

Chapter 2

HGDI Compilation Principles

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HGDI compilation principles mainly include:

2.1 Effective but Limited

The HGDI index system is designed to do effective but limited work so as to fully support the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our research are aimed at helping each country promote green development rather than replacing the green GDP accounting and the green performance evaluation with the HGDI rankings, let alone interpreting the SDGs in an all-round way. The HGDI report will be only used as a reference for each country to better understand and promote human development, to recognize the achievements of the better-performing countries, to encourage those with a lower ranking to do better in future, and to effectively facilitate the green development efforts of humanity. On this ground, we work out 12 fields of human green development and then choose one most representative indicator to measure the performance in each field, so as to draw wide attention to the 12 key indicators and their comprehensive evaluation.

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2.2 Combining Green and Development

Green development has a dual emphasis on “green” and “development” and seeks a balance between the two. The concept of green development was raised against the background of economic development conflicting with resources, environment, and ecology. However, the contradiction doesn’t mean we should deny the economic development. Instead, we will explore a new growth mode. Green development is first of all an issue of development. Without development, there will be no green development at all. For quite a long time in future, development will remain the major theme around the world, and green development is all about approaching this theme in a “green” way. Sustained and healthy economy and sustainable development of resources, environment, and ecology are important to all countries, either developed or developing ones. Though the major problems confronting them may vary, each country should take green development as their common responsibility so as to benefit from the green economy and help shape a great future for all.

2.3 Shared Responsibility and Equal Measurement

As indicated in the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* in 1992, the developed and developing countries should take “common but differentiated responsibilities” in handling the climate change. The stipulation is very important. It plays a positive role for protecting not only the global environment but also economic rights of developing countries. It should be noted that there will be no direct evaluations of development plans and measures for different countries in our report, only relative rankings are conducted according to common indicators, which actually follows the principle of equal measurement. It is advisable that countries undergoing different development phases learn from each other and be more supportive on the attempts to promote the global green development instead of simply criticism. Meanwhile, high importance should be attached to the distinctiveness in the practice, with differentiated treatments to individual countries according to their actual economic growth stage and national conditions.

2.4 Inclusive and Equal Principle of Human Development

In 2007, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) came up with the concept of *inclusive growth*, believing its essence is to ensure the shared prosperity. This concept has developed into an international consensus and one of the UN advocates. *Inclusive growth* attaches importance to the following three aspects: sharing the benefits of economic growth equitably and reasonably; achieving social and human

development at the same time as seeking economic growth¹; and maximizing job opportunities to provide primary welfare for citizens, ensure their equal opportunity and equitable participation in the development process, and promote the equitable social development. Apart from developing economy without wasting resources and damaging environment, the human green development also calls for equality and equity of social development. Inclusiveness and equity is not only one purpose of human development but also one inherent requirement of green development. All of the 12 indicators, especially the social and economic development indicators, embody the spirit of inclusiveness and equity. Among them, the indicators of halving the extremely poor population and halving the population without sustainable access to improved sources of drinking water reflect the requirements of the “elementary equity”.² At the “Rio+20” UN Conference on Sustainable Development, a resolution was made to establish an index measuring national welfare beyond GDP, which was an expectation for all countries in the world. To this end, we would like to make our due contribution.

¹Quoted from former Chinese President Hu Jintao’s speech at the opening ceremony of Boao Forum for Asia 2011 annual meeting.

²This concept was derived from the “elementary requirements” of “capability” by Amartya Sen.



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