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# China plots course for green growth amid a boom built on dirty industry

National economic blueprint set to tackle pollution and waste, and invest in renewable energy

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**Jonathan Watts**, Asia environment correspondent  
guardian.co.uk, Friday 4 February 2011 19.51 GMT

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Smog down a main street of Linfen, in China's Shanxi province. Photograph: Peter Parks/AFP/Getty Images

Whisper it, but could [China](#) be about to turn an environmental corner after more than three decades of filthy economic growth? Hopes for a cleaner future are rising ahead of a national blueprint to tackle [pollution](#), [waste](#) and champion renewable technology.

The five-year plan, due in March, is being hailed as the greenest strategy document in the country's history. Sceptics warn that one environmental threat – industrial pollution – may be replaced by another – excess consumption.

The five-year economic plan, once an arcane exercise in communist fiat, has big implications for the outside world. It could affect the colour of the sky, the planet's temperature and the welfare of billions of people beyond the jurisdiction of the country's mandarins.

An army of cadres, officials and academics have spent years laying groundwork for the plan – the 12th since Mao Zedong started Soviet-style strategising in 1953. They have one of the world's most ambitious administrative tasks: plotting a course for a continent-sized nation, a 1.4 billion population and a \$5 trillion economy that is growing at double-digit speed every year.

It has never been more important to the global environment.

China is the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter, number one [energy](#) user and arguably the most polluted nation on earth. The International Energy Agency [noted](#) that Europe's plan to extend 1990-2020 carbon dioxide cuts from 20% to 30% would equal only two weeks of China's emissions.

The final document will include measures to curb pollution, promote clean technology and initiate an environment tax, the Guardian understands.

"The environment tax is going to happen. This is evident in the proposals for the next five-year plan," said Ma Zhong director of the school of environment and national resources at Renmin University. "It is likely to be levied nationwide, but there is also a possibility it will initially be introduced in selected regions."

Other radical measures still under discussion include a possible cap on energy use and a

shift away from GDP-based performance evaluation, academics and government advisers say.

Hu Angang, economics professor at Tsinghua University and a consultant on the plan, said he advised the government to set a cap on energy consumption, to influence when China's emissions might peak. With existing targets, this is not likely before 2030, by when carbon dioxide output will have more than doubled. Hu is pressing for more rapid reductions.

"For the first time, we will see a new model pioneered by a country that is not yet developed. This is a historical, critical change," he said. "The new five-year plan is an opportunity for China to lead the green revolution, which will de-link growth and carbon dioxide emissions."

It is far from certain his radical proposal will be adopted, though several NGOs and international institutions said the suggestion has had surprising traction.

The five-year plan will see a growth in both black and green power consumption. Even as coal use rises, Beijing will blaze further along the trail towards a low-carbon economy. Its wind power generating capacity has doubled annually for four years and in 2010 became yet another field in which China surpassed the US to become number one. Seven of the planet's top 10 solar panel makers are now Chinese.

The focus in future is likely to be nuclear energy, forecast to increase tenfold over the next 10 years, and hydroelectric power. Last month, the National Energy Agency said China plans to build an additional 140 gigawatts of hydropower capacity in the next five years, though this will have a dire impact on ecologically crucial sites.

The country's high-speed rail network – non-existent in 2008 – will be bigger than the rest of the world combined within two years. According to one domestic carmaker, China will soon unveil plans for 10m electric car charge-and-park places by 2020. In these and other fields, such as eco-city development and public transport construction, the five-year plan is likely to set ambitious spending targets.

Last year China invested \$34bn in clean technology, compared to \$18bn by the US. The contrast – which shocked many in Washington – is partly explained by different political systems, vested interests and stages of development. While the US is dominated by big oil and big money, China is run by big hydro and big brother – a dictatorship of engineers.

The "scientific development" policy of President Hu Jintao, who started his career working for Sinohydro, the world's biggest dam builder, recognises the challenges posed by climate change and the investment opportunities of renewable energy. It has been far less successful in curbing the dirty side-effects of industrial development.

Deborah Seligsohn of the World Resources Institute said there was a clear difference between China's record on pollution – where it lags far behind developed nations – and renewable technology, where it is ahead in many sectors.

"In clean energy, China is busy setting themselves up as a world leader. If they meet their most ambitious targets for 2020, they'll have the most wind, the most nuclear and the most hydro," she said. "But China is still playing catch-up on pollution. The air quality in Beijing does not exactly feel like London or New York."

That too should change. Sharp northern winds have helped Beijing to start this year with a record stretch of "blue sky" days.

A longer term solution to the smog shrouding many Chinese cities will be tighter factory and vehicle controls. Last week, the government said it would widen pollution reduction targets by adding nitrogen oxide – roughly a third of which comes from vehicle exhausts – and ammonia, a source of water contamination from chemical and textile plants.

Cities including Shanghai and Beijing have begun restricting car ownership. The authorities have also taken positive steps on the release of environmental data. For the past two years, the only real-time, publicly available air pollution monitor in Beijing was

provided by tweets from the US embassy. From last month, up-to-the-minute air and water data from more than 100 cities in China has been available on the website of the [environment ministry](#).

Green technology and pollution controls should improve the quality of the air and water, but they do little to ease the bigger environmental threat from depleting wildlife, ecosystems and natural resources. Each year northern China faces a shortfall of 40bn cubic metres of water, forcing ever deeper drilling into non-replenishable aquifers. To address this, China plans to [cap water use and double spending on water conservation projects](#).

Government advisers say environmental talk will be greenwash unless local officials are persuaded to rethink their growth-at-all-costs mentality. Pan Jiahua, the executive director of the sustainable development research centre at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, expects this to happen naturally.

"GDP growth will have to be slowed down," said Pan. "This is somewhat natural. In Shanghai there is no more land available for development. In the steel industry, we have the capacity to produce 750m tonnes, which is 40% of the global total. There is no need to grow further."

While double-digit expansion has been the norm for the past five years, Pan expects the next target to be 8 or 9%. The plan will place greater priority on protecting arable land, food security, wildlife protection and the "ecological restoration" of areas damaged by construction of roads, rail and other infrastructure. Together, these would mark a turning point for China's environmental degradation. "In the 12th five-year plan, we will go beyond the peak and start to go down," he said.

That is optimistic. Previous attempts to give nature a breather by slowing the economy failed spectacularly. For the 10th and 11th five-year plans, the government aimed at 7-7.5% growth, but this was treated as a floor rather than a ceiling by overzealous local officials, who see GDP as a key measurement to compete with rival regions, get promoted and secure bribes. As a result, the economy surged forward at double-digit pace for most of this period – with dire consequences for coal consumption, pollution and habitat destruction. Once again, provincial governments appear unwilling to throttle back. Figures published late last month indicate most plan to [double their GDPs during the next five years](#).

To tackle this problem, planners are considering another radical measure, to de-link GDP figures from cadres' performance evaluation. This may prove a step too far. While there is widespread praise for the proposals unveiled so far, there is scepticism about the government's ability to overcome business groups and corrupt officials who have benefited from growth.

"We are expecting to see a truly green five-year plan, which for the first time will contain really detailed measures and teeth in it," said Yang Ailun of Greenpeace. "The next five years will be the defining moment for China's environmental movement. There will be more disasters and more of a struggle to impose tougher regulations. Local interests groups have grown quite strong. They won't accept change quietly."

Ma Jun, of the Institute for Public and Environmental Affairs, said the government would take a big step forward if it set absolute limits on pollutants and resource consumption, rather than the incremental, economy-linked targets seen until now.

"This is the first major effort to translate words into actions. Before the government set targets and talked of improvement, but this is the first really major effort to integrate that into an economic plan. They should get credit for that," said Ma.

China still had a long way to go, given the appallingly low level from which it starts and the lack of many of the tools used to improve the environment in the west, such as a strong civil society and regulatory obligations for factories to disclose a toxic release inventory.

"I don't consider this a turning point," said Ma. "We haven't seen air and water really

get clean yet. The measures under discussion are not sufficient at all. "

Beijing's claims to have turned over a green new leaf are also weakened by the continued destruction of the nation's ecosystems. Last month, the boundaries of the last fish wild sanctuary on the upper reaches of the Yangtze river were redrawn to make way for a dam that showed, say conservationists, the authorities lack a protection baseline. This highlights the greater longterm environmental threat facing China from the unsustainable use of resources, already visible in the depletion of water systems, biodiversity, energy, soil quality and arable land.

To deal with this, environmentalists say even the most progressive top-down policies need to be balanced with greater awareness at the grassroots otherwise China will follow the west in looking clean but consuming dirty.

"I'm hopeful about the next five-year plan," said Li Bo of Friends of Nature. "The government is prepared to go further than before. But we should do more. Until now, low carbon concepts have been introduced only for industry. In the future, I hope those ideas can be adopted in the community so we see a change in lifestyles."

• Additional reporting by Cui Zheng, Liu Yang and Han Cheng

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## **Comments in chronological order (Total 46 comments)**

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[oldbrew](#)

4 February 2011 8:07PM

It might help to differentiate between 'on-the-ground' pollution and the carbon dioxide question. Nobody gets health problems directly from carbon dioxide but they do from local environmental pollution.

At least China is looking at ways of tackling the issues.

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[Zogz](#)

4 February 2011 8:45PM

Good for China in showing some initiative- if only the west, the worst historic polluters, would show the same insight.

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[MaggiesFirmhand](#)

4 February 2011 8:48PM

This should keep the useful idiots in the West happy and onside for another few years...

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[CrackedButter](#)

4 February 2011 8:51PM

I didn't like reading this line from the first paragraph, though it speaks the truth '*three decades of filthy economic growth*'.

I just consider it a bit rich, when this is coming from a Western country where ALL it's growth has been based on a filthy economy.

Things will look different in 100 years time if China pulls this off.

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[SamabAhmad](#)

4 February 2011 8:56PM

Go China.....

If Western are so concerned with China CO2 emissions then they have to cut down waste from everything. This will have little pressure on third world countries who are producing for so called civilised countries. I am glad to read that China has ambitions to look into creating greener spaces.

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[Gelion](#)

4 February 2011 9:01PM

@Zogz

"Good for China in showing some initiative- if only the west, the worst historic polluters, would show the same insight."

Yes, good for China to FINALLY show some interest in this issue. I would point out that the Chinese, though communist, have been keeping their currency deflated, has one of the lowest minimum wages in the world, and has no health and safety legislation anywhere near the UK or EU (thus of course why their manufacturing is so cheap).

@MaggiesFirmhand

"This should keep the useful idiots in the West happy and onside for another few years..."

The West has it's problems, but so do China - 2/3rds of their population live in poverty, the rest have earned money on the back of supplying the West with products. Take away that demand any time in the next 50 years and the Chinese economy will collapse. The Chinese government have had to artificially reduce the value of their currency for many years to stay competitive, and this is now causing inflation in China, a bubble effectively, which will, in the end lead to a crash.

The idea that China can live well on it's own is utterly false. It NEEDS the West as much as the West needs China.

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[Gelion](#)

4 February 2011 9:03PM

@SamabAhmad

"Go China....."

If Western are so concerned with China CO2 emissions then they have to cut down waste from everything. This will have little pressure on third world countries who are producing for so called civilised countries. I am glad to read that China has ambitions to look into creating greener spaces."

It is a fantasy to suggest that China is a bastion of health and safety, good conditions for workers, environmental soundness and non-pollution or human rights.

The West (and the US) are hardly paragons of virtue, but China is in the same boat.

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[NoddyMe](#)

4 February 2011 10:11PM

Economic progress is without penalties, as shown by the Industrial Revolution in the West.... - which industrialised about 100 years earlier than China and I still remember learning all about the London smog of 1952, and all these well before the concept of climate change and greenhouse gases..

So, well done China, for doing what it can to help the environment..

As for our human rights, 2 words - Iraq and Afghanistan...?

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[Monitor2010](#)

4 February 2011 10:29PM

Well, having got a sniff of 'clean air' as result of the Olympics the Chinese at all levels have become 'addicted' to it.

After all what good is all that wealth if you are living in a cesspit!

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[tomtom007](#)

4 February 2011 11:32PM

>>>Last month, the National Energy Agency said China plans to build an additional 140 gigawatts of hydropower capacity in the next five years, though this will have a dire impact on ecologically crucial sites.<<<

Hydropower is the primary source of China's clean energy efforts. Using more hydro allows China to claim that 15% of its energy will come from clean sources by 2030. This is praise worthy and the USA and the UK should do more of this. However, in America, for the past thirty years groups like Greenpeace have made it nearly impossible to build any new dams.

As for other green efforts like wind and solar, China currently derives less than 1% of its total energy from these sources, and, according to a US senate report, that will not change between now and 2030. Also, China now supplies 95% of the rare earth materials used for solar PV creation. Any country besides China that moves heavily into solar manufacturing had better line up a second source as a rare earth supplier.

Personally, I think that those who argue that PV cells should be made at home are ignoring an obvious bit of reality. The labor is so cheap in China and India that in the long run, developed nations will never be able to compete price wise. Better to purchase the cells where they are most cheaply made as we now do for plumbing and electrical

supplies. The money to be made locally off of any surge in the use of solar will be mostly as a result of the fees charged for installing the system.

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Longrigg

5 February 2011 12:01AM

Let's hear it for benign dictatorships that differ somewhat from the corporate-owned 'democracies' in the west where, despite, all the scientific data / consensus in the world, we still have virtual inaction due to the clamouring of the corporate-owned media and a few climate-denying buffoons.

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t1mh0pe

5 February 2011 12:08AM

@ Gelion

The West has it's problems, but so do China - 2/3rds of their population live in poverty, the rest have earned money on the back of supplying the West with products. Take away that demand any time in the next 50 years and the Chinese economy will collapse. The Chinese government have had to artificially reduce the value of their currency for many years to stay competitive, and this is now causing inflation in China, a bubble effectively, which will, in the end lead to a crash.

A fair point, but how is this any different from the problems currently being experienced by most Western countries? After a century of printing more and more valueless money, I'd say the Western bubble is well on it's way to bursting too. All the maneuvering by economists and policy makers does nothing except to patch up a broken system that by it's own design must eventually implode.

However, there is a solution.

<http://www.zeitgeistmovie.com/>

While it is of course commendable that China is taking a stand on the environment, apparently more so than the rest of the world that has spent the last 20 years discussing action, true change cannot be effected in the current system of profiteering - there is no profit in sustainability and efficiency, no carrot on the end of the stick to prompt us to action.

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Qingyou

5 February 2011 12:40AM

As far as I am concerned, pollution control targets have been set for each level of the government and those who can't meet the targets will be held accountable; demerited or dismissed. Another good news, glacier is increasing on the Himalayas and wonder if it is contradictory to the green house effect theory.

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kennymac825

5 February 2011 3:03AM

I feel I have to join those gushing over China and how much better than the evil West they are.

Hu Angang, .....advised the government to set a cap on energy consumption, to influence when China's emissions might peak. With existing targets, this is not likely before **2030, by when carbon dioxide output will have more than doubled.**

Er, perhaps I will hold off on proclaiming China as the saviour of the planet for just a bit longer

Qingyou@ 12:40

When you write

and those who can't meet the targets will be held accountable; demerited or dismissed.

I think you meant demerited or dismissed with extreme prejudice> as is the usual practice.

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[LochnessMunster](#)

5 February 2011 5:14AM

MaggiesFirmhand

This should keep the useful idiots in the West happy and onside for another few years...

What makes you think china gives a toss what the West thinks?

Green energy is the next industrial revolution - China intends to lead it and the attitudes of people like yourself means we are handing it to them on a plate.

Thanks a lot.

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[LochnessMunster](#)

5 February 2011 5:20AM

Gelion

I would point out that the Chinese, though communist, have been keeping their currency deflated, has one of the lowest minimum wages in the world, and has no health and safety legislation anywhere near the UK or EU (thus of course why their manufacturing is so cheap).

Yep - which is exactly why our philanthropic western corporations have been falling over each other to relocate half of their manufacturing base there.

You voted for political parties with a global capitalism policy remember?

Now you got it.

Recommend (10)

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[MattPrescott](#)

5 February 2011 9:05AM

It might be a Central Plan, but at least China has a Plan.

Meanwhile, our government Ministers proudly announce that they have no plan, beyond cutting public spending.

I am a green entrepreneur and have found the past 2 years hugely dispiriting.

The banks have seized up, the EST looks after itself and is on course for being shut down, DECC has been given a £4 billion bill for nuclear decommissioning, the



Technology Strategy Board part funds things and then expects you to magic up money from somewhere else, the EU funding process is a closed shop for the favoured few, the Carbon Trust has a few compliant favourites, Ofgem is asleep at the wheel and the energy companies are being given the lead on energy saving.

The list goes on and on...

If the government was serious about green growth it would create a carbon price and a market for new innovative businesses.

As it is we've had a lot of rhetoric, but no policies or funding anyone could build a business plan around.

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[gpwayne](#)

5 February 2011 9:30AM

**tomtom007**

However, in America, for the past thirty years groups like Greenpeace have made it nearly impossible to build any new dams.

I find that hard to believe - not that Greenpeace might campaign against new dams, but that they could exercise enough influence. During that period, the Republicans have been in power several times and their relationship to the environmentalists is hardly warm. During the same period, companies have been allowed to blow the tops off mountains and fuck up everything around them for miles, yet the environmentalists have only just managed to get anything done to prevent this. Your claim would be more credible if you could substantiate it.

Better to purchase the cells where they are most cheaply made as we now do for plumbing and electrical supplies.

Sure, mass manufacture is best done in Asia, since its labour is cheaper but also the earnings do help create employment and a demand for education that lifts rural people out of the poverty trap they may be in. But the R&D, and the intellectual property rights that go with it, can be done anywhere. Right now, there is a huge difference between PV efficiencies in the lab (around 45% of energy converted) and manufactured PV cells - average efficiency 15% subject to conditions and other factors (like whether they track the sun or not).

Closing that gap, both in terms of efficient conversion and lowering manufacturing costs, should be an international priority in my opinion, especially as PV and other solar technologies are far less controversial in deployment and much easier and cheaper to maintain than wind generators, for example, or installations in the ocean, the most hostile environment on Earth.

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[EwanB](#)

5 February 2011 9:38AM

**Zogz**

*Good for China in showing some initiative- if only the west, the worst historic polluters, would show the same insight.*

If you're talking about GHG emissions Actually europe is making progress and has far more ambitious targets than China. In fact we are now reaching a point where some european economies are starting to drop below Chinas per capita emissions as Chinas continue to soar, fuelled by an enormous level of coal combustion.

[http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bnccppjof8f9\\_&ctype=l&strail=false&nslm=h&met\\_y=en\\_atm\\_co2e\\_pc&hl=en&dl=en#ctype=l&strail=false&](http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bnccppjof8f9_&ctype=l&strail=false&nslm=h&met_y=en_atm_co2e_pc&hl=en&dl=en#ctype=l&strail=false&)

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and according to the Guardian the emissions for 2009 per capita are:

China: 5.83

Sweden: 5.58

Portugal: 5.28

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/jan/31/world-carbon-dioxide-emissions-country-data-co2>

So actually as Chinas emissions are increasing at a current rate of about 13% a year many European economies have lower emissions per capita and are in fact setting ambitious emission reduction targets in line with what climate science says we need. (Sweden is aiming for 40% cut on 1990 levels by 2020 for example)

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[gpwayne](#)

5 February 2011 9:43AM

On the article:

The five-year plan, due in March, is being hailed as the greenest strategy document in the country's history. Sceptics warn that one environmental threat – industrial pollution – may be replaced by another – excess consumption.

Over the last few years I've been writing about China's progress, mainly supportive of their efforts, the speed of change they are prepared to contemplate, the progress they are making as a society etc. It didn't occur to me that the speed at which they are embracing the future and its potential - as opposed to the west cowering behind its faux-complacency - would bring it sooner to a confrontation with the essential paradox behind the whole environmental debate; the relationship between growth and sustainability. I believe that the growth of consumerism is antithetical to sustainability. As others have also pointed out, China's future is inextricably bound up with everyone else's now. If the US and European markets fold up under the pressures of climate change, peak oil, water shortages and disrupted food supplies, China will be one of the biggest losers (particularly in respect of devalued US debt like T-bills, of which they still hold nearly \$900 billion).

So the expansion of domestic markets, and the 'excess consumption' described in the article, is paradoxical for China. They are burning vast amounts of fossil fuels to provide energy for the expansion of both their export markets and domestic improvement, knowing these same initiative may also move us closer to climate change tipping points, a destabilised climate, and the collapse of the global markets that sustain China's growth.

"The new five-year plan is an opportunity for China to lead the green revolution, which will de-link growth and carbon dioxide emissions."

That's certainly the challenge. If China can figure out how to do it, their preeminence in the next century will be wholly deserved, since they will have saved all our bacon instead of, as several US politicians have observed, 'eating our lunch'.

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[AntonyIndia](#)

5 February 2011 1:11PM

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our [community standards](#). Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see [our FAQs](#).



[lxy001](#)

5 February 2011 1:29PM

Good for China. We could do with a 5 year plan in UK to boost renewable energy and stop all the delays caused by NIMBYS.

NIMBYS are not willing to have any power plants, renewable or traditional or landfill near their homes because they spoil their view. They should be charged far more for provision of electricity and waste disposal services.

The NIMBYS want to keep the UK as some form of 19th Century Industrial museum but where they have all the comforts of a modern world.

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[gpwayne](#)

5 February 2011 1:31PM

**AntonyIndia**

Just compare the headline with the photo below to see the difference between spin and reality. The CPC are masters at this, as India found out in 1962 after years of that party's line "Hindi Chinni bhai bhai". Why does the Guardian in 2011 has to fall for this PR China's PR hook line and sinker?

What is this - the alternative reality post? The headline and picture are complimentary, in that Chinese ambitions are reported against a graphic backdrop of the difficulties involved - a point also made several times in the article. Perhaps you didn't get that far? A more pertinent question then might be why you felt the need to imply the Guardian has fallen for anything.

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[AntonyIndia](#)

5 February 2011 1:50PM

@gpwayne

"Chinese ambitions" : yes, their country is one of the most polluted on Earth, all because of the ambitions the CPC polit bureau. Nobody forced them to industrialize in the way, speed and scale they did. Your favorite engineers forgot a few "details" in the run after power and money, like health and environment. Instead of criticizing the biggest polluters on this planet, you praise them: you could one of the most "useful idiots" for them.

The Guardian lets out a constant stream of negative articles on India and an equally constant positive one on PR China, it becomes embarrassing.

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[gpwayne](#)

5 February 2011 2:19PM

**AntonyIndia**

Got a bit of a thing about China, have we?

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[Bodhisatva](#)

5 February 2011 2:39PM

Last year China invested \$34bn in clean technology, compared to \$18bn by the US. The contrast – which shocked many in Washington – is partly explained by different political systems, vested interests and stages of development. While the US is dominated by big oil and big money, China is run by big hydro and big brother – a dictatorship of engineers.

This says it all really doesn't it? Of course we must all oppose the dictatorship in China and how they use oppression on their people. but at least they are not dictated to by the self interests of big business like America is.

I notice from the time indicators on most of these comments that they probably originated from our American brothers. The usual loons who trawl the net, seeking out key words like climate, to then be able to pile in with their libertarian and free market dogma.

What this article was saying is that China is at last trying to do something about the pollution their rush to industrialise has caused and well done to them.

Why can't the moderators of these pages cut out comments that only seek to justify the writer's prejudices? It would save the rest of us having to wade through utter crap to find the comments that pertain to the article in question.

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[QueenElizabeth](#)

5 February 2011 3:07PM

Noddyme

I still remember learning all about the London smog of 1952, and all these well before the concept of climate change and greenhouse gases..

And the 1952 smog led to the Clean Air Act of 1956 and laws insisting on the use of smokeless fuels. Now London's air - compared to Beijing - is good, because of a strong clean up plan. But interestingly, Chinese people over the age of about 50 still call London 'wudu' ('city of fog' (smog)), which is quite quaint considering it's now Beijing that is the 'city of fog' (unless those northerly winds are blowing in its favour). But that's industrialisation for you. And China has industrialised more rapidly and more exponentially than any other nation in history, and is also the world's most populous nation - so it's desperately needs to be doing something. Many people say, however, that it is still too little, way too late. Furthermore, due to its size and scale of industrial development, China - as Jonathan Watts explains in his far less optimistic *When a Billion Chinese Jump*, has the ability to affect the global environment in a way that small nations cannot.

As for our human rights, 2 words - Iraq and Afghanistan...?

Perhaps you could explain what human rights has got to do with it or is this just an attempt to get a quick and poorly-concealed stab in?

Recommend (3)

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[NeverMindTheBollocks](#)

5 February 2011 4:26PM

With an expected increase of over 650GW from coal during this decade and some analysts expecting 500GW from coal between now and 2015, it is clear that China is pursuing "green growth".

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[BanKeymoonkey](#)

5 February 2011 7:13PM

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[Smogbound](#)

5 February 2011 7:56PM

I seem to recall the phrase 'greenest government ever' from somewhere or other. It would be ironic if that government turned out to be Chinese.

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[Smogbound](#)

5 February 2011 8:01PM

AntonyIndia

5 February 2011 1:50PM

The Guardian lets out a constant stream of negative articles on India and an equally constant positive one on PR China, it becomes embarrassing.

What, a constant stream?

[World carbon dioxide emissions data by country: China speeds ahead of the rest](#)

Not so very constant then.

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[Steinadler](#)

5 February 2011 9:03PM

**Gelion:**

*The idea that China can live well on it's own is utterly false. It NEEDS the West as much as the West needs China.*

I'm not so sure we really do need the Chinese as much as they need us - some people here might, others (such as the under- and unemployed, surely) might not. What would happen if we were to stop buying most of the products from China that we do not truly need ? It seems to me that in the longer term a large portion of the population in a number of countries in the West might be better off if it had, in some way, been possible to divert import-based consumption into long-term investment .

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[ravagesoftime](#)

5 February 2011 9:44PM

gpwayne

AntonyIndia

Got a bit of a thing about China, have we?

he is an indian. what do you expect? indians are over obsessed with china due to their inferiority complex.

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ravagesoftime

5 February 2011 9:46PM

AntonyIndia

The Guardian lets out a constant stream of negative articles on India and an equally constant positive one on PR China, it becomes embarrassing.

its even more embarassing when indians compare themselves with mighty china. india should be compared with 3rd world countries like zimbabwe instead.

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quokkaZ

5 February 2011 10:49PM

An under-reported but important development in China:

[China Initiates Thorium Molten Salt Reactor Project/](#)

Otherwise know as Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor (LFTR) this technology was developed over 40 years ago at the US Oak Ridge National Labs. The US has just sat upon its hands for all that time despite many potential advantages over current dominant technology of pressurized light water reactors in nuclear power stations:

- Potentially cheaper due to atmospheric pressure operation removing the need for high pressure vessels.
- Core melts impossible as the core is already molten.
- Extremely high levels of passive safety. "Walk away safe" a real possibility.
- Much smaller waste stream decaying to background levels in a few hundred years.
- Very high fuel burn up of the order of 100 times better than PWRs. Relatively abundant Thorium makes this technology quite sustainable with fuel available for tens of thousands of year.
- Higher temperature operation leading to better thermal efficiency and potential applications generating processes heat for some industrial processes.

LFTRs as well as fast spectrum reactors such as the Integral Fast Reactor can make [a lifetime of energy in the palm of your hand](#) a reality. For a small environmental footprint these advanced nuclear power technologies are unrivaled.

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AntonyIndia

6 February 2011 1:19AM

So my first post got deleted: no criticism of the Party line permitted on PR China here on CIF!

@Smogbound: yes PR China emits 5 times more CO2 then India, but nobody writes about that here: instead both countries are always mentioned in one breath here. Stop thinking logically, start thinking ideologically.

@quokkaZ

India is working on thorium reactors [since long](#), but China gets praised for just starting

now.

The Green-Red combination still flourishes, even though the CPC polit bureau members are now the most exploiting capitalists in the Universe, but at least they are anti US plus they are Powerful, so they get the positive spin here.

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[panderson](#)

6 February 2011 2:22AM

UK's annual per capita emissions are 10 tonnes, with a commitment to reduce by 3 per cent a year. China's annual per capita emissions are 5 tonnes with a commitment to double emissions over the next ten or 15 years. China's per capita emissions are going to overtake the UKs in the next five years....

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[ravagesoftime](#)

6 February 2011 3:33AM

AntonyIndia is pissed off because no one is giving indians any attention lol. face the facts. china is world leader in green technology. india is not.

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[anumakonda](#)

6 February 2011 5:24AM

Yes. Chinese 12th Five Year Plan envisages advances in Science and Technology, Energy and Environment.

"The 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) will be approved in March 2011. For the first time in history, China invites international expertise to advise on goals and policies of its Five-Year Plan. In the proposed Plan, China will nurture and develop seven new strategic industries with favorable policies in the next five years, including new-generation information technology, energy-saving and environmental protection, new energy, biology, high-end equipment manufacturing, new materials and new-energy cars. In addition, the country will no longer target the growth rate as its top priority in its industrial development plan, focusing instead on the quality and the profitability of industrial growth. In particular, China will encourage the use of high technology in its industrial development.

As illustrated in the past Five-Year Plans, Chinese planners have been trying to unify technology policy and economic policy, import and assimilate foreign technology, and overcome the problems of the separation of science, technology, and industry since the early 1950s. The commitment to these goals have been increasingly seen by Chinese administrators as requiring reforms in the operation of the economy and technology management. These initiatives will continue to be at the top of China's planning agenda."

Source: <http://en.ce.cn/subject/17cpc/index.shtml>

China's growth in Energy is indeed spectacular.

Dr.A.Jagadeesh Nellore(AP),India

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C



gpwayne

6 February 2011 6:08AM

**AntonyIndia**

Stop thinking logically, start thinking ideologically.

Wow. I can't believe you actually said that. What a strange, and rather perverse demand.

I don't like the clichés about the left we often see in here, but isn't it when people abandon logic for ideology that 25 million people end up freezing to death in Siberia?

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quokkaZ

6 February 2011 6:30AM

@AntonyIndia

India is working on thorium reactors since long, but China gets praised for just starting now.

But not on Molten Salt reactors for which I have listed some of the advantages. I understand India would like to travel in that direction but haven't done very much yet.

What it seems China is doing is taking the work done at the Oak Ridge Labs and developing it further.

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MillionGandhis

6 February 2011 4:27PM

China comes...than every thing will be rapid....economy or pollution .....China used the population as the new-clear energy for the economic growth.....and most celebrating thing is that, "If China taken a decision means it is more than one sixth of the people's decision on the earth" so India also sholud come a clear step forward in compete with the growth in green living....

and green concept should also consider into safety issue in industries so, every industry sholud implement the green dreaming concept before their economic growth....

stop prevention every time and start preservation.....green concept is also a safety measure ...it is for the rest of the world where?.....

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LSD2008

7 February 2011 1:07AM

Guess very soon America will regain its glorious status of number one, in emission, both in absolute volume and by per capita.

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[WarKar](#)

7 February 2011 5:49AM

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[farnishk](#)

7 February 2011 12:13PM

"Green Growth"

No, don't get it.

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[Freego](#)

7 February 2011 1:28PM

There are many stories of huge importance in this article, amongst which is that they are not doing enough yet.

Nevertheless, the real story for the Western world here is that a 'non-democratic' country is doing what they are doing.

My feeling after over half a decade living and working with highly educated people largely one generation removed from peasant stock in Chinese cultures is that Western democracy or culture is a system, an arrangement, a policy or law that supersedes relationships and that Chinese habitually put relationship ahead of system; the system does not form the relationship and they are profoundly mystified by any who think it does. This means that by hook or by crook they make the system comply to their understanding of relationship, whatever the system happens to be.

This is also a reason for the gangs in China and the article mentions them. Over the medium to long term, and often even the short term, gangs are never good for the entire community, but the gangs in China often have beneficial effects over the short term and merge into the background or develop as their teeth fall out over time. I have even seen that some who still swagger get given free meals and pats on the back and the best seats as a kindness or in avoidance of confrontation by the restaurants and businesses they used to protect and nurture and for some time gouge. I have recently seen Westerners treated in exactly the same way and for the same reasons.

The West (meaning the Anglo-Saxon west, which I know better than the rest of the hemisphere) has got to learn from the older, less aggressive, more intelligent, very tough and harder working Chinese culture. The Chinese want the West to learn; want to form a relationship with the West in the same way as they are trying to form a relationship with Africa and South America and Australia and people elsewhere. They will not patent their culture and level accusations of piracy at those in the presently gouging West. When eventually the West does learn they will rejoice even while so many in the West seek so desperately to see the Chinese fail.

That is the news folks. This news is now 400 years old., but it is still news in the West. It is the good news.

The bad is my news to them at all levels of contact, which is that the West cannot learn unless it is destroyed and rebuilt from scratch. The Western pirate ship needs to be sunk with a broadside and the good Western crew selectively and carefully plucked from the life boats. The religions, the understanding of self and relationships, be it in law or personal, are deeply flawed by the childish greed (No!: not a cliché.) with which Western people have for so long imperiously floated and tramped and spoken all over our planet.

The bad and the good together is that the Mother of all is suffering and the broadside is happening now because the West is spiking its guns.

Blowback is a bitch.

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