



The 2018 Xiamen International Ocean Forum shines a spotlight on environmental protection and the greater awareness of waters and mountains as invaluable assets. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Port city embarks on 13th World Ocean Week

By YUAN SHENGGAO

In hosting its 13th edition of World Ocean Week, the port city of Xiamen in East China's Fujian province has put its stamp on becoming an international platform for the marine economy especially in terms of the Belt and Road Initiative, according to senior officials.

Fujian is a very important province for China's marine economy and it is also the core region for the development of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and it should continue to lead the development of marine economy, Zhong Sheng, deputy director general of Fujian Provincial Bureau of Ocean and Fisheries, told the opening ceremony of the 2018 Xiamen International Ocean Forum on Nov 2.

In 2017, the marine GDP of Fujian province was 917.8 billion yuan (\$133.19 billion), which represented a 14.7 percent year-on-year growth, according to Zhong.

He said the strength of Fujian's marine economy, the innovation capability of its marine science and technology and the construction of a marine ecological civilization have all improved in recent years.

Fujian will accelerate the transformation of its marine resources into economic advantages and establish the ocean as a new pilot zone for high quality development, Zhong said.

Lin Huaiyuan, director general of the Ocean and Fisheries Bureau of Xiamen, told the forum that by hosting the World Ocean Week in Xiamen, they are further implementing the central government's Belt and Road Initiative and facilitating cooperation among B&R countries.

Charting course for a sea change

International forum underway in Xiamen puts the focus on sustainable development of the marine economy

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The much anticipated 2018 Xiamen International Ocean Forum was held on Nov 2, 2018, with government officials from different countries and many prestigious scholars gathering to discuss how to develop the marine industry in a sustainable manner.

The forum also signaled the start of World Ocean Week in Xiamen 2018, which runs until Nov 8 with the theme of "All Together for a Shared Sustainable Ocean".

A sustainable development of the ocean is a very important part of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and is also one of the core agendas in the field of international maritime cooperation, Zhang Zhi, director-general of Department of International Cooperation Ministry of National Resources of China, said at the opening ceremony of the Ocean Forum.

The theme of this year's World Ocean Week also fits perfectly with the nation's call for environmental protection and greater awareness of the waters and mountains as invaluable assets, Zhang said.

China's marine economy has continuously grown in size and the Chinese government has paid more attention to the sustainable development of the marine economy in recent years, actively advocating the concept of integrated marine management and the construction of a marine ecological civilization.

In 2017, the county's marine GDP reached 7.76 trillion yuan (\$1.13 trillion), an increase of 6.9 percent from a year ago. The scale of the national marine economy in 2017 was almost double the size it was in 2010.

China's marine GDP accounts for 9.4 percent of the nation's total GDP, and it creates 36.57 million jobs.

Looking to the future, China will cooperate with countries



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Thamasak Yeemin, president of the Association of Marine Scientists of Thailand

under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and make contributions to achieve the common goal of realizing harmonious, healthy and sustainable marine development, said Zhang.

Frederic Loua, Guinea's minister of fisheries and maritime economy, told the forum that his country's economic cooperation with China, particularly in fishery, has achieved remarkable results.

He mentioned that more than 90 percent of fishing boats in Guinea are Chinese and most of the country's marine products are exported to China. The minister also said that he is very proud of the bio-diversity of the marine resources for its fishery development.

Loua said that Guinea has an important role to play in China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and that by stepping up the multilateral cooperation, countries can rejuvenate and inject energy into a sustainable "blue economy".

The minister stressed that



A delegate shares his views on the sustainable development of the marine economy during the event.

LIN YUYANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

some parts of the world are still threatened by starvation, and by developing the blue economy it would help address the problem.

Thamasak Yeemin, president of the Association of Marine Scientists of Thailand, told the forum that Thailand is going to continue to develop the marine economy, and this offers a good opportunity to work closely with China.

"We can work together in several aspects for blue economy, including marine products, marine culture and marine tourism, as well as all the maritime activities," said Yeemin.

Aimee Gonzales, executive director of the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA),

told the forum that the coasts and ocean in East Asia have huge value.

Covering 7 million square kilometers and 234,000 kilometers of coastline, the seas of East Asia are some of the most ecologically and economically important sea areas in the world.

The region is home to over one third of all coral-reefs and mangroves and has the highest levels of biodiversity for coral reef fish, mollusks, mangroves and sea grass species.

The region accounts for 83 percent of the world aquaculture products and over 32 million metric tons of annual fish catch, she said, pointing out that economic growth has come at a cost to the ecosystems on which the

costs and ocean depends.

She stressed that the mission of PEMSEA is to foster and sustain healthy and resilient coasts and oceans communities and economies across the seas of East Asia through integrated management solutions and partnerships.

China has done a lot to promote sustainable development of the marine economy, in terms of reverting the effects of climate change, promoting biodiversity in reservation, and preserving habitats, and it has done a lot to solve marine pollution, Gonzales told China Daily.

"I think what China has to do is to share this knowledge and the expertise outside of the region and with the rest of the world," Gonzales said.



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Lin Huaiyuan, director general of the Ocean and Fisheries Bureau of Xiamen

917.8

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marine GDP of Fujian province last year

"At this year's ocean week, we are paying more attention to the negotiations among related industries as well as cooperation on projects," Lin said, adding that aside from what they had in previous editions of ocean week, this year they have industry matching meetings.

"We are actively introducing our scientific research results in marine fisheries, as well as our large enterprises of the marine industry to government officials and industrial experts from other countries who came to Xiamen to attend ocean week, in order to promote cooperation and the conversion of scientific results."

Lin said that compared to other developing B&R countries, China has a certain advantage in its traditional marine industry, including fishing and marine farming technology. This allows it to help other B&R countries in developing their own fishing and marine farming industries.

Many B&R countries have diversified marine resources which are waiting to be explored, and China has a vast market with rising demand, so these countries can export their marine products to China, in which Lin said Xiamen can play a crucial role as a distribution center.

China can provide technology and talents to B&R countries to help them in terms of exploring and protecting their marine resources, Lin said. "By doing so, our marine industry enterprises can continue to go global, while foreign marine products and projects will be continuously introduced into the Chinese market."

Annual event to boost marine-related businesses and activities

The 2018 World Ocean Week — running Nov 2-8 in Xiamen, Fujian province — focuses on integration in China's Belt and Road Initiative and furthers the host city's maritime cooperation with countries along the maritime silk routes, according to organizers.

Themed on promoting sustainable marine development, this year's event includes a series of marine-related activities such as the International Maritime Affairs High-end Forum, the China-ASEAN Think Tank Dialogue and South-South Cooperation Ocean Forum.

The event has four parts: an international ocean forum, ocean-related exhibitions and project matchmaking activities, an ocean-themed carnival, and introductions to ocean-related knowledge and theory.

Four international organizations — the Representative Office of the United Nations Development Program China, Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, The IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific, and the Ocean Policy Research Institute in Japan — are pooling their experiences at the event.

They are joined by ASEAN countries — including Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and Vietnam — which will also seek cooperation in marine ecological protection and integrated coastal management.

Aside from the forums, marine fisheries project matchmaking activities for developing countries will also feature at the event.

The fair, on commercializing marine scientific and technological achievements, is for the first time being presented at the Xiamen International Convention and Exhibition Center, which boasts an area of 4,000 square meters and features over 100 exhibition stands.

Various pavilions — including those on marine biomedicines and products, marine vessels and high-end equipment, seawater desalination and high-tech marine services — showcase the results of cutting-edge innovation.

Xiamen, famous for its attractive seascape, has emerged as a magnet for domestic and foreign tourists.

To ignite its vitality, Xiamen has put together an ocean-themed package of activities to appeal to tourists' senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste. These include sand art and play, a

seafood festival, a kite festival, a yacht race and shopping in Aluohai City Plaza.

The ocean week also hosts ocean culture activities, to help people have access to the worlds of science and technology and knowledge of ocean.

Laboratories at Xiamen University, the Third Institute of Oceanography of State Oceanic Administration, and the Xiamen Science and Technology Museum, will be open to the public, positioned as science centers.

The World Ocean Week has been held in Xiamen for 12 consecutive years.

Last year, the maritime event attracted more than 2,000 company representatives and 200 officials and academics from 43 countries and regions along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.