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Comparative study on Climate Change Policies in the EU and China

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Both the EU and China are among the largest CO_2 emitters in the world; their climate actions and policies have profound impacts on global climate change and may influence the activities in other countries. Evidence of climate change has been observed across Europe and China. Despite the many differences between the two regions, the European Commission and Chinese government support climate change actions. The EU has three priority areas in climate change: 1) understanding, monitoring and predicting climate change and its impact; 2) providing tools to analyse the effectiveness, cost and benefits of different policy options for mitigating climate change and adapting to its impacts; 3) improving, demonstrating and deploying existing climate friendly technologies and developing the technologies of the future. China is very vulnerable to climate change, because of its vast population, fast economic development, and fragile ecological environment. The priority policies in China are: 1) Carbon Trading Policy; 2) Financing Loan Policy (Special Funds for Renewable Energy Development); 3) Energy Efficiency Labelling Policy; 4) Subsidy Policy. In addition, China has formulated the "Energy Conservation Law", "Renewable Energy Law", "Cleaner Production Promotion Law" and "Circular Economy Promotion Law".
Under the present EU Framework Programme FP7 there is a large number of funded research activities linked to climate change research. Current climate change research projects concentrate on the carbon cycle, water quality and availability, climate change predictors, predicting future climate and understanding past climates. Climate change-related scientific and technological projects in China are mostly carried out through national scientific and technological research programs. Areas under investigation include projections and impact of global climate change, the future trends of living environment change in China, countermeasures and supporting technologies of global environment change, formation mechanism and prediction theory of major climate and weather disasters in China, technologies of efficient use of clean energy, energy conservation and improvement of energy efficiency, development and utilisation technology of renewable energy and new energy.
The EU recognises that developing countries, such as China and India, need to strengthen their economies through industrialisation. However this needs to be achieved at the same time as protecting the environment and sustainable use of energy. The EU has committed itself to assisting developing countries to achieve their goals in four priority areas: 1) raising the policy profile of climate change; 2) support for adaption to climate change; 3) support for mitigation of climate change; and 4) capacity development. This comparative study is part of the EU funded SPRING project which seeks to understand and assess Chinese and European competencies, with the aim of facilitating greater cooperation in future climate and environment research.