China

WORLD CLIMATE SIMULATION

To: Negotiators for China at United Nations World Climate Summit
Subject: Briefing on Negotiating Goals

Goals

China is the world's largest consumer of fossil fuels and the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. It also produces one-third of global manufactured goods, and in recent years, it has turned some of that manufacturing power towards leading the clean energy transition. China seeks to negotiate a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that can limit climate risks but also seeks the best outcome for our economy and vital national interests. At the 2015 UN climate negotiations in Paris, nations agreed to a goal of limiting global warming to "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." You must now decide on the following:

1. Actions to reduce China's greenhouse gas emissions, if any. Without action, China's emissions are expected to plateau around 2050. You can decide when your emissions will stop growing, when they will begin declining, and at what annual rate emissions decline, if at all. See the gray boxes on the next page for additional guidance.
2. Whether to make commitments to reduce deforestation or plant new forest area.
3. How much you will contribute to, or request from, a global climate fund, which is intended to provide at least $300 billion/year until 2035 for developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change.

Context

The scientific consensus on climate is clear: over 97% of climate scientists agree that climate change is happening, that it is caused primarily by use of fossil fuels, and that the impacts could be devastating.[1] China is vulnerable to climate change, as the country's water, food, and energy systems are already stressed and expected to face increasing pressure due to rising sea levels, droughts, water scarcity, and heat waves.

Public Opinion

Our people, like everywhere else, want to live in a healthy environment but also increase their standard of living; this includes having decent jobs, housing, food, healthcare, mobility, and national security. More than 90% of our population believes that climate change is real but economic development, access to social services, and national security are more important to the Chinese people than climate action.[2] However, nearly 70% think that climate action will improve economic growth and provide new jobs.

Opportunities

Besides slowing climate change, reaching an agreement to limit emissions would also reduce local air pollution, improving public health. Our country may also be emerging as the first "electro-state," and is powering the global transition to clean energy, supplying 80% of solar panels, 60% of wind turbines and 75% of EVs globally.

National Action

Economic development that brings our people out of poverty remains our top priority. So far, that development has relied heavily on fossil fuels. We may now have the potential to drive a transition to clean energy and electrification. Early analysis indicates that our emissions may be peaking earlier than expected. We are now promising that our emissions in 2035 will be 7-10% lower than their peak levels. We also have stated a goal of achieving net-zero CO_2 emissions before 2060. Meeting these goals requires quadrupling our electricity production by 2060, with most of that increase coming from renewable and zero-carbon energy sources.

Forests and Land Use

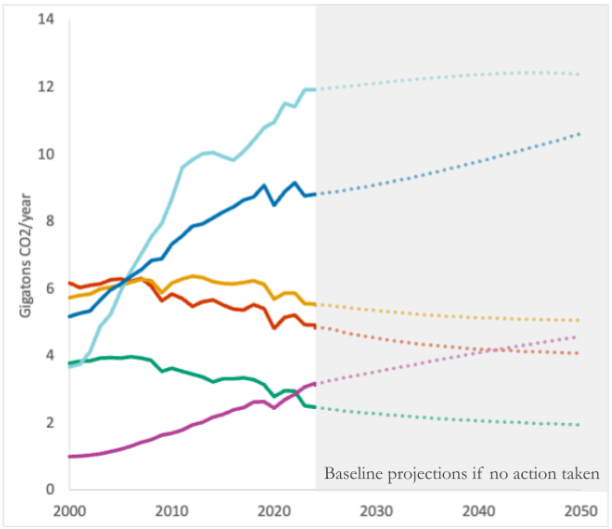
We have some opportunities to reduce emissions from deforestation and land degradation. While China's territory includes significant forested areas, most of the world's remaining tropical forests are in other developing countries where deforestation continues.

[1] https://skepticalscience.com/global-warming-scientific-consensus.htm
[2] https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/news-events/climate-change-in-the-chinese-mind/

Global Landscape

- The developed nations created the climate crisis and so should take responsibility for addressing it. These nations built their economies on fossil fuels and consume goods we manufacture, meaning the emissions from production occur here. We produce about one-fifth of the world's goods, yet our emissions per person are only about half of those of the US. Our average standard of living, though rising, is still far lower than that in the US, Europe, Japan, and other developed nations.
- China may face pressure to contribute to the global climate fund since we are now the world's second largest economy. Any commitments we make should require significant commitments to action by the US, EU, and other developed nations.
- The developed nations fear the rapid economic development we now enjoy and may seek to use a global climate agreement to slow our growth, limit our markets, and constrain our diplomatic and military influence around the world.
- Meanwhile, the US withdrew from the Paris Agreement, will not submit an emissions pledge, and has a federal government that is actively pursuing fossil fuel development while impeding development of wind and solar energy.

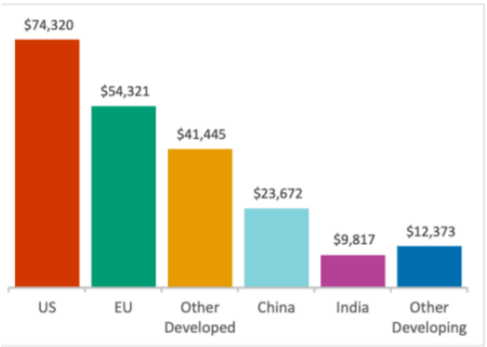
CO_2 Emissions from Fossil Fuels



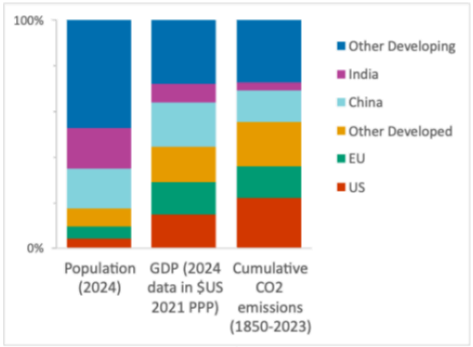
China is the world's largest emitter of CO_2. Without action, developing countries' emissions from fossil fuels are projected to increase about 21% by 2050.

Sweden sustained annual CO_2 emissions reductions of 4.5% to reduce their dependence on oil (1976-1986). **France** and **Belgium** saw similar reductions around this time. Otherwise, most significant historical emission reductions have come from financial or political crises.

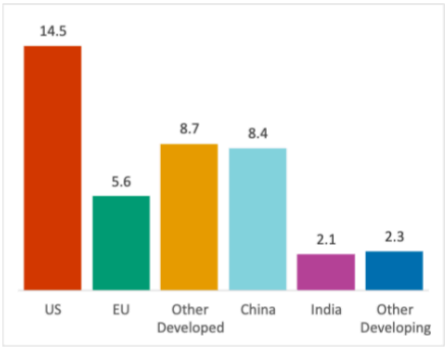
GDP per Person in 2024 (2021 $US PPP)



Population, Wealth, and Cumulative CO_2 Emissions



Emissions from Fossil Fuels per Person in 2023 (tons CO_2 per year)



While cumulative emissions so far have been higher in the developed countries (i.e., the **US**, **EU**, and **other developed** countries), the growth of population, GDP per person, and emissions in the **developing nations** far outpaces growth in the **developed countries**.

Since 1980, emissions from energy per person have risen dramatically in **China** and **India** but have fallen in the **US** and **Europe**.

Graphs source: C-ROADS v.25.10

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