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Exploring Green Development From the Perspective of Sociology: Logical Basis, Constraints, and Optimization Paths

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Abstract: With the advancement of ecological conservation in China, the concept of green development has gained extensive acceptance and recognition. Exploring green development from the perspectives of environmental protection and sociology holds great theoretical value and practical significance in studying the issues related to green development. Firstly, this paper examines green development in light of the objective needs of the economic and social transformation in the international community and China, and deconstructed its underlying social logic. Secondly, it further investigates the social factors that restrict green development, encompassing social structures, social concepts, social systems, and social behaviors. Finally, within the framework of the “green” discipline system in environmental sociology, this paper proposes specific measures such as restructuring social systems and transforming production modes, lifestyles, and consumption patterns to promote green development.

Keywords: environmental sociology, green development, ecological conservation, harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature

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Green development constitutes a crucial aspect of ecological conservation, and the seamless integration of green principles with development effectively showcases the profound transformation in China's development concepts and modes as the country enters a new era of ecological conservation. In 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed five major development concepts, including the concept of green development. In 2017, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed that China will step up efforts to advance green development, promote a sound economic structure that facilitates green, low-carbon, and circular development. In 2020, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed to advance green development and foster harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. In 2022, the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stressed that we should pursue green development, promote harmony between humanity and nature, and accelerate the transition to a model of green development. People's self-consciousness and initiative in implementing the concept of green development have significantly increased, and the situation of neglecting environmental protection has changed significantly (Chang, 2018, October 29). All regions and departments are actively working towards environmental protection. An increasing number of regions are leveraging the opportunities presented by ecological conservation and environmental protection to address challenges in industry, energy, transportation, and other sectors. This has paved the way for a mutually beneficial approach to economic development and environmental protection. As a result, green development has gained attention from domestic sociology circles. Wei Xiaojiang (2022) posits that the key to achieving reaching peak carbon emissions and carbon neutrality lies in promoting the construction of a zero-carbon society. To this end, he proposes shifting from geopolitics to biosphere cooperation, establishing a community for global carbon governance, comprehensively transforming economic development towards green growth, enhancing ecological legislation, implementing green social policies, fostering green social organizations, and developing green social work and volunteer services. Furthermore, he advocates for promoting sociological approaches such as social intervention and daily life management to explore viable solutions (Wei, 2022, pp. 113–121+255). Jiang Pei (2023) emphasizes that achieving green development is a systematic social work, which requires the establishment of a new conceptual and systemic framework, as well as innovative approaches to green transformation and industrial upgrading. Additionally, it requires the practical implementation of an effective environmental pollution prevention and control system (Jiang, 2023). Through a comprehensive review of the literature on environmental sociology since China's reform and opening up, Peng Yuanchun and Mao Jiabin (2017) summarized the characteristics of China's social structure changes in the field of ecological environment and proposed that in-depth discussions should be carried out to deal with issues regarding unbalanced development between urban and rural areas, green urbanization, green lifestyles, network environment action, global environmental problems, and composite environmental governance to further enhance the research level of environmental sociology (Peng

& Mao, 2017, pp. 12–23). Based on this, this paper further explores the social logic basis and constraints of China's green development through the perspective of environmental sociology and advocates promoting green development through social reform, which holds valuable theoretical and practical significance.

Research Background of Green Development at Home and Abroad

Origin of Green Development in the International Community

The process of economic globalization renders the world an organic entity. During the process of rapid development, both developed and developing countries will inevitably face challenges such as resource and energy scarcity, climate change, and environmental pollution. In the late 1960s, environmental issues were first recognized as a significant global crisis, breaking the limitation of related research to only focus on the ecological field and creating a cross-disciplinary perspective that integrates politics, economics, society, and culture. This has made the study of environmental issues the focal point of attention for all sectors of society.

In June 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (also known as the Stockholm Conference), was held in Sweden. It marked the first political response of the international community to address contemporary environmental problems and devise strategies for protecting the global environment. Since then, countries around the world, as well as organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), have significantly intensified their focus on environmental issues. In 1989, the United Nations Environment Programme Industry and Environment/Programme Activity Centre (UNEPIE/PAC) introduced the concept of “cleaner production,” advocating the win-win situation between environmental and economic benefits in the production field. The concept was incorporated as a fundamental component of sustainable development in *Agenda 21*, which was acknowledged by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992. The concept of green development has subsequently propelled the circular economy, disseminating the notion of sustainable development worldwide and elevating the concept of green development to the mainstream topics of the international community. Subsequently, the resounding advocacy for “developing a green economy” and implementing the “Global Green New Deal” has led to widespread recognition of the concept of green development.

Major countries or regions across the globe have implemented a series of policies aimed at promoting green development. The United States has initiated a “Green New Deal” focusing on key areas such as enhancing energy efficiency and promoting the development and utilization of new energy sources. The European Union launched the *EU 2020-strategy* in October 2010, with a primary focus on developing an energy-efficient, environmentally friendly, and green innovative economy. In July 2012, Japan adopted the *Green Growth Strategy*, planning to promote green

development over the next five to ten years by vigorously cultivating and developing such industries as large batteries, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles, as well as offshore wind power generation, making them pillar industries in the country's economic development. In addition, South Korea's *Green Growth Strategy*, India's *Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy*, and Brazil's promotion of bioenergy and new energy vehicles are also tangible manifestations of their commitment to green development. In brief, given the pressing environmental crisis, resource constraints, and the interplay of ecological, economic, and social development, there is a broad consensus within the international community on pursuing green development. Therefore, exploring sustainable pathways toward green growth has become an inevitable trend in our time.

Green Development and China's Economic and Social Transformation

Choosing the path of green development is a fundamental necessity for achieving sustainable development and fostering the harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. It is an essential prerequisite for sustainable growth, as well as a significant reflection of people's aspirations toward a better life. On the one hand, the green development model is necessary to alleviate the accumulated environmental problems in the long term. Over the past four decades, China's GDP has increased from RMB 367.87 billion in 1978 to a staggering RMB 121,020.7 billion in 2022, showcasing remarkable economic growth. Moreover, there has been a significant improvement in people's living standards (CNBN, 2023). During this process, an "environmental deficit" that cannot be ignored also occurred. On the other hand, scientific and technological innovation, along with the growing environmental awareness among individuals, and increased governmental attention, has created a conducive environment for promoting green development. First, green development cannot be achieved without the extensive application of high and new technologies. The concept of green development entails intelligent and sustainable practices, necessitating technological innovation to curtail energy consumption in production processes. Its fundamental objective lies in mitigating pollution. The advancements in the fields of new materials and bioengineering not only contribute to reducing excessive reliance on natural resources but also play a pivotal role in mitigating environmental pollution and its associated challenges. Second, the general enhancement of public awareness of environmental protection serves as the impetus for sustainable green development. The acceleration of the public's transition from materialistic values to post-materialistic values has led to an increased demand for cleanliness, energy efficiency, and environmental protection. This trend serves as a significant driving force behind the government's shift towards more environmentally friendly policies. Finally, embracing the principles and practices of green development will benefit the well-being of our people, and contribute to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In recent years, a series of important discourses and ideas have been put forward, such as the notion that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, the Beautiful China Initiative, and the promotion of harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. These ideas fully illustrate the Party's and State's commitment to green development.

In summary, the international community's heightened focus on green development is intricately

intertwined with global climate change, energy and resource scarcity, and other factors. This has prompted us to expedite the green development process. The pressing domestic environmental issues, accelerated scientific and technological innovation, heightened awareness of environmental protection, as well as the high attention from the Party and state, all serve as inexhaustible drivers for green development.

Social Logic Behind Green Development

Since the 1970s, the world has experienced tremendous growth in social and economic development, and human beings have also achieved remarkable progress in transforming the natural environment. Despite the rapid advancements and impressive achievements, concerns and apprehensions regarding sustainable development inevitably arise due to the unsustainable developmental paradigm inherent in industrial civilization. Therefore, as the world's largest developing country, it is crucial for us to critically evaluate and reflect upon our previous development model and path. This requires a fundamental dismantling of the institutional barriers that hinder the harmonization between environmental protection and sustainable development. Additionally, we should explore the social logic basis behind China's green development by examining the intricate interplay between social development and environmental protection. This will facilitate innovative transformations in social structure, concepts, systems, and behaviors.

Green Development Is a Product of an Optimized Social Structure

Since the start of its reform and opening up, China has witnessed profound transformations in its political, economic, and social spheres. The process of modernization has been accelerated, and the social structure has undergone continuous optimization. In terms of urban and rural structure, China has made significant progress in urbanization and rural development. But there still exists a dual economic structure between urban and rural areas. The transfer of enterprises with high pollution, high energy consumption, and high cost from urban areas to rural areas or urban-rural junctions causes environmental pollution in these areas. In terms of the regional structure, there are disparities between the eastern, central, and western regions concerning material and technical conditions and geographical conditions. In recent years, some low-end manufacturing enterprises and heavy chemical industrial enterprises in the eastern region have moved to the inland areas, resulting in the phenomenon of pollution transfer. Therefore, it is essential to implement ecological transformation in the industrial structure and planning across urban and rural areas as well as different regions. This will accelerate the transformation and upgrading of China's economic development mode, technological innovation pace, and production mode, thereby promoting green development. Concerning social structure, there is a significant gap between the different groups in terms of the availability of ecological environment and resources. The high-income group has a higher ecological footprint and carbon emission level. To some extent, narrowing the gap between different groups can not only make a positive contribution to the optimization of social structure but help reduce inequality in ecological footprint and carbon emissions. All in all, the various measures taken by the

Party and the state in optimizing social structure serve as the social foundations for our country to progress towards green development.

Green Development Embodies the Transformation in the Principal Contradiction Facing Chinese Society

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China made a new assessment of the principal contradiction facing Chinese society, that is, the contradiction between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life. In the pursuit of a better life, more importance has been attached to the ecological environment as people demand a higher standard of living characterized by access to clean water, fresh air, safe food, and a beautiful environment. This places higher requirements on China's governance system and capacity in the ecological environment during the course of modernization. In recent years, Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, has repeatedly stressed the importance of protecting of ecological environment. This can be evidenced by his important discourses such as "We must ensure that the environment benefits the people, stressing the resolution of prominent environmental problems that impact public health, accelerating the improvement of environmental quality, and providing more high-quality ecological goods." "We should protect our natural environment in the same way we would protect our own eyes." All these discourses emphasize the importance of a clean and healthy environment in improving people's quality of life and supporting their livelihoods. In other words, the increasing demand of the public for a clean and healthy ecological environment epitomizes the essence of green development in the realm of people's livelihood.

Green Development Is Rooted in the Profound Transformation of the Governing Philosophy

The further transformation of the Chinese government's governing philosophy and its functions has provided a certain degree of political guarantees for the realization of green development. In recent years, the Chinese government has been committed to the concept of green development and emphasized the crucial role of ecological conservation in promoting economic growth. The development of the environmental law system has been consistently progressing, and continuous improvements have been made in various strategic plans and top-level designs. Furthermore, significant enhancements have been made in the establishment and adjustment, staffing, and capital investment of relevant institutions. The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that, "We have acted on the idea that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets. We have persisted with a holistic and systematic approach to conserving and improving mountain, water, forest, farmland, grassland, and desert ecosystems, and we have ensured stronger ecological conservation and environmental protections across the board, in all regions, and at all times. China's ecological conservation systems have been improved, the critical battle against pollution has been advanced, and solid progress has been made in promoting green, circular, and low-carbon development. This has led to historic, transformative, and comprehensive changes in ecological and environmental protection and has brought us bluer skies, greener mountains, and

cleaner waters.” This is a valuable insight that reminds us to strike a balance between economic development and ecological protection, holding both in equal measure as we pursue China’s ecological modernization. We have come to recognize that a robust ecological environment is essential for improving the well-being of all people and for achieving maximum productivity. At the same time, the government is increasingly embracing more flexible ideas, approaches, and strategies to tackle environmental issues. It places greater emphasis on the participation and oversight of multiple stakeholders in ecological actions while recognizing the fundamental role of social forces in driving green development. In short, as the governing philosophy and functions continue to evolve, enterprises will be encouraged to innovate in production technology while the public will be empowered to exercise more effective supervision. This will ultimately propel China’s green transformation and promote high-quality development across its economy and society.

Green Development Is an Inclusive Development

The concept of green development is a holistic and people-oriented endeavor that encompasses the promotion of ecological awareness, the cultivation of sustainable industries, the adoption of eco-friendly lifestyles, and the establishment of resilient ecosystems. In other words, green development can be understood as a form of inclusive development that aims to achieve harmony, stability, and sustainability between the economy and the environment. First, it emphasizes the importance of promoting fairness and justice in the process of development. Based on the principle of equality, every citizen has the right to enjoy a clean environment without suffering adverse effects and also has the corresponding responsibility to protect the environment. Second, green development aims to improve people’s quality of life. According to the concept of green development, it is crucial to prioritize economic growth and shift our focus towards ensuring stable development, promoting reform, and adjusting structure in order to enhance people’s living standards. We should strive to enhance the availability of ecological public goods so that we can genuinely ensure that the environment benefits the people, resolving prominent environmental problems that impact public health, and accelerating the improvement of environmental quality. Finally, green development is built upon harmonious and stable social development. The relationship between reform, development, and stability is becoming increasingly intertwined, with their impact on each other growing more apparent. Therefore, it is crucial that we prioritize the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature by implementing innovative social and environmental governance measures to prevent potential environmental risks and ensure ecological security. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate the development of these aspects to promote China’s ecological modernization and green development toward an all-round, multi-field, and in-depth direction.

Analysis of the Social Constraints of Green Development

In the process of ecological modernization, the modernization featuring harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature constitutes an important part of Chinese modernization. China has

made impressive achievements in its economic growth and environmental protection efforts and preliminarily formed a development path with Chinese characteristics. The country is embarking on the journey of green development, but there is still a long way to go before it can be fully realized. Therefore, it is of great significance to make further exploration into this aspect.

Social Structure

Imbalanced development is a fundamental contributor to environmental issues. In the context of regional disparities in development, it is not uncommon for enterprises with high pollution, high energy consumption, and high cost to relocate from affluent coastal cities to less developed areas in central and western regions or from urban areas to rural areas or urban-rural junctions, along with the differences in ecological footprints related to income disparity. In December 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee was held, opening a new historical period for China's reform and opening up. The southeast coastal areas became the primary hubs for China's industrial and economic development since reform and opening up (Hong, 2012, pp. 82–99+207). However, due to the influence of rising prices of production factors such as land, labor, technology and information, tight resource constraints, and environmental pollution, China's industrial distribution has become increasingly decentralized. The processing industry in the southeast coastal areas, which faces high transportation costs for raw materials, is now shifting towards areas where raw material production is more concentrated. Enterprises are increasingly choosing locations with relatively lower land prices, while heavy chemical industries are also relocating to less developed regions in central and western regions. Less developed areas in the central and western regions are actively undertaking enterprises with high pollution, high energy consumption, and high cost as a means to drive the local economy. However, this has resulted in a series of environmental challenges. These new situations and problems require sufficient attention. The same is true for the phenomena caused by the structural differences between urban and rural areas.

The gap in personal and household wealth is also reflected in disparities in ecological footprints. A sample survey of 25 million households conducted by the Energy Saving Trust in the UK shows that affluent households are more diligent in reducing their electricity expenses compared to less affluent ones. However, it is worth noting that these same households also demonstrate relatively elevated levels of carbon dioxide emissions and energy consumption per capita. Carbon dioxide emissions make up 11.5 percent of total household emissions. Only 20 percent of the population is actively working to improve their home's energy efficiency, and a large proportion of these come from higher income brackets. More than half of those surveyed had little knowledge of how to reduce energy consumption at home, and 40 percent showed an indifferent attitude towards it (China.com.cn, 2006). The growth of the economy itself constitutes a significant driver for the increase in carbon dioxide emissions from the transportation sector. This is because individuals with higher wealth tend to prefer private cars over public transport means, and the latter has a relatively minimal impact on the environment (Kwadwo & Skripka, 2021). Although wealthy households are

the primary purchasers of new, energy-efficient devices, they tend to buy more luxurious houses, frequently engage in air travel, and use cars with high emissions and devices with high power consumption. The reason is that wealthy people can afford to live in spacious residences, drive cars with high emissions, and frequently engage in air travel (chinanews.com, 2016).

Social Consciousness

After more than 40 years of development since the start of its reform and opening up, Chinese society has embarked on the path of rapid industrialization, transitioning to a stage with relatively abundant materials. Ronald Inglehart, an American political scientist, posits that people from countries that have experienced industrialization have also undergone a transformation from materialistic values to post-materialistic ones. The former mainly emphasizes economic development and national security, while the latter places greater emphasis on quality of life and environmental preservation (Inglehart, 1995, pp. 57–72). This concept is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which starts with the basic physiological needs (including those necessary for survival) and progresses to higher-level needs such as spiritual and value-based needs. This theory posits that individuals must satisfy their fundamental needs before they progress towards higher ones. Developed countries have transitioned towards post-materialistic values as they have essentially progressed beyond the stage of basic necessities and entered into the stage of an affluent industrial society. Inglehart suggests that individuals who hold post-materialistic values tend to show more concern about the environment. According to his research, certain European countries with a greater emphasis on post-materialistic values tend to take more proactive measures in protecting the environment compared to others. This reveals that post-materialistic values can be translated into environmental behavior.

As a developing country, technological optimism and materialistic values have had an impact on the green development initiative and ecological conservation (Qi & Ge, 2022, pp. 7–10). The former argument holds that any problems faced by human beings can be resolved through scientific and technological progress without having to worry about issues such as environmental pollution and resource scarcity. If we can provide adequate funds to inspire innovation among entrepreneurs and scientists, alternative resources and environmental solutions will be easier to access. The latter argument suggests that our sense of self-worth and happiness is closely tied to the pursuit of material possessions, as well as the constant desire for the will to power. In addition, it is also closely related to the prevalence of hedonism and extravagance. At present, the trend of consumerism is gaining popularity, resulting in an increasing number of private cars. In Beijing alone, there are approximately 2 million cars on the road every day, which has become a significant contributing factor to the occurrence of haze incidents. People are benefiting greatly from the remarkable convenience brought about by “mass production, mass consumption, and mass emissions” while simultaneously enduring the adverse effects of environmental pollution. However, a large portion of the population is still unable to give up “mass production and mass consumption” and wants to eliminate “mass emissions.” In the view of technological optimists, people can continue to

implement “mass production and mass consumption,” and “mass emission” will no longer be a problem with the continuous progress of technology. It has been proven that mass production and mass consumption will inevitably lead to mass emissions, and supporting the theory of scientific and technological omnipotence is equivalent to believing that a perpetual motion machine can be created.

Social Behavior

The core objective of green development is to achieve sustainable economic and social progress, which is specifically demonstrated through societal actions pertaining to environmental preservation and resource conservation, as well as the contemporary implications of the modern concept of conservation. From the perspective of environmental behavior, certain studies propose a rational dilemma, positing that the underlying cause of environmental problems lies in the social actors’ anomie towards environmental behavior. The social actors referred to in this context encompass not only individual actors but also corporate entities. The social roots of the conflict between individual rationality and collective rationality primarily encompass the entrenched cultural inertia prioritizing private affairs over public ones, the lack of a coherent collective value system stemming from diverse values, and the erosion and deviation of institutional constraints during periods of institutional change.

Some regional governments hope that enterprises can take responsibility for pollution control and resource conservation. However, under the current policy, the cost of resources and environmental protection are relatively low, and the fees paid by enterprises for pollution discharge are lower compared to those for pollution control. This makes it difficult to mobilize the enthusiasm of enterprises for green production, resulting in a significant disparity between policy guidance and market outcomes. Therefore, it is imperative to exert efforts not only in regulating government behavior but also in further regulating enterprise and individual conduct.

Paths to Achieve Green Development

Green is an indispensable prerequisite for achieving sustainable development and serves as a significant manifestation of individuals’ pursuit of a better life. Promoting green development and fostering harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature represents a profound transformation that encompasses social structures, production modes, lifestyles, and consumption patterns. Here we will discuss this from four aspects.

Adhering to the New Development Philosophy and Further Improving the Social Structure

At the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, the five major development concepts were proposed, with a particular emphasis on innovation, coordination, green development, openness, and sharing. These concepts have emerged as pivotal strategic measures in China’s pursuit of ecological conservation. The grand objectives outlined at the Fifth Plenary Session, ranging from

promoting coordinated development of urban and rural areas as well as across regions to advancing the harmonious development of economy and society, from facilitating synchronous progress in new industrialization, informatization, urbanization, and agricultural modernization to strengthening both hard power and soft power of the country, all reflected the strategic and overall planning for future development. Over the past five years, Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, has repeatedly stressed that the Party organizations at all levels should be well aware that adhering to innovation-driven development, coordinated development, green development, open development, and sharing development is a profound transformation that is closely related to the overall development of our country. In 2022, the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that we should completely, accurately, and comprehensively implement the new development concepts. We must uphold and act on the principle that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, and we must remember to maintain harmony between humanity and nature when planning our development.

Issues such as imbalanced, uncoordinated, and unsustainable development, if not properly addressed, will significantly impede development. The environmental carrying capacity, which encompasses such factors as resources, energy, and ecology, restricts the comprehensive economic and social development of all regions, leading to an increased risk to environmental security. Therefore, it is imperative to promote coordinated development among regions and between urban and rural areas while also enhancing the system and mechanism for integrated urban-rural development. A people-centered approach should be adopted to enhance ecological conservation. Efforts should also be made to enhance the interest regulation pattern among different social groups in order to minimize potential contradictions and conflicts. Guided by the concept of the rule of law, we will innovate approaches to social governance, establish a just and equitable system for regulating interests, and continuously reduce the ecological footprint gap between different income groups. In view of the institutional-level issues, such as the official tenure assessment index system, it may be beneficial to incorporate factors like resource consumption, environmental protection, and ecological benefits into the comprehensive assessment framework. This approach can effectively incentivize positive behavior among cadres and ultimately make green the key melody of their governance performance (Wang, 2016, May 23). In summary, we need to further explore and adjust the social structure under the guidance of the new development philosophy.

Building a Green Industrial System and Promoting Green Production Methods

Green production is the perfect combination of advanced productive forces and production relations. To achieve a greener production mode, we need to further adjust and develop our productive forces and production relations. Currently, the concept of green development has been deeply ingrained in the public's consciousness. How to deal with the relationship between economy and ecology, development and protection has become an important issue that deserves our full attention and utmost concern.

In view of this, it is urgent to expedite the establishment of a well-organized and viable green

industry system while simultaneously coordinating the restructuring of the industrial framework to promote China's production mode toward green development. On the one hand, we should master cutting-edge green technology and promote continuous innovation in this field. The government should endeavor to incorporate green technology innovation in all aspects and establish and disseminate the linkage response system of innovative potential and vitality, thus creating a sustainable driving force for innovation during the process of the green transformation, and beyond. For example, the government should encourage enterprises to incorporate more green technologies throughout their production process, further advance the development of green and low-carbon industries, actively steer enterprises towards a path of low-carbon and environmentally friendly growth, and reduce their consumption of natural resources such as raw materials and energy as well as environmental pollution. This will ultimately drive enterprises to produce ecological products that are both abundant in quantity and superior in quality. Governments at all levels and relevant departments should enhance their support for green industries by implementing more favorable policies, These policies may include tax reductions and exemptions, financial subsidies, and lower interest rates on loans to enterprises that have made significant contributions to ecological environmental protection while producing products in compliance with green product standards. On the contrary, those with high pollution, high energy consumption, and high cost should be subject to strict resource and environmental taxes and be ordered to halt production for rectification when they violate the laws. In addition, efforts should also be made to further optimize the industrial structure, facilitate the transformation and upgrading of traditional industries, and advance R&D and application of green and intelligent technologies, thus promoting a comprehensive shift towards green production mode.

Taking a Variety of Green Actions to Promote Green Lifestyles

Promoting the cultivation of green lifestyles is an essential prerequisite for fostering harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. We should prioritize green development within the comprehensive agenda of both the Party and the state while concurrently establishing a favorable working and living environment for the public. In the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it is clearly stated that we must accelerate the transition to a model of green development, implement a comprehensive conservation strategy, boost green and low-carbon industries, encourage green consumption, and promote green and low-carbon ways of production and life.

The green lifestyle represents a process of social transformation towards a thrifty, low-carbon, civilized, and healthy lifestyle. It emphasizes the implementation of a comprehensive conservation strategy and the promotion of clean and efficient use of coal, which will bring about immeasurable environmental benefits. Therefore, we must fully encourage and inspire the public's initiative and creativity in adopting green lifestyles. This can be achieved through policy and institutional development, a shift in consumption mindset, nationwide campaigns, and enhanced protective measures. During the efforts to promote comprehensive resource conservation and recycling,

a simple, moderate, green, and low-carbon lifestyle should be advocated. Actions such as the establishment of energy-efficient institutions, green families, green schools, green communities, and green travel should also be taken. First, we should improve the top-level design and cultivate the public's consciousness toward green development. In accordance with the relevant provisions of the new *Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China*, the *Opinions on Accelerating Ecological Conservation* and the *Guiding Opinions on Building a Modern Environmental Governance System*, the "ten articles on green development" have been formulated and promulgated to align with the "ten articles on gas, water, and soil." Second, we should increase publicity efforts to create a green living atmosphere with the participation of all people. We should integrate the publicity resources of various departments and organizations, establish and improve the linkage mechanism for promoting green lifestyles, and carry out educational activities centered around the green lifestyle. We should also focus on developing green lifestyle apps for the public and encourage them to adopt a greener and healthier lifestyle in their daily routines. Third, we need to foster a culture of ecological and environmental protection. This can be achieved by creating and producing a variety of environmental publicity materials centered around green lifestyles, such as movies, television shows, dramas, public service advertisements, books, and photography works. These materials will help integrate the concept of green lifestyles into the current trend of our era and make green lifestyles the internal awareness and behavior of the public. Finally, pilot demonstration projects must be carried out to promote green development. It is important to choose areas or cities with favorable conditions and rich experience to take the lead in piloting green lifestyles so as to explore valuable experiences for other regions to emulate and help gradually promote green lifestyles. By personally committing to green concepts and practices and inspiring others to do the same, we can accelerate the creation of a favorable environment for promoting green lifestyles throughout society.

Leading the Green Consumption Mode by Transforming Concepts and Improving Systems

The concept of green consumption encompasses a wide range of aspects, primarily including three dimensions. Firstly, it advocates for an eco-friendly approach, with a particular emphasis on promoting the use of non-toxic and low and non-polluting green products. Secondly, it emphasizes resource and energy conservation while prioritizing material recycling. Thirdly, it highlights the significance of ecological environment protection and species preservation throughout the consumption process. In the pursuit of promoting comprehensive resource conservation and recycling, it is imperative to rigorously implement measures aimed at reducing material consumption while adamantly opposing extravagance, waste, and unreasonable consumption practices.

In terms of promoting green consumption patterns, we should advocate for the adoption of a green consumption mode. At the same time, we must prioritize ecological protection, conserve resources and use them efficiently, and pursue green and low-carbon development. First, we should strengthen publicity and education efforts and actively promote the concept of green consumption. We should comprehensively utilize various media platforms such as newspapers, radio, television,



the Internet, Weibo, and WeChat to guide all citizens in adopting a green consumption concept. This will help strengthen public awareness of environmental protection and conservation while encouraging people to actively adopt low-carbon and environmentally friendly options for clothing, food, housing, transportation, and other aspects of their lives. By doing so, we can effectively raise individuals' awareness and responsibility toward green consumption. Second, we should improve relevant laws and policy systems to accelerate the process of green consumption. On the one hand, we should enhance the relevant laws and regulations pertaining to green consumption in order to provide a robust legal framework for the in-depth promotion of green consumption, thereby ensuring that people's green consumption behavior adheres to established legal guidelines. On the other hand, we should develop relevant policies and measures for promoting green consumption in order to standardize and guide people's consumption patterns. We should further enhance the mechanism for income distribution regulation, particularly by restraining conspicuous and consumption. We will continue to promote green credit and provide robust support for the expansion of new energy vehicles and public transportation systems, as well as programs such as sharing cars and bicycles. Third, we should further standardize market regulations for green consumption and cultivate a favorable environment for it. We should develop a unified certification and testing system that is customized to different industries and fields, enhance monitoring, supervision, and management of green products, and ensure good and orderly consumer markets. Efforts should also be made to emphasize the crucial role of industry associations in promoting green consumption. Consumer associations should actively safeguard consumers' rights against fraudulent practices in the market, thereby ensuring that their legitimate rights and interests are not infringed.

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