

The background of the entire page is a dark blue. It is decorated with numerous horizontal lines of varying lengths and colors, including red, yellow, and green. These lines are scattered across the page, creating a dynamic, layered effect.

CEBRI

# BRAZIL CHINA

**50 YEARS OF  
RELATIONSHIP:**  
LOOKING TO  
THE FUTURE



# CEBRI

GEOPOLITICS  
PROGRAM

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THE FUTURE

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August, 2025

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## **EDITORIAL NOTE**

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# Summary

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<b>1. Foreword</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Overview	7

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<b>2. Brazil-China Cooperation for a Sustainable Future</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Past and Future	9
2.2 Low Carbon Economy	11
2.3 Sustainable Financing	14
2.4 Energy Transition	17

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<b>3. Brazil-China Collaboration in Innovation and Digital Transformation</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 Digitalization and Innovation	20
3.2 Digital Infrastructure	23

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<b>4. Challenges and Opportunities</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1 Global Governance	28
4.2 Sustainable Financing and Energy Transition	29
4.3 Digital Economy and Digital Infrastructure	30
4.4 G20 and BRICS+ Framework	32

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<b>5. Final Remarks</b>	<b>35</b>
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<b>6. Attachments</b>	<b>39</b>
6.1 List of Chinese Delegations received by CEBRI	39
6.2 CEBRI's Asia Program Influence on Media (2024)	40

## Foreword

This publication compiles insights derived from the China-related activities of CEBRI's Asia Program, particularly the work of the China Analysis Group, in the year marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Brazil and China. It reflects on five decades of collaboration, during which the bilateral relationship evolved from diplomatic recognition to a strategic partnership. By gathering insights from events and meetings, it seeks to analyze and reflect on the diplomatic, economic, and political ties between the two nations and to gain insight into the future of their collaboration.

Over the past 50 years, Brazil and China have significantly strengthened their cooperation, fostering economic exchanges, trade expansion, and joint initiatives in critical areas such as technology, energy, and environmental sustainability. As a global leader in renewable energy and digital innovation, China has driven the energy transition by increasing its manufacturing capacities and its control over the value chains of advanced technologies like lithium batteries and solar power. Simultaneously, it has spearheaded the digital economy through investments in digital infrastructure and in research across key sectors such as artificial intelligence, big data, and 5G connectivity. Brazil, with its vast renewable resources – wind, solar, and biomass – and its unique biodiversity, has emerged as a key

player in the global transition to a low-carbon economy. The country is also advancing its digital transformation, investing in technological innovation and the digitalization of services.

In this context, this publication explores the potential of Brazil-China cooperation through the intersection of sustainability and digital transformation within a broader context of shifts in global governance. It examines how Brazil and China can enhance collaboration to promote sustainable development, accelerate energy transition, and strengthen the digital economy, building on their complementarities and comparative advantages. The aim is to provide a strategic contribution to the reflection on the future of bilateral relations and the path toward a greener and more digital economy.

## 1.1 Overview

The 50th anniversary of Brazil-China relations in 2024 was a landmark, an occasion to highlight the attributes of one of the most successful examples of South-South cooperation. This partnership is evident economically, with bilateral trade reaching US\$ 157.5 billion in 2023 and US\$ 158 billion in 2024, making China Brazil's number one partner since 2009. Comparatively, the United States ranks second with US\$ 74.8 billion in 2023 and US\$ 81 billion in 2024<sup>1</sup>.

China is also a major investor in Brazil, with approximately US\$ 71.6 billion invested between 2007 and 2022 – rendering Brazil the largest recipient of Chinese capital in Latin America and the fourth largest globally<sup>2</sup>. The economic bilateral relationship, although still commodity-centered, is evolving into a more industrial and technological partnership.

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1. BRASIL. Ministério da Indústria, Comércio Exterior e Serviços. *Comex Stat – Estatísticas de comércio exterior: Exportação e Importação Geral*. Available at: <https://comexstat.mdic.gov.br/pt/geral>. Accessed on: 5 Aug. 2025.

2. MYERS, Margaret; HUA, Lin; HEINE, Jorge; RIDEG, Thomas. *What Is the State of Chinese Investment in Latin America?* Inter-American Dialogue, 8 Sep. 2023. Available at: <https://www.thedialogue.org/analysis/what-is-the-state-of-chinese-investment-in-latin-america/>. Accessed on: 13 Feb. 2025.

Beyond economic collaboration, Brazil and China have deepened their political ties on critical global issues such as energy transition, climate action, poverty reduction, and governance. The Sino-Brazilian High-Level Concertation and Cooperation Commission (COSBAN), Brazil's most comprehensive bilateral mechanism, reflects this. Notable milestones, such as the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) allocating US\$ 250 million to boost sustainable financing<sup>3</sup>, highlight the tangible outcomes of this cooperation. High-level visits, including President Lula's trip to China in 2023 and President Xi Jinping's visit to Brazil in 2024, underscore the mutual trust and importance the two nations place on their relationship.

This scenario establishes the favorable conditions necessary for further and enhanced collaboration. There is room to advance joint initiatives and progress in trade and political cooperation, with the Brazil-China relationship contributing to a vision of the future that is based on the sustainable and digital development that both nations pursue.

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3. AGÊNCIA GOV. *BNDES e bancos asiáticos assinam acordos de mais R\$ 9,1 bi para investimentos sustentáveis*. 8 Jun. 2024. Available at: <https://agenciagov.ebc.com.br/noticias/202406/bndes-e-bancos-asiaticos-assinam-acordos-de-mais-r-9-1-bi-para-investimentos-sustentaveis-1>. Accessed on: 29 Jan. 2025.



# 2

## Brazil-China Cooperation for a Sustainable Future

### 2.1 Past and Future

Chinese history is not monolithic, as its understanding must encompass the political, economic, and environmental shifts it has endured over time. Usually, its 20th-century history is divided into two main political categories: Maoist or Planned Economy (1950-1978), and Post Mao Reform (1978-Present). Another perspective proposed by scholars, such as Professor Stevan Harrell, divides China into Developmentalism (1950-1998) and Eco-Developmentalism (1998-Present). The key difference between these two periods is that, until 1998, state power and state policy aimed at expanding economic growth, regarding environmental considerations only as an afterthought. After 1998, the Chinese central government adopted ecological civilization as a guiding principle<sup>4</sup>.

Harrell argues that despite these recent developments, the emphasis on productivity has significantly impacted China's environment, making it more vulnerable to climate change. The country has developed technologies to improve the use of its natural resources, which have had positive outcomes in the short term. However, in the

4. HARRELL, Stevan. *An Ecological History of Modern China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2023. ISBN 9780295751719.

mid- and long-term, this dependence on technology has impacted ecosystem resilience – the system’s capacity to absorb disturbances or shocks from the outside and continue to function. In this sense, there is a tradeoff between productivity and resilience. An example of this is dams, which have become a tool for power generation, irrigation, and flood control, but have also resulted in environmental harm.

The response to ecosystem vulnerability is to build more infrastructural inputs. Although the Chinese economy has become less energy-intensive, its use of energy and its greenhouse gas emissions are greater, given the growth of its production at a rate close to that of green technology development.

The discussions organized by CEBRI around this topic pointed to the fact that China’s contribution to sustainable development is perceived through different lenses. From the perspective of developing countries, China is often seen as a source of infrastructure investments through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). From the West, and more precisely from a US standpoint, China is perceived as an opponent whose initiatives can be a threat to its interests, which hinders ecological cooperation. Although both sides know that the environmental crisis must be addressed collectively, they tend to be reluctant to do so due to their rivalry.

When it comes to Brazil, the bilateral relationship with China has, for several years, included robust exchanges on climate change. These include multilateral negotiations within forums such as BRICS+ (especially in the context of Brazil’s 2025 presidency), BASIC – Brazil, China, India, and South Africa – and bilateral efforts. Both fronts have led to positive outcomes for the sustainable development agenda, such as the previously mentioned MoU dedicating US\$ 250 million to boost sustainable cooperation and address the reconstruction needs of the floods in Rio Grande do Sul.

That being said, considering the urgency of action and the effects of climate change, which will worsen in the years to come, it would be

important for Sino-Brazilian cooperation priorities to truly integrate concrete agendas around economic development with climate and biodiversity concerns. Brazil and China have, for instance, already committed to “eliminating illegal logging and deforestation”, but they have yet to fully integrate this front into their bilateral agenda.

In this context, both nations need to collaborate on a broader, cohesive vision of sustainable development that is socially inclusive and economically viable, tackling critical issues in the climate agenda such as deforestation.



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## 2.2 Low Carbon Economy

The transition to a low-carbon economy requires structural reforms, particularly in the taxation and financial systems, to enable large-scale investments. However, global challenges, such as slow economic growth, high debt levels, and rising financing costs, tend to strain the ability of countries to achieve both development and climate goals.

In this context, China provides an illustrative case of a deliberate economic reorientation. Since 2017, the Chinese government has shifted towards a “New Growth Philosophy”<sup>5</sup>, prioritizing sustainable development and reducing macroeconomic risks, particularly in the

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5. PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. National Development and Reform Commission. *A Deep Understanding of the Great Power of the New Development Philosophy*. Beijing: National Development and Reform Commission, 2023. Available at: [https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xwdt/ztl/NEW\\_srxgjcjjpjsx/yjcg/yw/dt/202401/t20240123\\_1363651.html#:~:text=In%20October%202015%2C%20General%20Secretary,root%20and%20blossomed%20in%20China](https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xwdt/ztl/NEW_srxgjcjjpjsx/yjcg/yw/dt/202401/t20240123_1363651.html#:~:text=In%20October%202015%2C%20General%20Secretary,root%20and%20blossomed%20in%20China) Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

highly leveraged real estate sector. Despite challenges and policy adjustments, this approach emphasizes innovation, green finance, and cautious but consistent action.

Similarly, Brazil has expressed its commitment to becoming a major player in the climate and environmental agenda, without disregarding its economic development. In this sense, the country has developed key policy initiatives, namely the New Industry Brazil Initiative, aiming at promoting decarbonization in industrial sectors, particularly in hard-to-abate industries such as steel, cement, and chemicals. These sectors are critical for both Brazilian and Chinese economies, and collaboration between the two countries is an opportunity to develop low-carbon technologies and optimize the use of resources.

Under this scope, hard-to-abate industries account for a significant portion of global emissions, and there is a clear need for targeted strategies to accelerate their green transition. Establishing collaborative frameworks between Brazil and China, such as technology sharing and joint ventures, can drive innovation in emissions reduction technologies like carbon capture and utilization (CCUS) and hydrogen-based solutions.

To scale these solutions, Panda Bonds – instruments that allow foreign institutions to raise funds in China’s domestic market – can provide a financial framework, facilitating international funding for green projects in Brazil’s industrial sectors. When combined with Brazil’s expertise in renewable energy and bioeconomy, such mechanisms can offer a pathway to reindustrialization anchored in sustainability.

Sustainability is also a concern in other key economic activities in Brazil, particularly agribusiness, which accounted for about 23.2% of the country’s GDP in 2024<sup>6</sup> and remains a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHG emissions in Brazilian agribusiness are closely linked to land use, with the Agricultural Soil subsector

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6. CONFEDERAÇÃO NACIONAL DA AGRICULTURA. *PIB do agronegócio fecha 2024 com crescimento de 1,81%*. CNA, 09 Apr. 2025. Available at: <https://www.cnabrazil.org.br/noticias/pib-do-agronegocio-fecha-2024-com-crescimento-de-1-81>. Accessed on: 08 Aug. 2025.

accounting for 23% of the sector's total emissions in 2022<sup>7</sup>. To address this challenge, the Degraded Pastureland Recovery Plan has been developed to restore degraded land, improving soil health and boosting agricultural productivity, while reducing deforestation pressures. This is in line with global efforts to promote sustainable land use practices and foster resilience towards climate change.

The plan also aligns with private-sector initiatives like Syngenta's Revert project<sup>8</sup>, which provides an example of innovation for productivity gains which includes environmental stewardship, as mentioned in the conference "50 Years of the Brazil-China Relationship: Cooperation to a Sustainable World". Furthermore, integrating carbon markets with climate finance instruments can facilitate the expansion of these practices across Brazil's extensive agricultural landscape.

Brazil's reliance on agricultural exports, particularly to China, underscores the need for diversification to mitigate vulnerabilities and increase the added value of its trade portfolio. By engaging in forums such as BRICS+ and COSBAN, Brazil and China can enhance their partnership by exploring opportunities for collaboration in the industrial and technological sectors, moving beyond traditional commodity-based trade.

Regarding Brazil's opportunities, energy-intensive sectors, including agribusiness and manufacturing, can benefit from the country's green energy availability. The power-sharing model, which leverages renewable energy sources to decarbonize high-emission industries, presents a strategic opportunity for Sino-Brazilian collaboration. This was one of the possible approaches highlighted in the event "Financing Sustainable Development: A Dialogue with Brazil on climate and nature finance dialogue", due to its potential to not only strengthen

7. BRASIL. Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. *Brazil's National Inventory Report of Anthropogenic Emissions by Sources and Removals by Sinks of Greenhouse Gases*. Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, 2024. Available at: [https://www.gov.br/mcti/pt-br/acompanhe-o-mcti/sirene/publicacoes/relatorios-bienais-de-transparencia-btrs/BRA\\_NIR\\_2024\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.gov.br/mcti/pt-br/acompanhe-o-mcti/sirene/publicacoes/relatorios-bienais-de-transparencia-btrs/BRA_NIR_2024_ENG.pdf). Accessed on: 07 Aug. 2025.

8. SYNGENTA. *Syngenta amplia sua atuação na recuperação de pastagens degradadas no país*. Syngenta, 23 Apr. 2024. Available at: <https://www.syngenta.com.br/syngenta-amplia-sua-atuacao-na-recuperacao-de-pastagens-degradadas-no-pais>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

industrial competitiveness but also reinforce Brazil's leadership in global sustainability efforts.

Still, deforestation remains a significant challenge for Brazil, with over half of its emissions linked to agricultural expansion. China and Brazil could boost environmental and technological collaboration through technology exchange and implementation of shared recovery projects, aimed at combating deforestation and promoting reforestation. Both nations are exposed to climate-related risks, including disrupted agricultural cycles and coastal vulnerabilities.

Recently, the UN Summit for the Future highlighted the interconnections between climate change, peace, and global security, emphasizing the need for collaborative solutions<sup>9</sup>. For Brazil and China, integrating policy, finance, and technology would be crucial to address the climate emergency while balancing economic growth and environmental sustainability.



**By engaging in forums such as BRICS+ and COSBAN, Brazil and China can enhance their partnership by exploring opportunities for collaboration in the industrial and technological sectors, moving beyond traditional commodity-based trade.”**

## 2.3 Sustainable Financing

As the world navigates the triple crisis — climate, biodiversity, and pollution — emerging markets' struggles are exacerbated by the high costs of the green transition. It is estimated that countries will

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9. MILANI, Carlos R. S. *Brazil and China's renewed partnership must tackle deforestation*. Rio de Janeiro: Brazilian Center for International Relations (CEBRI), 8 Nov. 2024. Available at: <https://www.cebri.org/br/doc/355/brazil-and-chinas-renewed-partnership-must-tackle-deforestation>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

need US\$ 3 trillion<sup>10</sup> per year for climate financing, of which half will have to be generated by the countries themselves. To this extent, the scale of investments required to mobilize domestic resources and create an effective flow of capital to these economies is one of the major obstacles that climate action faces. During the event “Financing Sustainable Development: A Dialogue with Brazil on climate and nature finance dialogue”, panelists also underscored an aggravating factor to this scenario, which is the struggle to reconcile development goals with climate goals, especially for the Global South. To provide an adequate answer to this, the government, industries, academia, and agricultural producers need to interact actively and effectively.

Financial institutions and government initiatives are vital to the development of sustainable finance. The Chinese government, for example, has subsidized green technologies and, at the same time, has acted on carbon market quotas and the installation of green infrastructure, combining different approaches to environmental challenges. The main result of this strategy, is the Chinese capacity to address both supply and demand-related issues. The efforts promoted by the public and private sectors allow the implementation of a sustainable market from both ends, generating a more financially accessible alternative.

The solution mentioned above is just one of many pathways governments can adopt to address climate change. Broadly speaking, governments can pursue various courses of action to foster green finance: building state capacity for the transition to carbon neutrality, mobilizing funds to support development through state-owned enterprises, and seeking to establish partnerships with the private sector. However, state action alone is not enough to provide an effective response to the challenges of the triple crisis.

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10. REUTERS. *Yellen says US\$ 3 trillion needed annually for climate financing, far more than current*. Reuters, 27 Jul. 2024. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/sustainable-finance-reporting/yellen-says-3-trillion-needed-annually-climate-financing-far-more-than-current-2024-07-27/>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

National financial institutions, for example, play a major role in the response to the environmental crisis, as they raise capital and promote green tech companies such as electric vehicles Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs). These organizations also act as facilitators, providing support to some of the main infrastructure funds in Brazil, as well as sourcing private capital in China and creating private equity funds.

Similarly, multilateral development banks (MDBs) can boost green financing activities by increasing their lending capacities through more targeted climate-related funding. Additionally, MDBs play a key role in reducing the investment risks of sustainable initiatives, thereby enhancing their appeal to the private sector. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Brazil has strengthened its relationship with these institutions, notably with Asian development banks. This rapprochement has yielded positive outcomes for climate and nature investments. According to the discussions held at the event “Financing Sustainable Development: A Dialogue with Brazil on climate and nature finance dialogue”, the investments made by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in Brazil are all connected to climate and nature.

In addition, multilateral initiatives can also present helpful solutions to the environmental crisis, as proved by the Paris Agreement targets. Other projects, such as the Green Belt and Road Initiative, have reduced the number of new carbon-emitting infrastructures and offered green alternatives instead. Currently, China’s private sector is a key factor in China’s economic growth. Recognizing this, the central government has been taking action to boost confidence in this field – especially among electric vehicle companies and other high-tech products and services. However, the private sector is not Beijing’s only priority. As US tensions rise, the Chinese government seeks alternatives in international companies in Europe and South America. In the long run, this diversification tends to generate a positive balance for the Chinese economy and is one of the drivers behind the reforms in the visa application process.



Despite its challenges, Brazil has made significant progress with sustainable financing nationally. The country's platform is based on the preservation and restoration of the Amazon Rainforest, which is a concern not only in terms of its biodiversity but also regarding the population living in the Amazon region. Other Brazilian initiatives, including renewable energy investments, biofuels policies, and promotion of new technologies such as electric and hybrid vehicles, have also generated positive outcomes.

Agribusiness in Brazil also plays a pivotal role in advancing sustainability. The country encompasses 160 million hectares of pasture, 100 million of which are degraded to varying degrees<sup>11</sup>. To restore these areas, regenerative agriculture using low-carbon cultivation techniques is imperative. However, the restoration costs, ranging from US\$ 1.000 to US\$ 3.000, are particularly challenging to absorb, with farmers facing an annual interest rate of 11%<sup>12</sup>, contrasting with China's base rate of about 3.5% per year<sup>13</sup>.

Considering this, Brazil and China have a window of opportunity regarding green financing, especially with the possibility of modeling Panda Bonds into Green Bonds. To achieve this, it is still necessary to address the operational risks and to identify a solution for the interest rate, aiming at enabling cooperation and mutual benefit between both countries.



**MDBs play a key role in reducing the investment risks of sustainable initiatives, thereby enhancing their appeal to the private sector.”**

11. FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS. *Recuperação de pastagens degradadas custaria R\$ 383 bilhões, revela Observatório da Bioeconomia*. Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 08 Oct. 2022. Available at: <https://portal.fgv.br/noticias/recuperacao-pastagens-degradadas-custaria-r-383-bilhoes-revela-observatorio-bioeconomia>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

12. MÁXIMO, Wellton. *Brazil's Central Bank hikes basic interest rate to 11.25% a year*. Agência Brasil, 07 Nov. 2024. Available at: <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/en/economia/noticia/2024-11/brazils-central-bank-hikes-basic-interest-rate-1125-year>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

13. TRADING ECONOMICS. *China Interest Rate*. Available at: <https://tradingeconomics.com/china/interest-rate>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

## 2.4 Energy Transition

When it comes to attracting institutional investment, Brazil holds distinct advantages. One is its well-defined legal framework for energy production and transmission. The country enjoys a competitive edge in clean energy generation, leveraging abundant natural resources to produce energy that surpasses domestic demand.

Consequently, Brazil is an attractive investment destination for countries aiming to decarbonize their supply chains, including the European Union (EU), BRICS+ members, Gulf countries, and, notably, China, due to shared interests in power-sharing, food security, and ecological transition, as mentioned in the event BRICS in perspective: a dialogue on politics and economy.

According to the Brazil-China Business Council, from 2007 to 2023, Chinese companies' energy investments in Brazil – in generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity, oil, and mining – accounted for about 81% of Chinese investments in Brazil<sup>14</sup>. This financing is devoted to greenfield projects, in other words, the creation of a brand-new infrastructure, but is not limited to it. Other economic activities have received Chinese investment via acquisitions, such as the distribution sector, an area where China has a big presence. This reflects the growing confidence between companies and governments.

Yet, energy transition encompasses not only electricity-related fields, but it is also a strategic agenda for Brazil and China throughout the production chain. For example, the potential for producing green fertilizers from ammonia, derived from green hydrogen, presents a significant investment opportunity. This aligns with Brazil's agricultural needs and its broader goal of decarbonizing agricultural inputs, offering a compelling case for attracting investments from countries concerned with food security and sustainable agriculture practices.

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14. CARIELLO, Tulio. *Investimentos Chineses no Brasil Novas Tendências em Energias Verdes e Parcerias Sustentáveis 2023*. Conselho Empresarial Brasil-China, 3 Sep. 2024. Available at: <https://www.cebc.org.br/2024/09/03/investimentos-chineses-crescem-33-no-brasil-em-2023-com-foco-em-energias-verdes-e-carros-eletricos/>. Accessed on: 13 Aug. 2025.

Moreover, the demand to decarbonize the aviation and maritime industries is prompting Brazil to attract investment in the production of sustainable fuels. Given its capacity to produce clean energy at competitive costs, Brazil could become a hub for manufacturing sustainable fuels for international consumption, thereby enhancing its export potential to Europe and North America.

Finally, the steel sector's transition towards green production methods, utilizing hydrogen, illustrates another area where Brazil can attract foreign investment. The geographical advantage of producing and exporting green steel from Brazil to nearby markets offers a tangible benefit in reducing supply chain emissions.

These segments are also suitable investment options for green financing, given their high-profit perspectives. Brazil's energy and transport sectors are responsible for over 70% of the country's emissions, representing 24%<sup>15</sup> and 51%<sup>16</sup> in 2022 respectively. The former faces serious challenges, given the reduction of water resources, the insufficiency of solar and wind power plants to meet demand, and the expectation of supply gaps and increased instability in the energy supply. As a solution to these problems, investing in renewable sources, strengthening local manufacturing, building long-distance, high-efficiency transmission lines, and creating city-based solutions are some prospects for the future.



**The geographical advantage of producing and exporting green steel from Brazil to nearby markets offers a tangible benefit in reducing supply chain emissions.”**

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15. BRASIL. Secretária de Comunicação Social. *Brazil to rank among countries with lowest greenhouse gas emissions in energy production, study finds*. Secretária de Comunicação Social, 23 Oct. 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.br/secom/en/latest-news/2024/10/brazil-to-rank-among-countries-with-lowest-greenhouse-gas-emissions-in-energy-production-study-finds> . Access in: 8 Aug. 2025.

16. INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY. *Brazil – emissions*. IEA. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/countries/brazil/emissions>. Access in: 8 Aug. 2025.

# 3

## Brazil-China Collaboration in Innovation and Digital Transformation



### 3.1 Digitalization and Innovation

Currently, the world is facing a technological revolution, characterized by innovation and rapid development toward greater net connectivity<sup>17</sup>. The digital economy already has a global added value of US\$ 38.1 trillion, with an annual growth of 15.6% – 2.5% above GDP growth in the same period<sup>18</sup>. Representing 45% of the world's GDP,<sup>19</sup> this sector is still reliant on the digitalization of industries, but its interaction with other sectors such as agriculture and services is growing, with a penetration rate of 8.6% and 24.3%, respectively<sup>20</sup>.

In this scenario, China has experienced a profound change in its national environment. Through economic development, it has reached a new production model that combines climate, business, and technology. This represents a shift from an economic model that prioritized GDP

17. WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM. *Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/focus/fourth-industrial-revolution/>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

18. GANG, Sun. *Forging an Era of Intelligence with the Three Trees Talent Model*. HuaweiTech, Dec. 2023. Available at: <https://www.huawei.com/en/huaweitech/publication/202303/digital-era-three-trees-talent-model>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

19. GANG, Sun. *Forging an Era of Intelligence with the Three Trees Talent Model*. HuaweiTech, Dec. 2023. Available at: <https://www.huawei.com/en/huaweitech/publication/202303/digital-era-three-trees-talent-model>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

20. According to the discussions held at the event China Analysis Group: opportunities of the digital economy.

growth at all costs to a slower, more sustainable, and innovation-driven model. In line with this, China has increased its science and technology funding by 10%, which is higher than its defense budget<sup>21</sup>.

Within this new framework, the reindustrialization debate is central to the Chinese and Brazilian governments, as both nations navigate similar issues. Investment in innovation represents an attempt to become more resilient to external pressures, which is particularly important given the tensions between China and the United States. However, innovation goes beyond resilience and competitiveness for both Brazil<sup>22</sup> and China<sup>23</sup>, as it is seen as a security matter. Being able to innovate and create solutions for security threats in the market is precisely what allows the growth in a model not centered around exports, and it is also what reduces the impact of external influences.

Nonetheless, there are some constraints regarding innovation in China. Firstly, China is under pressure from the United States, since the North American country is making great efforts to restrict China's access to cutting-edge technology. Moreover, there has been a rise of tech experts in the political sphere. In the current Politburo, eight out of 24 party officials have a science and technology background<sup>24</sup> and 21 out of 31 provinces have either a party secretary or governor who is a technocrat<sup>25</sup>. While this could be advantageous, there is no evidence that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is leveraging this expertise within the system.

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21. PENG, Dannie. *China makes science and tech a budget priority with 10% jump in spending during 'two sessions'*. South China Morning Post, 6 Mar. 2024. Available at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3254290/china-makes-science-and-tech-budget-priority-10-jump-spending>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

22. BRASIL. Ministério da Defesa. *Livro Branco de Defesa Nacional*. 2. ed. Brasília: Ministério da Defesa, 2020. Available at: [https://www.gov.br/defesa/pt-br/arquivos/ajuste-01/estado\\_e\\_defesa/livro\\_branco/Versao2012dolivroLBDNportuguescompactado.pdf](https://www.gov.br/defesa/pt-br/arquivos/ajuste-01/estado_e_defesa/livro_branco/Versao2012dolivroLBDNportuguescompactado.pdf). Accessed on: 28 Nov. 2024.

23. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. State Council. *China's National Defense in the New Era*. State Council, 24 Jul. 2019. Available at: [https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201907/24/content\\_WS5d3941ddc6d08408f502283d.html](https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201907/24/content_WS5d3941ddc6d08408f502283d.html). Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

24. HULKOWER, Ilan; CUNNINGHAM, Michael. *The Life of the Party: Xi's New Politburo and China's Technological Ambitions*. Heritage Foundation, 2 Dec. 2022. Available at: <https://www.heritage.org/china/commentary/the-life-the-party-xis-new-politburo-and-chinas-technological-ambitions>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

25. MACROPOLLO. *The Return of Technocrats in Chinese Politics*. Available at: <https://macropolo.org/analysis/return-technocrats-chinese-politics/?rp=m>. Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

Regarding inequality mitigation, for example, China implemented the “Universal Service Policy”<sup>26</sup>. With this initiative, Beijing has addressed the distance between producers and consumers, bringing both parties closer via net connectivity. This framework could also be replicated in Brazil, given that the country’s agricultural producers struggle to enhance production and to accurately control resources such as water and pesticides, reducing environmental harm.

Moreover, a higher connectivity level could help monitor Brazil’s environmental assets and provide access to the financial system, boosting the sales of agricultural supplies. Initiatives related to these matters are already taking place in China, powered by many companies present in Brazil, which could replicate that same model, such as COFCO<sup>27</sup>.

In summary, initiatives focusing on technological cooperation, particularly regarding digital infrastructure and innovation, have been highly successful. China’s technological expertise and investment are crucial in supporting Brazil’s digital transformation, improving connectivity, and enhancing digital services nationwide. Programmes designed to foster innovation ecosystems, support start-ups, and promote entrepreneurship in Brazil have also benefited from BRICS+ partnerships. These initiatives have led to job creation, driven economic growth, and established Brazil as a hub for innovation in Latin America.



**China’s technological expertise and investment are crucial in supporting Brazil’s digital transformation, improving connectivity, and enhancing digital services nationwide.”**

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26. PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. 中央政府门户网站. 国新办举行完善电信普遍服务补偿机制等政策例行吹风会. 中央政府门户网站, 19 Oct. 2015. Disponível em: [https://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-10/19/content\\_2949719.htm](https://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-10/19/content_2949719.htm). Accessed on: 11 Aug. 2025.

27. COFCO INTERNATIONAL. *Sustainability*. Available at: <https://www.cofcointernational.com/sustainability/>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

## 3.2 Digital Infrastructure

Internationally, China's digital economy plays a key role, ranking second only to the US and accounting for nearly 20% of US\$ 38 trillion<sup>28</sup>, which is the estimated size of the digital and global economies. This follows the central government's ambition to elevate China's digital status. These efforts began in 2013 with the implementation of public policies at various levels to stabilize this sector, such as opening up government data and promoting its security and proper use.

Beijing's main goal with this strategy is to promote partnerships based on "mutual benefits" and enhance digital connectivity by fostering digital infrastructure through the Digital Silk Road, a key component of the Belt and Road Initiative. The "Asia Direct Cable" is one of the projects being carried out under this initiative, which aims to connect several Asian countries through a cable system extending over 9,400 km<sup>29</sup>.

Likewise, China is promoting projects in the digital manufacturing sector, such as the development of digital infrastructure projects in Africa<sup>30</sup> and the Middle East<sup>31</sup>, as well as in e-commerce<sup>32</sup>. By the end of 2023, China had already signed e-commerce cooperation agreements and established bilateral mechanisms with 30 countries, indicating a main trend in Chinese cooperation and demonstrating its active engagement<sup>33</sup>.

28. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. State Council Information Office. *China's Path to Modernization: A White Paper*. State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 7 Nov. 2022. Available at: [http://english.scio.gov.cn/whitepapers/2022-11/07/content\\_78505690.htm](http://english.scio.gov.cn/whitepapers/2022-11/07/content_78505690.htm). Accessed on: 28 Jan. 2025.

29. NEC CORPORATION. *Asia Direct Cable*. NEC Corporation, 28 Oct. 2020. Available at: [https://www.nec.com/en/case/asia\\_direct\\_cable/index.html](https://www.nec.com/en/case/asia_direct_cable/index.html). Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

30. GLOBAL TIMES. *China's green finance is key to global climate action*. Global Times, 25 Aug. 2021. Available at: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202108/1232404.shtml>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

31. LONS, Camille. *East meets Middle: China's blossoming relationship with Saudi Arabia and the UAE*. ECFR, 20 May. 2024. Available at: <https://ecfr.eu/publication/east-meets-middle-chinas-blossoming-relationship-with-saudi-arabia-and-the-uae/>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

32. OPALI, Otiato. *E-commerce widening Africa's online market*. China Daily Hong Kong, 4 Sep. 2024. Available at: <http://chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/592303>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

33. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. State Council. *China establishes e-commerce cooperation mechanisms with 29 countries*. State Council, 7 Sep. 2023. Available at: [https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202309/07/content\\_WS64f9c8ddc6d0868f4e8df377.html](https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202309/07/content_WS64f9c8ddc6d0868f4e8df377.html). Accessed on: 26 Jan. 2025.

Additionally, the shift in global supply chains is opening up new avenues for financing infrastructure and technology, as well as facilitating more direct investment from China. This is a key concept for enhancing cooperation, as Latin America struggles to gather capital for the digital sector, and Chinese funds, both private and state-owned, are still uncommon.

When considering the benefits for China, Latin America – and more specifically Brazil – is a manufacturer of important tech components, playing a key role in global supply chains. Brazil's growing semiconductor and electronics industries<sup>34</sup>, along with its strong mining sector, which provides essential raw materials such as lithium and rare earth elements, make it a strategic partner for China's technology and manufacturing sectors.

In addition to direct investment, developing countries can benefit from China's national experience. Digital development is a high priority for the Chinese government, which is investing heavily in 5G networks, broadband, and data centers to build a solid foundation. Examining the digital sector in China can help other countries to better understand the impact of proper infrastructure and policy support. Examples of policies that could be replicated include tax incentives, funding support, and regulatory frameworks.

Brazil and China have been working together in recent years to deepen ties in the digital field. As a result, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by both parties regarding e-commerce in 2017<sup>35</sup>. In 2021, the Strategy for the BRICS Economic Partnership 2025 was launched to provide cooperation in digital governance<sup>36</sup>. In 2022, Brazil and

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34. AGÊNCIA GOV. *Setor de semicondutores investe R\$ 25 bi de olho no mercado internacional*. Agência Gov, 11 Sep. 2024. Available at: <<https://agenciagov.ebc.com.br/noticias/202409/setor-de-semicondutores-investe-r-25-bi-de-olho-no-mercado-internacional>>. Accessed on: 14 Feb 2025.

35. PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE FORUM FOR ECONOMIC AND TRADE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES. *Economic and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries*. Permanent Secretariat of the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, 08 Sep. 2022. Available at: [https://forumchinaplp.org.mo/en/economic\\_trade/view/2478](https://forumchinaplp.org.mo/en/economic_trade/view/2478). Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

36. BRAZIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *XIII BRICS Summit: New Delhi Declaration*. Available at: <https://www.gov.br/mre/en/contact-us/press-area/press-releases/xiii-brics-summit-new-delhi-declaration>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.



China held the sixth high committee meeting, where a MoU covering the investments in the digital sector was discussed<sup>37</sup>.

As previously mentioned, the top two digital economies are the United States and China, each representing US\$ 15.3 trillion and US\$ 7.1 trillion in 2022<sup>38</sup>. On the one hand, China's current position in this sector implies a certain degree of rivalry with the US; on the other hand, the relationship between the two countries does not constitute total opposition but rather a high level of interdependence. This arrangement is only possible due to China's role in global supply chains, as its withdrawal would result in setbacks for all the economies that depend on China.

Nevertheless, tensions between China and the US have had a significant impact on the Chinese digital economy. Firstly, the blockage of critical technology means that national companies must meet the demand. Consequently, Huawei and ZTE are investing heavily in research and development to achieve self-sufficiency, thereby strengthening China's tech industries. Secondly, the US has imposed several restrictions on software built in China and on Chinese companies. As a result, the choice between Beijing and Washington becomes part of the strategic calculation of countries when deciding on technology sharing and infrastructure investments, according to the debate held at the event China Analysis Group: opportunities of the digital economy. An example of this sensitivity can be seen in Brazil's negotiations for the implementation of 5G technology in the country.

Although Beijing has increased its investment in response to US pressure, policies focused on the digital sector have been a priority since well before the current situation arose. Guided by the "Universal

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37. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. State Council. *China to further open up and enhance cooperation with the world*. State Council, 24 May 2022. Available at: [https://english.www.gov.cn/news/international/exchanges/202205/24/content\\_WS628ce340c6d02e533532b402.html](https://english.www.gov.cn/news/international/exchanges/202205/24/content_WS628ce340c6d02e533532b402.html). Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

38. CHEN, Lurong; RILLO, Aladdin D. (orgs.). *Further ASEAN-China Cooperation for Joint Prosperity: Envisioning ACFTA 3.0 in the Digital Era*. Jakarta: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), 21 Jun. 2024. ISBN 978-602-5460-56-2. Available at: [https://www.eria.org/uploads/Further-ASEAN-China-Cooperation-for-Joint-Prosperity-rev\\_.pdf](https://www.eria.org/uploads/Further-ASEAN-China-Cooperation-for-Joint-Prosperity-rev_.pdf). Accessed on: 26 Jan 2025.

Service Policy”<sup>39</sup>, China has focused on developing regional broadband networks by expanding infrastructure and network coverage in multiple areas. This process has been crucial in reducing the digital divide between urban and rural areas and promoting digital inclusion. The Internet Plus plan then integrated the agricultural, healthcare, and e-commerce sectors into the Internet in a second phase.

Within China’s framework for the future, digital infrastructure and data resource systems are the foundations for promoting digital development. This indicates the country aims to promote digital transformation across various segments, creating a deep integration of the digital economy and politics, culture, society, and the environment. Digital technology will be used to enhance governance efficiency that is essential and ensure public service. Additionally, China plans to continue investing in the digital sector to maintain competitiveness and tend to the demands of network security. Another instrument in China’s framework considers both domestic and international scenarios: domestically, the government is working towards market policies and legal reforms to enable digital development, and abroad, Beijing is actively looking for a role in the global digital governance.

This infrastructure could also be replicated in Brazil, given the country’s agricultural producers’ struggle to enhance production and to accurately control resources such as water and pesticides, reducing environmental harm.

Moreover, higher connectivity could facilitate monitoring of Brazil’s environmental assets and provide access to the financial system for buying and selling agricultural supplies. Similar initiatives are already taking place in China, driven by many companies operating in Brazil, and these could be replicated locally.

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39. PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. 中央政府门户网站. 国新办举行完善电信普遍服务补偿机制等政策例行吹风会. 中央政府门户网站, 19 Oct. 2015. Disponível em: [https://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-10/19/content\\_2949719.htm](https://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-10/19/content_2949719.htm). Accessed on: 11 Aug. 2025.



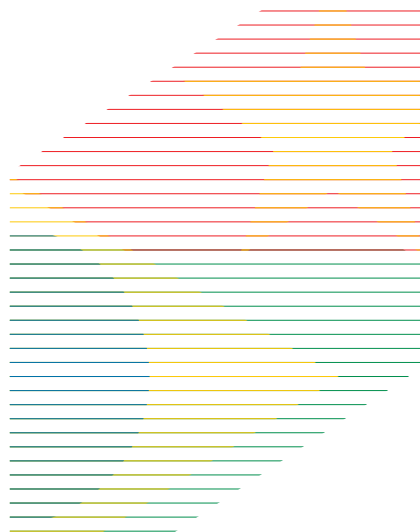
**Brazil's growing semiconductor and electronics industries, along with its strong mining sector, which provides essential raw materials such as lithium and rare earth elements, make it a strategic partner for China's technology and manufacturing sectors."**

# 4

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## Challenges and Opportunities

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### 4.1 Global Governance

Brazil and China demonstrate common interests regarding global governance and multilateral institutional reforms. There is a shared understanding that it is necessary to create a joint framework to diversify relations and supply chains, and to maintain energy security. In this regard, both nations aim to safeguard their economic and social development, including sustainability.

For instance, the countries' efforts within the World Trade Organization (WTO) have been characterized by a strong emphasis on cooperation, leading to the establishment of several agreements, including the Investment Facilitation Agreement. In terms of food security, a further global concern, Brazil and China have the potential to effect change, such as organizing a new green global order within the scope of COP30, promoting concrete products and approaches such as the Green Investment Finance Partnership<sup>40</sup>, and creating a bilateral task force.

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40. BRI International Green Development Coalition. *Green Finance and Investment*. Beijing, BRI International Green Development Coalition. Available at: <http://en.brigc.net/Partnerships/GFI/>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.



**There is a shared understanding that it is necessary to create a joint framework to diversify relations and supply chains, and to maintain energy security.”**

## 4.2 Sustainable Financing and Energy Transition

One of the key obstacles preventing Chinese capital from flowing into Brazil to fund sustainable low-carbon initiatives is the absence of a clear definition of sustainable activities<sup>41</sup>. An example is sustainable agriculture, where Chinese demand is significantly high and Brazil's supply is equally strong, presenting an opportunity to develop a Green Trade Agreement. This agreement could leverage the economic complementarities of both countries, facilitating the exchange of Brazilian agricultural products for Chinese green-manufactured goods.

Some Chinese investments or loans to Brazil aimed at supporting sustainable activities may involve purchasing Chinese equipment, construction services, and other resources, all of which will be paid in RMB. This portion of the activities could be carried out using RMB as the local currency.

In addition, establishing a shared taxonomy is crucial to ensure adequate funding and to foster strong partnerships. This approach is aligned with the strategy adopted by China and the European Union, a group of countries that even considered inviting Brazil to join the Common Ground Taxonomy.

Another challenge both countries face in this scenario is the lack of Chinese investors in Brazil, which is key for the dialogue and promotion of environmental issues. The fostering of this exchange would require the development of strategies and public policies to

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41. ROHTLA, Madli; MAO, Julia Qian. *Green finance in Brazil and prospects for Sino-Brazilian cooperation*. International Institute of Green Finance, 13 Aug. 2021. Available at: <https://iiigf-china.com/green-finance-brazil>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

promote macroeconomic stability, such as tax reforms and market incentives. This becomes especially important, given that Chinese banks can offer loans at lower costs thanks to the “Chinese Green Finance Policies”<sup>42</sup>.

A viable option to face many of the barriers previously mentioned is the inclusion of Brazilian institutions in the Green Bonds initiative in China. By doing this, it is expected that institutions and regulators from both China and Brazil will engage properly to overcome any hurdles.

Despite the challenges, Brazil’s enormous energy potential and biodiversity present opportunities for the country itself and for the private sector. To explore this, the Brazilian government created the Ecological Transformation Plan<sup>43</sup>, promoted new policies such as the regulated carbon market, initiated the formulation of an appropriate taxonomy, and allocated more resources to the Climate Fund<sup>44</sup>. Additionally, the reform of the Climate Investment Funds and the creation of nature-based solutions are relevant actions, with the latter being a significant opportunity for both Brazil and China.

## 4.3 Digital Economy and Digital Infrastructure

For the digital sector, on a national level, China’s economic model has been moving away from the pursuit of high and rapid economic growth and in favor of a more balanced and healthier model, a

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42. NEDOPIL WANG, Christoph; SONG, Ziyang. *Green Finance trends in China (1): China’s Green Finance Policy Landscape*. Green Finance & Development Center, 8 Feb. 2023. Available at: <https://greenfdc.org/green-finance-trends-in-china-1-chinas-green-finance-policy-landscape/>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

43. BRASIL. Ministério da Fazenda. *Ecological Transformation Plan*. Brasília: Ministério da Fazenda, 19 Oct. 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.br/fazenda/pt-br/acesso-a-informacao/acoes-e-programas/transformacao-ecologica/english-version/documents/pte-19-10-2023-ecological-transformation-plan.pdf>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

44. BRASIL. *BRAZIL’S NDC National determination to contribute and transform*. Bonn: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 13 Nov. 2024. Available at: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2024-11/Brazil\\_Second%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contribution%20%28NDC%29\\_November2024.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2024-11/Brazil_Second%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contribution%20%28NDC%29_November2024.pdf). Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

“New Growth Philosophy”<sup>45</sup>. On the one hand, this change implies a political mindset shift; on the other hand, this needs to fit within local budgets, which, in some cases, are already committed elsewhere. Also, local protectionism must be considered, as the government reallocates resources across the country and changes the standards of growth. So, the government should gradually shift away from traditional growth boosters and adopt new, more technical, but potentially riskier approaches.

Regarding the global digital sector, many countries cooperating with China face challenges in knowledge exchange. It is speculated that cultural and linguistic differences contribute to lower financial returns in countries like Brazil. Since Chinese companies primarily focus on infrastructure projects, which tend to have higher profit margins, bridging this gap is crucial to enable a broader range of digital projects in Brazil. One possible solution presented by China involves active knowledge sharing through partnerships with universities, research institutions, and companies abroad. A noteworthy program in this regard is the “Youth of Excellence Scheme of China (Yes, China)”<sup>46</sup>, which provides resources for training and capacity building of young talents.

In alignment with this strategy, Beijing has also promoted its digital projects and initiatives as a possible model for developing countries. However, to do so, it would be necessary to have some level of external aid since most developing countries lack the basic infrastructure to support this sector.

Also, regulations on digital platforms are one of the many concerns, given the difficulty in enforcing and properly tracking the use of information and data. This has a serious impact on social governance, both in the West and in the East.

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45. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. National Development and Reform Commission. *A Deep Understanding of the Great Power of the New Development Philosophy*. National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), 23 Jan. 2024. Available at: [https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xwdt/ztzl/NEW\\_srxgcyjpijsx/yjcg/yw/dt/202401/t20240123\\_1363651.html](https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xwdt/ztzl/NEW_srxgcyjpijsx/yjcg/yw/dt/202401/t20240123_1363651.html). Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2025.

46. CSC SCHOLARSHIP. *Youth of Excellence Scheme of China 2025*. CSC Scholarship. Available at: <https://www.chinesescholarshipcouncil.com/youth-of-excellence-scheme-of-china.html>. Accessed on: 12 Aug. 2025.

In the future, Brazil and China can cooperate in many areas, such as: i) building an advanced, broad, inclusive, and secure network, ii) sharing the benefits of development, and iii) strengthening technical cooperation. The development of domestic technologies through research programs and the strengthening of its digital infrastructures to reach a higher level of self-sufficiency is also an experience in China that yielded positive outcomes and can be replicated in other nations.

#### 4.4 G20 and BRICS+ Framework

In November 2024, Brazil held the G20 Summit, marking the end of the country's presidency. Within this period, Brazil and China held a series of meetings to discuss relevant issues such as bioeconomy, bilateral trade, industrial cooperation, and agribusiness<sup>47</sup>. These discussions led to the signing of 37 new agreements, including the creation of a "Community of Shared Future for a Fairer World and a More Sustainable Planet"<sup>48</sup>.

According to President Xi Jinping, Brazil and China will deepen cooperation in priority areas such as economy, trade, finance, science and technology, infrastructure, and environmental protection. They will also strengthen cooperation in emerging areas such as energy transition, digital economy, artificial intelligence, and green mining. This goal has been translated directly into the agreements signed, especially regarding telecommunications and financial cooperation. The use of local currencies was established as a key priority for both countries, although Brazil must be mindful of this, as most of its international debt is dollar-based.

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47. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Atos adotados por ocasião da visita de Estado ao Brasil do Presidente da China, Xi Jinping - 20 de novembro de 2024*. Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 21 Nov. 2024. Available at: [https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais\\_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/atos-adotados-por-ocasio-da-visita-de-estado-ao-brasil-do-presidente-da-china-xi-jinping-2013-20-de-novembro-de-2024-1](https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/atos-adotados-por-ocasio-da-visita-de-estado-ao-brasil-do-presidente-da-china-xi-jinping-2013-20-de-novembro-de-2024-1). Accessed on: 03 Feb. 2025.

48. BRASIL. Presidência da República. *President Lula's Toasting Speech at Dinner with President Xi Jinping*. Presidência da República, 20 Nov. 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/follow-the-government/speeches-statements/2024/11/president-lula2019s-toasting-speech-at-dinner-with-president-xi-jinping>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.



Although China has encouraged Latin American partners to join its flagship Belt and Road Initiative, Brazil has adopted a cautious approach toward the Belt and Road Initiative, declining to formally join while opting to establish “synergies” with BRI-related projects, reflecting a balance between economic opportunity and strategic autonomy<sup>49</sup>. The BRI sparks controversy, since the agribusiness sector is accelerating projects for exports via the Pacific, while Brazilian industry leaders have expressed concerns about competitiveness in the face of China’s growing presence. Yet, Brazil has achieved significant results in this theme with the signing of an agreement granting access to the technical standards of the countries participating in the BRI. In December, Xi Jinping emphasized in a speech the need for China to listen more to the expectations of the countries involved in the initiative, stressing that the BRI should incorporate a stronger social dimension<sup>50</sup>. This new approach is partially aligned with Brazil’s perspective on the initiative, which seeks greater dialogue and multilateral cooperation. Although the BRI remains predominantly a Chinese-led initiative, with centralized decisions and limited discussions, this statement may signal a shift, possibly influenced by Brazil’s stance and its emphasis on a more inclusive and participatory governance.

Thus, with Brazil’s BRICS+ presidency, continuity is expected regarding the intensification of bilateral relations and greater Brazilian prominence in discussions on trade integration and global infrastructure. Recent trade war episodes have not significantly affected China’s participation in global trade. Diplomatic and economic relations with the United States, for instance, remain intact, with China maintaining its trade surplus. However, there is great uncertainty regarding the trade policies of the Trump administration, particularly concerning trade tariffs.

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49. DIVYA, Aparna; ALI, Salman. *Brazil-China Partnership: Redefining the Belt and Road Initiative in Latin America*. THE DIPLOMAT, 30 dez. 2024. Available at: <https://thedi diplomat.com/2024/12/brazil-china-partnership-redefining-the-belt-and-road-initiative-in-latin-america/>. Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

50. PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. State Council. *Xi stresses comprehensively advancing high-quality Belt and Road cooperation*. State Council, 2 Dec. 2024. Available at: [https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202412/02/content\\_WS674db00bc6d0868f4e8ed991.html](https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202412/02/content_WS674db00bc6d0868f4e8ed991.html). Accessed on: 3 Feb. 2025.

On his first day in office, President Donald Trump approved a package of reciprocal tariffs, meaning that the United States imposed higher tariffs on both ally and non-ally countries. Regarding China, by early 2025, Washington had introduced a broad set of tariffs on Chinese goods, prompting Beijing to respond with extensive economic countermeasures targeting the US. This growing tension may not only jeopardize bilateral relations, but also disrupt global production chains as the prices of both raw and industrialized products are expected to rise.

Another point of convergence within the BRICS+ agenda is sustainable development and technological innovation. Collaboration with China, both in the context of BRICS+ and outside, can potentially improve technologies and practices that contribute to Brazil's sustainability goals, including renewable energy projects and smart city initiatives.

The country's presidency reinforces the group's prominence for Brazil's national interests. With the 2025 mandate, Brazil has the opportunity to lead efforts to discuss global governance structures, including those of the United Nations and international financial institutions. By advocating for reforms that increase the representation and voice of emerging economies, Brazil can help ensure that the global decision-making processes are more equitable and reflective of current geopolitical realities.

To that end, with environmental concerns increasingly at the core of the international discourse, Brazil's presidency can prioritize sustainable development and climate change initiatives. Leveraging its rich biodiversity and leadership in renewable energy, Brazil can champion environmental sustainability within BRICS+, advocating for green projects and technologies that benefit all member countries.

# 5

## Final Remarks

The convergence of Brazil's G20 mandate, its BRICS+ presidency, and its role as COP30 host in Belém represents a rare alignment of agendas that can redefine the scope and ambition of Brazil–China cooperation. This confluence of leadership spaces offers both nations the ability to simultaneously shape global economic governance, accelerate the energy transition, and set a new benchmark for climate ambition, grounded in innovation and technological transformation.

In 2025, high-level political dialogue between Brasília and Beijing was reinforced by the meeting between President Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva and Chinese Premier Li Qiang during the 17th BRICS Summit.

The two leaders identified priority areas for the next phase of bilateral engagement: science and technology, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, renewable energy, and infrastructure. These were not only discussed but institutionalized through the signing of two MoUs: one on Financial Strategic Cooperation and another establishing the China–Brazil Center for Artificial Intelligence Application<sup>51</sup>.

51. BRASIL. Presidência da República. *With Chinese prime minister, Lula emphasizes excellent moment in bilateral relations*. Presidência da República, 5 Jul. 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/latest-news/2025/07/with-chinese-prime-minister-lula-emphasizes-excellent-moment-in-bilateral-relations>. Accessed on: 8 Aug. 2025.

From a sustainability perspective, the partnership holds particular promise in advancing joint solutions for the low-carbon economy. Opportunities range from developing green industrial technologies and scaling renewable energy infrastructure to creating integrated biodiversity and climate policies. Brazil's vast natural capital and leadership in bioenergy complement China's manufacturing capacity and experience in green finance, a combination that could be channeled into a bilateral green technology innovation fund, expanded carbon market cooperation, and joint ventures in sectors such as green hydrogen, sustainable aviation fuels, and reforestation technologies.

On the innovation and digitalization front, China's expertise in digital infrastructure, data integration, and technology-driven productivity gains can help bridge Brazil's connectivity gaps, modernize its agricultural monitoring systems, and enable greater access to climate finance mechanisms. Initiatives inspired by China's Universal Service Policy and "Internet Plus" strategy could be adapted to Brazilian realities, enhancing both productivity and environmental monitoring, while also supporting the growth of start-up ecosystems and digital entrepreneurship.

The COP30 presidency adds an additional dimension to this partnership. As host, Brazil has the unique ability to convene not only BRICS+ members but a broad coalition of Geopolitical South actors around a more ambitious climate agenda. One strategic goal should be to align BRICS Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), ensuring greater coherence and ambition, with a particular emphasis on China's targets, given its scale and global influence. A systematic review of BRICS+ climate initiatives, identifying best practices and gaps, could serve as the foundation for a coordinated action plan to be announced in Belém.

In the current geopolitical environment, where supply chain resilience, technological sovereignty, and climate action are increasingly intertwined, Brazil and China have an opportunity to position their

cooperation as a model for pragmatic, forward-looking diplomacy. By operationalizing the commitments already made, embedding sustainability and innovation at the core of joint projects, and leveraging their leadership roles in multilateral platforms, both countries can contribute decisively to building a greener, more digitally integrated, and more equitable global order.



**In the current geopolitical environment, where supply chain resilience, technological sovereignty, and climate action are increasingly intertwined, Brazil and China have an opportunity to position their cooperation as a model for pragmatic, forward-looking diplomacy.”**

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## POSTSCRIPT:

For more information about the topics discussed in this report see:

CEBRI. **50 years of Brazil-China Relations: Cooperation to a sustainable world.** 2024.

CEBRI. **Brazil and China's Renewed Partnership Must Tackle Deforestation.** 2024.

CEBRI. **BRICS in perspective: a dialogue on politics and economy.** 2024.

CEBRI. **Financing Sustainable Development: A Dialogue with Brazil on climate and nature finance dialogue.** 2024.

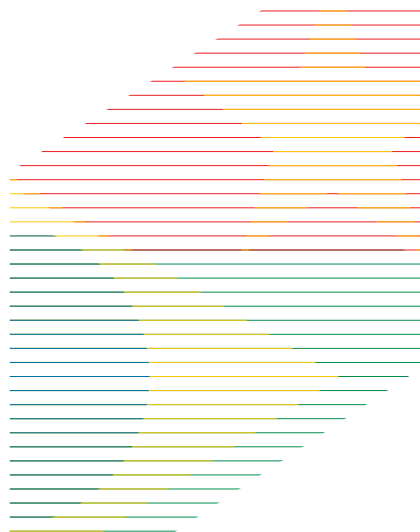
CEBRI. **Opportunities of the Digital Economy.** 2023.

CEBRI. **The Chinese Economy Today.** 2023.

CEBRI. **Transformation of the Chinese Economy: Impact of Digitalization and Innovation.** 2024.

# 6

## Attachments



### 6.1 List of Chinese Delegations received by CEBRI

Beijing Club

Caixin Global

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC)

Chinese Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro

Chinese Embassy in Brazil

Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China

Peking University

People's Liberation Army (PLA)

Renmin University

Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS)

Tsinghua University

## 6.2 CEBRI's Asia Program Influence in Media (2024)

1	<u>Alckmin diz que atrito com Congresso é "harmonia agitada"</u>	Metrópoles (Brasil)
2	<u>Relação Brasil-China no agro é 'ganha-ganha', diz Tereza Cristina</u>	Correio Braziliense (Brasil)
3	<u>'Harmonia agitada', diz Alckmin sobre tensão entre governo e Lira</u>	Correio Braziliense (Brasil)
4	<u>Zhu Qingqiao, embaixador da China: 'Nossa relação é de longo prazo'</u>	Correio Braziliense (Brasil)
5	<u>Presidente em exercício destaca harmonia na relação entre poderes</u>	Agência Brasil (Brasil)
6	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	UOL (Brasil)
7	<u>Alckmin minimiza atrito entre Lira e articulação política do governo: 'Ninguém precisa pensar igual'</u>	G1 (Brasil)
8	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	ISTOÉ (Brasil)
9	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	ISTOÉ DINHEIRO (Brasil)
10	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	MSN (Brasil)
11	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima Por Estadão Conteúdo</u>	Investing (Brasil)
12	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	Jornal de Brasília
13	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	O Povo (Brasil)



14	<u>Bússola &amp; Cia: etanol eleva venda do Grupo Açotubo em mais de 100%</u>	Exame (Brasil)
15	<u>Brasil e China comemoram 50 anos de relações</u>	Monitor Mercantil (Brasil)
16	<u>Alckmin destaca protagonismo do Brasil em segurança alimentar, energética e clima</u>	Folha Vitória (Brasil)
17	<u>Brasil deve atrair investimentos chineses para biogás, defende Tereza Cristina</u>	EPBR (Brasil)
18	<u>Alckmin tenta colocar ‘panos quentes’ na briga de Lira com o governo - Correio do Brasil</u>	Correio do Brasil (Brasil)
19	<u>Alckmin destaca harmonia na relação entre poderes</u>	Correio do Povo (Brasil)
20	<u>Presidente em exercício, Alckmin destaca harmonia na relação entre poderes</u>	Hoje em Dia (Brasil)
21	<u>Alckmin destaca ampla abrangência e diversidade da parceria entre Brasil e China</u>	Comex do Brasil (Brasil)
22	<u>Conferência em Brasília celebra 50 anos de relações diplomáticas entre Brasil e China</u>	Agência Xinhua (China)
23	<u>Brasil celebra 50 años de relaciones con China y pide incrementar aún más el comercio</u>	La Estrella de Panamá (Panama)
24	<u>Brasil celebra 50 años de relaciones con China y pide incrementar aún más el comercio</u>	Que Pasa Media (United States)
25	<u>Brasil celebra 50 años de relaciones con China y pide incrementar aún más el comercio</u>	SWI swissinfo.ch (Switzerland)
26	<u>Brasil celebra medio siglo de relaciones con China</u>	Cooperativa CL (Chile)
27	<u>Conferencia en capital brasileña celebra los 50 años de relaciones diplomáticas Brasil-China</u>	Agência Xinhua - Espanha (Spain)
28	<u>Conferencia en capital brasileña celebra los 50 años de relaciones diplomáticas Brasil-China</u>	Spanish People Daily (Spain)
29	<u>Brasil exalta comércio em comemoração dos 50 anos de relações com a China</u>	Notícias ao Minuto (Portugal)

30	<a href="#"><u>Larger Stimulus Package Would Do More to Stabilize China's Growth, Experts Say</u></a>	Caixin Global (China)
31	<a href="#"><u>Reporter's Notes   Genuine Warmth vs. Expressive Detachment: First Impressions of Peru and Brazil</u></a>	Caixin (China)
32	<a href="#"><u>Reporter's Notes   From Lima to Rio: Why Are the Reactions to the Trump Storm Different on Both Sides of the South American Continent?</u></a>	Caixin (China)
33	<a href="#"><u>Xi Jinping to Visit Peru and Brazil to Attend the APEC Summit and G20 Summit</u></a>	Caixin (China)
34	<a href="#"><u>G20 Rio Summit Declaration Softens Stance on Russia-Ukraine Issue as Host Brazil Seeks to Avoid Geopolitical Divisions</u></a>	Caixin (China)
35	<a href="#"><u>Caixin International Roundtable G20 Special Session: "China and Brazil: Building a Shared Vision for the Future"</u></a>	Caixin (China)
36	<a href="#"><u>G20 Caixin International Roundtable: With Trump's Return Imminent, How Can China and Brazil Join Forces to Address the Impact?</u></a>	Caixin (China)
37	<a href="#"><u>Caixin International G20 Roundtable Held: Chinese Scholars Interpret Economic Policies</u></a>	Caixin (China)
38	<a href="#"><u>Latest Caixin Weekly: "Trump Anxiety" Spreads at the Global Leaders' Summit</u></a>	Caixin (China)
39	<a href="#"><u>Event Webpage: 2024 G20-CAIXIN Roundtable</u></a>	Caixin (China)
40	<a href="#"><u>How Chinese Overcapacity Threatens the Global South   Business Beyond</u></a>	DW News
41	<a href="#"><u>T20 Brésil : le séminaire international sur « La gouvernance mondiale et la coopération sino-brésilienne » organisé à Rio de Janeiro- NETWORK DES SCIENCES SOCIALES DE CHINE</u></a>	Chinese Social Sciences Today (France)
42	<a href="#"><u>Lula, ou les ambitions contrariées d'un Brésil au centre du jeu</u></a>	Le Monde (France)
43	<a href="#"><u>Green is key to Sino-Brazilian collaboration</u></a>	China Daily (China)





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