



FWC Services for the Implementation of External Aid 2018

Final Evaluation EC-LINK Project

For partner country China

Project N° 2018-645

Final Report

January 2021



Project funded by
The European Union



DT Global

Project implemented by
DT GLOBAL International Europe

The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of **DT GLOBAL International Europe S.L.**
and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union



Final Report

Project N° 2018-645

by

Dirk Blink

&

Liu Yonggong

Presented by



In consortium with



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY	5
PREAMBLE	8
1 INTRODUCTION	9
1.1 The Project	9
1.2 Project Intervention Logic: Objectives & Expected Results	9
1.3 Project Stakeholder Map	10
1.4 The Evaluation	10
1.4.1 Scope & Objectives	10
1.4.2 Methodology & Work Plan	11
2 FINDINGS	12
2.1 Relevance	12
2.2 Coherence	16
2.3 Effectiveness	21
2.4 Efficiency	24
2.5 Impact	28
2.6 Sustainability	31
2.7 EU Added Value	33
2.8 Cross-cutting Issues	34
2.8.1 Gender	34
2.8.2 Environment & Climate Change	34
3 LESSONS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	35
3.1 Lessons Learnt	35
3.2 Conclusions	36
3.3 Recommendations	38
ANNEXES	40
Annex 1: Terms of Reference	40
Annex 2: Evaluation Team	51
Annex 3: Detailed Evaluation Methodology	52
Annex 4: Evaluation Matrix	55
Annex 5: Detailed Answers to the Evaluation Questions	60
Annex 6: Three Logframes – 2013, 2018 & 2019	79
Annex 7: Theory of Change	91
Annex 8: Follow-up Status: MTE & ROM Recommendations	95
Annex 9: Use of Human Resources	104
Annex 10: EC Link Work Plans & Progress Reports	105
Annex 11: Documentation	107
Annex 12: Persons Interviewed	110
Annex 13: Evaluation Assignment Schedule	115
Annex 14: Field Work Schedule	116
Annex 15: Map	117

GLOSSARY

Item	Description
<i>Acquis</i>	The legislation, regulations & court decisions constituting the body of EU law (<i>acquis communautaire</i>)
ADB	Asia Development Bank
AFD	<i>Agence française de développement</i>
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAG	Chinese Academy of Governance
CAM	Chinese Association of Mayors
CABEE	China Association for Building Energy Efficiency
CBEX	China Beijing Environment Exchange
CCCPC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CCUD	Chinese Centre for Urban Development (at NDRC)
CDIA	Cities Development Initiative for Asia
CDRF	China Development Research Foundation
CECA	Chinese Eco City Academy
CNY ¹	Chinese Yuan Renminbi
CNU	City Network Unit
CSUS	Chinese Society for Urban Studies
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DMF	Design & Monitoring Framework
EC	European Commission
EC Link	Europe-China ECO Link Project
ER	Expected Result (or Outcome)
EU	European Union
EUCCC	European Union Chamber of Commerce in China
EUD	EU Delegation to China & Mongolia
EUR	Euro
FA	Financing Agreement
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FE	Final Evaluation
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GB	Green Buildings
GHG	Green House Gases
GI	Green Industry
GIZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH</i>

¹ EUR-CNY exchange rate at the final evaluation cut-off date (InforEuro, Sep 2020): EUR 1 = CNY 8.1749.

Item	Description
GMF	Green Municipal Finance
GoPRC	Government of the PRC
GT	Green Transportation
HURD	Bureau of Housing, Urban & Rural Development (at municipal level)
ICL	Inter-City Lab
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IE	Incidental Expenditure
IFI	International Financing Institutions
IT	Information Technology
IURC	International Urban & Regional Cooperation
IUC	International Urban Cooperation
KE	Key Expert
KFW	<i>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i>
MEUR	Million Euro
MF	Municipal Finance
MoEE	Ministry for Ecology & Environment
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFCOM	Ministry of Commerce
MoHURD	Ministry of Housing & Urban- Rural Development
MoST	Ministry of Science & Technology
MS	Member State (of the EU)
MSME	Micro-, Small or Medium-sized Enterprise
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NFP	National Focal Point (SWITCH Asia Programme)
NKE	Non-Key Expert
NRDC	National Development & Reform Commission
NSS	National Support Staff
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development
OO	Overall Objective
OWP	Overall Work Plan
PAG	Project Advisory Group
PAGoDA	Pillar-Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement
PCM	Project Cycle Management
pm	<i>pro memoria</i> (not to forget; not part of the Project's staffing or budget)
PP	Project Purpose [Specific Objective(s)]
PRC	People's Republic of China
PT	Project Team (TAT + PTF)
PTF	Project Task Force
RACER	Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy (to monitor) & Robust

Item	Description
SCP	Sustainable Consumption & Production (Switch Asia)
SGDF	Shandong Green Development Fund (ADB, AFD & KFW supported)
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Time-Bound (indicators)
SWM	Solid Waste Management
TAT	Technical Assistance Team
TBD	To be determined
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
WD	Working Day
ZOPP	<i>Ziel-orientierte Projektplanung</i> (goal-oriented project planning) [GIZ]

PREAMBLE

The present document is the draft final report (DFR) for the final evaluation of the Europe-China ECO Cities (EC Link) Project [Service Contract N° DCI-ASIA 2013/329-453].

The evaluation assignment covers the whole duration of the Project (2013-2020). This DFR sets out the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation carried out on the basis of the terms of reference (ToR) issued by the Delegation of the European Union to China (EUD), the consultants' technical proposal, as well as the discussions with the Chinese authorities, EUD and other stakeholders in the course of the field work period (September-October 2020).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Project

Table 1 – Project Synopsis

Item	Date/Value	Item	Date/Value
FA Execution Period	90 months (until 29/03/2021)	Contract Duration:	82 months + 12 days
Project Implementation [Inception Period]	75 months + 12 days [7 months]	Contract Value:	EUR 9,304,400 [for an initial implementation period of 48 months; followed by two ‘no-cost extensions’ of that period (for a total of 34 months and 12 days)]; including an initial provision for incidental expenditure of EUR 2,850,000 [in Sep 2018 reduced to EUR 982,780]
Contractor	GIZ International Services (Germany)	Consortium Partners	<i>Climate Alliance</i> (Germany), <i>Eurocities</i> (Belgium) ² , the <i>European Chamber of Commerce in China</i> (EUCCC) and <i>Sweco</i> (Denmark)
Start/End Dates Implementation [Inception]	17 Nov 2013 – 29 Sep 2020 [17 Nov 2013 – 17 Jun 2014]	Final Evaluation cut-off date:	29 Sep 2020
Project/Counterpart Staff:	International Technical Assistance Team (TAT): 3 key experts (KE) positions: Team Leader (KE1), Sustainable Urban Development (KE2) & Senior Knowledge Management (KE3)	TAT National Support Staff : 3 FTEs: Project, Communications and Financial Management	Project Task Force (PTF) [Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS) counterpart staff]: Project Director, Deputy Project Director and Urban Planning Expert
Nº of KE working days (WDs) budgeted:	3,713 [Contract Addendum 7, pp. 139]:	KE utilisation at 29/09/2019 [Annex 9]:	3,778 (102%)
Nº of NKE working days budgeted:	2,945 (Senior Experts) 754 (Junior Experts)	NKE utilisation at 29/09/2019 [Annex 9]:	Senior Experts: 2,861 (97%) Junior Experts: 756.5 (100%)

1.2 Project Intervention Logic: Objectives & Expected Results

The overall objective of the Europe-China ECO Cities Link (EC LINK) Project is to support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12th Five Year Development Plan (FYP)³.

The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance (TA) to the Chinese *Ministry of Housing & Urban-Rural Development* (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions.

² Eurocities withdrew from the consortium, which was formalised in the 2018 addendum for the 2nd project extension.

³ And, although not specifically referred to, the 13th FYP for the period 2016-20.

The project’s intervention logic further includes a total of seven (expected) results (or outcomes).

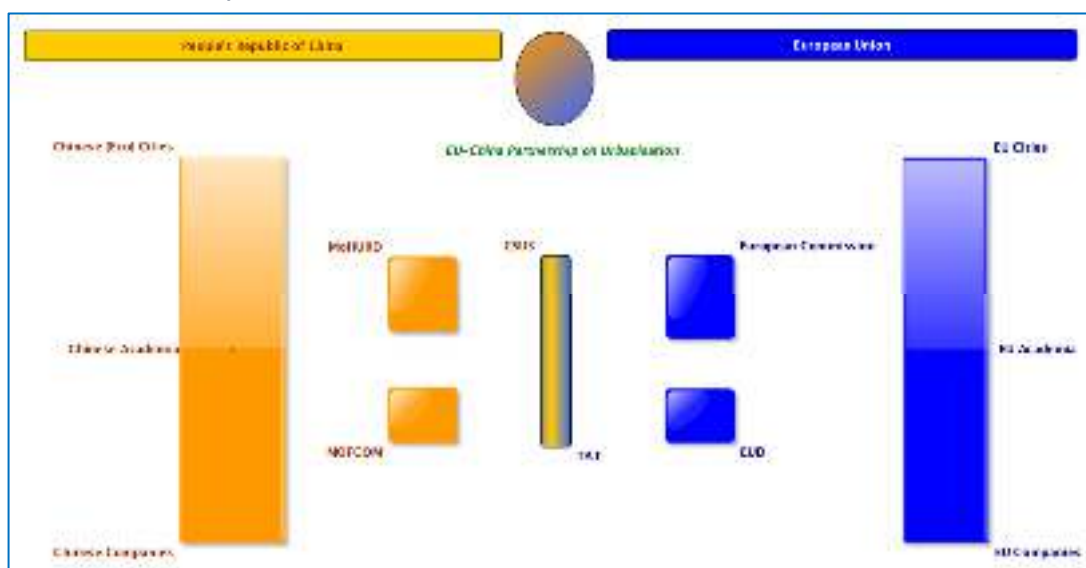
The original intervention logic, including the seven results, as set out in the project’s ToR and validated in the course of the intervention’s inception period (which ended in June 2014) remains in place at the start of the current evaluation assignment. The complete intervention logic is set out in a set of project logframes, the last of version in which dates from April 2019 [Annex 6].

1.3 Project Stakeholder Map

The following provisional stakeholder map [Figure 1] developed in the course of the evaluation inception, was validated in the course of the evaluation assignment.

It demonstrates a relatively straightforward project structure, appropriately delineating the prima facie role of the stakeholders.

Figure 1 – Stakeholder Map



1.4 The Evaluation

1.4.1 Scope & Objectives

The main objectives of the final evaluation of the EC LINK project were to provide the relevant services of the European Union, interested stakeholders and the wider public with:

- an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the EC-LINK project, paying particular attention to its results measured against its expected objectives; and the reasons underpinning such results; and
- key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations in order to improve current and future interventions.

The specific objective of the evaluation was to understand the performance of the Project, its enabling factors and those hampering a proper delivery of results in order to support Chinese ministries, MoHURD in particular, to enhance eco-urban policy-making and relevant international cooperation with the EU and EU Member States (MS), and to inform the planning of future EU interventions and actions in the same sector.

The main users of the evaluation are the European Commission’s Directorate General for International Cooperation & Development (DG DEVCO), the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments

(FPI), the EUD, and the European and Chinese cities, institutions and stakeholders involved in the project's intervention.

1.4.2 Methodology & Work Plan

The evaluation was carried out in line with standard EU and Organisation of Economic Cooperation & Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation methodology, as applicable to EU external actions. Seven evaluation criteria were used, respectively:

- **Relevance** looks at the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.⁴
- **Coherence** involves looking at the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.
- **Effectiveness** analysis considers the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.
- **Efficiency** considers the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.
- **Impact** considers the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.
- **Sustainability** concerns the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.
- **EU-added value** looks at the extent to which the Intervention brings additional benefits to what would have resulted from [EU] Member States' interventions only in the partner country.

The evaluation assignment was carried out on behalf of EUD, in line with Section 8.2 of the project ToR, which provides for external evaluations by independent experts.

The evaluation methodology is set out in detail in **Annex 3**. The 13 evaluation questions (EQ), as well as the related judgement criteria, relevant indicators and data sources formulated by the evaluation team [**Annex 2**] are in the Evaluation Matrix [**Annex 4**].

Detailed answers to the EQs are collected in **Annex 5**. The project's use of available expert time is summarised in **Annex 9**.

Following a review of relevant project documentation [**Annex 11**], the evaluation team carried out the field work in the course of Sep-Oct 2020, in line with the assignment work plan and the field work schedule set out in **Annexes 13 & 14**. The cut-off date of the evaluation was the last day of implementation of the project, 29 September 2020, which fell within the field work period.

Due the Covid-19 situation in Europe over the period of the assignment, the EU-based member of the evaluation team (KE1) could not travel to China and participated in key meetings via video link.

The persons interviewed in the course of the evaluation are listed in **Annex 12**.

⁴ These definitions from Annex VII of the evaluation assignment ToR differ from the ones in Tool 47 – Evaluation criteria and questions, in Better Regulation, European Commission, but cover the same ground. For instance, there the criterion 'relevance' is defined as: 'the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of the intervention and hence touches on aspects of design'.

2 FINDINGS

2.1 Relevance

EQ1: To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid? ^[1]_[SEP]

The project's intervention logic has essentially remained unchanged over the seven years of its implementation period. The overall objective (OO) and purpose of the EC Link project, as formulated at the start of the project, were still in force at project's end. Although the logframe was amended twice (in September 2018 and, informally, in April 2019), the expected results have remained largely the same.

The link between expected results, on the one hand, and the OO and the purpose, on the other hand were never adequately made explicit through good quality SMART indicators, or a detailed theory of change. Several attempts were made to formulate results-level indicators, even at the stage of final report preparation, but the intervention logic remained output, rather than results-oriented until project's end.

Ways to amend the intervention logic and the ToR at large were discussed several times in the course of the project duration, without action being taken, partly – perhaps mainly – for fear of falling foul of applicable procurement rules as laid down in the PRAG and the project's General Conditions of Contract. Changing the original intervention was seen by EUD and the contractor as a substantial contract amendment [Box 1].

The Finance & Control section of EUD Bangkok countered the view that procurement rules were the underlying reason for not changing the ToR and the intervention logic. The real reason was the fact that there was so long disagreement between the TAT, EUD and MoHURD on the course to be taken by the project that the resulting impasse could only be broken by changes in the team, new work plans and a 'let's-get-on-with-it' attitude (see also below). The latter was reinforced in the view of Finance & Control by the realisation on the part of the project and EUD that Chinese interest in the project in 2017 had waned in comparison with that at its start in 2013.

It is to be noted that appropriate changes in the Project's intervention logic and related indicators need not have been substantial in the sense of the contract award conditions. They would have served to clarify and make more measurable project outcomes hitherto solely expressed in terms of thoroughly interchangeable outputs.

Box 1: Contract Amendments and the PRAG

Some interviewees remarked on this issue that a change of the ToR during implementation might run counter to applicable procurement regulations of the Commission Services. If that was the reason for not amending the ToR, such is not correct, given the absence of an explicit statement to that effect in the *Practical Guide to Contract Procedures in EU External Actions* (PRAG). It is perhaps based on an overly rigid interpretation of the section of the PRAG. 1

Although strict conditions apply to contract modifications, including changes to the ToR, they are allowed. If there were no room at all for contractual changes, including changes to the ToR, it would be rather pointless for instance to require contractors to write project inception reports. The inception period *inter alia* serves to take another look at a project's environment and ascertain whether the intervention logic in the original project design still accords with the circumstances at the start of project implementation. Any changes in the project environment during the inception period would have been faced by any other contractor also. The same would apply to the changes during the implementation period. It is true, the PRAG sets limits on the value of admissible changes in the overall contract price and individual project budget lines. However, most desirable amendments in the ToR of the present project would not have been affected by this threshold, if at all. The Project's two duration extensions were agreed well into, respectively, the fourth and fifth years of implementation, by which time changes in the 'circumstances affecting project implementation' would have changed anyway, in the prevailing project environment.

The original intervention logic did not link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) formulated by the UN and formally adopted by the EU in 2017⁵. It could not, because the SDGs had not yet been formulated at the time of the project design (2012) and were promulgated only in 2015. The project formally established a link with Agenda 2030 in September 2018, with an amended logframe that included a total of seven indicators linking to three (out of 17) SDGs: respectively SDGs 6, 11 & 13⁶. This linkage was reduced in the April 2020 logframe in that five of the seven indicators were dropped, leaving only two indicators linked to, respectively, SDGs 11 & 13.⁷

In spite of the less than expected uptake of the project's services in the first three years of its operations, project reporting over the last three years of its duration, as well as the interviews conducted with stakeholder and beneficiary representatives indicate increased interest on the part of local Chinese partners in the participating cities.

Interlocutors generally were positive about the project's relevance, in spite of delays in effective implementation of pilot projects and sometimes patchy uptake by city-level stakeholders. For instance:

- In Chinese pilot cities: the EC Link project has high (policy) relevance for the Qingdao government's green urban development strategy and green financing, Weihai's delicate urban construction strategy and Loyang's high urban development policy. The project's green financing advice was much appreciated by policy makers in pilot cities Qingdao and Weihai, as the EC Link project assisted these two cities in drawing up five green urban development project proposals shortlisted for financing by the SGDF. The integrated implementation of five pilot projects in Zhuhai City is highly relevant with the governmental low-carbon and eco-city development strategy during the 13th FYP. Partners interviewed in Guilin and Zhuzhou also confirmed the high relevance of EC Link supported green building pilot projects and relevant training for their low-carbon and green city development strategy.
- Implementing partners in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Bologna and Valencia were positive on the relevance of the project, both from the Chinese and EU perspective, although they noted significant differences in expectations on the Chinese and EU sides. The Chinese partners expected practical answers and solutions to specific questions and concrete problems, where the EU-side expected more of an exchange of experience and insights between equal institutional partners and technical peers, both at the central and city level.
- The TAT referred to initial high relevance in all 'sectors' of low carbon urbanisation but later concentrated on three sectors especially: resilience, water management and green financing. The TAT noted that developments in China had outpaced the project design, especially in the first half of its duration, which caused the project to lose relevance to the needs of Chinese pilot cities. This was compensated by an increase of the project's pace of implementation, as well as a new focus on green financing during its last 2.5 years.
- The project's main counterpart entity, MoHURD, expressed the view that the selected 'sectors' and 'intervention areas' of the EC Link project are in general relevant to Chinese national and local low-carbon and eco-city development strategy and on-going intervention areas. The project also complies with the demand in China over the past two decades for fast urban development. Interviewed MoHURD officials positively assessed the project's relevance and

⁵ *European Consensus on Development*, European Commission, Brussels, 2017.

⁶ SDG 6 – Clean Water & Sanitation; SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities & Communities; and SDG 13 – Climate Action.

⁷ In discussions during the April 2019 ROM exercise, the TAT concluded that the dropped indicators were considered too ambitious and unrealistic to measure. This is plausible given that difficulties with the complex metadata of most SDG targets continue to be an issue in many countries that adopted the SDGs as part of their socio-economic planning models.

professed commitment to the project. However, this commitment was not always experienced as such by other stakeholders, including members of the TAT. The counterpart entity’s commitment to the project was seen to vary in accordance with the views of successive responsible persons within MoHURD.

- The project’s other counterpart, the Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS) – senior staff of which, together with the TAT, formed the Project Task Force (PTF) – confirmed the project’s focus on technical output delivery to the detriment of policy dialogue and consultation.
- According to the partners in the implementing GIZ Consortium, EC Link realised its potential for substantial discussion of ecological and water management issues between like-minded personnel in China and Europe. It failed to consider sufficiently the importance of the political level in pilot cities; the trouble the project was in during its first three years caused an attitude of ‘let’s do something, anything’ and focus on output delivery.
- The contractor’s assessment of relevance remained positive throughout, although it was aware that proceeding by ‘trial-and-error’ during the first half of the project – due to EUD, GIZ and TAT disagreeing on the strategy to be pursued by the project, insufficient consultation with MoHURD and the pilot cities, and the resulting gaps between supply and demand in terms of project activity in 2016 – had negatively affected the perception of relevance amongst stakeholders.
- EC Link’s objectives and results were coherent with the 12th and the 13th FYP, at both the national and local level. The 12th FYP set green development, resource saving and environment-friendly society as goals for national development. Almost all interviewed representatives from MoHURD, CSUS and all 6 pilot cities pointed out that the project’s objectives and expected results were generally coherent with the goals and targets of the 13th FYP and China’s national green and low carbon development strategies. The project is also highly coherent with China’s commitment to reduce carbon emissions and China’s 13th Action Plan for Energy-Saving & Low Carbon Emission as formulated by MoHURD and enacted by the State Council in 2016, as well as the Action Plan for Urban Adaptation to Climate Change formulated by MoHURD in 2016.

The EC Link objective remains highly valid for China’s 14th FYP (2021-25) which foresees pursuing effective transformation towards green production, green lifestyle and green society. It is also highly relevant to China’s strategic commitment to reach its peak of GHG emissions by 2030 and realise carbon neutrality by 2060.

Based on the national development policy analysis [Box 2], findings from interviews with pilot city partners (first

bullet above) and with MoHURD officials and Chinese experts, the evaluation identified the following priority areas for future EU-China cooperation: (i) development of a favoured policy and institutional framework for promoting sustainable and green urban development in China; (ii) a green finance mechanism for urban development; and (iii) assisting Chinese cities in implementing green building standards, and developing and applying energy saving measurement systems.

Box 2: Green Development Strategic Priorities in the 14th FYP

By end-2030 the green transformation of production and lifestyle will achieve remarkable results, the allocation and consumption structure of energy resources will be more rational and optimized, the energy utilization efficiency will be significantly improved.

China will continue to implement sustainable urban development program, such as urban renewal, urban ecosystem rehabilitation, resilient and sponge city, etc.

The country will accelerate the green and low-carbon development; strengthen the legal and policy framework green development; develop green finance, support green production technology innovation, promote clean production, develop environment-friendly industries; further promote clean, low-carbon, safe and efficient use of energy; promote green buildings.

Source: CCCPC Strategic Proposal for formulating 14th FYP, November 2020

EQ2: Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

As stated, the original project logframe as included in the contract (Nov 2013) was formally amended once, in Sep 2018 and, informally, in Apr 2019. The changes were limited and focused on the indicators, following recommendations from the ROM assignment (Feb-Mar 2019). At that time, the project had already embarked on planning its final year of operations and closure. It was therefore considered inappropriate to change the intervention logic and results chain, since this would affect the project's efficiency of implementation. EUD is of the opinion that the responsibility for improving the quality of indicators in the logframe rest with the contractor, based on the advice of M&E experts where necessary.⁸

Also because the theory of change underlying the project approach was never made explicit [Section 2.3, EQ6], no objective statements can be made of the consistency of project outputs with the results and impact expected of the project.

- All indicators pertained to or were expressed in terms of deliverable outputs, generally lacking 'SMART-ness', although quantified.
- In addition, neither the ToR nor technical progress reporting (12 six-monthly reports and a final report) made clear in what way the delivery of project outputs would contribute or had contributed to achievement of the project's results and objectives.
- Neither the ToR nor the technical progress reports explained whether, and if so, how the quantified targets in the output-oriented indicators had been arrived at and why those quantities might be considered sufficient in terms of the results to be achieved.

The intervention logic could have been improved by formulating adequate indicators at outcome or results level ('SMART', as suggested in the MTE report, or 'RACER'¹⁰, as suggested in the ROM report). In the event, this was not done, leaving measurement of effectiveness (results) and impact (purpose, OO) dependent on a large number of output indicators. By their nature, output indicators are limited in that they do not specify the outputs' contribution to project goal achievement. In other words, the project lacked sound internal monitoring arrangements.

The problems with the intervention logic may reflect the fact that the design of the project did not sit well with the intentions behind the project concept. Those intentions were of an overarching EU-China cooperation nature, as embodied in the Partnership [Section 2.2] and the 2012 EU-China Mayors Forum. While service contracts remain a key instrument, other available modalities, such as delegated cooperation, might improve the impact of this type of project. Such an intervention, with political overtones that on the EU also related to local government entities and their interests in Member States, is hard to implement by a commercial contractor, however qualified, without multi-level diplomatic support, both formal and informal.

Because its underpinning political intentions – i.e. to provide benefits to EU cities – were not always clearly spelled out, the project was allowed to lose sight of them early on, with as consequence that

⁸ The evaluators see this as a joint responsibility of the Contracting Authority, the contractor and the TAT, with – in this case – EUD taking the lead. In this case, agreement between the parties on a (slightly) amended logframe was produced only in April 2018, i.e. four and half years into the seven-year project implementation period. The reviewed logframe benefitted from the expertise of the ROM expert deployed by the Commission Services in March/April 2018, although not all of that expert's recommendations were taken on board by the contractor.

⁹ SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Time-Bound.

¹⁰ (i) Relevant (i.e. closely linked to the objectives to be reached); (ii) Accepted (by staff and stakeholders); (iii) Credible (for non-experts, unambiguous and easy to interpret); (iv) Easy to monitor (data collection at low cost); and (v) Robust (against manipulation). Source: Toolbox N° 41, *Better Regulation*, European Commission.

it found little traction with EU cities. Without the necessary strong networking effort targeting EU cities, the project fell back on the provision of technical assistance to Chinese cities. Unfortunately, the latter were initially not in a position to express their needs clearly.

However, there are also successful cases in the intercity cooperation between Zhuhai and EU cities of Amsterdam in the Netherlands and Valencia in Spain. Experts from these two EU cities were involved in the implementation of pilot projects in Zhuhai and delivered systematic consultancy reports with concrete and feasible technical and policy recommendations.

2.2 Coherence

EQ3: Does the Action align with EU's interests and needs?

The evaluation assessed the coherence of EC Link Project both with Chinese similar initiatives and with the relevant EU-China partnership, as well as the alignment with EU's interests and expectations. Both MOHURD and all visited pilot cities confirmed the high relevance with the low carbon city, green building and eco-city development programmes implemented by MOHURD and the city level HURDs. From the thematic perspective, EC Link interventions aligned with the Low-Carbon Pilot City Programme launched by the National Development & Reform Commission (NDRC) since 2008. This assessment included the issue of how the Project's outputs and results are shared with NDRC-led pilot cities. EC Link outputs were shared and used in the NDRC Low Carbon City Programme in Qingdao and Guilin. Both cities were selected as pilot cities of the latter programme, with the local HURDs responsible for implementing green building and low carbon urban infrastructure components of the NDRC pilot programme. The EC Link project was initiated and prepared MoHURD and HURD without involvement and consultation with NDRC. EUD as partner for relevant Chinese ministries also attempted to build synergies between EC-LINK and other relevant projects like IUC funded by EU FPI, but it has not significantly improved yet.

The project finds its genesis in the observation (in the ToR, Section 1.4) that the EU was already engaged in some cooperation initiatives with Chinese and international think-tanks, EU MS and international financing institutions (IFI) in China, but that (i) synergies and knowledge sharing among initiatives remained largely untapped; (ii) accessibility to information on the key findings under these initiatives was quite scattered and (iii) many more Chinese cities may not get this type of advantageous partnerships for themselves. Hence, *the clear need for centralised knowledge management and information through a 'platform' where information is accessible at national and EU (international) level and lessons learned can be discussed, where new approaches can be presented, and up-to-date advice provided.*

According to the ToR (dating from 2012, but still underpinning the project at its end) European cities *are now increasingly sustainable and able to offer the kind of quality of life and opportunities that make people want to live in them and make businesses want to invest.* As Europe was considered to be *well placed to be a strategic partner for China in sustainable urban development and share the wide range of expertise and knowledge accumulated among its institutions and its 27 Member States,* the EU and China embarked on a high-level partnership on sustainable urbanisation, through cooperative efforts at the central, regional and local levels. The partnership was launched at the 14th China-EU Summit in February 2012 and confirmed in the *Joint Declaration on the EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation* (Brussels, May 2012). The Partnership is a broad political initiative favouring the development of adequate solutions in various areas pertinent to sustainable urban development. It is structured in five pillars:

- (i) The Government-to-Government Pillar to enable the two sides to reflect together on new urbanisation trends, its consequences and share best practices on territorial planning.
- (ii) The City Networking Pillar for city level projects contributing to enhance cooperation with local stakeholders. The EC Link project was envisaged as an important initiative under this pillar.

- (iii) The Science & Technology Pillar to mobilise the Sino-European research community to deliver on the themes of the Partnership in the context of the *Innovation Cooperation Dialogue* and the dialogue on ICT policies between the Commission Services and the Chinese Ministry of Industry & Information Technology.
- (iv) The Business & Finance Pillar for discussing the creation by European and Chinese companies and financiers of an *EU-China Sustainable Urbanization Business Council* designed to foster the emergence of the best urban solutions.
- (v) Public participation in urban social management: with civil society and non-state actors contributing to the attainment of the objectives of the platform.

The ToR (Section 1.5) briefly, but explicitly mention a number of EU-funded initiatives in this and related areas in the period 2003-2020, with as the main ones the annual *EU-China Urbanization Forum* and the *EU-China Mayors Forum*. Other actions aimed at: (i) an integrated approach to sustainable development of new towns and satellite cities in Asia and focusing in China on two districts in Shanghai; (ii) analysing China’s urbanisation trends for the next 40 years; (iii) emissions trading pilots; (iv) supporting Chinese efforts at environmental sustainability by reducing water and heavy metal pollution; and (v) discussing the development of a low carbon economy in China. The *Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2), 2010-15*, led by *Politecnico de Torino* (Italy), promoted the development of methodological tools that could be proposed to other Chinese cities via the EC Link project. In addition, there were at the start of the project eleven *SWITCH-Asia (2014-20)* interventions to promote sustainable consumption and production in China, with some implementing pilots in fields relevant to EC Link. This included a 2.2 million euros (MEUR) action to promote energy efficiency and sustainable building practices in Western China, in cooperation with the *Wuppertal Institute für Klima* (Germany). This reflects an attempt to build synergies with EC-LINK on building efficiency, but the relevant contacts remained at TAT level and did not include MoHURD directly.

The project documentation and interviews with interlocutors paint a picture of a project initially struggling to find its place and way in a rapidly changing environment. This environment remains characterised by numerous Chinese interventions in the sphere of energy savings and sustainability, as well as low-carbon energy management in an urbanisation context.

Ultimately, however, the project seems to have managed bringing together a number of Chinese and EU partners with an interest in the scientific development and implementation of practical measures in this field.

In recent years, MoHURD is also cooperating with Germany, French and Finland in the area of ecocity development and sustainable urban development with focus mainly on the policy dialogue and technical exchange and capacity building of Chinese technical and management staff. No evidence found that the EC Link results are shared with these project partners, even CSUS also the management unity designated by MoHURD. EC Link results, guidelines and toolboxes, have so far been shared mainly with the portfolio of German projects (funded by GIZ and other German ministries) in the field of sustainable urban development in China. A website to showcase results from ongoing projects in this field will include EC Link products, EUD permitting.

EQ4: To what extent does the Action complement with other actions in the same sector?

The project’s ToR did not make mention of specific EU Member State initiatives in the ToR, although some Member States, including Germany through GIZ, were active in energy management in China. The ToR did observe that *many EU Member States are particularly active in the urbanisation domain, thus contributing to [the] Urbanisation Partnership with a wide range of actions on pilot districts and eco-cities, local low carbon strategies, sustainability indicators, regional urban planning, carrying capacity of cities and circular economy in the urban context, district heating and*

cooling, green buildings and retrofitting [and] *urban mobility*. Other international, bi-lateral efforts include the Swiss Government’s funding of a Low Carbon Cities project, a bottom-up action supporting a limited number of ‘committed’ cities to meet their carbon emissions targets.

The EC Link Project is also highly complementary with the EU SWITCH Asia Programme launched in 2007. One of the grant efforts in the construction sector is the SusBuild Programme *Up-scaling and Mainstreaming Sustainable Building Practices in Western China* implemented in Chongqing and Yunnan from 2016 to 2019. The project aims at upscaling sustainable building practices in less developed Western China, reducing the climate and resource impact of the building sector, and contributing to sustainable socio-economic growth in China. The main outputs and lessons learnt from the SusBuild programme were delivered to MoHURD through a number of policy dialogues. As a follow up, recently, the MoHURD commissioned SusBuild partner *China Association for Building Energy Efficiency (CABEE)* in cooperating with local partners in Chongqing and Yunnan for conducting a feasibility study for developing China’s 14th FYP (2021-25) for sustainable building development. MoHURD took the recommendations made by SusBuild and initiated a feasibility study on upscaling green financing for building energy efficiency. At the local level, the Chongqing and Yunnan housing authorities acknowledged the policy action plans developed in SusBuild and will consider them when developing the local five year plans for sustainable building development. In addition, a series of training handbooks for green construction and building energy management were produced.

The green financing products and procedures developed with the support of the programme will be used by the Bank of Chongqing (BoCQ) for financing micro-, small or medium-sized enterprises (MSME) in the building sector. Various match-making events between BoCQ and local building MSMEs improved mutual understanding and trust between the two parties, which is likely to facilitate access to green loans by the MSMEs. SusBuild also recommended local governments to provide financial incentives to support sustainable building development, to mitigate the financial barriers faced by MSMEs.

Other EU-funded programs related to the EC Link include URBACHINA (2011-15), the Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2) (2011-2015). The International Urban Cooperation (IUC) programme (2016-20) is a new initiative of the EU to foster its sustainable urban diplomacy through boosting sectoral, transversal and international urban cooperation and exchange with public and private city partners at regional level. The programme is funded by the EU’s Foreign Partnership Instrument (FPI), with a focus on city-to-city partnering on sustainable urban development, as well as climate action at sub-national level under the *Global Covenant of Mayors* initiative. See Table below.

Table 2: A comparison of intervention priorities of EC Link and other EU China Initiatives

Indicator	EC Link	SWITCH Asia	FPI
Green Building	Building Design, Passive House	Sub-BIRD (construction)	Asia Mayor Forum: climate change and energy
Green Transport	Pilot Projects in Qingdao, Weihai, Zhuhai	Partly included	IUC forum: clean tech, clean energy and circular economy
Energy efficiency for SME	N/A	Sustainable Consumption & Production (SCP), SME, VA3, ETS	IUC EU-China Regional Innovation Joint Study included green development, energy transition and innovation
Green finance	Urban infrastructure Projects	Green Production, SME, Circular Economy, Project in Chongqing and Yunnan	As major topic for dialogue

Indicator	EC Link	SWITCH Asia	FPI
Green Development Policy	N/A	SCP, policy makers dialogue	As major topic
Intercity Cooperation/ Experience Sharing	As major output; Zhuhai-Amsterdam-Valencia-Denmark	N/A	Asia Mayor Forum; Intercity dialogue
Partners	MoHURD	NDRC/MOHURD/MEE/Ministry of Industry and Information	NDRC

Source: [Switch Asia](#); [IUC-Asia \(EU\)](#); and [Asian Mayors \(EU\)](#)

It is to be noted that there are no national ministries acting as partners for the SWITCH Asia programme. The EU grants are selected and awarded directly to the implementing partner institutions without discussion with national authorities. However, there is a national focal point (NFP) for SCP in each partner country. For SWITCH Asia projects in China, an NFP has been set up within the Ministry of Ecology & Environment (MoEE) to coordinate and provide oversight of the key developments and outputs of the programme. The NFP coordinates with the relevant departments of the NDRC for the replication of the achieved results and outputs.

Where the IFI are concerned, the ToR referred to multilateral assistance targeting the whole of Asia and global initiatives, including interventions by the *World Bank Group*, the *Asian Development Bank (ADB)*, the *Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA)* and the PRC-UNDP strategic partnership on sharing China's experience on sustainable, low-emission urban development with other developing countries.

For achieving its committed carbon-reduction goal, China needs substantial green development funding. According to the Development Research Center of the State Council, China needs about CNY 2.9 trillion in green investment capital, but government financing can only cover about 10-15% of the total demand. A multi-stakeholder green finance system is therefore needed. In this context, in 2016 seven Chinese ministries, the People's Bank of China, the Ministry of Finance, the National Development & Reform Commission, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the China Banking Regulatory Commission, the China Securities Regulatory Commission, and the China Insurance Regulatory Commission, jointly issued *Guidelines on Building a Green Financing System*. The document highlighted seven financing and policy instruments for establishing and operating the green financing system in China [Box 3]. In 2017, the People's Bank of China launched green financing pilots in Zhejiang, Guangdong, Xinjiang, Guizhou and Jiangxi. However, the financing mechanism for green building was not piloted in these five regions.

To respond to the needs of urban green building development, EC Link project initiated an action in 2018 to support China in establishing a Green Finance Network (GFN) for urban green development. In 2018 and 2019, four stakeholder workshop and meetings were held in Beijing, involving EC Link green finance consultants, and representatives of ADB, World Bank, AFD, GIZ, KfW, the City Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA), the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), the Hua Xia Bank, the Bank of Jiangsu, the Green Credit Committee of Banking Association in China, the Agricultural Bank of China and Deutsche Bank. These meetings developed the concept of a green finance network, discussed and analysed the green finance policy framework in China, shared methodologies, tools and indicators for evaluating

Box 3. Major financing and policy instruments for developing the Green Financing System in China:

1. Develop a green loan lending system to support green enterprises
2. Promote the security market to support green development
3. Establish national green development fund through PPP model
4. Develop a green insurance system for enterprises
5. Develop a carbon emission trade system
6. Support local government to establish green development fund
7. Cooperation with international financial institutions for fund raising

Source: People's Bank of China, 2016

the green building projects, and considered the case of the Qingdao Green Urban Investment Project. However, fund raising channels were not discussed and developed. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the network activities were suspended in 2020.

A more recent initiative concerns the *Shandong Green Development Fund* (SGDF, Dec 2019), in which the ADB, the *Agence française de développement* (AFD) and the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (KfW) cooperate. Considering that Chinese pilot cities focus on concrete investment possibilities, the SGDF has their attention. The EC Link project's involvement since 2018 in feasibility studies and other preparatory steps on behalf of pilot cities regarding funding requests to the SGDF has met with substantial take up.

Other recent and specific cooperation efforts involving Member States include:

- The 5.6 MEUR China Green Cities Development Fund (CGCDF), 2018-23, in cooperation with KfW (Germany). It supports the implementation of China's policies to reach its climate change mitigation goals (Paris Agreement), and the Agenda 2030 (SDGs). It helps Chinese cities and provinces in fostering environmentally friendly and socially responsible urban development in the context of low carbon cities. The initiative is in line with the Partnership [see EQ3 above];
- the 10 MEUR Technical Assistance Facility for Green Promotional Loans (TAG-China), 2019-26. It supports the implementation of environmental, forestry and biodiversity projects in China that will be funded by KfW promotional loans. EU funding provides co-financing of technical assistance for the implementation of investment projects; and
- the 13 MEUR China Biodiversity Facility (CBF), 2020-27, in cooperation with Agence Française de Développement (AFD). It provides TA to prepare and accompany a portfolio of development and biodiversity projects identified by AFD and the Chinese authorities. This facility also seeks to disseminate best practices on issues of biodiversity protection to feed into national strategies.

All 7 expected results of the EC Link project are in alignment with chapters related to low carbon, low energy consumption and recyclable resource management in the 13th FYP.¹¹ The interviews in pilot cities showed that the EC Link pilot projects, guidelines, technical reports and technical recommendations contributed to achievement of local 13th FYP targets to some extent. There was no evidence of incorporation of EC Link products into the 13th FYP, since both the national and local 13th FYP were formulated in 2014 and 2015, while most EC Link technical outputs were produced after 2017. EC Link did not reflect the priorities set out in Chapter 46 of the 13th FYP related to carbon footprints and emission trading. However, review shows that SWITCH Asia and IUC do include these priorities and for incorporation into the 14th FYP, the EC Link outputs need to be subjected to further review and selection for incorporation. The evaluation did not yield evidence that the pilot cities involved in EC Link were made of these priorities. After reviewing relevant on-going and completed projects supported by EU and other donors, it is a critical issue how to effectively and complementarily use and share the results from other projects.

¹¹ Chapter 29 – Establishment of modern transportation systems, priorities of green and low carbon urban transportation system; Chapter 30 – Modern Energy Supply System, wind energy, solar energy; Chapter 34 – New urban and city development, liveable city, eco-city development; Chapter 43 – Resource Saving and Intensified utilization, save energy, save water resources, save land resources; circular economic development; Chapter 44 – Strengthen environmental governance, control the pollution, strengthen environmental infrastructure development, etc.; Chapter 45 – Ecosystem restoration and conservation, and Chapter 46 – Mitigation to the climate change, reduce the carbon emission by all sectors and industries.

2.3 Effectiveness

EQ5: What results/outcomes/impacts have been achieved compared with those in the project logframe?

As indicated, the project's intervention logic [**Annex 6**], largely unchanged since the beginning of the project, throughout remained focused on outputs, rather than results. As also observed in the MTE and in the April 2019 result-oriented monitoring (ROM) report, this makes it hard to assess whether the activities implemented, and the outputs delivered by the project have indeed contributed to the achievement of its desired outcomes and impact [see also EQ2 above].

Available project reporting for the period Dec 2013 – Dec 2019 suggests that the project has been struggling with this issue, but that only limited steps were taken to reconsider the emphasis of the project's intervention logic. The second revision of the logframe (September 2018) incorporated additional output-based indicators at the level of expected results [**Annex 6**], but no new indicators at purpose or objective level.

The self-assessment by the TAT and contractor in the project's draft final report [Sep 2020 version], states that the project has met six out of 32 indicators related to the outputs specified for the seven results. Six indicators were stated as having been met (one each under Results 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7).

The above described reservations [**Section 2.1, EQ1**] with regard to the suitability of this type of indicators for assessing effectiveness (and impact) remain. Such assessment would therefore have to rely on the extent to which the project's activities have resulted in the desired outputs [**Section 2.4**]. If they did, it would still be necessary to demonstrate that delivery of those outputs would be tantamount to achieving the project's expected results, and thus effectiveness.

Apart from direct know-how transfer through training and consultancy to projects of its pilot cities, a key EC Link activity was building a dedicated part of the EC Link website to serve as a Knowledge Platform. The evaluation team was in a position to review the structure and utilisation of the website by city-level HURD personnel and project partners. The platform contains seven sectors related to low-carbon, ecocity and sustainable urban development: (i) compact urban development; (ii) green building; (iii) green transport; (iv) urban water management; (v) solid waste management; (vi) clean energy; and (vii) municipal green finance. In addition, the platform presents a number of research papers in the context of the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI), news about EC Link activities and other low-carbon and eco-city related news, and the EC Link newsletter.

Interviewed Chinese experts confirmed that they were effectively involved during the second half of the project duration in consultancy support to pilot cities, as well as the preparation of the guidelines in Chinese language. For the latter, they used the position papers mainly written by EU consultants in 2017 and 2018. They confirmed that they had actively communicated with the sustainability urban development expert (KE2) on the TAT. This ensured the quality of the guidelines. All Chinese experts engaged in guideline development are senior leading experts from relevant design and urban construction research institutes. As such they are familiar with Chinese conditions, as well as the relevant governmental policies and technical standards.

A very satisfactory level of output delivery was achieved in Qingdao and Weihai City in the area of green finance. The Chinese urban green finance expert was involved in the preparation of project proposals in those pilot cities. With his help, two project proposals in Qingdao and three in Weihai have been shortlisted by the *Shandong Green Development Fund* (SGDF). This expert also cooperated with the project's EU green finance expert in transfer of know-how to the partners in the two cities. HURD staff in Qingdao and Weihai confirmed their satisfaction with the consultancy.

The platform contains sector folders, with position papers, guidelines, best practice and cases and thematic topic related toolboxes developed by the project. The EC Link website is freely accessible

to the public; the knowledge platform is accessible to accredited users through a subscription system.

A review of the Knowledge Platform's content revealed that:

- (1) **The position papers have reached a limited audience since they are in English only.**¹² According to Chinese interlocutors, the seven position papers with a length of between 190 and 300 pages, were almost exclusively compiled by European consultants with limited involvement of Chinese experts. The papers are useful only for readers proficient in English, such as the Chinese experts involved at project's end in developing the guidelines, and selected technical staff engaged in urban development and urban construction project design and feasibility studies. A number of researchers and scholars from research institutes and universities also the frequent users of the website and knowledge platform. For other Chinese experts, including many at MOHURD, local HURDs and project partners the position papers they are much less useful in term of policy and technical guidance.
- (2) **The Guidelines for seven sectors are developed directly in Chinese.**¹³ These guidelines were mainly developed by Chinese experts engaged by the project in the later stages of the project, at the instigation and under the guidance of the project's KE2 and the NKEs that were the major authors of the related position papers. The guidelines vary in size from 15 to 30 pages and include reference documents, indicators and standards, and descriptions of relevant policy **issues and procedures. Project personnel used some of the guidelines as training materials in pilot cities.**
- (3) **The quality, relevance and usefulness of the guidelines have been evaluated by experts, but not been evaluated by targeted users in the pilot cities.** Due to COVID-19, the development of the guidelines in Chinese language was rushed and the project did not have the time for carrying out a quality and relevance survey in the pilot cities prior to project's end. This issue relates to the sustainability and replication of project results in the EC Link pilot cities and potentially in NDRC Low Carbon Pilot Cities and cities like Chongqing and Yunnan which involved in EU SWITCH-Asia SusBuild Project, and Chinese cities which jointed the EU IUC programme.
- (4) **The cases studies and toolboxes have limited utility for Chinese users.** Although they contain photos and diagrams, they have not been translated. Since translation is costly and time-consuming it is perhaps understandable that counterparts opt for translating only those (parts of) documents that are of their direct interest. The principle should that all key outputs are produced in both languages.
- (5) **The number of visitors and users of the website and Knowledge Platform from pilot cities have so far been small number.**¹⁴ The visits to pilot cities, offered an opportunity to assess the extent to which HURD staff and project partners visit and use the EC Link website. Only 5-10% of interviewed HURD staff and project partners were found to have visited the website. A total

¹² They were delayed but, in the end, all Guidelines were translated, including Green Finance, although perhaps not the relevant PPT, and validated (just in time, in absence of further extension). But it was a long process (see point 10 of the minutes of a working meeting TAT/MoHURD of 31 July 2020) with formalities to be observed on the Chinese side.

¹³ Nine short version of the position papers were produced in Chinese by a like number of Chinese experts. At least of two of these papers were asked by EUD to be produced in English (covering, respectively, Green Finance and Green Building).

¹⁴ The project uses WeChat. KE3 produced visibility reports (2019 and 2010). The latter was finalised during the last reporting period (Jun-Sep 2020) and remains to be submitted. EC Link events are all uploaded to the website, with links to relevant other media (web sites) for all Chinese pilot cities.

of 246 users subscribed to the Knowledge Platform. Surprisingly, there were relatively few subscribers from the EC Link pilot cities, a fact confirmed by the interviews with pilot city interlocutors. Even some staff who involved in EC Link project didn't visit the website.

EQ6: What are the major factors leading to the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results and objectives?

The project's underlying theory of change is set out in a diagram in the project's draft Final Report and reproduced in the present report [Annex 7, diagram]. The diagram is not accompanied by supporting text specifying the causal linkages between the elements of the theory of change.

The diagram is an elaboration of a similar schematic presentation in Addendum N° 7 (Nov 2018) ruling the project contract (pp. 85). The text supporting the latter diagram sets out what will be done within the project from 2019 onwards but does not clearly state why.

A reconstruction of the theory of change [Annex 7, table] by the evaluators suggests possible causal linkages; the various versions of the project's logframes [Annex 6] do not include such linkages, especially with regard to linkage between outputs and results.

The projects pre-occupation with output and the lack of clearly establishing the linkage between outputs, results and objectives seems to have been partly or even largely responsible for its inability to account for its effectiveness in terms of expected results.

Another factor may have been less than optimal communication within the consortium and a lack of cooperation between its members. In the initial stages of the project this was reportedly due to the absence of a clear implementation strategy. In its later stages and especially during the last two years of the project, these inadequacies were corrected in the form of more involvement by consortium partner Sweco, as well as relevant entities of the municipalities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Bologna.¹⁵

The cooperation with European cities overall was less than initially aimed for. Consortium partner *Eurocities* left mid-way through the project duration¹⁶ and the cooperation with consortium partner *Climate Alliance* did not assume the proportions envisaged. The members of the *European Chamber of Commerce in China* (EUCCCC) also saw little involvement in the project, admittedly partly through their own lack of pro-activeness in the matter.

As noted, [Section 2.1] there is a strong impression that the project may have lacked the necessary orientation on political needs and the economic and commercial interests typically driving city-to-city cooperation. This may have had negative consequences for its effectiveness.

The project design reflected in the ToR identified a number of risks. These included: (i) *project partners (MoHURD and pilot cities) do not sufficiently consider the project's technical outputs due to lack of dissemination or poor communication*; (ii) *the Chinese versions of project materials becoming available only late in the project duration*; and (iii) *reports or study results will not receive the attention they deserve*.

All three risks materialised to an extent. The third of them perhaps due to the quality of some of the outputs (which MoHURD at project's end considered inadequate for wider dissemination). The

¹⁵ Some EU city entities involved in technical issues in the project remarked that it was not possible, at the rates per working day offered under the project, to engage top level experts on certain topics or, in their own case cover all costs of their involvement.

¹⁶ Eurocities did no longer wish to be involved in the project and was formally dropped from the consortium in Oct 2018 (through Addendum N° 7 to the contract ruling the project).

project's Final Report states in this connection that all position papers and best practice case studies produced by the project had been vetted by Chinese experts at MoHURD's request.

Addendum N° 7 (on the 2nd extension) to the project contract (pp. 79-82) sets out six key assumptions and a total of 16 risks. These include or paraphrase the five risks set out in the ToR: (i) communication barrier in EU-China cities exchanges; (ii) local limited capacity to absorb the knowledge promoted by the 'support mechanism'; (iii) knowledge not being shared among municipalities; (iv) costly pilot city and insufficient funding and capacity; and (v) platform not being known. Addendum N° 7 also added a further eleven apposite risks given in by GIZ experience with project implementation in China.

The project's draft Final Report includes statements on each of the eight assumptions underpinning project design and implementation and pronounces them as having been met to varying degrees. The evaluation did not yield any evidence to the contrary.

The draft Final Report states that the project's logframe was reasonably open and allowed for a flexible interpretation of what constitutes activities of low-carbon urban development, as the basis for a demand driven, responsive approach of the EC- Link project. Project beneficiaries were assessed as having appreciated the project's flexibility in responding to new developments in policies, guidelines and needs originating from innovative projects, particularly in Qingdao, Weihai, Zhuzhou, Zhuhai. The evaluation team shares this assessment.

2.4 Efficiency

EQ7: What are the main issues affecting the operational efficiency of the action?

Contract management. The project had a total duration of 82 months and 12 days. The original duration of the project was 48 months from 17 November 2013. This was extended twice for a total of over 54 months and 12 days, until 29 September 2020. **Table 3** summarises key contract parameters, including the seven addenda to the original contract.

Table 3 – Contract, Addenda & Extensions

Contract/ Addenda	Signed	Entry into Force	Purpose	Budget (EUR)	IE (EUR)
Contract [DCI- ASIE/2013/329- 453]	31/10/2013	17/11/2013	Project Start/Duration/Team: K1 – Asselin; KE2 – Perry; KE3 – de Sonis	9,304,400	2,850,000 (31%)
Addendum N° 1	13/11/2014	13/11/2014	KE2 substitution – Serena Sender	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 2	21/04/2015	Idem signing	KE2 substitution – Steinberg	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 3	12/10/2015	Idem signing	KE3 substitution – Beckmann ¹⁷	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 4	21/02/2017	06/02/2017	KE1 substitution – Claser	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 5	17/11/2017 ¹⁸	Idem signing	1 st Extension [10 months & 12 days] + budget composition	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 6	02/03/2018	01/02/2018	KE2 substitution – Ruan & Tertilt	Idem	Idem
Addendum N° 7	02/10/2018	29/09/2018	2 nd Extension [24 months] + budget composition	Idem	982,780 (11%)

¹⁷ Replacing Mr Baudouin de Sonis who left in the project in Jul 2015; identified by Sep 2015 and deployed in Nov 2015.

¹⁸ Based on a proposal by GIZ submitted in Sep 2017.

The decision to extend the project two times, in spite of unsatisfactory effectiveness and impact during its original four-year duration ultimately seems to have paid off in terms of a high rate of output delivery (if not results achievement).

Work planning. The inception period saw an initial plan of action (IPA) approved at the end of the period (Jun 2014). The project further produced drafts and final versions of – in total – 7 work plans over its duration:

- an overall work plan (OWP) for the period Jun 2014-Nov 2017; i.e. from the end of the inception period to the then foreseen end of the project. The OWP was submitted in June 2014 but approved – after much discussion – only in July 2015.
- the annual work plan for the period June 2014-June 2015 (AWP1); was likewise submitted in Jun 2014 and only approved in Jul 2015;
- an addendum to AWP1 for the period January-July 2015;
- the annual work plan for the period July 2015-July 2016 (AWP2);
- an (almost annual) work plan for the first ten-months contract extension period November 2017-September 2018 (AWPE1);
- the annual work plan for the first year of the second contract extension period October 2018-September 2019 (AWPE2); and
- similar for the second year of the second contract extension period, October 2019-September 2020 (AWPE3)

Please refer to **EQ8** (below) for more detail on successive work plans.

Personnel deployment. The project started operations in the month of the official start date (17/11/2013), with the arrival of the TAT in Beijing [**Annex 9**].

Whereas the uptake of the project's resources was lagging at the time of the MTE (April 2016), this had much improved at project's end, in the case of both KE and NKE resources. The utilisation of available human resources approached and even surpassed 100%, even taking into account an increase in the number of available working days through reallocation of part of the provision for incidental expenditure (IE).

The TAT changed composition 5 times, through replacement of KE1 (team leader) once (in Feb 2017), KE2 (sustainable urban development expert) three times (in Nov 2014, Apr 2015 & Mar 2018) and KE3 (knowledge management expert) once (in Oct 2015). One replacement (of KE2) involved 2 persons on a part-time basis. The substitution of the three international experts on the TAT involved a total of 8 persons in total. The replacements themselves were affected relatively quickly, but the process of decision making prior to their taking effect was in some cases protracted due to other occurrences in the project. One of the KE2s returned in a significant role in the project as NKE following the first extension of the project (Nov 2017).

The technical progress reporting does not provide information on the speed of mobilisation of NKEs, but there is no reason to assume that their mobilisation was delayed for reasons of inefficiency on the part of consortium partners.

At project's end, a total of 3,778 KE working days (WDs) had been used, or 102% of the total number allocated [**Annex 9**]. The total of used Non-Key Expert WDs amounted to 2,861 (97%) for senior and 756.5 (100,3%) for junior NKEs. The used WDs divide equally between KEs (51%) and NKEs (49%).

The use of WDs over the project's implementation period varied considerably. At total of 2,707 WDs (37%) were used during the first 7 semesters of the project duration, compared to 4,689 (63%) in the last 7 semesters, suggestive of almost a doubling of the pace of implementation during the

second half of the project duration. In the first half of the duration, the pace of implementation hit a low point, with only 496 WDs used [only 46% of the average annual use of WDs (1,057)].

The significant increase in WD utilisation was facilitated partly by converting a large share [EUR 1,867,220 (66%)] of IE funds into – mainly – fees for KEs and NKEs in Oct 2018 (2nd extension).¹⁹

Technical Progress Reports. The quality of project reporting [Annex 10] – already remarked upon in the MTE – improved somewhat over the project duration (particularly from October 2018 onwards) but remained a matter of concern until the end of the project. The half-yearly reports were detailed with regard to the project’s activities and specific outputs, but generally lacked attention for self-assessment regarding the achievement of the project’s expected results and objectives. In addition, also in the later period of the project’s operations, the reporting on several occasions was delayed to the point where it could not serve as a basis for the planning of project operations in the reporting period following.

The draft Final Report (September 2020) contains a summing of the degree achievement of a total of 46 outputs, across the 7 results, expressed in a percentage per output, taken over the whole duration of the project. The report arrives at an overall average score for accomplishment across the seven results of 94%. Taking the scores across all outputs gives a score of 72%. It may be there is some weighing involved in the higher score. It is fair to say that overall achievement of outputs is at least 72%. A score of 94% seems optimistic.

Project Steering Committee. The project reporting is not explicit about the role and decisions of the PSC. During interviews with a variety of stakeholders for the present evaluation, the PSC was not referred to once.

At the national level, the PSC consisted only of MoHURD and MOFCOM, and did not, for instance, comprise representatives of important policy-level stakeholders in urban and city development in China, such the NDRC and the Ministry of Ecology & Environment.

The MTE (April 2016) suggested to increase the frequency of PSC meetings to more than once a year. In the event, the project and its counterparts did not adopt this recommendation.

At the local level, pilot cities established multi-stakeholder-involved coordination mechanism which called project leading group (PLG). Besides HURD as key member, the leading group consists of relevant municipal governmental line agencies, such as Development and Reform Commission (DRC), Finance Bureau, Municipal Administration Bureau, Bureau of Ecology and Environment and representatives from districts and counties involved in the pilot projects. In Weihai the EC Link PLG played effective coordination roles in implementing EC Link pilot projects since the EC Link PLG was merged with the Delicate City Development PLG chaired by the vice governor of Weihai city. The EC Link PLG was established in 2015 headed by vice governor of Zhuhai City, besides the abovementioned municipal agencies, it also consists of relevant bureaus at the district level and administration committees of the new development zones. According to interviewed partners in Zhuhai, the PLG played also active coordinating roles in the project. The EC Link municipal project office was set up at HURD for coordinating and managing the implementation of pilot projects and coordinating with central project office in Beijing.

Counterparts. The daily communication between the TAT and its direct counterparts on behalf of MoHURD, i.e. the staff of CSUS that joined the Project Task Force appears to have been effective.

¹⁹ The use of IE was low, but there was hardly any travel, including study tours and final conference), with limited spending on the printing/website). The Chinese partners were supposed to cover their own expenses; for instance in relation the March 2019 study tour.

The communication between MoHURD, pilot cities and the TAT, on the one hand and that between MoHURD and EUD, on the other hand, during the first half of project was ineffective. Coupled with the lack of common understanding of the project’s implementation modalities and financing mechanism, this was partly responsible for the ineffective project implementation in 2015-2017.

The pilot cities in the project were not able to actively participate in its annual progress review and planning. This happened only once (Nov 2018). The reason for this lies in applicable budgetary regulations ruling official travel, given the need for strict control and reduction of public expenditure on the Chinese side. Instead of the formal annual review and planning workshops, the annual work plan was compiled by TAT based on the proposed activities by pilot cities, and through communication and consultation with the partners of pilot cities.

Treatment of MTE and ROM recommendations. The project was subject of a mid-term evaluation (MTE) in March-April 2016 (report finalised in August 2016) and results-oriented monitoring (ROM) in April 2019.

The MTE report included a total of 24 recommendations. The ROM report contained 8 recommendations.

In the context of the present evaluation the extent to which stakeholders had followed-up on the MTE and ROM recommendations was investigated [**Annex 8**].²⁰ Unlike the ROM report, the MTE recommendations were not shared with the contractor, the TAT and pilot cities at the time. This may have negatively affected follow-up improvement measures by the relevant stakeholders to the MTE recommendations.

Annex 8 shows the spirit of the 24 MTE recommendations was acted upon in whole or in part in the case of nine recommendations. With regard to the remainder (15), a different – but not necessarily a worse – approach was taken by stakeholders.

The three out of the eight recommendations in the ROM report were implemented, with plausible reasons for a different treatment given by the contractor and TAT in the case of five ROM recommendations.

EQ8: Is the action cost-efficient?

Budget execution. Of the project budget at large (EUR 9,304,400) an amount of EUR 8,833,837 (95%) had been spent at project’s end.

The balance of EUR 470,563 consisted mainly of unspent incidentals (i.e. 48% of the revised IE provision of EUR 982,788). The IE budget was reduced from an initial 2.85 MEUR in October 2018.²¹

According to interlocutors in Zhuhai, HURD Zhuhai covered costs of meeting rooms and meals for training workshops held in Zhuhai, travel costs for participants from other pilot cities were born by their own entities. The training courses conducted in other pilot cities have been financed in the same cost sharing modality.

Planning and progress monitoring. The planning documents show a progression on thinking on how to come to grips with the project’s subject matter and environment. The first planning

²⁰ There is of course no obligation on the part of any stakeholder, including – in this case – the contractor and the TAT to adopt and implement M&E recommendations. It is further to be noted that the team leader of the present evaluation also led the 2016 MTE.

²¹ Please refer to footnote 19.

documents were overly detailed. By the end of the fourth year of operations, planning had become more accessible.

However, a feature of all planning documents remains a lack of reflection on the success/failure of earlier activities and the actions in mitigation. This may be more obvious to outsiders than those directly involved in the project's management and implementation and may reflect reporting skills more than a lack of thought about possible amendments to activities and outputs.

The same applies to the 12 technical progress reports, which favour a description of activities carried out and outputs delivered over a focused presentation of changes in thinking on project progress in terms of the expected results.

Project reporting in the second half of the project duration is clearer on delays experienced and corrective measures taken than that it in the first three years. Project reporting in those first three years left much unsaid, judging by the comments made during interviews for the present evaluation.

The interviews conducted for the evaluation confirmed general agreement amongst stakeholder representatives with project management's assertion that the project recovered momentum in early 2018 and that the pace of project implementation had much increased in its last three years.

2.5 Impact

EQ9: What is happening as a result of the project?

From a purely formal point of view, little can be said about the degree to which the project achieved its desired impact, in terms of the degree of attainment of its overall objective: *To support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12th and 13th Five Year Development Plan*. MoHURD officials confirmed that the EC Link project covered most of intervention areas of sustainable and low carbon city development and timely accompanied the fast urban development process in the past two decades and therefore had a general impact on Chinese urban development. GIZ checked the project's performance mainly on the basis of delivery of expected outputs through its system of timesheet approval, tracking of activities through its backstopping services, and the use of its WINPACCS OnSite system for financial monitoring.

The project's intervention logic as set out in its three successive logframes [Annex 6] lack indicators at objective level, whereas the six indicators at purpose level are neither 'SMART' nor 'RACER'; they are not time-bound and lack quantified targets.

From a more informal perspective, attainment of the project purpose can be assessed through the following statements regarding the six indicators at purpose level:

- *'MoHURD is strengthened in achieving low-carbon and ecological solutions'*. This indicator relies on the definition of 'strengthened', which can have several meanings in relation to institutional capacity and political influence. At the central level, project impact is likely to have been limited. At the level of pilot city HURDs the impact may have been greater, especially in the case of Zhuhai, Weihai and Qingdao. There seems to willingness on the part of Zhuhai, Amsterdam and Valencia to enter into an MoU on this issue. Perhaps IUC can provide the necessary platform.
- *'Municipalities share best practices'*. EC Link project supported a number of sector-related training courses in Zhuhai and in all other pilot cities served as an effective platform for sharing the best practices in China and in Europe. Interviewed Chinese experts who wrote the Chinese guidelines in the late stage of the project confirmed that they shared the best practices in EU countries through EC Link Website and through direct involvement in the EC Link training workshops. Besides these findings, there is little evidence that municipalities in China have been sharing best practice to a significant degree as a result of project actions. In practice, the TAT

was given only one opportunity to communicate directly with the pilot cities (Summer 2018), for the purpose of calibrating the work plans for all 10 pilot cities. Still, pilot cities' individual access to best practice information may be considered to have been improved by means of the project's Knowledge Platform (KP).

- *'IT Platform is frequently visited and populated with information'*. This indicator relies on the definition of 'frequently'. During the last 18 months of the project, the KP received an increasing number of single visitors. That said, all the guidelines and other materials produced by the project have been published online and accessible through the KP, although not yet for very long.
- *'High level of cooperation with Pilot City set-up and funding mechanism'*. This indicator is unclear in its formulation, since urban green financing is not a primary function of the project. That said, a number of pilot cities, with Qingdao, Weihai, Zhuzhou and Zhuhai first among them, participated enthusiastically in the project, albeit – with the exception of Zhuhai – only for the last two years of the project duration. The project has achieved significant results through helping Qingdao and Weihai to carry out 5 feasibility studies for preparing 5 funding applications submitted to the SGDF. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) financing mechanism was piloted in Zhuhai and Luoyang in constructing the urban solid waste treatment plants and shows a successful result. Whilst the EC Link supported pilot project in Luoyang City for treatment of construction solid waste didn't enter into the implementation due to lack of financing sources. These cases indicated the importance of green financing mechanism for achieving sustainable urban development. Luoyang municipal partners realized this importance and expressed their interest to further cooperate with EU in piloting a feasible green finance mechanism for their urban infrastructure construction and urban ecosystem improvement projects.
- *'Experiences are shared on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China'*. The project certainly has been a vehicle for sharing of experiences. Through EC Link website and KP and TAT consultant interview the evaluation consultant could find out evidence that experiences, cases and policy framework from EU countries have been quite effectively elaborated into both position papers, EU TAT formulated 7 sector guidelines and partly in the best cases and toolboxes. Chinese policies and green and low carbon urban development cases from EC Link pilot cities and other Chinese cities are also presented in the guidelines, best cases and toolboxes. Best practices also presented in the training workshops. All interviewed Chinese experts who developed the Guidelines in Chinese language confirmed that they reviewed the EU policies and best practices and incorporated them into the Chinese guidelines. However, the consultant could not find evidence that knowledge sharing effectively took place at institutional and policy level, albeit perhaps mainly at the level of individual experts and managers in the pilot cities, except Zhuhai, Weihai and Qingdao where the project interventions were intensive and systematically delivered. In structural terms, the project cannot be said to have resulted in sustained contacts between EU and Chinese cities, not even between Zhuhai city and Amsterdam and Valencia²². In this context, to intensify the partnership between Chinese and EU cities needs further promotion platform, for instance the IUC initiative.
- *'Number of cities in China that share best practices, and how much they share via the Support Mechanism'*. It is unclear what the target for this indicator was supposed to have been. For the time being the upper limit is 10, that being the number of pilot cities, all of whom – to greatly varying degrees – have been sharing, or at least have gained access to best practice of a wider applicability. As a good example, Zhuhai city, as a city for comprehensively implementing

²² There seems to be willingness on the part of Zhuhai, Amsterdam and Valencia to enter into an MoU on this issue. Perhaps IUC can provide the necessary platform.

different types of pilot projects in resilient city, compact city, solidate treatment, sewage water treatment, etc., effectively shared the best practices from Amsterdam, Valencia and Denmark. For other pilot cities, they need first to find partner cities in EU countries and then share practices, the EU IUC China project might be a good platform for promoting the City-City Partnership.

The TAT/GIZ self-assessment of project impact as set out in the draft Final Report is largely positive although not expressed in terms of the project objective and purpose, but rather at the level of results and outputs. Consequently, this self-assessment relates primarily to the project's effectiveness [Section 2.3].

The project reporting does not contain information on unintended consequences of the projects activities. The interviews conducted in the course of the evaluation did not yield any findings with regard to unintended consequences of project operations.

EQ10: What are the differences at beneficiary level that the project has contributed to?

Pilot cities Qingdao, Weihai and Zhuhai appreciated the contribution of EC Link and TAT consultants. The project assisted the HURD of those cities in implementing low-carbon and eco-city development programmes. As a good example, the EC Link project assisted Qingdao and Weihai governments to develop green finance mechanism which helped the municipal government to overcome the financial investment constraints.

All pilot cities involved in the project received training related to projects in areas such as low carbon city development, green building, solid waste treatment and green finance. Participants in these training events included not only the staff of the local HURDs, but also staff and technicians from other relevant governmental line agencies at municipal and county/district levels, as well as technical staff of project partners, including construction design & planning institutes and construction companies. These training events contributed to enhancing the knowledge and awareness of these stakeholders. From 2018 onwards, the participants in training events were asked to complete training evaluation questionnaires. TAT consultant confirmed that training evaluation results show knowledge improvements. Interviewed partners in Zhuhai and Weihai affirmed that they improved their qualifications and knowledge through participating in training workshops and joining the on-site survey activities.

The project contributed to implementing green building standards in new public and residential buildings in the pilot cities Guilin and Zhuzhou, which can potentially save 25-35% energy in cold winter and hot summer region. In Qingdao and Weihai the project assisted to pilot passive house concept for reducing the energy consumption of public school and residential buildings, heat-pumps, natural ventilations, green building materials, high insulation materials and reuse of sewage water for generating heating, etc. However, the energy saving efficiency of individual projects designed on the basis of green building standards could not yet be assessed, since at project's end some of the construction projects were completed only recently or still ongoing. Consequently, it was not possible to collect sufficient efficiency data.

The overall project contribution to pilot cities was limited due to its ineffective implementation during first half of the project duration, while during the second half of project duration most of the selected pilot projects had already been designed or were under construction. The ongoing interventions therefore had limited technical and demonstrational impact.

Where EU cities are concerned, the above-mentioned lack [Section 2.3] of the necessary orientation on political needs and the economic and commercial interests typically driving city-to-city cooperation, may also have negatively affected the longer term impact of the project's result, especially in the absence of dedicated city-to-city follow-up efforts.

That said in regard to project impact, it is not possible to assess the project’s intermediate impact by gauging:

- the use of selected technical outputs such as the Low-Carbon and Eco City Management Toolboxes, by MoHURD and pilot-city HURDs;
- the degree of policy mainstreaming at national and municipal levels;
- its contribution to achieving relevant targets in China’s 12th and 13th FYPs;
- what project results and EU experience can be incorporated into the 14th FYP, which is currently under formulation;
- the contribution to Chinese governmental commitment to relevant SDGs and achieving the target of carbon emission reduction in the Paris Agreement; and
- instances of indirect project impact on the low carbon pilot cities indicated by the NDRC.

2.6 Sustainability

EQ11: To which extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after EU funding stopped?

Although MOHURD and all municipal HURDs visited expressed interest in continuing cooperation with the EU, at project’s end there was little evidence regarding the potential sustainability of project results, mainly because EC Link had focused on technical issues, with policy recommendations not systematically formulated in the guidelines and position papers produced by the project. The review of the structure and contents of the position papers developed by the project, revealed that they do not contain conclusion and recommendation chapters (although they do include a chapter on policy analysis). The guidelines likewise do not include concrete recommendations or practical tips for applying their application. That makes the positional papers and guidance insufficiently ‘mature’ for policy makers and the technical personnel responsible for planning, designing and supervision. Further improvement and editing is needed.

MoHURD has the mandate to contribute to China’s FYPs and can make policy recommendations. However, the project’s TAT did not systematically consult with relevant MoHURD departments on policy issues.

The Zhuhai City Government in its official documents on EC Link highlighted the project’s importance in terms of promoting low carbon and green city development. Representatives of all six pilot cities visited in the course of the evaluation stated that they will continue low carbon city, eco-city development, green transportation, use of clean energy and green financing in their future city development planning, feasibility studies and construction. In this context, the EC Link results may be expected to be further replicated through HURD and other project partners in these cities.

It is likely that MoHURD relevant departments, CSUS, national consultants, local partners – i.e. planning institutes, researchers and associations – will be the major actors to incorporate aspects and components of EC Link guidelines and toolboxes into their policy formulation, urban construction planning, supervision and capacity building without EU funding.

That said, sustainability will depend to a large extent on the continued use and expansion of the EC Link website developed by the project. The website is well structured, with project outputs systematically presented for each result, in two languages; position papers, guidelines and cases for each component (thematic area) are accessible to all visitors, and the toolboxes developed by the project accessible to subscribers only.

The Chinese experts and consultants involved in the project are important actors for replicating the EC Link generated knowledge and outputs in their own work, such as in training, advisory services and policy studies. Their future engagement, dialogue and project-based cooperation with EU counterparts will be also an enabling factor for EC Link project sustainability.

As long as the funds and human resources can be found on the part of the project's main counterpart, MoHURD, and its proxy entity CSUS, to continue, maintain and operate the website and periodically review and update the KP and keep in touch with KP visitors and users, the website may be expected to continue through merging with CSUS's existing website. At the time of writing this evaluation report, this pre-condition seems uncertain to be met because the responsible Chinese authorities have not yet taken the necessary enabling steps. For instance, at project's end, CSUS had not yet prepared and consulted with MoHURD on a feasible concept or plan for hand-over of the website and printing the outputs and materials for further use.

EQ12: What are the main issues of concern in sustaining the project outcomes?

The following statements may be made in respect of a number of aspects of sustainability, as expressed by stakeholders:

- **Know-how/best practice utilisation.** Some of the pilot cities, Zhuhai especially, but also Qingdao and Weihai, expressed satisfaction with the concepts, know-how and techniques obtained through the project, indicated their preparedness to use those in the future and stated their willingness to participate in similar joint interventions in the future.
- **Useful project follow-up efforts.** These will depend on co-financing from Chinese partner cities. It is not clear to what extent such co-financing is available at any point in time. In any case, project preparation in general and funds commitment in particular on the Chinese side requires sufficient lead time (and perhaps therefore a more flexible format for this kind of intervention than the project format under an EU-funded services contract).
- **Financial/budgetary commitment.** At the cut-off date of the evaluation (i.e. the project's end-date: 29 Sep 2020), there were no indications that the counterpart entity of the project, MoHURD, would take on financial responsibility for continuing the activities that have begun under or have been facilitated by the project, in particular the KP/website [see also **EQ11**, above].

AWPE2, dated Oct 2018, was the first planning document that explicitly referred to a project exit strategy in a sustainability context. Largely though, practical measures for ensuring the sustainability of project results on the part of stakeholders remained elusive until project's end.

In fact, the discussions on sustainability continued after the end-date of the project, without much prospect for success, given the lead time for Chinese decision making and the contractually limited options on the part of GIZ and EUD both. This in spite of the fact that a fair amount (EUR 480,000) of the provision for incidental expenditure remained unspent on the project closing date. Neither EUD nor MoHURD expressed willingness to extend the project duration for the purpose of spending the balance of funds.

Generally, there was a palpable lack of enthusiasm on the part of most stakeholder representatives for an extension of the project to accommodate disbursement of the balance of funds committed to the project or other measures in support of sustainability, even on the part of EUD.

The sustainability of knowledge transfer may be judged more positively but is essentially not measurable. In this context, it is noteworthy that the extent to which Chinese experts have been enabled to engage with EU experts is key. Such engagement was more common in the second half of the project duration than during the first half.

The EC Link knowledge products, both the website and the printed materials, can be used as: (i) reference documents for policy makers at the national and local level, researchers, consultants; (ii) reference documents in formulating urban green development policies and policy implementation guidelines and in development of relevant technical standards; and (iii) reference materials for developing relevant training materials and practice guidance document, such as handbooks for

guiding project planning, designing and monitoring and evaluating relevant urban investment projects.

2.7 EU Added Value

EQ13: To which extent does the action bring additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' actions only?

The project's ToR place EC Link in the context of the May 2012 Declaration on the *EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation*, which includes five pillars [**Section 2.2**] with a prominent place for the City Networking Pillar focusing on efforts to enhance cooperation between Chinese and EU local partners.

The project is an element in a wider range of EU Member State initiatives contributing to the 'breadth and depth of the Urbanization partnership' through activities on pilot districts and eco-cities, local low carbon strategies, sustainability indicators, regional urban planning, carrying capacity of cities and circular economy in the urban context, district heating and cooling, green buildings and retrofitting and urban mobility.

Statements and observations gleaned from project reporting and interviews held in the course of the evaluation can be summarised as follows:

- The EU Delegation to China sees the project as one of series of EU-funded projects, flanked as it were by the efforts of some Member States. The EU website makes mention of efforts supported by France, Germany and Italy.
- MoHURD/Pilot City HURDs did not volunteer any information on this issue, although they see the project as one of a bevy of European support projects, without differentiating between the EU at large and its Member States.
- European partner entity representatives interviewed saw the project as useful for supporting engagement with and continued interaction with Chinese partners at the same level, primarily on technical issues. It is clear that some of the European partners see substantial potential for cooperation with China, although they may be overly optimistic about their chances of securing the usual fees for consultancy services provision. Members of the EUCCC expressed the view that EC Link, but also, they themselves, could have done more to use the project for the promotion of EU business opportunities in China, given Chinese demand for European technology.
- GIZ Consortium partners seemed to agree that a project like EC link, as one of them put it: 'offers opportunities by making quicker and better-quality contacts with more promises than otherwise would be the case.' A project such as EC Link is held to facilitate quicker access to the right people for European companies). In one case, a consortium partner stressed that China has technological know-how to offer to Europe and implied that projects like EC Link should act as a conduit for business.
- The project only moderately achieved sharing knowledge with other relevant bilateral cooperation programmes during project implementation, apart from the Sino-German eco-city project. With regard to the Sino-French eco-city cooperation, the TAT initiated cooperation on eco-plans, but that effort faltered because the Chinese pilot cities preferred a more concrete problem-oriented approach than foreseen in the elaborate (and expensive) French eco-plan methodology based on a global covenant.

2.8 Cross-cutting Issues

2.8.1 Gender

The EC Link ToR and intervention logic give relatively little importance to gender issues. This may be illustrated by the fact that the term 'gender' did not appear in the project ToR.

However, from September 2018 the indicators in the logframe included one concerning gender; expected result number 5: '*About 450 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities, including 30% females*' [Annex 6].

The project reporting, in particular the draft Final Report (Sep 2020) does not provide an exact figure on the actual representation of women, but the contractor puts the number of female officials and other participants in capacity building activities at more than 30% (based on observation, not exact tallying).

Amongst the KEs on the TAT, the Chinese officials in the PTF and the NKEs deployed by the project there were at least 13 women, representing a similar share of the total.

2.8.2 Environment & Climate Change

According to the provisional indications, supported by the project's 11th technical progress report (Jun-Dec 2019), the project did not carry out environmental and climate change mitigation monitoring.

However, data and reports released by the *Ministry of Ecology & Environment* and the *Local Ecology & Environmental Bureau* provide evidence of environmental improvements and reduced carbon emissions in the EC Link pilot cities. According to City Air Quality Monitoring Report N° 11 (2019) released by the *China National Environmental Monitoring Centre*, the air quality in 337 Chinese municipal cities, including all 10 EC Link pilot cities, showed consistent improvement on all indicators. Measured by the indicators stipulated in the National Air Quality Standard, the report had it that average percentage of days with excellent and good air quality reached 85.4%, with 3.0% year-on-year increase. The CO₂ content decreased 14.3%, NO₂ decreased 2.9% and SO₂ decreased 7.1%.

These improvements of air quality and CO₂ emissions were also observed in Guilin, Qingdao, Weihai, Zhuhai and Zhuzhou. In 2019, Qingdao and Zhuhai were ranked at position 43 and 47 among 167 cities monitored in China. According to the July 2020 Zhuhai Air Quality Monitoring Report, the grade I (excellent) days numbered 163 and grade II (good) numbered 46 days in the period January - July 2020. The number of days where grades I & II were reached increased by 1.9% in comparison with the same period in 2019.

3 LESSONS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Lessons Learnt

L1 The project format, based on the standard template for EU-funded services contracts, may not be the best suited for a large intervention such as the EC Link project, with significant political weight and based on the expectation of effective peer-to-peer cooperation between equal partners in strategic policy areas such as joint mitigation of the effects of climate change and energy conservation. A ‘Joint Cooperation’ or ‘Delegated Cooperation’ effort, led by PAGO DA-certified EU Member State entity might be a better solution for such type of interventions.²³

L2 The choice of counterpart institution for a project of this type is critical and should be based on technical, institutional and political considerations. One of the arguments that seems to have been used for choosing MoHURD as the EC Link counterpart, namely that ‘other potential Chinese counterpart entities are already partnering in EU-funded interventions’, is not conducive to effective project design and implementation.

L3 The project demonstrates the consequences of not adhering to standard logical framework planning (logframe) methodology. The use of that methodology is mandatory for EU-funded service contracts. Its use enables: (i) objective monitoring of project implementation; (ii) reasoned assessment of the degree of achievement of expected results and objectives; and – by implication – (iii) reduction of the need for day-to-day management of projects by the Commission Services. The project further shows that vigilance on the part of the Commission Services remains necessary to ensure that contractors use the logframe methodology as intended. This applies even in the case of contractors with ample experience in using the methodology.²⁴ Such vigilance also requires sufficient technical knowledge of the methodology on the part of the Commission Services, to avoid that the logframe is merely treated as an administrative requirement instead of tool for better project planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation.

L4 The project illustrates the need to ensure that project reporting covers not only the activities carried out, the outputs delivered and operational details, but that it also clearly sets out: (i) the thinking underpinning any changes in the project approach and (ii) the problems encountered. The impasse in project operations in 2015-17 – caused by prolonged debate on the project course, disagreement between EUD and the contractor on how to proceed, and clear indications that the main counterpart entity (MoHURD) expected other things from the project than the Commission Services – was insufficiently addressed in project reporting. Proper coverage of the problems in the reporting might have contributed to an earlier resolution of the deadlock. In addition, it would have also prevented any speculation during the first half of the project duration (as conveyed to the team by the persons interviewed) that the impasse may partly have been due to interpersonal relations within the project management rather than to the existing technical and procedural disagreements on the project course and approach.

²³ There are successful service contracts; PAGO DA or Delegated Cooperation are often (not exclusively) used for policy-oriented cooperation where the recipient institutions are considered peers of the relevant EU entities (typically EU Member State government bodies or agencies).

²⁴ GIZ is one such contractor. It was GIZ that – in the form of its ZOPP (*Ziel-orientierte Projektplanung* (goal-oriented project planning) – pioneered the wide-spread use of the logframe approach in Europe in the 1990s, after its development in the USA in the 1960s.

L5 The active participation of Chinese experts from the beginning of the project duration has been an important factor for ensuring that project results and technical deliverables match the needs of the Chinese counterparts and pilot cities. Their collaboration with EU consultants in delivering advice and training to pilot cities, as well as in developing and producing technical and policy guidelines has also been important, in particular with regarding the transfer of EU experience and expertise in the form of pilot projects and policy and technical guidelines.

3.2 Conclusions

C1 The first of two hypotheses mooted in the final evaluation’s inception report was that *the project has sufficiently increased its pace of implementation to make up for initial flaws in planning and delays in implementation to warrant a conclusion of at least satisfactory efficiency of implementation*. This hypothesis was accepted by the findings of the evaluation.

C2 The second hypothesis was that *the project has been able to overcome the shortfalls in its effectiveness and impact noted in the mid-term evaluation carried out at the mid-point of its duration*. The hypothesis was not fully validated by the evaluation’s findings.

C3 The **relevance** of the project, in terms of its original project design remained at a satisfactory level over its – much extended – duration.

C4 This satisfactory relevance extended to both the Chinese beneficiaries and the EU partners, with the former showing continued interest in the project’s potential to transfer best practice and state-of-the art technical know-how and the latter aware of its potential for effective cooperation and business development with Chinese partners.

C5 Amendments to the project’s ToR and intervention logic were delayed or not adopted at all, perhaps due to an overly conservative interpretation of the procurement rules for service contracts as laid down in the PRAG or a perceived need to ‘get on’ with the activities in a project work plan that had been delayed many times. If the former cause applied, none of the amendments that proved necessary would have had effects detrimental to the interests of other tenderers.

C6 The project’s **coherence** was satisfactory of design. In practice, the project took considerable time in developing satisfactory ways of cooperation with Chinese beneficiary institutions, the Chinese pilot cities involved in the project in particular. EC Link results, guidelines and toolboxes, have so far been shared mainly with the portfolio of German projects (funded by GIZ and other German ministries) in the field of sustainable urban development in China. A website to showcase results from ongoing projects in this field will include EC Link products, EUD permitting.

C7 The **effectiveness** of the project in terms of its expected results is unsatisfactory if considered in the formal terms of its own intervention logic. The output-orientation of the project and the lack of good quality indicators, particularly lack of indicators to measure the effective use of the EC Link outputs by partners, in support of its intervention logic hamper objective assessment of the degree of achievement of the results.

C8 Taking a more informal view, there is some evidence in support of satisfactory effectiveness in that the project: (i) developed a number of position papers and guidelines of (potential) use for Chinese partner institutions at central and local level; (ii) transferred EU best practice on low carbon urbanisation, green building and green financing to technical staff and management within a number of pilot city administrations; (iii) showed a number of EU entities and experts the benefits of cooperation with counterparts at local level in China; and (iv) enabled effective involvement of Chinese experts in EC Link supported training, pilot project preparation and implementation, and in the development of guidelines, particularly in the project’s later stages.

C9 The project's **efficiency** of implementation was salvaged by almost doubling its duration and using part of incidental expenditure for additional technical assistance delivery on technical topics of interest to the pilot cities in the project. However, project efficiency in terms of sufficient time for achieving the useful and deliverable results has been negatively affected by inefficient project implementation up to 2018 and by the Covid-19 situation from early 2020.

C10 At the project's end, the use of resources and budget expenditure had reached satisfactory levels, the attainment of which was much in doubt at the project's halfway mark.

C11 Project reporting remained unsatisfactory for a project of such size and importance, being output rather than results-focused, overly detailed and lacking sufficient reflection on necessary changes to improve its effectiveness and potential impact.

C12 The project insufficiently achieved its (potential) **impact** in terms of its overall objective and purpose, due to: (i) only gradually perceiving the interest in the project on the part of the Chinese partners entities and pilot cities; (ii) disagreement between EUD and the contractor on project strategy which could only be resolved when the original duration of the project had almost run its course; (iii) insufficient communication between EUD, TAT and MoHURD and pilot cities on annual work plans reflecting the needs of both sides (only one case of direct contact between the TAT and all 10 pilot cities on this subject, in 2018); and (iv) lack of an effective internal M&E system and quality insurance for the outputs (mainly the usual GIZ quality assurance methods based on accepting deliverables by approving NKE timesheets and the use of the WINPACCS OnSite system for financial monitoring); (v) the EC Link website, position papers, guidelines and materials uploaded into the Knowledge Platform being insufficiently 'mature' for use by policy makers and technical staff.

C13 The project's **sustainability** in terms of its expected results is unsatisfactory in that: (i) the handover of the Knowledge Platform to MoHURD was not finalised at project's end, although the dissemination by that counterpart entity of materials developed by the project in printed form had been prepared for dissemination to pilot cities by that time; and (ii) the implied goal of sustained, continued cooperation between EU and Chinese cities remained elusive throughout the project, with uncertain outlook for the future, with the possible exception of Zhuhai's cooperation with Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Bologna.

C14 The project's **EU-added value** in terms of the support provided to EU Member States' efforts in China, is hard to pin down, but the project has its place in the context of the May 2012 Declaration on the *EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation*, and figures in a wider range of EU Member State initiatives contributing to the 'breadth and depth of the Urbanization partnership' in China. However, no evidence was found that knowledge was shared with other relevant bilateral cooperation programmes during project implementation, apart from the Sino-German eco-city project. With regard to the Sino-French eco-city cooperation, the TAT initiated cooperation on eco-plans, but the cooperation faltered because the Chinese pilot cities preferred a more problem-oriented approach than foreseen in the elaborate (and expensive) French eco-plan methodology based on a global covenant.

C15 Given that China has committed to reducing its carbon emission for achieving the Agenda 2030 goals in this area, the country's mainstreaming of the related efforts in the on-going 13th FYP and the upcoming 14th FYP, and the fact that most EC Link-supported interventions in the pilot cities have not yet been completed, the Chinese partners in the project are interested in further cooperation with the EU.

3.3 Recommendations

R1 The Commission Services are advised that the project format based on the template for EU-funded services contracts may not be the best choice for EU interventions with similar aims as those of the EC Link project. The ‘joint programming and ‘delegated cooperation’ modalities may be more suitable for longer term EU-funded engagement on strategic issues between peers such as the EU and China [Lesson **L1**].

R2 The Commission Services are advised to ensure that its project managers and contractors have and use sufficient technical knowledge of the logical framework planning (logframe) methodology for service contracts as stipulated in the PRAG, in line with applicable methodology set out in EU documents and taking into account relevant OECD/DAC standards. In the case of Commission Services project managers this would help them to judge proper application of the methodology. In the case of contractors this would serve to set a standard for proper progress reporting [**L3**; Conclusion **C5**].²⁵

R3 The Commission Services are advised to ensure that project reporting by contractors for service contracts covers the whole range of project operations, including any discourse and disagreement on the course to be adopted by the project, in order to (i) focus on the causal linkages in the theory of change underpinning the project; and (ii) speed up problem resolution [**L4**, **C11**].

R4 The Commission Services and MoHURD²⁶ are advised to request CSUS to prepare a systematic proposal on receiving, maintaining and sustainably operating the EC Link website and submit to MoHURD for official approval. MoHURD would then send an official document to EUD for initiating the handover.²⁷ The whole website would be taken over by CSUS. CSUS would undertake to review the existing sector-related position papers, guidelines, toolboxes and other useful uploaded materials and translate English materials into Chinese. CSUS would assign sufficient technical and IT staff for updating the technical contents and ensuring the maintenance and operation. CSUS would provide sufficient funds for sustainable operation of the website. Users’ survey would be regularly conducted to ensure the website effectively serves targeted users [**C12**, **C13**].

R5 MoHURD are advised to request CSUS to prepare a proposal for reviewing and processing and replicating the EC Link Results and submit to MoHURD for approval. CSUS would then recruit Chinese experts to systematically review the existing materials, process and edit the produced guidelines and toolboxes. These materials would be used as reference materials for development of training manuals and practical guidelines (manuals) in training and guiding the city development planning, urban infrastructure project designing as well as evaluating the construction projects [**C12**, **C13**].

²⁵ All partners must be competent in logframe methodology, including the contractor (addressing/revising the logframe is part of the bidding process and the inception). This applies certainly to this contractor, GIZ, a pioneer in introducing the methodology in the 1990s [Footnote **24**]. For its part, the contracting authority may be expected to have a clear vision on the theory of change underlying the project set out in the ToR and include in the latter a good quality logframe in accordance with OECD/DAC (and thus EU) methodology. The contracting authority must produce the logframe in conjunction with the recipient party.

²⁶ The recipient is first responsible for ownership. However, that puts the responsibility on the EU to stop the project if such ownership is not demonstrated by the recipient.

²⁷ CSUS already prepared the documentation necessary for the suggested take-over of the KP to MoHURD, with the latter having agreed and working on the formal request to EUD, Beijing (pending at the evaluation cut-off date. **Source:** CSUS, Dec 2020).

R6 For future EU-China cooperation, the Commission Services are advised that – since China is committed to reducing its carbon emission for achieving the goal of SDG 2030, and low carbon city development has been put into the priority of the national development goal – to initiate – based on the already achieved results of the EC Link project and to further consult on the format and thematic content of such cooperation with appropriate Chinese counterpart entities according to their mutual interests. It is suggested to use the FPI IUC Platform²⁸ in further supporting city-to-city cooperation and policy dialogue with financing shared by both sides. The 10 EC Link pilot cities in China and partner cities in EU countries, to be invited to join on-going and pipelined IUC projects [L2, L4, L5, C15].

R7 In addition, the Commission Services and MoHURD are advised to use SWITCH Asia as a grant platform for supporting technical research, methodology and practical tool development for green urban finance and green building by way of follow-up on the already initiated Green Finance Network. MoHURD departments affiliated technical and policy research institutions at both national and local level are eligible to apply SWITCH Asia grant projects following the open procedure published on the EuropeAid website [L2, L4, L5, C15].

²⁸ Currently the IUC program in China is collaborating with NDRC and MoEE.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Relevant country/region/sector background

China's 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) demonstrated its strong commitment in transmitting the economy towards green and sustainable with very stringent mandatory targets set on energy saving and environmental protection. These domestic targets in decarbonizing the economy is closely linked with China's international commitment under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) where China's ambition and efforts in tackling climate challenges have a very high level of regional/global economic and environmental interdependencies.

China has been experiencing an unprecedented rate of urbanization with a fast-growing economy, which has an important implication on the carrying capacity of various eco-systems that lead to problems of increased pollution and greater demand for energy and natural resources. While some advanced Chinese cities facing such challenges were already taking actions, it was anticipated that there remains a large potential untapped to build synergies and knowledge sharing among initiatives at various levels, and there is a clear need to centralise knowledge and information through a 'platform' to enable the access to stakeholders at national/international (EU) level.

The Europe 2020 strategy has set the mandate towards smart, sustainable and inclusive growth at different levels. The EU's policies and investment in the development of a market-based mechanism have demonstrated effectiveness and efficiency in reducing GHG emissions and contributing to energy efficiency. In cities, a number of voluntary initiatives including the European Initiative on Smart Cities and the Covenant of Mayors have increasingly promoted city networks and opportunities to engage and share best policies, practices and ideas in dealing with urban challenges and improving quality of life.

The value for the EU to engage in a long-term partnership on urbanization was in the need for a more systematic and coordinated European approach to sustainable urbanization as well as the need of sharing best European practices. The EU and EU MS has already established dialogues and cooperation mechanism with China to address a wide range of environmental challenges in the urban context at both central and local levels. This cooperation materialized through exchange of expertise, capacity building, institutional strengthening, promotion of green technology solutions, investment, etc.

The Joint Declaration on the EU-China Partnership on Urbanization signed in 2012 formed the framework for cooperation at five levels including a) government-to-government focussing on urbanization policies; b) city networking and city-level projects; c) science and technology focussing on research community partnership; d) business and finance; e) public participation involving civil society and non-state actors.

1.2 The Intervention to be evaluated²⁹

Title of the Intervention to be evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe-China Eco-cities Link (EC-LINK)
Budget of the Intervention to be evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUR 9,304, 400
CRIS and/or OPSYS number of the Intervention to be evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453
Dates of the Intervention to be evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start: 13/11/2013 • End: 29/09/2020

In alignment with the European Commission's country strategy, the EU's Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for 2011-2013 prioritized the support to China in its efforts of promoting environmental sustainability and low-carbon economy. The Low Carbon and Environmental Sustainability Programme (DCI/2011/23093) was therefore developed with the objective to support China in meeting the environmental, energy- and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12th Five-Year Plan. Three distinct but mutually reinforcing projects

²⁹ The term 'Intervention' is used throughout the report as a synonym of 'project and programme'.

were formulated under the programme that work in parallel in three key thematic areas including Emissions Trading System (ETS), Sustainable Urbanization, and Water, Waste and Heavy Metal Pollution. The EC-LINK project is one of the three projects that aims to assist Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions by sharing with China experiences in European sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies.

The Financing agreement of the EU-China Low Carbon, Urbanisation and Environmental Sustainability Programme (DCI-ASIE/2011/23093) was signed on 29/09/2012 for a duration of 72 months for operational implementation. Following an international restricted tender procedure, a service contract for technical assistance (TA) was awarded to a consortium led by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH) in association with SWECO, EUROCITIES, Climate Alliance and the European Chamber of Commerce in China to implement the EC-LINK project. The service contract was signed on 13/11/2013 with an implementation duration of 48 months.

The project management structure is comprised of the following:

- Project Steering Committee (PSC) – co-chaired by Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and EU Delegation who oversee policy and strategic direction and validates the overall work plan on annual basis. Representatives of Chinese government (MoHURD) are included too.
- Project Task Force – established by MoHURD and work together with the ITAT on day-to-day management of the project.
- International Technical Assistance Team (ITAT) – established by the Consortium led by GIZ and provides technical expertise in project implementation in close coordination with the PTF.

The overall objective of the EC-LINK project is to support China in meeting the environmental, energy, and carbon-intensity targets as defined in the 12th Five Year Plan.

The specific objective of the project is to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD) and through this to further assist Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions by sharing experiences on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China.

The project is expected to achieve the following seven results:

Result 1: An appropriate support mechanism enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low-carbon planning and management is implemented.

Result 2: The MoHURD is supported in preparing low carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments.

Result 3: One 'Europe-China pilot low carbon eco-city' supported in China.

Result 4: Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities.

Result 5: Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low carbon knowledge on innovative financial schemes.

Result 6: Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes.

Result 7: Visibility/dissemination of project results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized.

The project website and knowledge platform are accessible via the following link: www.EC Link.org.

1.3 Stakeholders of the Intervention

In China, the main target groups are government decision makers and policy makers at both central (MoHURD and its affiliated institutions) and local (pilot cities) level as well as other stakeholders working in relevant urban sectors from the public and private sectors including but not limited to academia, business, financing institutions, civil societies, etc.

The final beneficiaries are:

- **Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD)** is responsible for the design, implementation and monitoring of urban policies and plans as well as for some specific urban environmental/energy issues (e.g. green buildings). The Ministry will be supported with development of eco- low carbon toolboxes to benefit central-level planning and policy-making. It needs to be noted during the 7-year operational period of the project, China has gone through extensive institutional development and reforms to adapt to emerging priorities in social-economic development. A major institutional reform happened in 2017-2018 following which substantial changes happened for a number of ministries concerning adjustments of their mandates. MoHURD was one of the ministries impacted with the previous core function on urban-rural planning cut and shifted to the new Ministry of Natural Resources. Such a change also had fundamental influence on MoHURD's re-organization of responsibilities and priorities, which had to be taken up by the project to ensure alignment. Within MoHURD, the Department of Building Energy-saving and Technology was the main beneficiary and focal point, who was replaced by Department of Standards and Norms since 2018.
- **Chinese municipalities** that are at the frontline of dealing with the challenges in an accelerated but balanced urbanization process and play critical roles in implementing national targets on energy efficiency and environmental protection through innovation and pilots. Ten Chinese cities were nominated by MoHURD as pilot cities in the project, i.e. Guilin, Changzhou, Liuzhou, Luoyang, Hefei, Qingdao, Zhuhai, Zhuzhou, Xi'xian, Weihai. These cities were involved at different stages and in different activities of the project, benefiting mainly from the networking with European cities through exchanges of technical know-how, best practices and policies in the field of low-carbon urban development. Out of the ten cities, Zhuhai was in particular benefiting as the Europe-China pilot low carbon eco-city with a more focussed support with European cities through pilot actions on climate resilience and waste management in the final two years of the project. Qingdao, Zhuzhou, Luoyang and Weihai has been active since 2018 when a revised strategy was adopted for the project to start working on green urban finance. Guilin and Zhuzhou benefited from learning European experience (in particular Germany – DENA) on green building.

In Europe, the main target group are European cities as well as public and private sector stakeholders working in the low-carbon urban context that are willing to exchange and cooperate with China. More than 15 European cities have been involved into the project at different stages with distinct interests and levels of participation. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Valencia, Bologna are the most active working specifically with Zhuhai on pilot actions. Swedish and German best practices in waste management and energy-efficient buildings were shared with the support from SWECO and DENA.

1.4 Other available information

At the time when the project was developed, the EU has already been supporting China in dealing with urban environmental challenges through various cooperation initiatives including but not limited to the Asia-Urbs (2003-2006), Asia Pro-Eco (2005-2009), URBACHINA (2011-2015), Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2) (2011-2015), and SWITH ASIA Phase I (2007-2017). The International Urban Cooperation (IUC) (2016-2020) is a new initiative of the EU to foster its sustainable urban diplomacy through boosting sectoral, transversal and international urban cooperation and exchange with public and private city partners at regional level. The programme is funded by the Partnership Instrument (PI) of the European Union, with focus on city-to-city pairings on sustainable urban development as well as climate action at sub-national level under the Global Covenant of Mayors initiative.

The Mid-Term Evaluation was carried out in early 2016 concluding that the project was unsatisfactory in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability due to the inadequate framing of an appropriate project strategy plus continuous problems encountered with the selection of pilot cities, delayed reporting and staffing of key positions.

The project was extended twice in 11/2017 (10 months) and 9/2018 (24 months) respectively to allow sufficient time to translate the revised and agreed strategy into concrete actions and deliver the expected results and impact.

The ROM review conducted in early 2019, acknowledged the improvement in efficiency and effectiveness despite continuous efforts in need, and recommended the project to build on the knowledge platform and green finance to explore the fullest potential of sustainability in the final 18 months of operation.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Objectives of the evaluation

Systematic and timely evaluation of its programmes and activities is an established priority³⁰ of the European Commission³¹. The focus of evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the **quality** and the **results**³² of Interventions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on **result-oriented approaches and the contribution towards the implementation of the SDGs**.³³

Type of evaluation	Final
Coverage	The Intervention in its entirety
Geographic scope	China
Period to be evaluated	The entire period of the Intervention from 13/11/2013 to 29/09/2020

From this perspective, the evaluations should look for evidence of why, whether or how these results are linked to the EU intervention and seek to identify the factors driving or hindering progress.

Evaluations should provide an understanding of the cause and effect links between inputs and activities, and outputs, outcomes and impacts. Evaluations should serve accountability, decision making, learning and management purposes.

The main objectives of this evaluation are to provide the relevant services of the European Union, the interested stakeholders and the wider public with:

- an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the EC-LINK project, paying particular attention to its results measured against its expected objectives; and the reasons underpinning such results;
- key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations in order to improve current and future interventions.

In particular, this evaluation will serve to understand the performance of the Intervention, its enabling factors and those hampering a proper delivery of results in order to support Chinese ministries (MoHURD in particular) to enhance eco-urban policy-making and relevant international cooperation with the EU/EU MS, and to inform the planning of future EU interventions and actions in the same sector.

The main users of this evaluation will be for the Commission DG DEVCO, FPI, the EU Delegation to China, and for the European and Chinese cities, institutions and stakeholders that have been involved into the Intervention as the findings of the evaluation will help them to draw lessons to improve the design and implementation of other related interventions.

2.2 Requested services

³⁰ COM(2013) 686 final *Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation; improving evaluation* – http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/docs/com_2013_686_en.pdf; EU Financial regulation (art 27); Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006; Council Regulation (EC) No 215/2008.

³¹ SEC (2007)213 "Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation", http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/docs/eval_comm_sec_2007_213_en.pdf; SWD (2015)111 *Better Regulation Guidelines*, http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/swd_br_guidelines_en.pdf; COM(2017) 651 final *Completing the Better Regulation Agenda: Better solutions for better results*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/completing-the-better-regulation-agenda-better-solutions-for-better-results_en.pdf.

³² Reference is made to the entire results chain, covering outputs, outcomes and impacts. Cfr. Regulation (EU) N° 236/2014 - *Laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action* - https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/ipa/2014/236-2014_cir.pdf.

³³ The New European Consensus on Development, *Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future*, Official Journal 30th of June 2017. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2017:210:TOC>.

2.2.1 Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will assess the Intervention using the six standard DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and early signs of impact. In addition, the evaluation will assess one EU specific evaluation criterion, which is:

▣ the EU added value (the extent to which the Intervention brings additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' interventions only);

The definition of the 6 DAC + 1 EU evaluation criteria is contained for reference in the Annex VII.

The evaluation team shall furthermore consider whether gender, environment and climate change were mainstreamed; the relevant SDGs and their interlinkages were identified; the principle of Leave No-One Behind and the rights-based approach methodology was followed in the identification/formulation documents and the extent to which they have been reflected in the implementation of the Intervention, its governance and monitoring.

2.2.2 Indicative Evaluation Questions

The specific Evaluation Questions as formulated below are indicative. Based on the latter and following initial consultations and document analysis, the evaluation team will discuss them with the Evaluation Manager³⁴ and propose in their Inception Report a complete and finalised set of Evaluation Questions with indication of specific Judgement Criteria and Indicators, as well as the relevant data collection sources and tools.

Once agreed through the approval of the Inception Report, the Evaluation Questions will become contractually binding.

Relevance:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

Coherence:

- Does the Action align with EU's interests and needs?
- To what extent does the Action complement with other actions in the same sector?

Effectiveness:

- What results/outcomes/impacts have been achieved compared with those in the project logframe?
- What are the major factors leading to the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results and objectives?

Efficiency:

- What are the main issues affecting the operational efficiency of the action?
- Is the action cost-efficient?

Impact:

- What is happening as a result of the project?
- What are the differences at beneficiary level that the project has contributed to?

Sustainability:

- To which extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after EU funding stopped?
- What are the main issues of concern in sustaining the project outcomes?

EU added value:

³⁴ The Evaluation Manager is the staff of the Contracting Authority managing the evaluation contract. In most cases this person will be the Operational manager of the Action(s) under evaluation

- To which extent does the action bring additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' actions only?

2.3 Phases of the evaluation and required outputs

The evaluation process will be carried out in three phases:

- Inception
- Field
- Synthesis

The outputs of each phase are to be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases as specified in the synoptic table in section 2.3.1.

2.3.1 Synoptic table

The following table presents an overview of the key activities to be conducted within each phase and lists the outputs to be produced by the team as well as the key meetings with the Contracting Authority and the Reference Group. The main content of each output is described in Chapter 5.

Phases of the evaluation	Key activities	Outputs and meetings
Inception Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial document/data collection • Background analysis • Inception interviews • Stakeholder analysis • Reconstruction (or as necessary, construction) of the Intervention Logic, and / or description of the Theory of Change (based upon available documentation and interviews) • Methodological design of the evaluation (Evaluation Questions with judgement criteria, indicators and methods of data collection and analysis) and evaluation matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-off meeting with the Contracting Authority the EU Delegation in Beijing via teleconference • Remote meetings with the Consortium in Europe • Inception report • Slide presentation of the Inception report
Field Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering of primary evidence with the use of the most appropriate methods and techniques • Data collection and analysis • Interviews • Meetings in Beijing with the EU Delegation, Consortium, ITAT, PTF, beneficiaries and stakeholders • Meetings in selected Chinese cities with local authorities and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide Presentation of key findings • Debriefing with the EU Delegation (and reference group) and via face-to- face meeting
Synthesis phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final analysis of findings (with focus on the Evaluation Questions) • Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations • Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Final Report • Executive Summary according to the standard template published in the EVAL module • Final Report • Chinese translation of Executive Summary and Final report

2.3.2 Inception Phase

This phase aims at structuring the evaluation and clarifying the key issues to be addressed.

The phase will start with an initial background study, to be conducted by the evaluators from home. It will then continue with a kick-off session between the relevant EU services in the EU Delegation and the evaluators via teleconference. The meeting aims at arriving at a clear and shared understanding of the scope of evaluation, its limitations and feasibility. It also serves to clarify expectations regarding evaluation outputs, the methodology to be used and, where necessary, to pass on additional or latest relevant information.

In the Inception phase, the relevant documents will be reviewed (see annex II).

Further to a first desk review of the political, institutional and/or technical/cooperation framework of EU support to China, the evaluation team, in consultation with the Evaluation Manager, will reconstruct or as necessary construct, the Intervention Logic of the Intervention to be evaluated.

Furthermore, based on the Intervention Logic, the evaluators will develop a narrative explanation of the logic of the Intervention that describes how change is expected to happen within the Intervention, all along its results chain, i.e. Theory of Change. This explanation includes an assessment of the evidence underpinning this logic (especially between outputs and outcomes, and between outcomes and impact), and articulates the assumptions that must hold for the Intervention to work, as well as identification of the factors most likely to inhibit the change from happening.

Based on the Intervention Logic and the Theory of Change the evaluators will finalise i) the Evaluation Questions with the definition of judgement criteria and indicators, the selection of data collection tools and sources, ii) the evaluation methodology, and iii) the planning of the following phases.

Initial interviews should already take place in the inception phase through appropriate remote means with the implementing Consortium members and stakeholders in Europe, in order to obtain preliminary data, identify information gap and hypotheses to be tested in the field phase.

The methodological approach will be represented in an Evaluation Design Matrix³⁵, which will be included in the Inception Report. The methodology of the evaluation should be gender sensitive, contemplate the use of sex- and age-disaggregated data and demonstrate how Interventions have contributed to progress on gender equality.

The limitations faced or to be faced during the evaluation exercise will be discussed and mitigation measures described in the Inception Report. Finally, the work plan for the overall evaluation process will be presented and agreed in this phase; this work plan shall be in line with that proposed in the present ToR. Any modifications shall be justified and agreed with the Evaluation Manager.

On the basis of the information collected, the evaluation team should prepare an Inception Report; its content is described in Chapter 5.

The evaluation team will then, present the Inception report to the EU Delegation in China in a face to face meeting.

2.3.3 Field Phase

The Field Phase starts after approval of the Inception Report by the Evaluation Manager.

³⁵ The Evaluation Matrix is a tool to structure the evaluation analysis (by defining judgement criteria and indicators for each evaluation question). It helps also to consider the most appropriate and feasible data collection method for each of the questions, cities and for how long within the maximum days allowed for field visits, based on the sectors and level of involvement that cities work with the project as well as the methodologies developed and task allocation within the evaluation team. However, it is proposed that both experts will visit Zhuhai given the city's extensive involvement during the project life. Throughout the mission the evaluation team will use the most reliable and appropriate sources of information, respect the rights of individuals to provide information in confidence, and be sensitive to the beliefs and customs of local social and cultural environments.

The Field Phase aims at validating/changing the preliminary answers formulated during the Desk phase and further completing information through primary research.

If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation or not respecting the end of the validity of the specific contract, these elements are to be immediately discussed with the Evaluation Manager and, regarding the validity of the contract, corrective measures undertaken.

In the first days of the field phase, the evaluation team shall hold a briefing meeting with the EU Delegation in China; meet with the Consortium members (GIZ and EUCCC), ITAT and PTF. During the field phase, the evaluation team shall ensure adequate contact and consultation with, and involvement of the different stakeholders in China based on the network that has been established by the project on green urban finance and urbanization; with the relevant government authorities and agencies at central (MOFCOM, MoHURD) and local (local HURD) levels. The evaluation team should visit the project pilot cities that have been most active and interested in working with the project, in order to meet with local HURD and stakeholders that have been involved. It is proposed field visits are paid to Zhuhai, Qingdao, Weihai, Luoyang, Zhuzhou and Guilin. It is up to the evaluation team to propose which expert(s) will visit which

At the end of the field phase, the evaluation team will summarise its work, analyse the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present preliminary findings in a meeting with the EU Delegation in Beijing,

At the end of the Field Phase a Slide Presentation will be prepared.

2.3.4 Synthesis Phase

This phase is devoted to the preparation by the contractor of two distinct documents: the Executive Summary and the Final Report, whose structures are described in the Annex III; it entails the analysis of the data collected during the desk and field phases to answer the Evaluation Questions and preparation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

The evaluation team will present, in a single Report with Annexes, their findings, conclusions and recommendations in accordance with the structure in Annex III; a separate Executive Summary will be produced as well, following the compulsory format given in the EVAL module (see Annex III).

The evaluation team will make sure that:

- Their assessments are objective and balanced, statements are accurate and evidence-based, and recommendations realistic and clearly targeted.
- When drafting the report, they will acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place.
- The wording, inclusive of the abbreviations used, takes into account the audience as identified in art. 2.1 above.

The evaluation team will deliver via email the Draft Final Report to Evaluation Manager who will share and discuss with the Reference Group on the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The Evaluation Manager consolidates the comments expressed by the Reference Group members and sends them to the evaluation team for the report revision, together with a first version of the Quality Assessment Grid (QAG) assessing the quality of the Draft Final Report. The content of the QAG will be discussed with the evaluation team to verify if further improvements are required, and the evaluation team will be invited to comment on the conclusions formulated in the QAG (through the EVAL Module).

The evaluation team will then finalise the Final Report and the Executive Summary by addressing the relevant comments. While potential quality issues, factual errors or methodological problems should be corrected, comments linked to diverging judgements may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team must explain the reasons in writing. After approval of the final report, the QAG will be updated and sent to the evaluators via EVAL Module. In addition, it is requested that the Executive Summary and Final Report be translated into Chinese.

2.4 Specific Contract Organisation and Methodology (Technical offer)

The invited Framework Contractors will submit their specific Contract Organisation and Methodology by using the standard SIEA template B-VII-d-i and its annexes 1 and 2 (B-VII-d-ii).

The evaluation methodology proposed to undertake the assignment will be described in the Chapter 3 (Strategy and timetable of work) of the template B-VII-d-i. Contractors will describe how their proposed methodology will address the cross-cutting issues mentioned in these Terms of Reference and notably gender equality and the empowerment of women. This will include (if applicable) the communication action messages, materials and management structures.

2.5 Management and Steering of the evaluation

2.5.1 At the EU level

The evaluation is managed by the Evaluation Manager Ms Feng Mei of the EU Delegation to China; the progress of the evaluation will be followed closely with the assistance of a Reference Group consisting of members of EU Services including DG DEVCO and FPI.

The main functions of the Reference Group are:

- To define and validate the Evaluation Questions.
- To facilitate contacts between the evaluation team and the EU services and external stakeholders.
- To ensure that the evaluation team has access to and has consulted all relevant information sources and documents related to the Intervention.
- To discuss and comment on notes and reports delivered by the evaluation team. Comments by individual group members are compiled into a single document by the Evaluation Manager and subsequently transmitted to the evaluation team.
- To assist in feedback on the findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations from the evaluation.
- To support the development of a proper follow-up action plan after completion of the evaluation.

2.5.2 At the Contractor level

Further to the Requirements set in the art. 6 of the Global Terms of Reference and in the Global Organisation and Methodology, respectively annexes II and III of the Framework contract SIEA 2018, the contractor is responsible for the quality of: the process; the evaluation design; the inputs and the outputs of the evaluation. In particular, it will:

- Support the Team Leader in its role, mainly from a team management perspective. In this regard, the contractor should make sure that, for each evaluation phase, specific tasks and outputs for each team member are clearly defined and understood.
- Provide backstopping and quality control of the evaluation team's work throughout the assignment.
- Ensure that the evaluators are adequately resourced to perform all required tasks within the time framework of the contract.

3 LOGISTICS AND TIMING

Please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.

3.1 Planning, including the period for notification for placement of the staff³⁶

As part of the technical offer, the framework contractor must fill in the timetable in the Annex IV [(to be finalised in the Inception Report)]. The 'Indicative dates' are not to be formulated as fixed dates but rather as days (or weeks, or months) from the beginning of the assignment (to be referenced as '0').

Sufficient forward planning is to be taken into account in order to ensure the active participation and consultation with government representatives, national / local or other stakeholders.

³⁶ As per art 16.4 a) of the General Conditions of the Framework Contract SIEA.

4 REQUIREMENTS

Please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.

5 REPORTS

For the list of reports, please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.

5.1 Use of the EVAL module by the evaluators

It is strongly recommended that the submission of deliverables by the selected contractor be performed through their uploading in the EVAL Module, an evaluation process management tool and repository of the European Commission. The selected contractor will receive access to online and offline guidance in order to operate with the module during the related Specific contract validity.

5.2 Number of report copies

Apart from their submission -preferably via the EVAL Module-, the approved version of the Final Report will be also provided in 3 paper copies and in electronic version (Word and PDF) at no extra cost.

5.3 Formatting of reports

All reports will be produced using Font Arial or Times New Roman minimum letter size 11 and 12 respectively, single spacing, double sided. They will be sent in Word and PDF formats.

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Content of reporting

The outputs must match quality standards. The text of the reports should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables; a map of the area(s) of Intervention is required (to be attached as Annex).

6.2 Comments on the outputs

For each report, the Evaluation Manager will send to the Contractor consolidated comments received from the Reference Group or the approval of the report within 15 calendar days. The revised reports addressing the comments shall be submitted within 15 calendar days from the date of receipt of the comments. The evaluation team should provide a separate document explaining how and where comments have been integrated or the reason for not integrating certain comments, if this is the case.

6.3 Assessment of the quality of the Final Report and of the Executive Summary

The quality of the draft versions of the Final Report and of the Executive Summary will be assessed by the Evaluation Manager using the online Quality Assessment Grid (QAG) in the EVAL Module (text provided in Annex V). The Contractor is given – through the EVAL module - the possibility to comment on the assessments formulated by the Evaluation Manager. The QAG will then be reviewed following the submission of the final version of the Final Report and of the Executive Summary.

The compilation of the QAG will support/inform the compilation by the Evaluation Manager of the FWC SIEA's Specific Contract Performance Evaluation.

7 PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Please address any request for clarification and other communication to the following address(es): delegation-china-cris-fwc-offers@eeas.europa.eu.

REPORTS

10. Reports and deliverables requirements

Title	Content	Language	Submission timing or deadline
Inception report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention logic • Stakeholder map • Preliminary answers to each Evaluation Question, with 	English	Within 3 Week(s) after the project start

Title	Content	Language	Submission timing or deadline
	<p>indication of the limitations of the available information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data gaps to be addressed, issues still to be covered and hypotheses to be tested during the desk phase • Methodology for the evaluation, incl.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluation Matrix ○ Evaluation Questions, with judgement criteria and indicators, and data analysis and collection methods ○ Consultation strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of risks related to the evaluation methodology and mitigation measures • Work plan Max. 20 pages excluding annexes 		
Draft final report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cf. detailed structure in Annex III Max. 70 pages 	English	Within 2 Month(s) after the project start
Final report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same specifications as of the Draft Final Report, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report that have been accepted Max. 70 pages 	English	Within 3 Month(s) after the project start
Chinese translation of the final report		English	Within 4 Month(s) after the project start

Annex 3: Detailed Evaluation Methodology

1. Scope & Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were to provide the relevant services of the European Union, interested stakeholders and the wider public with:

- an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the EC-LINK project, paying particular attention to its results measured against its expected objectives; and the reasons underpinning such results; and
- key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations in order to improve current and future interventions.

The specific objective of the evaluation was to understand the performance of the project, its enabling factors and those hampering a proper delivery of results in order to support Chinese ministries, MoHURD in particular, to enhance eco-urban policy-making and relevant international cooperation with the EU and EU Member States (MS), and to inform the planning of future EU interventions and actions in the same sector.

The main users of this evaluation were envisaged to be the European Commission's Directorate General for Development (DG DEVCO), the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), the EUD, and the European and Chinese cities, institutions and stakeholders involved in the project's intervention. The evaluation findings were intended to draw lessons to improve the design and implementation of similar and related interventions.

2. Methodology & Tools

The evaluation assignment was carried out on behalf of EUD, in line with Section 8.2 of the project ToR, which provides for external evaluations by independent experts.

The criteria to be covered by the evaluation concerned, respectively: the 'relevance', 'coherence', 'effectiveness', 'efficiency' of implementation, likely 'impact', 'sustainability' and 'EU added-value' of the project.

In addition to on-line interviews with EUD officials and the Technical Assistance Team (TAT), the assignment involved face-to-face and on-line interviews with representatives of the main beneficiaries of the EC Link project, i.e. MoHURD and other entities at central and local level, including the beneficiary cities participating in the project [**Annex 12**].

Open and semi-structured interview methods were applied in the on-line evaluation interviews and field visits [**Table: Consultations**, below]. The evaluation team produced notes and documentation of findings and evidences from stakeholder interviews; these were used to assess results and achievements of interventions.³⁷

The evaluation was of a summative character, involving a qualitative approach – based on applicable EU evaluation guidelines³⁸ – to answering a total of 13 evaluation questions (EQ), as they relate to the six main evaluation criteria, as well as a seventh criterion, as specified in the ToR (**Annex 1**, Section 2.2) and summarised in **Annex 4**. The inception period did not yield reasons to diverge from the EQs as included in the evaluation assignment's ToR.

The preparation for the field work was based on a review of the project documentation [**Annex 11**]. The documentation was made available by EUD, the contractor for the project – the GIZ

³⁷ The evaluators will use the interview notes – which are confidential – for factual validation and triangulation.

³⁸ Joint Evaluation Unit: Evaluation Methods for the European Union's External Assistance, 2006.

consortium³⁹ – and the Technical Assistance Team (TAT). All three of these stakeholders, as well as CSUS counterpart staff, were helpful in arranging the interviews and focus group meetings in the field visit venues.

The cut-off date of the present evaluation was agreed – during the inception period – to be the last day of the implementation period of the project, which fell within the field work period of the evaluation, i.e. 29 September 2020.

The 13 EQs, as well as the related judgement criteria, relevant indicators and data sources formulated by the evaluation team are set out in the evaluation matrix [**Annex 4**].

The evaluation matrix takes account of the project’s current logical framework planning matrix (logframe) included, together with the original logframe and an intermediate version, in **Annex 6**.

A reconstruction – required by Section 2.3.1 of the evaluation ToR – of the theory of change (ToC) underlying the project’s design is in **Annex 7**. The reconstructed ToC served as a basis for discussion of the scope and orientation of the final evaluation during the inception period of the assignment and helped to assess the application of the intervention logic methodology in the course of project implementation.

The main tools used for the consultation process in the evaluation assignment were on-line and face-to-face interviews (the latter to the extent possible in connection with the Chinese authorities Covid-19 related stipulations).

The consultations covered all 13 EQs, the relevant judgement criteria and the indicators set out in the evaluation matrix [**Annex 4**]; this to ensure effective triangulation of findings. Depending on the role of the project stakeholders, the consultations focused on specific EQs and main topics, as suggested in the following table.

Table: Consultations

Stakeholders	Evaluation Questions [Annex 4] and Key Issues	Methods
EURD	EQs 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12 & 13; relevance, cohesion, efficiency, sustainability & EU added value. <i>Main topic</i> : relative success EU and MS efforts in this sphere	On-line & face-to-face interviews
TAT/GIZ	EQs 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10; effectiveness, efficiency & impact. <i>Main topic</i> : managing effectiveness and impact of a relatively long-term project in EU-China cooperation	On-line and face-to-face interviews
MoHURD	EQs 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 & 12; effectiveness, impact & sustainability. <i>Main topic</i> : dissemination of outcomes fruitful exchange between Chinese and EU cities	Face-to-face consultations
CSUS	Idem, plus EQs 7 & 8; efficiency; same main topic	Face-to-face consultations
HURDs in Chinese pilot cities	EQs 1, 2, 5 & 6; relevance & effectiveness. <i>Main topic</i> : uptake of cooperation with EU cities	Focus group meetings
Chinese cities – Site visits	EQs 5, 6, 9 & 10; effectiveness, impact. <i>Main topic</i> : mutual relevance of Chinese and EU experience	On-line & face-to-face interviews
EU partner cities	EQs 5, 6, 9, 10 & 13; effectiveness; impact, EU added value. <i>Main topic</i> : interest in and reasons for cooperation with Chinese cities	On-line interviews

³⁹ In addition to the German *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), consisting of the *European Chambers of Commerce in China*, international engineering group *Sweco AB* (formerly *Grontmij*), *Climate Alliance*, an association of 1,700 cities, municipalities and districts, provinces, NGOs and other organisations, and initially also *Eurocities*, the network of major European cities.

Stakeholders	Evaluation Questions [Annex 4] and Key Issues	Methods
Beijing-based stakeholders on green financing (experts, financial institutions, consortium members)	All EQs, as appropriate; all 7 criteria as opportune; all the above-mentioned main topics, as germane to role in the project	Face-to-face interviews and on-line consultations

3. Work Plan

The evaluation team [Annex 2] carried out the field work for the evaluation in the course of Sep-Oct 2020, largely in line with the work plan and field work schedules set out in Annexes 13 & 14.

Due the Covid-19 situation in Europe over the period of the assignment, the EU-based member of the evaluation team could not travel to China and participate in key meetings via video link.

The field work was split due the Chinese autumn holidays (01-08 October 2020). The visit to three of the six participating Chinese cities, apart from Beijing, took place during the two weeks before these holidays; the remaining three cities were visited in the two weeks immediately following.

The interviews and focus group meetings carried out in the course of the field work are listed in Annex 12.

Annex 4: Evaluation Matrix

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Methods [Data & Sources]
Relevance: The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change				
1	To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid? ^[11] _[SEP]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refinement of the logframes⁴⁰ produced by the GIZ consortium and the TAT/PTF over the course of the project ▪ Continued relevance affirmed by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Switch from output to outcome-oriented indicators materialised ▪ Prominent link to relevant SDGs ▪ High coherence with the environmental and ecological goals/targets of the 12th and 13th FYPs, at both national and municipal level ▪ Positive statements on current relevance by majority of stakeholder representatives during evaluation interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EUD documentation (ToR, OWP/AWPs) ▪ Project reporting on output delivery and results achievement ▪ Relevant PRC authorities' policy and planning documents ▪ Statements by stakeholder representatives ▪ TAT/PTF self-assessments
2	Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects? ^[11] _[SEP]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intervention logic in the logframe [Annex 3] current in the final stages of the project ▪ Degree of 'SMART'-ness⁴¹ of indicators in the logframe current in the final stages of the project ▪ Documented recipient government policy & strategies [reflected in, e.g.: Five Year Plans (FYP)] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plausible link between objectives, outcomes, outputs and results, as per EU evaluation methodology ▪ Quantified indicators where available ▪ Attributable benchmarking of quantified indicators ▪ Relevant targets re environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets and related statements on achieving them in 13th FYP; ▪ Incorporation of project technical and policy outputs in the 13th FYP 	

⁴⁰ Logframe = the logical framework planning matrix, required by standard EU evaluation methodology.

⁴¹ 'SMART' indicators are: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Time-bound.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Methods [Data & Sources]
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the project does not reflect relevant new policy priority areas as set out in the 13th FYP 	
Coherence: Compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution				
3	Does the Action align with EU's interests and needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Action's ToR refer specifically to past, current or future EU interventions in China, specifically in the field of energy management The Action's ToR refer specifically to past, current or future EU interventions in the fields of resource sustainability and energy management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 specific reference to an EU intervention in the field of energy management in the ToR At least 1 specific reference to an EU intervention in the field of resource sustainability or energy management in the ToR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUD documentation (ToR, DCI, EEAS) Project reporting on relevance and results achievement Relevant PRC authorities' policy and planning documents Statements by stakeholder representatives
4	To what extent does the Action complement with other actions in the same sector?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Action's ToR and EC Link project reporting refer explicitly to other EU and MS funded initiatives in the area of energy management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 specific reference to an EU or Member State (MS) initiative in the field of energy management in the ToR Plausible coherence with the NDRC's 2nd and 3rd Low Carbon Pilot City Programme 	
Effectiveness: The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups				
5	What results/outcomes/impacts have been achieved compared with those in the project logframe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented achievement against indicators in current logframe Risks materialised at final evaluation cut-off date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive self-assessment against methodologically sound result/outcome indicators project reporting Project reporting contains plausible statements on risks and risk management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project reporting on results achievement TAT/PTF self-assessments EUD documentation (comments on and approval of reporting) Relevant PRC authorities' statements in project related meetings with EUD and TAT EC LINK website
6	What are the major factors leading to the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results and objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plausible causal link between delivery of outputs, achievement of results and likely attainment of intended impact at final evaluation cut-off date Current explicit and implicit assumptions with regard to project implementation and environment Updated risk analysis and proposed mitigation at contract extension time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 explicit statement on the project's underlying theory of change in project design or reporting At least 1 explicit statement(s) on the assumptions underpinning project implementation and environment Presence of updated risk management matrix in contract extension addenda 	


N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Methods [Data & Sources]
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Project outputs and results in planning and monitoring NDRC low carbon city programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 documented instances of such use 	
Efficiency: The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way				
7	Is the action cost-efficient? ^[11] _{SEP}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed of TAT mobilisation Quality of planning during inception period and during preparation of contract extensions Use of project budget at the final evaluation cut-off date Use of KE and NKE working days at final evaluation cut-off date Documented attainment of planned outputs at Project's end (as set out in applicable OWP/AWPs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically no more than 3 months between intent and realisation of KE replacement Typically no more than 6 weeks between intent of NKE mobilisation and deployment Plausible, detailed work plans (annual or for each planning period) At least 80% of total budget used in last financial statements at final evaluation cut-off date At least 90% of last approved budgeted number of KE and NKE working days used at final evaluation cut-off date At least 90% of planned outputs delivered by final evaluation cut-off date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project technical reporting on activity implementation and output delivery achievement TAT/PTF self-assessments MoHURD statements and reporting EUD documentation (comments on and approval of reporting, AWPs and budgets) Project financial reporting Evaluators' professional experience': technical experience in the field covered by the project, as well as knowledge of EU project cycle management (PCM). EC LINK website
8	What are the main issues affecting the operational efficiency of the action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of applicable overall work plan (OWP) Quality of applicable annual work plan (AWPs) Degree of recovery of initial delays in implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verified improvements of work planning documents in comparison with mid-term evaluation (April 2016) Verified improvements of work planning documents in comparison with ROM (Apr 2019) Presence of self-assessment of achievement of AWP and related mitigation action in Project successive reports Verified, positive statements on delay recovery in project reporting 	

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Methods [Data & Sources]
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statements by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validation of recovery of project implementation delays by stakeholder representatives 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PSC role in providing policy and technical guidance and decision making in changes in Project strategy and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documented instances of PSD decisions in Project, EUD and MoHURD reporting 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficiency of communication between MoHURD and city partners and the TAT and EU partner cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statements by EUD, MoHURD, Chinese and EU city partners in project, EU and MoHURD reporting 	
Impact: The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects				
9	What is happening as a result of the implementation of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Degree of attainment of project objectives, as measured against indicators in current logframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive self-assessment against methodologically sound impact indicators project reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project technical reporting on impact achievement ▪ Self-assessment by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries ▪ Statements by MS & IFI representatives ▪ Reasoned⁴² assessment by the evaluators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documented, unintended results, with likely impact in terms of objective achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Idem 	
10	What are the differences at beneficiary level that the project has contributed to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number and type of beneficiaries of project activities at the final evaluation cut-off date, as documented in reporting by EUD, TAT, PTF and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive statements by stakeholder representatives (i) EUD; (ii) MS and IFI; and (iii) other stakeholders 	
Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue				
11	To which extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after EU funding stopped?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documented commitment by Chinese authorities and stakeholders in the form of FYPs and other planning documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 1 positive statement in relevant PRC documents ▪ At least 2 positive statements in relevant city documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project technical reporting on sustainability ▪ Self-assessment by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries ▪ Statements by MS & IFI representatives ▪ Reasoned assessment by the evaluators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Likely continuation of key project outputs under CSUS/MoHURD aegis after project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of City links established and continued upon project closure ▪ Continued use of EC Link website upon project closure 	

⁴² 'Reasoned' means that all conclusions are traceable to documented findings and any recommendations are explicitly linked to one or more conclusions.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Methods [Data & Sources]
12	What are the main issues of concern in sustaining the project outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive statements by Chinese authorities and stakeholders on relevant policy continuity ▪ Positive statements by same on domestic budgetary resources availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant positive statements by Chinese authorities and stakeholders during project final conference (08-09 Sep 2020) ▪ Idem 	
EC Added Value: the extent to which the Intervention brings additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' interventions only in the partner country				
13	To which extent does the action bring additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' actions only? ¹¹ _{SEP}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perspective on the project's EU 'added value', as currently held by: (i) EUD; (ii) counterparts & beneficiaries; (iii) other stakeholders; (iv) MS and IFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant positive statements by MS representatives during the project's final conference (08-09 Sep 2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EUD documentation ▪ MS representatives' statements (final conference/interviews) ▪ Project reporting ▪ Relevant PRC authorities' statements (final conference/interviews) ▪ Statements by other stakeholder representatives

Annex 5: Detailed Answers to the Evaluation Questions

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
Relevance					
1	To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid? 	Refinement of the logframes produced by the GIZ consortium and the TAT/PTF over the course of the project	Switch from output to outcome-oriented indicators materialised	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall objective (OO) and purpose of the EC Link project, as formulated at the start of the project (Nov 2013), were still in force at project’s end (Sep 2020) • The expected results remained largely the same throughout the project, although the logframe was amended twice (formally in Sep 2018 and informally in Apr 2019). • The link between expected results, on the one hand, and the OO and the purpose, on the other hand were never adequately made explicit through good quality SMART indicators, or a detailed theory of change. • Several attempts were made to formulate results-level indicators, even at the stage of final report preparation, but the intervention logic remained output- instead of results-oriented until project’s end. • Over the course of the project duration, the possibilities for amending the intervention logic and the ToR at large were discussed several times, without action being taken, partly – perhaps mainly – so as not to fall foul of applicable procurement rules as laid down in the PRAG and the project’s General Conditions of Contract. This point was gainsaid by Finance & Control (Bangkok) which put the cause for the lack of amendment of ToR/intervention logic as the urge to get on with it, once a project work plan had been approved. • The problem with the intervention logic may derive from that fact that the design of the project does not sit well with the intentions behind the project idea. These were of an overarching EU-China cooperation nature, linked to China’s participation in the 2012 Covenant of Mayors. It may be questioned whether those intentions could be served best or even at all by an intervention funded by the EU in the form and format of a project framed within the parameters of a services contract with a consultancy firm or firms. • This kind of effort, with political overtones, in that it involves local government entities and their interests in the EU MS, is hard to implement by a commercial contractor, however qualified, without multi-level diplomatic support, both formal and informal.
			Prominent link to relevant SDGs	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original intervention logic did not link to relevant SDGs (which had not been formulated at the time of the project design). • The link with SDGs was established to an extent in the Sep 2018 logframe which included a total of seven indicators linking to SDGs 6 (under Result 3), and SDGs 6, 11 & 13 (under Result 4). • However, this limited linkage was reduced in the Apr 2020 logframe in that five of these indicators were dropped, leaving 2 indicators linked to, respectively SDGs 11 & 13 under Result 4.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
			High coherence with the environmental and ecological goals/targets of the 12 th and 13 th FYPs, at both national and municipal level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EC Link project objectives and its thematic areas (compact city, green building, green transport, water management, waste management, green finance and clean energy) are coherent with both the 12th and 13th FYP, at the national and local level. • The 12th FYP set up green development, resource saving and environment-friendly society as goals for national development. • Almost all interviewed EC Link project partners from MoHURD, CSUS, and all six pilot cities pointed out that the objective and seven selected thematic areas are coherent with the goals and targets of the 13th FYP and China’s national green and low carbon development strategies. The high coherence with local development goals and targets was verified in all six visited pilot cities, and particularly in Qingdao, Weihai and Zhuhai and Zhuzhou
		Continued relevance affirmed by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries	Positive statements on current relevance by majority of stakeholder representatives during evaluation interviews	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interlocutors generally were positive about the project’s relevance. This in spite of delays in implementation and sometimes patchy uptake by city-level stakeholders. For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Chinese pilot cities: the EC Link project has high (policy) relevance for the Qingdao government green urban development strategy and green financing, the Weihai delicate urban construction strategy and the Luoyang high urban development policy. The green financing advice was much appreciated by policy makers in pilot cities Qingdao and Weihai. ○ EU cities: implementing partners in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Bologna expressed themselves positively on the relevance of the project, both from the Chinese and EU perspective, although they noted differences in expectations on the Chinese and EU sides. ○ TAT: initially high relevance in all ‘sectors’ of low carbon urbanisation; later focus on three sectors: resilience, water management and green financing; on the other hand, developments in China outpaced the project, especially in the first half of its duration, which caused the project to lose in relevance. This was made up by an increase of the pace of activity, as well as a new focus on green financing during its last three years. ○ Consortium partners: EC Link offered and realised the opportunity for substantial discussion of ecological and water management issues between like-minded personnel in China and Europe (Zhuhai/Amsterdam/Rotterdam); it did not sufficiently take into account the importance of the political level in pilot cities; the troubles the project was in during its first three years caused an attitude of ‘let’s do something, anything’ and a focus on output delivery. ○ CSUS: The project has focused on technical output delivery, not on policy dialogue and consultation. ○ MoHURD: professed commitment interest in and awareness of the relevance of the project. This commitment was not always experienced as such by other stakeholders, including members of the TAT.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GIZ: positive assessment of relevance, although the second project manager observed that proceeding by ‘trial-and-error’ (due to EUD, GIZ and TAT not being able to agree on a strategy) during the first half of the project duration had negatively affected the perception of relevance due to hiatuses in project activity.
2	<p>Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects? ^[1]_{SEP}</p>	<p>Intervention logic in the logframe [Annex 3] current in the final stages of the project</p>	<p>Plausible link between objectives, outcomes, outputs and results, as per EU evaluation methodology</p>	<p>✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original project logframe as included in the contract (Nov 2013) was formally amended, in Sep 2018 and informally in Apr 2019. The changes were limited and focused on the indicators, following recommendations from the ROM assignment (Feb-Mar 2019). • The original intervention was not changed, apparently because doing so was seen by EUD and the contractor as a substantial contract amendment. • The intervention logic could have been improved by formulating adequate indicators at output level (‘SMART’, or, as suggested in the ROM report ‘RACER’). • In the event, this was not done, leaving measurement of effectiveness (results) and impact (purpose, OO) dependent on a large number of output indicators. • The conclusions with regard to the measurement objective and results achieved expressed in the mid-term evaluation (2016) therefore remained uncorrected. • Because of this, and because the theory of change underlying the project approach was never made explicit (but merely expressed in a single graph), no objective measurement can be made of the degree of achievement of project results and impact.
		<p>Degree of ‘SMART’-ness⁴³ of indicators in the logframe current in the final stages of the project</p>	<p>Quantified indicators where available</p>	<p>✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All indicators used pertained to or were expressed in terms of deliverable outputs, lacking ‘SMART-ness’, although quantified. • In addition, neither the ToR nor technical progress reporting (12 six-monthly reports and a final report) made clear in what way the delivery of project outputs would contribute or had contributed to result, purpose and OO achievement. • Is therefore not helpful that the indicators for the project purpose are not SMART or RACER, rendering an objective assessment of its achievement difficult.
			<p>Attributable benchmarking of quantified indicators</p>	<p>✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither the ToR nor the technical progress reports explained whether, and if so, how the quantified targets in the output-oriented indicators had been arrived at and why those quantities might be considered sufficient in terms of the results and objectives to be achieved.
		<p>Documented recipient government policy &</p>	<p>Relevant targets re</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All seven thematic areas (compact city, green building, green transport, water management, waste management, green finance and clean energy) of the project are in alignment with

⁴³ ‘SMART’ indicators are: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Time-bound.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		strategies [reflected in, e.g.: Five Year Plans (FYP)]	environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets and related statements on achieving them in 13 th FYP;		<p>chapters related to low carbon, low energy consumption and recyclable resource management in the 13th (national) FYP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 29 – Establishment of modern transportation systems, priorities of green and low carbon urban transportation system; ○ Chapter 30 – Modern Energy Supply System, wind energy, solar energy; ○ Chapter 34 – New Urban and City Development, liveable city, eco-city development; ○ Chapter 43 – Resource Saving and Intensified utilization, save energy, save water resources, save land resources; circular economic development; ○ Chapter 44 – Strengthen environmental governance, control the pollution, strengthen environmental infrastructure development, etc.; ○ Chapter 45 – Ecosystem restoration and conservation; and ○ Chapter 46 – Mitigation to the climate change, reduce the carbon emission by all sectors and industries.
			Incorporation of Project technical and policy outputs in the 13 th FYP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The pilot city visits showed that the EC Link pilot project’s guidelines, technical reports and technical recommendations contributed to achieving the local 13th FYP targets to a certain extent. ▪ There was no evidence of incorporation into the 13th FYP, since both national and local 13th FYPs were formulated in 2014 and 2015, and most of the EC Link technical outputs were produced after 2017. ▪ For incorporation into the 14th FYP, the EC Link outputs would need to be further reviewed and selected for incorporation.
			Extent to which the Project does not reflect relevant new policy priority areas as set out in the 13 th FYP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EC Link did not reflect the priorities in Chapter 46 of the 13th FYP in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carbon prints and accounting for relevant sectors urban areas; ○ Establishment of Carbon Trading Market, Emission Trading System (ETS); and ○ Establishment of carbon emission supervision, accounting, certification systems. ○ Assessment of the energy saving efficiency for public and residential buildings; ○ Green Industry Development; ○ Public awareness building for low carbon society construction <p>Note: As pointed out by EUD, there are other EU projects in China that inter alia cover these issues (see main text; pp. 18-19).</p>
Coherence					
3	Does the Action align with EU’s interests and needs?	The Action’s ToR refer specifically to past, current or future EU interventions in China,	At least 1 specific reference to an EU intervention	✓	The project finds it genesis in the observation (in the ToR, Section 1.4) that the EU was already engaged in some cooperation initiatives with Chinese and international think-tanks, EU MS and international financing institutions in China, but that (i) synergies and knowledge sharing among initiatives remained largely untapped; (ii) accessibility to information on the key findings under


N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		specifically in the field of energy management	in the field of energy management in the ToR		<p>these initiatives was quite scattered; and iii) many more Chinese cities may not get this type of advantageous partnerships for themselves. Hence, the <i>clear need for centralised knowledge management and information through a ‘platform’ where information is accessible at national and EU (international) level and lessons learned can be discussed, where new approaches can be presented, and up-to-date advice provided.</i></p> <p>According to the ToR (dating from 2012, but still underpinning the project in 2020) European cities <i>are now increasingly sustainable and able to offer the kind of quality of life and opportunities that make people want to live in them and make businesses want to invest.</i> Because Europe was considered to be <i>well placed to be a strategic partner for China in sustainable urban development and share the wide range of expertise and knowledge accumulated among its institutions and its 27 Member States</i>, the EU and China embarked on a high-level Partnership on sustainable urbanisation, through cooperative efforts at the central, regional and local levels. The Partnership was launched at the 14th China-EU Summit in February 2012 and confirmed in the <i>Joint Declaration on the EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation</i> (Brussels, May 2012). The partnership is a broad political initiative favouring the development of adequate solutions in various areas pertinent to sustainable urban development such as urbanisation development strategies and policies; spatial distribution; infrastructure investment and financing; public services; energy supply and demand management; mobility, public and smart transport; green buildings; urban industrial economy. The Partnership is structured in five pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The Government-to-Government Pillar to enable the two sides to cooperate on urbanisation issues at the central level, the objective being to reflect together on the new urbanisation trends, its consequences and share best practices on territorial planning. (ii) The City Networking Pillar for city level projects contributing to enhance cooperation with local stakeholders. The experience gained with those initiatives feeds the first pillar and facilitates the adoption of specific decisions. The EC Link project was envisaged as an important initiative under this pillar. (iii) The Science & Technology Pillar to mobilise the Sino-European research community to deliver on the themes of the Partnership. The deliverables under this pillar are defined primarily through the <i>Innovation Cooperation Dialogue</i> (DG RTD/Ministry of Science & Technology MoST) and the dialogue on ICT policies (DG Connect/MoST) (iv) The Business & Finance Pillar for discussing the creation of an EU-China Sustainable Urbanization Business Council by European and Chinese companies and financiers, to foster cooperation and business relations towards the emergence of the best urban solutions. (v) Public participation in urban social management: with civil society and non-state actors contributing to the attainment of the objectives of the platform.
		The Action’s ToR refer specifically to past, current or future EU interventions in the fields of resource sustainability and energy management	At least 1 specific reference to an EU intervention in the field of resource sustainability or energy management in the ToR		

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<p>The ToR (Section 1.5) briefly, but explicitly, mention nine EU-funded initiatives in this and related areas in the period 2003-2020, without going into detail on the goals and scope of these programmes. The two main ones are the <i>EU-China Urbanization Forum</i> and the <i>EU-China Mayors Forum</i>, which were foreseen to be held annually. Other actions relevant to EC Link funded by the EU included: <i>From pilot to sustainable towns: Satellite cities and metropolitan governance</i>, aiming at developing integrated urban approach to foster sustainable development of new towns and satellite cities in Asia and focusing in China on two districts in Shanghai; <i>URBACHINA</i>, a research project under the RTD Framework Programme 7 aiming at analysing China's urbanisation trends for the next 40 years; <i>Supporting the Design and Implementation of Emissions Trading Systems in China</i>, assisting China in designing and implementing successful emissions trading pilots; the <i>EU-China Environmental Sustainability Project</i>, supporting the Chinese authorities in their efforts of achieving environmental sustainability by reducing water and heavy metal pollution and implementing sustainable waste policies; the <i>EU-China Low carbon platform</i>, managed by EU-China Trade Project, comprising a group of different stakeholders meeting regularly to discuss the development of a low carbon economy in China. An important cooperation project also funded by the EU, with great potential for synergy with EC-LINK, is the <i>Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2)</i>. In particular, EC2 has recently started activities in Urumqi, where it is supporting the municipality to set up a demo zone on clean energy. The activities include the development of methodological tools that could be proposed to other Chinese cities via the EC Link project. Finally, 11 <i>SWITCH-Asia</i> projects promoting sustainable consumption and production were on-going in China, with some of them implementing pilot actions in fields relevant to EC Link. This includes a 2.2 MEUR action to promote energy efficiency and sustainable building practices in Western China, in cooperation with the <i>Wuppertal Institute für Klima</i> (Germany).</p>
4	To what extent does the Action complement with other actions in the same sector?	The Action's ToR and EC Link Project reporting refer explicitly to other EU and MS funded initiatives in the area of energy management	At least 1 specific reference to an EU or Member State (MS) initiative in the field of energy management in the ToR	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was no mention of specific EU Member State initiatives in the ToR, although some MS, including GIZ, were active in energy management in China. ▪ The ToR did observe that many EU Member States are particularly active in the urbanisation domain, thus <i>contributing to the breadth and depth of the Urbanisation Partnership with a wide range of actions on pilot districts and eco-cities, local low carbon strategies, sustainability indicators, regional urban planning, carrying capacity of cities and circular economy in the urban context, district heating and cooling, green buildings and retrofitting, urban mobility, etc.</i> Other international bi-lateral activities include the Swiss Government's funding of a Low Carbon Cities project, a bottom-up action supporting a limited number of 'committed' cities to meet their carbon emissions targets. ▪ Where the international financing institutions (IFI) are concerned, the ToR refer to multilateral assistance targeting the whole of Asia and global initiatives, including: the World Bank's Eco2 Cities initiative (ecological cities as economic cities), Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s 3R strategy (), the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA) (sustainable urban

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<p>infrastructure investment) and the PRC-UNDP strategic partnership on sharing China's experience on sustainable, low-emission urban development with other developing countries. A more recent initiative concerns the Shandong Green Development Fund (SGDF, Dec 2019), in which the ADB, the <i>Agence française de développement</i> (AFD) and the <i>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i> cooperate. Because of Chinese pilot cities' focus on concrete investment possibilities, the SGDF and the EC Link Project's involvement in feasibility studies and other preparatory steps on behalf of pilot cities has met with substantial take up.</p> <p>More recent and specific cooperation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the <i>China Green Cities Development Fund</i> (CGCDF), 2018-23 (5.6 MEUR), in cooperation with KfW (Germany), it supports the implementation of China's policies to reach its climate change mitigation goals (Paris Agreement), and the Agenda 2030 (SDGs). It helps Chinese cities and provinces in fostering environmentally friendly and socially responsible urban development in the context of low carbon cities. The initiative is in line with the Partnership. ▪ In 2018, the EC Link project initiated a Green Finance Network, including EUD, MoHURD, TAT consultants, ADB, GIZ, KfW, the Industrial & Commercial Bank of China, and Chinese Green Finance Research Institutions. Four meetings were organized for developing the concept, methodologies and tools, and analysing the policy framework for establishing green finance for urban investment projects. However, the activities were suspended due to COVID-19. No results were achieved. Another problem of the network is that DRC, MEE, MOF, and the China Banking Regulatory Commission, the China Security Market Regulatory Commission, and the China Insurance Regulatory Commissions were not presented in the Green Finance Network. ▪ the <i>Technical Assistance Facility for Green Promotional Loans</i> (TAG-China), 2019-26 (10 MEUR), it supports the implementation of environmental, forestry and biodiversity projects in China that will be funded by KfW promotional loans. EU funding provides co-financing of TA during the implementation of investment projects. Partner: KfW ▪ the <i>China Biodiversity Facility</i> (CBF), 2020-27 (13 MEUR), in cooperation with <i>Agence Française de Développement</i> (AFD), it provides TA to prepare and accompany a portfolio of development and biodiversity projects identified by AFD and the authorities of P.R. China. This facility also seeks to disseminate best practices on issues of biodiversity protection to feed into national strategies.
			<p>Plausible coherence with the NDRC's 2nd and 3rd Low Carbon Pilot City Programme</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The objective of EC Link is coherent with the NDRC's Low Carbon Pilot City Programme. It also include interventions with green building, energy saving construction and urban green transportations which are very relevant to EC Link intervention sectors. Whilst its components of low carbon society, low carbon industries and carbon sequestration are complementary with EC Link interventions. ▪ At the national level, the NDRC was not involved in EC Link; however, at the municipal level, DRCs are important members of the EC Link PSCs.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among the 10 EC Link pilot cities, Qingdao and Guilin were listed as the 2nd tier NDRC pilot cities; Hefei, Changzhou and Liuzhou are listed as 3rd tier NDRC pilot cities. In these cities, HURDs are members of the NDRC Low Carbon Programme and designated as responsible line agencies for green building and green urban infrastructures components. The Qingdao and Guilin HURDs confirmed that EC Link is highly coherent with the NDRC Low Carbon City Programme, since those HURDs are key implementing agencies for that programme.
Effectiveness					
5	What results/outcomes/ impacts have been achieved compared with those in the project logframe?	Documented achievement against indicators in current logframe	Positive self-assessment against methodologically sound result/outcome indicators project reporting	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above (EQ 2) for factors limiting an objective assessment of project results/outcomes and impact. The self-assessment by the TAT and contractor in the draft Final Report (Sep 2020) states that the project has met six out of 32 indicators related to the outputs specified for the seven results. Six indicators were stated as having been met (one each under Results 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7). Reservations with regard to the suitability of this type of indicators for effectiveness and impact assessment remain.
		Risks materialised at final evaluation cut-off date	Project reporting contains plausible statements on risks and risk management	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks included: (i) project partners (MoHURD and pilot cities) do not sufficiently consider the project's technical outputs due to lack of dissemination or poor communication; (ii) the Chinese versions of project materials becoming available only late in the project duration; (iii) reports or study results will not receive the attention they deserve. All these risks hung over the project far into the project implementation period, but could be largely overcome, with the exception of sufficient guarantees for a smooth takeover of the Knowledge Platform and the further dissemination of Chinese and English language guidelines. Both these remain a MoHURD responsibility without hard guarantees that they will be taken in hand at project's end. The project based on a total of eight assumptions, all of which the project's Final Report assessed as having been met to varying degrees. The evaluation did not yield any evidence to the contrary.
6	What are the major factors leading to the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results and objectives?	Plausible causal link between delivery of outputs, achievement of results and likely attainment of intended impact at final evaluation cut-off date	At least 1 explicit statement on the Project's underlying theory of change in project design or reporting	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project's underlying theory of change is set out in a diagram in the project's draft Final Report and reproduced in the present report [Annex 7, Diagram A]. The diagram is not accompanied by supporting text specifying the causal linkages between the elements of the theory of change. The diagram is an elaboration of a similar one in Addendum N° 7 (Nov 2018) to the contract ruling the project (pp. 85). The text supporting the latter diagram sets out what will be done within the project from 2019 onwards but does not clearly state why.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A reconstruction of the theory of change [Annex 7, Table A] sets out possible causal linkages; the various versions of the project’s logframes [Annex 6] do not include such linkages, especially with regard to the linkage between outputs and results. ▪ Where the cooperation with European cities is concerned, the project may have lacked the necessary orientation on political needs and the economic and commercial interests typically driving city-to-city cooperation. This has negatively affected its effectiveness and longer-term impact.
		Current explicit and implicit assumptions with regard to project implementation and environment	At least 1 explicit statement(s) on the assumptions underpinning project implementation and environment	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project’s draft Final Report includes statements on each of the 8 assumptions underpinning project design and implementation, as well as its environment. The extent to which these assumptions have materialised is hard to assess.
		Updated risk analysis and proposed mitigation at contract extension time	Presence of updated risk management matrix in contract extension addenda	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addendum N° 7 (on the 2nd extension) to the project contract (pp. 79-82) sets out six key assumptions and a total of 16 risks. These include or paraphrase five risks as set out in the ToR: (i) communication barrier in EU-China cities exchanges; (ii) local limited capacity to absorb the knowledge promoted by the ‘support mechanism’; (iii) knowledge not being shared among municipalities; (iv) costly pilot city and insufficient funding and capacity; and (v) platform not being known. ▪ Addendum N° 7 added a further eleven apposite risks given in by GIZ experience with project implementation in China). ▪ The draft Final Report comments on three risks: (i) MoHURD and (pilot) cities not sufficiently considering the project’s technical outputs due to lack of dissemination or poor communication; (ii) Chinese versions of project materials becoming available late during the project duration; and (iii) project reports or study results not receiving the attention they deserve. ▪ In response, the report states that the project produced a fair amount of Position Papers and best practice case studies, all of which were vetted and reviewed by Chinese experts at MoHURD request. ▪ The draft report states that the project’s logframe was reasonably open and allowed for a flexible interpretation of what constitutes activities of low-carbon urban development, as the basis for a demand driven, responsive approach of the EC- Link project. The project clients were assessed as having appreciated the project’s flexibility in responding to new developments in policies, guidelines and needs originating from innovative projects.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		Use of Project outputs and results in planning and monitoring NDRC low carbon city programmes	At least 2 documented instances of such use	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is evidence of the use of EC Link outputs and guidelines in NDRC Low Carbon City Programme activities. ▪ This important factor for replication of EC Link results into other programmes was not considered during project implementation.
Efficiency					
7	Is the action cost-efficient? 	Speed of TAT mobilisation	Typically no more than 3 months between intent and realisation of KE replacement	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project started operations in the month of the official start date (17/11/2013), with the arrival of the TAT in Beijing. ▪ The TAT changed composition 5 times, through replacement of KE1 (team leader) once (in Feb 2017), KE2 (sustainable urban development expert) three times (in Nov 2014, Apr 2015 & Mar 2018) and KE3 (knowledge management expert) once (in Oct 2015). One replacement (of KE2) involved 2 persons. The substitution of the three international experts on the TAT involved a total of 8 persons in total. ▪ The replacements themselves were affected relatively quickly, but the process of decision making prior to their taking effect was in some cases protracted mainly due to other occurrences in the project. ▪ One of the key experts, KE2, returned in a significant role as NKE following the first extension of the project (Nov 2017).
			Typically no more than 6 weeks between intent of NKE mobilisation and deployment	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The technical progress reporting does not provide information on the speed of mobilisation of NKEs, but there is no reason to suspect that their mobilisation was delayed for reasons of inefficiency on the part of consortium partners. ▪ The participation of experts provided through consortium partner <i>Eurocities</i> did not materialise because this partner wished no longer to be involved in the project and was formally dropped from the consortium in Oct 2018 (through Addendum N° 7 to the contract ruling the project).

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		Quality of planning during inception period and during preparation of contract extensions	Plausible, detailed work plans (annual or for each planning period)	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inception period, originally envisaged to of 6-months duration, was extended by one month until 18 Jun 2014. ▪ The original 48-months project duration expired on 16 Nov 2017. The 1st extension of the duration, was signed the next day, on 17 Nov 2017. The 2nd extension was signed on 02 Oct 2018, i.e. just after the expiry of the 1st extension on 29 Sep 2018, with effect from the latter date. ▪ The inception period saw an initial plan of action (IPA) approved at the end of the period (Jun 2014). ▪ An Overall Work Plan (OWP), submitted in Jun 2014, was approved – after much discussion – only in Jul 2015). ▪ An accompanying Annual Work Plan (AWP) for the period Jun 2014-Jun 2015 was likewise submitted in Jun 2014 and approved in Jul 2015. ▪ The AWP for the period Jun 2015-Jun 2016 was formally submitted for approval only March 2016 (approval date unknown). ▪ The extension of the project saw three annual work plans (AWPEs 1, 2 & 3) with better timing for submission, although it is unclear when they were approved except in the case of AWPE3 (Sep 2019-Sep 2020) which was approved in mid-October 2019. ▪ Please refer to EQ8 for more detail on successive work plans.
		Use of project budget at the final evaluation cut-off date	At least 80% of total budget used in last financial statements at final evaluation cut-off date	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Of the project budget at large (EUR 9,304,400) an amount of EUR 8,833,837 (95%) had been spent at project's end. ▪ The balance of EUR 470,563 consisted mainly of unspent incidentals (i.e. 48% of the Incidental Expenditure provision of EUR 982,788. Note: The IE budget had already been reduced from an initial 2.85 MEUR in Oct 2018.
		Use of KE and NKE working days at final evaluation cut-off date	At least 90% of last approved budgeted number of KE and NKE working days used at final evaluation cut-off date	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At project's end, a total of 3,778 Key Expert (KE) working days (WDs) had been used, or 102% of the total number allocated [Annex 9]. ▪ The total of used Non-Key Expert WDs amounted to 2,861 (97%) for senior and 756.5 (100,3%) for junior NKEs. ▪ The used WDs divide equally between KEs (51%) and NKEs (49%). ▪ The use of WDs over the project's implementation period varied substantially. At total of 2,707 WDs (37%) were used during the first 7 semesters of the project duration, compared to 4,689 (63%) in the last 7 semesters, indicating almost a doubling of the pace of implementation during the second half of the project duration. In the first half of the duration, the pace of implementation hit a low point, with only 496 WDs used [46% of the average annual use of WDs (1,057)].

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		Documented attainment of planned outputs at Project's end (as set out in applicable OWP/AWPs)	At least 90% of planned outputs delivered by final evaluation cut-off date	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The substantial increase in WD utilisation was facilitated partly by converting a substantial amount (EUR 2,387,137) of IE funds into – mainly – fees for KEs and NKEs in Oct 2018 (2nd extension). ▪ The draft Final Report contains a summing up of the degree achievement of a total of 46 outputs, across the seven expected results, expressed as a percentage per output, taken over the whole duration of the project. ▪ The report arrives at an overall average score for accomplishment across the seven results of 94%. Taking the scores across all outputs gives a score of 72%. It may be there is some weighing involved in the higher score. It is fair to say that overall achievement of outputs is at least 72%. A score of 94% seems optimistic.
8	What are the main issues affecting the operational efficiency of the action?	Quality of applicable overall work plan (OWP)	Verified improvements of work planning documents in comparison with mid-term evaluation (April 2016)	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project produced drafts and final version of – in total – 7 work plans over its duration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ an overall work plan for the period Jun 2014-Nov 2017 (OWP); i.e. from the end of the inception period to the then foreseen end of the project. The OWP was based on an initial plan of activities (IPA) dated Jun 2014; ○ the annual work plan for the period Jun 2014-Jun 2015, dated 04/07/2014 (AWP1); ○ an addendum to AWP1 for the period Jan-Jul 2015; ○ the annual work plan for the period Jul 2015-Jul 2016 (AWP2); ○ an (almost annual) work plan for the first ten-months contract extension period Nov 2017-Sep 2018 (AWPE1); ○ the annual work plan for the first year of the second contract extension period Oct 2018-Sep 2019 (AWPE2); and ○ similar for the second year of the second contract extension period, Oct 2019-Sep 2020 (AWPE3) ▪ The OWP is detailed and clear about the activities to be carried out and the outputs to be delivered. The OWP is based to a number of 'project principles'. The activities are grouped into three project components: (i) support mechanism; (ii) urban sustainability – Lab; and (iii) urban sustainability – Helpdesk. In addition, reference is made to the logframe, and thereby to the project's overall objective, purpose and the seven expected results in the intervention logic [Annex 6]. Confusingly, however, the OWP sets out a 'results/benefit' for each activity (of which there are 22 in total). These are not the same as the seven project level results but appear to be meant as a kind of deliverable, although they cannot be considered outputs (as for activity A.18 – Providing Guidance & Capacity Building: <i>Local managerial level function's people's capacity improved</i>). That said, each of the seven sets of activities is introduced by a short narrative setting out the link with the project results to be achieved. Each set of activities is accompanied by a risk assessment. For instance with regard Activity A.7 – <i>Assessing How to Ensure the Continued Delivery of the Platform Services after Ceasing of EU Funding</i>, the risk is: <i>We don't find [sic] a solution for self-</i>

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<p><i>sustainability, the platform is not maintained after November 17th, 2014 therefore the value created is lost.</i> Section 4 of the OWP sets out the deliverables (of which there are 38) across the project duration. The 22 ‘results’ are repeated in the Gantt-chart at the end of Section 4. Section 5 sets out the parameters for project management and reporting. Section 6 contains an expert time budget, matching KE/NKE working days with each of the 22 activities. The OWP is – at 54 pages – of apposite length and detail for a plan covering 40 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AWP1 is structured largely like the OWP. It repeats (in its Section 1) the introductory sub-sections of the OWP. In Section 2 it sets a series of activities and outputs in even more detail than set out in the OWP. The 22 activities have a total 58 ‘sub-activities’. The section identifies tasks, participants/beneficiaries, links with other (sub-) activities in AWP1, risks and related mitigation measures, as well as the project resources to be deployed for each (sub-) activity. In Section 3 it sets out the ‘programme timing and results’, in the form of a table for each result. Section 4 – Programme Management & Reporting, largely repeats the content of Section 5 of the OWP. Section 5 contains an update of the budget in the form of a separate excel sheet. AWP1 is – at 102 pages – too long and detailed for a work programme covering 12 months. ▪ The AWP1 Addendum covers the period Jan-Jul 2015, i.e. the last half year of AWP1. Its objectives are to: (i) present an overall project strategy in more detail incorporating insights and guidance received from both MoHURD and the EUD during the first six months of project implementation, and (ii) present a detailed set of ToR supporting the implementation of project activities during the period from Jan-Jul 2015. It covers all 58 sub-activities set out in AWP1 with a focus on a sector-based approach⁴⁴ to engagement with 10 pilot cities in 7 areas linked to the seven project results. For each sector it identified: (a) the state of demand in China; (b) best practice in Europe; and (c) outlook for potential toolboxes. It further identified (a) partner city(ies) for each Chinese pilot city. Under the ‘ToR’ for each activity it set out the profile and identity of the experts to be involved and for how long, and their tasks/deliverables. Other particulars, including mission dates/schedules and budgets for single events are likewise included. Annexes include templates, e.g. for the ‘eco city action plans’. The Addendum is – at 108 pages – even longer and more detailed than AWP1. The question may be asked whether there is a need for a comprehensive document containing this level of detail, which would normally be subject of dedicated procurement notes.

⁴⁴ Nine key sectors: (i) clean energy; (ii) compact urban development; (iii) green buildings; (iv) green industries; (v) green transport; (vi) municipal finance; (vii) solid waste management; (viii) urban renewal & revitalisation & (ix) water management.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AWP2: (i) summarises the project’s work under AWP1, (ii) presents a strategic framework for the project; and (iii) sets out the four main parts of the project, i.e. sector work in the cities, the toolboxes, training & CB, and the support mechanism and the inter-city lab (ICL) concept. Chapters on, respectively, the budget, the M&E framework and project management/human resources conclude the document. An interesting feature is the <i>EC-LINK Pilot Projects Management Regulation</i> [Chapter 9, <i>ibid</i>], which charts out the formal relationship between pilot city, PTF, TAT, MoHURD and EUD. AWP2 is – at 228 pages – even accounting for its key character for project planning – inordinately long and detailed. ▪ AWPE1, dated 20/12/2017, covers the 10 month + 12 days between 18 Nov 2017 and 29 Sep 2018. The main part of the document concerns a presentation of 22 activities arranged under the seven expected results of the project [NB: not the same outputs as the 22 ‘results/benefits’ set out in the OWP (see above)]. Each of the seven sections contains an assessment of the ‘overall outcome (sum of all activities)’. This assessment typically consists of descriptions of the kind of support received by relevant beneficiaries/stakeholders. Each section further contains a list of outputs and related ‘indicators’. Both the outputs and the indicators are new introductions. They resemble but are the same as in earlier planning documents. In its Annex 3, it presents revised logframe which however was not retained. The revision presented the project results in terms of 3 new project components: (i) European technical know-how on low carbon solutions has been shared; (ii) exchange mechanism; and (iii) capacity development for sustainability. Annex 4 contains a detailed Gantt-chart with timelines for ‘results-delivery’ expressed in 22 activities/outputs. In its Annex 5, AWPE1 presents a ‘draft indication’ on outputs achievable over the period Oct 2018-Sep 2020, i.e. until project’s end). AWPE1 is – at 72 pages – a document of more manageable proportions. It is also slightly more oriented on the 7 project expected results and in its Annex 2 reports on activity/output delivery in terms of the indicators for those results. In its introduction it includes a useful ‘reminder’ of the costs for activities and events to be borne by the beneficiary country. ▪ AWPE2, final version dated Oct 2018, introduces a theory of change for the project in the form a diagram illustrating its conceptional model and linkages. It further sets out (in the introduction) a section on ‘exit strategy & sustainability’. For its main text, the AWPE2 follows the structure of AWPE1. At 38 pages, AWPE2 is a much more fit-for-purpose work plan.
			Verified improvements of work planning documents in comparison with ROM (Apr 2019)	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The same applies for AWPE3 (final draft dated Oct 2019). This follows the same structure, as the two previous planning documents. Noteworthy is that introductory chapter contains a section dedicated to follow-up action on the ROM, arranged by the 10 conclusions in the ROM report (April 2019). ▪ AWPE3 was the last annual planning document prepared by the project.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
		Quality of applicable annual work plan (AWPs)	Presence of self-assessment of achievement of AWP and related mitigation action in Project successive reports	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The planning documents show a progression on thinking on how to come to grips with the project’s subject matter and environment. The first planning documents are overly detailed. By the end of the fourth year of operations, planning became more to the point. ▪ However, a feature of all planning documents remains a lack of clear reflection on the success/failure of earlier activities and the actions in mitigation. This may be more obvious to outsiders than those involved in project management and implementation and may reflect reporting skills more than a lack of thought about amendments to activities and outputs. ▪ The same applies to the 12 technical progress reports which favour a description of activities carried and outputs delivered over a focused presentation of changes in thinking on project progress.
		Degree of recovery of initial delays in implementation	Verified, positive statements on delay recovery in project reporting	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project reporting in the second half of the project duration is clearer on delays experienced and corrective measures taken than that it in the first three years. ▪ Project reporting in those first three years left much unsaid, judging by the comments made during interviews for the present evaluation.
		Statements by EUD, counterparts & beneficiaries	Validation of recovery of Project implementation delays by stakeholder representatives	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The interviews conducted for the evaluation revealed general agreement amongst stakeholder representatives that the project recovered momentum in early 2018 and that the pace of project implementation (in terms of activities carried out and outputs delivered) had increased since then.
		PSC role in providing policy and technical guidance and decision making in changes in Project strategy and implementation	Documented instances of PSC decisions in Project, EUD and MoHURD reporting	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project reporting is not explicit about the role and decisions of the PSC. ▪ During interviews with a variety of stakeholders for the present evaluation, the PSC was not referred to even once.
		Efficiency of communication between MoHURD and city partners and the TAT and EU partner cities	Statements by EUD, MoHURD, Chinese and EU city partners in Project, EU and MoHURD reporting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff of CSUS joined the TAT office; daily communication between TAT and CSUS was effective. ▪ Communication between MoHURD and TAT, MoHURD and EUD in the first half of project implementation (2014-2017) was ineffective, with no clear and common understanding of the implementation modalities and financing mechanism between MoHURD, EUD and the pilot cities. Lack of effective communication between key stakeholders was the main reason for ineffective project implementation during 2014-2017.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There were no regular meetings for reviewing and planning the project activities and preparing the annual work plan; pilot cities did not actively participate in the annual progress review and planning.
Impact					
9	What is happening as a result of the implementation of the project?	Degree of attainment of project objectives, as measured against indicators in current logframe	Positive self-assessment against methodologically sound impact indicators project reporting	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From a purely formal point of view, nothing can be said about the degree to which the project achieved its desired impact, measured by the degree of attainment of its overall objective and (project) purpose. The project’s intervention logic as set out in its three successive logframes [Annex 6] lack indicators at objective level, whereas the 6 indicators at purpose level are not SMART. The latter are not time-bound and lack quantified targets. ▪ From an informal perspective, attainment of the six purpose indicators can be assessed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ‘MoHURD is strengthened in achieving low-carbon and ecological solutions’. This indicator relies on the definition of ‘strengthened’, which can have many meanings in relation to institutional capacity and political influence. At the central level, project impact is likely to have been limited. At the level of pilot city HURD’s the impact may have been greater, especially in the case of Zhuhai. ○ ‘Municipalities share best practices’. There is little evidence that municipalities in China have been sharing best practice to a significant degree as a result of project actions. The potential for individual access to best practice information may considered to have been improved by means of the Knowledge Platform (KP) ○ ‘IT Platform is frequently visited and populated with information’. This indicator relies on the definition of ‘frequently’. During the last 18 months of the project, the KP received an increasing number of single visitors. By project’s end, most of the guidelines and other materials produced by the project have been online and accessible through the KP, but not yet for very long. ○ ‘High level of cooperation with Pilot City set-up and funding’. This indicator is unclear in its formulation, since funding is not a primary function of the project. That said, a number of pilot cities, with Qingdao, Weihai, Zhuzhou and Zhuhai first among them, have participated enthusiastically in the project, albeit – with the exception of Zhuhai – only for the last two years of the project duration. ○ ‘Experiences are shared on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China’. The project certainly has been a vehicle for sharing of experiences, albeit mainly at the level of individual experts and managers in the pilot cities and not perhaps at the institutional level, Zhuhai excepted. ○ ‘Number of cities in China that share best practices, and how much they share via the Support Mechanism’. It is unclear what the target for indicator was supposed to have been. For the time being the upper limit is 10, that being the number of pilot cities, all of

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<p>whom – to greatly varying degrees – have been sharing, or at least have gained access to best practice of a wider applicability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TAT/GIZ self-assessment of project impact as set out in the draft Final Report is largely positive although not expressed in terms of the project objective and purpose, but rather at the level of results and outputs. Consequently, this self-assessment relates primarily to the project’s effectiveness [please refer to EQ5, above].
		Documented, unintended results, with likely impact in terms of objective achievement	Idem	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project reporting does not contain information on unintended consequences. The interviews conducted in the course of the evaluation did not yield any findings with regard to unintended consequences.
10	What are the differences at beneficiary level that the project has contributed to?	Number and type of beneficiaries of project activities at the final evaluation cut-off date, as documented in reporting by EUD, TAT, PTF and other stakeholders	Positive statements by stakeholder representatives (i) EUD; (ii) MS and IFI; and (iii) other stakeholders	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zhuhai, Qingdao, Weihai appreciated the contribution of EC Link and TAT consultants. The project assisted HURD to implement low-carbon and eco-city development programmes. All cities received technical training related to their pilot projects, such as low carbon city development, green building, solid waste treatment, green finance, etc. Another evidence, Qingdao and Weihai successfully applied project loans from SDFG. EC Link contributed to all beneficiaries in Guilin, Weihai, Zhuhai and Zhuzhou, and to implement the green building standards in their new public and residential buildings.
Sustainability					
11	To which extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after EU funding stopped?	Documented commitment by Chinese authorities and stakeholders in the form of FYPs and other planning documentation	At least 1 positive statement in relevant PRC documents	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evidence yet, since EC Link mainly focused on technical recommendations; policy recommendations have not been systematically addressed in guidelines and position papers. MoHURD has the mandate to contribute to FYPs and make policy recommendations; but the TAT did not consult with relevant departments of MoHURD on policy recommendations.
			At least 2 positive statements in relevant city documents	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zhuhai City Government in its official documents on EC Link highlighted the importance of the project in promoting low carbon and green city development. All pilot cities stated that they will continue low carbon city, eco-city development, green transportation, use of clean energy, etc., in their future city development planning, construction and project evaluation. In this context, the EC Link results will be further replicated through HURD and project partners in these cities.
		Likely continuation of key project outputs under CSUS/MoHURD aegis after project completion	Number of City links established and continued upon Project closure	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is likely that MoHURD relevant departments, CSUS, national consultants, and local partners, including planning institutes, researchers, associations will be major actors in selectively incorporating EC Link guidelines and toolboxes into policy formulation, urban construction planning, supervision and capacity building, also without EU funding.

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
			Continued use of EC Link website upon Project closure	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As long as the funds and human resources can be found on the part of the project’s main counterpart, MoHURD, or its proxy entity within project, CSUS, to continue, maintain and operate the website and periodically review and update the Knowledge Platform and keep in touch with KP visitors and users, the website may be expected to continue through merging with CSUS’s existing website. At present this condition seems uncertain to be met because the Chinese authorities responsible have not yet taken the necessary enabling steps. ▪ A feasible concept or plan for hand-over of the website and printing the outputs and materials for further use needs to be prepared by CSUS and consulted with MoHURD.
12	What are the main issues of concern in sustaining the project outcomes?	<p>Positive statements by Chinese authorities and stakeholders on relevant policy continuity</p> <p>Positive statements by same on domestic budgetary resources availability</p>	<p>Relevant positive statements by Chinese authorities and stakeholders during Project final conference (08-09 Sep 2020)</p> <p>Idem</p>	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The following statements may be confidently made in respect of a number of aspects of sustainability, as expressed by stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ know-how/best practice utilisation: some of the pilot cities, Zhuhai especially, but also Qingdao and Weihai expressed satisfaction with the concepts, know-how and techniques obtained through the project, indicated their prepared to use those in the future and stated their willingness to participate in similar joint interventions in the future. ○ useful project follow-up efforts will depend on co-financing from Chinese partner cities. It is not clear to what extent such co-financing is available at any point in time. In any case though, project preparation in general and funds commitment in particular on the Chinese side require sufficient lead time (and perhaps therefore a more flexible format than the EU project format). ○ financial/budgetary commitment: there were at the cut-off date of the evaluation (the same as date of project’s end: 29 Sep 2020) no indications that the counterpart entity of the project, MoHURD, would take on financial responsibility for continuing activities begun under or facilitated by the project, in particular the Knowledge Platform/website [please refer also to EQ11 above]. ▪ AWPE2, dated Oct 2018, was the first planning document that explicitly referred to a project exit strategy in a sustainability context. The above views show that thinking on the practicalities of ensuring the sustainability of project results among stakeholders has remained elusive until the project’s end. ▪ In fact, the discussions on sustainability continued after the end-date of the project, without much prospect for success, given the lead time for Chinese decision making and the contractually limited options on the part of GIZ and EUD both. ▪ The latter in spite of the fact that a fair amount (EUR 480,000) of the provision for incidental expenditure remained unspent. ▪ Generally, there was a palpable lack of enthusiasm on the part of most stakeholder representatives for an extension of the project to accommodate disbursement of the balance of funds committed to the project or other measures in support of sustainability,

N°	Evaluation Questions	Judgement Criteria	Indicators	Status	Answers
					<p>even on the part of EUD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The conclusion must therefore be that the sustainability of the project’s results where the Knowledge Platform is concerned, will be limited. ▪ The sustainability of knowledge transfer may be judged more positively but is essentially not measurable. In this context it noteworthy that the extent to which Chinese experts have been enabled to engage with EU experts is key. Such engagement was more common in the second half of the project duration than during the first half. It could have been more pronounced throughout the project duration. ▪ Most importantly, that the knowledge platform, both the website and the printed materials, must be further edited and processed in a user-friendly format and layout, to that potential users can effectively use website and materials for a training manual and practical guidelines.
EC Added Value					
13	<p>To which extent does the action bring additional benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' actions only?</p> <p><small>11 SEP 2020</small></p>	<p>Perspective on the project’s EU ‘added value’, as currently held by: (i) EUD; (ii) counterparts & beneficiaries; (iii) other stakeholders; (iv) MS & IFI</p>	<p>Relevant positive statements by MS representatives during Project final conference (08-09 Sep 2020)</p>	<p>✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statements and observations gleaned from project reporting and interviews held in the course of the evaluation include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EUD: sees the project as one of series of EU-funded projects, flanked as it were by the efforts of some Member States, with Germany first among equals. ○ MoHURD/Pilot City HURDs did not volunteer any information on this issue, although they saw the project as one of a bevy of European support projects, without differentiating between the EU at large and its Member States. ○ European Partners: the partners interviewed saw the project as useful for supporting engagement with and continued interaction with Chinese partners at the same level, primarily on technical issues. It is clear that some of the European partners see substantial potential for cooperation with China, although they may be over-optimistic about their chances of securing the usual fees for consultancy services provision. ○ Consortium partners seemed to agree that a project like EC Link, as one them put it: ‘offers opportunities by making quicker and better-quality contacts with more promise than other would be the case.’ A programme like EC Link is held to facilitate quicker access to the right people (for, in this case, European companies). In one case, a consortium partner stressed that China has technological know-how to offer to Europe and implied that projects like EC Link offer a conduit. ▪ The issue of EU added value was not in the foreground during the evaluators’ interviews with stakeholders.

Annex 6: Three Logframes – 2013, 2018 & 2019

The original Logical Framework ('logframe' or 'LF') as included in the contractor's proposal in response to the ToR dates from November 2013 (**Logframe 1**, below). It was reviewed and formally approved by contract addendum in September 2018 (**Logframe 2**, below). This second version left the original intervention logic unchanged but added a number of indicators at output level.

The ROM mission (March 2019) yielded suggestions to amend the indicators in the September 2018 logframe and recommended further revision or elimination of indicators relevant toward the objective and/or suitable at outcome level only, as well as those indicators too difficult to be verified (also in light the priorities expressed by Chinese cities. In agreement with EUD some indicators were removed, with the justifications recorded in the relevant technical progress reports). The result was a revised logframe dating from April 2019 (Logframe 3, below).

In the course of implementing the annual work plan for the period October 2018 – September 2019, Chinese cities expressed a need to prioritise targeted training on topics related to resilient city, solid waste management and water management, and the relevant focus on cooperation with Dutch, Italian, Spanish and Swedish experts. Consequently, the project activities related to the Eco-urban planning (Indicator 5.3 in Logframe 2), initially foreseen in cooperation with a French company, was replaced with training on those three topics. **Logframe 3** took these changes into account.

1. Original EC Link logframe (November 2013)

Overall Objective: To support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12 th Five Year Development Plan					
Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement		Means of Verification	Assumptions
PP	To provide technical assistance to the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions	0.1 MoHURD is strengthened in achieving low-carbon and ecological solutions 0.2 Municipalities share best practices 0.3 IT Platform is frequently visited and populated with information 0.4 High usage of Help Desk 0.5 High level of cooperation with Pilot City set-up and funding 0.6 Experiences are shared on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China 0.7 Number of cities in China that share best practices, and how much they share via the Support Mechanism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of MoHURD Survey of Mayors Usage statistics of the IT Platform Input of information from Municipalities Calls to the Help Desk Reports Database 	National and local government in the EC-LINK are willing to cooperate constructively, and the EU-China relations will continue evolving within a favourable environment for co-operation.
R1	An appropriate support mechanism is implemented, enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low carbon planning & management	1.1 Number of times knowledge and information is shared, including best practices and case studies 1.2 Ability to promote the output of existing pilots and demonstration projects 1.3 Resultant number of Chinese cities connected with other Chinese or European cities 1.4 Ability to supply contacts and coordination with relevant on-going actions and projects (of EU, EU member states and others)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website statistics PR and media actions Covenant of Mayors EU-China Mayors' Forum Chinese Assoc. of Mayors European Mayors Associations 	Municipalities will have the capacity to absorb the knowledge promoted by the 'support mechanism'.

		<p>1.5 Number of quality networking events established</p> <p>1.6 Establish communities of practice, via a web-based forum, etc.</p> <p>1.7 Network is enhanced between EU and Chinese cities</p> <p>1.8 Ability to act as the daily virtual continuation of the EU-China Mayors' Forum</p>		
R2	MoHURD is supported in preparing low carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments.	<p>2.0 Urban Sustainability Lab successfully compiles and organises data for the toolboxes</p> <p>2.1 Volume of information in toolboxes</p> <p>2.2 Codifying data into standardized comparative units</p> <p>2.3 Best practice information more available for municipalities</p> <p>2.4 Lessons learned from low carbon eco-city pilots</p> <p>2.5 Examples and models of action plans from the EU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website statistics • PR and media actions • MoHURD query/survey feedback • Toolbox evolution • MoHURD eco-city indicator, NDRC, MEP and other indicator systems 	MoHURD will embrace EC-LINK and utilisation of the Urban Sustainability Lab
R3	Support to one Europe-China pilot low-carbon eco-city	<p>3.0 The pilot city's local authority is strengthened in setting up the project, attracting financing and increasing competences</p> <p>3.1 Shared value and cross-departmental long-term benefits are achieved and added social capital leveraged by means of an integrated planning process</p> <p>3.2 Innovative technologies and policies are applied on the infrastructure and on the building level, achieving measurable energy savings</p> <p>3.3 MoHURD receives valuable feedback from the pilot city KPIs on its eco city indicators</p> <p>3.4 MoHURD staff's capacity and knowledge increases as a result from learning from the pilot city project</p> <p>3.5 The visibility and brand of EC-LINK AND the EU is substantially enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of planning team meetings • Certification of project sustainability to China Star/MoHURD system and additionally to EU system (e.g. BREEAM Communities, DGNB New-Build District) • GHG inventory (after/before (if available), otherwise compared to regional and MoHURD benchmarks) • Energy consumption monitoring (after/before (if available), otherwise compared to regional and MoHURD benchmarks) • Exhibition (visitor statistics), distribution number of printed publications, access to project website 	Pilot city costs will be met with sufficient funding and capacity.
R4	Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities	<p>4.0 IT platform provides easy access to information</p> <p>4.1 IT platform encourages sharing of best-practices</p> <p>4.2 Chinese cities have first-hand access to know-how of Chinese and European cities.</p> <p>4.3 Chinese cities have first-hand access of European clean urban development initiatives</p> <p>4.4 Ample actors and donor information is shared</p> <p>4.5 Increasing targeted networking activities at conferences</p> <p>4.6 Increasing collaboration and participation of relevant EU stakeholders</p> <p>4.7 Mayors are empowered to develop of cooperation schemes between EU and China, and within China</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of entries on platform • Surveys on user-friendliness of platform • Platform contents • Conference speakers and topics • Cooperation announcements in literature 	Knowledge will be shared among municipalities in China and between Chinese and European cities.

		4.8 City networking is improved 4.9 Increased contact and networking with EU and Chinese stakeholders		
R5	Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low-carbon and ecological solutions	5.0 Municipalities improve planning, identifying and implementing low-carbon and ecological solutions 5.1 Monitoring methods improve 5.2 Frequency of toolbox utilisation in the guidance and capacity building process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative surveys of Mayors and activity participants • Monitoring methods • Toolbox utilisation statistics • Helpdesk query statistics 	The long-term low-carbon development and ecological solutions will be given priority at the national and municipal level. Peer-to-peer learning will be supported.
R6	Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon-solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes.	6.0 Increased number of Chinese municipalities find access to finance for low-carbon projects 6.1 Increased number of innovative financial schemes 6.2 Improved financing strategies 6.3 Increased number of feasibility studies 6.4 Municipalities potential is enhanced regarding raising financing for eco/low solutions 6.5 Money raised by financing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeted amounts • Financial schemes • Financing strategies • Feasibility studies • Financing Results 	Municipalities understand the potential of financing eco/low-carbon solutions, and support the steps required to raise financing.
R7	Visibility/dissemination of project Results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized.	7.1 Increasing volume of traffic on website 7.2 Increasing number of calls to help desk 7.3 Increasing number of emails and letters received, etc. 7.4 Increasing number of EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as in publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc. 7.5 Quality of Road Shows/Exhibitions 7.6 Number of attendees at Road Shows 7.7 Contact generation of Road Shows 7.8 Distribution of printed publication of the "ideas book" resulting from urban design competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website statistics • Help desk statistics • Media generation statistics • Media mentions for Road Shows • Road show reviews/results/statistics • Distribution numbers of printed publications 	Platform will be known by shareholders and target groups

2. Revised Logframe (September 2018)

Overall Objective: To support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12th and 13th Five Year Development Plans.

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
PP	To provide technical assistance to the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions.	0.1 MoHURD is strengthened in achieving low-carbon and ecological solutions; 0.2 Municipalities share best practices; 0.3 IT Platform is frequently visited and populated with information; 0.4 High level of cooperation with Pilot City set-up and funding;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of Local HURDs and cities' Officials; • Usage statistics of the IT Platform; • Input of information from Municipalities; 	National and local government in the EC-LINK are willing to cooperate constructively, and the EU-China relations will continue evolving within a favourable

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		0.5 Experiences are shared on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China; 0.6 Number of cities in China that share best practices, and how much they share via the Support Mechanism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports; • Database. 	environment for co-operation.
R1	An appropriate support mechanism enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low carbon planning & management is implemented.	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> 1.1 20 daily unique visitors on EC Link website; 1.2 30 uploaded news; 1.3 15 uploaded documents related to 9 main sectors; 1.4 At least 4 quality-networking events established; 1.5 4 connection requests received from European and Chinese cities. <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> 1.1 At least, 30 daily unique visitors on EC Link website; 1.2 At least, 40 uploaded news; 1.3 At least, 6 uploaded documents; 1.4 At least, 40 registered users Platform; 1.5 At least 6 newsletters uploaded on EC Link website and distributed by email and WeChat; 1.6 At least 3 quality-networking events established; 1.7 At least 4 connection requests received from European and Chinese cities. <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> 1.8 At least, 20 daily unique visitors on EC Link website. 1.9 At least, 70 uploaded news. 1.10 At least, 6 uploaded documents. 1.11 At least, 100 registered users on the Platform. 1.12 At least 6 newsletters uploaded on EC Link website and distributed by email and WeChat. 1.13 At least 2 quality-networking events established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website statistics; • PR and media actions; • Feedback from cities and stakeholders^[1]_{SEP}; • City Officials and technicians membership of IT Platform; • Discussion groups generated within IT Platform. 	Municipalities will have the capacity to absorb the knowledge promoted by the support mechanism
R2	MoHURD is supported in preparing low-carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments.	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> 2.1 9 Position papers according to EC Link sectors published in both Chinese and English versions 2.2 At least 24 Eco-city tools made available on Website 2.3 At least 6 Eco-city indicators made available on Website 2.4 At least 100 Cases study on relevant EC Link sectors made available made available on Website/platform; 2.5 Increased interest in consultation of best practices and tools (published on Website) by cities' officials and technicians; <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC Link Website and Platform • Website statistics PR and media actions • MoHURD query/survey feedback • Planning documents developed by EU and Chinese cities joint work 	MoHURD continues to play an active role as driver of pilot cities, to favour the cooperation with EU experts for the elaboration of Research papers, Guidelines and any tool to improve their planning capacity for sustainable urbanisation.

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>2.1 At least 3 reports concerning state of the art in pilot cities on relevant EC Link topics, addressing EU cities</p> <p>2.2 At least 6 technical articles published on well-known technical journal;</p> <p>2.3 At least 3 documents focussed on pilot actions results (feasibility studies, research reports, technical guidelines, policy recommendations etc.) published on-line and on paper version.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>2.1 At least 2 reports concerning state of the art in pilot cities on relevant EC Link topics, addressing EU cities;</p> <p>2.2 At least 6 technical articles published on well-known technical journal. ^[1]_{SEP}</p> <p>2.3 At least 3 documents focussed on pilot actions results (feasibility studies, research reports, technical guidelines, policy recommendations etc.) published on-line and on paper version.</p>		
R3	Support to one Europe- China pilot low-carbon eco-city	<p>10/2018 – 09/2020</p> <p>3.1 One trans-boundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation (from SDG 6.5);</p> <p>3.2 Full Compliance with the indications of Manuals and Guidelines elaborated by EU cities at local level or in the frame of EU/UN projects;</p> <p>3.3 At least 4 relevant EC Link topics /solutions to face climate change impact are shared between EU and Chinese cities and transposed in Guidelines for designing resilient city;</p> <p>3.4 At least 4 EU cities provide their competences for strengthening the pilot city's local authority in setting up the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of working groups meetings. • Signed agreement/MoU among different administrative entities concerning basin ^[1]_{SEP} area management; • Feedback received BY MoHURD from the pilot city on the basis of its eco city; • Comparative tables with low carbon solutions adopted and related indications of manuals/guidelines; • Reports of the experts involved in Pilot project working groups created between EU and Chinese cities. 	Pilot city costs will be met with sufficient funding and capacity
R4	Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities	<p>12/2013 - 9/2018</p> <p>4.1 At least 1 cooperation agreements signed between Chinese and EU cities;</p> <p>4.2 At least 1 Research paper concluded or close to finalisation.</p> <p>4.3 At least 1 revision of relevant city guidelines started</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>4.4 At least 2 cooperation agreements signed between Chinese and EU cities;</p> <p>4.5 At least 2 pilot actions concluded or close to finalisation;</p> <p>4.6 At least 2 cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban ^[1]_{SEP} planning and management that operate regularly and democratically (from SDG 11.3);</p> <p>4.7 At least one Chinese city (countries) with national and local disasters risk reduction strategies (from SDG 13.1);</p> <p>4.8 At least one city with change in the extent of water-related ecosystems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of entries on Platform; • Surveys on user friendliness of Platform; • Deliverables produced by EU and Chinese experts working in the frame of CNUs (Research papers, Disaster risk reduction plans, feasibility studies...); • Chinese cities that elaborated an Eco-urban Plan within end of the project; • Basin areas and water-related ecosystems involved in pilot actions. 	Knowledge will be shared among municipalities in China and between Chinese and European cities.

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>overtime (from SDG 6.6).</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>4.1 At least 2 cooperation agreements signed between Chinese and EU cities;</p> <p>4.2 At least 3 pilot actions concluded or close to finalisation;</p> <p>4.3 <i>At least 2 cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically (from SDG 11.3);</i></p> <p>4.4 <i>At least one city with change in the extent of water-related ecosystems overtime (from SDG 6.6).</i></p> <p>4.5 At least 1 Chinese city (countries) with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (from SDG 13.1).</p>		
R5	Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low carbon and ecological solutions (sectorial and integrated solutions).	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> <p>5.1 Eight Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts).</p> <p>5.2 About 600 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females;</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>5.1 Three Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts).</p> <p>5.2 About 450 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females;</p> <p>5.3 Two Eco-urban plans elaborated in Chinese cities through EC Link project support (training and concrete cooperation with EU experts team);</p> <p>5.4 Frequency of toolboxes utilization in the guidance and capacity building process.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>5.1 Three Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts).</p> <p>5.2 About 450 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females;</p> <p>5.3 Two Eco-urban plans elaborated in Chinese cities through EC Link project support (training and concrete cooperation with EU experts team);</p> <p>5.4 Frequency of toolboxes utilization in the guidance and capacity building process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees' lists, pro-activity of the audience, pointed out in the minutes of training events; • Web monitoring related to the frequency of the use of selected key words by Web users to identify and download specific toolboxes; • Toolboxes spread during trainings events; • Surveys on downloads from website; • Training materials and feedback by Chinese cities during Eco-urban plans elaboration. 	The long-term low-carbon development and ecological solutions will be given priority at the national and municipal level. Peer-to-peer learning will be supported.
R6	Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon-solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes.	<p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>6.1 At least 2 Chinese municipalities supported to find access to finance for low-carbon and resilient projects linked to Financial institutions;</p> <p>6.2 At least 1 Green project development workshops, providing increased number of innovative financial schemes;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial systems of local government strengthened - from training workshops; • Financial strategies adopted - from project development workshop; 	Municipalities understand the potential of financing eco/low- carbon solutions, and support the steps required to raise financing.

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>6.3 At least 6 focused network workshops and 2 broader city network events on financing and funding tools implemented, to increase capacities of financial institutions and cities to finance green projects;</p> <p>6.4 At least 4 Best practices on GMF disseminated through access to knowledge platform.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>6.1 At least 2 Chinese municipalities supported to find access to finance for low-carbon and resilient projects linked to Financial institutions;</p> <p>6.2 At least 1 Green project development workshops, providing increased number of innovative financial schemes;</p> <p>6.3 At least 6 focused network workshops and 2 broader city network events on financing and funding tools implemented, to increase capacities of financial institutions and cities to finance green projects;</p> <p>6.4 At least 4 Best practices on GMF disseminated through access to knowledge platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility studies conducted - resulting from project development workshops; • Financing resulting from financial strategies - from project development workshops. 	
R7	Visibility/dissemination of project results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized.	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> <p>7.1 4 EC-LINK presences in other International events.</p> <p>7.2 8 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders;</p> <p>7.3 10 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link events.</p> <p>7.4 One International Forum organized.</p> <p>7.5 6 of EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as in publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>7.1 At least, 2 EC-LINK presences in other International events;</p> <p>7.2 At least, 6 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders;</p> <p>7.3 At least, 12 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link on-going activities;</p> <p>7.4 One International Forum organized;</p> <p>7.5 At least, 8 of EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as in publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>7.1 At least, 2 EC-LINK presences in other International events.</p> <p>7.2 At least, 4 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders;</p> <p>7.3 At least, 15 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link on-going activities.</p> <p>7.4 One International Forum organized.</p> <p>7.5 At least 9 EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website statistics^{S_{SEP}} • Media generation statistics^{S_{SEP}} • Distributed numbers of printed publications • Number of invitations to other International events 	Platform will be known by shareholders and target groups

3. Logframe with amended indicators (April 2019) [In red, the indicators removed in comparison with the Sep 2018 version]

Overall Objective: To support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the 12th and 13th Five Year Development Plans.

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
PP	To provide technical assistance to the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions [[To provide technical assistance to the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions]] Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical	0.1 MoHURD is strengthened in achieving low-carbon and ecological solutions. 0.2 Municipalities share best practices. 0.3 IT Platform is frequently visited and populated with information. 0.4 High level of cooperation with Pilot City set-up and funding. 0.5 Experiences are shared on sustainable urbanisation and other relevant policies between Europe and China. 0.6 Number of cities in China that share best practices, and how much they share via the Support Mechanism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of Local HURDs and cities' Officials; • Usage statistics of the IT Platform; • Input of information from Municipalities; • Reports; • Database. 	National and local government in the EC-LINK are willing to cooperate constructively, and the EU-China relations will continue evolving within a favourable environment for co-operation.
R1	An appropriate support mechanism enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low carbon planning & management is implemented [[An appropriate support mechanism is implemented, enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low carbon planning & management]] Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical (excepting a slight reformulation of the first part, which does not change its meaning)	<p>12/2013 - 09/2018</p> <p>1.1 20 daily unique visitors on EC Link website. 1.2 30 uploaded news. 1.3 15 uploaded documents related to 9 main sectors. 1.4 At least 4 quality-networking events established. 1.5 4 connection requests received from European and Chinese cities.</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>1.1 At least, 30 daily unique visitors on EC Link website. 1.2 At least, 40 uploaded news. 1.3 At least, 6 uploaded documents. 1.4 At least, 40 registered users Platform. 1.5 At least 6 newsletters uploaded on EC Link website and distributed by email and WeChat. 1.6 At least 3 quality-networking events established. 1.7 At least 4 connection requests received from European and Chinese cities.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>1.1 At least, 20 daily unique visitors on EC Link website. 1.2 At least, 70 uploaded news. 1.3 At least, 6 uploaded documents. 1.4 At least, 100 registered users on the Platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website statistics; • PR and media actions; • Feedback from cities and stakeholders⁽¹⁾_{SEP}; • City Officials and technicians membership of IT Platform; • Discussion groups generated within IT Platform. 	Municipalities will have the capacity to absorb the knowledge promoted by the support mechanism

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>1.5 At least 6 newsletters uploaded on EC Link website and distributed by email and WeChat.</p> <p>1.6 At least 2 quality-networking events established.</p>		
R2	<p>MoHURD is supported in preparing low-carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments [[MoHURD is supported in preparing low carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments]]</p> <p>Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical</p>	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> <p>2.1 9 Position papers according to EC Link sectors published in both Chinese and English versions.</p> <p>2.2 At least 24 Eco-city tools made available on Website.</p> <p>2.3 At least 6 Eco-city indicators made available on Website.</p> <p>2.4 At least 100 Cases study on relevant EC Link sectors made available made available on Website/platform.</p> <p>2.5 Increased interest in consultation of best practices and tools (published on Website) by cities' officials and technicians.</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>2.1 At least 3 reports concerning state of the art in pilot cities on relevant EC Link topics, addressing EU cities.</p> <p>2.2 At least 6 technical articles published on well-known technical journal.</p> <p>2.3 At least 3 documents focussed on pilot actions results (feasibility studies, research reports, technical guidelines, policy recommendations etc.) published on-line and on paper version.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>2.1 At least 2 reports concerning state of the art in pilot cities on relevant EC Link topics, addressing EU cities.</p> <p>2.2 At least 6 technical articles published on well-known technical journal.</p> <p>2.3 At least 3 documents focussed on pilot actions results (feasibility studies, research reports, technical guidelines, policy recommendations etc.) published on-line and on paper version.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC Link Website and Platform; • Website statistics PR and media actions; • MoHURD query/survey feedback; • Planning documents developed by EU and Chinese cities joint work. 	<p>MoHURD continues to play an active role as driver of pilot cities, to favour the cooperation with EU experts for the elaboration of Research papers, Guidelines and any tool to improve their planning capacity for sustainable urbanisation.</p>
R3	<p>Support to one Europe- China pilot low-carbon eco-city [[Support to one Europe-China pilot low-carbon eco-city]]</p> <p>Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical</p>	<p>10/2018 – 09/2020</p> <p>3.1 One trans-boundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation (from SDG 6.5).</p> <p>3.2 Full Compliance with the indications of Manuals and Guidelines elaborated by EU cities at local level or in the frame of EU/UN projects.</p> <p>3.3 At least 4 relevant EC Link topics /solutions to face climate change impact are shared between EU and Chinese cities and transposed in Guidelines for designing resilient city.</p> <p>3.4 At least 4 EU cities provide their competences for strengthening the pilot city's local authority in setting up the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of working groups meetings. • Signed agreement/MoU among different administrative entities concerning basin [SEP]area management; • Feedback received BY MoHURD from the pilot city on the basis of its eco city; • Comparative tables with low carbon solutions adopted and related indications of manuals/guidelines; • Reports of the experts involved in Pilot project working groups created between EU and Chinese cities. 	<p>Pilot city costs will be met with sufficient funding and capacity</p>

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
R4	<p>Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities [[Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities]] Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical</p>	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018 4.1 At least 1 cooperation agreement signed between Chinese and EU cities. 4.2 At least 1 Research paper concluded or close to finalisation. 4.3 At least 1 revision of relevant city guidelines started. 10/2018 – 09/2019 4.4 At least 2 cooperation agreements signed between Chinese and EU cities. 4.5 At least 2 pilot actions concluded or close to finalisation. 4.6 At least 2 cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically (from SDG 11.3). 4.7 At least one Chinese city (countries) with national and local disasters risk reduction strategies (from SDG 13.1). 4.8 At least 1 city with change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time (from SDG 6.6). 10/2019 – 09/2020 4.1 At least 2 cooperation agreements signed between Chinese and EU cities. 4.2 At least 3 pilot actions concluded or close to finalisation. 4.3 At least 2 cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically (from SDG 11.3). 4.4 At least one city with change in the extent of water-related ecosystems overtime (from SDG 6.6). 4.5 At least 1 Chinese cities (countries) with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (from SDG 13.1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of entries on Platform; • Surveys on user friendliness of Platform; • Deliverables produced by EU and Chinese experts working in the frame of CNUs (Research papers, Disaster risk reduction plans, feasibility studies...); • Chinese cities that elaborated an Eco-urban Plan within end of the project; • Basin areas and water-related ecosystems involved in pilot actions. 	<p>Knowledge will be shared among municipalities in China and between Chinese and European cities.</p>
R5	<p>Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low carbon and ecological solutions (sectorial and integrated solutions) [[Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low-carbon and ecological solutions]] Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical (excepting deletion of the text in brackets in logframe 1)</p>	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018 5.1 Eight Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts). 5.2 About 600 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females. 10/2018 – 09/2019 5.1 Three Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts). 5.2 About 450 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females. 5.3 Two Eco-urban plans elaborated in Chinese cities through EC Link project support (training and concrete cooperation with EU experts team). 5.4 Frequency of toolboxes utilization in the guidance and capacity building process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees' lists, pro-activity of the audience, pointed out in the minutes of training events; • Web monitoring related to the frequency of the use of selected key words by Web users to identify and download specific toolboxes; • Toolboxes spread during trainings events; • Surveys on downloads from website; • Training materials and feedback by Chinese cities during Eco-urban plans elaboration. 	<p>The long-term low-carbon development and ecological solutions will be given priority at the national and municipal level. Peer-to-peer learning will be supported.</p>

Intervention Logic		Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>5.1 Three Training sessions on the relevant EC Link topics implemented in Chinese cities (on their request, supported by EC Link experts).</p> <p>5.2 About 450 officials and technicians trained by capacity building activities including 30% females.</p> <p>5.3 Two Eco-urban plans elaborated in Chinese cities through EC Link project support (training and concrete cooperation with EU experts team);</p> <p>5.4 Frequency of toolboxes utilization in the guidance and capacity building process.</p>		
R6	<p>Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon-solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes</p> <p>[[Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon-solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes]]</p> <p>Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical</p>	<p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>6.1 At least 2 Chinese municipalities supported to find access to finance for low-carbon and resilient projects linked to Financial institutions.</p> <p>6.2 At least 1 Green project development workshops, providing increased number of innovative financial schemes.</p> <p>6.3 At least 6 focused network workshops and 2 broader city network events on financing and funding tools implemented, to increase capacities of financial institutions and cities to finance green projects.</p> <p>6.4 At least 4 Best practices on GMF disseminated through access to knowledge platform.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>6.5 At least 2 Chinese municipalities supported to find access to finance for low-carbon and resilient projects linked to Financial institutions.</p> <p>6.6 At least 1 Green project development workshops, providing increased number of innovative financial schemes.</p> <p>6.7 At least 6 focused network workshops and 2 broader city network events on financing and funding tools implemented, to increase capacities of financial institutions and cities to finance green projects.</p> <p>6.8 At least 4 Best practices on GMF disseminated through access to knowledge platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial systems of local government strengthened - from training workshops; Financial strategies adopted - from project development workshop; Feasibility studies conducted - resulting from project development workshops; Financing resulting from financial strategies - from project development workshops. 	<p>Municipalities understand the potential of financing eco/low- carbon solutions, and support the steps required to raise financing.</p>
R7	<p>Visibility/dissemination of project results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized</p> <p>[[Visibility/dissemination of project Results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized]]</p> <p>Logframes 1 & 3 compared: identical</p>	<p>12/2013 – 09/2018</p> <p>7.1 4 EC-LINK presences in other International events.</p> <p>7.2 8 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders;</p> <p>7.3 10 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link events.</p> <p>7.4 One International Forum organized.</p> <p>7.5 6 of EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as in publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p> <p>10/2018 – 09/2019</p> <p>7.6 At least, 2 EC-LINK presences in other International events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website statistics; Media generation statistics; Distributed numbers of printed publications; Number of invitations to other International events. 	<p>Platform will be known by shareholders and target groups</p>

	Intervention Logic	Objective Indicators of Achievement	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<p>7.7 At least, 6 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders.</p> <p>7.8 At least, 12 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link on-going activities.</p> <p>7.9 One International Forum organized.</p> <p>7.10 At least, 8 of EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as in publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p> <p>10/2019 – 09/2020</p> <p>7.1 At least, 2 EC-LINK presences in other International events.</p> <p>7.2 At least, 4 network meetings with relevant Chinese and European Stakeholders.</p> <p>7.3 At least, 15 WeChat post promoting relevant EC Link on-going activities.</p> <p>7.4 One International Forum organized.</p> <p>7.5 At least 9 EC-LINK mentions and coverage in media, such as publications, reports, journals, TV programs, web movies, etc.</p>		

Annex 7: Theory of Change

This annex presents – in the **Table** overleaf – a reconstruction of the Project’s theory of change as initiated during the inception phase of the evaluation assignment. It tries to indicate the causal linkages between its activities/outputs, expected results, project purpose and overall objective.

The project’s original theory of change in the following **Diagram** (as included in the Project’s Final Report dated Aug 2020) is a plausible schematic – from the Project’s Final Report dated Aug 2020 – presentation of the connections between the Project’s 7 expected results. However, it lacks an explanation of the causalities linking Project outputs with those results, as well as linkage between the results and the Project’s purpose and overall objective.

Figure: Original Theory of Change [Project Final Report, draft version Aug 2020]

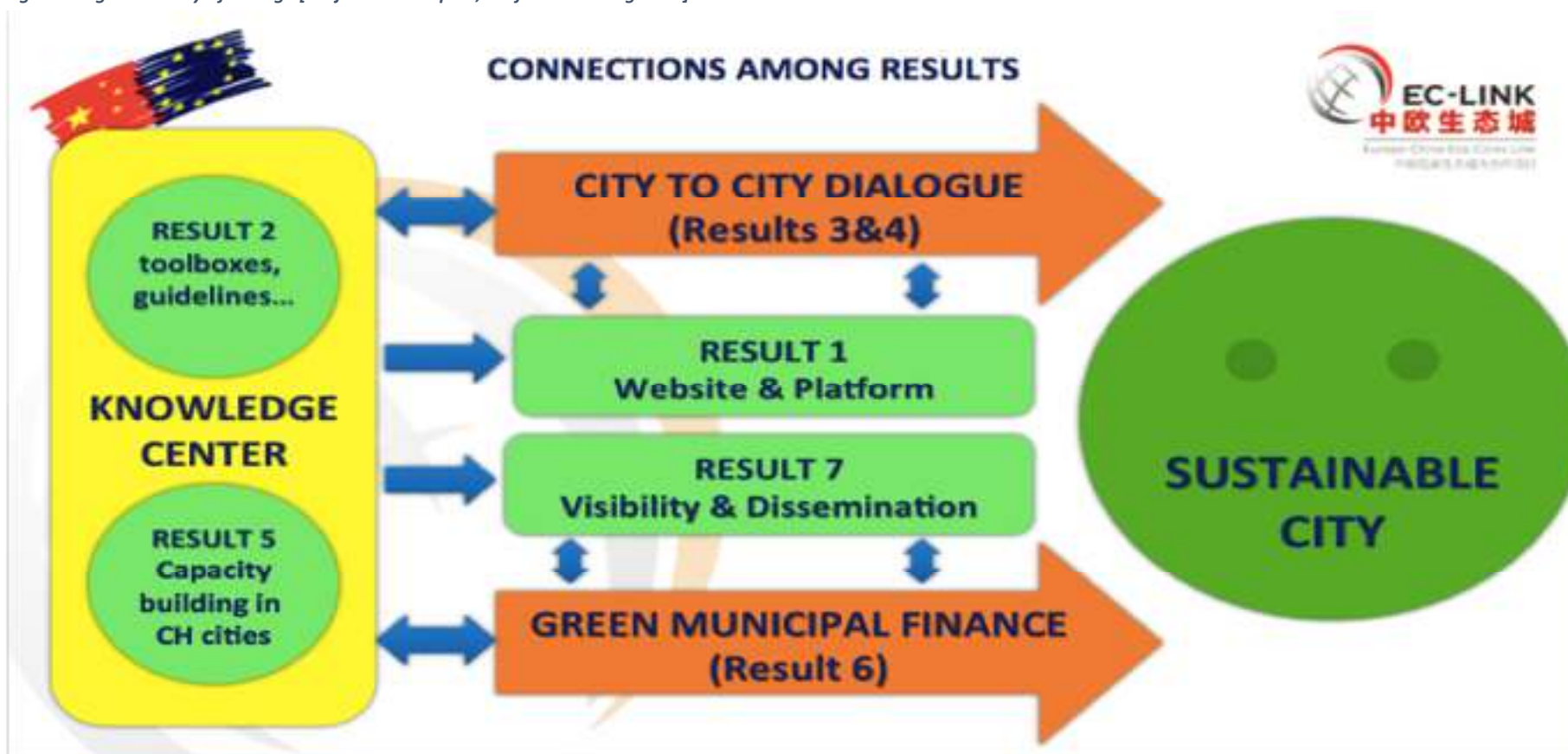


Table: Theory of Change – A Reconstruction

Activities/Outputs	>	Causal Linkage	>	(Expected) Results	>	Causal Linkage	>	Purpose	>	Causal Linkage	>	Overall Objective
EC LINK website	>	EC LINK as central, interactive repository of knowledge and vehicle for information exchange and cooperation between eligible subscribers.	>	[1] An appropriate support mechanism enhancing networking between European and Chinese cities and advising and assisting Chinese municipalities on urban ecological/low carbon planning & management is implemented	>	Enhanced cross-fertilisation through managed exchange of ideas and best practice between EU and Chinese cities on ecological/low carbon planning & management	>	To provide technical assistance to the Chinese Ministry of Housing & Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD), assisting Chinese cities in adopting energy and resource efficient ecological solutions	>	Provision of timely and effective EU know-how on energy and resources efficient solutions, when and where deemed necessary by Chinese counterparts and beneficiaries at central and local level	>	To support China in meeting the environmental, energy and carbon-intensity targets defined in the [12 th] ⁴⁵ Five Year Development Plan (FYP)
EC LINK website sustainability concept	>	Safeguarding future operations and expansion of the support and cooperation mechanism	>									
Reports on the background of Chinese pilot cities, addressing the Projects 6 main (results)	>	Enhancing technical and implementation know-how on the part of China's central level in respect of energy and ecological management of Chinese cities	>	[2] MoHURD is supported in preparing low-carbon eco-city management toolboxes for local governments	>	Availability of active TA provision, if and when opportune (effective demand for TA/support)	>		>		>	
Technical journal on specific topics defined according to MoHURD or Pilot Cities' priorities	>											
Green financing BRI research paper and international workshop presentation	>											
Online Publication of Eco-City Toolboxes	>											
Development of support pilot projects:	>	Development of a dedicated pilot low-carbon	>	[3] Support to one Europe-China pilot	>	Demonstration effect of successful pilot on	>		>		>	

⁴⁵ And, given the duration of the Project, the 13th FYP.

Activities/Outputs	>	Causal Linkage	>	(Expected) Results	>	Causal Linkage	>	Purpose	>	Causal Linkage	>	Overall Objective
WWM (E), SWM (S), Flooding Prevention (NL)		eco-city, serving to act as a model for other Chinese cities		low-carbon eco-city [Zhuhai]		effective demand for TA/support by other Chinese cities						
Support to Zhuhai pilot project (green park, public spaces)	>											
Targeted training/ seminars in China City Network Units (CNU)	>	Establishing efficient information and knowledge exchange between EU and Chinese cities facing similar problem in energy and ecological management		[4] Improved exchange of information and knowledge sharing between municipalities in China, and between Chinese and European cities		Idem Result [1]						
Research papers, master plans, (pre) feasibility studies and revision of guidelines involving EU/CN experts (Zhuhai,	>											
Study Tour/Training in EU countries	>											
CNU Pilot actions	>											
Training events: SWM (Luoyang), Resilient City [Zhuhai NL, I]), Water Management	>	Transfer of practical, operational know-how on low-carbon and ecology issues		[5] Strengthened capacities of municipalities to plan, identify, implement and monitor low carbon and ecological solutions (sectoral and integrated solutions)		Enhanced capacity on the part of Chinese cities through adoption and internalisation of improved and new techniques for implementing sustainable development						
On-the-job training events for cities (Qingdao, Zhuzhou)	>	Capacity building in the specific area of green financing at local level, through training and practical information exchange		[6] Municipalities' potential to finance eco/low carbon-solutions is improved, including knowledge on innovative financial schemes		Enhanced capacity on the part of Chinese cities through adoption and internalisation of improved and new techniques for managing & funding sustainable development						
Green Financing Network meetings (Beijing)	>											
Green Municipal Finance Guidelines and practical tools (Green Municipal Bonds; green	>											

Activities/Outputs	>	Causal Linkage	>	(Expected) Results	>	Causal Linkage	>	Purpose	>	Causal Linkage	>	Overall Objective
investment design, pre-feasibility and assessment format)												
Forum on Green Municipal Finance	>											
EC LINK website (update 'series product')	>	EC LINK as central, interactive repository of knowledge and vehicle for information exchange for the interested public		[7] Visibility/ dissemination of project results both within China and regionally or internationally are ensured and maximized		More rapid appreciation & adoption by the international community of the most promising, suitable and cost-effective solutions for sustainable energy management						
EC LINK newsletter	>											
Forums (international)	>											
Meetings (Chinese stakeholders)	>	Exchange of EU and Chinese know-how on sustainable city management and development	>									
Production of project materials (including knowledge products)	>											
WeChat accounts	>											

Annex 8: Follow-up Status: MTE & ROM Recommendations

The following table summarises the measures taken by the Project in response to the recommendations set out in the 2016 mid-term evaluation (MTE) and the 2019 results-oriented monitoring (ROM) reports.

Note: Where, according to the table below, a recommendation was not or only partly responded too, this should not be taken as criticism of the project team or the contractor in itself. Any evaluation or monitoring provides a snapshot, reflecting the conditions in the project at the time. In addition, the process of quality control of monitoring and evaluation reports may involve considerable discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations between M&E teams and the responsible Commission Services. Finally, recommendations may have turned out to be hard to implement in practice. Independent outsiders, however expert, can err. The implementing parties should have the benefit of the doubt.⁴⁶

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
MTE [2016]	1	The practices identified in the toolboxes need to be placed in a European/national policy/legislative context, to allow those analysing them to understand the framework within which they were developed and successfully applied. This policy background is essential to allow an accurate evaluation of the suitability of the practices to China. Without the implementation of the appropriate policy that will support uptake of the solution in China, its sustainability and long-term impact in China will be limited	The project has replaced the toolboxes concept by that of the Guidelines, which include the salient aspects of toolboxes, as well as flanking measures suggested to be appropriate or necessary for low carbon urbanisation management. MoHURD has continued to link this to the successive FYPs (12 and 13 in particular) but has also stated that some of the material produced by the project does not meet current (rapidly evolving) standards and need further elaboration and correction before publication under the MoHURD flag (in either digital or hard copy formats).
	2	The practices contained in the toolboxes need an explanation of why they are considered to be examples of good practice (delivering above average results) or best practice (delivering the best results in Europe). Currently, there are no baseline or evaluation criteria presented to justify their classification as best practice. The project needs to justify its workings, i.e. how it reached the conclusion that a particular practice can be defined as a European best practice	The 12 progress reports filed to date, do not contain a reasoned explanation of why certain methods or measures can be considered best practice. NB: This is not to say that these methods or measures are not good. In fact, many of the techniques proposed by the project's experts have been much appreciated by their Chinese counterparts. Examples included water management and green financing.
	3	The content of the toolboxes needs to be evaluated in terms of their impact, cost, scalability, applicability and adaptability to Chinese conditions, to ensure their long-term sustainability in the Chinese urban environment. This can only be achieved	This has been done, especially from mid-2017 onwards. As examples may serve:

⁴⁶ In this case perhaps especially, because the 2016 MTE report in its final form was not formally shared with the contractor and technical assistance team, although they had informal access to early drafts of the report.

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
		through additional consultation with MoHURD and, importantly, the relevant stakeholders (local government representatives) in the Chinese pilot and partner cities	Zhuhai received questionnaires on quality and usefulness of technical guidelines and toolboxes, results of evaluation not provided to Chinese partners Position papers developed by TAT EU consultants were peer-reviewed by Chinese experts, comments and feedback provided to TAT. Partners of pilot cities did not review the guidelines and toolboxes. EC Link project recruited 9 Chinese experts (consultants) for writing up the guidelines in Chinese based on the position papers developed by EU consultants and the results of pilot cities.
	4	The toolbox practices should contain methodologies for monitoring and evaluating impact in China	Monitoring and assessing the results of green building and other pilot projects were not done due to the limited time
	5	The toolboxes need to provide methodologies and approaches to help Chinese cities develop and implement sustainable carbon reduction strategies. Methodologies for analysing a city's carbon footprint, the development of a baseline from which an objective can be set and an action plan (with targets and milestones) put in place to achieve that objective. The practices already included in the toolboxes would provide the solutions to achieving the desired objective. Such a broad and overarching approach to urban centres has already been tested and established in Europe through a number of other European projects and networks including the Covenant of Mayors. These should be included in the toolboxes to give the focus that it is now lacking	Systematic training on application of toolboxes was not carried out; training-of-trainers for the application of toolboxes were not organized. The contractor responded: MoHURD wanted sectorial work (9 thematic areas) ,not integrated city-wide carbon reduction strategies as Global Covenant of Mayors. Please have a look to the guidelines work done in early 2020. These were done on request of MoHURD, which wanted shorter summaries. The position papers have been translated into Chinese, proofread and validated by Chinese experts indicated by MoHURD.
	6	With the limited time left, the original approach of using Zhuhai and Luoyang as pilot cities for the partner cities should be revised. This approach should be replaced with the comprehensive implementation of all the toolboxes, in conjunction with complete analysis of pilot cities' carbon footprint and accompanying strategy with targets, activities and monitoring to deliver GHG reductions. This should be based on additional expertise and best practice identified in the toolboxes. The initial outcomes should then be used to develop Chinese policies/strategies and applied to other cities, initially the EU Link partners	The project has chosen a different approach by focusing on Zhuhai as the most important partner city, with intensive input from Dutch and Italian experts. A somewhat similar, but less intensive approach was adopted for Weihai and Luoyang Luoyang was selected as city for comprehensive piloting, however, only focused on construction solid waste treatment. Compared with Luoyang, EC Link provided quite intensive support in 2019 and 2020 to Weihai to prepare the project proposals to be financed by Shandong Green Development Fund
	7	The remaining element, the partner cities, should continue as a secondary element, with the improved toolboxes delivering technical solutions that can be properly evaluated for impact and transferability	The evaluation of results/reports has been done in Zhuhai, in other cities were not systematically done. Systematic questionnaire survey on guidelines and toolboxes and website was not done. This negatively affected the transferability and further replication.

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
	8	The contractor and the TAT are advised that a properly constructed logframe with SMART- indicators will be helpful in formulating the concise and comprehensive strategy essential for the Project's success	The original logframe (Nov 2013) has remained in largely in place, with the intervention logic unchanged. A number of outputs were amended, and some indicators deleted in the two formal successive versions of the logframe (Sep 2018 and Apr 2019) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added outputs linked indicators in 2018 and 2019 version; ▪ Indicators for measuring the utility and replication of results and impacts of each results are missing, therefore, insufficient evidences provided in the progress reports.
	9	EUD is advised to pursue, in the interest of securing sustainability of the results of the Project, as well as any other EU-funded programmes in the environmental sphere in China, wider dialogue and cooperation with the Ministries with an environmental mandate, as well as more coordination amongst EU-funded projects in this sphere	In the context of pursuing sustainability, EUD has encouraged and supported the search for linkage to other efforts in this field, sponsored by EU, GIZ, KfW and the some IFI (ADB and AFD) However, consultation with other related Chinese line agencies, such as NDRC and Ministry of Ecology & Environment, did not take place, which poses a constraint for replicating EC Link results into the NDRC Low Carbon City Programme.
	10	EUD, MoFCOM and MoHURD are advised to consider increasing the frequency of PSC meetings to at least twice, and if possible, four times a year	The frequency of PSC meetings seems to have remained – at a low – constant over the project's implementation period The contractor responded: PSC is a steering instrument and the project owners are the ones using it and determine the frequency. They were organised once a plenary meeting with EUD, TAT and project beneficiaries was considered relevant (e.g. to discuss project extensions and present work-plans). In the final year, during AWPE3, one PSC took place.
	11	EUD, the contractor and the TAT are advised that urgent action is required to speed up the implementation of project activities in the interest of achieving key Project results. This concerns first and foremost the articulation of the above strategy by the contractor, the approval of AWP2 by EUD and finalisation of outstanding project reporting by the TAT	All these measures were taken in hand, but themselves took time. They were not fully completed until the end of 2017, i.e. until the start of the 1 st contract extension (Nov 2017). It is observed that the implementation of activities, particularly the support to the pilot activities in the cities, was speeded up since 2018 and onwards
	12	The contractor is advised that the TAT would benefit from high level backstopping in the matter of strategy formulation	Project progress report does not provide information as to whether this backstopping has been sought and, if so, received. The contractor has pointed out that the MTE report was never shared with the TAT and this recommendation did not reach the TAT: "Only some very general summary recommendations were made available to the TAT through a PowerPoint presentation of the MTE".

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
	13	EUD is advised to formulate with precision – for the benefit of the contractor’s backstopping – the parameters of the strategy, in order to forestall a time-consuming ‘trial & error’ approach to further strategy formulation	There is no record in project progress reporting of formal parameters of the strategy having been formulated and communicated to the contractor and TAT.
	14	EUD, the contractor and the TAT are advised to investigate and agree as a matter of urgency what can be done to utilise the available working days and other budget items by November 2017. This could be done by intensifying work on a limited number of activities and outputs related to key results (Knowledge Platform, and related ‘matchmaking’ networking, as well as training and mentoring in support of toolbox introduction and dissemination)	Discussions in this context were held in the period following the evaluation (Apr 2016) but did not lead to tangible results until the resignation of the first TAT TL (end-2016) and the departure of the EUD HoC (2017), and the preparatory period for the 1 st extension in mid-2017.
	15	MoHURD, the contractor and the TAT are advised that the completion of the toolboxes might benefit from treating them as ‘living documents’, testing them through daily use by city practitioners and amending them as required. If deemed necessary, MoHURD is advised that a small group of Chinese experts be engaged to canvass the opinion of pilot city decision makers, administration and technicians to accelerate assessment of the toolboxes’ practical utility	Adopted and put into practice. Chinese experts (MoHURD and city-level) were involved in writing the documentation and its application to local conditions, as well as supporting translation in Chinese. The Project recruited 9 Chinese national experts to write up the Chinese guideline documents in a short version based on the position papers and pilot results. Systematic evaluation on the guidelines and toolboxes was not carried out, evaluation to certain reports was conducted in Zhuhai City. After 2018 performance evaluation was conducted for all training activities implemented in different pilot cities, evaluation reports were prepared and submitted to EUD.
	16	The Project’s effectiveness, impact and sustainability depend on its ability to provide the beneficiaries with wide ranging ‘matchmaking’ skills for creating ‘technical partnering’ between EU and China cities and other stakeholders. The EUD, MoHURD, the contractor and the TAT are advised that finalisation of the Knowledge Platform is one set of activities that deserve the maximum possible of resources and attention	Adopted and pursued in the course of the 1 st and 2 nd extensions of the project duration (Nov 2017 – Sep 2019) Internal effectiveness and impact assessment and M&E system were not established and conducted
	17	The toolboxes are indispensable for ensuring eventual replicability of Project outputs and results on a larger scale. The EUD, MoHURD, the contractor and TAT are advised that finalisation, dissemination and training in support of toolbox introduction is the second set of activities that deserve the maximum possible share of Project resources and attention	Partly adopted and pursued with energy with energy, particularly in the course of the 1 st and 2 nd extensions of the project duration (Nov 2017 – Sep 2019), including publication on the KP. Training of partners on effectively use and replication of the guidelines and toolboxes was not delivered, which affects the sustainability and replicability of project results
	18	EUD, MoHURD, the contractor and TAT are advised to address the replicability/upscaling of EU successful eco/low carbon initiatives at city level in China, as a matter of urgency, through the Knowledge Platform, the wide dissemination of	Done well in Zhuhai for dissemination of the reports and materials. EU cases included in the website and incorporated into the training materials

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
		toolboxes, accompanied by a communications & dissemination strategy also geared towards sustainability of Project results	No printed toolboxes disseminated to partners in pilot cities until date of close up of the Project Most translated guidelines and toolboxes had been uploaded into EC Link website at the closing date of the EC Link project. A workshop to be attended by MoHURD, Pilot Cities and Chinese Experts for reviewing the EC Link results was planned, but not conducted due to the COVID-19
	19	MoHURD and the TAT are advised that the Project might contribute to a discussion in China on a topic also much discussed in EU member states: Should closely related spheres, such as transport, environment and urban development, be the responsibility of a single, centre-of- government ministry with an environmental protection mandate? Or should the environmental aspects in each of these separate spheres be the concern of more specialised sectoral ministries, subject to a system of inter-ministerial coordination?	Not clear whether such discussion has taken place at national level. At municipal level, the Project Steering Committee meeting is a platform, however, PSC meetings were not regularly held in pilot cities. That said, the local PSCs in Luoyang, Qingdao, Weihai and Zhuhai played important inter-agency coordination roles.
	20	EUD, MoHURD and MoFCOM are advised that improved coordination on environmental issues relating to eco city/low carbon urbanisation can be improved if all parties involved (the supervising ministries – including MoHURD – CSUS and the Project) share the same legal, institutional and organisational definitions of the nine sector foci and municipal public services. The dissemination of the toolboxes will enable the Project to play a role in this area	The EC Link project set up a Steering Committee consisting only of MoHURD and MoFCOM, but not including NDRC and the Ministry of Ecology & Environment, although the latter two entities are very important stakeholders in urban and city development At municipal level, particularly in Weihai and Luoyang, the local PSCs – headed by the vice mayor – played effective roles in coordinating the joint actions on solutions to environmental problems. The local branches of all relevant central ministries were involved in the PSC at municipal level in at least 6 of the 10 pilot cities.
	21	EUD, MoHURD and MoFCOM are advised that the current division of responsibilities between ministries calls for increased attention for the inter-ministerial coordination ultimately affecting inter alia the replicability of Project outcomes	Not clear whether this was adopted
	22	The Project is advised that it might provide a useful contribution by advising its counterparts on the concept of nation-wide binding regulatory frameworks	Not clear whether this was adopted, but there is some indication that this was discussed at ministry level.
	23	MoHURD and the TAT might consider the four pillars and eight recommendations formulated in the OECD's 2013 paper Urbanisation & Green Growth in China in the preparation of the strategy requested by EUD	It is unclear from the available documentation whether this was done. In the event, the project produced a strategy, which was approved by EUD in May 2017. The contractor responded: Considering that the report was never shared with the TAT, the TAT, at the end of 2016 acted following EUD indications and proposed ICL organisation submitting related ToR. In March 2017, after several exchanges with EUD and ToR amendments

Report	Nº	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
			<p>(in the event, the ToR were not amended [evaluation team], they were approved on condition that, in a few weeks, TAT present a more strategic approach for ICL implementation, to complement the approved ToR In May 2017, after the presentation and (informal) approval of the new strategy, EUD gave green light to ICL implementation.</p> <p>The OECD's 2013 paper Urbanisation & Green Growth in China recommended by MTE was never highlighted as a relevant issue by EUD at that time, and they appreciated the contents of the strategy proposed.</p>
	24	The MoHURD and the TAT are advised to heed certain aspects of the EU acquis, such as the 8th Implementation Report on the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (No 91/271), the regulatory framework 'binding' the urban transport sector, as well as the concepts of 'public service obligation' and 'public service compensation' as they apply to urban passenger transport companies	<p>Project progress reporting does not provide indications that this has been done.</p> <p>The contractor responded: The water management position paper makes extensive reference to the EU instruments for the water sector. Why was the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (Nº 91/271) singled out? Likewise, the Green Transport position paper has extensively reviewed the EU transport sector instruments. Not clear why MTE singled out the 'public service obligation' and 'public service compensation'.</p>
ROM [2019]	1	For the TAT: Improve the coherence of the intervention logic: a more in-depth review of a few selected indicators at output and outcome levels would certainly contribute to increase the potential of the logframe to be used for results monitoring and reporting. Revisiting the ToC underpinning the intervention should support the selection of indicators that will provide informative added value at outcome level with the additional benefit of reinforcing the of strategic coherence of the intervention	<p>This was done, although to a very limited extent, by reconsidering the indicators, including those at results level, and deleting some of the latter.</p> <p>In response to the first draft of the Final Report, EUD requested the TAT to formulate a number of additional 'outcomes' to enhance the clarity the final report's narrative with regard to project effectiveness and impact.</p>
		For the EUD: Improve the coherence of the intervention logic: consider a more comprehensive review of the indicators at output (reduction of the number of process indicators) and at outcome (definition of a few selected RACER indicators) levels	
	2	For the contractor: Dynamic project planning and project resources management: support the TAT with a management tool allowing for detailed resource allocations by activities including timetables with timelines that would contribute to have a more formalized and informed implementation for the project as a whole	<p>It is unclear to what extent this recommendations has been acted on: progress reporting does not contain references to other project planning and resources management tools. The work planning proceeded largely as established earlier in the project, with work plans only gradually becoming less detailed and more accessible</p>
For the TAT: Dynamic project planning and project resource management: a more detailed planning would support consultation and communication between project			

Report	N°	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
		<p>partners, point out where activities would require more attention or resources due to deviation from initial planning</p>	<p>The contractor responded: In each progress report, starting from N° 8 (December 19th, 2017 – June 18th, 2018), the indicators of achievement for each activity (12/2013 - 9/2018 and 10/2018 - 9/2020) have been included, using the approved revised log-frame as a reference, indicating the target achieved during reporting period and target to be achieved yet. Annual work plans including number of man days and timelines were used.</p> <p>The TAT responded: A bi-weekly meeting between Team and Project manager has been regularly held during all project implementation, to discuss about resources and eventual deviation from initial planning. A weekly update on activities (weekly progress + plan for next week) was presented to EUD since April 2020 until project conclusion, to monitor in details project implementation during the Covid-19 period. Several monthly plans (e.g. events plan, knowledge products editing/uploading/printing, new web-based workshops/training plans) were elaborated during last year of project implementation. The yearly workplan (as above) guided the team discussions.</p>
	3	<p>For the TAT: Prevention and mitigation of risks: a risk management/mitigation update should be added in the agenda of the monthly meetings and in the six-monthly technical progress reports (as a check-list)</p>	<p>Not clear.</p> <p>The contractor responded: Regular monthly meetings of TAT-EUD-MoHURD have been regularly implemented since 2018 and any difficulty/risk in project implementation has been always openly discussed, as well as mitigation measures.</p>
		<p>For the EUD: Prevention and mitigation of risks: the interpretation issue on the use of the fee budget line needs to be clarified asap and closed once and for all</p>	<p>Project reporting does not provide a clear picture on how this issue was resolved. That said, the WD budgets for KEs, NKEs and the project staffing overall were – ultimately, in several steps – increased by, respectively, 9.2%, 13.4% and 23.6%. This was largely accommodated by reducing the provision for incidental expenditure by 65% and reallocation the freed resources to the relevant budget lines for project staff fees and related costs.</p> <p>The contractor responded: The data reported are correct – concerning the different interpretation between GIZ and EUD of the administrative and finance procedures applicable for contracting EU-based city utility/city service companies, it was still an open issue at ROM mission time, but it has been fully clarified in agreement with EUD Bangkok during following weeks. GIZ operated correctly to conclude the contract with the Dutch state company World Waternet (Amsterdam) and SWECO (Sweden) according to EUD rules.</p>

Report	N°	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
	4	For the TAT TL: Timeliness of reporting: efforts should be made to ensure that progress reports are delivered within a (couple) of month(s) after the completion of the reporting period. Providing partners with timely reports will also improve the image of the project in terms of efficiency	Not implemented in practice. Technical Progress Reports are delayed beyond what must be considered a reasonable period (30 days). The TAT claims pressure of other work
	5	<p>For the contractor: Quality of outputs: QA/QC procedures should be implemented by the contractor for all project deliverables.</p> <p>For the TAT, PTF: Quality of outputs: to be informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the delivered trainings – a satisfaction survey should systematically be conducted after each training session. Other feedback mechanisms could be used to collect appreciation and suggestions from direct beneficiaries (e.g. GMF network; IT platform)</p>	<p>The contractor responded: Not clear: what “Zhuhai partners didn’t receive the survey results” means, because we received a feedback from them (with red stamp) to the questionnaire sent.</p> <p>Since ROM recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have designed registration form & questionnaires for each training (not only for Zhuhai), so that gender issues can also be tracked. After questionnaires being returned, we have summarized them in English and submitted them to EUD. ▪ We have also asked ZHUHAI HURD & related organizations to evaluate the four advisory reports (relating to 3 pilot projects & revision Zhuhai urban planning guideline). Zhuhai has sent their feedback from municipal organizations with their official red stamps. These have also been sent to EUD. ▪ Zhuhai feedback has been annexed to Progress report 11th, including its translation in English. <p>The contractor/TAT responded: The feedback has been requested to cities to which where a long-term assistance (TA and trainings) has been addressed. Qingdao feedback on the support received on GMF (training and technical assistance) has been included in Progress report 12th (Dec. 18th, 2019 – June 19th, 2020) as annex. The draft report has been presented to EUD in August 2020 and, recently, some requests of amendments have been received. It is now almost finalised and will be sent to EUD for approval within first weeks of November.</p> <p>CN and EU experts joint research paper on green building in a special climate “summer hot and winter cold” has been evaluated in Zhuzhou and Guilin very carefully, two rounds evaluation/feedback from Chinese experts in these cities helped a lot for further updating the research paper, which fits more in the context of local situation.</p>
	6	For the TAT: Mobilisation and use of budgeted resources: the projections on the planned resource use should be verified and consolidated. If a positive balance is to remain by the projected completion date, different options to exhaust the budgeted	The use of budget resources reached 100% for the budget at large and even slightly exceeded it, with the exception of the provision for incidental expenditure, which was first reduced (from 2.85 MEUR to

Report	N°	Recommendation	Observations and Project Response (where applicable)
		resources should be explored including the option for a short extension of the duration of the project	nearly 1 MEUR) and which nearly 0.5 MEUR (49%) remained at project's end.
	7	For the project TAT, PTF: Capitalisation of the experience gained with partner cities: the more integrated methods or processes used during pilot initiatives with partner cities should be documented and feed a capitalisation exercise dedicated to identifying and sharing best-practices with city decision-makers. Ensuring that a formal capitalization process is implemented might be part of the exit strategy that still needs to be designed	Adopted: exit strategy included in Final Report (draft Aug 2020). Not fully done: Toolboxes/Guidelines for pilot cities, including best practice examples included on Knowledge Platform and disseminated to stakeholders in printed form (EN/CH). Zhuhai has printed all technical consultancy reports, but not the guidelines in 7 areas.
	8	For the SC: Promotion of EC-Link results: the learning process (capitalisation) that is recommend should contribute to process the achievements of the project into material that can be promoted to inform other partner cities involved in CNU. This processed material would feed the policy process from on-the ground experience and communicate results that would be less output-based or descriptive. It is therefore recommended for the SC to support the promotion of project results through a learning process	It is not clear what steps have been taking by MoHURD and pilot city HURDs in this regard Not all materials, position papers (quite large size comparing with the later ones, guidelines and toolboxes, are translated into Chinese, therefore, they are not yet ready to be used in training staff or guiding the urban and city planning.

Annex 9: Use of Human Resources

Position	Name	I-2014 [IP]	II- 2014	I- 2015	II- 2015	I- 2016	II- 2016	I- 2017	II- 2017	I- 2018	II- 2018	I- 2019	II- 2019	I- 2020	II- 2020	Total
KE1	Asseline	141	92	113	93	103	20									562
	Claser							101	91	114	106	108	106	109	52	787
All KE1		141	92	113	93	103	20	101	91	114	106	108	106	109	52	1,349
KE2	Perry	121	2													123
	Steinberg			24	83	70	78	49	83							387
KE2A	Ruan									45	80	62	62	75	45	370
KE2B	Tertilt									39	23					62
KE2	Lindfield										8	20	32	33	13	106
All KE2		121	2	24	83	70	78	49	83	85	111	82	94	108	58	1,048
KE3	de Sonis	139	98	100	20											218
	Beckmann				30	119	101	108	34							392
	Ghiara									96	124	118	118	125	51	632
All KE3		139	98	100	50	119	101	108	34	96	124	118	118	125	51	1,381
All KEs		401	192	237	226	292	199	258	208	295	341	308	318	342	161	3,778
Sr NKEs	Various	60	36	188	267	0	5	168	385	76	266	292	494	474	150	2,861
Jr NKEs	Various		32	69	77	0	0	0	0	65	23	79	125	188	99	757
All NKEs		60	68	257	344	0	5	168	385	141	289	371	619	662	249	3,618
All Experts		461	260	494	570	292	204	426	593	436	630	679	937	1,004	410	7,396

Note: Figures represent working days (WD); rounded to whole WDs. IP = Inception Phase.

Annex 10: EC Link Work Plans & Progress Reports

Item	[Reporting] Period	Due (ToR & IR)	Submission to EUD	EUD Approval
Initial Plan of Activities (IPA)	17 Nov 2013-17 May 2014	n/a	19 May 2014 (v.2)	04 Jun 14
Inception Report	17 Nov 2013-18 Jun 2014	mid-May 2014	26 Jun 2014	06 Jul 2015
Overall Work Plan (OWP)	17 Nov 2013-18 Nov 2017	mid-May 2014	26 Jun 2014	06 Jul 2015
1 st Annual Work Plan (AWP1)	19 Jun 2014-18 Jun 2015	mid-Jun 2014	mid-Jun 2014 [addendum May 2015]	06 Jul 2015
1 st Technical Progress Report (TPR1) ⁴⁷	19 Jun-18 Dec 2014	18 Jan 2015	mid-Mar 2015	Not known
TPR2	19 Dec 2014-18 Jun 2015	18 Jul 2015	26 Apr 2016	Not known
TPR3	19 Jun-18 Dec 2015	18 Jan 2016	26 Apr 2016 Nov 2016 (hard copy)	Not known
Design & Monitoring Framework	n/a	n/a ⁴⁸	early-Apr 2016 (planned)	Not known
Revised Project Strategy	Up to 18 Nov 2017	Oct 2015	05 May 2017 ⁴⁹	05 May 2017
2 nd Annual Work Plan (AWP2)	19 Jun 2015-18 Jun 2016	18 Jul 2016	mid-March 2016 ⁵⁰	Not known
TPR4	19 Dec 2015-18 Jun 2016	18 Jul 2016	Not known	Not known
TPR5	19 Jun-18 Dec 2016	18 Jan 2017	Not known	Not known
TPR6	19 Dec 2016-18 Jun 2017	18 Jul 2017	Not known	Not known
Annual Work Plan for 1 st Extension (AWPE1)	Nov 2017-Sep 2018	Not known	15 Nov 2017	Not known
TPR7	19 Jun-18 Dec 2017	18 Jan 2018	Not known	Not known
TPR8	19 Dec 2017-18 Jun 2018	18 Jul 2018	Not known	Not known
TPR9	19 Jun-Dec 2018	18 Jan 2019	23 Dec 2019	Not known
AWPE2	30 Sep 2018-29 September 2019	n/a	Not known	Nov 2018
TPR10	19 Dec 2018-18 Jun 2019	18 Jul 2019	31 Mar 2020	Not known

⁴⁷ Each six-monthly report is due within 1 month from the end of each six-months implementation period and to be accompanied by financial report, expenditure verification report and invoice.

⁴⁸ Not a planning/reporting deliverable specified in the ToR, but a document requested by EUD in its search for a viable project strategy, in this particular case focusing on establishing a set of outputs & outcomes allowing for easy progress monitoring.

⁴⁹ Fourth revision, following earlier versions submitted in Oct and Dec 2015 (1st revision), as well as Mar, Apr and Aug 2016.

⁵⁰ Following earlier versions submitted in Oct and Dec 2015, as well as Jan and Mar 2016.

Item	[Reporting] Period	Due (ToR & IR)	Submission to EUD	EUD Approval
AWPE3	30 Sep 2019-29 Sep 2020	n/a	Not known	16 Oct 2019
TPR11	19 Jun-18 Dec 2019	18 Jan 2020	18 Jun 2020	Not known
TPR12	19 Dec 2019-18 Jun 2020	18 Jul 2020	Jul 2020	Not known
Draft Final Report (DFR)	17 Nov 2013-29 Sep 2020	29 Aug 2020	Aug 2020	pending
Final Report (FR)	Idem DFR	<1 month from receipt of comment on DFR	Under preparation	n/a

Source: GIZ Consortium & TAT Reporting

Annex 11: Documentation

N°	Title	Provenance	Date
1	Addendum N° 1 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	European Commission (EC), Brussels	13 Nov 2014
2	Addendum N° 2 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EC, Brussels	21 Apr 2015
3	Addendum N° 3 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EC, Brussels	12 Oct 2015
4	Addendum N° 4 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EC, Brussels	21 Feb 2017
5	Addendum N° 5 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EUD, Bangkok	17/11/2017
6	Addendum N° 6 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EUD, Bangkok	02 Mar 2018
7	Addendum N° 7 to Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453	EC, Brussels	02 Oct 2018
8	Annex 1 [TPR 11] – Goals and objectives for the development and promotion of the EC Link platform in terms of long-term sustainability	NKEs Angela Hanisch & Nina Stiehr	Sep 2019
9	Annex 11 [TPR 11] – Industrial Water Treatment Concerning Fushan Water Purification Plant	NKEs Ignasi Orts & Ismael Abel	Sep 2019
10	Annex 13 [TPR 11] – Zhuhai Eco-Industrial Park Waste to Energy Plant EC LINK Report	Consortium partner Sweco International AB, Stockholm	Sep 2019
11	Annex 2 [TPR 11] – EC Link Platform Optimisation Report	NKE Xue Xiaoguang	Oct 2019
12	Annex 8 [TPR 11] – Applying Green Building Techniques (Chinese version)	Feng Ya FENG, Qinglong Gao, & Yanling Qiu, China Southwest Architectural Academy, Chengdu	Undated (likely 2019)
13	Annex 9 [TPR 11] – Review of a Passive House Case in the Cold Winter and Hot Summer Climate Region in China for Policy Support – Draft methodology	NKE Dirk Schwede, Stuttgart University	Undated
14	China Weihai Delicate City Construction Summit Forum – Draft Agenda	HURD, Weihai	Sep 2018
15	China Weihai Delicate City Construction Summit Forum – Minute of Mission	TAT, Beijing	Sep 2018
16	Commission Decision – On a delegation of powers relating to the Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement (PAGoDA2)	European Commission, Brussels	01 Oct 2017
17	EC Link – Final Report – Annexes – Draft (not approved)	Technical Assistance Team (TAT), Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	02 Sep 2020
18	EC Link – Final Report – Draft (under review)	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	02 Sep 2020

Nº	Title	Provenance	Date
19	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 1 – 19 June 2014 – 18 December 2014	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Draft: Mar 2016
20	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 10 – 19 December 2018 – 18 June 2019	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	31 Mar 2020
21	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 11 – 19 June 2019 – 18 December 2019 (draft not yet approved)	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Jun 2020
22	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 11 – Annexes	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Jun 2020
23	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 12 – 19 December 2019 – 18 June 2020	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Jul 2020
24	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 2 – 19 December 2014 – 18 June 2015	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
25	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 3 – 19 June 2015 – 18 December 2015	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
26	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 4 – 19 December 2015 – 18 June 2016	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
27	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 5 – 19 June 2016 – 18 December 2016	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
28	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 6 – 19 December 2016 – 18 June 2017	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
29	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 7 – 19 June 2017 – 18 December 2017	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
30	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 8 – 19 December 2017 – 18 June 2018	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	Undated
31	EC Link – Technical Progress Report 9 – 19 June 2018 – 18 December 2018	TAT, Beijing and GIZ, Eschborn	23 Dec 2019
32	EC Link Project and Weihai Municipality to support 'Weihai Delicate City Development' – Note	TAT, Beijing	Sep 2018
33	Evaluation of Potential of Green Municipal Bonds – TPR 11, Annex 25	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
34	Green Investment Project Design Guidelines-Green Transport – TPR 11, Annex 28	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
35	Green Investment Project Design-Clean Energy – TPR 11, Annex 27	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
36	International Urban & Regional Cooperation – Terms of Reference	European Commission	28 May 2020
37	Mid-Term Evaluation of the Europe-China Eco Cities Link (EC Link) Project, People's Republic of China	Particip Consortium, Freiburg	Aug 2016
38	Mission Reports Zhuzhou & Guilin – TPR 11, Annex 42	TAT, Beijing	19-21 Jun 2019
39	Pre-Feasibility Format & Green Financing Guidelines – TPR 11, Annex 26	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020

N°	Title	Provenance	Date
40	Pre-Feasibility Report on Qingdao Energy Efficiency in Buildings – TPR Annex 21	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
41	Pre-Feasibility Report on Qingdao Green Transportation System – TPR 11, Annex 22	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
42	Progressive Report on Flood Prevention in Zhuhai – TPR 11, Annex 14	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2020
43	Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Report – Projects & Programmes – TA to Sustainable Urbanisation – Europe-China Eco Cities Link (EC Link) – C-329453	ROM Contractor	Apr 2019
44	Service Contract N° DCI-ASIE/2013/329-453 for European Union External Actions; including Annexes I-VII	EC, Brussels/GIZ, Eschborn	13 Nov 2013
45	Three Logframes	TAT, Beijing	2013, 2018 & 2019
46	Working Meeting with MoHURD - Minutes	TAT, Beijing	31 Jul 2020
47	WP – Addendum to the First Annual Work Plan – January 2015 - July 2015	TAT, Beijing	Undated
48	WP – Annual Work Plan Extension 3: October 2019 – September 2020	TAT, Beijing	Oct 2019
49	WP – First Annual Work Plan – 19 June 2014 – 18 June 2015 – Version 2 (Internal Draft for MoHURD & EUD)	TAT, Beijing	Undated
50	WP – Overall Work Plan – 19 June 2014 – 17 November 2017 – Version: 1	TAT, Beijing	Jun 2014
51	WP – Second Annual Work Plan – July 2015 to June 2016	TAT, Beijing	Undated
52	WP – Ten-Months Work Plan: November 2017 – September 2018	TAT, Beijing	20 Dec 2017
53	WP – Work Plan Extension 2: October 2018 – September 2019 – Final Version	TAT, Beijing	Oct 2018

Annex 12: Persons Interviewed

Nº	Name	Position	Entity	Date
1	[REDACTED]	Innovation & Sustainability Expert	Independent Consultancy, Valencia	02/11/20 (via Skype)
2		Division Chief	Municipal Culture and Tourism Bureau	27/09/20
3		Senior Engineer, Solid Waste Management	China Urban Construction Design & Research Institute, Beijing	06/11/20
4		Deputy Division Chief	Division of Planning, Science & Technology, HURD, Luoyang	27/09/20
5		Deputy Director	HURD, Yunlong District	16/10/20
6		KE3 – Senior Knowledge Management	TAT, Beijing	22/09/20 (via Skype)
7		Team Leader (KE1)	TAT, Beijing	04/09/20 10/09/20 30/09/20 12/10/20 17/12/20 (via Skype)
8		Project Director, Director PTF	CSUS/MoHURD, Beijing	18/09/20 10/10/20 16/12/20
9		Staff Member	Fushan District Construction Bureau, Zhuhai	19/10/20
10		Representative	GIZ, Beijing	16/10/20
11		Vice President & Chief Engineer	Guilin Construction Designing Academy, Guilin	15/10/20
12		Project Manager/ Evaluation Manager	EUD, Beijing	04/09/20 10/09/20 30/10/20 02/11/20 (via WebEx) 26/11/20
13		Representative	City Government, Bologna	Left City of Bologna government
14		Chief Engineer	Energy Save Office, HURD Weihai	25/09/20 (via WebEx)
15		Finance & Control	EUD Bangkok	02/11/20
16		Representative	City Government, Bologna	12/10/20 (via Google Meet)
17		Engineer	Sino-German Eco-park, Qingdao	23/09/20

Nº	Name	Position	Entity	Date
18		General Manager	EU-China Chamber of Commerce (EUCCC), Beijing	Mon 26/10/20 (via Zoom)
19		Division Chief of Village & Township Development Department; former EC Link Project Officer	MoHURD, Beijing	12/10/2020
20		Officer	Division of Planning, S&T, HURD	27/09/20
21		Responsible Person	Chuangke Mansion Project, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
22		Director	Energy Saving Office, HURD Qingdao	23/09/20
23		Director	Climate Alliance, Frankfurt/Main	18/09/20 (via Skype)
24		Programme Officer, EU IUC in China	EUD, Beijing	26/11/20
25		Division Chief	HURD, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
26		Project Manager	Fushan Nº 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
27		Chief Engineer	Delicate City Construction Office, HURD, Weihai	25/09/20
28		KE2b – Green Financing	TAT, Beijing	25/09/20 17/12/20 (via Skype)
29		Deputy Director PTF	CSUS, Beijing	18/09/20 10/10/20
30		Secretary General	Zhuzhou Construction Energy Saving Association	16/10/20
31		Staff Member	Construction & Environmental Protection Bureau, Zhuhai Hi-Tech District	19-21/10/20
32		Chief Designer	Weida Construction Group, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
33		Division Chief	Municipal Water Resource Bureau, Luoyang	27/09/20
34		Engineer	Delicate City Construction Office, HURD	25/09/20
35		Director	Hengqin District Construction and Environmental Protection Bureau, Zhuhai	25/09/20
36		Vice President, Compact City Expert	China Eco-City Academy, Beijing	05/11/20

Nº	Name	Position	Entity	Date
37		Professor Clean Energy	Tongji University, Shanghai	06/11/20
38		Division Chief	HURD, Zhuhai	25/09/20
39		Deputy Director	HURD, Weihai	25/09/20
40		Project Designer	Fushan N° 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
41		Various	MoHURD, MoFCOM, CSUS, TAT, Beijing	08-09/09 (via WebEx)
42		Architectural Engineer	Jinmao Urban Construction Co., Ltd, Qingdao	23/09/20
43		Senior Project Manager, Asia	GIZ, Eschborn	04/09/20 17/12/20 (via MS Teams)
44		KE2a – Sustainable Urban Development	TAT, Beijing	18/09/20 27/10/20 (via Skype)
45		Chief Economist	Finance Bureau, Luoyang	27/09/20
46		Former KE2	TAT, Beijing	18/09/20 (via Skype)
47		Former Project Responsible	GIZ, Eschborn	01/10/20 (via MS Teams)
48		Environment Expert	Sweco AB, Stockholm	21/09/20
49		Officer	HURD, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
50		Chief, Energy Saving Technology Division,	HURD, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
51		Chief	Planning Division of New City Construction Administration, Weihai	25/09/20
52		KE2b – Landscape Planner/Urban Ecology Expert	Former TAT, Beijing	16/09/20 (via Skype)
53		Landscape Architect/Planner	Palmhout, Rotterdam	18/09/20 (via Skype)
54		Project Leader (2019-20)	WaterNet, Amsterdam	17/09/20 (via MS Teams)
55		Project Leader (2018-19)	WaterNet, Amsterdam	17/09/20 (via MS Teams)
56		Division Chief	Development & Reform Commission, Luoyang	27/09/20
57		Deputy Director General	HURD, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
58		Director, Information Centre	HURD, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
59		Chief Engineer	Guilin Green Building Design Institute	15/10/20

Nº	Name	Position	Entity	Date
60		Deputy Director	HURD, Luoyang	27/09/20
61		Project Officer, Department of Building Standard	MoHURD, Beijing	12/10/20
62		Vice President, Green Building Expert	China Urban Construction Design & Research Institute, Beijing	06/11/20
63		Project Officer, Administration Office,	Lingui New Department Area, Guilin	15/10/20
64		Officer	HURD, Yunlong District	16/10/20
65		Staff Member	Fushan District Construction Bureau, Zhuhai	
66		Deputy Director General	HURD, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
67		Division Chief & Project Officer	HURD, Guilin	15/10/20
68		Project Assistant	TAT, Beijing	18/09/20 27/10/20
69		Manager	Fushan Nº 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant, Zhuhai	19-21/10/20
70		Staff Member, Management Office	Lingui Water System, Guilin	15/10/20
71		Chief Engineer	HURD, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
72		Manager General	Huanfeng Solid Waste Recycle Company, Luoyang	27/09/20
73		Inspector	Municipal Administration Bureau, Luoyang	27/09/20
74		Deputy Manager General	Jinmao Urban Construction Co., Ltd	23/09/20
75		PhD Candidate, Environmental Economist	Qingdao Oceanic University	23/09/20
76		Chief Designer	Chuangke Mansion Project, Zhuzhou	16/10/20
77		Division Chief & Project Officer for EC Link Project	MoHURD, Beijing	12/10/20
78		Project Financial Responsible	TAT, Beijing	18/09/20
79		Project officer	TAT Beijing	18/09/20
80		Chief Engineer	Municipal Transportation Bureau, Luoyang	27/09/20
81		Division Chief	Municipal Planning Bureau, Luoyang	27/09/20

N°	Name	Position	Entity	Date
82	[REDACTED]	Division Chief	Division of Planning and Science and Technology, HURD, Luoyang	27/09/20
83		Consultant, Green Finance	Independent, Shanghai	05/11/20

Annex 13: Evaluation Assignment Schedule

Year	2020																			2021			
Weeks	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	01	02	03	04
Dates	24-28/08	31/08-04/09	07-11/09	14-18/09	21-25/09	28/09-02/10	05-09/10	12-16/10	19-23/10	26-30/10	02-06/11	09-13/11	16-20/11	23-27/11	30/11-4/12	07-11/12	14-17/12	20-25/12	28/12-01/01	04-08/01	11-15/01	18-22/01	25-29/01
Phases & Activities																							
Inception Phase [Home-based]																							
Initial data collection & analysis																							
Kick-off meetings via teleconference																							
Reconstruction theory-of-change																							
Identification of information gaps & hypotheses																							
Methodological design & evaluation matrix																							
(Draft) Inception Report																							
Field Phase [Largely in China]																							
Meetings in-country (EUD & stakeholders)																							
Additional gathering of evidence/Interviews																							
Visit to 6 pilot cities																							
Data collection & analysis																							
Intermediary report & PPT slides																							
Debriefing at EUD																							
Synthesis Phase [Home-based]																							
Initial analysis of findings (EQs)																							
Draft Final Report																							
Findings, conclusions & recommendations																							
Final Report & PPT slides																							
Presentations to EUD + stakeholders																							
Chinese translation of Final Report																							

Annex 14: Field Work Schedule

Date	Location	Activities	Persons to meet
Evaluation Team Member(s):		Liu Yonggong & Dirk Blink⁵¹ (10-23/09)	TAT, GIZ and EU partner staff based in EU; as well as consortium partners <i>Waternet, Sweco, Climate Alliance, EUCCC</i> and selected EU cities
10/09/20 (Thu)	Beijing	Meeting with EUD Programme Manager	
11/09/20 (Fri)	Beijing	Meeting with TAT/MoHURD	
14/09/20 (Mon)	Qingdao	Travel Beijing-Qingdao (flight)	
15/09/20 (Tue)	Qingdao	AM: visit project sites PM: interview with Qingdao HURD Partners	Pilot city officials and project sites
16/09/20 (Wed)	Weihai	Travel Qingdao-Weihai (train)	
17/09/20 (Thu)	Weihai	AM: visit project sites PM: interview with Weihai HURD Partners	
18/09/20 (Fri)	Beijing	Travel Weihai-Beijing (train)	
21/09/20 (Mon)	Luoyang	Travel Beijing-Luoyang (train)	
22/09/20 (Tue)	Luoyang	AM: visit project sites PM: interview with Luoyang HURD Partners	
23/09/20 (Wed)	Beijing	Travel Luoyang-Beijing (train)	
09/10/20 (Fri)	Beijing	Meeting with EUD	Pilot city officials and project sites
12/10/20 (Mon)	Beijing	Meeting with MoHURD/CSUS	
14/10/20 (Wed)	Guilin	Travel Beijing-Guilin (flight)	
15/10/20 (Thu)	Guilin/ Zhuzhou	AM: Interview with Project partners; visit project sites PM: Travel Guilin-Zhuzhou (train)	
16/10/20 (Fri)	Zhuzhou	AM: Project site visits PM: Interview with Zhuzhou HURD/Partners	
17/10/20 (Sat)	Zhuhai	Travel Zhuzhou-Zhuhai (train)	
18/10/20 (Sun)	Zhuhai	Field Visit Reporting	
19/10/20 (Mon)	Zhuhai	AM: visit project sites PM: Interview with Zhuhai Project partners	
20/10/20 (Tue)	Zhuhai	Project site visits	
21/10/20 (Wed)	Beijing	AM: Project site visits PM: Travel Zhuhai-Beijing (flight)	
22-28/10/20	Beijing	Documentation of findings	
29/10/20 (Thu)	Beijing	Preparation of PPT for debriefing	
30/10/20 (Fri)	Beijing	Debriefing with EUD	

⁵¹ Participation of Mr Blink in meetings with pilot city stakeholders by video-link due to lack of clearance for travel to China by relevant EU and Chinese authorities.

Annex 15: Map

