

Longquan celadon brings spirit of Silk Road to life

An emcee displays pieces of Longquan celadon at a press conference held in Beijing on May 23. [Photo by Li Kang/China.org.cn]

Under the theme of “Chinese celadon rekindles world attention” a press conference on the celadon items used at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation earlier in the month was held in Beijing on May 23, attracting more than 100 attendees.

The organizing committee of the China Green Industry Exposition took the opportunity to sign an agreement with Quzhou Kiln Research Institute on the selection of Longquan celadon as exhibits for a fine artworks hall.

Another agreement was signed between Green China Internet TV (GCITV) center and Longquan Banxian Hall Cultural Development Corporation to designate it as the online trading platform for celadon.

Emcees display pieces of Longquan celadon at a press conference held in Beijing on May 23. [Photo by Li Kang/China.org.cn]

Longquan celadon is a kind of green-glazed Chinese ceramic produced in kilns largely located in Lishui City in Zhejiang Province in the southeast of China. The firing techniques of Longquan celadon joined the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage in 2009.

Longquan celadon has a history spanning more than 1,000 years, being shipped to the outside world through the ancient overland and maritime “silk roads.” The ceramics epitomize Chinese culture and bring the spirit of the ancient Silk Road to modern life.

Longquan celadon was used as designated wares at the APEC summit in 2014, the G20 Hangzhou summit in 2016 and the Belt and Road Forum in 2017, becoming a “living fossil” for multicultural exchanges along the Belt and Road.

An emcee displays pieces of Longquan celadon at a press conference held in Beijing on May 23. [Photo by Li Kang/China.org.cn]

Tang Wei, the founder of Quzhou Kiln Research Institute, said the craftsmen in Banxian Hall made topnotch porcelain utensils in the spirit of craftsmanship to ensure Longquan celadon was well qualified as wares to be used at the Belt and Road Forum.

“Longquan celadon is a product embodying the wisdom of Chinese people,” said Zhang Shouzhi, a professor of the Academy of Arts & Design of Tsinghua University.

The conference also exhibited a host of original celadon pieces to demonstrate the concept of the Belt and Road Initiative through unique charm

of traditional Chinese culture.

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Inspections of imported waste to rise



Border patrol officers handle parcels of used clothes that were smuggled from Hong Kong to the Chinese mainland in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, in June last year. [File Photo/China Daily]

Legislators have vowed to increase supervision of government departments in charge of handling imported solid waste, aiming to protect the environment and ensure public health.

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress will conduct inspections to ensure that the law on the prevention of solid waste pollution is being enforced.

The inspections, led by Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, will be conducted in 10 areas, including Tianjin, Jiangsu Province and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The inspections will last until the end of July, the committee said.

It is the first enforcement inspection since 2005, when the revised law took effect.

“Our aim is to protect the environment by rule of law, hoping supervision and inspections can be effective in ensuring residents’ health and improving ecological safety,” Zhang said on Monday.

“We’ll urge government departments to enforce the law, and find areas where the law needs to be improved.”

The country has drawn up a list of 66 kinds of solid waste that can be imported, including paper and plastics, to satisfy the nation’s need for raw materials for economic development, “but problems brought by illegal imports are still serious”, said Chen Jining, minister of environmental protection.

Since 2013, more than 400 cases relating to smuggling of imported solid waste have been filed at Chinese customs and nearly 800 suspects have been detained, a statement from the legislature said.

In April, for example, Shenzhen Customs in Guangdong province seized more than 1,000 metric tons of imported industrial waste in 38 containers. The goods from the Middle East were prohibited from import under the law, and smugglers attempted to transport the waste into the country as synthetic graphite.

“Some imported solid waste doesn’t meet our environmental standards, while some enterprises import banned waste by hiding it or making false reports to governments,” Chen said.

He confirmed that a few areas for recycling and reusing waste become “trafficking destinations” for imported solid waste. A campaign led by the ministry against illegally imported waste began in March.

“In addition, we’re trying to reduce the quantities and categories of imported solid waste, further reforming management in the industry,” he added.

Liu Jianguo, a professor at Tsinghua University’s School of Environment, said the utilization of solid waste comes with a higher cost to the economy and environmental protection than natural resources, warning that some recycling projects harm human health and pollute the environment.

Solid waste can have high levels of pollutants, while the reusable resources are of low quality, he was quoted as saying by Xinhua News Agency. He said there should be clear and stricter controls on the recycling of solid waste.

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China pledges peaceful development in Antarctica



Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli (L) addresses the opening ceremony of the 40th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) in Beijing, capital of China, May 23, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

The Chinese government reiterated its commitment to the peaceful development and research of Antarctica as the 40th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) opened in Beijing Tuesday.

This is China's first time hosting the meeting, an annual decision-making mechanism established under the the Antarctic Treaty.

Peaceful, stable, green and sustainable development of Antarctica is in line with the common interests for mankind and a strong commitment to future generations, said Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli when addressing the opening ceremony.

China acceded to the Antarctic Treaty in 1983 and became a consultative member two years later.

In the past three decades, China has sent nearly 6,000 professionals to Antarctica since the nation dispatched its first Antarctic expedition team in November 1984.

Chinese leaders have stressed on various occasions the need to better protect and research Antarctica due to its special location and environment. To review its progress on Antarctica, China on Monday published the first full report on its study and use of the region over the past 30 years, titled "China's Antarctic Activities."

According to the report by China's State Oceanic Administration, the country has so far opened four research bases – the Great Wall station, Zhongshan station, Kunlun station and Taishan station – and established the Polar Research Institute of China in Shanghai in addition to sailing the icebreaker Xuelong (Snow Dragon).

The number of papers on Antarctic studies published by Chinese scientists and included by the Science Citation Index (SCI) has risen from 19 in 1999 to 157 in 2016, leading China to rank among the top 10 countries.

China has a relatively short history of study in Antarctica, but the progress it has achieved, especially in the past few years, has been huge, said Qin Weijia, director of the Chinese Arctic and Antarctic Administration.

China also raised its financial inputs in Antarctic research. In the past 15 years from 2001 to 2016, China invested 310 million yuan (about 45 million U.S. dollars) in related projects – 18 times the total for the years 1985 to 2000.

Antarctic research has remained one of the most difficult topics due to the lack of research data, said Qin.

China is not yet a global leader in Antarctic research, Qin said, but as the country grows in technology and overall national power, it is willing to contribute more to a better understanding of Antarctica.

China pays close attention to cooperation and sharing of information in the study of Antarctica. The Chinese National Arctic and Antarctic Data Center has provided data for more than 100 international projects and more than 10 countries.

"In past years, China has cooperated with more and more countries in various aspects such as policy making, expeditions and scientific studies," said China's Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin.

According to "China's Antarctic Activities," from 2016 to 2020, China plans to elevate its Antarctic activities to a higher level, including installing new Antarctic stations and deploying new and advanced icebreakers.

"Down the road, China is willing to join hands with the rest of the international community in understanding, protecting and using Antarctica," said the report.

Some 400 delegates from 44 countries and 10 international organizations which have signed the Antarctic Treaty attended the 40th ATCM in Beijing.

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