

An Analysis of the Path to Harmony between Man and Nature from the Perspective of Chinese Path to Modernization

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Abstract:

Harmony between man and nature is a fundamental strategy for adhering to and developing Chinese socialism with distinctive features. In the Chinese path to modernization, the principle of harmony between man and nature upholds the people-centered approach, advocates the concept of shared living space for all creatures, and emphasizes the unity of economy and ecological benefits. The specific path to achieving this include building a modernized development pattern that prioritizes harmony coexistence between humans and nature, strengthening the protection and restoration of ecosystems, and promoting the development of green and sustainable ways of life. At the same time, it is necessary to correctly handle such issues as structural contradictions in the ecological environment, international competition in the field of ecology, and the construction of an ecological governance system, so as to provide a new paradigm for human civilization.

Keywords:

Chinese Path to Modernization, Harmony Between Man and Nature, Path

1. Introduction

According to the long-standing practice of socialist modernization construction, the Communist Party of China has pioneered and formed a new path for Chinese-style modernization in the new journey of building a modern socialist country. In April 2021, during the collective study session of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, Xi Jinping was pointed out. "In the basic strategy of adhering to and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, one of the key points is to uphold the harmony coexistence between humans and nature." [1] Chinese path to modernization is a modernization where humans and natures coexist in harmony. [2] In the new journey to achieve the second centenary goal, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has always strove to build a beautiful China where humans and nature coexist harmoniously, and thus has actively enriched and expanded the

connotation of Chinese path to modernization. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to profoundly grasp the distinct characteristics of harmony between humans and nature, explore feasible paths for harmony coexistence in the new era, address outstanding issues in the construction of ecological civilization, and achieve the goals of great rejuvenation and sustainable development.

2. The Distinct Features of Harmony between Humans and Nature

In the modern era of industrial civilization, the ecological and natural crises are deepening. The reason for this is that the industrial civilization society sacrifices nature to achieve rapid economic development, which is one of the essential characteristics of capitalist production methods in realizing industrial civilization. Building an ecological civilization is a millennium-old plan related to the sustainable development of the Chinese nation, and it must be planned on the basis of harmony between humans and nature. Chinese path to modernization that emphasizes harmony between humans and nature in the new era, placing both natural and social productivity equally important. It seeks to coordinate high-level production development with a high-quality lifestyle while ensuring good ecological conditions. This new path of socialist ecological civilization development has great practical value in achieving the goal of creating a beautiful China and creating a new form of human civilization in the new era. Therefore, fully grasping the distinct features of harmony coexistence between humans and nature in the perspective of Chinese path to modernization is of great practical significance for achieving the goal of beautiful china and creating a new form of human civilization in the new era.

2.1. Adhere to the Fundamental Position of Putting People First

The starting point and destination for achieving harmony coexistence between humans and nature is the vastest numbers of the people. Only by truly grasping the most pressing ecological needs of the people can we implement policies related to people's livelihood and well-being in the process of constructing socialist ecological civilization, and carry out the development concept of 'putting people first' on the road to achieving harmony between man and nature. The fundamental position of upholding people's paramount importance is to reflect the people's nature in the context of modernization with Chinese characteristics. On the one hand, the Communist Party of China has always put forward that all aspects of the party and state development must be people-centered from the beginning of its founding. In building a fully modernized socialist country, people are the decisive force.[3] It once again points out the decisive role of the people in the historical process of socialist ecological civilization construction in the new era. On the other hand, China's large population size and relatively insufficient per capita natural resources has not changed, which determines that China, under the internal pressure of resource and environmental conditions and the external environment of global ecological crisis, must follow a different path from Western "ecological colonialism" in modernization. It is necessary to correctly handle the relationship between the creation of material wealth for the people and the protection of the natural ecological environment. Therefore, only by adhering to the fundamental position of upholding the people's paramount importance can we give full play to the main body status of the people in realizing harmony between man and nature, and reasonably adjust the material transformation between humans and nature in a step-by-step manner, constantly

enhancing the sense of gain and happiness of the people in a beautiful ecological environment.

2.2. Advocates the Concept of Shared Living Space for All Creatures

Promoting the construction of a community with a shared future for humanity are the essential requirement of Chinese path to modernization. The concept of living in harmony with nature and upholding the idea of a community with a shared life is an innovative development of ecological civilization thought under the new historical conditions, which is based on the principle of “coexistence”. Emphasizing “coexistence” reflects the holistic and systematic nature of human-nature harmony in the perspective of Chinese path to modernization.

Firstly, the harmony between man and nature constructs a life community where all ecological elements in nature coincide with each other. By incorporating all animals and natural elements such as mountains, rivers, forests, lakes, grassland, sand, ice, etc. Into the life community, various species in nature can live in a more suitable ecological environment and coexist harmoniously according to the laws of natural evolution. This allows the people's production and lifestyle to resonate with the ecological cycle, emphasizing China's unwavering commitment to prioritizing ecology in its modernization. Secondly, the harmony between man and nature constructs a development community where humans and nature mutually benefit. The damage caused by the capital-driven modernization in the West to the ecological environment from the Industrial Revolution till now has not been fully restored. The unbridled pursuit of nature by humans will eventually lead to the ruthless revenge of nature, which will still be humanity itself. The extensive damage caused by humans' arbitrary expansion activities to the natural world is also permanent, warning that socialist modernization must carefully handle the relationship between humans and nature, promote the formation of harmonious interactive state between human society's development and the biological development of nature, and rationally construct a mutually beneficial community between humans and nature with the aim of generating the endogenous driving force for sustainable harmonious development of Chinese path to modernization. Finally, the harmony between man and nature constructs a global community with shared destiny for all human beings worldwide. Around the country, China shares land borders with 14 countries. China has accumulated a lot of experience in allocating and undertaking the responsibility of ecological environment protection among countries through platforms, technology support, demonstration effect, etc. For example, it promotes ecological civilization construction around the country by combining hardware and software, such as improving the ecological cooperation level and regional ecological protection capacity along national boundary; internationally, China has always adhered to the relevant provisions of international environmental conventions and actively provided Chinese wisdom and solutions in building a global ecological governance system. In developing countries, China has actively guided and invested in clean energy projects, enabling more people around the world to enjoy the high-quality changes in life brought about by green development.

In the practice of ecological civilization construction in China, it has been concluded that only through communication and cooperation can response to the current global environmental problems. Facing ecological environment challenges, humans are a community of shared destiny where everyone benefits or suffers together. No country can exist independently.[4] Actively participating in global

governance, adhering to multilateralism, and jointly building a community of shared destiny for all human beings around the world with the international community is the proper meaning for achieving harmony between man and nature.

2.3. Emphasizes the Unity of Economic and Ecological Benefits

Achieving harmony between man and nature not only requires following natural laws for development but also insists on maintaining the coordination and unity of economic benefits and ecological benefits. It is necessary to consciously protect the ecological environment while pursuing economic development, and to achieve healthy economic development while protecting the ecological environment. The relationship between ecological environment protection and economic development is not one of contradiction and opposition, but one of dialectical unity.[5] Hubei Province has made an important role in promoting the unification of ecological and economic benefits by deeply cultivating the development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt. It creates a green, low-carbon development path through coordinated, systematic, intelligent ecological governance in the basin, and promotes the improvement of Hubei's carbon market through environmental protection-induced economic restructuring. Emerging high-tech industries have strategically placed themselves in Hubei, realizing the direction of more balanced, higher-level, and higher-quality development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt. Practice has proven that the ecological environment is also an important part of productivity. In short, it is essential to grasp the relationship between human's material wealth and the beautiful natural environment, adhere to the internal unity of ecological value and economic value, and achieve harmony between man and nature in the process of the new era.

3. Practical Specific Path to Achieving Harmony between Man and Nature

Implementing harmony between man and nature is a systematic project that requires strict adherence to the laws of natural development, and is also a great cause that benefits both the present and future generations. It must be completed with the conscious action and participation of the entire society. "The real content of all epoch-making systems is formed by the needs of that period in which they arise." [7] Therefore, to build a harmonious and sustainable development model for modernization in China, it is necessary to establish a new path for ecological civilization construction based on harmonious development between humans and nature. This includes strengthening the protection and restoration of ecosystems, laying the foundation for green development, adopting a green way of development, and lifestyles, ensuring effective implementation of ecological civilization construction, and cultivating a distinctly green color in Chinese path to modernization.

3.1. To Build a Modernization Framework for Harmonious Development between Humans and Nature

Under the perspective of Chinese path to modernization, constructing a modernization framework for harmonious development between humans and nature means achieving the goal of harmony between man and nature. In the new historical context, harmony between man and nature must be fully implemented with a complete, accurate, and comprehensive adherence to the new development concept, using it as a theoretical guide to build the basic path towards achieving harmony between man and nature, thus supporting Chinese path to modernization. Specifically, firstly, efforts

should be made to accelerate the construction of an ecological government, establish a greener governance structure, firmly adhere to the development concept of prioritizing ecology, and not only strengthen the economic governance but also focus on building an ecological government that can systematically and comprehensively examine the relationship between humans, nature, and themselves. Secondly, deepening the development of green and low-carbon enterprises, establishing a production pattern that adapts to the energy conservation, pollution reduction, and carbon emissions reduction, firmly adhering to the concept of clean and low-carbon production, following the basic principles of the green development logos, and accelerating the upgrading of industries towards green and the low-carbon directions. Thirdly, expanding public participation, establishing a pattern of ecological civilization construction with the public as the main body, firmly adhering to the concept of green and low-carbon living, broadening channels for public participation in ecological civilization construction, and enhancing the sense of ownership among the public in participating in ecological civilization construction. Chinese path to modernization can be achieved through the joint efforts of governments, enterprises, and the public to achieve harmony between man and nature. At the same time, it is necessary to deeply understand the long-term, arduous, and complex nature of achieving harmony between man and nature, and prevent negative phenomena such as “looking at the immediate but ignoring the long-term” and “waiting for handouts.”

3.2. Strengthen the Protection and Restoration of Ecosystems

Strengthening ecosystem protection and restoration is the key foundation for achieving harmony between man and nature. Strengthening ecosystem protection and restoration must follow natural laws.[7] The law of succession of ecosystems is the sum of the natural laws that various biological communities have evolved over the earth's 4 billion years, which were generated under the law of the movement of the sun, moon, and earth on the universe. Therefore, in the top-level design of ecological environment protection and restoration, a systematic concept must always be adhered to enhance ecosystem stability and achieve sustainable development of eco-economic society. Strengthening ecosystem protection and restoration firstly ensure biodiversity, which is the foundation for maintaining the healthy cycle of ecosystems. In the new era, at the national level, ecological functional regions, protected areas, national parks, nature reserves, and other ecosystem protection areas defined by the country are established to ensure long-term and effective protection of biodiversity. Secondly, it is necessary to coordinate the systematic governance of inorganic environments in nature and protect the ecological boundary of biological communities. The inorganic materials and energy, including mountains, rivers, forests, lakes, grasslands, sand stones, and glaciers, form a unified whole with biological communities to constitute an organic system. Stronger management of inorganic environments is an important way to address ecological problems caused by fragmentation. Finally, it is essential to scientifically plan artificial ecosystems to consolidate the material base for Chinese path to modernization development. Artificial ecosystems are built using natural resources to provide human beings with a material base for survival and development. For example, agricultural land, fruit orchards, urban ecosystems provide livable spaces suitable for reproduction. Proper design and careful management of artificial ecosystems can achieve harmony within the entire ecosystem and effectively reduce adverse effects on natural ecosystems caused by the wasteful use of natural resources.

3.3. Promote the Formation of Green Development Patterns and Lifestyles

The way of green development and lifestyle is to implement the ecological civilization thought in the basic social activities of the people, promote the green transformation of the development mode, form a structure group that meets the requirements of green high-quality economic development in the new era, promote the greenification of lifestyle, form a strong force for all citizens to build a resource-saving and environment-friendly society, and fundamentally solve the traditional problem of production, life, development, and ecological deterioration from the source. The ecological environment problem is ultimately a matter of development mode and lifestyle. Firstly, we should deeply practice a green way of development, transforming social and economic development from extensive and wasteful to intensive and green. The a green way of development is a core link of high quality in China's economy in the new era. Deeply practicing a green way of development requires that social and economic development gradually abandons the extensive, wasteful, low-output development mode and turn into a green, cyclical, and low-carbon sustainable development mode. Secondly, proactively advocating a green lifestyle and committed to promot a green lifestyle in developing countries with a population of 1.4 billion.As we all know, most of China's natural resources have advantages compared with other developing countries and developed countries, but the per capita amount is not up to the world average level. The actual situation of China's per capita natural resources determines the urgency and importance of promoting the greenification of lifestyle, building a resource-saving and environment-friendly society, achieving the universalization of a green lifestyle, and realizing the harmony between man and nature.

4. Several key Issues Need to be Addressed during Achieve Harmony between Man and Nature

In the new road to achieving harmony between man and nature, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has always adhered to a problem-oriented approach, starting from caring for the people with ecology, benefiting the people with ecology, working for the people with ecology, firmly grasping the initiative of the development direction of the new era of ecological civilization construction.In general, it is shown on the one hand in solving and improving outstanding environmental problems that affect people's health, and on the other hand in striving to achieve the unity of ecological protection, ecological development, and improvement of people's livelihood. The Chinese path to modernization has put forward more new requirements for the construction of socialist ecological civilization with harmony between man and nature, aiming at solving the contradictions and challenges faced by China in the field of ecological construction in building a comprehensive socialist modernized country. On the new journey of the new era, there are several key issues that need to be handled properly to realize harmony between man and nature.

4.1. The Structural Contradictions in the Ecological Environment Still Remain Prominent

From the overall perspective of the effectiveness of ecological civilization construction, environmental protection and improvement of ecological quality are steadily improving. Especially in areas such as the living environment, air quality, water environment quality, soil quality, significant achievements have been made to varying degrees and stages. However, a comprehensive analysis shows that structural

contradictions in the process of ecological civilization construction still exist, with unclear main responsibilities and low resource utilization rate remaining prominent issues, requiring more highly targeted policy measures. Firstly, there is a structural contradiction in organizational structure. Due to the involvement of multiple subjects and links in ecological environmental construction, it is easy for ecological environmental construction to suffer from fragmentation and systemic governance coordination difficulties in the long run. Secondly, there is a structural contradiction in the energy structure. China's modernization development still heavily relies on industrialization, maintaining increase and pursue higher quality in demand for energy resources, and during the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, it is also the critical period for achieving carbon peaking in the "double carbon" strategy. Reducing pollution and lowering carbon emissions has become a major focus of work in the new era. Thirdly, there is a structural contradiction in spatial structure. Influenced by the distribution of ecological resources and environments, the overlapping and interdependent relationships between production space, living space, and ecological space in ecological civilization construction are becoming increasingly prominent. Fourthly, there is a structural contradiction in the technology structure. Lack of investment in technological innovation and low technology content in addressing new pollutants are important constraints for the transition from quantitative improvement to a qualitative improvement in the ecological environment.

4.2. The International Game in the Ecological Field is Arduous and Challenging

Since the beginning of the new century, China has made significant achievements and changes in ecological civilization construction, which has earned praise from other countries around the world. Jointly participating in global ecological environment governance with other countries has become a necessity. Currently, the trend of international politicalization of ecological environmental issues is increasing, and the international responsibility and rights for ecological environments of various countries is not yet clear. Therefore, the international game in the ecological field still faces great challenges for China. On the one hand, China's advocacy for an earth-based biosphere called the Ecological Civilization Community encounters suspicion from Western countries in the unilateralism and globalization dominated by capitalism. On the other hand, China's international discourse power in the ecological field is facing both practical difficulties and opportunities. [8] In the international game in the ecological field, it is not only a prerequisite for promoting the construction of a community with a shared future for all mankind in order to provide Chinese wisdom and solutions for worldwide human solidarity, but also a means for promoting international society to deeply understand the green and peaceful development connotation of harmony between man and nature under the perspective of China's modernization.

4.3. The Ecological Environment Governance System Urgently Needs to be Developed

In the goal of achieving harmony between humans and nature, and in order to provide strong support for the construction of ecological civilization, how can the modernization of the ecological environment governance system and its capacity adapt to green and high-quality development with Chinese characteristics in the process of achieving harmony between humans and nature is a top priority. Firstly, it is necessary to deepen the concept of ecological environment governance. With the

guidance of ecological civilization thought, we need to form a scientific understanding of ecological environment governance and formulate and implement correct ecological environment governance strategies based on this. Secondly, it is essential to accelerate innovation and improvement of the ecological environment governance system. We should establish a timely and forward-looking institutional system to provide institutional guarantees for ecological environment governance in the new era, ensuring that human-nature harmony and modernization is compatible with a perfect system. Thirdly, it is vital to strengthen the strategic position of talent in ecological environment governance. Training and cultivating a large number of highly qualified and capable individuals is the long-term development plan for the country and the nation, said. By establishing flexible and sustainable talent system and mechanism that meet the requirements of socialist ecological civilization construction, creating a healthy and positive talent development ecosystem, building a high-quality professional talent team, we can make talent the first resource for realizing harmony between man and nature. Finally, it is necessary to build a reasonable and clearly defined governance structure. Based on widespread recognition of ecological environment governance values in society, we should build a governance structure led by the Party committee, with the government as the main player, enterprises, social organizations, and the public participating together. Scientifically designing ecological governance mechanisms, coordinating the strengths of all ecological governance actors in the construction of ecological civilization, gathering together to form a great power for realizing harmony between man and nature in the new era.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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