

# Study on the Way to Cultivate the Eco-citizen

## Facing Difficulties and How to Break through

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**Abstract**—In the process of national ecological civilization development, as the main body of the construction of ecological civilization, ecological citizens are the precondition for the establishment and normal operation of the institutional system. The cultivation of ecological citizens is the driving force and important guarantee for fostering the building of ecological civilization, solving ecological environmental problems, and promoting ecological civil society. Therefore, in the process of building ecological civilization, we must implement ecological citizen cultivation as an important work that concerns the future and destiny of the country and raise it to the strategic level of national development and pay attention to it from a global perspective. Since the new century, under the correct guidance of each country's five-year plan, China's citizens' ecological civilization has achieved certain achievements, and the people's awareness of ecological civilization has also increased significantly. However, judging from the current level of China's economic development, there is still a large gap between the ecological problems we faced and the corresponding needs of ecological civilization construction, so there are still many problems and difficulties that urgently need to be broken through and resolved.

**Keywords**—ecological civilization; Eco-citizens; cultivation; the construction of ecological civilization

### I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past 30 years of reform and opening up, China's economic construction has achieved unprecedented achievements. At the same time, as the country with largest population in the world, China is also facing the basic national conditions of relatively insufficient energy resources and weak ecological environment carrying capacity. The rapid economic development has also accumulated a large number of ecological Environmental problems, which have become the cause of the people's livelihood and the pain of the people. In general, the level of ecological civilization construction in China has long been lagging behind economic and social development. The contradiction between increasingly tight resource constraints, serious environmental pollution, degraded ecosystems, social development and population resources and environment has become increasingly prominent, which has become a major bottleneck constraint for sustainable development.

Faced with severe constraints such as tight resource constraints, serious environmental pollution, and degraded

ecosystems, the Party's report at the 18th National Congress clearly stated that we must firmly establish the concept of ecological civilization that respects nature, conforms to nature, and protects nature, and follow sustainable development path to build an ecologically civilized society. At present, the level of ecological civilization awareness of our citizens is still far behind the seriousness of the ecological crisis and the urgency of the need for ecological civilization construction. Therefore, breaking through the predicament of citizens' awareness of ecological civilization and exploring effective ways for the development of ecological citizens have become an important and pressing issue. The core of solving the current ecological and environmental crisis is to effectively restrict the non-ecological behavior of citizens and cultivate ecological citizens with a high level of awareness of ecological civilization. At the same time, we must regard the ecological citizen development as an important task concerning the destiny of the country and the future of the nation and implement it.

### II. THE INHERENT COUPLING OF ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION CONSTRUCTION AND ECOLOGICAL CITIZEN CULTIVATION

In the process of human society development, the ecological civilization construction is a civilization form that based on the principle of respecting and preserving the ecological environment as well as sustainable development, taking future human continuity as the focus, and gradually achieving the harmonious development of human and nature, human and society. In the report of the 17th CPC National Congress, the goal of building an ecological civilization was first proposed. In the report of the 18th CPC National Congress, the construction of an ecological civilization was also made into an independent chapter. They comprehensively and profoundly discussed various aspects of the construction of ecological civilization, and made a strategic decision "make vigorous effort to promote ecology Civilization Construction". Since then, China's ecological civilization construction entered a new historical period.

General Secretary Xi Jinping's proposal for "Green Mountain is the golden hill" is to integrate ecological civilization construction into economic development, political construction, cultural construction, and social construction process in accordance with the concept of green development, to build beautiful China and strive to create a new era of ecological civilization society .The opinion of the Central

Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council on accelerating the construction of an ecological civilization regards the construction of ecological civilization as an important content of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the foundation for the Chinese nation's great rejuvenation of the Chinese dream and the goal of "two hundred years". The construction of ecological civilization is to upgrade sustainable development to a green development level and "planting trees" for future generations to "cool down". That is, not leaving regrets for future generations but leaving more ecological assets. The deployment of a series of major decisions has promoted major progress and positive results in the construction of ecological civilization in China.

"Eco-citizens" are the people that able to regard the realization of the harmony between man and nature as their core concepts and basic goals, enjoy the rights of the ecological environment and undertake ecological environmental obligations in accordance with the law, and they also appear to have the right to participate in the management of ecological environment and hold public qualifications. Ecological citizens have multiple complex attributes. We can also redefine them according to their characteristics: ecological citizens are ecological people who respect nature, conform to nature, and protect nature; they are followers of the laws of natural development, social development, and human development; they are unity of social, ecological and subjectivity of modern citizens.

The cultivation of eco-citizens is to make ordinary citizens have the status of "ecological citizen" and make them "social people", "ecological people" and "modern people". The cultivation of ecological citizens is to achieve the harmony between man and nature by cultivating the citizens' self-conscious ecological environmental protection behavior and reducing the damage to the ecological environment. Therefore, under the background of building an ecologically-civilized society, the core concept of ecological civilization construction in China and the ultimate goal of ecological citizen cultivation are coupled in nature.

The intrinsic coupling of ecological civilization construction and ecological citizen cultivation determines the mutual relationship between ecological civilization construction and ecological citizen cultivation. As the main body of the practice of ecological civilization construction, eco-citizens are the prerequisite for the establishment and normal operation of the ecological civilization system. The cultivation of ecological citizens is an important force to cultivate ecological civilization, the significant mechanism and guarantee for solving ecological environmental problems and promoting ecological civil society. It is also the starting point and important focal point for the construction of ecological civilization. In the process of building an ecological civilization, we must attach importance to the cultivation of ecological citizens and regard it as an important strategic task. The construction of ecological civilization and the cultivation of ecological citizens should be carried out simultaneously.

To truly realize ecological civilization, citizens' understanding and recognition of the ecological environment should be promoted from passive protection and governance at

a purely technical level to active safety thinking at the level of philosophy and ethics, that is, the desired ecological environment for human survival and development is in a state where it is not damaged or threatened. This requires citizens to have a scientific ecological concept and a good ecological quality, form a way of life and behavior that saves energy resources and protects the ecological environment, fulfills the responsibility and obligation to protect the ecology, reasonably exercises ecological rights, and develops the concept of value with the core of ecological virtues, and reduces or eliminate the emergence of ecological destruction from the source.

### III. DIFFICULTIES: AN ANALYSIS OF OBSTACLES IN THE CULTIVATION OF ECOLOGICAL CITIZEN

Since entering the 21st century, under the guidance of the National Five-Year Plan, China's citizens' ecological civilization has achieved certain achievements, and the people's awareness of ecological civilization has increased significantly. However, there is still a long way to go comparing to the seriousness of ecological issues and the urgent need for the construction of ecological civilization. We still face many problems and difficulties, and we sum it up into the following four aspects:

First, economic development in various regions is uneven, and the construction of ecological civilization is difficult to synchronize. Behind the rapid economic growth, China has long faced a series of outstanding environmental problems such as "extensive mode" and "unbalanced structure" of economic development. The uneven development of the regional economy and the gradual increase of the economic gap between the eastern and western regions are major problems. In economically developed areas, economic growth has slowed down in recent years, but long-term economic development damaged the ecological environment. In economically backward areas, economic development has long been constrained by climate and environmental conditions, making it lack of fund support. Therefore, it is imperative to seek a development path that can ensure the speed of economic development while maintaining the stability of the local ecological environment. It is imperative for the development of ecological citizens.

Second, the legal system is imperfect, and it is difficult to ensure the cultivation of citizens' ecological ethics. As the fundamental law of the country, the legal provisions and internal systems of the "ecological civilization" in the Constitution are still not perfect, and ecological civilization has not yet been raised to its proper level. The overall understanding of ecological environmental protection is lacking, and the importance of ecological civilization is not significantly confirmed. At the same time, in our country's other corresponding legal systems, there is a lack of programmatic regulations that can grasp and guide the construction of ecological civilization as a whole, and it is difficult to find definitions that can reflect the rights and responsibilities that ecological citizens should have, "ecological civilization construction" and "Ecological citizen cultivation" still stays at a morally driven stage. Where rights, responsibilities, and benefits cannot be adequately guaranteed by the system, citizens' perceptions of the ecological legal

system are usually weak, and they tend to lack corresponding awareness of responsibility and awareness of rights protection. If we only rely on ethics to drive the development of ecological citizens, we are often hindered.

Third, there is a general lack of citizen ecological culture and a weak sense of environmental protection. For a long time, due to the lack of a sound education system for ecological civilization, Chinese citizens generally lacked relevant knowledge about environmental protection, and the overall level is relatively low, and the acquired ecological knowledge only stays at a shallow level. As the main force for the construction of ecological civilization, citizens have long been lack of knowledge of ecological civilization and weak awareness of environmental protection, so the ecological civilization practice is often in a blind phase. Excessively pursuing short-term interests, a large number of applications of chemical fertilizers, burning of straw and other environmental destruction have occurred from time to time, which seriously affect the process of ecological civilization construction.

Fourth, citizens' ecological civilization has a low degree of participation and less way to practice. The lack of participation in ecological practices is another key issue that plagues the development of ecological citizens. In recent years, people have increasingly paid attention to environmental issues. However, due to the small impact of the ecological environment on individual lives, citizens often do not consciously participate in environmental protection activities, and it is even more difficult to implement environmental awareness in their daily lives. People generally think that it is none of my business when facing environmental problems. In addition, environmental organizations are not very active on this issue, and the status quo of social welfare activities that promote the development of environmental protection habits is relatively small, which reflects the difficulties faced by our country's ecological citizen cultivation to a certain extent.

#### IV. BREAKTHROUGH: RESEARCH ON THE PATH OF CULTIVATING ECOLOGICAL CITIZEN

The development of ecological citizenship is not a spontaneous process, but is influenced by multiple and complex factors. Citizens' environmental preferences and responsibilities, institutional supply and government behavior norms, social public opinion, and the cost of citizen participation and the expected income of participating behaviors are all factors that influence the choice of rational citizens' ecological behavior. This shows from the side that the development of ecological citizens is a long-term and tortuous process.

The cultivation of ecological citizens is an inevitable requirement of the era for the goal based on national ecological civilization construction. In the face of the predicament of the construction of ecological civilization, the path of breakthrough - the establishment of the dynamic mechanism for cultivating ecological citizen has become the most important task in the process of solving ecological environmental problems.

#### A. To Uphold the Party's Leadership and Strengthen the Ecological Management System

Since the founding of the Communist Party of China, it has achieved several milestone achievements in promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Giving full play to role of the Communist Party of China and upholding the ideological leadership is not only an important basis for adhering to the correct direction in the process of building an ecological civilization, but also a fundamental guarantee for the development of ecological citizens in meeting the requirements of the development of the times and realizing the goals of ecological civilization. In the dynamic mechanism for the cultivation of ecological citizens, both thought leadership and institutional innovation are indispensable. Adhering to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in the construction of the ecological management system, the advanced nature of the Communist Party of China has ensured the advanced nature and innovation of the ecological management system. In August 2015, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Measures for Responsibility of Party and Government Leading Cadres on Responsibility for Damage to the Ecological Environment (Trial)". The document requires leading party and government cadres to firmly establish the concept of green development and strengthen the responsibility for protecting the ecological environment and resources. To speed up the construction of ecological civilization, we must adhere to the principle "follow regulation and law, being objective and fair, make scientific determination, conform powers and responsibilities, and life-long accountability" and implement the lifelong accountability system for ecological environmental damage. This is not only an important improvement to China's ecological management system, but also an important milestone in the process of building ecological civilization in China.

#### B. To Transform the Mode of Economic Development and Promote the Deep Transformation of Enterprises

The construction of ecological civilization is inseparable from the way of economic development. The problem of ecological environment is, in the final analysis, a problem of economic development. The cultivation of ecological citizenship needs good external environment. This is not only a theoretical environmental concept, but it is actually the whole process of transforming the ecological environment from "sewage black water" to "green water". Eco-citizens are the main forces that drive the ecological environment from being inferior to being better. To correctly handle the relationship between economic development and ecological environmental protection, it is necessary to effectively integrate the concept of green development into all aspects of economic and social development, promote the formation of green development methods and healthy lifestyles, and promote the prosperity of the people, the country's prosperity and strength, and the beauty of China.

In terms of steady growth, the labor-intensive industries that originally depended on the destruction of the environment were gradually transformed into green industries, high-tech industries, and outstanding cultural industries. The goal of



ecological civilization construction will never be realized until the evils of the destruction of the ecological environment are broken. In terms of structural adjustment, the transition from extensive economics to deep-seated high-tech and environment-friendly economies is an inevitable requirement for China's future development. Therefore, ecological civilization construction projects should be used as an important starting point for fostering new growth momentum and promoting industrial restructuring. We will vigorously promote economic restructuring and achieve green development. In 2016, the Three Gorges Ecological Economic Cooperation Zone carried out the "Yichang Trial" for ecological management and incorporated ecological industrialization and capitalization into the construction of "ecological citizens". In the "Eco-Citizens" experiment of Yuan'an, the ecological citizen cultivation was summarized and put forward. It is necessary to strengthen the ecological governance infrastructure and promote the "dual-engine project" of the eco-consumption power project. Global ecological governance and development of ecological industries require a clear understanding of the internal mechanism of economic and social ecological construction. By innovation, promotion, and solidification of various forms of development of eco-themed industries, to create distinctive brands, form ecological influence and agglomeration effects and achieve the transformation between ecological construction and economy Social construction.

#### *C. To Strengthen Ecological Awareness Education and Promote the Practice of Citizen Ecological Civilization*

Thought is the precursor to action and is the internal driving force for the development of the cultivation of ecological citizen. Only by properly mastering ecological knowledge can we establish a good ecological value and ecological evaluation ability. Education is an important way and means for the formation of consciousness and culture. Therefore, ecological cognitive education is the fundamental approach to the formation of ecological civic awareness, and it is the most basic means of ecological cultural construction. The development of ecological behaviors and lifestyles is a long-term process. It is of utmost importance to strengthen ecological cognition education and guide citizens to form correct ecological moral concepts and good ecological citizenship.

The requirements of ecological cognitive education based on citizens, we must base on the development of the times and supplement the content and form in the existing ecological cognitive education model. With the advent of the Internet era represented by Weibo and WeChat, the methods of ecological civilization education have more possibilities. The establishment of an ecological civilization education network is an innovation of the times, and it is also an important opportunity to innovate the traditional education model of civic ecological cognition. Establishing a new media matrix for ecological cognitive education and popularizing environmental protection knowledge are powerful complements to the existing ecological cognitive education model.

The practice of civil ecological civilization is an important way to widely disseminate the concept of ecological

civilization and promote the formation of a sense of ecological protection and correct ecological ethics among citizens. In the process of promoting citizens' ecological civilization, it is necessary to establish a strong connection between citizens and practical activities of ecological civilization, expand the form and practice space of ecological practice activities, and create conditions for citizens' ecological practice activities; Insist on ensuring public ecological practice activities, establish an environmental charity organization and hold environmental protection volunteer activities to innovate practice forms; Establish an environmental protection practice education base, reduce the cost of citizen participation and increase the interest of the practice process. Implement the practice of ecological civilization through scientific and effective ways.

#### *D. To Clarify the Rights of Ecological Citizens and Establish a Sound Ecological Legal System*

Eco-citizen is not only a political concept but also belongs to the legal category. It is a combination of civil rights and responsibilities. The construction of an ecological civilization is a revolutionary change involving production methods, lifestyles, ways of thinking, and values. It must rely on systems and the rule of law to achieve this. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "Only by implementing the strictest system and the strictest rule of law can we provide a reliable guarantee for the construction of ecological civilization." Most of the outstanding problems in China's ecological environment protection are related to imperfect systems, inadequate mechanisms, and the absence of the rule of law. To deepen the reform of the ecological civilization system, it is necessary to construct an ecological civilized institutional system with clear ownership, multiple participations, both incentives and constraints, and a complete system, so as to integrate ecological civilization into the rule of law and institutionalization.

Ecological civilization relies on the awakening of civic awareness. Environmental protection is not only the responsibility of the environmental protection department, but also the obligation of every citizen. The cultivation of ecological civic responsibility and the clearness of rights are all extensions of ecological benefits. The participation of the public in environmental protection is a statutory right and obligation. It is necessary to strengthen the guidance for public participation in environmental protection, pay attention to improving public participation, and expand public participation fields.

As an example and supplement of ecological laws, ecological administrative policies can formulate flexible measures for ecological protection and management based on the ecological management objectives of a certain period and the ecological development status of certain regions. The establishment and promulgation of ecological laws and policies provided the basis and guarantee for citizens' ecological behavior and solutions to the conflicts and disputes arising from the process of ecological governance and construction. At present, China's legislation on the ecological environment has a preliminary system, including the Environmental Protection Law, the Marine Environmental Protection Law, the Water Pollution Prevention Law, the Air

Pollution Prevention Law, the Forest Law, the Grassland Law, and the Mineral Resources Law, etc., which provide a relatively complete legal basis for practical activities. However, most of these laws and regulations do not conform to the principle of sustainable development. They focus on paying attention while lack of prevention and treatment. The characteristics of government regulation are distinctive. They place too much emphasis on citizens' obligation to protect the environment and ignore the environmental rights of citizens. They only stipulate the citizens' ecological rights in principle but lack of concrete and feasible legal measures, which will cause that the existing laws and policies cannot provide effective protection for ecological citizens. It can be seen that perfecting the ecological legal system, clarifying the status of ecological citizens in the law, and providing guarantees for citizens' ecological behavior are issues that urgently need to be resolved.

## V. CONCLUSION

The report of the 18th CPC National Congress made it clear that we must firmly establish the concept of ecological civilization of respecting nature, conforming to nature, and protecting nature, build an ecologically civilized society, and take the path of sustainable development. The report of the 19th CPC National Congress explicitly pointed out that we should speed up the reform of the ecological civilization system to build a beautiful China. On May 18, 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the National Conference on Eco-Environmental Protection. He emphasizes that we must consciously integrate economic and social development with the building of an ecological civilization, give full play to the party's leadership and the political advantages of China's socialist system to concentrate on managing major events, and make full use of the solid material foundation accumulated during the 40 years of reform and opening up, to intensify efforts in promoting the construction of ecological civilization, solve the problems of the ecological environment, and resolutely fight the battle against pollution, and push China's ecological civilization construction to a new level.

In the process of the development of national ecological civilization, ecological citizen as the main body of the construction of ecological civilization is the precondition for the establishment and normal operation of the system of ecological civilization. The cultivation of ecological citizens is the driving force and important guarantee for fostering the building strength of ecological civilization, solving ecological environmental problems, and promoting ecological civil society. Therefore, in the process of building ecological civilization, cultivation of ecological citizen must be regarded as an important work concerning the future and destiny of the country, and it should be promoted to the strategic level of national development to be valued with a global perspective and.

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