



# Science, Technology and Education News from China

## Number 64 – October 2009

Please note that the previous newsletters can be downloaded from the website of the Embassy of Switzerland in China: [www.eda.admin.ch/beijing](http://www.eda.admin.ch/beijing)<sup>1</sup>. To subscribe/unsubscribe or send us your comments, please send an email with the corresponding subject to [cynthia.robbiani@eda.admin.ch](mailto:cynthia.robbiani@eda.admin.ch).

### Introduction

"The 2009 Evaluation of Disciplines" has been published by the China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC). This University ranking shows the best Chinese universities, particularly in the field of social sciences. New efforts have also been made this month to counter global warming's effects. While Taiwan showed its intentions to participate in the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen, China's urban planning experts called for a substantial implementation of low carbon concept in city development strategy to avoid environmental crisis amid rapid urbanization. New discoveries have also been made: the world's largest dinosaur fossil gallery has been found and new-type explosives detectors have been produced to help ensure security in the subway for the World Expo in Shanghai in 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Please click on the blue texts to activate the hyperlinks to either email addresses or related websites.



## Policies

### Who is at the top in China's Social Sciences?

The **Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)** is the highest academic research organization in the fields of philosophy and social sciences as well as a national centre for comprehensive studies in China. Also considered as the most important think tank in China, the CASS was built on the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences, and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Since the establishment of CASS in 1977, the institution has grown up considerably. CASS is now made up of 31 research institutes and more than 50 research centres. It has five academic divisions:

- Ø Philosophy, Literature and History;
- Ø Economics;
- Ø Law, Social and Political Studies;
- Ø International Studies;
- Ø Marxist Studies.

Also focusing on social sciences, the China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC) has recently published "The 2009 Evaluation of Disciplines", a ranking of the best universities in China in the field of social sciences. The CDGDC is an administrative department directly under the Ministry of Education, operating under the joint leadership of the Ministry of Education and the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council (ADCSC). CDGDC was established on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003, evolving as one department from China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre affiliated to Tsinghua University.

According to this ranking, **Peking University** and **Renmin University** rank in the top 3 in most of the social sciences' disciplines listed. Peking University reaches the first place in :

- Ø Philosophy;
- Ø Political Science;
- Ø Foreign Languages and Literatures;
- Ø History.

Whereas Renmin University reaches the first place in:

- Ø Theoretical Economics;
- Ø Applied Economics;
- Ø Law;
- Ø Sociology;
- Ø Journalism and Communication.

The third position is shared by several universities depending on the disciplines:

- Ø Sun Yat-sen University in the field of Philosophy;
- Ø Nankai University in the field of Theoretical Economics, and Sociology;
- Ø The Central University of Finance and Economics in the field of Applied Economics;
- Ø Fudan University in the field of Political Science, Chinese Language and Literature, and Journalism and Communication;
- Ø Zhejiang University in the field of Psychology;
- Ø Guangdong University in the field of Foreign Languages and Literatures;
- Ø Beijing Normal University in the field of History;

It is worth noting that University of Zurich has recently signed an Exchange Agreement with CASS, which allows CASS to participate in the remaining calls of the Sino Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation Program SSSTC (<http://www.global.ethz.ch/stc/china>).



## News

### 1. [Taiwan seeks to participate in U.N. climate convention](#)

(Reuters, 26-10-2009)

Taiwan, hit by its worst typhoon in 50 years in August, has found a culprit for the disaster that killed about 770 people and begun using it to get precious attention overseas where the island is usually overlooked in favour of its giant political rival China. Global warming is taking blame for Morakot, which was freakish as Taiwan's only major typhoon of the year and because it lingered instead of blowing straight through. The island's foreign ministry says that as global warming's victim it should get to participate in the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change in time for its December talks in Copenhagen. Sixteen countries have already voiced support. "We are a victim of this problem. It's closely related to the public's economic interests," said Yang Kuo-tung, director general of the foreign ministry's treaties and legal affairs. Morakot's incessant rain caused agricultural losses of T\$16.47 billion (\$510 million). "It's no laughing matter." But Taiwan's bid for participation faces a new kind of storm despite recent detente with China, a powerful veto-wielding Security Council member. China has claimed sovereignty over Taiwan since 1949 and blocked more than a decade worth of applications to enter the United Nations on grounds that the self-ruled island lacks statehood. [...]

### 2. [Chinese experts map out low carbon city strategy](#)

(Xinhua, 19-10-2009)

China's urban planning experts Monday called for a substantial implementation of low carbon concept in city development strategy to avoid environmental crisis amid rapid urbanization. It will be hard for the country to achieve its goal of sustainable development if measures were not taken to improve energy efficiency and to cut carbon emission, the experts warned, citing the fact that a 75 percent of urbanization by 2050 means much more energy consumption and carbon dioxide emission. They sounded the alarm in a report, China's Low Carbon Eco-city Development Strategy, which was launched here Monday based on a research by the Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS). The report predicted that even in the best "low-carbon development" scenario, the rise of the emission of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas (GHG), would likely be halted only by 2035. Cities will be the dominant energy consumer and GHG emitter. By 2050, between 70 percent and 75 percent of the Chinese will live in cities, while the urban economy contributes 90 percent of the national economy, according to the report. [...]

### 3. [World's Largest Dinosaur Fossil Group Discovered in China](#)

(CAS, 23-10-09)

A 500-meter-long, 26-meter-deep dinosaur fossil gallery has been found in Shandong's Zhucheng Dinosaur Stream. Dozens of well-known dinosaur experts at home and abroad have confirmed that it is the largest fossil group with the richest reserves in the world. [...] On October 7, a complete set of dinosaur skeletons of unknown species was transported from Zhucheng to the Beijing Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology for further study. [...] The skeletons have been identified by Zhao Xijin and Professor Xu Xing from the Chinese Academy of Sciences as the biggest known duck-billed dinosaur skeletons. The fossils set, initially named 'Huge Chinese Dragon', make up a skeleton over 21 meters long, nearly 4 meters longer than the 'Dragon King of the World'. Currently, fossil repair has been done. 10 dinosaur species have so far been found in Zhucheng dinosaur stream. Dinosaur Stream, the mainstay of Zhucheng Cretaceous Dinosaur Geo-park, is proactively applying to be included in the World Geological Parks, the World Natural Heritage and the Geological Wonders of the World. (China Daily Shandong Bureau)



#### 4. **7<sup>th</sup> Health and Technology Summit Forum held in Beijing**

(MOST, 23-10-2009)

The 7th Health and Technology Summit Forum was held successfully in Beijing recently. The forum, themed around "the Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Medicine R&D of Diabetes", invited a host of experts, including Prof. Li Guangwei from China-Japan Friendship Hospital, Prof. Ji Linong from Peking University People's Hospital, Prof. Nin Guang from Ruijin Hospital affiliated to Shanghai Jiaotong University, and Prof. Du Guanhua from Institute of Materia Medica of Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences. All of them delivered reports on relevant subjects. Over 150 people joined the forum, including representatives from MOST and relevant sponsors, experts of Diabetes research, and teachers and students from related background.

#### 5. **China's Proposal of the "International Center on Using Space Technology for Cultural and Natural Heritages" Ratified by UNESCO**

(CAS, 22-10-2009)

35th UNESCO General Conference reviewed and adopted China's proposal to set up a UNESCO International Center Using Space Technology for Cultural and Natural Heritages on October 15, 2009 in Paris, France. It will be the first space technology research center set up by UNESCO around the globe to apply space technology for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. The research center will be based in the Center for Earth Observation and Digital Earth (CEODE), Chinese Academy of Sciences. It will focus on the study and safeguarding of world heritage sites, biological protection and monitoring of disasters. UNESCO and the European Space Agency (ESA) started the "Open Initiative on the use of space technologies for World Heritage sites" in 2001. CAS joined the program and proposed to set up a space technology research center for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage in 2005. CEODE is one of the key institutes in China that focuses on earth observation and digital earth technologies. It will apply its advantages in digital earth sciences and acquisition of airborne remote sensing data to monitor world heritage sites, and provide training and staff for other developing countries.

#### 6. **New-type explosive detectors used for Shanghai World Expo**

(Xinhua, 22-10-2009)

New-type explosives detectors have begun to serve at some major stations of the urban rail transport system in Shanghai to help ensure security for the World Expo scheduled for May 1 next year, developers said on Thursday. The detectors, dubbed SIM 07 and SIM 08, have passed tests by the Ministry of Public Security. The new products were produced on the basis of the fluorescent polymer sensing technology that was jointly developed by the Shanghai Institute of Microsystem and Information Technology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Shanghai Sanco Instrument Co.,Ltd. The new detectors are more sensitive than experienced police dogs, and would do no harm to operators and those being investigated and produce no pollutants, according to the developers.

#### 7. **China, Germany build astronomical observatory in Tibet**

(Xinhua, 13-10-2009)

Chinese and German scientists are establishing an astronomical observatory in a Tibetan county 4,300 meters above sea level. Construction of the observatory began on Monday in Yangbajain Township, of Damxung County in the suburbs of Tibet's regional capital Lhasa, said project leader Wang Junjie Tuesday. The observatory would be operational in early 2011, after a state-of-the-art telescope was moved to the Tibet plateau from its current site in the Swiss Alps, said Wang, a researcher with the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), in Beijing. [...] The project will enable Chinese and German scientists to carry out interdisciplinary research. "Tibet is an ideal location because the water deficit in its air ensures superb atmospheric transparency and creates a comparatively



stable environment for research in the areas of astrophysics, high-energy and atmospheric physics," said Yan Jun, director of the CAS National Astronomical Observatories. [...] The telescope would be moved next year from Gornergrat, in Switzerland, at an altitude of 3,200 meters, he said. [...] "It will boost China's research capacity in sub-millimeter astronomy and will hopefully provide a platform for astronomical experiments and training on the plateau and in the polar regions," he said. Sub-millimeter astronomy refers to astronomical observations carried out in the region of the electromagnetic spectrum with wavelengths from approximately 0.3 to 1 millimeter. China is yet to build its own sub-millimeter-wave astronomical telescope for general research.

## Events (November – December 2009)

### November 2009

#### **China Fashion Week 2009**

Date: November 2009  
Place: Beijing  
Fashion Design

#### **Int'l Symposium on Carbon Cycling in Tropical Ecosystems**

Date: November 2009  
Place: Guangzhou  
Academic Exchange

### December 2009

#### **PhD Workshop**

Date: 11-13 December 2009  
Place: Beijing  
Swiss university participation  
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