



Promoting Cooperative Solutions for Space Sustainability

Thoughts on Euro-China Cooperation

Brian Weeden
Technical Advisor
Secure World Foundation

The opportunity exists

- There is an opportunity for Europe to strengthen its relationship with China on space cooperation
 - Broad recognition of need for international cooperation on a range of space activities
- US is currently hampered by a number of factors
 - ITAR
 - Restrictions on NASA
 - Lack of stable mil-mil cooperation
 - Predominance of US military in space activities (such as SSA)
- But cooperating with China is not easy, and Europe would need to overcome bad experience with Galileo for both sides

- We recognized that a lot of important conversations regarding space security and sustainability were happening without meaningful Chinese participation
 - Challenges from microsatellites
 - Space debris removal
 - Space sustainability as a concept
 - Code of Conduct / LTSSA
- Formed relationship Beihang University to sponsor research and hold conferences
 - Bring specific conversations to China to get their perspectives & familiarize them with concepts
 - Build Chinese technical and policy expertise

Lessons from SWF's work with China

- China has a different perspective on use of space than Europe, US, Russia, or Japan
- Not inherent to China, but rather a function of their stage of development as a space actor
 - China is currently *building its space capabilities*, particularly for national security and prestige
 - US/Europe/Russia/Japan focused more on *maintaining space capabilities*
- These differing perspectives (and goals) make it difficult to find common ground on which to build consensus
 - Would the US of the 1970's/1980's have bought into space sustainability?

- Chinese government lacks a strong interagency process or perspective on space issues
 - Certain sectors are dominated by specific agencies (military or scientists or diplomatic corps) but rarely is there effective coordination between agencies
 - Opacity of the Chinese policy process is a challenge for them as well as outsiders
- Difficult to find Chinese experts with cross-discipline experience and knowledge
 - Current system is strongly stove-piped into law, political, engineering, science, etc

- China is looking to be a *partner* in space activities, not to be “*helped*”
 - Do not want gifts, extremely sensitive to condescension
 - Want to be treated as equals, not as a second-tier space power
- Extremely proud of their accomplishments and will take the long, slow road of developing indigenous capabilities if they need to
- China does not recover from slights easily, and often reacts in a calculated manner
 - Overlap of BeiDou and Galileo security signals doesn’t cause interference but does intertwine both services

- Ultimate question: what is Europe's goal for cooperation with China in space?
 - Soft power?
 - Hard power?
 - Offset economic costs?
 - Improve relationships?
- If there isn't a well-defined goal (or set of goals) going in, it is extremely hard to have a good outcome



Promoting Cooperative Solutions for Space Sustainability

Thank you

bweeden@swfound.org