

**China Development Forum 2024**  
**The Continuous Development of China**

**Symposium on Carbon Neutrality and Global Climate Governance**  
**(Dialogue)**

Hosted by the Development Research Centre of the State Council (DRC) and organized by the China Development Research Foundation (CDRF), the China Development Forum (CDF) 2024 was held at Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing from 24th to 25th March. The Symposium on Carbon Neutrality and Global Climate Governance was held on the afternoon of March 24. It was chaired by Gao Shiji, Director-General of the Institute of Resources and Environment Policy, DRC. The guests participating in the “Dialogue” were Bai Chong-En, Dean of School of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University, and Tim Cook, CEO of Apple Inc.

Regarding striving towards carbon neutrality, Tim Cook stated that for Apple Inc., the largest source of carbon emissions actually comes from the supply chain and customer usage. Apple Inc. has publicly set a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, aiming for carbon neutrality at the entire company level by that year. Since 2015, the total carbon

footprint of Apple Inc. (including the entire supply chain and customer usage) has decreased by 45%, while its revenue has increased by 68% during the same period. Addressing environmental problems is different from managing business operations. Solving environmental challenges requires systematic efforts, and there is a need for more innovation to resolve such issues and achieve the set goals.

According to Tim Cook, Apple Inc. has already achieved carbon neutrality in its global operations and will continue the efforts for achieving carbon neutrality for every product manufactured by 2030. Last year, it released its first carbon-neutral product, the Apple Watch. The projects of Apple Inc. mainly fall into three categories, namely materials, transportation, and electricity. From the perspective of materials, the ultimate goal of Apple Inc. is not to extract resources indiscriminately from the earth to make products but to continuously recycle resources, which requires strong technological support. Materials such as rare earths used in Apple Watch and cobalt used in batteries can already be recycled. Regarding energy, Apple Inc. utilizes 15 gigawatts of renewable energy in its global operations, with a significant portion located in China. This is a major initiative within its supply chain. Meanwhile, the company faces challenges throughout its production process, such as difficulties in transportation and the need to minimize packaging.

Tim Cook holds that he who travels alone travels faster, yet he who travels in company travels farther. The Chinese supply chain partners of Apple Inc. play a crucial role in the carbon neutrality process, so the

collaboration with them will lead to a synergistic effect. They not only embrace goals of Apple Inc. but also continuously innovate, showing a strong willingness to meet and overcome these challenges. In addition, artificial intelligence has brought fundamental changes to recycling, making it more feasible for every company to achieve carbon neutrality goals. AI can offer assistance in this process.

Bai Chong-En said that sustainable development can synergize with the digital economy and AI which are developing at a fast pace. In response to climate challenges, the School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University pays special attention to environmental protection and sustainable development. It collaborates with the School of Environment and the School of Architecture to actively cultivate students who are interested in entrepreneurship in the environmental field. He expressed that they strive to educate students to increase their awareness of sustainable development and enable them to become practitioners of sustainability for building a more sustainable world. Green transformation is a significant challenge but also brings many opportunities. It is believed that continuous innovation will emerge to help humanity achieve green transformation. The School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University places great importance on sustainable development. It releases sustainability reports to set an example for students, offers courses on sustainable development, and establishes green transformation training programs for corporate executives. All these help to meet the expectations of stakeholders

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regarding corporate responsibility.

Bai believes that different stakeholders should be brought together to jointly promote sustainable development. The School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University will strive to play a greater role in promoting sustainable development. It will promote not only the integration of science and technology but also better collaboration among the educational, scientific, and business communities. It is hoped that such efforts could build a bridge of communication between China and the rest of the world.

(China Development Press Author: Du Qianqian; Reviewer: Cui Keliang)

--Background Information--

Under the mandate 'Engaging with the world for common prosperity', China Development Forum (CDF) serves as an important platform for Chinese government to carry out candid exchanges and discussions with leaders of global businesses and international organizations as well as foreign and Chinese scholars. Initiated in 2000, CDF has made remarkable contributions for the policy exchange and international collaborations between China and the world.

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