

## **China takes responsible attitude to climate change**

April 13 (Xinhua)-- BOAO - China is taking a responsible attitude towards climate change and some measures taken by the country are even more pro-active than some developed countries, Richard Yorke, HSBC China chief executive officer, told Xinhua at the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) in the country's southern Hainan Province.

The Shanghai-based banker said there was a clear-cut regulation that air-conditioning units in the city should be set no lower than 26 degrees Celsius in summer, adding that China 's banking industry watchdog was launching a "green credit" program.

The temperature of all the country's air-conditioned public rooms should be kept at no lower than 26 degrees Celsius in summer and no higher than 20 degrees Celsius in winter, stipulated last summer by the State Council, China's Cabinet, in effort to save energy.

China 's top five banks offered a total of 106.3 billion yuan in loans (US\$ 15.18 billion) last year to help enterprises cut emissions and save energy, according to the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC).

The CBRC also said in February that some 30 energy-intensive, high-polluting enterprises were denied credit from the top five banks last year after being blacklisted by the environmental authorities.

Rob Morrison, Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia (CLSA) chairman, said China 's recent move of promoting the State Environmental Protection Administration to a full ministry known as the Ministry of Environmental Protection, could facilitate environmental protection endeavors.

In recent years, China has enhanced macro-control and stepped up its industrial upgrading in effort to make industrial structures, modes of growth and consumption patterns more conducive to conserving resources and the environment.

Rajendra Pachauri, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) chairman, said on Sunday it was not easy for China to solve many problems as the country had a 1.3 billion population. The government, however, had endeavored to make the economic development mode shift in the right direction. The Indian economist added he was deeply moved by the Chinese efforts made in this regard.

The country launched a national program in June to address climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an all round way.

Under the National Climate Change Program, the first by a developing country, China pledged to restructure its economy, promoting clean technologies and improving energy efficiency.

China has set goals of reducing energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) by 20 percent, and cutting total emissions of major pollutants by 10 percent by 2010.

Dr. John Rutledge, an economic advisor to the administration of former US President Ronald Reagan, described this as a "responsible plan".

In 2007, emissions of sulfur dioxide and chemical oxygen demand (COD) in China decreased by 4.66 percent and 3.14 percent, respectively, year on year.

The government is currently carrying out the "Top 1,000 Enterprise Energy Efficiency Action Plan" and is implementing 10 major energy-saving projects. These included enhancing the efficiency of low-efficiency industrial boilers and improved energy-saving programs for oil refining, iron and steel companies.

Due to the government's efforts, China saw a 3.27 percent year-on-year drop in energy intensity in 2007 for each unit of GDP, equal to saving up to 89.8 million tons of standard coal.

To protect the environment and save energy, China shut down 29.4 million tons of outdated iron smelting capacity and 15.21 million tons of outdated steel smelting capacity as of November.

The country vowed last month to continue eliminating outdated production facilities this year, including small thermal power generating units with a combined capacity of 13 million kilowatts, and facilities with 50 million tons of cement, 6 million tons of steel and 14 million tons of iron.

China also scrapped export tax rebates on hundreds of products to curb energy-consuming and pollutant-discharging industries and exports of key natural resources.

China 's central government planned to increase spending on energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission reduction schemes by 78 percent this year, with the total expenditure rising to 41.8 billion yuan from 23.5 billion yuan last year.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the BFA annual conference on Saturday, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd praised China 's efforts of increasing its forest coverage.

He added Australia and other countries shared the same responsibility and should make joint efforts in reducing discharges and promoting sustainable development, including the protection of trees and forests.

The BFA was established in 2001 as a platform for high-level interaction between leaders from Asia and the world. The theme of this year's annual conference was "Green Asia: moving toward win-win through changes".

### **Center will help cut CO2 emissions from farming**

April 2 (Agencies) -- New standards and technologies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused by farming will be adopted with the launch yesterday in Beijing of the Center for Research on Agriculture and Climate Change.

Jointly established by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a US-based nongovernmental organization, the center will publish a Chinese version of the Duke Standard - a US guide to verifiable and measurable methods for reducing, avoiding and storing GHGs produced by agriculture.

The EDF has already run pilot schemes based on the standard in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. These included promoting non-till farming technology, adopting drip irrigation, turning biogas into fuel and planting tamarisk - a shrub that is good at slowing sand movement.

Carbon credits produced by the pilots were sold on the market for voluntary GHG emissions reduction.

The pilot schemes will help prevent estimated emissions of more than 300,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) equivalent over the next five years.

They also provided additional revenue for farmers who were able to sell the carbon credits.

David Yarnold, executive director of the EDF, said the center will teach farmers about GHG reduction technologies, provide local communities with plans on how to mitigate the effects of climate change and provide verification services as credits to be traded on the international market.