

JANUARY 15, 2024

The ICES Bulletin

- Bringing you the latest insights on China-Europe relations -

Dear ICES friends...

We are delighted to present you the latest issue of our bi-monthly Newsletter. We warmly invite you to take a look at our takeaway, the events we participated on, and this month's recommendations.

- Editor's Note -

Few relations are as crucial and valuable as the ones, past present and future, connecting Europe with China. At the ICES, we believe regular knowledge-sharing can be the bedrock that empowers mutually beneficial partnerships and the foundation for fruitful collaborations. In this biweekly newsletter, we identify and highlight the latest ideas and developments in a variety of fields, in view of improving cross-continental communication and understanding.

The ICES' Takeaway from this edition:

The EU-China relationship for 2024 was launched with Prime Minister Alexander De Croo of Belgium, the country assuming the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, visiting Beijing. The official readouts and official comments unveil that the talks between the two sides were candid and generally presented a positive note. Although there are differences, the driving force for mutually beneficial cooperation is still there and is growing even stronger, which might set the tone for the subsequent bilateral engagement. While the world will likely witness some twists and turns this year, the EU-China relationship will have to overcome multiple tests.

NEWS ROUND:



Chinese Anti-dumping Investigation Against Brandy Imported from the EU

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce announced on January 5, 2024 the launch of a probe into brandy imported from the EU stemming from a complaint filed by China's liquor association in November. Industry experts believe the investigation is a tit-for-tat response to EU probes against Chinese businesses. In 2022 China imported more brandy than any other spirit, most of it coming from France.

EU Confirms Probe into Chinese Biodiesel Dumping Allegation

Following a complaint from the European Biodiesel Board (EBB), the Commission has confirmed the launch of a probe into cheap Chinese biodiesel after the body announced it would formally investigate allegations in last December. The decision was appraised by European biofuel producers, who viewed it as a positive step to stop the economic devastation of the domestic sector. On the Chinese side, Chinese officials claimed the investigation is protectionist and an abuse of trade remedies.

EU's EV Investigations to Examine China's BYD, Geely, and SAIC

Investigators from the European Commission are to inspect the Chinese automakers BYD, Geely, and SAIC as part of the institution's probe to determine whether punitive tariffs are to be adopted to protect European EV makers. Chinese-made vehicles' share of the EU's EV market has risen to 8% and could reach 15% in 2025, prompting these companies to stepping up their efforts to expand overseas.



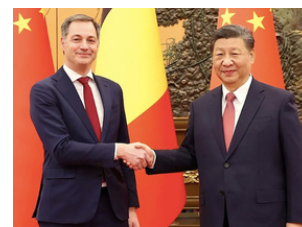
Concerns over Franco-German Energy Cash Splash

Germany and France's moves to slash energy costs for their industries have raised concerns among smaller EU states. Lacking the resources Germany and France possess to pour public cash into their industries, some member states have warned that the decision risks undermining the single market, Europe's biggest asset, and the continent's overall competitive edge.

EU-CHINA RELATIONS

Alexander De Croo Visits Beijing

Acting both as a representative of Belgium and in the capacity of the country taking the presidency of the EU, PM De Croo met with Chinese President Xi in Beijing. The pair vowed to boost cooperation and oppose decoupling.



China's hope to shape "a new pattern" of international relations

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated that China is looking forward to shaping "a new pattern" of international relations while upholding peace and multilateralism in the face of global challenges. In his speech, delivered at an event organised by two Chinese think tanks, Wang Yi remarked that when China and Europe join hands, attempts to create bloc confrontation will not succeed nor will a new Cold War take place.

German Foreign Minister Remarks on China's 'Risky Manoeuvres' in South China Sea

German foreign minister Baerbock criticised China's "risky manoeuvres" in the South China Sea during a visit to the Philippines saying the actions were causing concern in Europe. The comments were slammed by China, stating that Germany was "disregarding basic facts" and making "unwarranted accusations".



HAINAN



Hainan's Recreational Fishery Industry Picked Up Momentum in 2023

The province of Hainan witnessed its recreational fishery industry pick up momentum in 2023, with a total output value exceeding 4 billion yuan, marking a year-on-year surge of 90 percent. The data shows the island's considerable efforts in fostering the high-quality development of recreational fisheries.

Hainan's Wenchang Space Launch Site Advances in its Lunar Exploration Program

The components of Chang'e-6 lunar mission's spacecraft have arrived at the Hainan Meilan International Airport, marking a significant step for the fourth phase of the lunar exploration program, with pre-launch testing preparations underway. The mission strives to break new ground in lunar retrograde orbit design and control, intelligent sampling on the moon's far side, and ascent from the lunar surface.



Hainan's Offshore Duty-Free Sales Increased by 25% in 2023

The province of Hainan registered a surge of the 25.4% (year on year) of the total offshore duty-free sales in 2023. Since the beginning of said year, Hainan introduced a pack of measures to boost the recovery of duty-free consumption, including simplifying purchase procedures, issuing duty-free consumption coupons, and holding duty-free shopping promotions.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

For this edition, we suggest you check the following materials:

- MERICS - [MERICS EU-China Opinion Pool: What does it really mean for Europe to 'de-risk' its relationship with China?](#)
- CGTN - [How to define the current China-E.U. relations?](#)
- China File - [What Does It Really Mean for Europe to 'De-Risk' Its Relationship with China?](#)
- Raquel Jorge Ricart for Real Institute Elcano: [Policy orientations on EU-China relations in semiconductors: an outlook on bilateral and multilateral agendas](#)
- Henry Sanderson for Foreign Affairs - [The Problem With De-Risking: Transitioning to Clean Energy Requires Trade With China](#)
- Maria Siow for SCMP - ['Likely to agitate China': European powers step up their Indo-Pacific presence – to a mixed Southeast Asian reaction](#)
- Francesca Ghiretti for Internationale Politik - [Resilience at Core of China's Geostrategic Approach to Europe](#)
- Davide Giacomello for Fiscal Note - [EU-China Trade Dynamics: Unveiling the Opportunities and Challenges](#)

PREVIOUS EVENTS

Over the past two weeks, the ICES has been getting ready to take part, again, in the many upcoming events set up for this new year.

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Thank you for being a part of our newsletter community! We appreciate your continued support and engagement. Stay tuned for more exciting updates in our upcoming editions. If you have any suggestions or feedback, we would love to hear from you.

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