


Article

# The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and China's Belt and Road Initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean

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**Abstract:** During the initial implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda), the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of China and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was held in Santiago, Chile, in January 2018. During this forum, China officially invited 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This study links three important global governance issues: The 2030 Agenda, China-LAC relations and BRI. The authors attempt to analyze how China's BRI in the LAC region can learn from the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations with 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs). This study shows that although China and the LAC region have strong political, economic and trade relationships, they must deepen dialogues and cooperation on sustainable development, especially the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs, which can be inspirations for China's BRI in this region. BRI, which aligns with the 2030 Agenda and contributes to Chinese experience in development, can generate new opportunities for the LAC region to implement such an agenda. However, the challenges and risks of BRI cannot be ignored, and adequate answers and solutions should be provided to allow BRI to achieve a win-win outcome for China and LAC countries. The authors also examine the alignment of China's policies towards LAC and BRI with the 2030 Agenda (17 SDGs) and the involvement of each SDG in these policies as the 2030 Agenda (17 SDGs) should be considered in policy-making for China's BRI in the LAC region. Moreover, on the basis of previous analyses, suggestions for a successful BRI in the LAC region in six sectors are proposed in the context the 2030 Agenda.

**Keywords:** China; Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC); Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); 2030 Agenda; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

## 1. Introduction

China has been already a strong political, economic, financial and trade partner of the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Region. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has arrived in the LAC region, and China has invited countries in the said region to join such an initiative. China, Latin America and the Caribbean play important roles in safeguarding global peace and development. In addition, they are important potential partners in sustainable development because they shared a rich experience in global agendas and have common responsibility and extensive cooperation in the post-2015 agenda. Sustainable development is essential for social and economic development and the maintenance of the environment. After the millennium development goals (MDGs) from 2000 to 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations provide the direction and blueprint of sustainable development for international development and cooperation by 2030. Hence, considering the importance of the bilateral relationship

between China and the LAC region and sustainable development, discussing how to implement China's BRI in LAC in the context of the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations is crucial. In particular, this article poses the following questions. 1. How does the BRI arrive in the LAC region considering the current relationships of China and LAC? 2. How do China and the LAC region perform and collaborate in the 2030 Agenda and SDGs? 3. What can the BRI in LAC learn from the 2030 Agenda and SDGs and what can be suggested?

This paper is composed of six sections. In addition to the introduction, the following describes the materials and methods of this study. Section 3 provides analysis of BRI and China-LAC relationships. Section 4 seeks to outline the performance and collaboration in the 2030 Agenda of the two parties. Section 5 argues what BRI in LAC can learn from the 2030 Agenda and provides suggestions, followed by the conclusions and discussions in Section 6.

## 2. Materials and Methods

To answer these questions, first the authors provided an analytical overview and a content analysis of China's political, economic, financial and trade relationships with the LAC region and its BRI in this region. Data were collected from official documents, business reports, online resources and academic papers. Second, the authors assessed the issues of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda between China and LAC. Then, the authors made policy analyses and comparative analyses of the two parties according to the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs to understand their implementations, challenges and opportunities, which could be implications for BRI in the LAC region. For this part, through literature review and content analysis of official documents, the authors investigated how China's policies towards LAC involved sustainable development and aligned with the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs in Table 1. Furthermore, the authors adopted the SDG index and the SDG dashboards in Table 2 to explore challenges and opportunities of both parties. Third, the authors argued how BRI in LAC can learn from the 2030 Agenda and provide opportunities in development in LAC. At the same time, the authors issued the challenges or even risks along BRI, which should be avoided and made policy analyses on China's official documents of the BRI according to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda in Table 3. Then, based on the results of Tables 1 and 3, the authors contented China's policies towards the LAC, BRI and 17 SDGs in Table 4 to examine the alignment of these policies with the 17 SDGs and the involvement of the 17 SDGs in these policies. Results were presented in Figures 1 and 2. Finally the authors provided suggestions for the BRI in the LAC region in the context of the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs.

## 3. China's BRI Arrives in the LAC Region

China has large-scale foreign investments worldwide. After its opening-up in 1978, China became the second largest economy in the world in 2010. However, the growth rate of China's economy recently slowed down, whereas the global economy recovered gradually; hence, new markets for investments, raw materials and outlets are demanded [1]. In 2001, the "Going Out" strategy, which encourages Chinese domestic enterprises to participate in cross-border investment, was adopted in China's 10th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development (2001–2005). Since then, the outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) of China has been increasing rapidly [2]. BRI is an ambitious project that involves regional cooperation and integration. The framework of BRI was proposed during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazakhstan on September 7, 2013 (the Silk Road Economic Belt or SREB) and in Indonesia on October 3, 2013 (the twenty-first century Maritime Silk Road Initiative or MSRI) [3–5]. BRI is a huge integration of China's economy with the rest of the world and aims to promote the economic connectivity and partnership of Asia, Europe, and Africa and their adjacent seas along six economic corridors.

China has a strong political and economic relationship with LAC. China has established a comprehensive strategic partnership with Brazil (in 2012), Peru (in 2013), Mexico (in 2013), Argentina (in 2014), Venezuela (in 2014), Ecuador (in 2016) and Chile (in 2016). China also has a strategic

partnership with Bolivia (in 2018), Costa Rica (in 2015) and Uruguay (in 2016) and China announced a friendly partnership of common development with Jamaica (in 2005). In addition, China is already an important economic, financial and trade partner of LAC. Currently, China is the LAC region's second-largest trade partner and the largest trade partner of several countries in this region. The LAC region mainly exports raw materials and commodities to China (68.21% of total exports), agricultural products (28.86% of total exports) and minerals (25.78% of total exports) [6]. The Export-Import Bank of China and the China Development Bank lent to countries in the LAC region, and the financing amount in infrastructure is more than the combined amount from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank [7]. China established the Sino-Latin American Production Capacity Cooperation Investment Fund, the Special Loan Program for China-Latin America Infrastructure Project and the China-Latin America Cooperation Fund. China has been a major source of foreign aid to Latin America along with the United States and European Union [8]. China also has been a shareholder of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank. Currently, the majority of countries along the BRI are from Asia, Europe and Africa. With the promotion of the BRI, more countries even from Latin America and the Caribbean have participated and the concept of the BRI begins to align more with global issues and agendas.

The LAC region appears as an extension of China's BRI. Initially, the LAC region was not part of the BRI [9]. On 14–15 May 2017, the Belt and Road Forum was hosted in Beijing and attended by 29 heads of state, representatives from more than 130 countries, and 70 international organizations. Twenty countries from Latin America sent representatives to this forum, including Argentine President Mauricio Macri and Chilean President Michelle Bachelet [10]. Since then, Latin America has been officially referred to as a "natural extension" of the Maritime Silk Road and an "indispensable participant" of the BRI [10,11]. Six countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela) from the LAC region are prospective members of AIIB [12]. China invited LAC to join the BRI. In the Second Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum in January 2018 in Santiago, Chile, China invited 33 LAC countries to join the BRI and issued the special statement on the BRI [13]. By March 2019, 16 countries in the LAC region had signed a memorandum of understanding for the BRI, including Barbados, Ecuador, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Dominica, Guyana, Uruguay, Grenada, El Salvador, Chile and the Dominican Republic [14]. The BRI could benefit the LAC region by boosting trade and product demand; generating international cooperation in science, technology and innovation; and connecting this region with Asia, Europe and Africa [15,16]. However, several challenges including the issue of sustainable development exist in the current relationship between the two parties.

#### **4. The 2030 Agenda: New Opportunities for Cooperation between China and LAC**

Even though China has a pretty strong political, economic, financial and trade relationship with the LAC region and the BRI has arrived, China and LAC must deepen the dialogue and strengthen the cooperation in sustainable development. Several concerns exist with regard to environmental and social impacts as Chinese investments, infrastructure projects, trade balance and market opportunities enter this region. China has noticed this issue as well. Chinese enterprises must recognize challenges in investing in the LAC region, such as their lack of experience in local laws and regulations, local culture and society and environmental issues. They also need to learn how to undertake social responsibilities and benefit local communities beyond single investments in energy and natural resource, especially acting in a sustainable way [17]. China's BRI in LAC should learn from sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) of the United Nations provides the direction and blueprint of international development and cooperation by 2030 and provides new opportunities for cooperation between China and LAC [18]. Human society is facing various challenges regarding sustainable development, such as a large population in extreme poverty, inequality within and among countries, slow economic growth, youth unemployment, global diseases and disasters, refugee and humanitarian problems, depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity and climate

change. On 25 September 2015, on the basis of the valuable lessons learned from eight MDGs, 193 member states adopted the 2030 Agenda called “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and 17 SDGs at the UN Sustainable Development Summit [19]. The 17 SDGs are SDG1: No poverty, SDG2: Zero hunger, SDG3: Good health and well-being, SDG4: Quality education, SDG5: Gender equality, SDG6: Clean water and sanitation, SDG7: Affordable and clean energy, SDG8: Decent work and economic growth, SDG9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, SDG10: Reduced inequalities, SDG11: Sustainable cities and communities, SDG12: Responsible consumption and production, SDG13: Climate action, SDG14: Life below water, SDG15: Life on land, SDG16: Peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG17: Partnerships for the goals [20]. To achieve sustainable development, China and the LAC region share common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) [21].

Both China and LAC value the importance of the 2030 Agenda. China attaches great importance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and has released several official documents such as China’s National Plan on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China presented its executive summary of China’s actions on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the Voluntary National Review 2016 of the United Nations’ High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). China is willing to work with LAC on sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda, and several official documents have emphasized the importance to have dialogues and cooperation, including South-South cooperation, in sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda as several official policies indicate. Table 1 contents these policies and presents their contents that align with sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda and their alignment with 17 SDGs such as the China-Latin American and Caribbean Countries Cooperation Plan (2015–2019, mainly aligned with SDG1, SDG 2, SDG3, SDG7, SDG8, SDG9, SDG10 and SDG17). The 2030 Agenda brings historical opportunities to the LAC Region, including important regional issues such as poverty reduction, social justice, economic development, ecological protection and climate change [22]. The Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was established as a regional mechanism to follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda under the CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations) in 2016. Several LAC countries have national institutes, and 11 have national development plans aligned with the 2030 Agenda [23,24]. Fourteen countries in this region have submitted their national voluntary reviews to the United Nations HLPF during 2016 and 2017. Nine LAC countries participated in the National Voluntary Review in 2018 and six countries in LAC are part of the 2019 Voluntary National Review of HLPF. For the LAC Region South–South Cooperation, triangular and multilateral cooperation can play an important role in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and a need exists to design a policy and mechanism for boosting cooperation at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels [22,23].

**Table 1.** China's policies towards the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) region and the 2030 Agenda.

Time	Policy	Contents Align with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
L1: 23 January, 2015	<b>China-Latin American and Caribbean Countries Cooperation Plan (2015–2019)</b>	<p>II. International Affairs</p> <p>-2. Enhance collaboration in global economic, trade and financial institutions, improve global economic governance, promote sustainable development with social inclusion and poverty eradication, and bolster the prosperity of global trade and sustainable development.</p> <p>-3. Strengthen dialogue and consultation on sustainable development, and other global issues, and call on the international community to intensify its work towards the drawing up of the Post 2015 Development Agenda, with the aim of effectively contributing, inter alia, to the eradication of poverty, hunger and illnesses of global impact.</p> <p>III. Trade, Investment and Finance</p> <p>-8. Make good use of the China-LAC Cooperation Fund, China-LAC Special Loan for Infrastructure, concessional loans offered by China as well as other financial resources, to support the key cooperation projects between China and CELAC countries, in a manner consistent with the social, economic and environmental development needs of the CELAC region, as well as with the sustainable development vision.</p> <p>V. Energy and Natural Resources</p> <p>-2. Enhance collaboration in the energy and mineral sectors, including technological research and development, and sustainable use of natural resources, based on equality, overall reciprocity and mutual benefit, with close observance of applicable laws, regulations and best international practices, while respecting the full sovereignty over their natural resources.</p> <p>VII. Industry, Science and Technology, Aviation and Aerospace</p> <p>-7. Increase the collaboration in the area of sustainable fuels for aviation, including renewable jet fuel from biomass.</p>	SDG1 SDG2 SDG3 SDG7 SDG8 SDG9 SDG10 SDG17
L2: 23 January, 2015	<b>Beijing Declaration of the First Ministerial Meeting of the CELAC—China Forum</b>	<p>-4. We are guided by the principles of respect, equality, plurality, mutual benefit, cooperation, openness, inclusiveness and non-conditionality; we are resolved to carry out a dialogue in the framework of the Forum's thematic areas and others added by mutual agreement, through innovative ways of cooperation, in order to promote common sustainable development, social well-being, economic growth and make new contributions to South-South cooperation.</p> <p>-5. Promoting substantial and comprehensive mutual cooperation is a priority. We will work actively to develop a mutually agreed framework for cooperation, based in the follow-up and monitoring of initiatives, programs and projects, in order to promote dialogue on our respective development strategies and macroeconomic policies, transform and upgrade cooperation at a faster pace, aiming at achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development.</p>	SDG10 SDG17
L3: 24 November, 2016	<b>China's Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	<p>Part I Latin America and the Caribbean: A Land Full of Vitality and Hope</p> <p>- Faced with changes in the external environment triggered by the global financial crisis, all countries are taking active steps to cope with the challenges and maintain and promote inclusive and sustainable economic and social development.</p> <p>2. In the Economic Field; (4) Energy and Resources Cooperation</p> <p>- China wishes to expand and deepen cooperation in the fields of energy and resources with Latin American and Caribbean countries based on the principle of win-win cooperation and sustainable development.</p> <p>(9) Space Cooperation</p> <p>- China will pay full attention to the role of space technology as a driving force for the scientific, technological and industrial development of Latin American and Caribbean countries, and promote sustainable development in science and technology and the economic fields.</p> <p>5. International Collaboration; (3) Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</p> <p>- China is ready to work with Latin American and Caribbean countries to promote global, win-win cooperation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. China stands ready to provide support and assistance within its capacity to Latin American and Caribbean countries in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</p>	SDG7 SDG8 SDG9 SDG17

Table 1. Cont.

Time	Policy	Contents Align with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
L4: 2 February, 2018	<b>Joint Action Plan of China-LAC Cooperation (Priority Areas) (2019–2021)</b>	<p>- In order to promote sustainable development of the CELAC-China Forum countries and to encourage cooperation in various areas of common interest and, taking into account the presentation made by China on the possibilities offered by the Belt and Road initiative, it was agreed to adopt the CELAC-China Joint Plan of Action for Cooperation on Priority Areas (2019–2021).</p> <p>II. Infrastructure and transport</p> <p>- To promote the integral implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA), through the strengthening of cooperation and exchange in the housing and sustainable development sector of urban and rural zones.</p> <p>III. Trade, investment and finance</p> <p>-1. To recognize the importance of the multilateral trading system as a fundamental tool for the sustainable and inclusive development of our peoples, as well as to intensify the cooperation and dialogue of the members within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), to defend together a multilateral system of trade, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive, which has the WTO rules as a basis, in order to promote global trade and sustainable development in a balanced and mutually beneficial manner.</p> <p>IV. Agriculture</p> <p>-5. To promote and strengthen family farming and sustainable agriculture with the purpose of improving the food and nutrition security and of our people.</p> <p>-6. To support the institutional strengthening related to the conservation, research, sustainable utilization, development and distribution of the benefits resulted from the use of phyto-genetic resources for agriculture and food; likewise, to strengthen the diagnostic infrastructure for phyto-zoosanitary surveillance, safety and grain drying for food security, among others.</p> <p>VI. Cooperation on the environment</p> <p>-1. To promote dialogue on conservation policies and policies on sustainable use of biological diversity and its components between China and CELAC, including the sustainable management of forests, the conservation of wild fauna and flora, the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, coasts, seas and the fight against desertification, among others.</p> <p>-2. To make the necessary efforts for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.</p> <p>-5. To strengthen collaboration in the protection of the marine-coastal ecosystem, the prevention and management of maritime disasters, access to satellite information, within the framework of cooperation agreements, the conservation and sustainable use of maritime resources and hydric, the prevention and management of pollution, among other areas, in order to jointly improve the capacity to protect the environment.</p> <p>-6. To promote the implementation of courses and related training in the development of public policies in relation to eco-efficiency and clean technologies, clean and renewable energies in the member countries of the CCF, with the aim of contributing to the sustainable development effort in its three dimensions - social, economic and environmental - compatible with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</p> <p>VIII. Cooperation in other areas</p> <p>-5. To support the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To intensify to a greater extent high-level dialogues and exchange of good practices on the issues of poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions and sustainable development.</p>	SDG1 SDG2 SDG6 SDG7 SDG8 SDG9 SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG17

The 2030 Agenda containing 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 232 indicators set out quantitative and qualitative objectives across the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, achieving the 2030 Agenda involves a large-scale project and a huge challenge. Member nations should strengthen their capacity building, data and information collection and financial support and adopt adequate actions according to their own national conditions. To understand the challenges and opportunities in implementing the 2030 Agenda between China and LAC, we adopt the SDG index and the SDG dashboards in Table 2. To help countries identify priority for actions, understand key challenges and opportunities for implementation and obtain assessments of countries' distance to achieving SDGs, the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Foundation of Germany have been publishing an annual report called the SDG Index and Dashboard Report since 2016 [25]. This report measures the implementation of SDGs at the national level with the SDG index and sustainable development target dashboards (SDG dashboards). The SDG dashboards provide a visual representation of the countries' performance by SDGs to identify priorities for action by using traffic light colors (red, orange, yellow and green) to illustrate a country's distance to achieving SDGs and a five-arrow system to show progress toward an indicator's goal achievement [26]. The 2018 Report contains data from all 193 member states of the United Nations, including China and all 33 countries in LAC. For data integrity, 156 countries have been ranked in the SDG index of 2018.

As shown in Table 2, China's overall score in 2018 was 70.1, and it ranked 54th among 156 countries. In Table 2, except for SDG1 (no poverty) and SDG8 (decent work and economic growth), which are in green, China still needs to work hard to reach the remaining 15 SDGs, especially SDG3 (good health and well-being) and SDG10 (reduced inequalities). SDG13 (climate action) and SDG14 (life below water) are colored red. For LAC, Costa Rica has a score of 73.2 and ranks the 33rd among 156 countries and the first among 25 countries in this region (Table 2). In addition, Chile has the highest score of 72.8 and ranks the first among 12 countries in the region of South America (the 38th among 156 countries). However, eight small island countries in the Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) are not included in the ranking because of missing data. This situation indicates the limit of capability and difficulty in data collection in sustainable development in small developing island countries. In the LAC Region, Haiti faces the most significant challenges, with a score of 49.2 and a position of 145th. For LAC as a whole, great opportunities exist in SDG1 (no poverty), SDG7 (affordable and clean energy) and SDG13 (climate action) while significant challenges are present in SDG2 (zero hunger), SDG3 (good health and well-being), SDG9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), SDG10 (reduced inequality), SDG14 (life below water) and SDG16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions). With regard to the achievement of SDGs by China and LAC, China has a similar score as Argentina or Brazil. Both parties have great opportunities to achieve SDG1 (no poverty). China has a comparative advantage in achieving SDG8 (decent work and economic growth). The LAC region has a comparative advantage in achieving SDG13 (climate action). Both sides have major challenges in SDG3 (good health and well-being), SDG10 (reduced inequality) and SDG14 (life below water).

**Table 2.** Comparative analysis of challenges and opportunities in the 2030 Agenda (2018 SDG index and SDG dashboards and trends).

Country	Index Score	Ranking	SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
China	70.1	54	99.7 ↑	71.5 ↑	80.0 ↗	73.8 —	75.6 ↗	89.9 —	69.1 ↗	83.1 ↑	58.7 ↑	59.6 —	69.2 ←	73.2 —	69.3 ↓	33.5 ←	58.6 ←	72.5 ↓	53.6 —
<b>South America</b>																			
Chile	72.8	38	99.5 ↑	68.6 ↗	86.9 ↗	84.1 ←	66.6 ↗	94.2 ↑	87.5 ↑	78.1 ↑	43.6 ↗	27.4 ↗	79.6 ←	74.0 —	92.4 ↓	62.9 ↗	50.0 ↓	68.3 ←	73.8 —
Ecuador	70.8	46	95.9 ↑	49.7 ↗	76.7 ↗	78.1 ←	80.5 ↑	—	83.9 ↗	67.5 ↑	28.8 ↑	35.6 —	90.3 ↑	73.4 —	88.9 ↓	62.6 ↗	56.9 ←	57.1 ↗	79.8 —
Uruguay	70.4	49	100.0 →	65.9 ↗	82.8 ↗	83.2 ←	74.4 ↗	85.1 —	94.9 →	70.5 ↗	40.2 ↗	50.2 —	84.5 ←	63.2 —	83.7 ↑	45.8 ←	31.7 ↓	65.9 ←	75.0 —
Argentina	70.3	53	99.8 →	69.1 ↗	80.8 ↗	88.6 ↗	78.5 ↗	100.0 —	85.6 ↗	61.5 ↗	38.3 ↗	39.8 —	83.6 ←	69.9 —	89.1 ↓	44.5 ←	50.5 ←	58.8 ↓	56.6 ↓
Brazil	69.7	56	96.9 ↑	67.7 ↗	78.2 ↗	77.4 ←	68.3 ↗	98.3 —	89.6 →	67.6 ↗	45.3 ↗	25.7 —	79.4 ←	70.3 —	90.1 ↓	59.9 ←	56.4 ←	47.3 ↓	66.4 ←
Peru	68.4	64	97.4 ↑	60.5 ↗	80.0 ↗	82.9 ←	74.6 ↗	96.3 —	75.8 ↗	61.4 ↗	28.5 ↗	41.9 —	72.9 ↗	73.2 —	87.4 →	63.8 ←	58.6 ←	52.2 ↓	56.2 ←
Bolivia	68.1	66	94.5 ↑	49.6 ←	68.9 ↗	76.9 ←	77.9 ↗	95.8 —	66.8 ↗	72.5 ↑	19.6 ↑	48.7 —	79.5 ←	75.3 —	88.4 →	48.5 —	71.1 ↗	45.9 ↗	77.3 —
Suriname	68.0	67	73.4 ←	55.5 ↗	75.5 ↗	78.7 ←	66.8 ↗	89.1 ←	87.4 →	67.0 —	27.8 —	36.5 —	81.7 —	67.4 —	72.0 ←	63.4 ↗	71.9 ↗	60.1 ←	81.2 —
Paraguay	67.2	72	99.3 ↑	66.0 ↗	74.3 ↗	75.0 —	68.0 ↗	96.7 ↑	86.3 ↑	68.4 —	20.7 ↗	42.5 —	76.5 ←	71.3 —	87.6 →	48.5 —	44.4 ←	49.1 ←	67.9 —
Colombia	66.6	74	95.5 ↑	56.7 ↗	80.8 ↗	75.5 ←	72.0 ↗	97.6 —	85.4 ↗	56.9 ↑	28.2 ↗	21.8 —	80.8 ↓	74.7 —	86.6 →	54.2 ←	53.6 ←	50.6 ←	61.3 ↗
Venezuela, RB	64.0	93	71.8 ↓	48.8 ←	70.7 ←	77.9 ←	70.8 ←	96.0 —	86.7 ↑	63.8 ↑	27.5 ↗	26.1 —	59.8 ↓	68.8 —	85.6 ←	45.7 ←	76.4 ↗	37.3 ↓	74.3 —
Guyana	61.9	104	95.2 ↑	59.8 ↗	64.9 ↗	77.1 —	64.6 ←	91.6 ↗	72.9 —	58.3 —	15.1 ↗	36.5 —	84.8 —	43.7 —	63.0 ↓	50.8 ←	58.7 —	50.5 ←	64.9 —



Table 2. Cont.

Country	Index Score	Ranking	SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
<b>Central America</b>																			
Costa Rica	73.2	33	100.0 →	57.0 ↗	87.0 ↗	83.1 —	78.1 ↗	91.2 —	91.9 →	71.3 ↑	36.2 ↗	34.8 —	89.9 ←	72.9 —	90.9 →	62.1 ↗	61.5 —	64.2 ↗	71.4 ↗
Nicaragua	66.4	76	97.3 ↑	44.2 ←	77.2 ↗	69.3 —	82.9 ↑	87.9 —	64.4 ↗	64.6 ↗	16.3 ↗	46.5 —	85.0 ↗	77.8 —	91.0 →	45.0 ←	62.4 ↗	53.6 ←	63.1 —
Mexico	65.2	84	97.1 ↑	56.2 ↗	82.5 ↗	81.9 ←	76.5 ↗	59.7 ←	80.0 ↗	64.7 ↗	36.7 ↗	14.7 ↓	81.2 ↗	74.2 —	88.1 ↗	58.4 ←	42.4 ←	52.7 ←	61.6 ←
Panama	64.9	86	99.6 ↑	50.2 ↗	78.4 ↗	79.1 ←	66.4 ↑	86.5 ↗	81.3 ↗	71.3 ↑	34.2 ↑	25.5 —	86.3 ←	70.6 —	87.5 ↓	50.3 ↗	50.7 —	57.3 ←	27.9 —
El Salvador	64.1	92	98.9 ↑	49.5 ↗	79.3 ↗	67.2 ↓	69.6 ↗	89.7 ↑	81.4 ↑	62.2 ↑	15.7 ←	39.0 —	79.4 ←	74.9 —	90.7 →	32.5 ←	60.1 ←	38.9 ←	60.6 ←
Honduras	63.6	96	80.3 ↗	45.5 ←	74.8 ↗	63.6 ←	70.9 ↑	87.5 ↑	67.5 ↗	65.4 ↗	14.4 ↗	26.8 —	82.6 ↗	76.3 —	90.8 →	58.8 ←	55.9 —	47.8 ←	72.9 —
Belize	62.3	103	84.7 ←	58.5 ↗	74.5 ↗	83.1 ↗	60.7 ↗	90.4 ↗	89.3 —	56.3 —	18.7 —	36.5 —	70.9 —	63.8 —	85.0 ↑	24.6 ←	41.6 ↑	47.1 —	73.8 ↑
Guatemala	58.2	117	91.2 ↗	39.6 ←	70.8 ↗	64.2 ←	58.7 ←	83.0 —	58.9 ←	60.1 ↑	13.9 ←	20.3 —	79.1 ←	74.8 —	91.0 →	43.3 ←	40.6 ↓	48.4 ↗	52.2 ↓
<b>Caribbean</b>																			
Cuba	71.3	42	98.4 ↑	65.4 ←	85.4 ↗	92.2 ↗	82.3 ↗	90.3 —	80.0 ↗	85.9 —	12.4 —	36.5 —	56.8 —	74.2 —	82.0 ↓	51.0 ←	59.1 —	60.8 —	100.0 —
Trinidad and Tobago	67.5	70	99.7 →	51.3 ←	77.1 ↗	84.1 —	72.1 ↗	87.1 —	76.4 ↗	76.0 —	29.2 ↗	36.5 —	73.5 —	68.7 —	61.7 ↓	45.5 ↗	58.9 —	49.9 ↓	100.0 —
Dominican Republic	66.4	76	99.6 →	52.9 ↗	68.9 ←	71.6 ←	74.2 ↑	80.3 ↗	83.0 ↑	65.5 ↗	27.9 ↗	32.9 —	79.9 ←	78.8 —	90.6 ↑	57.7 ↗	67.5 ↗	47.7 ←	50.1 —
Jamaica	65.9	81	99.5 →	48.8 ←	81.6 ↗	66.6 —	71.4 ↗	88.8 ←	78.7 ↑	66.0 ↗	24.5 ↗	36.5 —	87.3 ↓	77.9 —	83.8 ↑	23.7 ←	49.8 —	60.3 ↗	75.1 ↓
Haiti	49.2	145	73.4 ↗	33.5 ←	47.0 ↗	37.9 —	41.6 ←	61.4 ←	13.3 ←	42.7 ↓	3.2 —	62.4 —	32.0 ↓	77.7 —	93.5 →	32.9 ←	37.7 ↓	45.6 ↗	100.0 —
Antigua and Barbuda	N	N	↑	→	↗	↓	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	↓	↗	—	—	—
Barbados	N	N	→	↗	↗	↗	↗	—	—	—	↑	—	—	—	↑	←	—	↗	—
Bahamas, The	N	N	→	↗	↗	↓	↗	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	↓	←	—	—	—
Dominica	N	N	—	↗	—	↗	—	↗	—	—	—	—	—	—	→	↓	—	—	—
Grenada	N	N	↗	←	↗	↗	—	←	—	—	—	—	—	—	↑	←	—	—	—

Table 2. Cont.

Country	Index Score	Ranking	SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
Saint Kitts and Nevis	N	N	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	↓	←	—	—	—
Saint Lucia	N	N	↓	↗	↗	—	↗	↑	—	—	—	—	—	—	←	↓	—	—	↓
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	N	N	←	↗	↗	←	↗	↗	—	—	—	—	—	—	↑	↗	—	—	—

Source: SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018 and drawn by authors. Comment for Table 2: According to the 2018 Report, for the colors, “The green band is bounded by the maximum that can be achieved for each variable (i.e., the upper bound) and the threshold for achieving the SDG. Three color bands ranging from yellow to orange and red denote an increasing distance from SDG achievement. If a country has less than 50% of the indicators available under a goal, then the dashboard color for that goal is gray.” According to the 2018 Report, for the trends, “↓ Decreasing (Decreasing score); ← Stagnating (score remains stagnant or is increasing at a rate below 50% of the growth rate needed to achieve the SDG by 2030); ↗ Moderately increasing (score is increasing at a rate above 50% of the required growth rate but below the rate needed to achieve the SDG by 2030); ↑ On track (score is increasing at the rate needed to achieve the SDG by 2030); → Maintaining SDG achievement (score is level and the trend remains at or above SDG achievement).”

## 5. What Can BRI in LAC Learn from the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs?

Both China and LAC value the importance of the 2030 Agenda and are willing to have South and South cooperation and international cooperation. From the comparative analysis of SDGs, according to the 2018 SDG index and dashboards the two parties have opportunities in achieving SDG1 (no poverty) and challenges in achieving SDG3 (good health and well-being), SDG10 (reduced inequality) and SDG14 (life below water). So, to promote sustainable development and to achieve win–win outcomes, the BRI can learn from the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs and put them in its development in LAC.

The BRI should offer China's experience in development, which can be an implication for countries in the LAC Region. Basic industry and infrastructure investment is one of the most important factors that contribute to China's economic growth and social development through six vital aspects, namely, China's developing experience consisting of market integration through transportation connectivity, acceleration of industrialization and urbanization in urban and rural areas, investment opportunities and capital attraction, update of economic structure by innovation, mobilization of human resources and job creation and improvement of livelihood through improved public services [27]. China's experience in development can be taken in BRI and as an implication for LAC countries, which are facing significant challenges in SDG2 (zero hunger), SDG3 (good health and well-being) and SDG9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), as presented by the SDG dashboards.

The BRI should provide additional opportunities to promote win–win outcomes and enhance South–South and multilateral cooperation that can benefit countries along the BRI, including LAC countries as several official documents and reports indicate. First, the BRI should be set for linking up unconnected road sections, removing transport bottlenecks and improving road connectivity [28]. Second, the BRI should build a community with shared interests, responsibilities and destiny so that countries along BRI could enhance their political trust, economic integration, cultural acceptance and interconnectivity [15]. Third, the BRI, which is inclusive, open and multilateral, should provide a platform for the coordination of development strategies of diversified stakeholders, including major powers and international and regional institutions [27]. The importance of win–win outcomes, South–South cooperation and multilateral cooperation is not highly emphasized by China and the LAC Region and is extremely important SDG17 (partnerships for the goals).

The BRI should align with sustainable development especially the 2030 Agenda, which are greatly valued by China and the LAC Region. Several documents from China's institutes and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in China examine the BRI's alignment with the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs. The five priorities of the BRI (policy coordination, facility connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people linkages) have a market overlap with the frameworks of global sustainable development, such as the 2030 Agenda (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership) and the associated set and implementing priorities of 17 SDGs [27,29]. In return, the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs complement the BRI by highlighting the importance of sustainability, which is a crucial aspect for the credibility of the BRI [29]. This condition means that the BRI will not only benefit the participating countries in basic infrastructure, regional development, connectivity, and industrialization but will also lead to a sustainable transformation focusing on poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, and inclusive social development, thereby aligning with the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs. China is willing to cooperate with the LAC Region on sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda as mentioned in its several official documents. BRI can be a related topic in this regard and can be put it into practice.

China is advancing the BRI in China's National Plan on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to facilitate the implementation of the agenda and SDGs, which are also significant for LAC countries. In such a national plan, for Target 2.a (increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, particularly in the least-developed countries) of SDG2 (zero hunger), China will launch agricultural cooperation along the Belt and Road routes. As mentioned

in the plan, “By 2022, jointly launch about 10 country programs under the South–South cooperation framework with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and conduct cooperation with countries and regions along the Belt and Road routes in such areas as crop breeding, animal husbandry, fishery, and processing and trade of agricultural products”. The LAC Region is facing major challenges in SDG2 (zero hunger), as shown in the SDG Dashboards for Target 8.a (increase aid for trade support for developing countries, in particular the least-developed countries, including through the enhanced integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance to least-developed countries) of SDG8 (decent work and economic growth), China will promote trade facilitation with the least-developed countries as follows: “Strengthen economic and trade cooperation with least-developed countries. Promote trade facilitation with countries along the Belt and Road routes, and help the countries improve customs facilities in border and port cities, and enhance trade capacity building. Expand the export and import between least-developed countries and China”. Through satisfactory and correct facilitation of BRI, the least-developed countries and small developing island countries that have limited capability and difficulty in data collection in sustainable development in LAC can be benefited.

For Target 9.2 (promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product in line with national circumstances and double its share in least-developed countries) of SDG9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), the improvement of the manufacturing industry and industrial development are highly emphasized as follows: “Implementing the Made in China 2025 strategy, vigorously promote technological transformation and upgrading, transform and upgrade traditional industries, and improve the quality and effectiveness of the manufacturing industry. Advance the Belt and Road Initiative to promote the industrial development of other developing countries, especially least-developed countries, through international cooperation on production capacity and equipment manufacturing. Jointly promote SME development through building international SME cooperation parks (zones)”. As shown in the SDG dashboards, LAC countries need urgent aid in SDG9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), which can be aided by BRI.

For Target 17.3 (mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources) of SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund can help build platforms for financial cooperation as “Actively participate in South–South Cooperation by operationalizing the Assistance Fund for South–South Cooperation, and implementing China–UN Fund for Peace and Development. Promote the development of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank and tap the full potential of the Silk Road Fund to attract international capital for the establishment of open, diversified, and win–win platform for financial cooperation”. Countries in the LAC Region, the CELAC and the CEPAL all attach importance to win–win cooperation and South–South cooperation. The BRI will catch their attention if its promise to promote such type of cooperation is successfully realized.

The BRI cannot ignore challenges and risks. Although the BRI can bring opportunities for the development of countries along it, major challenges and risks exist at traditional and non-traditional levels, consisting of political risks (e.g., lack of central coordination mechanism and potential clash), economic and financial risks (e.g., financial viability), environmental and social risks (e.g., environmental pollution and labor problem) and security risks (e.g., terrorism and sea channel safety and even concerns about their geopolitical and geo-economic repercussions) [10,27,30–32]. China and its partners in the BRI have realized this. To cope with such challenges and risks, to offer China’s experience in development, and to promote win–win outcomes and enhance South–South and multilateral cooperation in BRI, several bilateral and international documents, policies and regulations at the national level and local plans at the provincial level, which align with sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs, have been released and presented on the website of the Belt and Road Portal. Table 3 contents these policies and presents their contents that align with sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda and their alignment with 17 SDGs such as the vision for maritime cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (mainly aligned with SDG9, SDG14, SDG16 and SDG17).

**Table 3.** China's official documents towards the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the 2030 Agenda.

Time	Policy	Contents Aligning with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
B1: 30 March, 2015	<b>Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt And 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road</b>	I. Background - The Belt and Road Initiative aims to promote the connectivity of Asian, European and African continents and their adjacent seas, establish and strengthen partnerships among the countries along the Belt and Road, set up all-dimensional, multi-tiered and composite connectivity networks, and realize diversified, independent, balanced and sustainable development in these countries.	SDG17
B2: 29 June, 2015	<b>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Articles of Agreement</b>	Article 1 Purpose 1. The purpose of the Bank shall be to: (i) Foster sustainable economic development, create wealth and improve infrastructure connectivity in Asia by investing in infrastructure and other productive sectors;	SDG8 SDG9
B3: 31 March, 2017	<b>"The Belt and Road" Vision and Actions for Cooperation in Metrology</b>	- With the constant development of society, metrology, as an important means of social governance, lays the groundwork for economic development, serves as a foundation for fair trade, supports technological progress, has play a significant role in global trade and sustainable economic as well as social development. I. General ideas - With combined efforts, we should promote the innovation and development of an international metrological system, encourage international mutual recognition for metrology, facilitate trade liberalization and contribute to the sustainable development of regional economies and societies.	SDG8 SDG10 SDG17
B4: 08 May, 2017	<b>Guidance on Promoting Green Belt and Road</b>	I. Significance (i) - Promoting green Belt and Road is an internal need to share the ecological civilization philosophy and achieve sustainable development. - Promoting green Belt and Road and strengthening eco-environment protection will help improve mutual understanding and support among governments, enterprises and people of countries along the 'Belt and Road' route, share China's experience and practice in ecological civilization and green development, enhance capability for eco-environment protection, prevent eco-environment risk, facilitate joint achievement of 2030 sustainable development goals by countries and regions along the route and provide sound service, support and guarantee for the building of the 'Belt and Road'. II. Overall requirements (iii) Main objectives We will build up a mutually beneficial cooperation network, new cooperation model and diversified cooperation platform while taking into account the demands for ecological civilization green growth and sustainable development of the countries along the route. III. Main tasks (i) Comprehensively serve the 'Five Goals', promote green development and ensure eco-environment safety 1. We will highlight the ecological civilization philosophy, strengthen communication on eco-environment protection policy and facilitate people-to-people bonds. We will, according to the overall requirements of the 'Belt and Road' Initiative and by centering around ecological civilization, sustainable development goals and relevant environmental protection requirements, coordinate existing domestic and international cooperation mechanisms, leverage on the role of eco-environment protection as a window for international cooperation, strengthen integration of eco-environment protection strategies and plans of countries or regions along the route, and build cooperation and exchange systems. 4. We will advance green trade and promote sustainable production and consumption. We will study and formulate policy measures and relevant standards and codes and boost green trade.	SDG12 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG17

Table 3. Cont.

Time	Policy	Contents Aligning with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
B5: 10 May, 2017	<b>Building the Belt and Road: Concept, Practice and China's Contribution</b>	<p>Preamble</p> <p>- Cooperation helps to promote efficiency in the flow of elements and in-depth integration of markets, to achieve diversified, independent, balanced and sustainable development.</p> <p>III. Areas of Cooperation: Economy and Culture</p> <p>(2) Enhancing economic and trade cooperation</p> <p>-China attaches importance to furthering such ties to bring benefits to all, and building a more balanced, equal and sustainable trade system.</p> <p>(5) Strengthening cooperation on ecological and environmental protection</p> <p>-Strengthening cooperation in protecting forests and wildlife: China has signed 35 forestry cooperation agreements with the B&amp;R countries, and founded the China-ASEAN and China-CEE forestry cooperation mechanisms, in an effort to promote the sustainable development of forestry and protect forest resources.</p> <p>- It is cooperating with Russia on the protection and use of forest resources, the prevention of fires in border areas, and the protection of migratory birds; with Mongolia on the protection of wildlife, and the prevention and control of desertification; with Egypt, Israel, Iran, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Laos and Myanmar on the prevention and control of desertification, sustainable use of forestry, wild- life protection, sustainable management of the ecological system and wetland protection, and on addressing climate change regarding forestry.</p> <p>IV. Diverse Cooperative Mechanisms</p> <p>- Kazakhstan's Bright Road economy policy, Saudi Arabia's oil and gas program for its western region, Mongolia's Prairie Road program, the EU's Investment Plan for Europe, ASEAN's Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, Poland's Responsible Development Strategy, Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum Strategy, Turkey's Middle Corridor Initiative, Serbia's Reindustrialization Strategy, APEC's Connectivity Blueprint for 2015–2025, the Asia-Europe Connectivity Initiative and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are all complementary to China's Belt and Road Initiative.</p> <p>V. A Future Vision Based on Reality</p> <p>- It is a community pursuing peace on the basis of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and striving for a world where all countries respect each other's core interests and resolve disputes peacefully.</p> <p>- A high level of connectivity and reinforced pragmatic cooperation on the Eurasia Continent and surrounding oceans will enable all civilizations in the region to further tap the enormous potential of this region, increase the exchange of ideas and mutual learning, and work together to achieve diverse, independent, balanced and sustainable development.</p> <p>- China is committed to working together with other countries to foster the environment-friendly and sound development of the Belt and Road, featuring peace and the exchange of wisdom, and to build a global economy that is more vibrant, open, inclusive, stable and sustainable.</p>	<p>SDG6</p> <p>SDG8</p> <p>SDG10</p> <p>SDG13</p> <p>SDG15</p> <p>SDG16</p> <p>SDG17</p>
		<p>II. Principles</p> <p>- Countries are respected to choose their own development path and mode. Agricultural cooperation along the Belt and Road echoes goals on food and agriculture of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and advocates the principle of mutual consultation, joint efforts and shared interests for a green Silk Road.</p> <p>VI. Action and Future</p> <p>In the future, China will keep promoting agricultural cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative by partaking in the development of regional agricultural cooperation platform(s), supporting talks on agriculture-related trade and investment agreements bilaterally or multilaterally, jointly devising the plan of bilateral cooperation on agricultural investment, increasing agricultural investment in least developed countries, facilitating implementation of 10 cooperation plans between China and Africa, mobilizing the "South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund" and promoting South-South Cooperation in agriculture, supporting developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, engaging in agricultural cooperation with developed countries innovatively, assisting in formation of a new pattern of relationship on agricultural cooperation and promoting agricultural sustainability in the world.</p>	<p>SDG2</p> <p>SDG17</p>

Table 3. Cont.

Time	Policy	Contents Aligning with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
B7: 14 May, 2017	<b>The Belt and Road Ecological and Environmental Cooperation Plan</b>	I. Significance (I) A fundamental requirement of environment-friendly Belt and Road The cooperation on eco-environmental protection meets the fundamental requirement of reinforcing eco-friendly Belt and Road construction with a view to sustainable development and common prosperity while practicing the concepts of ecological civilization and green development. (III) An important measure to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations aims to jointly improve the welfare of all mankind and clearly specifies the targets of green development and environmental protection, mapping the road to sustainable development and international development cooperation in the next decades. The cooperation on eco-environmental protection under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative will inject an effective impetus to accomplishment of environmental targets in the Agenda in countries along the routes.	SDG12 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG17
		II. Overarching Requirements (I) Guiding ideology - A new pattern of higher-level cooperation on eco-environmental protection among diverse stakeholders will be created in the Belt and Road, thus contributing to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals. (III) Development goals To 2030, we will promote cooperation on eco-environmental protection with higher standards and at deeper levels to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals. V. Promote Sustainable Production and Consumption and Boost Green Trade (II) Provide more support to green demonstration projects Promote green foreign aid: We will develop strategies and action plans for green foreign aid which focuses on the fields of pollution control, ecological conservation, environmental protection technologies and industries, as well as sustainable production and consumption.	
B8: 16 May, 2017	<b>Joint communique of leaders roundtable of Belt and Road forum</b>	General Context 2. - The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the set of Sustainable Development Goals at its core provides a new blueprint of international cooperation. 3. - In this context, we welcome bilateral, triangular, regional and multilateral cooperation where countries place emphasis on eradicating poverty, creating jobs, addressing the consequences of international financial crises, promoting sustainable development and advancing market-based industrial transformation and economic diversification. 4. - All countries, especially developing ones, still face common challenges of eradicating poverty, promoting inclusive and sustained economic growth and achieving sustainable development. 6. - We also emphasize the opportunities which can be created by communication and coordination among other global, regional and national frameworks and initiatives for promoting cooperation in connectivity and sustainable development, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, Ancient Civilizations Forum, APEC Connectivity Blueprint, ASEAN Community Vision 2025, Asia-Europe Meeting and its group on path-finder of connectivity, Caravanserai Customs Initiative, China and Central and Eastern European Countries Cooperation, China-Europe Land-Sea Express Route, East-West Middle Corridor Initiative, EU-China Connectivity Platform, EU Eastern Partnership, Eurasian partnership based on the principles of equality, openness and transparency, Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America, Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, Main Directions for Economic Development of the Eurasian Economic Union until 2030, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Trans-European Transport Networks, Western Balkans 6 Connectivity Agenda and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.	SDG1 SDG6 SDG8 SDG10 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG16 SDG17
		Cooperation Objectives 12. - We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through taking urgent action on climate change and encouraging all parties which have ratified it to fully implement the Paris Agreement, managing the natural resources in an equitable and sustainable manner, conserving and sustainably using oceans and seas, freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and dry-lands, protecting biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife, combating desertification and land degradation so as to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions in a balanced and integrated manner. Cooperation Principles 14. c) Harmony and inclusiveness: Acknowledging the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognizing that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development. Cooperation Measures 15. k) Jointly working on a long-term, stable and sustainable financing system; enhancing financial infrastructure connectivity, by exploring new models and platforms of investment and financing and improving financial services; assessing the opportunity to better serve local financial market; and encouraging development-oriented financial institutions to play an active role and strengthen cooperation with multilateral development institutions. Our Vision for the Future 17. We reiterate that promoting peace, mutually-beneficial cooperation, and honoring the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law are our shared responsibilities; achieving inclusive and sustainable growth and development, and improving people's quality of life are our common goals; creating a prosperous and peaceful community with shared future for mankind is our common aspiration.	

Table 3. Cont.

Time	Policy	Contents Aligning with Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda	Mainly Aligned SDGs
B9: 16 May, 2017	<b>Guiding Principles on Financing the Development of the Belt and Road</b>	<p>- Therefore, we, finance ministers of Argentina, Belarus, Cambodia, Chile, China, Czech, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Serbia, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom, call upon the governments, financial institutions and companies from countries involved to follow the principles of equal-footed participation, mutual benefits and risk sharing as they work together to build a long-term, stable, sustainable financing system that is well placed to manage risks.</p> <p>4. - We reaffirm the important role of infrastructure in sustainable economic and social development.</p> <p>- We encourage the interested parties to establish effective information flow between private sector and financial institutions, which support sustainable development through financing infrastructure investments.</p> <p>7. - We support these institutions in strengthening of coordination and collaboration to provide sustainable financing, institutional know-how and consulting services to countries involved.</p> <p>14. - We underscore the need to strengthen social and environmental impact assessment and risk management of projects, improve cooperation on energy conservation and environmental protection, fulfill social responsibilities, promote local employment and ensure sustainable economic and social development.</p> <p>15. - We recognize that financing arrangements for the development of the Belt and Road should benefit all businesses and populations in a way that supports sustainable and inclusive development.</p>	SDG1 SDG7 SDG8 SDG9 SDG10 SDG16 SDG17
B10: 16 May, 2017	<b>Vision and Actions on Energy Cooperation in Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road</b>	<p>I. Global Energy Development</p> <p>- The supply and demand balance in the market is generally easing; response to climate change is moving into a new stage; a new round of revolution in energy technology accelerates; a new mechanism for global energy governance is developing; but the goal of “sustainable energy for all” is nonetheless far from reach and all countries face big challenges in their energy development.</p> <p>II. Cooperation Priorities</p> <p>(VI) Sustainable energy for all. We will actively implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Paris Agreement on climate change. We will advance affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy services for all, promote clean energy investment and development in relevant countries and work together to achieve greater energy efficiency.</p>	SDG7 SDG13 SDG17
B11: 22 May, 2017	<b>Initiative on Promoting Unimpeded Trade Cooperation along the Belt and Road</b>	<p>- In light of sluggish global economic growth, the participants in this initiative (hereinafter referred to as “the participants”) recognize that it is important to promote more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable economic globalization, enhance trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, resist protectionism, boost unimpeded trade cooperation along the Belt and Road and achieve win-win outcomes, while respecting the development objectives of countries.</p> <p>III. Promoting inclusive and sustainable development</p> <p>- The participants reiterate their commitment to implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, enhance economic and technical cooperation and capacity building for trade and investment and create conditions for inclusive and sustainable development in its three dimensions. economic, social and environmental. in a balanced and integrated manner.</p> <p>- China will also support trade and investment cooperation programs tailor-made by UN agencies and the WTO for Belt and Road countries to help deliver inclusive and sustainable development.</p>	SDG9 SDG10 SDG17
B12: 20 June, 2017	<b>Vision for Maritime Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative</b>	<p>I. Background</p> <p>- The oceans comprise the largest ecosystem on earth, contributing valuable assets for human survival and a common arena for sustainable development.</p> <p>- China advocates the Silk Road Spirit—“peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit”, and exerts efforts to implement the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the field of coasts and oceans. China is willing to work closely with countries along the Road, engage in all-dimensional and broad-scoped maritime cooperation and build open and inclusive cooperation platforms, and establish a constructive and pragmatic Blue Partnership to forge a “blue engine” for sustainable development.</p> <p>IV. Cooperation Priorities</p> <p>4.2 Ocean-based prosperity</p> <p>- Participating in Arctic affairs: Chinese enterprises are encouraged to join in sustainable exploration of Arctic resources in a responsible way.</p> <p>4.4 Innovative growth</p> <p>- Innovation is one of the main drivers for the sustainable development of ocean-based economies.</p> <p>- Building platforms for marine technology cooperation: Efforts will be undertaken to facilitate the development of the APEC Marine Sustainable Development Center, the East Asia Marine Cooperation Platform, the China-ASEAN Marine Cooperation Center, the China-ASEAN College of Marine Sciences, the China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center, the China-Malaysia Joint Marine Research Center, the China-Indonesia Center for Ocean and Climate, the China-Thailand Joint Laboratory for Climate and Marine Ecosystem, the China-Pakistan Joint Marine Scientific Research Center and the China-Israel Seawater Desalination Joint Research Center, so as to improve our capacity to achieve innovation in marine technology.</p>	SDG9 SDG14 SDG16 SDG17



In order to examine the alignment of China's policies towards the LAC Region (L1 to L4) and BRI (B1 to B12) with SDGs and the involvement of SDGs in these policies in the domain of sustainable development, 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 232 indicators are taken as references. Table 4 contents such policies and 17 SDGs and the results are presented in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. For the policies' alignment, overall, the Joint Action Plan of China-LAC Cooperation (priority areas) (2019–2021) (L4) has aligned with the maximum number of 13 SDGs, followed by the Joint communique of leaders roundtable of Belt and Road forum (B8) and the China-Latin American and Caribbean Countries Cooperation Plan (2015–2019) (L1). Each policy aligns with at most 13 SDGs and at least one SDG. It shows China does consider sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda in its relationship with LAC and in the BRI. Two policies among four towards the LAC Region (L policy) and eight policies among 12 towards the BRI (B policy), in total 10 policies have mentioned the 2030 Agenda and/or SDGs. For the SDGs' involvement, SDG17 (partnerships for the goals) is the most involved in fifteen policies (L and B), followed by SDG8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) and SDG9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure) in the domain of sustainable development. On the contrary, SDG4 (quality education) and SDG5 (gender equality) are not involved in the domain of sustainable development in these policies (L and B).

Several suggestions based on the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs are provided for BRI cooperation between China and LAC. First, further studies and dialogues should be conducted not only in China but also in the LAC region and the world about how the BRI could align with the 2030 Agenda and support other important global agendas, such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change. The BRI should notice that the 2030 Agenda has 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 232 indicators and each country can select its priority under its own condition. Second, China and the LAC region are strongly encouraged to learn from the experience of both parties in implementing the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs and even the experiences in MDGs. Third, China and the LAC region could try to better understand the challenges and opportunities in implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs of each other and how the BRI could benefit the 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs in the LAC region, especially for small island countries and the least-developed countries. Fourth, China and countries in the LAC region and the LAC region as a whole should establish official mechanisms and platforms for the BRI to implement adequate and practical actions in eco-environmental protection, ecological civilization (eco-civilization), green finance and green development that are beneficial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and a Green Belt and Road. Fifth, the 2030 Agenda is open and inclusive, and so is the BRI. To better promote the BRI and implement the 2030 Agenda, official dialogues, academic exchanges, and civil cooperation are necessary. In addition, all related parties, such as governments, UN systems such as UNDP and CEPAL, regional organizations such as CELAC, local organizations, civil society, private sectors, think tanks, indigenous groups and minorities could participate. Sixth, for policy-making of the BRI in LAC, the alignment of policies with SDGs and the involvement of SDGs in policies should be further taken into consideration based on current situation and further development. Policy-making should also consider challenges and opportunities in implementing SDGs and how to make policies into practice and reality.

**Table 4.** China's official documents toward the LAC Region and the BRI and 17 SDGs.

China's Official Documents and 17 SDGs																	
SDGs	L1	L2	L3	L4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	Involvement
SDG1	√			√								√	√				4
SDG2	√			√						√							3
SDG3	√																1
SDG4																	0
SDG5																	0
SDG6				√					√			√					3
SDG7	√		√	√									√	√			5
SDG8	√		√	√		√	√		√			√	√				8
SDG9	√		√	√		√							√		√	√	7
SDG10	√	√		√			√		√			√	√		√		8
SDG11				√													1
SDG12				√				√			√						3
SDG13				√				√	√		√	√		√			6
SDG14				√				√			√	√				√	5
SDG15				√				√	√		√	√					5
SDG16									√			√	√			√	4
SDG17	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	15
Alignment	8	2	4	13	1	2	3	5	7	2	5	9	7	3	3	4	
2030 Agenda/SDGs mentioned			√	√				√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	

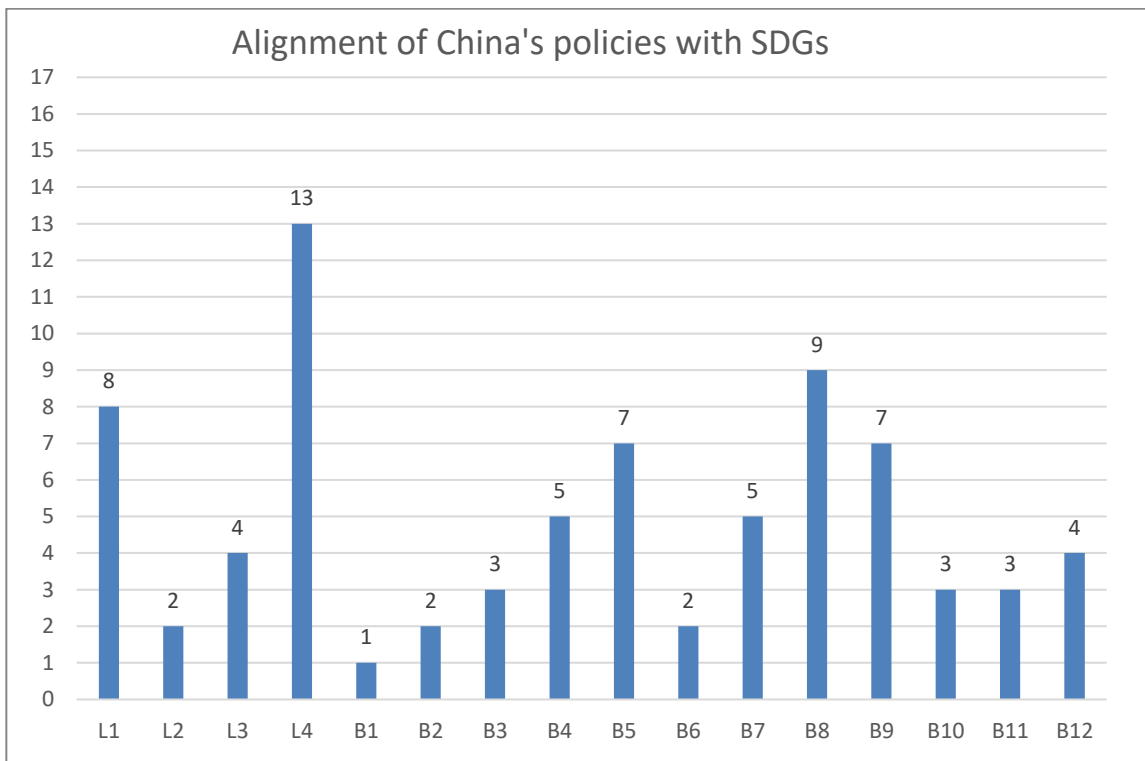


Figure 1. Alignment of China’s policies towards LAC and the BRI with 17 SDGs.



Figure 2. Involvement of 17 SDGs in China’s policies towards LAC and the BRI.

6. Conclusions and Discussion

This study links the 2030 Agenda, China-LAC relations and the BRI, three important global governance issues, and tries to indicate what the BRI in LAC can learn from the 2030 Agenda and to give suggestions. It shows even though China has strong political, economic, financial and trade

relationships with LAC countries and the BRI has reached this region, China and the LAC region need to deepen the dialogue and strengthen their cooperation in sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda and 17 SDGs provide opportunities for cooperation. Moreover, China and LAC have taken actions in implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the 17 SDGs by releasing related policies and establishing responsible institutes. On the basis of the SDG index and SDG dashboards, China has a comparative advantage in achieving SDG8 (decent work and economic growth), while the LAC region has a comparative advantage in achieving SDG13 (climate action). Both are confronting major challenges in SDG3 (good health and well-being), SDG10 (reduced inequality) and SDG14 (life below water). Additionally, this research emphasizes that the BRI in LAC can learn from the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs, while sharing China's experience in development, promoting win-win outcomes and enhancing South-South and multilateral cooperation. Meanwhile, the BRI must deal with existing and potential challenges and risks through adequate answers, solutions and policies. It also shows that China's policies towards LAC and the BRI somehow align with the 2030 Agenda and several SDGs are involved. Challenges and opportunities in implementing SDGs and how to make these policies into practice should be considered in policy-making. Lastly, this work offers suggestions for six sectors regarding the BRI in the LAC Region based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations.

This study is special in that it provides an analytical study in linking three important global governance issues in the 2030 Agenda, China-LAC relations and the BRI and further attempts to analyze how the BRI can learn from the 2030 Agenda with 17 SDGs. Additionally, this study gives suggestions for China's BRI in the context of the 2030 Agenda in the LAC region. This study has certain limitations. It focuses on secondary data and adopts a literature review to analyze BRI and sustainable development between China and the LAC Region in a macro-structure. However, it does not use interviews or questionnaires, and it does not cover all aspects. Furthermore, in the part that examined the alignment of policies towards the LAC region (L1 to L4) and the BRI (B1 to B12) with SDGs, the results, to some extent, depended on the authors' subjective judgment and contents without mentioning that "sustainable development" may probably align with the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, a more in-depth and theoretical study from a variety of aspects with first-hand data must be conducted in the future.

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