Background

Griffith University and Peking University in collaboration with the Queensland Government, have established a future-orientated partnership between Australia and China. This partnership will focus on how the region will evolve in the next 20 years and how this evolution can be shaped. With this background, the Dialogues, which is co-organised by The Griffith Asia Institute and Office of International Relations, Centre for Australian Studies, Peking University, will be conceptually linked around the overarching theme of “Charting a Common Future: China, Australia and the Region Beyond 2020”.

The Dialogues incorporate three yearly events: an Annual Leader’s Lecture, Second Track Dialogue and an Emerging Leaders Dialogue. The project works on building capacity and relationships between Queensland, Australia and its Asia Pacific neighbours, particularly China. It encourages cooperation and innovation by bringing together leaders and emerging leaders to discuss issues of importance to the Asia Pacific region. These events provide an avenue to formulate and express ideas than can influence future policy decisions.

2009 Australia China Futures Dialogues

Annual Leader’s Lecture: China’s Rise- its significance for Australia, the Region and the World

Presented by The Honourable Bob Hawke, AC, 150 Members from the Brisbane community, including The Honourable Cameron Dick MP, Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations; The Honourable Stephen Robertson MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade; Mr Zheng Zhanghua, Director, Political Section, Chinese Embassy in Australia; Professor Zhu Xing, Assistant President, Peking University and Professor Peter Andrews AO, Queensland Chief Scientist, Queensland Government attended the lecture on 1 December, 2009.

(L. to R.) The Hon Bob Hawke AC, The Hon Cameron Dick MP, Attorney General and Minster for Industrial Relations, Professor Ian O’Connor, Vice Chancellor, GU and Hon Stephen Robertson MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade

(L. to R.) Professor Liu, Deputy Dean, School of Languages, Peking University; Professor Haig Patapan, Griffith University(GU); Ms Michele Robinson, Director, International Collaborations, DEEDI; Professor Li, Assistant President, Peking University; Professor Zhu, Assistant President, Peking University; Professor Peter Andrews AO, Queensland Chief Scientist; The Honourable Bob Hawke AC; Professor Michael Powell, Pro Vice Chancellor (Business), GU; Professor Ian O’Connor, Vice Chancellor and President, GU; Professor Chris Madden, Pro Vice Chancellor (International), GU; Professor Marilyn McMeniman AM, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost, GU and Mr Liao, Peking University.
It has become widely acknowledged that in the twenty-first century, knowledge, technology and communications will be increasingly important to the functioning of economies and societies. Technology, and the knowledge on which it is based, has become as vital to the functioning of modern economies as have labour and capital. Given the context of the current Global Financial Crisis, knowledge – its substance and its transfer – will be a crucial feature of our region’s capacity to both compete and cooperate over the coming decades. It is with this theme in mind that leading scholars, scientists and officials from across China, Australia and the Asian region came together in Beijing to explore the challenges and opportunities of the Knowledge Economy for Asia’s future at the inaugural second track dialogue.

Professor Stephen Fitzgerald, former Australian Ambassador to China and Deputy Dean Liu Shu Shen from the School of Foreign Languages, Peking University were the co-chairs for the Second Track Dialogue. The Dialogue began with opening remarks by Professor Zhou Qifeng, President of Peking University and Former Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education, Peoples Republic of China, Mr Zhang XinSheng.

One of the highlights of the Dialogue came in its opening minutes with an enlightening and engaging 40-minute address given by China’s Vice-Minister of Education who talked enthusiastically about the importance of regional engagement in the field of knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing. Vice-Minister Zhang is one of the most influential education leaders in China and his presence at the event was considered a major coup.

Dialogue participants came from wide-ranging areas of expertise, and included The Hon. Warwick L. Smith, Chairman of the Advisory Board of Australian Capital Equity Group of Companies (ACE) and Chairman of the Australian New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ Ltd) for the State of NSW and ACT, Mr Suk-In Chang, Director of Korea Institute for Industrial Economics & Trade (KIET), Mr. Yogeesvaran Kumaraguru, Director of Services Industry Section, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Ministers Department, Malaysia and Mr Zhang Zijian, Commission for the Queensland Government Trade and Investment Office.
Participants agreed that one of the most fruitful outcomes of the Dialogue was the opportunity given to discuss the theme of knowledge in a cross-disciplinary context and to engage in discussion with people from disparate areas of expertise and backgrounds.

(L. to R). Professor Ian O’Connor, Vice Chancellor and President of Griffith University, Professor Zhou Qifeng, President of Peking University and Mr. Zhang Xinsheng, Former Vice Minister of Education of the PRC.

Emerging Leaders’ Dialogue: Building an Asia Pacific Knowledge Bank

From the Second Track Dialogues in March this year, one main question was selected that best articulates the connection between innovation and cooperation: How, as a region, can we best share knowledge and communicate that knowledge effectively across geopolitical boundaries? A subsidiary question that arose from the Dialogue was: What scaffolding is required to share knowledge and to build the requisite knowledge infrastructure of the 21st century in our region?

At present, geopolitical boundaries can be a structural hindrance to the free flow of knowledge and innovation. For the Emerging Leaders’ Dialogue the objective of ‘Creating a model of an Asian Knowledge Bank’ was chosen as a practical follow-up to the March Dialogues. Participants were asked to focus on how, as a region, we might be able to build an Asia-Pacific Knowledge Bank as a supranational, collaborative structure. This structure would facilitate the flow of knowledge internationally, bringing sustainable economic and social benefits to the Asia-Pacific Community and the global community at large.

A welcome dinner was hosted by Peking University on the evening of the 21st October where Peking University, Vice President and Director of International Relations Office, Mr Li Yansong, Mr Shen Yang, Deputy Director-General Department of International Cooperation and Exchanges from the Ministry of Education and Professor Michael Dutton, Griffith Asia Institute welcomed the students. Mr Iain Watt, Minister Counsellor Education Australian Embassy officially opened the dialogues the following day. Interspersed throughout the Dialogue were several talks and meetings with various groups, including a tour of Zpark (Zhongguncun Software Park), a dinner with the Australia China Alumni Association with Ms Zaneta Mascarenhas, from Energetics who spoke to the group about “The need for leaders to develop and implement eco-friendly policies and attending the Australian Chamber of Commerce (AustCham) Economic Briefing.
2010 Australia China Futures Dialogues

Annual Leader’s Lecture: Public Sector Innovation

The Annual Leader’s Lecture was held on 21 June 2010 at the China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong (CELAP), Shanghai and formed part of the Queensland Government State Week activities held during the Shanghai World Expo 2010. The Hon Andrew Fraser spoke on ‘Public Sector Innovation’.

Front row (L to R) Mr Li Yansong, Vice President & Director, Office of International Relations, Peking University, Professor Peter Coadrake, Vice-Chancellor, QUT, Mr Feng Jun, Executive Vice President, China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong (CELAP), The Hon Andrew Fraser MP, Queensland Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development, Professor Zhou Qifeng, President, Peking University, Professor Ian O’Connor, Vice Chancellor & President, Griffith University, Professor Peter Andrews, Queensland Chief Scientist and Mr Brendan Connell, Principal Media Advisor, Office of the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development.

Back row (L to R) Mr Xia Hongwei, Executive Deputy Director, Office of International Relations, Peking University, Ms Nina Shen, Project Manager, Shanghai World Expo 2010, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Mr Jiang Haishan, Director General, Department of International Exchange & Program Development, CELAP, Ms Siobhàn Ahern, Director, Shanghai World Expo 2010, DEEDI, Professor Andrew O’Neill, Director, Griffith Asia Institute, Professor Liu Shusen, Deputy Dean, School of Language, Peking University and Professor Haig Patapan, Department of Politics and Public Policy, Griffith University.

Second Track Dialogue: Achieving Sustainable Economic Development in the Asia Pacific

Asia will confront some serious transnational challenges in the early part of the twenty-first century. Foremost among these will be achieving sustainable economic development in an era of rapid climate change. This is a challenge that cannot be met by one country alone—it requires regional cooperation among like-minded countries and a leading role for government and non-government organisations. Above all, it will require new and innovative approaches that are ambitious while at the same time relevant to policy makers and corporate leaders.

The Dialogue brought together a range of high level experts from government, academia, and business with the purpose of formulating new approaches and innovative ways of thinking about sustainable economic development in twenty-first century Asia Pacific. A primary focus of the dialogue was on the issues of climate change and tourism. The dialogue was held over three sessions Sustainability in the 21st Century, The Impact of Climate Change on Economic Sustainability and Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth.

The 2010 Second Track Dialogue was held in the Australian Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo as part of the Queensland Government’s Oceania Month activities on 12 August 2010.
Front Row (L. to R.) Professor Cordia Chu, Director, Centre for Environment and Population Health, Griffith University, Dr BIE Tao, Deputy Director-General, Department of Policy and Law, Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), Professor Andrew O’Neil, Director, Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, The Hon Benny Allan MP, Minister for Environment & Conservation, Papua New Guinea, Professor Ian O’Connor, Vice Chancellor and President, Griffith University, Professor YU Kongjian, Dean, Graduate School of Landscape Architecture, Peking University, Dr Henry Bastaman, Deputy for Community, Empowerment and Environment Communication, Ministry of Environment, Indonesia, Mr Matthew Skoien, Senior Director, Office of Climate Change, Queensland Government, Mr Jiang Haishan, Vice President, China Executive Leadership Academy, Pudong (CELAP)

Back Row (L. to R.) Ms Lina Shen, Senior Manager, China Beijing Environment Exchange, Ms JIA Li, Program Officer / Engineer, The Administrative Centre for China’s Agenda 21 (ACCA21), Ms Juan Wang, Research Fellow, Griffith Asia Institute, Ms Kym Cheatham, Chief Executive Officer, Eco Tourism Australia, Dr Kunihiko Shimada, Principal International Policy Coordinator and Principal Negotiator, Ministry of the Environment Japan, Professor Tsunekazu Toda, Department of Management Studies, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Hiroshima University, Professor David Weaver, Department of Tourism, Leisure, Hotel and Sport Management, Griffith University, Mr Chris Flynn, Regional Director, PATA Pacific, Professor Barry Brook, Sir Hubert Wilkins Chair of Climate Change, Environment Institute, University of Adelaide, Ms Katherine Harman, General Manager, Industry Development Branch, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, Australian Government, Mr BI Jianzhong, Assistant General Manager of China Beijing Environment Exchange, Dr ZHANG Junyi, Hiroshima University, Professor LV Bin, Professor and Chair, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, College of Urban and Environmental Sciences, Peking University, Dr Amanda Katili Niode, Manager, The Climate Project Indonesia, Ms ZHOU Manli, Deputy Chief, Office of International Relations, Peking University and Mr. LIU Genfa, Director, Department of International Exchange & Program Development, China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong (CELAP).

Ms Lyndall Sachs, Commissioner General for Australia, World Exposition 2010 opening the Dialogues.

The Hon Benny Allan MP, Minister for Environment & Conservation, Papua New Guinea

Mr Matthew Skoien, Senior Director, Office of Climate Change, Queensland Government gave opening remarks and also presented at session 2.
PhD Students from Australia, China and the Region met from 27-29 September 2010 in Brisbane. The focus of the dialogue was on China’s motives and aims in Asia, China’s strengths and vulnerabilities as a regional actor and the sorts of policies and approaches other countries, including Australia should be pursuing in their interactions with China.

Strong emphasis was placed on free and frank exchange of views, supported by logical academic arguments. The net result of the Forum was a greater understanding of the various complexities of China’s rise in Asia. The dialogues kicked off with a keynote address by Dr Richard Rigby, Executive Director of the ANU’s China Institute, which was followed by an expert panel discussion. A total of eight students were selected to present their submitted research paper and group work was held the following day. The Emerging Leaders’ also met with Mr John Michell, State Director Queensland, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and had the opportunity to hear Consul General Mr Ren Gongping and Ms Sharon Wang, MSL Lawyers speak at the co-hosted Dialogues and Australia China Business Council reception.