

## **Chinese Urban Initiatives in Climate Change:**

### **Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Wuhan and Guangzhou**

**Organized by the Hong Kong America Center**

#### **Introduction**

July 2016 is the hottest month in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's 137 years of record-keeping. In September 2016, atmospheric carbon dioxide has passed the symbolic 400 ppm mark permanently. Although the world leaders accelerated global climate action across a broad range of areas at the Marrakech COP-22, there is still much to be done such as coping with the effect of climate change and achieving sustainable development. It is our obligation to try to make a sustainable world for the next generations, yet it should be their vision to shape the world for it will be their world to take on. An annual project which equips the younger generations around the world with knowledge and skills and builds networks among them to exchange ideas and take actions collectively would be beneficial for all.

The Hong Kong-America Center (the Center) has re-designed a grant from the Ford Foundation to focus on climate change involving advanced students from mainland China and the US. With an additional support of the Konrad Adenauer foundation, the center is organizing a 14-day program in June & July 2017 for 33 undergraduate and postgraduate students from China, U.S., Europe, Hong Kong and other Asian cities. We are inspired by the commitments made at the COP-22 Marrakech 2016 and seek to hold cities accountable as far as possible to do their share in meeting these national targets.

#### **Project Aim**

The target audience of this project is the university students in environmental protection and climate change around the world. The project aim is to engage as well as to equip them to develop climate change strategies for policy advocacy and further to build a network for exchanging ideas and join forces in the future. The program will highlight the new technologies and policy initiatives in four Chinese cities (Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Wuhan, and Guangzhou) to slow global warming and mitigate its effects on the urban environment.

The Center is committed to the cause of Climate Change and will put our program emphasis on issues related to Climate Change for the next five years. We want to make Hong Kong a learning space for university students to focus on solutions to the challenges of carbon reduction, mitigation and adaptation in Asian urban settings. The university students can gain an understanding of the initiatives that the cities of Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Wuhan, and Guangzhou have undertaken to reduce pollution and curtail carbon emissions and other greenhouse gasses. By the end of the project, they would have a deep understanding of how the four cities plan to move toward the targets for reducing carbon as expressed in the Marrakech COP-22 agreement well as insights of the initiatives in these four mega-cities to mitigate and adapt to climate change which can be learned by other cities in America, Europe and Asia.

#### **Project theme**

The project focuses on four sectors of climate change and four functions which improves the conditions of the four sectors. They are organized in a 4 X 4 matrix. The four sectors are:

- Urbanization

- Infrastructure
- Energy
- Environmental protection

Whereas, the four generic functions that are critical to positive change in each of these sectors are:

- Technology
- Public policy
- Green finance
- Education

The full 4 x 4 grid of basic Climate Change Sectors and Functions:

	Urbanization	Infrastructure	Energy	Environmental protection
Technology	•	•	•	•
Public policy	•	•	•	•
Green finance	•	•	•	•
Education	•	•	•	•

The 16 cells in this matrix create suggestions for areas of climate change education and action. The students would be divided into four teams, one for each sector. Each team would have a facilitator or convener. The members of the sector teams would choose the function(s) they wished to work on as they study the four cities. From time to time, the participants working on the same function in different teams would get together for comparative discussions. Each sector team would produce a report by the end of the project based on the knowledge and insights they have gained from the four cities and from the stories that participants bring from their own experiences dealing with climate change in cities.

### Program design

We will form a delegation of university students to move together through the four Chinese cities and create a team for each sector based on the interests of the participants. Each team will have representatives from the several jurisdictions and academic disciplines. The teams will be responsible to produce a report near the end of the program to show the knowledge and insights they have gained in these four cities. Based on what they learn, the teams will design and propose new strategies and activities that involve collaboration among cities to address climate change by meeting COP-22 targets. These reports will include both technical and policy aspects of climate change issues and feature collaborative activities that involve collaboration among cities to address climate change by meeting their COP-22 targets.

The program will be 2 weeks in duration including briefings by experts in each city, site visits to study innovations, as well as time for the teams to work together and produce the reports. During the two weeks, each participant will present to the others something of what their respective home cities are doing in climate change. The program will culminate in Guangzhou with attending an international conference on urban housing and climate change organized by the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Sun Yat Sen University and other national sponsors. The Center will organize a sharing session in Guangzhou at the end of the program, which the teams will present their findings and proposals.

For more information, please contact Mr. Stephen Tong at [stephentong@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:stephentong@cuhk.edu.hk)