

Sustainable Innovation 2021

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Changhua Wu, CEO, Beijing Future Innovation Centre, China

Changhua Wu is a specialist and policy analyst of China's sustainable development, an advisor to governments and corporations on sustainability strategy and innovation, a strategist of public and private partnership engagement for clean energy transformation and an advocate for climate leadership. She was one of the 15 global women leaders recognized by the Time magazine in 2019 for their leadership in fighting climate change. She started her career as an environmental journalist right after graduate school from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and became the Editor of the English edition of China Environment News, a national newspaper affiliated with the Ministry of Environment and Ecology. In 1993, she received a scholarship from World Press Institute headquartered in St. Paul, MN, in the US and travelled for five months with 8 other international journalists to gain a holistic perspective of the US, in particular around environmental justice. Then, she joined the Mid-Career Graduate Program at School of Public Affairs of University Maryland afterwards, with a focus on environmental management and ecological economics. In 1995, she started her internship at World Resources Institute in Washington, DC and after graduation, joined the world leading think-tank on global environment and development. Later, she contributed to the establishment of the China Studies Program at WRI and became the Director of the program that focused on China's environmental health, energy policy and climate change, sustainable business education, among other key themes of research. Back to China in 2003, she became the China CEO of ENSR, the world 5th largest environment and energy consulting company back then, supporting multi-national companies for their compliance and market strategy in the region. In 2017, she became the Greater China Director and Chair of the China Board of the Climate Group, leading the efforts to support government and business leaders to fight climate change. During the tenure, she led the work with leading expertise in China and globally to pioneer some of the cutting-edge initiatives around Business Low Carbon Strategy and Innovation, China's Clean Revolution, Low Carbon City Leadership, China's national climate finance policy design, clean technologies for a low carbon future (LED lighting, EVs, solar energy, smart grid, CCUS, building energy efficiency), China Redesign (a holistic strategy for low carbon transition), and the Future Academy (with a focus on future talents). In 2016, she joined Jeremy Rifkin (author of the Third Industrial Revolution, Zero Marginal Cost Society, the Green New Deal) to support his China and Asia strategy, while later taking on the role of CEO of Beijing Future Innovation Centre, a public-private partnership platform between Tsinghua Holding and local government to support Beijing's endeavour to become a global leadership city in science and technology. She continues to advise leading global companies for their corporate sustainability strategy and innovation and serves on various advisory boards to contribute to the acceleration of deployment of policy, technology, finance, infrastructure, and future talents towards a net zero carbon society by mid-century.