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THE CAPACITY OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PLAYERS
TO TAKE A LONG-TERM VIEW
Beyond short-term games:
Building Euro-Chinese codevelopment on Green Competitiveness
Summary
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One of the options open for economic and financial players from Europe and China to think and act in a long-term perspective is to manage to create stable and sustainable codevelopment partnerships around new common models of business. A codevelopment initiative around “green competitiveness”, built around the formidable economic and environmental efficiency potential of clean production can be the answer.

Green competitiveness, through eco-management, is about using an environmental focus to reshape the way to do business. This requires the capacity to challenge and get rid of wrong assumptions such as those considering the environment and its impact on business. The issue is not anymore one of “impact”, but of “opportunity”.

Both in China and in Europe, the need to improve environmental performance could trigger green innovation and competitiveness, and create the conditions for an emerging market for green technological innovation and applied techniques for clean industrial production, as it is starting to be the case in the Euro Mediterranean region¹. In turn, the development of environmental technologies and techniques, and their diffusion throughout Europe and China, could increasingly become a real green competitiveness win-win co-development strategy. But this will only be possible if the right proactive attitudes and new mechanisms and approaches are put in place.

The conceptualization, launching and implementation of innovative mechanisms, in the framework of a new Chinese-European initiative in this field, is one of the possibilities open to create serious commitment, synergies, and concrete measurable results at governmental and business levels. The new mechanism should be tailored considering the private sector as the protagonist in the much larger framework of public-private partnerships. It could consider addressing, among others, issues such as:

- support for the adoption of clean production green competitiveness strategies in China;
- new ways to foster the generation, diffusion and transfer to the private sector of green techniques for clean production between Europe and China;
- new financial mechanisms to foster development and diffusion of technologies and techniques (green competitiveness venture capital funds, permanent fund);
- new options and roles for firms, participating at different stages of production in global value chains involving European and Chinese companies, regarding the adoption of technology flows and green competitiveness techniques;
- new types of mechanisms between firms and governments to foster the economic/green competitiveness approach to clean production, including through the progressive integration of public actors from economic sphere Ministries;

¹ Recent research covering successful experiences in European and non-European countries in the Mediterranean is proving that the adoption of clean production techniques, by firms, is generating green competitiveness with simultaneous economic and environmental efficiency, and with impressive economic savings and pay-back periods on these investments, and can be an engine for Euro-Mediterranean co-development. The Regional Activity Center for Clean Production (RAC-CP) of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of UNEP, in Barcelona, in collaboration with the University Nebrija, in Madrid, is in the process of launching a new Euro-Mediterranean Initiative on Green Competitiveness.

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