

Press Release

2023 Integral Conversation Celebrates a Decade of Dialogs in Guilin, Sparking Insights on Sustainable Growth from an Asian Perspective

Hong Kong, November 1, 2023 – the 10th Integral Conversation took place in Guilin from October 26 to 28. Visionary leaders and practitioners revolved around “The Future of Sustainable Growth from an Asian Perspective”, to explore how businesses, public sectors, institutions, academia, and individuals can jointly explore opportunities and progress towards a greener future for all.



The Future of Sustainable Growth from an Asian Perspective at 2023 Integral Conversation

Since 2014, Integral Conversation has been a fundamental platform for knowledge sharing and insight exchanges, having engaged 221 speakers and held 48 dialogs surrounding 12 diverse topics. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, **Integral Institute**, an independent non-profit organization dedicated to sustainability and environmental stewardship, was established to further radiate the mission of promoting sustainable development to a wider community.

10 Years of Dialogs Fostering Relentless Pursue towards UNSDGs

Kickstarting 2023 Integral Conversation, **Dee Poon**, Member of the Board, President of Brands and Retailing of Tessellation Group, called on all like-minded partners to act responsibly and collectively move the world forward, expressing her anticipation for the insightful discussions as we celebrated the 10th anniversary of this spectacular event.



Welcome Speech by Dee Poon, Member of the Board, President of Brands and Retailing of Tessellation Group

During the Fireside Chat moderated by **George Lam**, Chairman of UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Sustainable Business Network, **Siddharth Chatterjee**, UN Resident Coordinator in China shared his story of physical transformation, acknowledging that proper breathing is indispensable in leading us towards Goal 3 – “Good Health and Well-being” of the UNSDGs. Valuing wellness, fair education and the synergy of artificial intelligence and businesses, he encouraged all stakeholders to rekindle their spirits in forming ripples of future possibilities.



Fireside Chat between Siddharth Chatterjee, UN Resident Coordinator in China, and George Lam, Chairman of UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Sustainable Business Network

Teresa Yang, Vice Chairman of Esquel Group extended her warmest welcome to all guests. In her opening speech, she proudly highlighted Esquel's prescience in tackling climate change, practicing responsible and sustainable production, and promoting workplace wellness. Integral, Esquel's Sustainable Development Garden is a result of unwavering dedication and has achieved significant progress in all 17 UNSDGs. She also emphasized that accelerating sustainability requires wellness conscious mindsets among employees and seamless collaboration with partners sharing the same vision.



Opening Speech by Teresa Yang, Vice Chairman of Esquel Group

Yang Yanyan, Chairperson of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) Guangxi Committee and Secretary-General of China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit Secretariat, commended Integral for its integration between manufacturing, people, and ecology, and advised all practitioners to establish shared mechanisms, build closer partnerships across industries, and accelerate digital economy.



Speech by Yang Yanyan, Chairperson of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) Guangxi Committee and Secretary-General of China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit Secretariat

Impactful Philanthropy – Leveraging the Power of Transformation to Enhance Resilience

Gabriel Leung, Executive Director of Charities and Community, the Hong Kong Jockey Club, emphasized the role of impactful philanthropy for social innovation and sustainable growth. He shared that HKJC’s philanthropic model extends from donations to community engagements. Rethinking the future, he identified three focus areas – de-carbonization, biodiversity conservation, and waste management. He also encouraged organizations to co-create, co-support, and co-fund in enhancing social, economic and climate resilience in today’s ever-changing landscape.



Keynote Speech by Gabriel Leung, Executive Director of Charities and Community, the Hong Kong Jockey Club

CEO Perspectives – Reforming Goals, Transforming Business Models and Performing Green Economy

With the increasing emphasis on SDGs by prospective corporate leaders, **Aloke Lohia**, Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer, Indorama Ventures PCL, **Belinda Wong**, Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer, Starbucks China, and **Ronald Lu**, Founder and Chairman of Ronald Lu & Partners, revisited their business approaches and reiterated the importance of embedding sustainability at the organization’s core. Lohia claimed that businesses should create quality and eco-friendly products, with the goal of ensuring that one-third of the future raw materials are degradable and renewable. Wong explained Starbucks’ purpose-driven growth agenda and expressed her passion for inspiring other industries to jointly advance sustainability. Lu introduced eco-friendly architectural designs and stressed sustainability mindsets groomed from early education.



CEO Panel with Aloke Lohia, Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer, Indorama Ventures PCL; Belinda Wong, Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer, Starbucks China; Ronald Lu, Founder and Chairman of Ronald Lu & Partners, moderated by Hau Lee, the Thoma Professor of Operations, Information and Technology at Stanford Graduate School of Business

Accelerating Socio-economic Progress by Crowdsourcing and Dynamic Knowledge Acquisition, while Thriving with Technology

The harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature is deeply ingrained in Asian culture. With the moderation by Professor **Christine Loh**, Chief Development Strategist, Institute for the Environment of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, **Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich**, Deputy Minister of Education, Thailand, **Lu Zhi**, Professor, School of Life Sciences & Institute of Ecology, Executive Director, Center for Nature and Society, Peking University, and **David Wei**, Chairman and Founding Partner, Vision Knight Capital delved into the relationship between climate challenges and biodiversity, forecasting the socio-economic outlook. Lu shared China's gradual elimination of plant exploitation and pointed out that the threat of dwindling biodiversity deserves more attention. Moving to policymaking, Sophonpanich spoke about the Thai community's mitigation of water shortage and retention of biodiversity through reviving forests, engaging in field studies and educational courses, eventually multiplying the villager's yield and income. Wei suggested that understanding our surroundings to push forward ESG policies, as the more we learn, the clearer we know where our roles lie in.



Panel guests (from left to right): Christine Kung-wai Loh, Lu Zhi, Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich, David Wei

Moderated by **Chetwyn Chan**, Vice President (Research and Development) and Peter T. C. Lee Chair Professor of Psychology, The Education University of Hong Kong, “The Future of Work” panel highlighted the increasing demand for digital-savvy critical thinkers at workplace. **Helen Meng**, Patrick Huen Wing Ming Professor of Systems Engineering and Engineering Management (SEEM), the Chinese University of Hong Kong, shared her plan in simplifying AI-related courses to promote technical knowledge among adolescents. **Tommie Lo**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Preface, added that we should persist in dynamic lifelong learning and thrive with the latest technologies. **Tuan Q Phan**, Associate Professor of Marketing, Innovation & Information Management, the University of Hong Kong Business School, believes that technological intelligence, creativity, interpersonal skills, and resilience are essential in the future workforce.



Panel guests (from left to right): Tuan Q Phan, Helen Meng, Tommie Lo, Chetwyn Chan

Pioneering Sustainable Fashion through China’s Natural Dye, Heritage Preservation, and Innovations

With extensive knowledge in Natural dye – the ancient technique with over 3000 years of heritage, **Wang Qiong**, Senior Experimenter and Team Leader of the Plant Dyeing Team, Institute of Botany, Jiangsu Province and Chinese Academy of Sciences, and **Zhou Liming**, R&D Director of Esquel Group, shared their optimism towards natural dye blooming across industries. Despite natural dye’s unstable production and need for delicate care, Zhou highlighted that Esquel remains committed to applying and improving this technique. Wang also supported using Chinese plant dye as it is degradable throughout its life cycle. The dialog closed with a tour around Integral’s Natural Dye Garden and an “Indigo Tie-Dye” workshop, providing guests with an immersive experience in understanding plant features and dyeing processes.

Facilitated by **Herman Chan**, Director of Symmpix at Tessellation Group, a conversation was held to discuss the relationship between preserving traditional craftsmanship and technological advancements in achieving sustainable fashion. **Radhikaraje Gaekwad**, Vice President of Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya, Trustee of Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum, shared that delicate royal textiles and handicrafts of her home are produced sustainably and locally, whereas mass production provides larger quantities but oversimplified craftsmanship. **Edwin Keh**, Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, suggested that clothing sales and production should focus more on durability, market adaptation and technological advancements.



Panel guests (from left to right): Wang Qiong, Zhou Liming, Herman Chan, Radhikaraje Gaekwad, Edwin Keh

Dialog with Young Generations

Holly Ming, Headmistress of Diocesan Girls' Junior School, Hong Kong, had a dialog with representatives of the young generation, our leaders of the future. Nurturing young sustainable minds, Ming brought up the concept of 5Cs – Compassion, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication and Conviction. She also listened to youngsters' perspectives in bridging the gap between understanding and practicing sustainability.



Dialog between Holly Ming, Headmistress of Diocesan Girls' Junior School, Hong Kong, and Representatives of the Young Generation

The Establishment of Integral Institute

As the Council Chair of the Integral Institute, **Hau Lee**, the Thoma Professor of Operations, Information and Technology, Stanford Graduate School of Business, announced the official establishment of the Institute, serving as an independent non-profit organization dedicated to sustainability-related education and innovative research. Integral Institute aims to create a sustainable future for all, by offering a variety of programs, activities, and resources to facilitate knowledge sharing, and exchange of ideas and insights.

As a Council Board Member of Integral Institute, **Edgar Tung**, Chief Executive Officer of Tessellation Group, also announced the group's pledge for Carbon Neutrality by 2050.



(Left): Hau Lee, Council Chair of Integral Institute, announced the official establishment of Integral Institute
(Right): Edgar Tung, Chief Executive Officer of Tessellation, announced the group's pledge for Carbon Neutrality by 2050

As we pursue common goals with a decade of dialogs, in the years to come, Integral Conversation will continue to joint hands with leaders of noble aspirations, to explore diverse solutions in realizing the UNSDGs.

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About Integral Conversation

Integral Conversation provides thought leaders and experts from diverse fields an independent platform to exchange insights and perspectives on sustainable development models. Discussion topics spanned culture, education, innovation, urban planning and architecture, healthcare, digital transformation, and how they are connected to the concept of sustainability.

Since 2014, the conference integrates dialogs, cultural experiences, and eco-tourism activities in the scenic city of Guilin.

About Integral Institute

Established in 2023, Integral Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to sustainability and environmental stewardship. It offers a variety of programs and courses, activities, and networks that empower like-minded individuals and organizations to develop necessary skills and knowledge, to create a more sustainable future.

Grounded in Integral's sustainability, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all aspects of life and the need to address social, economic, and environmental issues, Integral Institute stimulates innovation, develops holistic perspectives on sustainability, and explores the world's complex challenges.

