

L3 Autonomous Driving Permits Get Green Light

Policy Express

By LIN Yuchen

China has taken a landmark step in the development of intelligent connected vehicles, after the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) granted conditional road approval to two Level 3 (L3) autonomous driving models on December 15, produced under the Changan and Arcfox brands. The decision signals a transition of China's autonomous vehicle industry from the technological verification stage to initial commercial application.

L3 autonomous driving represents a critical threshold in the evolution of vehicle automation. Under China's classification system, driving automation is divided into six levels, from L0 to L5. While L1 and L2 are considered driver-assistance systems, L3 and above formally enter the realm of automated driving. At L3, the automated system can continuously perform driving tasks such as steering, acceleration, and braking under specific conditions. Drivers are no longer required to monitor the road driving environment constantly, but must be able to take over control quickly when the system requests intervention.



A visitor experiences the intelligent system of the Arcfox series of pure electric vehicles at an exhibition in Shanghai. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

This transition has profound implications for liability allocation. Unlike L2 systems, where driving responsibility rests entirely with the human driver, L3 introduces shared responsibility among drivers, vehicle manufacturers, and system suppliers. Experts view the approval of the first L3 models as a policy breakthrough, as it allows autonomous vehicles to enter the market as regulated products through pilot programs, setting a precedent for future commercialization.

Safety remains the central consideration in the approval process. According to industry experts, the two approved models have undergone comprehensive system safety assessments, rather than isolated functional tests. These evaluations cover the entire lifecycle of product development, including design, testing, and validation processes. Key areas assessed include scenario-handling capabilities within defined operational

domains, functional safety, cybersecurity and data protection, and emergency response mechanisms. Independent testing institutions and expert reviews were also involved to ensure objectivity.

To mitigate risk, the pilot program adopts a cautious, conditional approach. The approved vehicles are restricted to specific roads and scenarios and operate under real-time supervision by relevant authorities and local governments. Importantly, the vehicles will not be sold directly to consumers during the pilot phase, underscoring the principle of safety-first and gradual implementation.

The pilot trials will be conducted on selected urban expressways in Chongqing and Beijing, reflecting a controlled yet practical testing environment. Regulators have emphasized that the application channel for L3 pilots will remain open and advance on an approval basis.

More broadly, the launch of L3 pilots highlights China's commitment to balancing innovation with governance. While large-scale adoption of autonomous driving will take time, this step demonstrates that the era of automated mobility is no longer theoretical but increasingly within reach, supported by evolving regulatory frameworks and real-world validation.



Global Journal Observatory

TAMO: Committed to Research That Changes Patients' Lives

By TIAN Lingling

In today's rapidly evolving landscape of cancer treatment, a journal's academic impact should go beyond the printed page and be effectively translated into reliable evidence for clinical decision-making. The journal I serve, *Therapeutic Advances in Medical Oncology* (TAMO), is committed to this mission.

Frontiers of clinical oncology research

Cancer has become a major global public health challenge. According to the latest data, there were approximately 20 million new cancer cases worldwide in 2022. Driven by population aging and lifestyle changes, the global cancer burden is expected to continue rising, with new cases projected to exceed 35 million by 2050.

In this situation, rapidly and reliably translating the latest scientific findings into clinical practice has become critical for the global medical community.

As the flagship oncology journal under Sage Publishing, TAMO strives to publish research of significant value to oncology research and clinical practice. It covers clinical trials and real-world evidence studies, with a focus on cutting-edge topics such as immunotherapy, targeted therapy and biomarker discovery.

In particular, it emphasizes innovative research that can directly improve patient outcomes, thereby serving as a bridge between advancing academic knowledge and optimizing clinical decision-making.

Promoting paradigm shifts

Over the past decade, TAMO has published studies that are not only widely cited in the academic community but have also been incorporated into clinical guidelines and policy documents across multiple countries, exerting a profound influence on cancer treatment concepts and practices worldwide.

For example, a 2022 article, "Reconsidering T component of cancer staging for T3/T4 non-small-cell lung cancer with additional nodule," was adopted by the expert consensus of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (U.S.).

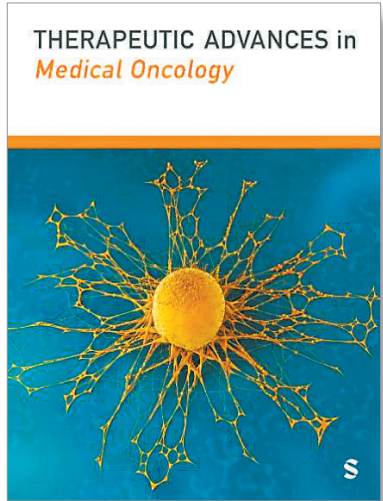
By systematically re-evaluating T staging in the presence of additional nodules, the study clarified key factors affecting surgical feasibility and staging stratification, providing evidence-based support for multidisciplinary discussions and resectability assessment in locally advanced cases.

While driving changes in clinical practice, TAMO also emphasizes innovation in scientific communication. We encourage authors to provide plain language summaries alongside their articles and support their publication as independent, secondary outputs.

These articles explain the core value of research in clear, everyday language for patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals and the wider public, thereby expanding the reach and societal impact of oncology research.

Upholding rigorous standards

We have established a rigorous manuscript handling process: Submissions



Front cover of *Therapeutic Advances in Medical Oncology*. (COURTESY PHOTO)

are first assessed by the editorial team for ethical compliance and scientific quality, followed by peer review.

Each manuscript is peer reviewed by at least two independent experts active in the field, and statistical reviewers are invited when necessary to ensure scientific rigor. Every manuscript is jointly handled by the editor and associate editors, and all associate editors are scholars actively engaged in frontline research, with deep professional expertise and extensive clinical experience, thus providing a solid guarantee of academic quality.

Engaging with Chinese academic community

In recent years, submissions and publications from Chinese authors to TAMO have continued to grow. Chinese researchers have achieved outstanding results in areas such as immunotherapy, targeted drug development, clinical trials and real-world study, and early cancer screening technologies, making important contributions to the development of global cancer treatment.

Currently, more than 10 Chinese scholars have joined the TAMO editorial board, bringing deep expertise in clinical oncology, drug development and related fields, and providing strong support for the journal's growth.

The journal also places emphasis on engaging with Chinese scholars and authors, e.g., organizing webinars to help authors improve their submissions, and is participating in academic events such as the Annual Meeting of the Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology, strengthening its ties with the Chinese academic community.

At the beginning of TAMO's 17th year, I have succeeded Georgia Patey as the new editor. Based in Shanghai, I am committed to providing more direct and effective support to local researchers, helping high-quality academic work to be published and gain broader international visibility.

Looking ahead, TAMO will continue to focus on research from China. We warmly welcome Chinese clinicians and researchers to join TAMO's global academic community to foster deeper collaboration and exchanges.

The author is the editor of TAMO and senior managing editor at Sage Publishing.

New Tech Products Sway Foreign Tourists

Observer

By Staff Reporters

AI glasses, robotic pets, and foldable smartphones — these innovative Chinese tech products have become increasingly popular purchases with foreign tourists in China.

In a 3D printing store in Shenzhen, a foreign tourist scanned a QR code, chose an item in a model file and then started his own creation process. The tourist said there is no need to have any tech expertise as customers can download an item from MakerWorld, a website for 3D models. "This experience is excellent," he said.

Cao Zhongxiong, assistant president of the China Development Institute and director of the Digital Strategy and Economic Research Center, said amid the

transformation of instant retail and the realignment of people, goods and venues, China's tech product market has become a large platform for foreign tourists to have immersive experiences and a new gateway to understand Chinese lifestyle.

An AI hi-tech experience store in Shanghai has also attracted many foreign tourists. The in-store products extend from smart wearables to fitness, and 90 percent of them were intelligently made in China.

This store was the second destination for Anna, a 25-year-old Spaniard, and her boyfriend. She said she wanted to buy an AI interactive doll's house to tell her stories about Chengyu, Chinese proverbs normally with four or eight characters, and help her learn more about Chinese culture.

Tech product counters in Sanlitun, Beijing are also welcoming a large group of foreign tourists. A team of Egyptian tourists tried out home appliances like

garment steamers, rice cookers and hair dryers, and marveled at the ingeniously thoughtful human-centered design and the powerful functionality backed by cutting-edge technology.

Tech products have evolved to a highly persuasive new medium, and the use and circulation of these products form the most natural global dialogue between Chinese culture and the spirit of modern innovation, said Sun Yu, researcher at Beijing Open Economy Research Institute, University of International Business and Economics. He regards the purchase of Chinese tech products by foreign tourists as their recognition and choice of the lifestyle and innovative culture embodied in these products.

Tourists share their experiences of purchasing Chinese tech products and showcase the product's key features on social media platforms, which triggers curiosity and discussion, according to

Zhang Menghan, vice director and professor of School of Communication, Soochow University. She added that such sharing enhances product awareness and brand influence.

From another perspective, extending the personal experience of tourists to topics discussed by a larger group not only makes tech products a link between China and other parts of the world, but also efficiently delivers the innovation and pragmatism of "Made in China."

"Made in China" is no longer simply about product selling, but reconstructs and leads global lifestyles, according to Cao. China is no longer only the "world's factory," but leads a new type of trendy global consumption against the backdrop of high tech manufacturing. "Made in China" is now building a new image around the world, and global tourists have cast their vote with their wallets.

High-yield Hybrid Rice Thrives in Saline Coastal Soil

Case Study

By SUN Jin & YU Huiyou

Soil salinization has long constrained agricultural productivity in China's coastal regions. Now, to take up this challenge, local authorities in

the Shenzhen-Shanwei Special Cooperation Zone in south China's Guangdong province have joined hands with scientists in central China's Hunan province.

Building on the legacy of the late Yuan Longping, the "Father of Hybrid Rice," his former research team has driven a collaborative project that has achieved sustained yield growth in the coastal areas of the Shenzhen-

Shanwei Special Cooperation Zone, despite challenging soil and climate conditions.

In February 2023, the Guangdong branch of the Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center (HHRRC) was established to accelerate the transition from research to field application. Drawing on the successful experience of Hunan province, local authorities introduced a systematic cultivation plan tailored to regional conditions.

The plan included a recommended seed catalogue for early-season and late-season rice, prioritizing hybrid varieties with strong salt tolerance, high yield potential and stable performance, such as "Jingliangyou 3261" and "Zhuoliangyou 1126."

"At the demonstration base, the Jingliangyou 3261 has achieved an average yield exceeding 450 kilograms per mu (about 0.07 hectares) for two consecutive years on soil with a salinity level of 0.3 percent," said Nie Lingli, director of the HHRRC Guangdong Branch. "This is about 50 percent higher than the national average for similar conditions."

As a result, the Shenzhen-Shanwei's rice yield per mu increased by 10

percent in the first year of the program. In 2024, the average yield of early-season rice rose by a further 13.3 percent year-on-year.

To further scale up the achievements, the agricultural science promotion institute of Shenzhen-Shanwei was established.

Through the institute, the Guangdong Branch team successfully secured approval and authorization for multiple salt-tolerant hybrid rice varieties. The team also incubated Shenzhen Xin'an Seed Company, strengthening the link between research institutions and farmers.

"With the institute's technical support, we have promoted over 10,000 mu of hybrid rice seeds," said Yuan Chengwei, general manager of Xin'an Seed.

"We're scaling this project to drive the transformation of Shenzhen-Shanwei's agriculture toward smarter, greener and more precise production systems," said Tang Wenbang, director of the HHRRC. "The goal is to establish a new agricultural paradigm in south China that could also offer valuable experience for other salt-affected regions nationally."



At the rice field of the Shenzhen-Shanwei Special Cooperation Zone, an experts' team screens and identifies varieties. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Journal Review

The field of tumor treatment has witnessed rapid and cutting-edge advancements in recent years. It is imperative for academic journals to effectively communicate these research achievements to the global community of researchers and clinicians. TAMO is committed to fulfilling this responsibility by disseminating high-quality, clinically relevant research.

As a specialized journal in oncology, TAMO has established a promi-

nent academic standing through its unique mission: accelerating the translation of scientific breakthroughs into clinical practice and evidence-based decision-making. By doing so, the journal plays a critical role in alleviating the global burden of cancer and addressing key challenges in oncology.

— Si Lu, professor and chief physician, Peking University Cancer Hospital and Institute