Explaining China’s Commitment to Sustainable Development

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Explaining China’s Commitment to Sustainable Development

- Purpose: Understanding the broad and diverse context of public and private sector & society dynamics rather than narrow focus on implementation gaps.
- Theory references: Collaborative governance and creative incrementalism concepts (Jing 2015, 2017)
- Comprehensive Approach & Qualitative Methodology Mix, including policy analysis, interviews with experts, conferences, observations.
- Domestic factors & Global Factors
- Push & Pull Factors
- Context Factors
- Driving Forces
- Process Factors
- Implementation Challenges
- Feedback & Discussion
13. Five Year Plan (2016-2020)

• China’s five year plans are blueprints containing the country’s social, economic, and political goals.

The Five Tenets of the 13th FYP:

• **innovative, coordinated, green, open and inclusive development (social welfare)**

• Green development: reduce emissions per unit of GDP by 40 percent to 45 percent by 2020 compared to 2005 levels; increase the share of non fossil fuel energy to 15 percent by 2020; ban commercial logging in natural forests.
Framework of Roles and Responsibilities

State-Market
Policies, Laws, Regulations, Subsidies, Incentives, Curricula
Market: Investments, R&D, M&S, PPP, Insurances, CSR, Code of Conducts

State-NGO
Policies, Laws, Regulations, Funding

State
Dialogue
Market
NGO

Market-NGO: CSR Partnerships, social enterprises, foundations
NGO-Market: ideas, partnerships, naming, shaming, monitoring

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Fig. 1: Framework for Explaining China’s Commitment to Sustainable Development: Context, Driving Forces, Governance Aspects & Objectives

Ecological Crisis

Air Pollution

Urbanisation

Discourses

Leadership

Eco-Civilisation & Green Development & Innovation

In-Country Expertise

International Cooperation

Institutional Density

Smart Cities

Technical & Social Innovations

G20
South-South Cooperation
One Belt One Road
BRICS, AIIB
Development Cooperation

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Fig. 2: Process Factors Explaining China’s Commitment to Implementing the SDGs: Policies, Governance Aspects & Objectives

- National Plan on SDG Implementation
- Experimental Zones & Projects
- Leadership
- Discourses
- Ecological Civilisation & Green Development & Innovation
- Institutional Density
- In-Country Expertise
- International Cooperation
- Command-Control & Market Mechanism
- Special Incentives

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Fig. 3: China’s Challenges to Implementing the SDGs Challenges and Objectives

- Trade-offs between Economic/Environmental/Social Goals
- Relations between Central and Subnational Governments
- Diverse economic situation in different parts of China
- Creativity & Ownership in Hierarchical Structures
- Ecological Civilisation & Green Development & Innovation

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Lanzhou
(Gansu province)

- In 2011, using Chinese statistics, the World Health Organization reported that Lanzhou has the worst air quality (annual mean PM10 ug/m3 of 150) among eleven western Chinese cities, and is worse than Beijing with its reading of 121.
- Since then, authorities have taken measures to improve air quality, which have largely been successful. "Thirteen polluting enterprises with excessive capacity have been closed, more than 200 highly polluting enterprises were suspended in winter, and 78 industrial enterprises have moved to an industrial park outside the city."\(^1\)
- In 2015 it was awarded China's climate progress title. As a city once unable to be spotted from satellites, Lanzhou has taken various measures to combat air pollution in recent years, having reduced its Air Pollution Index at the fastest speed across China.

(Source Wikipedia)
Lanzhou temple  22 Sept 2017
Lanzhou Ofo Bikes 22 Sept 2017
Points for Discussion

1. To which extent do China’s commitment and policies in the field of sustainable development challenge growth-critical and participation-oriented environmental strategies and discourses in Germany and EU countries?

2. Which will be China’s main challenges to implementing the targets sustainable development goals?

3. Will China’s ambitious drive for sustainability reforms increase the legitimacy of the party state, internally and externally?