

China's largest coal-producing province ramping up international cooperation concerning the clean energy transition

Agora Energiewende, the Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum, and Shanxi Province Energy Research Institute have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for trilateral cooperation to advance the clean energy transition in China's Shanxi province.

Berlin, 6. September. On 4-5 September, domestic and international dignitaries, business leaders, experts, and scholars participated in one of China's most important meetings on the energy transition: the 2021 Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon (TELC) Development Forum, held in Taiyuan, the capital city of China's Shanxi province. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Forum 2021.

Contributing to the meeting from Taiyuan, Beijing and Berlin, Agora Energiewende and the partners of the Sino-German Energy Partnership – the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the China Southern Power Grid Energy Development Research Institute – co-organized the first Europe-China Workshop on Clean Energy Transition at the TELC Development Forum. This workshop enabled a lively exchange of ideas on the topics of regional coal transition solutions, corporate transition strategies, and the development of the hydrogen economy and of distributed energy systems.

The highlight of the workshop was the conclusion of a new trilateral cooperation MoU among Agora Energiewende, the TELC Development Forum, and Shanxi Province Energy Research Institute, signed in the presence of the Vice Governor of Shanxi province Wu Wei and other senior government officials.

TELC Development Forum is jointly organized by several Chinese governmental bodies, among which China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Energy Administration, and the Shanxi provincial government. Energy policy and technology think tank Shanxi Province Energy Research Institute was launched in 1985 by the Shanxi provincial government.

The three parties will collaborate in organizing academic and industrial exchanges between German and Shanxi government officials, businesses, experts, and academia in formats such as workshops, study tours, and training seminars. Furthermore, all parties will support energy transition research and project cooperation with relevant organizations and

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universities in Germany and Shanxi. It was also agreed that the Europe-China Workshop on Clean Energy Transition will be convened as a permanent event of the TELC Development Forum.

Shanxi is currently China's largest coal-mining province by output. Its annual coal production was 1,063 Mt in 2020, accounting for over a quarter of China's total production. The coal industry has dominated Shanxi's economy for many decades. In 1982, China's State Council decided to develop Shanxi as a national coal energy resource.

In 2019, almost forty years later, the Chinese central government adopted a new vision for the Shanxi province to be China's key comprehensive energy revolution pilot region. Shanxi is taking this opportunity to make breakthroughs in improving the quality and efficiency of its energy supply system, which means deepening energy system reform, promoting energy technology innovation, and boosting international cooperation. This commitment has been strengthened further by the announcement of China's new climate targets to achieve carbon emissions peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060 by Chinese President Xi Jinping. This climate pledge has profound implications for Shanxi.

The MoU with Agora Energiewende is one of Shanxi's first steps to work on the carbon peaking and carbon neutrality targets. From Agora Energiewende's perspective, Shanxi plays a strategically significant role in China's clean energy transition: back in 2019, the TELC Development Forum met Agora Energiewende's delegation for the first time in Shanxi and discussed opportunities for mutual exchanges and learning.

Agora Energiewende is working closely with like-minded partners in Shanxi and other parts of China to promote in-depth Europe-China collaboration on energy and climate. China accounts for 31% of global carbon emissions in 2020. Agora Energiewende's Team China is primarily working on the clean energy transition and industrial decarbonization challenges, including provincial coal transition and corporate energy transition.

About Agora Energiewende

Agora Energiewende develops scientifically sound, politically feasible ways to ensure the success of the energy transition – in Germany, Europe and the rest of the world. The organization works independently of economic and partisan interests. Its only commitment is to climate action.

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