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The message from a climate meeting on Thursday was that local governments in the United States and China need to take action to facilitate low-carbon and green economies.  
City leaders and experts from the two countries gathered on Thursday for the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco. They shared local-level experiences and explored ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while sustaining economic growth.  
Chinese Special Representative on Climate Change Affairs Xie Zhenhua said in his speech at the opening plenary that local governments, enterprises and nonprofit organizations have had remarkable achievements in low-carbon development.  
He also said China will step up efforts to implement existing policies to ensure 100 percent delivery of the country's pledge to fight climate change.  
"The leadership often starts at the local level. Many of California's ambitious state goals started in cities first," said Kate Meis, executive director of the Local Government Commission NGO. She spoke at the China Pavilion, a forum hosted by California and China on the sidelines of the summit.  
The city of Los Angeles decided to move toward 100 percent renewable power, and smaller cities like Lancaster and Santa Monica set the same goal before California as a whole did, Meis said.  
She said local governments should serve as pilot sites and be innovative. "We often see that cities will be really innovative and at the forefront. That gives political backing to the state, and the state can pass legislation and (issue) executive orders," she said.  
China has made low-carbon development a high priority by establishing a "green economy indicator" system to evaluate local government leaders' performance, said Wang Zhigao, program director of low-carbon cities at Energy Foundation China. It's a good way to stimulate motivation on a local level, he said.  
Wang said most Chinese cities face a challenge in changing from energy-intensive industries to new-energy industries.  
"There are 609 cities in China, and they vary in size and development level," Wang said. Fewer than 10 percent of Chinese cities are developed, and the pressure of reducing emissions comes from changing consumption behavior, he said.  
In over 200 Chinese cities, populations are declining, but the local leaders still want expansion. In those cities, China should curb their desire to expand and help retrain the labor forces of industries heavily reliant on energy for new-energy industries, Wang said.  
In California, transportation pollution is a big challenge, Meis said. "California is ahead of the 2020 goals. But we have actually seen transportation emissions increase in the last quarter century."  
She said the city of Sacramento is a great example of developing a solution: 2,000 residents have access to a free car-share program. "So that's a great example of tackling social equity challenges while also being environmentally friendly," she said.  
Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said he hosted the first US-China Climate Leaders Summit in Los Angeles in 2015, where major cities came together on climate issues.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201809/15/WS5b9c3e9da31033b4f46562fd.html