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Policies

China unveils 5-year plan for agricultural green development

[Xinhua, 08-09-2021] The Chinese government unveiled a plan for the green development of the country's agricultural sector over the next five years.

The plan, jointly issued by six departments including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, identified resource protection, pollution control, restoration of agricultural ecology and the development of a low-carbon agricultural industrial chain as the key tasks for the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025).

The plan set quantitative objectives for the agriculture sector to be achieved by 2025, which include attaining an overall pass rate of over 98 percent in routine quality and safety tests of agricultural products.

Click [here](#) for details

China to revise law on safety of agricultural products

[Xinhua, 19-10-2021] China will revise its law on the quality and safety of agricultural products.

The draft revision to the law was submitted for review at the latest session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, which commenced 19 October.

The draft's provision on improving the accountability mechanism stipulates that producers and dealers are responsible for the quality and safety of their agricultural products and should accept supervision and shoulder their social responsibilities.

It demands establishing a monitoring system for the origin of agricultural products in order to enhance the whole-process management of the production and sales of agricultural products.

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Plan to ensure food security launched

[China daily, 04-10-2021] China will beef up efforts to create higher yields and higher quality production of major food crop varieties, and self-sufficiency in major livestock and poultry varieties by 2030, the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences said.

It released an action plan to promote the national seed industry late last month in Sanya, South China's Hainan province, where the Nanfan Scientific and Research Breeding Base is located.

The plan lays out the necessary theoretical, scientific and technological developments for the industry to improve seed varieties and grain yields, and ensure protection of national germ plasm resources.

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Kunming Declaration adopted at COP15

[GOV.CN, 14-10-2021] The Kunming Declaration was adopted on Oct 13 at the ongoing 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) in Kunming, Southwest China's Yunnan province.

The Kunming Declaration is a political declaration and the main achievement of this conference. The declaration commits to ensuring the development, adoption and implementation of an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework to reverse the current loss of biodiversity and ensure that biodiversity is put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of "Living in Harmony with Nature."

It declared that putting biodiversity on a path of recovery is a defining challenge of this decade, requiring strong political momentum to develop, the adoption and implementation of an ambitious and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework and putting forward the 17 commitments.

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China to continuously improve eco-environment: action plan

[Xinhua, 09-09-2021] China will fight and win the battle against pollution and continuously improve the eco-environment, a human rights action plan said.

According to the action plan, China will take further actions to prevent and control atmospheric pollution, and coordinate its commitments to reducing air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.

In terms of soil conservation, China will consolidate and improve the safe use of agricultural land, reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, and treat the pollution caused by agricultural plastic film.

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China issues guideline on deepening reform of eco-compensation mechanism

[Xinhua, 13-09-2021] China has released a guideline on deepening the reform of the country's ecological compensation mechanism to speed up the building of ecological civilization.

The guideline details measures for the country to realize long-term ecological compensation goals set for 2025 and 2035.

By 2025, an ecological compensation mechanism that is aligned with economic and social development should be basically built up. The classified compensation system targeting ecological elements such as rivers, natural forests and wetlands, and the comprehensive compensation system that features fiscal support will be improved.

By 2035, the country will form an ecological compensation mechanism that meets the requirements of ecological civilization in the new era, according to the document.

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China releases white paper on its biodiversity conservation

[CGTN, 08-10-2021] China's State Council Information Office released a white paper on biodiversity conservation in China on 8 October, days ahead of a key UN meeting to be held in the southwestern Chinese city of Kunming.

Here are some highlights:

- Protected areas account for 18 percent of China's land area
- 10 national parks have been launched
- Habitats for wildlife keep expanding and their populations are increasing
- A large number of valuable biological germplasm resources in China have been collected and preserved
- A relatively complete off-site protection system has been established
- A series of ecological protection and restoration projects were carried out.

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China to launch pilot programs on business environment

[Gov.cn, 08-09-2021] China will roll out pilot programs on the business environment in several selected cities in support of local reform efforts in better benefiting firms and individuals, the State Council's executive meeting decided on Sept 8.

Improvement of the business environment is a fulcrum in unleashing market vitality and social creativity, and promoting high-quality development. Implementation of the Regulation on Improving the Business Environment will be advanced, and a market-oriented, world-class business environment governed by a sound legal framework will be nurtured across the nation.

On this basis, pilot programs on the business environment will be launched in the cities home to a relatively large number of market entities. The goal is to better meet the needs of market entities and the public, and align with advanced international standards, by deepening the reform of government functions.

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Yangtze Belt to receive fiscal fillip

[China daily, 02-09-2021] China's fiscal measures will help accelerate higher-level opening-up in the Yangtze River Economic Belt, and promote the transformation and upgrade of the region's foreign trade, officials from the Ministry of Finance said in Beijing.

--The Yan-gtze River Economic Belt includes provinces like Zhejiang, Anhui and Hubei, and several big cities that have published plans of developing pilot free trade zones. For such places, the fiscal policy will facilitate the implementation of their plans.]]

Areas eligible for special supervision of Customs are encouraged to integrate into comprehensive bonded zones, he said. The fiscal policy will support the development of key overseas economic and trade cooperation zones and agricultural cooperation zones.

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China sees good autumn grain production despite disasters

[Gov.cn, 01-09-2021] China continued to see sound fundamentals to reap a bumper autumn grain harvest this year, despite severe disasters triggered by extreme weather in parts of the country, an official said on Sept 1.

Of the 13 major grain-producing regions, areas other than Henan have witnessed sound momentum in autumn grain production, said Wei, noting that Northeast China is likely to see more output of corn and rice.

With the large-scale harvest of autumn grain coming, Chinese authorities have made preparations for disaster prevention and are confident of reaping a bumper autumn harvest in 2021.

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How China has contributed to world food security

[Xinhua, 17-10-2021] 16 October marked the 41st World Food Day. Due to a pile-up of factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and regional conflicts, world food security is currently faced with severe challenges.

China, as one of the most populous countries in the world, has taken effective actions and played an active role in ensuring world food security.

First, China has achieved food self-sufficiency relying on its own capacity.

Second, China has been actively helping the world achieve the goal of zero hunger and zero poverty while its food production has been steadily on the rise

Last but not least, China has been promoting policy coordination of the international community, improving global governance of food security

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Science, Technology and Environment

China to strengthen agricultural sci-tech innovation

[Xinhua, 18-09-2021] The Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) has released a plan for promoting key subjects during the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025), aiming to enhance the country's agricultural sci-tech innovation.

The subjects involve food security, nutrition and health, cultivated-land conservation, disease prevention and control, green development, intelligent agricultural machinery, basic research, frontier and interdisciplinary research, data resources and regional development.

In the future, the CAAS will focus on developing basic scientific research issues, including biological nitrogen fixation, apomictic reproduction, pathogenesis and transmission mechanisms of animal diseases, as well as cutting-edge technologies such as gene editing, synthetic biology, pest monitoring and early warning.

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China issues scientific plan to strengthen seed industry

[Xinhua, 27-09-2021] The Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) has released an action plan drawing on science and technology to promote the country's seed industry.

It focuses on improving seed varieties, grain yield and germplasm protection, seed-source self-sufficiency, and strengthening related theories and core technology.

According to the plan, China will strive to make the varieties of food crops high-yield, high-quality, and self-controllable and steadily improve the yield level and quality of major crops by 2030. It will also guarantee the absolute security of rice and wheat provision and ensure the basic self-sufficiency of corn.

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Chinese researchers make new discovery in rice

[China daily, 13-10-2021] Chinese researchers have discovered that increased expression of a type of protein in rice could possibly boost its absorption of phosphorus and reduce the use of agricultural phosphorus fertilizers.

A research team at the Center for Excellence in Molecular Plant Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Shanghai has for the first time mapped a transcriptional regulatory network for arbuscular mycorrhizal symbiosis in rice.

The team has identified that the particular protein PHR, a type of transcription factor, is at the core of the regulatory network, and multiple other transcription factors are involved in the network.

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Third-generation hybrid rice achieves high yield

[Xinhua, 18-10-2021] The third-generation hybrid rice developed by Yuan Longping, the "father of hybrid rice," and his team achieved a new record of yield in rice fields in central China's Hunan Province.

The new record of the hybrid rice planted in Qingzhu Village, Hengyang City, one of the hybrid rice's experimental fields, reached 1,603.9 kg per mu (about 667 square meters).

Hunan is one of the major rice producers in China, where farmers plant double-cropping rice. Among the output of the hybrid rice, the yield of early rice came to 667.8 kg per mu in the test fields, and that of late-season rice stood at 936.1 kg per mu.

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China adds 268 plants to state protection list

[CGTN, 09-09-2021] China announced its amended national list of protected wild plants. There are 455 species of wild plants on the new list, including 54 first-class and 401 second-class protected plants, according to National Forestry and Grassland Administration and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The new list has three major differences compared with the list published in 1999.

- The protection level of 18 wild plants has been changed;
- 268 wild plants have been added to the new list;
- 35 wild plants have been removed from the list due to their broad distribution, large population and stable conditions.

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China's leading seed bank preserves plant biodiversity

[Xinhua, 09-10-2021] Chinese scientists have recently collected seeds of several plants at a height of about 6,200 meters on Mount Qomolangma and will permanently preserve them in a place where seeds can be kept alive for as long as thousands of years.

The seed haven, namely the Germplasm Bank of Wild Species, is located in an ordinary four-story building in a research institute in the city of Kunming.

The Germplasm Bank of Wild Species had preserved more than 85,000 seed samples from over 10,000 species of wild plants by the end of 2020, accounting for 36 percent of the number of China's seed plant species.

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Int'l conference on food loss opens in east China

[Xinhua, 10-09-2021] The International Conference on Food Loss and Waste opened on 10 September in Jinan, capital of east China's Shandong Province.

Set around the theme of reducing food loss and food waste, and promoting global food security, the conference aims to establish a platform for multi-party dialogue on food loss.

A total of 150 representatives of 49 countries, international organizations, enterprises and non-governmental organizations around the world attended the conference and passed an initiative on food loss and waste.

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China cuts food loss, waste for food security

[Xinhua, 13-09-2021] With the International Conference on Food Loss and Waste closed on 11 September in Jinan, east China's Shandong Province, the country has sent a signal to the world that China will cope with issues concerning food security by reducing loss and waste in agriculture.

In recent years, China has made substantial progress in curbing loss and waste in food production and consumption, with main efforts put into areas including upgrading facilities and equipment.

Data shows that during China's 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), about 13 million tonnes of food had been saved annually after production.

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Global robot tech achievements on show in Beijing

[China Daily, 11-09-2021] The latest global cutting-edge technological achievements and business models are in the spotlight at the 2021 World Robot Conference, which opened in Beijing on 11 September.

This year's exhibition area will feature three major sections on industrial robots, service robots and specialized robots.

Another key exhibition area will focus on the latest technological achievements in robotic parts, as well as how the use of robots is revolutionizing fields such as medicine, life sciences and agriculture.

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Pandemic pushes Chinese tech giants to roll out more courier robots

[Reuters, 28-09-2021] More than a thousand robots are set to join the delivery personnel ranks of Chinese behemoths Alibaba, Meituan and JD.com over the next year as the pandemic fuels demand for contactless services.

The firms expect to operate over 2,000 robots between them by 2022, up about four-fold from now, their executives said, encouraged also by falling costs of making robots.

Millions of couriers still deliver packages for as less as 3 yuan (\$0.47) in China, but companies have been exploring the use of drones or box-like robots on wheels from as early as 2013 amid a labour crunch that has worsened due to the pandemic.

Beijing has also ordered firms to ensure rest periods for couriers as they scramble to meet rising demand and deadlines.

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Unmanned agricultural machinery widely used in China

[People's daily, 16-09-2021] Intelligent agricultural machinery is now easily seen in farmlands across China. With the in-depth integration of AI into agriculture, farm work is becoming increasingly intelligent and more efficient, while agricultural production modes grow more effective.

Unmanned operating systems represent the most popular application of AI in agriculture. They can adapt to dozens of types of farm tools and enable agricultural machines to carry out tasks automatically in an accurate manner day and night.

With the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), technicians can ensure that self-driving agricultural machinery performs operations along a pre-set route. The positioning accuracy of the system can reach 2.5 centimeters.

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China's high-quality grain projects boost domestic agriculture development

[Xinhua, 23-09-2021] China's implementation of high-quality grain projects has promoted supply-side structural reform in agriculture, helped to increase food supply, and reaped benefits for farmers, an official with the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration said.

China implemented the projects in 2017. Since then, the central government has allocated 21.5 billion yuan (about 3.32 billion U.S. dollars) from the central budget to the projects. The local government and social investment added 60 billion yuan, said Zhang Wufeng, head of the administration.

The country has added over 50 million tonnes of high-quality grain through the projects during the period, the data showed.

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China's future food demand and its implications for trade and environment

[Nature Sustainability, 18-10-2021] Satisfying China's food demand without harming the environment is one of the greatest sustainability challenges for the coming decades.

In a paper published at "[Nature Sustainability](#)", a group of Chinese and international authors provided a comprehensive forward-looking assessment of the environmental impacts of China's growing demand on the country itself and on its trading partners. The authors found that the increasing food demand, especially for livestock products (~16%–30% across all scenarios), would domestically require ~3–12 Mha of additional pasture between 2020 and 2050, resulting in ~–2% to +16% growth in agricultural greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The projected ~15%–24% reliance on agricultural imports in 2050 would result in ~90–175 Mha of agricultural land area and ~88–226 MtCO₂-equivalent yr⁻¹ of GHG emissions virtually imported to China, which account for ~26%–46% and ~13%–32% of China's global environmental impacts, respectively.

The paper pointed out that the distribution of the environmental impacts between China and the rest of the world would substantially depend on development of trade openness. Thus, to limit the negative environmental impacts of its growing food consumption, besides domestic policies, China needs to also take responsibility in the development of sustainable international trade.

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China edging closer to top 10 most innovative economies

[Xinhua, 20-09-2021] China is still the only middle-income economy in the list of the world's top 30 most innovative economies, establishing itself as a global innovation leader and approaching the top 10, according to a report released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

WIPO's "Global Innovation Index (GII) 2021" shows that China has made continuous progress from ranking 14th last year to 12th this year and is now "knocking at the door of the GI top 10," which "underlines the continued importance of governmental policies and incentives to stimulate innovation."

Since 2013, China has moved up the GII ranks consistently and steadily, establishing itself as a global innovation leader.

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China, UK to strengthen cooperation on climate change, biodiversity

[CGTN, 08-09-2021] China and the UK have expressed willingness to strengthen dialogue and cooperation in tackling global climate change and achieve positive results at the upcoming United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference and the Global Biodiversity Summit.

Chinese Vice Premier Han Zheng and Alok Sharma, president-designate of the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), made the assurance during a video meeting on 7 September.

COP26 will be held in Glasgow, Scotland, in November, while the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) will be held in south China's Kunming City online in October 2021 and offline in October 2022.

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Trade and Business

China officially applies to join CPTPP trade pact

[Reuters, 16-09-2021] China has filed an application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the country's commerce ministry said on Thursday, 16 September.

The regional trade pact was signed by 11 nations including Australia in 2018.

Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao submitted the application to New Zealand's Trade Minister Damien O'Connor in written letter, the Chinese ministry said in a statement.

Accession to the CPTPP would be a major boost for China following the signing of the 15-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement last year.

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Boost for rural area delivery services

[Gov.cn, 01-09-2021] Authorities will work to improve the postal system and the final leg of delivery services in rural areas as the country focuses on facilitating both the transportation of agricultural products to cities and the delivery of consumer goods to residents of the countryside, according to a guideline issued by the State Council.

As an important channel for agricultural products headed for cities and consumer goods bound for villages, rural delivery logistics are vital for efforts to meet rural residents' production and living needs, unleashing the potential of rural consumption and promoting rural vitalization.

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Pedestrian streets urged to innovate

[Gov.cn, 01-09-2021] Pedestrian street business owners are encouraged to use new technologies such as big data to build smart shops and develop new types of businesses including unmanned supermarkets and restaurants to provide more convenient shopping experiences for consumers, the Ministry of Commerce has said.

The ministry also encourages pedestrian streets to offer an array of unique activities in which shoppers can participate, so as to attract more young consumers.

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Chinese, UK firms need to do right thing: Chinese commerce minister

[GT, 30-09-2021] Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao urged Chinese and British companies to do the right thing in the face of challenges in China-UK ties in a video conference.

China welcomes British companies to continue to deepen their business ties in China, given the complementarity and huge potential for economic and trade cooperation.

It is hoped that British firms can continue to play the role of bridge between the two countries and introduce China to the British public in a comprehensive and objective way, Wang said.

Executives from 15 multinational companies, including HSBC, Burberry Group, Standard Chartered, Jaguar Land Rover, Prudential, Diageo and Reckitt attended the conference.

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Foreign investment in agricultural sector grows in China's Jiangsu

[Xinhua, 14-09-2021] The foreign direct investment (FDI) in actual use in the agricultural sector in east China's Jiangsu Province reached 283 million U.S. dollars in the first half of this year, authorities said.

The value was 9.7 percent higher year on year, according to the provincial department of agriculture and rural affairs.

The investment projects have gradually expanded from farming and breeding to processing, tourism and other sectors involving the primary, secondary and tertiary industries.

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Diageo announces the creation of research and development centre in Shanghai

[Diageo, 16-09-2021] Diageo, a global leader in beverage alcohol, announced the establishment of a new research and development centre in Shanghai to further its product innovation and development ambitions in China.

The state-of-the-art facility - the first of its kind in the beverage alcohol sector in Shanghai - will primarily support the China market and will strengthen Diageo's ability to rapidly innovate and develop premium products that cater to Chinese consumer tastes. The aim is to create an exciting portfolio of products developed in China for China based on local consumer insights and trends.

Construction will begin in 2021 and the R&D centre is expected to be fully operational by mid-2022.

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China posts highest Q3 pork output in three years as herd recovers

[Reuters, 18-10-2021] China's third-quarter pork production surged to its highest in three years, official data showed, after producers built thousands of large breeding farms last year to rebuild a hog herd decimated by African swine fever.

Pork output for July-September was 12.02 million tonnes, up 43% compared with a year earlier, according to Reuters' calculations based on official data, and the highest since the third quarter of 2018, before China began feeling the fallout of the swine fever epidemic.

China's pork output jumped 38% in the first three quarters of 2021 versus a year earlier to 39.17 million tonnes, the statistics bureau said.

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China renews ban on imports of some UK beef over 'mad cow' case

[Reuters, 11-10-2021] China customs said on Monday 11 October it has banned the import of British beef from cattle under 30 months of age due to a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or 'mad cow' disease, in the country last month.

The ban took effect from Sept. 29.

China also suspended imports of beef from Brazil, its top supplier, in early September after Brazil reported two cases of atypical mad cow disease.

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China's pet care spend set for dramatic increase, says Goldman

[FT, 28-09-2021] US bank predicts sixfold increase in pet food sales to meet demands of growing singles population.

Goldman Sachs is urging investors to take a bet on China's \$30bn pet market and the prospect that the country's city-dwelling youth will opt for well-fed cats and dogs over a new baby boom. The US investment bank has laid out its case for the Chinese pet care market in a 104-page report that forecasts a stellar 19 per cent compound annual growth in pet food spending between now and 2030 as, among other factors, the diet of China's nearly 200m cats and dogs shifts from leftovers to packaged pet food.

Critically, the report predicts a transformation of China's pet market over the coming decade as the industry expands to meet the demands of fast-growing single and elderly populations. Both of these demographic groups, said Goldman, have a high correlation with higher per pet spending than elsewhere in the world.

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Norway, China to lead the progress of offshore aquaculture

[Seafoodsource, 14-09-2021] Limited opportunities to secure new salmon farming licenses in Norway and a lack of coastal space in China have made offshore aquaculture an increasingly attractive means for these two nations to increase their future fish production and meet the growing demand for marine proteins, according to a new analysis from Rabobank.

According to RaboResearch's "A Deep Dive into Offshore Aquaculture," released on 9 September, those limits on the sector are "supercharging innovation and scale," with many new offshore projects in the pipeline, particularly in Norway.

But space constraints for aquaculture on China's coasts are far greater than those of Norway or any other salmon-farming region, it said. At the same time, there are multiple risks in having a young, fast-growing industry that is so densely located close to the country's coast, including increased pollution and disease threats, and a risk of exposure to more extreme weather patterns caused by climate change.

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This issue is compiled by Yuelai Lu at SAIN Secretariat (UK). If you have any further enquiries, please contact Yuelai Lu at: y.lu@uea.ac.uk; for more information about SAIN, please visit: www.sainonline.org/English.html

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