

Summary Report - Swedish Scholarly Delegation to China 2024





Bridging Borders for Global Sustainability Governance: Lund University Leads Groundbreaking Scholarly Delegation to China

In a significant stride towards global sustainability, an inter-university and interdisciplinary delegation of Swedish scholars, spearheaded by Lund University's Department of Business Law and supported by the Embassy of Sweden in China, recently visited China. As **the first high-level Swedish Scholarly Delegation to China focusing on sustainable development after the Covid-19 Pandemic**, it marks a pivotal milestone for pioneering Sino-Swedish dialogue on global sustainability governance. This landmark visit, involving week-long events from 18th – 22nd March 2024, centered around the **“Sino-Swedish Colloquium on Global Sustainability Governance” hosted at Wuhan University**, and coupled with a crucial side event **“Perspectives from Swedish Researchers & Businesses on Corporate Sustainability” held at the Embassy of Sweden in Beijing**.

- **Navigating Constructive Sino-Swedish Academic Collaboration on Sustainability Governance in a Polarized World**

In the face of an urgent call for joint efforts to address climate change and its political, societal and economic impacts on sustainable development in a polarized world, this pioneering Swedish scholarly delegation to China aimed to explore globally beneficial academic collaboration and navigate constructive scholarly exchanges on global sustainability governance between Swedish and Chinese academia.

The scholarly delegation was co-led by Assoc Prof. **Andreas Inghammar**, Pro Dean of Lund University School of Economics and Management (LUSEM), and Prof. **Jörgen Hettne**, Head of the Department of Business Law, with Dr. **Meng Zhang** from the same Department of Lund University as the coordinator, composed of luminaries from across Swedish academia. Eminent delegates were Prof. **Emily Boyd** (Centre for Sustainability Studies, Lund University), Prof. **Jonas Ebbesson** (Director of Stockholm Environmental Law and Policy Centre, Stockholm University), Prof. **Karin Bäckstrand** (Department of Political Science, Stockholm University), Assoc Prof. **Radu Mares** (Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law), and Assoc Prof. **Christer Ljungwall** (Department of



Economics, University of Gothenburg). The composition of this delegation across leading Swedish universities demonstrated a robust interdisciplinary solidarity towards collaborations on sustainability governance spanning environmental law, climate policy and politics, green trade, labor market regulations, human rights and responsible business conduct.

- **Highlights from the Sino-Swedish Colloquium: Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Nexus Surrounding Global Sustainability Governance**

On March 18-19, the delegation participated in the **“Sino-Swedish Colloquium on Global Sustainability Governance” at Wuhan University**, successfully co-organized by Lund University’s Department of Business Law and Wuhan University’s Research Institute of Environmental Law (a National Centre of Excellence in China and the first Advanced Training Centre of the International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN – Academy of Environmental Law). It represented the first international scholarly assembly focusing on sustainable development at Wuhan University after the Covid-19 Pandemic, highlighting the significance of transnational academic collaboration on this topic. The Swedish scholarly delegation was warmly welcomed by senior officials including the Vice President of Wuhan University, the Chief Legal Advisor of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, and the Vice President of the Chinese Society of Environment and Resources Law.

The colloquium convened leading scholars, high-level policymakers, and key practitioners from both nations, fostering a vibrant exchange of knowledge and strategies aimed at achieving sustainable development and climate neutrality. The **three thematic sessions** of the colloquium covered cutting-edge topics standing at the nexus of global sustainability governance such as **“Governance Pathways towards Climate Neutrality”**, **“Greening Economic Transition and Trade Flows”**, and **“ESG as a New Governance Tool to Achieve Corporate Sustainability”**.



Sweden's Ambassador for Sustainable Business from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, **H.E. Ms. Cecilia Ekholm**, delivered a compelling keynote, sharing Sweden's innovative sustainability strategies and reinforcing the critical role of business and industrial sectors in addressing global climate challenges and achieving sustainable development.

A significant highlight was the colloquium's focus on the role of the private sector in sustainable development. Representatives from **major Swedish multinational companies** and consultancy operating in China, such as IKEA, SEB, and the Swedish Environmental Research Institute (IVL), engaged in discussions that underscored recent EU regulatory developments aimed at promoting responsible business conduct and sustainable supply chains.

Moreover, the Colloquium also celebrated **the launch of the book** "Carbon Emissions Trading in China: Law, Policy, and Mechanisms" published by Edward Elgar recently. This book, co-authored by Prof. Tianbao Qin of Wuhan University and Dr. Meng Zhang of Lund University, stands as a significant academic output from the ongoing collaboration on green transition policy between the two institutions, highlighting the fruitful cooperative spirit underpinning this event.

Both the **Counsellor for Science and Innovation at the Embassy of Sweden in China Ms. Tina Karlberg** and the **sustainability officer Ms. Linn Engvall** who actively participated in the entire two-day event in Wuhan highly appreciated the visit of the Swedish scholarly delegation and underscored the collaborative spirit of the Colloquium that facilitated a rich exchange of ideas on sustainability governance across various stakeholders between Sweden and China.

- **Fostering Collaboration between Academia and Business: Side Event at the Swedish Embassy in Beijing**

Further enriching the visit of the Delegation, **the Embassy of Sweden in Beijing** hosted a side event titled "**Perspectives from Swedish Researchers & Businesses on Corporate Sustainability**" on 22 March 2024. This gathering provided a platform for a fruitful exchange of perspectives between Swedish business leaders and scholars to discuss sustainable corporate practices in Sweden and in China as well as the practical implications of emerging EU and China's sustainability regulations. This dialogue was catalyzed by proactive contributions from the **Swedish Trade and Invest Council (Business Sweden)**, the Swedish Environmental Research Institute (IVL), and major Swedish



corporations operating in China (**IKEA, Volvo Group, Tetra Pak, SEB, LKAB, SKF, Lindex, Munters, Sandvik**), deepening the inter-sectoral cooperation on sustainable business and industrial practices.

H.E. Mr. Per Augustsson, the **Ambassador of Sweden to China**, praised the fruitful outcomes of the Delegation, emphasizing the enriched partnerships towards sustainability governance between academic circles and industry leaders in Sweden and China. This event not only strengthened ties between Sweden and China in sustainability initiatives but also celebrated the success of the Delegation's landmark visit to China which facilitated a rich dialogue of sustainability challenges across both academic and business sectors and fostered a deeper understanding of global sustainability governance cooperation between Sweden and China.

- **A Surprising Gathering for Lund University Alumni in China**

A Lund University (LU) alumni event also paralleled this side event at the Embassy of Sweden in Beijing, where LU alumni in China engaged with LUSEM representatives Pro Dean Andreas Inghammar, Prof. Jörgen Hettne, and Dr. Meng Zhang. During cordial conversations, many LU alumni recalled their delightful experience during their study at Lund University. The wonderful LU alumni event at the Embassy fostered a sense of community and ongoing connection to their alma mater, marked a happy ending of the successful, fruitful and colorful visit of the Delegation.

- **Legacy and Forward Look**

Five decades after the UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment that marketed the beginning of global environmental governance, the world, with mounting geopolitical tensions, has been becoming increasingly divided and polarized. However, this polarized world, as threatened by the “triple planetary crisis” – climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, is now struggling with



achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which calls for more solid joint efforts and collective actions including the indispensable role of both Sweden and China.

Reflecting on the visit, Dr. Meng Zhang, the initiator of the Sino-Swedish project and the coordinator of the Delegation, remarked that facing the urgent call for global sustainability governance towards climate neutrality, all stakeholders should work hand in hand, including both China and Sweden, both scholars and policymakers, both academia and private sectors. Particularly, climate change, despite posing a crucial collective challenge, also offers a pivotal opportunity for a rejuvenated momentum of global cooperation on sustainability governance in this polarized world.

As we look to the future, this delegation's Groundbreaking visit not only positions Lund University and Swedish academia at the forefront of global efforts towards achieving the climate neutrality target and the 2030 SDGs, but also showcases how academic institutions can play a pivotal role in bridging the polarized and divided world through constructive dialogue, collaborative initiatives, and shared goals in sustainable development, climate neutrality, and responsible governance. The Sino-Swedish Colloquium together with its side event stands as a small but sparkling beacon of hope and cooperative excellence, driving forward the agenda in pursuit of a more sustainable and equitable world.

As articulated by a Lund University alumna during the event, "One time a small step", Swedish academia together with its international partners is poised to inspire more small steps contributing to a long journey that continues to build on the collaborative spirit and scholarly excellence – a monumental journey towards global sustainability and a climate neutral world that we can all eventually be proud of.

◆ **Further Information:**

For the detailed programmes of the "Sino-Swedish Colloquium on Global Sustainability Governance" at Wuhan University and the side event "Perspectives from Swedish Researchers & Businesses on Corporate Sustainability" at the Embassy of Sweden in Beijing, please refer to the attached documents.



The visit of the Swedish scholarly delegation to China and the “Sino-Swedish Colloquium on Global Sustainability Governance” were the cooperative outcomes of the previous visit of the Delegation of the Research Institute of Environmental Law of Wuhan University to the Department of Business Law at Lund University in August 2023. (<https://www.lusem.lu.se/article/exploring-academic-collaboration-trade-and-sustainability-towards-climate-neutrality>)

It is also worth mentioning that this “Sino-Swedish Colloquium on Global Sustainability Governance” is part of the Department of Business Law’s high-level Global and the EU Governance Event series. For more information on our previous events, please visit <https://www.cfe.lu.se/en/article/climate-emergency-law-policy-and-adjudication-eu>

For more information on the Sino-Swedish project, please contact Dr. Meng Zhang (meng.zhang@har.lu.se), Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Business Law at LUSEM and initiator and coordinator of the project.

[Meng Zhang's profile in the Lund University Research Portal](#)



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Organized by:  Research Institute of Environmental Law (RIEL)
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 Department of Business Law, School of Economics and Management (LUSEM)
Lund University

 Committee of International Environmental Law
Chinese Society of Environment and Resources Law (CSERL)

2024年3月18-19日, 武汉

March 18-19, 2024, Wuhan





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Sino-Swedish Colloquium on
Global Sustainable Governance





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**Ambassador for Sustainable Business
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**Embassy of Sweden
Beijing**



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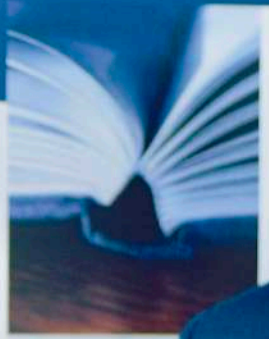
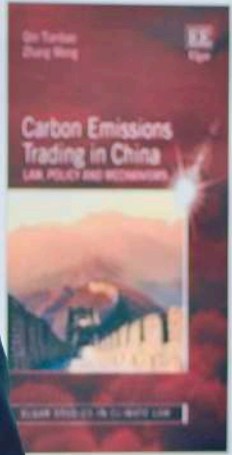




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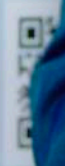


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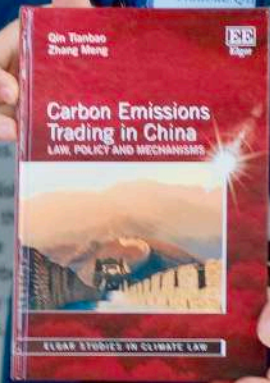
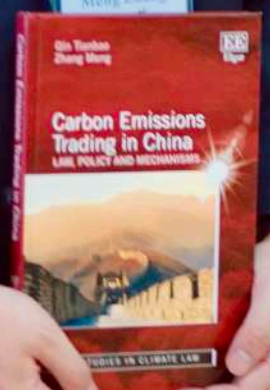
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Embassy of Sweden
Beijing



*Perspectives from Swedish Researchers & Businesses
on Corporate Sustainability*

Date & time: March 22, 10:00-13:30

Location: Embassy of Sweden, Beijing











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