

Speech by SITI at Thematic Forum on Maritime Cooperation of third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Thematic Forum on Maritime Cooperation of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing today (October 18):

Thank you, Professor Lin (Member of the Academia Europaea and Chair Professor of Southern University of Science and Technology, China, Professor Lin Jian). In response to the questions raised by Professor Lin just now, I would like to share with you all how Hong Kong contributes to promote innovation in marine science and technology for the benefit of the mankind and how the application of innovation and technology (I&T) can champion the development of blue economy in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Our country clearly indicates the importance of promoting marine economy development and marine ecosystem protection in order to strike a balance between economic development and ocean protection, for the sustainable development of mankind.

Being one of the most important international cities in China facing the South China Sea, Hong Kong is a key node city of the Belt and Road. Apart from strengthening our position as an international financial, trade and logistics centre, Hong Kong is working in full steam towards the vision of becoming an international innovation and technology centre. Let me share with you two points on how Hong Kong's I&T community promotes innovation in marine technology.

First, exploring marine resources to facilitate the development of life and health science and technology.

Oceans are rich in biological resources with great potential for application in biomedicine, environmental protection and many other fields. Marine resource development technology can unleash the application potential of biological resources and create new industries. Our scientific research teams in Hong Kong have conducted R&D (research and development) work on marine biological resources through various scientific means, and succeeded in tapping active lead compounds of medical value from these resources, which are helpful to the R&D of new medicines.

Second, using AI (artificial intelligence) and big data to protect the

marine environment in a precise and efficient way.

Maintaining biodiversity is crucial to the balance of the marine ecosystem. The State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution in Hong Kong has been working for many years to address the ecological imbalance caused by marine pollution. In addition, a Hong Kong start-up has developed a solar-powered marine cleaning robot that uses AI technology to identify ocean garbage and determine shipping routes to facilitate marine clean-up.

In conclusion, innovation in marine science and technology not only opens up new areas for the blue economy development, but also brings new opportunity for the sustainable development of humanity. Hong Kong stands ready to work with the world and contribute our blue power in promoting innovation in marine science and technology for the betterment of the world. Thank you very much.

