

# Europe-Asia Center: 50 Years China-EU, 75 Years Sweden-China – United for a Sustainable Future

*Europe-Asia Center marked 50 years of China-EU and 75 years of Sweden-China ties with forums highlighting green innovation and global cooperation.*

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, July 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- To mark the 50th anniversary of China-EU diplomatic relations and the 75th anniversary of Sweden-China ties, two high-level forums were held in Brussels and Stockholm on 15 and 17 July 2025. Leaders from government, business, and civil society gathered for “50 Years of China-EU Relations: Building a Sustainable Future Together” and “Wuyi Bamboo Innovation: Where Chinese Tradition Meets Sweden’s Green Future” — events designed to celebrate decades of cooperation and explore future opportunities in green development.



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Our decades of partnership show the power of dialogue and respect. Now, let's shape the future with sustainability and innovation at the core.”

*Yan Rui, Secretary-General of the Europe-Asia Center*

Co-organised by the Nanping Municipal People's Government, the Shaowu Municipal People's Government, the [Europe-Asia Center](#), and the Fujian Shaowu Bamboo Cube Operation Company, the forums brought together a wide range of perspectives to position bamboo innovation as a symbol of ecological harmony and international collaboration.

The events opened with a Daniel Ost exhibition, reflecting the theme of harmony between nature, art, and tradition.

This set the stage for speeches and discussions centred on cultural exchange and sustainability.

H.E. Piet Steel, Honorary President of the Europe-Asia Center, reflected on the strength of EU-

China ties:

"The EU and China have built a rich, multifaceted relationship, founded on mutual respect, pragmatic cooperation, and a joint commitment to global peace, prosperity, and sustainable development."

He also praised the Wuyi region's beauty and industry:

"The Wuyi Mountains, Wuyi tea, and the innovation in the bamboo sector are all remarkable."

H.E. Zhu Jing, Minister at the Chinese Mission to the EU, spoke of the forum's deeper purpose:

"Beyond appreciation of bamboo culture, we are here to build pragmatic cooperation, deepen green development, and seek win-win outcomes between China and Europe."

He described bamboo as a pillar of China's ecological civilisation and rural revitalisation.

Mr. He Mingxing, Vice Mayor of Nanping, introduced the "Replacing Plastic with Bamboo" initiative, framing it as a nature-based solution to global issues:

"Come to Nanping — taste bamboo delicacies, walk bamboo trails, and see how bamboo transforms daily life."

Ms. Guo Feihong, Mayor of Shaowu, presented the Wuyi Bamboo Cube as an embodiment of Shaowu's sustainable vision. Quoting the proverb, "Better to eat without meat than to live without bamboo," she emphasised the material's deep role in Shaowu life — from housing and food to clothing and transport:

"We welcome partnerships and are ready to share the green dividends of our bamboo industry."

Ms. Yan Rui, Secretary-General of the Europe-Asia Center, called bamboo a cultural ambassador linking China's heritage to Europe's sustainability goals:

"Let bamboo be our guide — rooted in respect, watered by cooperation, and reaching toward a shared green future."



Several speakers offered broader reflections. Ambassador Leo Faber, former EU Ambassador and Advisory Board Member of the Europe-Asia Center, said:

“Dialogue is more than exchanging views — it’s about mutual understanding. Europe and China can differ while working together toward shared goals.”

H.E. Irina Bokova, former Director-General of UNESCO, shared:

“Bamboo grows in clusters — never alone. It reminds us that culture and nature are inseparable, and must both be protected if we’re to build a better world.”

Mr. Hussein Askary, Vice-Chairman of the Belt and Road Institute in Sweden, highlighted the Silk Road’s history and the need to renew ancient ties through sustainable innovation.

Ms. Natalia Lopez, Senior Manager at PwC Sweden, emphasised the importance of design in sustainability:

“Circularity starts at the design stage. Around 80% of environmental impact is decided there. Bamboo is a strong candidate for this future.”

Mr. Vide Richter, from UN Global Compact Sweden, pointed to bamboo’s potential in accelerating the green transition in Europe and the growing demand for material innovation.

The forums also hosted a roundtable with speakers from architecture, art, and industry — including Diane Hennebert (China House), Estelle Yanfeng Li (Revelations China), Nicolas Godelet (architect), Chen Liling (Bamboo Egret), Emma Olbers (designer), Stella Chen (artist), Du Jinxiang (Fujian Dushi Wooden Industry), and Stephen Brawer (Belt and Road Institute in Sweden). Their discussions focused on design, innovation, and intercultural exchange.

Central to both events was the Wuyi Bamboo Cube, China’s first regional public bamboo brand. Based in Shaowu, it promotes a “full industry chain empowerment + global layout” approach and is fast becoming a model for international green industry.

Built on 44,870 hectares of bamboo forest, the sector involves 292 enterprises — including two national key forestry leaders and several high-tech firms. Its 6,300 sqm Eco Innovation Center houses over 300 companies and offers more than 10,000 bamboo-based products. Since opening in April 2023, it has welcomed over 20,000 visitors and hosted more than 10 major events.

The brand’s value rose from €2.63 billion in 2024 to €2.90 billion in 2025. It has received international acclaim — including the French Design Gold Award and MUSE Silver Award — and appeared in media such as People’s Daily, Xinhua, and Sustainable Structures.

Shaowu’s bamboo industry generated €1.12 billion in 2024, with 16.4% growth, creating 12,000 jobs and raising rural incomes by €39 million. Between April 2023 and June 2024, it secured over 1,900 orders worth around €39 million.

In February 2024, it co-launched China’s first “All-Bamboo Tea Space” standard and has since entered 12 European markets, participating in 20+ international exhibitions.

At the Brussels event, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Europe-Asia Center and Fujian Shaowu ZhuliFang Brand Operation Co., Ltd., setting the stage for deeper collaboration on sustainability, trade, and cultural exchange between China and Europe. The forums concluded with informal receptions, giving attendees a chance to connect, exchange ideas, and explore new partnerships. Both events closed on an optimistic note, reaffirming a shared commitment to peace, green innovation, and cross-border cooperation — with bamboo at the heart of the vision for a more sustainable world.

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