

Expo should provide big boost for economy in Zhanjiang

'City of prawns' has long striven to be commercial powerhouse, and trade fair expected to be major step toward that goal

By HAO NAN

haonan@chinadaily.com.cn

Zhanjiang in Guangdong province has long striven to become a maritime powerhouse in China, with its economic growth closely tied to its ocean industries — and the upcoming China Marine Economy Expo is expected to be a major step toward that goal.

The expo, which takes place from Nov 22 to 25, has been a prominent aspect of city life since it settled in Zhanjiang in 2014.

The expo has played a leading role in serving the implementation of several national strategies, such as the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, civil-military integration and coordinated development of the region's economy, and also in promoting Zhanjiang to build a modern economic system and pursue high-quality development.

The city, surrounded by the sea on three sides, has an ocean area of about 20,000 square kilometers, a coastal line stretching 2,023 kilometers and more than 130 islands.

In 2016, Zhanjiang was approved as one of the country's first batch of marine economy innovative development pilots and received a special fund worth 300 million yuan (\$43.17 million).

Last year, the total output of the city's maritime industry reached 154.6 billion yuan, up 15.2 percent year-on-year.

The sector also attracted a group of projects invested in by leading Chinese and overseas companies, including German chemical giant BASF, Chinese steel manufacturing group Baosteel, China National Offshore Oil Corporation and China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation, which have offered a solid industrial basis for the city to develop a modern coastal economic belt, said Jiang Jianjun, mayor of Zhanjiang and director of the expo's preparatory committee.

Statistics from the Zhanjiang Ocean and Fishery Bureau showed that the city's total output value in the fishery economy hit 44.5 billion yuan in 2017, with many major economic indicators ranking the city first in Guangdong.

Known as "a city of prawns", Zhanjiang is an important



With abundant ocean resources and geographical advantages, Zhanjiang in Guangdong province aims to grow into a major pivot of the modern coastal economic belt in Guangdong. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Exhibitors seek business opportunities during the expo in 2017.



Foreign buyers show great interest in local products at last year's expo.

prawn feeding center in China, leading the nation in terms of cultured area, output, processing and exports.

It is home to 206 companies engaged in exporting aquatic products, the most of any city in the province.

The city in recent years has issued several policies to boost marine economic growth. Leading the pack is the Zhanjiang Blue Ocean Comprehensive Development Plan (2017-2020), which is intended to increase the city's total output value in the marine economy to 220 billion yuan by 2020 by enhancing the related infrastructure construction and optimizing the structure of the maritime industry.

Innovation is a key driver for sustainable industrial development.

On July 9, the Zhanjiang

154.6
billion yuan

total output of Zhanjiang's marine industry last year

Micro-Innovation and Marine Sci-Tech Industry Innovation Center was inaugurated after more than two years of planning and construction, covering a total floor area of 280,000 square meters and with an investment of 780 million yuan.

The complex has attracted the TusKspace incubator and four high-end research and development institutions — a maritime advanced materials research center of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, a maritime biotech innovation

center from Sun Yat-sen University, a maritime medicine research institute of Guangdong Medical University and the Guangdong (Zhanjiang) Academy of Sciences.

One-stop services are available for companies in the center, including financing, resource sharing and business matchmaking.

The Chinese investment group Tus-Holdings is responsible for the center's operation and management. Set up in 2000, Tus-Holdings has accumulated a wealth of experience in the planning, construction and management of science and innovation parks, with a high-quality management team.

Zheng Renhao, Party chief of Zhanjiang, said the city is rich in maritime resources and boasts bright prospects

for high-tech development. The center should fully capitalize on the city's strengths in the maritime industry and try to establish itself as a beacon of innovation in the sector, Zheng said.

The government should focus more on building industrial platforms, serving the talents, providing complete supporting facilities and improving the business environment, he added.

The marine economy has also become a new economic growth pillar in Guangdong province overall, officials said. According to the province's Natural Resources Department, the gross ocean product of Guangdong ranked first in China for 23 consecutive years, increasing from 1.05 trillion yuan in 2012 to 1.78 trillion yuan in 2017.

What they say

The China Marine Economy Expo is a large marine economic and trade event co-hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Guangdong provincial government. It is an important platform to showcase marine economy development and the innovative fruits of marine science and technology. It plays an active role in serving the national marine strategy and promoting development of the country into a marine powerhouse.

Zhong Xuanhui, deputy secretary general of the Guangdong provincial government

As a co-host of the expo, we hope that by providing a high-level platform of internationalized marine economic communication and cooperation, we can serve marine economy development and marine scientific and technological innovation and also build a new brand for helping development of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Wei Guoqi, deputy director at the marine strategic planning and economy department of the Ministry of Natural Resources

This year's expo is arranged in a professional and high-level way and is attracting global companies. The transactions to be conducted here, the number and quality of exhibitors and the levels of forums at the expo are expected to achieve new records, and the practical result should be new levels of economic and trade cooperation.

Jiang Jianjun, mayor of Zhanjiang

The China Marine Economy Expo is a national-level exhibition event. The coastal tourism display area of this year's expo will, by providing the "coastal tourism plus" communication and cooperation platform, showcase the province's related quality products to guests from China and abroad. The event will become an important aspect of Guangdong's coastal tourism and related communication.

Mao Cheng, deputy chief of the Guangdong Provincial Culture and Tourism Department

The China Foreign Trade Center and the Zhanjiang government signed a strategic cooperation agreement in 2017 that is related to the expo, utilizing

the experience of attracting buyers and exhibitors for the China Import and Export Fair to bring more vitality to the expo. This year, we have improved in satisfying the purchasing needs of the marine engineering sector and invited large contractors of marine engineering equipment. We have added a special trade area for marine scientific and technological results and at the same time, technological research centers will talk with and give suggestions to exhibitors at the expo.

Lin Xiaohong, deputy general manager at Canton Fair Advertising Co

The China Marine Economy Expo is an international exhibition and is greatly influential in the industry. This year, China Merchants Group is again co-organizing the expo and will lead its advantaged resources such as China Merchants Port Holdings Co and China Merchants Industry Holdings Co to attend the event. It will host themed forums on port logistics, offering platforms for profound dialogues and high-level communications.

Han Dong, South China general manager of China Merchants Shekou Industrial Zone Holdings Co

China Shipbuilding Industry Corp, one of the main organizers of the 2018 expo, will use its advantages, including profound scientific research and its wide industry presence, to offer a communication platform for ships, marine engineering and military trade, and to develop the expo into an influential brand event.

Zhang Mingqian, director at reform office of China Shipbuilding Industry Corp

Yunzhou Technology has attended the expo several times and the 2017 expo improved a lot in terms of both scale and the brand image. In particular, we displayed the newest unmanned surface vehicles, which drew attention from industry leaders and buyers. The brand publicity effect was beyond our expectations.

Zhang Yunfei, founder and CEO of Zhuhai-based Yunzhou Technology



Annual event in metropolis showcasing maritime sector's heavyweights

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The upcoming China Marine Economy Expo in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province will feature several companies that have pledged massive investments in the city, such as German chemical giant BASF, which plans to invest \$10 billion in a fine chemical project.

Overseas Chinese Town Group, which plans to invest 50 billion yuan (\$7.2 billion) in tourism facilities in Zhanjiang, and Fantawild Holdings Inc, which will invest 3 billion yuan in a theme park in the city, will also stage booths at the expo, said Mao Cheng, a deputy chief of the Guangdong Provincial Culture and Tourism Department, at a news conference

in Guangzhou earlier this month.

China Merchants Group, which signed a comprehensive strategic cooperative agreement with Zhanjiang city government last year and is committed to developing an international cruise port in the city, serves as one of the co-organizers of the expo.

It will showcase its major business units and organize some of the forums during the expo, said Han Dong, the South China general manager of China Merchants Shekou Industrial Zone Holdings Co.

Most of the projects highlighted in the strategic cooperative agreement reached between China Shipbuilding Industry Corp and the



Shell souvenirs attract visitors at last year's expo.

Guangdong provincial government in April this year are located in Zhanjiang, said Zhang Mingqian, director of the reform office of the corporation, which is one of

the co-organizing parties of the expo. Exhibitors at the expo will also include China National Offshore Oil Corporation, China Communications Construction Co

and China General Nuclear Power Corp.

Co-hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Guangdong provincial government, CMEE will be held in the port city from Nov 22 to 25.

The expo will feature national pavilions, industrial and offshore show areas, a tourism and cultural area and a merchandise sale area.

More than 60 vessels of various kinds will be on show during the expo, with Chinese navy ship open days also being arranged, according to the organizer.

Models or real-life examples of such national advanced marine equipment as ice-breaker *Xue Long*, *Xue Long 2*, oceanographic research ship *Xiangyanghong 10*, Chi-

nese coast guard vessels and deep-sea survey equipment, will be on display at the offshore exhibition area.

Major indexes of China's marine economy will be issued at the main forum, which will be addressed by heavyweights such as Yin Zhongqing, deputy director of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, and Wu Yousheng, academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

The German-Chinese Business Association, the Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry are joining the expo, with exhibitors, buyers and professionals from

54 countries also having registered. More than 3,200 exhibitors from 63 countries and regions — including Australia, the United Kingdom, Norway, Canada and Thailand — attended the last session of the annual expo.

The event attracted 161 leading scientific research institutes and industrial associations, as well as 286 innovation companies from home and abroad last year.

Agreements and formal expressions of interest reached during the expo totaled 90.1 billion yuan in combined investment value.

A total of 11,000 firms from 83 countries and regions attended the expo, clinching trade deals worth more than 200 billion yuan since the expo was first staged in 2012.