

Ministry of Ecology and Environment
of the People's Republic of China

2020 Press Conference Records of Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the People's Republic of China



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Ministry of Ecology and Environment
of the People's Republic of China
Beijing, China

ISBN 978-981-16-9060-0 ISBN 978-981-16-9061-7 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-9061-7>

Jointly published with China Environment Publishing Group Co., Ltd.
The print edition is not for sale in China (Mainland). Customers from China (Mainland) please order the
print book from: China Environment Publishing Group Co., Ltd.

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This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

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Preface

In 2020, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China (MEE) made new headway on public information and outreach. It conveyed ecological and environmental protection policies, measures and progress to the public in an authoritative, accurate and timely manner, vigorously disseminated Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization and the guiding principles of the National Working Conference on Environmental Protection, and made timely response to widely concerned issues. These efforts gained stronger support for ecological and environmental protection from the media and the public.

During the 2020 annual meetings of the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), known as the "Two Sessions," Huang Runqiu, Minister of Ecology and Environment, briefed on the work of ecological and environmental protection and took questions from Chinese and foreign reporters at the "ministers' corridor" interview. Zhao Yingmin, Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, attended a number of press conferences held by the State Council Information Office, including the press conference on the release of the Bulletin on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources, the policy briefing themed "Harness the Power of Technology to Win the Battle for Blue Skies," and the press conference on ecological and environmental protection during the 13th Five-Year Plan period. Zhuang Guotai, Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, attended the press conference on implementing the guiding principles of the fifth plenary session of the Nineteenth CPC Central Committee and promoting high-level green development, which was held by the State Council Information Office.

In the extraordinary year of 2020, the MEE creatively held press conferences in an online format, ensuring regular communication with the public amid the pandemic. A total of twelve regular press conferences were held in the year, which covered a wide range of topics such as water pollution prevention and control, coordination of pandemic prevention and control with social and economic development and ecological and environmental protection, nuclear security, air pollution prevention and control, environmental quality monitoring, ecological and environmental protection based on the rule of law, pollution prevention and control with the help of technology, deepening of environmental impact assessment reform, environmental

improvement of the Bohai Sea, response to climate change, solid waste management, and achievements in ecological and environmental protection during the 13th Five-Year Plan period. The press conferences gave an update on the key tasks and responded to hot issues, greatly increasing people's understanding of ecological and environmental protection policies and measures, enhancing their environmental awareness and creating an enabling atmosphere for public engagement in ecological and environmental protection.

This book consists of three parts. Part I is the records of the interview with Minister Huang Runqiu on the “ministers’ corridor” during the “Two Sessions.” Part II includes the records of the press conferences and policy briefings held by the State Council Information Office which was attended by Vice Minister Zhao Yingmin and Vice Minister Zhuang Guotai. Part III comprises the records of the twelve regular press conferences held by the MEE in 2020. We hope this book could be valuable to ecological and environmental protection workers, the media as well as readers from all walks of life who are concerned about and support ecological and environmental protection.

Your opinions and suggestions, if any, would be greatly appreciated.

Beijing, China
January 2021

The Editorial Team

Contents

Records of Press Conference During the “Two Sessions”	1
Interview at the Ministers’ Corridor	1
Records of Press Conference of State Council Information Office	11
Briefing on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources	11
Records of the State Council Policy Briefing Themed “Harness the Power of Technology to Win the Battle for Blue Skies”	22
Records of Press Conference on Ecological and Environmental Protection During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period	35
Records of Press Conference on Implementing the Guiding Principles of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee and Promoting Green Development Through High-Level Environmental Protection	48
Records of Regular Press Conferences in 2020	60
Regular Press Conference (January)	60
Ensuring That the Targets and Tasks of the Battle for Clear Water Are Achieved	66
Ensuring That the Departments Fulfill Duties in Line with the Principle That “the Lead Department Shall Take Responsibility”	67
Taking Solid Steps to Protect and Restore the Yangtze River	68
Scaling Down the Accumulative Amount of Phosphogypsum and Gradually Reducing the Existing Amount	69
Preserving the River and Lake Ecology by Maintaining Ecological Conservation Red Lines, Withdrawing Production Activities and Restoring the Water Environment	71
Fishing Ban in Key Waters of the Yangtze River Basin Is of Great Significance to Biodiversity Conservation	72
Advancing the Rectification of Malpractices in Chemical Parks to Achieve a Win–Win Situation Between Environmental Protection and Economic Development	74

Pressing Ahead with the Campaign Against Black and Odorous Water Bodies Together with Housing and Urban–Rural Development Departments	74
Improving the Compliance Coordination Mechanisms and Policy and Legal Systems and Making Continued Efforts to Phase out ODS and Deliver on Our Promises	76
Groundwater Protection Is an Essential Part of the Battle Against Water Pollution	78
Pushing Forward Central Environmental Protection Inspections and Continuing to Transmit Pressure and Promote the Rectification	79
Taking into Account the Actual Conditions of Different Regions and Sticking to a Problem-Based, Demand-Oriented and Result-Oriented Approach	80
Accelerating Delineation of Rural Water Sources Above Designated Size and Promoting the Protection of Other Water Sources in Rural Areas	83
Regular Press Conference (February)	88
Implementing the Guidelines on Coordinating Epidemic Prevention and Control, Economic and Social Development, and Ecological and Environmental Protection	94
Wuhan Has Maintained a Week-Long Record of Medical Waste Disposal Within 24 h	96
With the Focus on the Environmental Quality of Drinking Water Sources, We Assigned Two Covid-19-Related Indicators, Namely Residual Chlorine and Biological Toxicity	98
A Total of 1,354 Construction Projects Under Category III That Are Urgently Needed for Epidemic Prevention and Control Have Been Exempted from EIA	99
Enhanced Services for the Resumption of Work and Production and Sustained Efforts to Advance Proactive Services by the Eco-environment Departments at All Levels	103
A Total of 300,000 People Have Been Dispatched to Regulate Medical Waste and Sewage Treatment, with No Case of Infection due to On-site Supervision	105
New Positive List for Environmental Monitoring and Enforcement Reduces On-site Inspections to Companies with Good Credit in Environmental Protection	106
Illegally Restricting Pig Raising in the Name of Environmental Protection Strictly Forbidden	110
At Least One Standard Medical Waste Disposal Facility Will Be Built in Every Prefecture-Level City Across the Nation by the End of This Year	112
China’s Ecological Environment Will Continue to Improve	113

Inclusion of Execution of Wildlife Protection Laws and Regulations into the Eco-environmental Protection Inspection by the Central Government Will Be Studied	115
Strengthened Supervision and Assistance May Be Further Expanded to Non-key Areas Such as Jiangsu, Anhui, Shandong and Henan	116
Regular Press Conference (March)	124
MEE Adheres to the Holistic Approach to National Security and Nuclear Security and Comprehensively Promotes the Modernization of the System and Capacity for Nuclear Security Governance	129
National Security Education and Publicity Are Flexibly Customized to Local Conditions Under the New Anti-pandemic Situation	132
MEE Brings the Information Advantage into Play to Support Emergency Production of Protective Supplies and Uses the “One Net for All” to Explore New Regulation Modes	133
Assurance Plans Ensure Stable Operation of Nuclear Power Plants and Nuclear Power Projects Are Barely Affected by the Pandemic in General due to the Long Construction Cycle	136
The Pandemic Promotes the Development of Information-Based and Intelligent Development of Nuclear Safety Regulation	137
Strict Measures Are Practiced to Protect Personnel Who Maintain Normal Operation of Nuclear Power Plants and Respond to Abnormal Conditions During the Pandemic	139
China’s Disposal Capacity for Radioactive Waste Remains Short and Three Disposal Fields in Operation Are Under Renovation and Expansion	140
Two Events at Haiyang Nuclear Power Plant Are Level-0 Events with No Radioactive Consequences Outside or Inside the Station	142
Standards in the <i>Controlling Limits for Electromagnetic Environment</i> Are Practiced in a Stricter Way than International Recommended Limits	144
MEE Supports Environment-Related Social Organizations to Express Opinions and Propositions via Public Interest Litigation by Law	145
MEE Releases Chinese Nuclear and Radiation Safety Management System and Establishes the Procedural System	146
Regular Press Conference (April)	152
The Year 2019 Saw Improved Air Quality Amid Stable Progress Nationwide; in 2020, We Advanced in the Same Direction of Pollution Control with Unabated Effort	158
With PM _{2.5} Concentration Remaining High and Ozone Pollution Emerging, Governance Efforts Will Be Ramped up to Cope with the Difficult Structural Adjustment	162

A Critical Battle Against Volatile Organic Compounds Will Be Launched, Featuring Targeted and Scientific Pollution Control by Law	164
Work Resumption Didn't Pose Significant Effects on Air Quality Nationwide	166
Causes for Heavy Air Pollution in Autumn and Winter in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region and Surrounding Areas Have Been Found Out	166
Air Quality Was Evidently Improved in the First Quarter of This Year ...	169
Compilation of the 14th Five-Year Plan on Air Pollution Prevention and Control Has Kicked Off	169
Practice of Differentiated Emission Reduction to Reduce Pollutant Emission and Enhance High-Quality Industrial Development	171
Replacement of Coal with Natural Gas and Electricity Contributed over 1/3 to PM _{2.5} Decrease, Producing Noticeable Environmental Benefit	173
The Atmospheric Research Program Helped To Improve Regional Air Quality, and Social and Economic Benefits Were Analyzed and Summarized	174
MEE Will Promote 22 Cities in the Border Areas of Jiangsu, Anhui, Shandong and Henan to Establish a Joint Working Mechanism Against Air Pollution This Year	176
The Second Round of Central Inspection on Ecological and Environmental Inspection Will Proceed This Year	178
Promote Comprehensive Straw Utilization to Tackle Pollution from Straw Burning	179
MEE Is Confident in Fully Realizing the Nine Obligatory Targets on Environmental Protection Stipulated in the 13th Five-Year Plan	180
Regular Press Conference (May)	187
Outline of the Plan on Ecological and Environmental Monitoring (2020–2035) Was Released, with the Roadmap, Timetable and Charter Specified	193
China's Ecology and Environment Are Getting Better in General, as We See More Days of Blue Sky, Clearer Water and Healthier Ecosystems	195
National Forecasting Technology on Ambient Air Quality Reaches the World's Advanced Level	197
MEE Will Construct a Marine Eco-environmental Monitoring System Covering Nearshore, Offshore, Polar and Ocean Areas in the 14th Five-Year Plan Period	200
Chinese Ozone Standard Has Been Geared to the International One Ahead of Schedule, and Ozone Has Become the Primary Pollutant Affecting Summer Air Quality	201

Interference with the Ecological and Environmental Monitoring Is Subject to Absolutely “Zero Tolerance” and to “Strict Investigation” and “Harsh Punishment”	202
MEE Will Construct an Ecological Quality Monitoring Network with Terrestrial and Marine Environment Coordinated and Sky and Land Integrated in the Yellow River Basin	207
Chinese Mascot on Eco-environmental Protection Will Be Launched on the Environment Day on June 5th	208
MEE Promotes Modernization of the Monitoring System and Capacity to Realize Holistic Monitoring and Protection and Ensure the Authenticity, Accuracy and Integrity of Data	209
China Will Firmly Practice Its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to Respond to Climate Change	211
MEE Will Randomly Inspect the Self-monitoring Status of Municipal Solid Waste Incineration-Based Power Plants	212
MEE Will Select Quality Labs in Eco-environmental Monitoring Nationwide This Year	213
Regular Press Conference (June)	219
The Framework of Regulations and Standards Compatible with the Critical Battle Against Pollution Has Been Constructed in Accordance with the Requirement in Law-Based Pollution Control ...	226
MEE Continues to Strictly Practice Eco-environmental Laws, Regulations and Standards to Build the due Authority of Law-Based Eco-environmental Governance	228
MEE Has Handled a Group of Influential Cases of Eco-environmental Damage Compensation, Producing Admirable Effects	230
The <i>Civil Code</i> Fully Reflects Its “Green” Feature, Making It a “Green” Civil Code	234
Revision of the <i>Law on Prevention and Control of Pollution from Environmental Noise</i> Has Been Launched	236
MEE and the Ministry of Public Security Supervised the Handling of the Case of Runmin Biotechnology Hebei Co., Ltd. Illegally Dumping Hazardous Wastes	237
Yangtze River Protection Law Is Formulated to Protect the Ecosystem of the Yangtze River Ecosystem and Promote the Green Development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt	238
MEE Actively Supports the Revision, Promulgation and Implementation of the <i>Regulations on the Ecological and Environmental Protection of Qinling Mountain in Xi’an City</i>	239
MEE Continues to Promote Study and Formulation of Eco-environmental Criteria Compliant with China’s Eco-environmental Features	242

Solid Waste Import Nationwide Dropped by 45.3% in the First Five Months This Year Compared to Last Year and Will Be Fully Banned Next Year	244
Eco-environmental and Procuratorial Authorities Collaborate to Advance Environmental Public Interest Litigation	245
Regular Press Conference (July)	255
Eco-environmental Science and Technology Remain Problem, Demand and Result-Oriented and Have Made Positive Progress	260
Technical Breakthroughs in the Special Program of Water Pollution Control Enables Traditional Heavily Polluting Industries to Realize Both Capacity Increase and Pollution Reduction	263
National Green Development Fund Is an Important Measure for Promoting the Ecological Progress and Green Development	264
Science and Technology Are Fully Utilized to Proactively Ensure Stability on “Six Key Fronts” and Maintain Security in “Six Key Areas”	265
“One Policy for One City” Helps Localities Address Practical Problems and Shapes the Long-Term Mechanism Supported by Science and Technology to Win the Battle Against Air Pollution	266
A Total of 1,173 Advanced Technologies Are Released, and the Construction of a National Comprehensive Service Platform Is Launched for the Transformation of Scientific and Technological Achievements in Ecological Environment	267
A Total of RMB 224.8 Billion Were Accumulatively Granted to Ecological Environment During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period	268
Number of Environmental Emergencies Dropped by 22.5% on a Yearly Basis in the First Half of 2020	269
Four Support Systems Will Be Built and Six Tasks Deployed Regarding Eco-environmental Science and Technology Work in the 14th “Five-Year” Plan Period	270
Environmental Protection Industry Has Its Market Space Released Faster, Elevating Its Strategic Position Continuously	271
The Comprehensive Service Platform Established for the Transformation of Scientific and Technological Achievements Offers Technical Support for Pollution Governance and Environmental Management	273
Regular Press Conference (August)	279
As of July 22nd, MEE Has Provided Emergency Support to a Total of 5,499 “Projects of Category III,” Playing a Vital Part in the Fight Against the Epidemic	283
The MEE Shows Zero Tolerance for the Fraudulent, Shoddy and Irresponsible EIA Reports	286
As of July, About 76,000 Projects Have Been Exempted from Filing Registration Form	287

We Will Continue to Advance the EIA Reform, Deliver Greater Benefits to Micro and Small Enterprises, and Further Optimize the Business Environment	289
Trial Inspection of Two Departments of the State Council Is Conducive to Promoting the Implementation of “One Post with Dual Responsibilities” on Eco-environmental Protection	290
As of July, 112,000 Projects Were Granted with EIA Approval, with a Total Investment of RMB 11.4 Trillion	291
We’re Confident in Achieving Full Coverage of Discharge Permit by Year End	293
EIA for Copper Concentrate Construction Projects Should Be Carried out in Line with Relevant Requirements for Industries Like Non-ferrous Metal Mining and Dressing	295
Supervise the Ecological Restoration and Governance in the Muli Mining Area in Qinghai and Carry out All-Round Inspection on a Yearly Basis	295
The EIA Credit Platform Went Online, Incorporating the Credit Files of More than 5,700 Units	297
Promote the Thorough Implementation of the “Three Lines and One List” Plan to Help Win the Battle of Pollution Prevention and Control ...	298
The 14th Five-Year Plan Will Optimize the System for Pollution Prevention from Sources, with the EIA at the Core	300
Regular Press Conference (September)	310
Comprehensive Treatment of the Bohai Sea Is Progressing Well in General and the Ecological Environment in the Bohai Sea Constantly Improving	314
Since the Beginning of This Year, Law Enforcement Agencies at All Levels Have Uncovered 620 Sea Sand Illegal Mining Cases and Captured 6,813 Persons Involved in the Cases	317
In the First, Second, and Third Quarters of This Year, the Proportion of Good Water in Coastal Waters of Bohai Sea Reached 79.4%, 81.6%, and 87.1%, Respectively	318
Build All Bays Nationwide into “Beautiful Bays” in Three Five-Year Periods	321
There Are Two Weak Links in the Protection of Marine Biodiversity—Poor Understanding of the Ocean and Inadequate Capacity	322
Since the Beginning of This Year, Coast Guards at All Levels in the Bohai Rim Have Inspected 95 Sea-Related Projects of Various Types	324
The Amount of Microplastics in China’s Offshore Surface Waters Was at a Low-to-Medium Level	325
Marine Microplastics and Marine Trash Call for Coordinated Governance on a Global Scale	327

As of the End of August, Law Enforcement Agencies of Coast Guards at All Levels Had Inspected 572 Marine Engineering and Construction Projects and 293 Dumping Projects	328
In Response to Heavy Air Pollution in Autumn and Winter, the Number of Industries Subject to Performance-Based and Differentiated Management Increased from 15 to 39	329
From January to September, the Ecology and Environment Departments Organized to Properly Handle 7 Marine Environmental Emergencies	330
Regular Press Conference (October)	340
A Series of Vigorous Policies and Actions Have Led to the Decreasing Carbon Intensity and the Optimized Energy Mix	345
As of the End of 2019, China Had Lowered Its Carbon Emission Intensity by About 48.1% from the 2005 Level	346
Promote the Fundamental Transformation of Economic Structure, Industrial Structure, and Energy Mix at the Source During the 14th Five-Year Plan Period	348
As of August 2020, the Pilot Provincial (Municipal) Carbon Emissions Trading Markets Have Covered More than 20 Industries, with a Cumulative Turnover of More than RMB 9 Billion	350
China Has Actively Helped Other Developing Countries Address Climate Change, Which Is Highly Praised by the International Community	352
The Campaign Against Air Pollution This Autumn and Winter Will Continue to Maintain the Same Direction and Intensity	353
Upgrade the Existing Low-Carbon Pilot Programs and Launch Pilot Programs for Carbon Neutrality	354
We Will Stay on the Track of Green and Low-Carbon Development and Take the Resumption of Work and Production as a New Opportunity to Go Further Along the Track	355
China Attaches Great Importance to the Building of Ecological Civilization and Environmental Protection, Having Produced Outstanding Results	356
China Won't Stay Aloof from Addressing Climate Change and Will Work to Avoid the Damage from Climate Change	357
Regular Press Conference (November)	365
During the 14th Five-Year Plan Period, China Still Faces Serious Challenges in Managing Solid Wastes and Chemicals in an Eco-friendly Way	370
China Expected to Realize Zero Import of Solid Wastes by the End of 2020	371
Start with the Pilot Waste-Free City Project and Vigorously Promote the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Reform	372
Continue Developing and Revising Standards for Identifying Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste	374

National Centralized Hazardous Waste Utilization and Disposal Capacity Exceeded 110 Million Tons per Year as of the End of 2019	375
Pilot Zero-Waste City Project Achieved Phased Targets with Initial Replicable Demonstration Models	376
A Total of 84,179 Companies Included in the Positive List for Monitoring and Law-Enforcement as of the End of December	378
New Development Philosophy Underlies the Law on the Prevention and Control of Environmental Pollution by Solid Waste (Revised in April 2020)	379
All Medical Waste Across the Country Properly Disposed of Since the Outbreak of COVID-19	381
Chinese, Japanese and Korean Experts: Local Emission Is the Main Contributor to PM _{2.5} Density in the Three Countries and Drastic Reduction in Local Emissions Is Recommended	382
Hazardous Waste Risk Screening Completed in 21,000 Enterprises and over 400 Chemical Parks in 2019	384
Regular Press Conference (December)	392
Nine Binding Targets Over-Fulfilled and Ecological and Environmental Goals of Building a Moderately Prosperous Society Achieved on Schedule	396
All Water Bodies in the Mainstream of the Yangtze River Score Grade II or Higher	398
Total Planned Investment Volume of Construction Projects Reviewed and Approved by Administrations of Ecology and Environment Nationwide Rose 18.5% Year on Year to RMB 18.5 Trillion This Year	401
More Emphasis Expected on Market Mechanisms for Ecological and Environmental Protection During 14th Five-Year Plan Period	403
Strive for a Fair and Competitive Market Environment and Support Sound and Green Development of Private Companies	405
The Central Inspection of Ecological and Environmental Protection Will Focus on Major Areas Such as Biodiversity and Climate Change . . .	407
Initial 14th Five-Year Plan for Ecological and Environmental Protection Drafted	408
Accelerate Efforts to Develop the Ecological and Environmental Protection Plan of the Yellow River Basin, Conduct Legislative Research, and Promote Comprehensive Pollution Control	411
China's Permit System Covers All Fixed Pollution Sources Nationwide	413
Win a Full Victory in the Battle Against Pollution by Stressing Air, Water, Soil, Carbon Emissions, Ecological Protection, and Risk Prevention	414

Records of Press Conference During the “Two Sessions”



Interview at the Ministers’ Corridor

May 25th, 2020



The ministers’ corridor



Huang Runqiu, Minister of Ecology and Environment

On the afternoon of May 25th, after the second plenary meeting of the third session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC),¹ the “ministers’ corridor” interview of the 2020 “Two Sessions”² took place at the Great Hall of the People. Huang Runqiu, Minister of Ecology and Environment, received an interview via video link.

Beijing Radio and Television Station: It is universally known that the COVID-19 pandemic has put great pressure on social and economic development. It has also placed new demands on and posed new challenges to ecological and environmental protection endeavors. Could you please introduce how the MEE will further coordinate pandemic prevention and control³ with ecological and environmental protection? Thank you.

Huang Runqiu: Thank you for your question. Just as you said, the year 2020 is an extraordinary year since it marks the concluding year of the 13th Five-Year Plan period and a decisive year for securing a victory against pollution and building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Since the beginning of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic has delivered a blow to our work. However, as General Secretary Xi Jinping has stressed, the ecology and environment hold the key to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. This exactly points to the vital role of improved environmental quality in the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Therefore, how to coordinate various areas of

¹ Hereinafter referred to as the third session of the Thirteenth NPC.

² The 2020 “Two Sessions” refers to the third session of the Thirteenth National People's Congress (NPC) and the third session of the Thirteenth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

³ Pandemic prevention and control refers to the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic.

work on ecological and environmental protection and contribute to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects is of great importance. The MEE believes that the following points deserve great attention.

First, we should have confidence in our ecological and environmental protection strategies. We should follow the new vision for development, stick to the right direction of ecological and environmental protection and keep up the support intensity in this regard. In the face of difficulties and challenges, we should not ease our demands for ecological and environmental protection and lower the requirements for environmental supervision and environmental access. Otherwise, we may return to the old path of going after near-term development gains at the expense of the environment or the old path of polluting first and fixing it later. I believe that all media friends present, officials and people would not allow that to happen. Over the years, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee and the joint efforts at every level, remarkable progress has been made in ecological and environmental protection, and the environmental quality has improved significantly. If we go back to the old ways, all our efforts over the past few years would go to waste, which I believe is something no one wants to see. Hence, we should remain steadfast in three aspects. To be specific, we should steadfastly prioritize ecological conservation and boost green development, tackle environmental pollution and protect the environment according to law, and uphold the bottom line of ecological and environmental protection. We will not alter our principles, change the direction, scale down our effort or lower the standards.

Second, while sticking to the strategies, we will take into account the impact of the pandemic on economic and social development and advance the work of ecological and environmental protection at a proper pace and with a proper intensity. As I see it, the former is a strategic issue, and the latter is a tactical one. Tactically, I think we should pay more attention to targeted, scientific and law-based pollution control, adopt the appropriate strategies and approaches at the right time according to local conditions, and address ecological and environmental issues in a more targeted manner. Based on the three pollution control principles,⁴ we recently put forward the five precisions. It refers to precision in issues, time, location, objects and measures. In addition, in support of production resumption and the “six key areas,”⁵ we rolled out the “two positive lists,” namely, the positive list on environmental impact assessment and approval and the list on supervision and law enforcement. The two lists have been in force for a while and lived up to expectations on the whole. They are widely applauded by the localities. Therefore, we will carry on our work. Against the backdrop of pandemic prevention and control, we should concentrate on key areas of ecological and environmental protection. We always oppose the “lockstep marching,” “broad-brush” and “one-size-fits-all” approaches in ecological and environmental protection.

⁴ The three pollution control principles refer to targeted, scientific and law-based pollution control.

⁵ To maintain security in “six key areas” refers to the task of ensuring security in job, basic living needs, operations of market entities, food and energy security, stable industrial and supply chains, and the normal functioning of primary-level governments.

Third, in the context of pandemic prevention and control this year, we should put greater emphasis on the guidance and support for localities, which I think is particularly important. Since May this year, we have dispatched a number of working groups to the localities, cities, counties and businesses to help them identify some outstanding ecological and environmental issues, address people’s concerns and improve the governance capacity of localities. Moreover, we will provide technical support for businesses and develop targeted programs and policies to help strengthen their pollution control capacity and promote green development.

In a nutshell, in this special year, we will act on the general principle of pursuing progress while ensuring stability, stick to the goal-oriented, problem-based and result-oriented approaches and advance the work of ecological and environmental protection at a proper pace and with a proper intensity. In doing so, we hope to serve the tasks of ensuring stability on “six key fronts”⁶ and maintaining security in “six key areas” and complete all tasks for the 13th Five-Year Plan period, thus contributing to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Thank you.

China Youth Daily: Beijing saw the most blue-sky days last year. With the 13th Five-Year Plan period drawing to a close, how is the fight against pollution going? Can the goals of the battle for blue skies, clear water and clean soil be achieved? In the past few years, the delegates have shown great concern for the ecological and environmental protection plan for the 14th Five-Year Plan period. What arrangements will be made for the 14th Five-Year Plan period to build a Beautiful China? Thank you.

Huang Runqiu: Thank you for your question. More than four years of the 13th Five-Year Plan period have passed. Overall, the work on ecological and environmental protection has been going smoothly. According to data from the end of last year to the beginning of this year, good results have been achieved in various metrics.

Out of the nine obligatory targets for ecological and environmental protection laid out in the 13th Five-Year Plan, seven had been achieved by the end of 2019. They include four targets for the total amount of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, chemical oxygen demand and ammonia nitrogen. Three of the four environmental quality targets have been met. One of the targets is about the average PM_{2.5} concentration in cities at and above the prefecture level which failed to meet the standards. As required in the 13th Five-Year Plan, the concentration in 2020 should be 18% lower than that in 2015. By the end of 2019, the concentration had been reduced by 23.1% compared to 2015, topping the target by 5.1 percentage points. Great results have been achieved in the two water quality targets. One target is to ensure that water bodies with water quality of Grade I to III, colloquially “good water bodies,” will account for 70% of the total by the end of the 13th Five-Year Plan period, and this ratio had reached 74.9% by the end of last year. The other target is to ensure that water bodies below Grade V, colloquially “bad water bodies,” will make up less than 5%, and this ratio was reduced to 3.4% last year. On the whole, our work to improve air and water quality and contain the total amount of air and water pollutants has

⁶ To ensure stability on “six key fronts” refers to the task of keeping employment, the financial sector, foreign trade, foreign and domestic investments, and expectations stable.

been proceeding smoothly and achieved great results. This is in alignment with what people feel. As people have seen in the past two years, there are more days with blue skies and white clouds, and they are surrounded by clear water and lush mountains, which also increase their sense of happiness.

Nonetheless, there are still two targets to be completed, and we need to work on them this year. One is the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP), and the other is the ratio of good days in cities at and above the prefecture level. We will work to meet the targets this year. Although the tasks are challenging, we have confidence in doing them well. This is what we have done to protect the environment during the 13th Five-Year Plan period.

As to our plan for ecological and environmental protection for the 14th Five-Year Plan period, I think that despite the improvement in environmental quality, we must be realistic about the serious situation and arduous tasks we face in ecological and environmental protection. We must wake up to the fact that the improvements we have made are still quite limited. The improvements or the current conditions are far from meeting people's expectations for better lives and building a Beautiful China. In brief, the current situation is characterized by "no fundamental changes" in three aspects. First, there is no fundamental change in the sectoral composition of the economy based on heavy chemicals and the coal-dominated energy mix. Second, there is no fundamental change in the severe situations we face in ecological and environmental protection. Third, there is no fundamental change in the high-risk trend of frequent environmental incidents. In view of this, we think that the situation and tasks of ecological and environmental protection in the next stage will remain challenging. In other words, the turning point for the qualitative change of the ecology and environment is yet to come. We need to keep working and strive to tackle challenges in the 14th Five-Year Plan period.

Based on such judgment, the following two considerations will weigh with us during the 14th Five-Year Plan period. First, we will focus on two key areas of work simultaneously. On one hand, we will work to reduce pollutant emissions and prevent pollution at the source, and this is the most effective way to improve the environmental quality. Therefore, during the 14th Five-Year Plan period, we will continue the fight against pollution, which will certainly be taken to a new level. In addition, we will stick to targeted, scientific and law-based pollution control. On the other hand, we will double down on efforts in ecological protection and restoration, advance the conservation of mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands, vigorously strengthen the supervision of ecological protection, expand ecological spaces and capacity, and strive to safeguard the country's ecological security. In the meantime, we will push for the adjustment of the industrial structure and the green and low-carbon transformation of the economy, promote green development and green lifestyles, and provide more green and ecological products for people.

Second, we will strive to modernize the environmental governance system and capacity, another task we will spare no effort in completing during the 14th Five-Year Plan period. The CPC Central Committee and the State Council have lately put forward specific requirements in this regard. In response, we have proposed to

develop “seven systems” including the leadership responsibility system, the enterprise responsibility system, the full engagement system, the regulatory system, the market system, the credit system, and the legal and policy system. The seven systems constitute a full-chain ecological and environmental management system ranging from prevention at the source and process supervision to punishment and compensation. I am convinced that when the full-chain ecological and environmental management system is in place by the end of the 14th Five-Year Plan period, the modernization level of our environmental governance system and capacity will be significantly improved. Thank you.

China Media Group: In recent years, we can see that China has made significant progress in air pollution prevention and control; however, the achievements still need to be further consolidated as there are signs of rebound now and again. Especially during the Chinese New Year holiday this year, heavy air pollution occurred in spite of the decreased production and social activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the holiday. What were the reasons? What measures will be taken in the future? Thank you.

Huang Runqiu: Thank you for your question. Actually, we have made some responses to this issue on multiple occasions since the Chinese New Year. Here I would like to talk a bit more about it.

Heavy air pollution is one of the environmental issues people are most concerned about. It has great impact on people’s life and health and therefore draws widespread attention. It can be said that since the beginning of the 13th Five-Year Plan period, the frequency and intensity of heavy air pollution have greatly declined in some key regions thanks to the progress in the fight against pollution. Let me give you some data. In 2015, the twenty-eight cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and surrounding areas saw an average of 36 days with heavy pollution, that is, days with an air quality index (AQI) valued over 200; on average, heavy air pollution occurred in each city for more than one month a year. In contrast, in 2019, the average number of days with heavy pollution in the twenty-eight cities decreased to 20, about 45% lower than that in 2015. The twenty-eight cities saw an average of nine days with serious pollution, that is, days with an AQI value over 300, in 2015, and just two days with serious pollution in 2019, representing a decrease of about 80%. The improvement in air quality is even more significant in Beijing. In 2015, the capital city saw 43 days with heavy pollution and only four days with heavy pollution in 2019, a slump of about 90% compared to 2015. Certainly, the reduction is not quite stable yet. The city suffered no days with serious pollution in 2019.

Therefore, judging from the change in the number of days with heavy pollution, the measures we have taken to tackle air pollution are correct, which have also produced satisfactory results. However, we must be aware of the fact that pollutant emissions remain serious in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region or some other key regions. In this context, the improvement in air quality is comparatively vulnerable.

Why? In the case of unfavorable weather conditions, especially the so-called extremely unfavorable weather conditions, the quality of the atmosphere will be affected, and it is totally possible that heavy air pollution will make a comeback. Just as the journalist noted earlier, from the end of January to mid-February this

year, heavy air pollution struck twice during the Chinese New Year holiday. This is a typical example.

Some people may wonder why heavy air pollution occurred when social activities and pollutant emissions decreased greatly during the pandemic. In fact, this is not hard to explain. Air quality depends on two factors, that is, pollutant emissions and environmental carrying capacity. When pollutant emissions far exceed the environmental carrying capacity, heavy air pollution may occur.

Let's take a look at pollutant emissions first. During the Chinese New Year holiday, which coincided with the pandemic prevention and control efforts, it is true that the level of social activities decreased and pollutant emissions declined consequently. However, much of the decline was closely related to people's everyday life, such as transportation, travel and catering, in addition to the halted construction sites. However, the emissions of some pollutants remain unchanged, such as heating, which is a kind of rigid demand in winter. Some industries, including heavy chemicals industries, are unlikely to stop production, leading to little change in emissions. According to our estimates, during the period from the end of January to February when strict pandemic containment measures were in place, the emissions of pollutants in the entire society were 30% lower than usual.

Now let's look at the environmental carrying capacity. During those days, extremely unfavorable weather conditions occurred in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. What are extremely unfavorable weather conditions? They include high temperature and humidity in winter and static stability, that is, there is no wind or only a breeze. A region struck by such extremely unfavorable weather conditions will suffer from intense atmospheric inversion, which means that the temperature above is higher than that below, covering the region like a pot lid. Such a phenomenon also greatly lowers the boundary layer, which practically reduces the environmental carrying capacity. What is the height of the boundary layer? Normally, the boundary layer is 1,500–2,000 m high; under extremely unfavorable weather conditions, however, the height is 600–800 m, about 50% lower than usual. Based on conservative estimates, the environmental carrying capacity was reduced by about 50% during that period. Then the issue becomes clear. The emissions of pollutants decreased by 30% but the environmental carrying capacity declined by 50%. To accommodate the pollutants in the environment, the pollutant density and concentration would rise, so heavy air pollution occurred.

This is like a room with a capacity of one hundred people. If the floor space of the room is reduced by half, fifty people will have to leave the room to keep the population density unchanged. If only thirty people get out of the room, there will be twenty excessive people, and the population density in the room will increase. This is why heavy air pollution strikes. Therefore, in some high-emission regions like the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, it is totally possible that heavy air pollution makes a comeback in case of extremely unfavorable weather conditions. This also testifies to what I said earlier that the turning point for the improvement of the environmental quality has not come yet, and we need to keep working hard in the future.

We give full consideration to what measures and methods should be taken, just as you asked. In the long term, efforts in structural adjustment should be increased. In

the short and medium term, we will implement a number of projects to cut emissions. These include the upgrading for ultra-low emissions in the iron and steel industry, the replacement of coal with clean energy for heating, the reduction in the use of low quality coal, the reduction in pollution from diesel trucks, and the shift from road transport of coal to rail transport. In the near future, we will make coordinated prevention and control efforts in emergency response to air pollution. We need to increase efforts in various aspects and we expect more support from media friends. I believe that heavy air pollution will go farther away from us, and we will see more days with a blue sky and white clouds. Thank you.

Dragon TV: Nice to meet you, Minister Huang. The central environmental protection inspection has attracted wide attention in society. What do you think of the role of the central environmental protection inspection? Thank you.

Huang Runqiu: Thank you for your question. The central environmental protection inspection is a major reform measure in the field of ecological and environmental protection launched on the initiative of General Secretary Xi Jinping after the 18th CPC National Congress. The pilot program was carried out in 2015, and by 2018, regular inspections had covered thirty-one provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. In addition, we conducted a review of central environmental protection inspections in twenty provincial-level regions. The second round of the review began last year. Last year, we conducted environmental protection inspections on six provincial-level regions and two central businesses.

On the whole, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee, the central environmental protection inspection has achieved significant results over the past five years. As I see it, the results are mainly reflected in three aspects.

First, the central environmental protection inspection has promoted the implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization. Thanks to the central environmental protection inspection, Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization has struck deep roots in people's hearts and built broad consensus on ecological and environmental protection, which is truly impressive. As you may see, the officials and the masses across the country have attached unprecedented importance to ecological and environmental protection, with a fundamental change in their sense of responsibility. In addition, the policy of co-responsibility of the Party and governmental officials and the policy of one post with dual responsibilities have been put in place. This provides an essential ideological basis and fundamental guarantee for ecological and environmental protection.

Second, the central environmental protection inspection has pushed for the handling of numerous outstanding ecological and environmental issues people are concerned about. A total of 198,000 clues were received from the masses during the central environmental protection inspections. This is a significant number, and all the reported issues were solved during the inspections or shortly after the inspections. In addition, we transferred 542 major ecological and environmental issues to localities, requiring them to address the issues as soon as possible. This intends to prompt local Party committees and governments to fulfill their responsibilities, reflecting the incisive role of the central environmental protection inspection.

Third, the central environmental protection inspection has propelled the establishment of effective and long-term ecological and environmental protection systems. To date, all provincial-level regions have developed their own ecological and environmental protection inspection systems. The central government has recently clarified the responsibility of various departments for ecological and environmental protection. The central environmental protection inspection system itself has seen great breakthroughs institutionally. In June last year, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council⁷ jointly issued the *Regulations on Central Environmental Protection Inspection Work*, further improving the leadership mechanism and system of the central environmental protection inspection. I think that the achievements are remarkable. They can be summarized in a few words. That is, the central environmental protection inspection has been applauded by people, won recognition from the central government, gained support from localities, and proved effective in addressing problems. Therefore, the central environmental protection inspection system should be unswervingly pushed forward under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee. This year, we are going to launch the second batch of the second round of central environmental protection inspections to see how the key tasks of the fight against pollution are implemented. The upcoming inspections will revolve around the implementation of major decisions and arrangements made by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on ecological progress and ecological and environmental protection and some outstanding ecological and environmental issues closely related to people. I believe that the system will proceed smoothly with concerted effort from all sectors of society and strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee. Thank you.

⁷ They refer to the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council of China.

Records of Press Conference of State Council Information Office



Briefing on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources

June 10th, 2020



Zhao Yingmin, Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment

The State Council Information Office (hereafter SCIO) held a press conference at 10:00 a.m. on June 10th, 2020. At the press conference, Zhao Yingmin, Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, Hong Yaxiong, Director of the Office of the Second National Census on Pollution Sources, Liu Wenhua, Director of the Energy Statistics

Department of the National Bureau of Statistics, and Liao Xiyuan, Director of the Technology and Education Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, briefed on the progress of second national census of pollution sources and took questions from the reporters.

Shou Xiaoli, Deputy Head of the Press Bureau of the State Council Information Office: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning! Welcome to the press conference of the State Council Information Office. The second national census on pollution sources which started in 2017 is an important part of ecological and environmental protection. At today's press conference, we are honored to have Zhao Yingmin, Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, to give an overview of the Bulletin on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources and answer your questions. Other guests include Liu Wenhua, Director of the Energy Statistics Department of the National Bureau of Statistics, Liao Xiyuan, Director of the Technology and Education Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and Hong Yaxiong, Director of the Office of the Second National Census on Pollution Sources.

Now I will give the floor to Mr. Zhao Yingmin.

Zhao Yingmin: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, media friends, good morning! Thank you for your long-held concern and support for ecological and environmental protection. According to the *Regulations on the National Census of Pollution Sources* and the *Circular of the State Council on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources*, 15 departments including the MEE, the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs jointly conducted the second national census on pollution sources from 2017 to 2019. Regular national census on pollution sources is a statutory requirement stipulated in the *Regulations on the National Census of Pollution Sources*. The first national census on pollution sources was conducted ten years ago. The second national census on pollution sources is a systematic project as China has entered the decisive stage of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and is working to secure a victory in the fight against pollution. It is also a major survey of national conditions for the building of a Beautiful China. Therefore, it holds great significance.

The CPC Central Committee and the State Council paid high attention to the census. Under the leadership and arrangements of the State Council leading group for the second national census on pollution sources, localities, departments and census agencies at every level made careful preparations and advanced the work down to earth according to the principle of unified leadership by the state, division of labor and coordination between central government departments, implementation by local governments at different levels, and involvement by all sides. Thanks to the hard work of hundreds of thousands of census takers and collaboration from all target groups of the census, we overcame various difficulties such as the tight schedule, heavy tasks and technical barriers and successfully completed the census in three years.

The standard time point of the second national census on pollution sources was December 31st, 2017 and the standard time period was 2017. The census involved three stages, namely the preparation stage, the implementation stage and the summary and results release stage. It was a comprehensive survey of more than

3.58 million polluting enterprises and self-employed businesses across the country which discharged pollutants and obtained the basic information and pollutant emission information about industrial pollution sources, agricultural pollution sources, household sources, centralized pollution control facilities and mobile sources. The census was carried out in strict accordance with the plan approved by the General Office of the State Council. A quality control system covering the entire process and all personnel was put in place, ensuring the authenticity, accuracy and completeness of the census results. The goals set for the census were fulfilled. The census results were included in the Bulletin on the Second National Census on Pollution Sources, where you can find the specific information if you are interested.

Now my colleagues and I will open the floor for questions. Thank you.

Shou Xiaoli: Now we will take questions from the media. Please state which news agency you are from when raising questions.

China Media Group: What results have been achieved in the second national census on pollution sources? What are the main environmental issues in China? Thank you.

Zhao Yingmin: Thank you. The results of the second national census on pollution sources are mainly reflected in the following five aspects.

First, the census provides a basic picture of the pollution sources across the country, including their number, structure and distribution. As of the end of 2017, there were 3.5832 million pollution sources (excluding mobile sources) nationwide, including 2.4774 million industrial sources, 639,500 household sources, 378,800 large-scale livestock and poultry farms and 84,000 centralized pollution control facilities. Pollution sources of Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shandong and Hebei together accounted for 52.94% of the nation's total. The number of pollution sources, especially those of industrial sources, decreased from east to west. By sector, pollution sources in the fabricated metal products industry, non-metallic mineral products industry, general equipment manufacturing industry, rubber and plastics industry, and textiles and apparel industry accounted for 44.14% of the total industrial sources. As of the end of 2017, there were 267 million motor vehicles nationwide, 4.132 million construction machinery products, agricultural machinery diesel power of 762 million kilowatts and 278,000 vessels in operation. In 2017, diesel locomotives around the country consumed 2,461,800 tons of fuel, and the number of aircraft movements totaled 10,248,900. This is the general distribution of pollution sources.

Second, the census gives an overview of the discharges from various pollution sources. As to water pollutants, the chemical oxygen demand reached 21,439,800 tons, total nitrogen 3.0414 million tons and ammonia nitrogen 963,400 tons. Owing to their large area, the Yangtze River Basin, the Pearl River Basin and the Huaihe River Basin ranked among the top by discharges of pollutants including chemical oxygen demand, total nitrogen and ammonia nitrogen. The Haihe River Basin, Liaohe River Basin and Huaihe River Basin topped out regions in terms of pollutant discharge intensity. As to air pollutants, the country emitted 17.8522 million tons of nitrogen oxides, 16.8405 million tons of particulate matter and 6.9632 million tons of sulfur dioxide. We also investigated the emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in some industries and sectors, which totaled 10.1745 million tons nationwide. The

Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and surrounding areas, the Yangtze River Delta and the Fenhe-Weihe River Plain have the highest air pollutant emission intensities per unit area. It is generally known that they are also key regions for air pollution prevention and control designated by the state. In terms of solid waste, in 2017, 3.868 billion tons of general industrial solid waste was generated, of which 2.062 billion tons of solid waste was put into comprehensive use, 943 million tons disposed and 931 million tons in storage. A total of 805 million tons of straw was generated, of which 585 million tons was used. Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Hebei, Shandong and Liaoning together accounted for 42.4% of the country's total general industrial solid waste. Shandong, Hebei, Shanxi, Anhui and Jiangsu made up about 40% of the total general industrial solid waste that was put into comprehensive use.

Third, the archives and databases of key pollution sources have been refined. A unified database of the second national census on pollution sources was established, which comprises more than 1,800 tables, 15,000 data fields and 150 million entries, giving a holistic "picture" of the census. According to the requirements of the *Administrative Measures for the Archives of the Census on Pollution Sources*, all archives have been properly managed and stored.

Fourth, an "iron army" for environmental protection has been fostered. During the census, the census takers and instructors at every level worked diligently in the spirit of an "iron army." Through systematic training and on-site investigations, they learned about the production processes, pollution prevention and control techniques and environmental protection facilities of key industries and businesses and got a grasp on the accounting methods for various pollutant discharges. Through analysis and generalization of the census results, they gained a thorough understanding of the environmental policies and the current situation and comprehensively improved their abilities. Through the census, we have cultivated a group of highly competent talents who have a strong sense of responsibility, are dedicated to their work and are familiar with policies.

Fifth, the environmental awareness of the public has been further enhanced. The census last three years. During the entire period, publicity was carried out through various media outlets and in multiple forms, with strong support from numerous media friends, and people from all walks of life were encouraged to engage in the census. This increased the environmental awareness of the whole society and created an enabling atmosphere for the census.

These are the main results of the census.

Through this census, we come to realize that despite the improvements we have made, there are various issues worthy of attention. First, the emissions of chemical oxygen demand, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and VOCs exceeded 10 million tons each. Tackling the four types of pollutants is crucial to the improvement of both air quality and water quality and is there a focal area of work in the next step. Second, agricultural sources and household sources contributed greatly to the discharges of water pollutants, motor vehicles were the highest contributor to the emissions of nitrogen oxides, and industrial sources, household sources and motor vehicles accounted for a high proportion in VOC emissions. These pollution sources involved a wide range of entities. As opposed to centralized emissions in the past,

unorganized emissions or non-point source emissions are dominant in these fields, adding difficulty to governance and supervision. Third, in terms of the environmental protection infrastructure, rural areas and the western region still lagged behind the urban areas and the eastern region, requiring more investments in the future. Fourth, the emission intensities in key river basins and regions were high, indicating that they face daunting challenges to adjust the sectoral composition and patterns of the economy. Fifth, the census reveals that our environmental governance system and capacity still have ample room for improvement. In summary, the issues revealed in the census point the way for the future work on ecological and environmental protection. We need to persist in our efforts and strive to overcome difficulties to improve the environmental quality. Thank you.

China Daily: Data serves as an important basis for the census. What did the National Bureau of Statistics do and what measures were taken to keep the census on track and ensure its smooth progress? Thank you.

Liu Wenhua: Thank you. As the government's statistical department and a member unit of the leading group for the second national census of pollution sources, the National Bureau of Statistics mainly carried out three areas of work in the census.

First, we assisted with the deliberation and registration of the census report systems. According to the *Statistics Law* (revised in June 2009), all investigation and census plans must be approved by the National Bureau of Statistics in advance. Meanwhile, we participated in the development of the census plans and related technical plans and put forward suggestions on various systems, methods and reports from a statistical perspective.

Second, by making full use of the cross-departmental information sharing mechanism, we provided industry-specific information, the organization directory and relevant statistics in a timely manner for the Ministry of Ecology and Environment. To carry out the census, we must figure out where the pollution sources are. We wouldn't make it if we were in the dark on everything. The fourth national economic consensus results published last year provide the latest information including the name, address and core businesses of organizations. Such information is undoubtedly crucial for helping us identify the location of pollution sources and improving the efficiency of the census. In addition, we also provided relevant statistics to help validate the quality of data.

Third, we provided guidance on the quality management of census data. Census data quality is of vital importance. As a department specialized in statistics, we collaborated with the Ministry of Ecology and Environment on data quality analysis and evaluation, provided relevant data and assisted with data validation and evaluation as well as the release of the census bulletin and results. We participated in many specific tasks in the process of the census and provided suggestions when necessary.

These were the three main areas of work we engaged in the census. Thank you.

China Review News Hong Kong: It is known that the second national census on pollution sources involved a large number of businesses. How could you ensure the quality of the data sources? How could you make sure that the data provided by each enterprise is truthful? Thank you.