

CHINA HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

“Sustainability, Soft Power and Competitiveness”

中国有望通过打造下一代国际可持续发展标准提升竞争力

—可持续、软实力和竞争力

April 19, Boao, China - ‘**Advancing Sustainable Competitiveness of China’s Transnational Corporations**’ is a paper that is part of China’s long-term “sustainable trade strategy”, a research project by Chinese and international think tanks, and is presented at the Boao Forum for Asia today. It is an in-depth analysis of China’s opportunity to maintain fast-paced economic growth through enhancing competitiveness of transnationalising Chinese businesses, mainly through engagement in international sustainability standards.

4月19日，中国博鳌—作为中国“可持续贸易战略”研究的一部分，《提高中国跨国公司的可持续竞争力》一文于今天在博鳌亚洲论坛上发布。这篇论文由国内外专家共同撰写，深入分析了中国的跨国企业如何抓住机遇，利用国际可持续发展标准而提高在全球市场的竞争力，以保持快速的经济增长。

Dr. Long Guoqiang, co-author and deputy director of the Foreign Economic Research Department of the Development Research Center of the State Council, says “Chinese companies “going out” not only need to strengthen their hard power, but must enhance their soft power as well.”

中国国务院发展研究中心对外经济研究部副部长，本报告的合著者隆国强博士表示：“中国公司在“走出去”的过程中，不仅需要增强它们的‘硬实力’，也要提升它们的‘软实力’。”

“Chinese enterprises will play a key role in shaping tomorrow’s global markets and their impact on sustainable development. This paper examines current practice and outlines potential roles for business strategy and public policy in advancing the responsible competitiveness of Chinese enterprise in trade and investment”, said **Simon Zadek**, co-author and Managing Partner at AccountAbility.

AccountAbility 执行合伙人 Simon Zadek 表示“中国企业将在塑造全球市场和影响可持续发展方面起到重要作用。本文探讨了当前实际情况并概述了中国企业可以通过商业战略和公共政策，在贸易和投资领域提升责任竞争力。”

Credible and demonstrable sustainable development practices are a prerequisite for China’s transition to a major economic global player. Failing to achieve global recognition of China’s commitment to sustainable development will accentuate the negative aspects of the China brand, which will in turn limit China’s economic success at home and internationally.

可靠且可论证的可持续发展实践是中国转变为一个全球主要经济大国的首要条件。如果中国对可持续发展的承诺无法获得全球认可，则中国品牌的形象将会恶化，从而导致中国企业界在全球市场中受到重重限制，无论是在国内还是在国际上，影响中国经济的成功及其和谐发展。

Both the business community and the government need to play a key role in assuring the international community that Chinese transnational corporations are moving to surpass the traditional legal frameworks existent in the countries in which Chinese businesses operate. They should do this through exercising 'soft power'.

要让国际社会确信中国的跨国公司在东道国的运营，将不限于遵守传统的法定框架，他们将通过增强“软实力”来实现这一目标，为此，中国政府与企业界都应发挥重要作用。

Different from 'harder' dimensions of China's competitiveness (i.e. finance, information, technology and infra-structure), the 'softer' dimensions can't be underestimated. They are tools to deal with issues concerning different sectors in society.

与中国竞争力的“硬实力”因素（比如金融、信息、技术和基础设施）不同，“软实力”不能被低估。它们是处理与社会中不同部门关系的手段。

Voluntary sustainability standards are a means to exercise strategic 'soft power' in global markets in pursuit of international competitiveness. They are often developed and stewarded by businesses and states or groups that Chinese businesses have less experience working with, such as civil society. Due to their growing scale and wide convening power, these standards groups often end up playing a gatekeepers role to decide the legitimacy of international businesses that seek to operate in global markets.

自愿性可持续发展标准是在全球市场中增强“软实力”的一条主要途径。这些自愿性标准通常是由企业连同公民社会、劳工组织和国家一道制订和管理的；鉴于它们日益扩大的规模和广泛的号召力，这些标准组织正日益成为决定那些设法在全球市场中赢利经营的国际企业是否正当的“掌门人”。

Thousands of sustainability standards encompass hundreds of sectors. For example, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which already certifies ten percent of the world's forests, gives smaller companies using their logo automatic branding and access to higher value consumer markets, while preserving forests. Other standards are used by investors, governments, or other stakeholders in evaluating companies' commitments to social and environmental rules, such as the Equator Principles on project finance or membership in the United Nations Global Compact.

数千种可持续发展标准涵盖了数百个行业部门。例如，“森林管理委员会（FSC）”标准已经对全世界百分之十的森林进行了认证，并在认证同时给予了这些小公司以品牌效应，使它们在保护森林的同时也能够进入高附加值消费者市场。其他标准则被投资者、政府或利益相关方用于评价公司对社会和环境规则的承诺，例如：用于项目融资的“赤道原则”，或成为联合国全球契约组织的会员。

Despite its international recognition and importance to the global business community, adherence by most Chinese businesses is not happening due to:

尽管自愿性标准在全球商业社会都有着很高的认可度和重要性，但是仍未被中国的大多数企业遵循，主要归因于：

- Perceptions that these standards are inappropriate and/or difficult to adopt given the ‘residual’ markets open to Chinese late-comers;
- Unfamiliarity with the rules of the game;
- Weak networks with the relevant organisations that build the standards;
- Perception that voluntary sustainability standards are entry barriers to global markets - and indeed whilst not designed to prevent a new generation of businesses from emerging nations to establish themselves as global payers, these standards have been developed and are in the main stewarded by Western businesses (i.e. they can protect workers and forests or reduce drug prices to poorer communities, but they are in practice dominated by incumbent institutions and could become actual impediments to new players);
- Default, rather than resulting from a strategic business decision.
- 在许多情况下，由于对中国迟来者所开放的属于“ 剩余市场” ，故中国企业认为这些标准不恰当或难以采用；
- 不熟悉游戏规则；
- 与相关标准组织的关系较为薄弱；
- 中国企业将这些倡议视为进入全球市场的壁垒—确实，虽然这些标准的初衷不是为了阻止新兴国家的新一代企业发展为国际企业，但这些标准主要是由西方企业制订和管理的，而它们基本上代表了欧洲和北美的公民社会组织和公共机构。所以，虽然其目的是（例如）保护工人或森林，或让药品价格降至贫困群体可承受的程度，但它们实际上受当权机构所控制，并可能（或有时可能）成为可持续发展的障碍；
- 没有把这一问题提到战略层面加以认识。

Due to the importance of using international sustainability standards as a ‘soft power’ to enhance responsible competitiveness but at the same time the fact that some standards may not apply to the Chinese broader context and interest, the Chinese business community has an opportunity to become a force to shape the next generation of international sustainability standards.

基于应用国际可持续发展标准对于提升责任竞争力中“ 软实力” 的重要性，与此同时，一些标准也许事实上并不适用于中国更广泛的环境和利益，中国商业界有望成为在全球市场中打造下一代可持续发展标准、并以此做为符合中国更广泛利益的一项竞争策略的中坚力量。

This paper concludes that, for China to gain prominence and strategic importance in this space, it requires a deeper understanding and engagement in existing standards initiatives and the players behind them, and a more prominent Chinese role amongst the communities that have developed and now govern these existent standards.

本文认为，为了使中国在此领域获得重视和战略重要性，中国需要提高对现有标准倡议以及背后相关组织的了解和参与度，并在制定和统领这些标准的国际组织中树立一个更为突出的角色。

Both business and public policy would need to work side by side to create the environment that allows such strategy to develop.

企业和公共政策机构应并肩致力于营造一个允许此类战略发展的环境。

"When we began to work with the Chinese government on a Sustainable Trade Strategy for China we assumed that the key issues would all revolve around how trade policy was crafted in the Ministry of Commerce and other parts of the public service relating to trade. Instead, one of the most exciting outcomes is the recognition that the Chinese corporate sector has emerged as a key player in determining China's trade policy. Both through China's reaction to and participation in the development of private and voluntary standards and the role of Chinese investment at home and abroad, the panorama of China's trade policy has been fundamentally transformed in just a few years' time. Understanding this is essential to shifting Chinese trade into more sustainable channels," said **Mark Halle**, Executive Director, IISD Europe.

国际可持续发展研究所欧洲部主管 Mark Halle 先生表示：“当我们开始与中国政府就中国的可持续贸易战略开展工作时，我们认为关键的问题都会围绕着贸易政策如何在商务部或其他与贸易相关的公共部门内制定这些问题。然而，最为激动人心的是，中国的公司已经逐渐成为决定中国贸易政策的主要力量。通过中国对私有的和自愿性可持续标准的回应和参与以及中国在国内和国际上的投资角色，中国贸易政策的面貌仅仅在过去几年时间里就发生了根本性的转变。对这一情况的理解，是将中国贸易转轨为更加可持续方式的基本条件。

This paper gives practical strategic advice to companies and government officials about both traditional hard power and newer soft power aspects of Chinese companies' foreign investments. It offers the Chinese government advice on incentives that help Chinese companies embed economic, social and environmental sustainability into their business practices. This work also gives companies a strategic framework for selecting which, if any, international sustainability standards will help them achieve access to new markets by assuring wider stakeholders of their sustainability goals. It offers Chinese companies means of addressing standards that discriminate against or block market access to Chinese companies.

本报告为公司和政府提供了政策建议，涉及中国公司在海外投资的传统“硬实力”因素和新兴“软实力”因素。它为中国政府如何出台激励政策，夯筑中国公司在它们的商业运营中嵌入经济、社会和环境可持续因素提供了建议。本文还为企业提供了战略框架，比如如何选择国际可持续发展标准，这些标准能够帮助它们获得广泛的利益相关方认可，确保它们实现可持续发展目标，从而开拓并顺利进入新市场。该报告还为中国企业提供了方法，即如何识别那些歧视或阻碍其进入国际标准市场的标准。

"One important finding of this research is that Chinese companies have important strategic choices. Choices such as whether to engage with, ignore, or seek to influence existing sustainability standards — or to build consensus and recognition around future generations of Chinese-developed standards in international markets. These choice centre on how deeply Chinese companies see sustainability issues impacting their future competitiveness," said **Joshua Wickerham**, co-author and China Representative at AccountAbility.

AccountAbility 中国代表，本文合著者，Joshua Wickerham 先生表示：“此研究最重要的一个发现就是中国公司拥有重要的战略选择，比如是否参与、规避或寻求对现有的可持续标准

施加影响，更或是为未来中国自己制定的标准在国际市场上获得认同与公信力。这些决策的关键在于中国公司如何看待可持续发展对它们未来竞争力的影响。”

“There is a great potential for more sustainability in global trade if China is prepared to adapt some of the recommendations regarding a more sustainable trade approach. This can most effectively be done by training publicly owned entities in introducing resource-efficient production methods that also respect high quality standards”, **Hans-Peter Egler**, Head of Trade Promotion, SECO.

瑞士联邦政府经济总局贸易促进负责人 **Hans-Peter Egler** 先生表示：“如果中国准备采纳一些关于更加可持续贸易方式的建议，从而整合出适合自己国情的政策，则当今的全球贸易就能具备更大的可持续发展潜力。最有效的方式是对国有及上市企业进行培训，介绍那些既遵守高质量标准，又符合资源节约型的生产方式。

The full volume of China’s “sustainable trade strategy” will be published later this year.

“中国可持续贸易战略”研究的全部研究成果将在今年下半年出版。

The report is available in English and Mandarin at www.accountability21.net.

本报告的英文版和简体中文版可在以下网址下载 www.accountability21.net

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RESEARCH PARTNERS: 研究合作机构

- Chinese State Council’s Development Research Center - www.drc.gov.cn
- AccountAbility - www.accountability21.net
- International Institute for Sustainable Development - www.iisd.org
- The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO - www.seco.admin.ch
- 中国国务院发展研究中心—www.drc.gov.cn
- AccountAbility—www.accountability21.net
- 国际可持续发展研究所—www.iisd.org
- 瑞士联邦政府经济总局—www.seco.admin.ch

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRES: 媒体垂询:



Joshua Wickerham (乔舒华)
AccountAbility
+86 139 105 20831
Joshua [at] accountability21.net

Fernanda Polacow
AccountAbility
+44 (0)7824 318 407
+55 11 7422 5282
Fernanda [at] accountability21.net

Shi Yi (时怡)
AccountAbility
+86 137 520 16254
Yi [at] accountability21.net