

# A Theoretical Thinking about Ecological Civilization Construction

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**Abstract.** Nowadays, human society is transforming from industrial civilization to new civilization. The rapid development of China has encountered tremendous pressure and challenges of resources and environment. We need a revolution in ideas to change the mode of economic development. With such a background, the eighteenth national congress of the CPC has proposed the ecological civilization construction, and that it is significant to bring ecological civilization into Chinese socialism's "five in one" general layout. To push forward the construction of ecological civilization, we should clear the overall requirements of ecological civilization construction, adhere to the basic state policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment, and perfect the institutional system of ecological civilization.

## Introduction

Construction of ecological civilization is a long-term plan that relates to the well-being of the people and the future of the nation, revolutionary change involving production mode, life style, mode of thinking and value concept, and an important part of the Chinese dream to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Proposing the ecological civilization construction is the enrichment and development of Marx's Theory, our party's historical grasp of the evolution of human civilization, and the development and perfection of the socialist civilization system with Chinese characteristics. The construction of ecological civilization must be based on the current situation of China, and take the road of building socialist ecological civilization with Chinese characteristics.

## The background of ecological civilization construction

**Human society is in a period of transition from industrial civilization to new civilization.** The first stage of human civilization is primitive civilization, the second stage is agricultural civilization, and the third stage is industrial civilization. So far, industrial civilization is the most dynamic and creative civilization. The advantage of industrial civilization is that the large-scale production can rapidly enrich human goods. The defect is a sharp acceleration of consumption and pollution of the earth's resources. Ecological civilization is a new stage in the development of human civilization after industrial civilization, it is the summation of material and spiritual achievements that human beings follow according to the objective law of human, nature and social harmonious development. Human society has gone through primitive civilization, agricultural civilization and industrial civilization, and finally reached ecological civilization. It is a process in which productivity levels continue to increase and develop. It is also the universal law of human society.

**China's rapid development has encountered tremendous pressure and challenges from resources and the environment.** The Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC has pointed out that: facing the severe situation of tight resource constraints, serious environmental pollution and ecological degradation, we must set up the concept of ecological civilization, which is respecting the nature, conforming to the nature and protecting the nature. Since the reform and opening up, China has paid a heavy price for leaps and bounds while achieving fruitful results. The scarcity of resources is unprecedented, the destruction of environment is unprecedented, and the destruction of our homeland is unprecedented. If we do not speed up the construction of ecological civilization, the

resources, the environment and the society will be unbearable, the sustainable development is difficult to continue.

**The transformation of the mode of economic development requires a revolution in ideas.** The relationship between human and nature has turned from the reverence for nature and worship of nature in the primitive civilization, depending on nature and conforming to nature in agricultural civilization to conquering and transforming the nature in industrial civilization. Anthropocentrism has been continuously strengthened. The relationship between man and nature has been conflicting and tense. The nature has become the object of human to recognize, to transform, and even to conquer. The core of ecological civilization is to correctly handle the relationship between man and nature. Ecological civilization advocates the dual subject relationship between human beings and nature, adhering to the principle of respecting nature, conforming to nature and protecting nature. We should conform to the laws of nature, and achieve national sustainable development.

### **Accurately grasp the connotation of ecological civilization construction**

**The connotation of ecological civilization.** Ecological civilization is a new form of human civilization. Its prerequisite is respecting and protecting the nature. Its purpose is harmonious coexistence of human and human, human and nature, human and society. Its connotation is to establish a sustainable way of production and lifestyle. It guides people to follow the road of sustainable and harmonious development. The connotation of ecological civilization can be summed up from the following four angles: generally, ecological civilization is a development stage of human civilization; specifically, ecological civilization is one aspect of social civilization; ecological civilization is a development concept, which means respecting the nature, conforming to the nature and protecting the nature; ecological civilization is a kind of institutional property, it is the essential attribute of socialism.

**The connotation of ecological civilization construction.** People protect the nature, improve and optimize the relationship between human and nature and build a healthy and orderly ecological operation mechanism and a good ecological environment in the process of using and reforming nature. This is ecological civilization construction. To construct ecological civilization, we should set up respecting the nature, conforming to the nature and protecting the nature as the concept of ecological civilization; we should put ecological civilization in a prominent position, and integrate it into all aspects and the whole process of economic construction, political construction, cultural construction and social construction; we should build a beautiful China and realize the sustainable development of the Chinese nation; we should adhere to the basic state policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment.

**The mission of ecological civilization construction.** The first one is to optimize the pattern of land and space development: we should accelerate the implementation of the main functional areas strategy, promote regional development in strict accordance with the main functions, and construct a scientific and rational pattern of urbanization, agricultural development pattern and ecological security pattern. The second one is to promote resource conservation: we should develop circular economy and promote the reduction, reuse and recycling of production, circulation and consumption. The third one is to increase the natural ecological system and environmental protection efforts: we should implement major ecological restoration projects and enhance the production capacity of ecological products (such as clean air, clean water, dense forests, vast grasslands, safe food, pleasant climate and comfortable environment). The last one is to strengthen the construction of ecological civilization system: resource consumption, environmental damage and ecological benefits should be included in the evaluation system of economic and social development, and we should establish a target system, an assessment method and a reward and punishment mechanism that reflect the requirements of ecological civilization.

## **To promote the construction of ecological civilization, we must strengthen overall planning**

**Clear the overall requirements of ecological civilization construction.** The Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC has brought the construction of ecological civilization into the "five in one" general layout of the socialism with Chinese characteristics. The meeting discussed "Vigorously promote the construction of ecological civilization" with one single chapter for the first time. We should put the ecological civilization construction on the prominent position, and bring it into all aspects and the whole process of economic construction, political construction, cultural construction and social construction. We should build a beautiful China and realize the sustainable development of the Chinese nation.

The third plenary session of the 18th central committee of the CPC further emphasized that, we should deepen the reform of ecological civilization system around the construction of beautiful China, accelerate the establishment of ecological civilization system, improve the system of land and space development, resource conservation and ecological environment protection, and promote the formation of a harmonious development of man and nature, a new pattern of modernization.

In April 2015, the central committee of the CPC published "The Opinions on Speeding up the Construction of Ecological Civilization". It has made overall arrangements for strengthening the construction of ecological civilization. By 2020, significant progress will be made in building a resource-saving and environment-friendly society, the layout of the main functional areas will be basically formed, the quality and efficiency of economic development will be remarkably improved, the mainstream values of ecological civilization will be carried out in the whole society, the level of ecological civilization construction will be in line with the goal of building a well-off society. The land and space development pattern will be further optimized, resource will be utilized more efficiently, the quality of ecological environment will be improved, and the major system of ecological civilization will be basically established.

**Adhere to the basic state policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment and perfect the institutional system of ecological civilization.** In terms of values, we should set up the concept of ecological civilization, which means respecting the nature, conforming to the nature and protecting the nature. This is an important ideological foundation for promoting the construction of ecological civilization, and reflects the new value orientation and ecology theory. Respecting the nature means that, people respect, appreciate and repay the nature, respect for the creation and existence of nature, and will never be above the nature. Conforming to the nature means that, harmonious coexistence of human and nature, human conforms to the objective law of nature, and acts according to the laws of nature. Protecting the nature means that, people play their subjective initiative, we should care for nature, repay the nature and let the nature rehabilitate while claiming to the nature.

In status, we should put ecological civilization in a prominent position, and bring it into all aspects and the whole process of economic construction, political construction, cultural construction and social construction. This is the essential characteristic of promoting the construction of ecological civilization. Bringing ecological civilization into economic, political, cultural and social construction is a huge and complex systematic engineering. The concept and policy of ecological civilization should be put into practice and be embodied in related fields. In the economic sphere, we should vigorously promote the green transformation of the economy and achieve green development. In the political sphere, we should strengthen the political leadership of the party and the state in the construction of ecological civilization. In the cultural sphere, we should incorporate ecological civilization and other important ecological values into the socialist core value system, and form a resource conserving and environment-friendly administration concept and achievements view. In the social sphere, we should innovative social management model. The citizen's environmental rights must be clearly established in the Constitution and related laws and regulations. We should also improve the system of environmental management information publicity, improve the system of environmental public interest litigation, and perfect the hearing system of environmental legislation.

For a grand goal, we should build a beautiful China and realize the sustainable development of the Chinese nation. A beautiful China should have the natural beauty of mountains and rivers, the simple beauty of resource saving, the beauty of the cultural atmosphere of human civilization and the beauty of the pattern of scientific development. To build a beautiful China, firstly, we need to push forward the reform of the political system, establish and improve the institutional mechanisms that are compatible with economic and social development and ecological civilization construction. Secondly, we need to strive for coordinated development, properly handle the relationship between economic and environmental resources. Thirdly, we need to connect Chinese culture with the world. Fourthly, we need to solve the problems in social construction, and coordinate the pace of economic growth and social development.

For basic policies, we should adhere to the basic state policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment and create a good production and living environment for the people. First of all, we need to save resources. Secondly, insist natural restoration as the main method. Thirdly, promote healthy development, circular development and low-carbon development. At last, we need to form a space structure, an industrial structure, a mode of production and a way of life for conserving resources and protecting the environment.

In the fundamental policy, we should adhere to the principle of saving, protecting and restoring naturally. Saving can improve the level of comprehensive utilization of resources. Protecting can improve the quality of the environment. Restoring naturally can let the natural self-regulate. The three aspects are indispensable.

In the basic way, we should promote healthy development, circular development and low-carbon development. For healthy development, we must change the development model of polluting the environment. For circular development, we must change the development model of wasting resources. For low-carbon development, we must change the development model of making the climate warmer.

For the purpose of construction, we should form a space structure, an industrial structure, a mode of production and a way of life for conserving resources and protecting the environment, reverse the trend of ecological deterioration from the source, create a good production and living environment for the people, and contribute to global ecological security. We should also achieve harmonious development, all-round development, sustainable development and circular development, and step towards a new era of ecological civilization.

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