Rooted in western China: IE expo Chengdu 2026 helps companies settle and grow

- 207 environmental companies from nine countries and regions
- 9,157 trade visitors from 23 countries and regions
- 48 projects worth RMB 5 billion announced by Chengdu Environment Group
- Six concurrent forums on implementation challenges

IE expo Chengdu 2026, western China's leading trade fair for environmental technologies, closed on September 18 at the Western China International Expo City in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Over three days, 207 exhibitors from nine countries and regions showcased products and solutions for water, solid waste, air and environmental monitoring to 9,157 trade visitors.

"Six editions in, IE expo Chengdu has outgrown its role as a place to buy equipment," said Jiang Gang, Managing Director of Messe Muenchen Zhongmao Co., Ltd. "What encourages us most is how many exhibitors now keep their R&D, their service teams and their people in western China. In the end, a trade fair is only as valuable as the industry it helps grow here."

From bringing companies in to helping them take root

For its first five editions, IE expo Chengdu worked like a transfusion for the region, bringing mature technology, equipment and capital from China's east coast to the west. This year, exhibitors from outside Sichuan are increasingly building plants, opening branch offices and setting up local service teams in the province. The fair's role is moving from inviting companies in to helping them settle and grow.

Foshan Shanjia Environmental Protection Equipment Co., Ltd. has built a production base in Guang'an, Sichuan. Chengdu Fengkun Environmental Protection Technology Co., Ltd. is registered in Chengdu and was set up by a Suzhou parent company to serve customers across western China. Both are examples of a wider trend: teams and manufacturing capacity moving into the region.

"Western China's environmental market has a strong outlook, and it is a priority for us. Our energy-saving and emission-reduction products fit regional demand closely," said Wang Bin, Operations Manager of Chengdu Fengkun Environmental Protection Technology. "Visitor quality was high. We met customers from several industries and overseas buyers from Portugal. Compared with similar fairs in the region, this one delivered."

For exhibitors, the message is clear: the region's environmental market has

gone from “worth a visit” to “worth putting down roots.”

Project pipelines gain momentum as visitor quality rises

The fair drew 9,157 trade visitors from all 31 provincial-level regions of China. Of these, 82.7 % came from the 12 western provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. Chengdu, Chongqing and Mianyang were the top three source cities, a pattern that broadly reflects the region’s industrial clusters.

During the fair, Chengdu Environment Group held its 2026 Eco-Partner Conference and announced 48 cooperation projects with a planned value of RMB 5 billion. Delegations from Sichuan Environmental Protection Industry Group, Sichuan Eco-Environment Group, Chengdu Xingrong Environmental Technology, Chengdu Tiantou Environment and Chengdu Tuojiang River Basin Investment & Development Group also visited the show. Environmental projects in Sichuan have traditionally been delivered by design-build-operate consortia, and local platform companies have built up assets and networks through years of operation. Now they want to put that experience to work on new technologies and processes. For these companies, IE expo Chengdu has become the annual meeting point for new technology and new partners.

Environment, health and safety (EHS) managers from manufacturing companies have become a fast-growing visitor group. Those from BOE, Tongwei Solar, Kanghong Pharmaceutical, Swellfun, Dongfang Boiler, Sinoma Science & Technology and Yibin Grace arrived with upgrade projects, and their questions have moved upstream: they want to know how to cut emissions within the process rather than treat them at the end of the pipe, how to reduce energy consumption and how to measure green manufacturing indicators.

Exhibitors noticed the difference. Guang Huirong, Deputy General Manager of Chengdu Zhihe Environmental Protection Technology, said the visitor profile matched the company’s business precisely and drew interest from food and chemical customers as well as overseas visitors. Fu Xiaohong of Fujian Fengzhu Environmental Protection said the region’s accelerating infrastructure and industrial park upgrades suit the company’s new AI monitoring, energy-saving and resource-recovery products. At the fair, the company connected with customers in the industrial and livestock wastewater sectors.

International participation rises

Overseas participation grew noticeably this year. Visitors came from 22 countries and regions outside China, including Malaysia, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Poland, Russia, Singapore and Türkiye.

“Visitor quality at this year’s IE expo Chengdu was high, with large numbers of trade visitors and overseas buyer delegations,” said Yang Zhuo, General Manager of the Solid Waste Division at Shanghai Shanmei Environmental Equipment. “We hosted several overseas customer groups and presented some of our international project references. They showed strong interest in

our AI optical sorters and high-speed sorting robots."

These visitors came to do business: municipal solid waste concessionaires and recycling businesses from Malaysia, along with sanitation and waste management companies from the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore, arrived with concrete requirements and were sourcing technology and equipment in western China. Environment and sustainability teams from manufacturers such as Samsung Display, Murata and Henkel came to see how global green supply chain standards can be applied in their Chinese plants. That fits both the region's push to expand abroad and the wider shift of supply chains toward Southeast Asia.

Industry expertise, multiple formats

Six concurrent forums ran alongside the fair, each built around implementation challenges. Topics covered water and wastewater, solid waste, monitoring and testing, green and low carbon, and cross-cutting themes. Speakers included Tan Zhouliang, Vice President of the Chengdu branch of the Chinese Academy of Sciences; He Weiqi of the Tsinghua Suzhou Institute for Environmental Innovation; Gong Zhengjun, Dean of Environmental Science and Engineering at Southwest Jiaotong University; and He Chuanshu of Sichuan University. Technology leaders from MFT Environmental, FPI, Sailhero and SDL contributed engineering case studies.

IE expo Chengdu connects technology from eastern China with projects in the west, and research insight with project owners. It also turns "circular economy and green manufacturing" from a slogan into figures that local companies can see and calculate. The connections made on the show floor and the teams that choose to stay in western China will outlast the fair. That is what "rooted in western China" means.

This year's edition in western China wraps up, and the next stop on the calendar is IE expo Shanghai 2027, Asia's leading trade fair for water, air, recycling and circularity solutions. It will take place April 20–22, 2027, at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre and will show where the industry is heading next.