



# *Climate Change Politics in China*

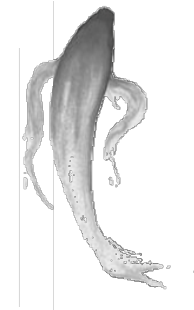
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# Basics about China



- China has a gigantic population and a fast growing economy
  - More than 1.3 billion Chinese
  - More than 8% annual growth in last three decades
- The highly centralized state still dominates
  - The state effectively penetrates economic arenas
  - A mature and vibrant civil society is yet to emerge
- The state used to overemphasize on economic growth
  - As a developmental state, a continuing economic growth itself becomes the main base of legitimacy of the regime
  - Due to the population pressure, the state believes the annual economic growth rate cannot below 8%

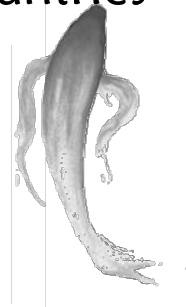


# GHG emission in China

- GHG emission
  - China became the largest greenhouse gas emitter in the world recently
  - Still below the world average per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion
- China's GHG emission is very likely to keep growing
  - Industrialization
    - Became the “world factory” and the largest exporter
    - The car market increased 44% in 2009 and became the largest in the world
  - Urbanization
    - Hundreds of millions are moving into urban areas
    - A new middle class is emerging
  - China's primary energy mix is dominated by coal
    - Raw coal accounted for 76.4% of the primary energy production in 2005

# Official stands in Climate Change talks

- China participated in Climate Change related international talks from quite early on
  - Partially due to China's “environmental diplomacy”
  - The existence of an overlap between emission reduction and economic growth
  - As a developing country, China does not have binding emission target according to Kyoto Protocol
- Official stands of Chinese government
  - Insist on “common but differentiated responsibility”
  - Promise to decrease its energy intensity by 40-45% by 2020
  - Refuse to set emission amount target
  - Suggest “historic responsibility” of industrialized countries



# Climate Change participation in China

- China is very active in CDM market instead
  - Chinese firms received \$ 600 million between 2006 to 2008
  - China had 40% of registered projects and 57% CER in 2009
- Some Chinese scholars suspect Climate Change as a strategy employed by the industrialized countries to curb the development of the developing countries
  - “Right of emission means right of development”
- NGOs were quite late to join the game
  - Yes, there were Chinese environmental NGOs
  - They have also been active since the 1990s
  - But, Chinese NGOs did not focus on Climate Change until 2006



# Climate Change participation is also highly centralized



- The state controls the framing of Climate Change participation
- Chinese NGOs' participation
  - They seldom openly criticize government on major state policies
  - NGOs did not criticize government on many domestic issues not because they agreed with these official positions and policies, but because they usually avoid confronting the state openly.
  - However, NGOs did not confront the government for its Climate Change efforts, not because self-censorship, but because they did share a very similar position and perspective with government.

