



Bundaberg Regional Sister City ASEAN Visit Report

Venue: Nanning

Date: 24 September – 28 September

Attendees:

- Mayor Helen Blackburn
- Cr Steve Cooper
- Cr Carmen McEneaney
- Betty Kao (Economic Development Projects Officer)

Overview

The delegation was invited by the Nanning Foreign Affairs to attend the China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) and a series of meetings and visits to promote cultural and economic interaction. The event was hosted by the Nanning Municipal People's Government.

Visits and meeting included:

21st CAEXPO Exhibition - Major Trade Expo

The 21st CAEXPO featured over 3,000 exhibitors and attracted more than 200,000 visitors.

This year, more than 100 contracts were signed between businesses at the expo, with 69% of these focused on manufacturing. The projects spanned key sectors such as new chemical materials, new energy and energy storage, non-ferrous metals, and machinery and equipment. Emerging industries, including low-carbon polymer materials and high-end semiconductor chemical materials, also featured prominently.

Bundaberg was represented in two capacities this year: through a Sister Cities booth and alongside Trade and Investment Queensland, showcasing products from Bundaberg Brewed Drinks and Macadamias Australia. Discussions also took place with a local distributor about Kalki Moon.



Trade Investment Booth: Bundaberg products were a key feature

2024 Nanning Sister Cities Exchange Conference – Economic and Trade Matchmaking Conference - Industry, Agricultural and Cross-Border Trade.

On the second day of the conference, Mayor Helen Blackburn addressed over 300 international delegates and business representatives, highlighting investment opportunities in Bundaberg.

Countries and organisations represented at the event included Indonesia, Mexico, Malaysia, Xuan Cau Group (Vietnam), Tri Son Trade and Services Company (Vietnam), Michoacan Industrial Association (Mexico), and Guangxi Qifeng Juzhou Fruit Industry (China), among others.



Mayor Helen Blackburn speaking on various investment opportunities.



Bundaberg Region investment prospectus and hotel investment prospectus on display.

Jasmine Industry Tour in Hengzhou

Hengzhou, known as the "hometown of jasmine" in China, produces over 80% of the country's total output of both jasmine flowers and jasmine tea.

In recent years, Hengzhou has accelerated the development of its jasmine flower industry, contributing significantly to the region's rural revitalisation. The city is building a diverse industrial cluster that includes jasmine flower tea, potted plants, food, tourism, catering, and sports and wellness sectors, among others.

The purpose of the visit was to understand how the city had created a tourism destination around the agriculture industry.



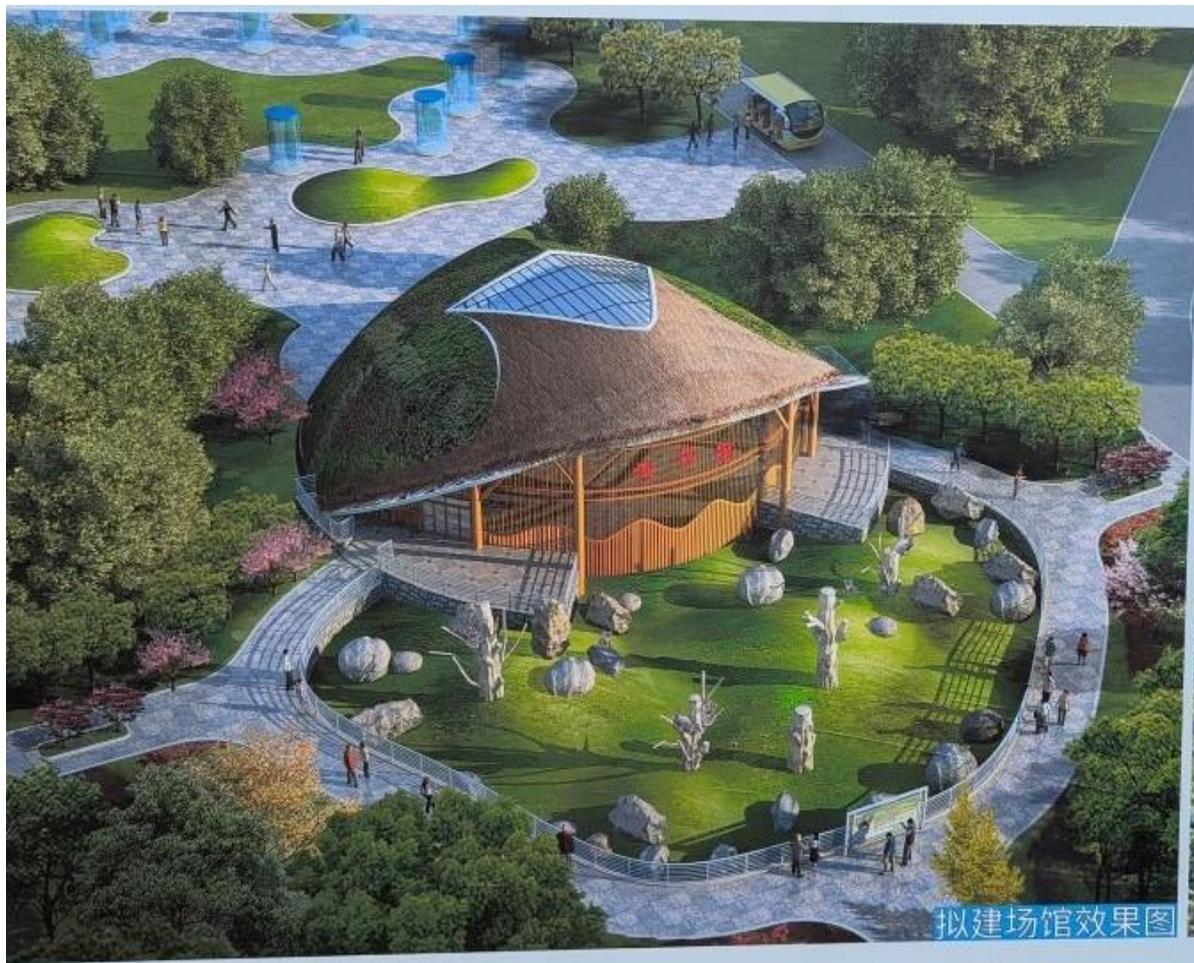
Council delegation in front of the newly constructed Jasmine tourism facility

Nanning Zoo

The delegation participated in the opening ceremony of the new baby animal nursery at Nanning Zoo.

Nanning Zoo is one of the most profitable zoos in China. In November 2023, it began a major expansion and modernisation project, which will unfold in five stages, with completion expected by the end of 2027.

The zoo currently features a kangaroo enclosure and plans are underway to develop an Australian precinct that will include both kangaroo and koala enclosures. The zoo's management expressed interest in receiving support to help them acquire koalas for this new exhibit.



RT-Mart Supermarket

RT-Mart Supermarket, formerly known as Auchan and now owned by the Alibaba Group, is one of China's largest grocery chains.

The purpose of the visit was to gain insights into the new in-store fulfillment technology for online orders that has been implemented across RT-Mart to enhance efficiency.

Orders placed through RT-Mart's mobile app are fulfilled using in-store inventory and placed on conveyor belts that transport bags of groceries above the shopping floor to a designated area for packing and delivery. This technology has significantly improved efficiency by reducing the number of workers walking across the aisles. Now only one person manages a small section to fulfill smaller orders before placing them on the conveyor belt for completion. RT-Mart reported that this streamlined process had increased overall efficiency within the store.

Additionally, RT-Mart features an international products section that includes a limited selection of Australian goods. While they currently do not stock products from Bundaberg, we are exploring this opportunity.



Fengxiang Road Primary School

Fengxiang Road Primary school visited Bundaberg earlier this year and performed at the Lunar new year celebration. During the visit, they also attended a half day at St Luke's Primary School where students from both schools enjoyed a varied program of activities. The visit was the highlight of the education delegates.

The Bundaberg delegation was invited to visit Fengxian Road Primary School. The principal and teachers expressed interest in establishing a long-term exchange program with Bundaberg schools.



The delegation was welcomed to the school by a group of student dancers



Gift exchange



Guangxi Sports Centre

The Guangxi Sports Centre is a key construction project sponsored by the governments of Nanning and Guangxi. It features a stadium, gymnasium, swimming and diving hall, modern tennis centre and disaster coordination centre. The purpose of the visit was to understand the management of the facility, explore the various ways the facilities are utilised and learn how to ensure that they are used at full capacity as much as possible.



Nanning Agricultural Products Trading Centre

The Nanning Agricultural Products Trading Centre, which is currently undergoing expansion, aims to enhance connectivity between Nanning and ASEAN countries through improved land and sea routes.

The project seeks to establish a comprehensive trading system that encompasses fruit distribution, trading, and processing, facilitating a high level of China-ASEAN fruit trading, display, settlement, warehousing, processing, logistics, and customs clearance.

During the meeting, the trading centre manager highlighted the potential opportunity for Bundaberg to export processed mango and passionfruit puree due to the high demand for these products in China.

Additionally, they expressed interest in exploring the possibility of using the Nanning Trading Centre as a fulfillment centre for delivering Australian products to ASEAN countries. We advised them that we would need to refer this request to Trade and Investment Queensland.



Site plan of the development



The Centre General Manager holding frozen mango puree which is distributed across China.

Rivulis

Rivulis is a global manufacturer and provider of complete micro and drip irrigation systems and solutions for seasonal horticulture, orchards, vineyards, row crops, sub-surface drip irrigation (SDI), and greenhouse hydroponic applications. They currently have an office in Brisbane.

During the meeting between the Council delegation and Rivulis, the Mayor expressed concerns regarding waste from existing irrigation systems, particularly T-Tape and drip tape, which are frequently used in Bundaberg but are causing significant landfill issues. The Mayor highlighted the challenges local farmers face in recycling these pipes that need to be replaced regularly and requested a more sustainable and easily recyclable irrigation system.

Additionally, the Mayor highlighted opportunities for Rivulis to attend future agricultural events in the region.

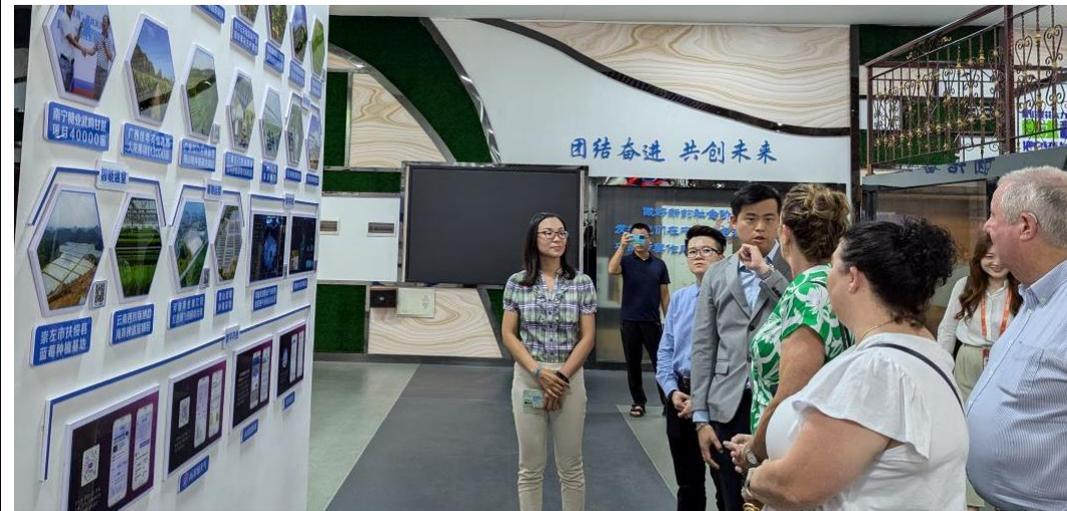


Jiejia Run Science and Technology (JJR)

Founded in 2008 with a registered capital of 107.47 million yuan, JJR is a high-tech enterprise specializing in digital agriculture, intelligent water and fertiliser integration, and smart greenhouse technology. The company leverages historical data, cloud computing, AI vision technology and other advanced technologies to provide customers with innovative agricultural solutions.

JJR is currently assisting numerous agricultural producers in China and abroad by using AI to monitor and identify the growth stages of crops, automatically determining the corresponding water and fertiliser needs for each specific crop.

The mayor encouraged the CEO to visit Bundaberg and present this technology to local agricultural producers.



Meeting with the Nanning Government

- Mayor Hou Gang, Mayor of Nanning
- Ms Jian Xianoyun, Vice Chairwoman of the CPPCC Nanning Committee, Director of Nanning Committee of China Zhi Gong Party
- Ms Wei Na, Director of Nanning Administration of Culture, Broadcast and Tourism
- Mr Liang Jian, Deputy Director of Nanning Foreign Affairs Office

The meeting took place in Mayor Hou Gang's office and discussion was around building on our current relationship through tourism and educational exchange.



Meeting with the Chairman of the Autonomous Region Overseas Chinese Federation and local businesses investors

The Autonomous Region Overseas Chinese Federation plays a crucial role in assisting Chinese citizens who have recently returned to China, ensuring their contributions to the country's economic growth and modernisation. The Federation encourages returnees to leverage their strengths in capital, technology, talent, information and management to support national initiatives focused on rural revitalisation, common prosperity and green development.

The organisation's goal is to foster closer ties with overseas Chinese businesspeople, startup leaders, talented individuals, and college students. It aims to establish cooperation platforms for the joint development of the Belt and Road Initiative and to expand channels for attracting investments and talent.

At the meeting, we presented the host and guests with copies of the Bundaberg Region's investment flyer and hotel investment prospectus. They advised the hotel investment prospectus was informative but would benefit from the inclusion of a feasibility study.

Actions:

- **Follow up with Kalki Moon** on a potential market opportunity identified at the ASEAN Conference. Council to engage with Kalki Moon to explore this lead.
- **Connect Nanning Zoo** with the relevant Australian department regarding their request for a loan of koalas.
- **Engage local primary schools** to explore opportunities for forming exchange programs.
- **Consult with local passionfruit and mango suppliers** about the possibility of exporting to the Chinese market. Council will then introduce them to Trade Investment Queensland for assistance with this opportunity.
- **Encouraged Rivulis and JJR** to visit Bundaberg and attend future agriculture events, providing them with opportunities to speak to local farmers.
- **Review and update** the existing hotel investment prospectus.