

WWF publishes Shanghai urban environment nature guidebook

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) China on Friday published a nature guidebook based on Shanghai's urban environment.

Supported by Shanghai Disney Resort, the "Wishing Star Park Nature Book" uses the resort's Wishing Star Park as its natural survey area.

The book features eight chapters and covers different aspects of the park, including aquatic plants, birds, insects, butterflies and wetlands.

Located in Shanghai Disney Resort, Wishing Star Park is a 500,000-square-meter recreational area with restored wetlands along the central lake's shoreline and more than 2.5 kilometers of pathways through open woodlands and scrublands along the lake's edge, which evoke the native landscape of the Yangtze River Delta. It creates a living ecosystem, providing a natural environment for plants, animals, fish and more than 70 species of bird.

Murray King, vice president of public affairs at Shanghai Disney Resort, said that the park was designed for families and their children to enjoy and spend time together, and to inspire a lifetime's understanding of environmental protection.

The book will be sold in merchandise stores at the resort's two hotels, selected kiosks and other channels. The book will also be available to download for free on the WWF China official website.

The book is one of the three nature guide books series that WWF China has been developing in the past three years, with others featuring the Meng Qing Garden in Shanghai Putuo District and Tai Lake areas in China's Jiangsu Province, which will be published later, according to Yong Yi, senior manager of environmental education at WWF China.

CPC national congress shows more openness, transparency

American journalist Sarah Wendt was surprised to find a media-friendly environment at the ongoing Party congress in Beijing, as opposed to the perceived "media-averse" atmosphere at her home Washington D.C.

Thursday was the second day of the 19th National Congress of Communist Party of China. Wendt and her colleagues arrived early at the Great Hall of the

People, which overlooks Tian'anmen Square at the heart of Beijing.

For the second day in a row, a group of 20 delegates met with the press at the "delegates' passage" at the hall, answering questions from interested reporters.

"There is great access and openness at the Party congress, whereas in the United States, the administration is closed in a way that they don't want media attention or criticism," she said.

"The delegates' passage is a good format to have preliminary interviews with the delegates before going into longer discussions," Wendt said.

The delegates' passage is a new addition at the 19th CPC National Congress, drawing on experience from the annual parliamentary sessions in the past years, in which ministers meet the press to answer questions.

About 2,300 delegates have gathered for the twice-a-decade CPC congress, but the number of journalists covering the supremely important political event is even more, at over 3,000.

"The aim is to provide more chances for the delegates to meet with the media," said Zhang Qiang, deputy director of congress press center.

A total of 70 delegates are expected to receive interviews at the passage. Their interactions with reporters are broadcast live on state television and various Internet portals.

On Thursday, the interviewees included CPC history researcher, aircraft carrier pilot, computer engineer, teacher, cleaner, farmer and anti-corruption official.

Topics touched on Party governance, environmental protection, scientific innovation, and personal stories of grassroots delegates.

Ling Jiefang, writer and a five-time delegate to the Party congress, warned against slackness in the fight against corruption.

"If we look back in the history of China, there has never been a comparable amount of effort to fight corruption like we've seen in recent years. There has never been a CPC-led people's war against corruption like we are having now," said Ling coming from Henan Province.

"The congress report said the anti-corruption battle shall never cease. If there were any slackness in the effort, corruption might bounce back and there would be negative consequences," he said.

Besides the passage, there are press conferences and open discussions in delegations with the presence of reporters. Starting Thursday, press conferences are held at the press center.

"The Party congress has become more open and transparent, which reflects the growing confidence of the ruling party of a large country like China," said

Dong Guanpeng, director of the media and public relations institute at the Communication University of China.

[Xi's report at key CPC meeting further strengthens global confidence in China](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping's report at a landmark meeting of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has further boosted the confidence of foreign countries and organizations in China's development prospect and global role.

In the report delivered Wednesday at the opening session of the 19th CPC National Congress, Xi, who is also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, blueprinted China's future development and reiterated Beijing's aspiration to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

The report "outlines China's grand strategy for the next few decades" as it brings greater clarity to the vision for China's full modernization by the middle of the 21st century, said Dali L. Yang, a professor of political science in the University of Chicago.

In particular, the expert said he was impressed by the report's emphasis on the environment and efforts to build a greener China.

"In fact, the report mentions the environment more than the economy. Modernization is more than economic growth and Xi's report is a clear articulation of the CPC's greater emphasis on balanced development," he told Xinhua via email.

B. R. Deepak, a professor at the Center of Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, noted that Xi's report draws a blueprint for China's future direction.

"With this blueprint, China will forge ahead to transform into a great modern socialist country by 2050," added the renowned Indian expert on China.

He added that China's vision of building a community with a shared future for all humankind, championed by Xi, emphasizes the ongoing trend of multi-polarism, interdependence, tolerance and mutually-beneficial cooperation.

Noting that Xi mentioned the Belt and Road Initiative in his report, Deepak said, "In the next five years, we will witness a lot more infrastructure connectivity in Eurasia, and the region is likely to emerge as an important driver of regional and global growth."

For Rashed Khan Menon, Bangladesh's civil aviation and tourism minister, China's progress is very important to developing countries like Bangladesh,

and Xi's speech reflects what people desire across the world.

"I do believe that the CPC led by Xi Jinping is capable enough to build a modernized socialist China with Chinese characteristics," he said. "We are confident in his leadership dynamism to lead China forward."

In the eyes of Suresh Acharya, a senior member of Nepal's Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (Democratic), Xi's report is "highly important for the entire South Asia and neighboring countries like Nepal."

"From his remarks I see very positive signals to materialize the dream of creating this century as the Asian Century," he said. "The pragmatic vision presented by President Xi will help to build a peaceful and harmonious world."

"I believe that China will become a global leader as envisioned by President Xi in terms of comprehensive national strength and international influence," he added. "Common prosperity for everyone will be basically achieved."

[China to divert more water from Yangtze River to Shandong](#)

Shandong Province on east China's seaboard will get 1.09 billion cubic meters of more water from the mighty Yangtze River via the country's massive water diversion project, authorities announced Thursday.



The diversion work of the eastern route of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project for the 2017-2018 period starts on Oct. 19, 2017, which is scheduled to carry 1.09 billion cubic meters of more water from the mighty Yangtze River to Shandong Province on east China's seaboard by the end of May 2018. [Photo/CNS]

The eastern route of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project will carry water from the Yangtze River through canals and pump stations to Shandong. The diversion work for the 2017-2018 period started Thursday, and is scheduled to be completed by May 2018, according to the South-to-North Water Diversion Office under the State Council.

Shandong has already received a total of 2 billion cubic meters of water through the project.

The project, one of the country's largest infrastructure schemes, is designed to take water from the humid south to the arid north. Water flows northward via three routes of the massive water diversion project – eastern, central, and western.

Apart from Shandong, the project has transferred 10 billion cubic meters of water to areas including Beijing and Tianjin, benefiting some 53.1 million people, earlier data from the office showed.

[775 mln Chinese students receive financial aid over past decade](#)

A total of 775 million Chinese college and vocational school students received financial help in the past 10 years, according to the Ministry of Education.

The number of students who were subsidized rose from 51.6 million in 2007 to 91.3 million in 2016, representing an average annual increase of 6.55 percent, the ministry published the figures on its website early this week.

The total volume of financial aid reached 1 trillion yuan (about 159 billion U.S. dollars) during the past decade, with the number at 41.6 billion for 2007 and 168.9 billion for 2016, an average growth of 16.84 percent year on year, the ministry said.

It also said that government funding always played a leading role in aid. The figure topped 726 billion yuan over the years, accounting for 68.87 percent of the total.

In May 2007, the State Council issued a document establishing a system of financial aid to college and vocational school students from poor families.

It was the first comprehensive and systematic plan on student financial aid.

The aid comes in forms such as tuition fee exemptions, living allowances, scholarships and student loans.

In the past decade, China has created 40 policies and documents on financial help for students, with 29 aid programs, the ministry said.

Currently, financial help is available to students from pre-school kindergartens to post-graduate studies, from public to private schools, and for all families in poverty, the ministry said.