



# Research and Environment News from China

## Number 36 – June 2007

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### Introduction

The National People's Congress Standing Committee has recently officially announced 2 new ministers that for the first time in recent history, are not members of the communist party.

Wan Gang, German-trained engineer, expert of automobile (incl. clean energy) and President of Shanghai's Tongji University, was nominated as the new Minister of Science and Technology

Chen Zhu, French-trained doctor and health researcher in molecular biology and leukaemia, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Science, was nominated as the new Minister of Health.

Besides, 2 others new Ministers have been announced in environmentally related fields, namely Land and Resources and Water Resources.

China issued a national plan on June 4, 2007 to address climate change and show its determination to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in an all round way. Under the National Climate Change Program, the first by a developing country, China pledges to restructure its economy, promoting clean technologies and improving energy efficiency. But the plan does not include any quantified targets for carbon dioxide emission.

### Science & Technology

#### KEYWORDS

1. **China to develop new-generation carrier rockets**

*new-generation rockets*

2. **World's 1st Solar-powered Mobile Developed**

*solar-powered mobile*

### Environment

#### KEYWORDS

1. **China may halt production of liquefied coal: official**

*production of liquefied coal*

2. **China threatens waste disposal companies with fines**

*waste disposal*

3. **China Issues National Plan to Address Climate Change**

*climate change*

4. **Hu urges "common but differentiated responsibilities" to tackle climate change**

*climate change*

5. **Recycling can help the environment**

*recycling & environment*

6. **China sets deadline for cleaning up Taihu Lake**

*cleaning up Taihu Lake*

7. **China invests US\$930m to fight climate change**

*climate change*

8. **China should handle climate change issue for sustainable development: PSA President**

*climate change*



## Health

1. **HIV/AIDS Among Women on the Rise**
2. **TCM Find New Avenue to Int'l Market**
3. **China Builds First Provincial HIV/AIDS Care Center**

## KEYWORDS

women HIV/AIDS  
TCM & Int'l market  
HIV/AIDS care center

## Activites coming up soon

July 16 – 20, 2007
<b>6<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics</b>
Zurich, Switzerland
<a href="http://www.iciam07.ch">http://www.iciam07.ch</a>
August 2007
<b>ICIC 2007</b>
Qingdao, China
Tel: 86-551-5591195
September 6, 2007
<b>China Int'l Solar-Energy &amp; Photovoltaic Application Exposition SPE</b>
Shenzhen, China
Fax: 86-10 6217 3701
September 2007
<b>China 1<sup>st</sup> Int'l Equipment Exhibition on Coal Processing and Utilization &amp; Environment Protecting Tech.</b>
Beijing, China
Fax: 86-10-82236096
November 22, 2007
<b>The 6<sup>th</sup> China Int'l Mechanism, Hardware &amp; Mould Exhibition</b>
Dongguan, China
Tel: 86-10-68594793

## Environment-related international tenders and investment opportunities:

[english.cepi.com.cn/homepage/homepage.jsp](http://english.cepi.com.cn/homepage/homepage.jsp)

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## Science & Technology

### China to develop new-generation carrier rockets

(People's Daily Online, 2007-06-18)

China has planned to develop the new-generation carrier rockets and, with its completion, the maximal carrying capacity of its "Long March" series is to increase to 25 tons from the current 9.5 tons, and this will help bolster significantly the nation's capability to explore and utilize outer space for peaceful purposes.

This was disclosed at a symposium the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) held in Beijing recently to mark the 100th launch of Long March rockets.

China has defined its short- and long-term goals for carrier rocket development. For the short-term goal, it will focus on the researches and development of the new-generation rockets to raise the capability of its rockets comprehensively and sharpen its competitive edge in the international launch services. As for the long-term goal, the country is expected to build a complete aerospace transport system and conduct researches into the new-concept space carriers.

### World's 1st Solar-powered Mobile Developed

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-06-08)

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/China/213261.htm>

## Environment

### China may halt production of liquefied coal: official

(Xinhua, 2007-06-10)

China, which is rich in coal but poor in petroleum and gas, may put an end to projects which are designed to produce petroleum by liquefying coal, an official with the country's top economic planning agency has said.

The consideration came after evaluation of the nation's limited energy resources and its ecological environment, a deputy director of the industry department of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) told a seminar on China's fuel ethanol development, held in Beijing on Saturday.

"Liquefied coal projects consume a lot of energy, though the successful industrialization of liquefied coal could help reduce the country's dependence on petroleum," said the official who declined to be named.

The Chinese government said earlier it would invest more in developing alternative energy resources including biomass fuel and liquefied coal to substitute petroleum during the 11th Five-Year Program (2006-2010) period, amid concerns over the country's growing dependence on petroleum.

China, the world's second-largest energy consumer, imported 162.87 million tons of oil in 2006, driving the country's reliance on imported oil up 4.1 percentage points from a year earlier to reach 47 percent, official statistics show. The country is also confronted with huge capital demand and higher consumption of water and coal in producing the liquefied coal, the official said.

A project in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region with a designed capacity of 1.08 million tons would need more than 50 billion yuan (6.58 billion U.S. dollars) of investment, according to him.

He said the country had begun the coal-liquefying projects without trial industrialization operation, and the technologies involved were not sophisticated yet. And both coal and petroleum are irreproducible energy resources, he said. However, the country has never slackened its efforts to find substitutes for petroleum.

China said on Tuesday it has successfully excavated combustible ice--a kind of natural gas hydrate--from below the floor of the South China Sea after nine years of research in this field. The Chinese government said recently it



upheld the development of renewable resources as an important national strategy, and would continue to boost the development of hydro power, solar power, wind power, biomass fuel and methane.

The current seminar was hosted by Chinese Academy of Engineering with sponsorship from Denmark-based Novozymes, the world's leader in enzymes and microorganisms. Discussions focus on the industrialization of China's fuel ethanol.

### **China threatens waste disposal companies with fines**

(Xinhua , June 06, 2007)

Chinese companies engaged in the disposal of urban waste could be fined as much as 100,000 yuan (13,160 U.S. dollars), according to new regulations on urban garbage disposal issued by the Ministry of Construction.

The new rules, which will come into effect on July 1, are designed to force waste disposal companies to show more concern for the environment. The maximum fine of 100,000 yuan will be imposed on companies who fail to monitor the impact of garbage disposal on water, air and soil on a regular basis and report the results to the local supervision departments.

Those responsible for the demolition or closure of disposal facilities without approval from authorities will also liable to pay the maximum penalty. Companies engaged in garbage disposal are not allowed to cease operation without approval from local administrations.

The new regulations said the government would adopt preferential policies and measures to develop new technologies in waste disposal. The Chinese government announced Monday its first national action plan to address climate change, in which the disposal of urban garbage was identified as a major area to be addressed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The action plan said the country would improve the recycling of urban garbage, for instance, collecting flammable gases when burying the garbage and developing technologies for the treatment of garbage, such as incineration.

### **China Issues National Plan to Address Climate Change**

(Xinhua News Agency June 5, 2007)

China issued a national plan on Monday to address climate change and show its determination to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in an all round way.

Under the National Climate Change Program, the first by a developing country, China pledges to restructure its economy, promoting clean technologies and improving energy efficiency. The plan is proof of China's determination to reduce GHG emissions, said Ma Kai, minister in charge of the National Development and Reform Commission.

But the plan does not include any quantified targets for carbon dioxide emission. "The absence of any quantified targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions does not mean China isn't serious about reducing GHG emissions," the top economic planner told a press conference in Beijing two days ahead of Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Germany for a G8 meeting at which global warming will top the agenda.

China has come under increasing pressure from industrialized economies to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions. With the new plan, the nation has opted not to hide behind the fact that the Kyoto Protocol does not obligate developing nations to reduce GHG emissions.

According to the calculations by Xinhua, if all the objectives in the program were achieved -- on hydro and nuclear power generation, upgrading of thermal power generation, facilitation of coal-bed-gas development, the use of renewable energy resources such as wind power, solar power and terrestrial heat, forestation and energy-saving -- the world's most populous country would emit 1.5 billion tons less carbon dioxide and equivalent by 2010 while still continuing to grow rapidly. Citing figures from the International Energy Agency, Ma rebutted the argument that China is a "menace to the global environment".

"I don't see how China can be labeled a menace. Compared to the industrialized countries, until recently China had low greenhouse gas emissions and its emissions are still relatively low in per capita terms. Rises in gross domestic



product in China produce smaller hikes in carbon dioxide discharges than in other countries. This kind of talk is grossly exaggerated and unfair," Ma said.

China prefers to calculate GHG emissions in per capita terms pointing out that, in 2004, its per capita carbon dioxide emissions were 3.65 tons, compared to a world average of 4.20 tons and an average of 10.95 tons for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. More pertinently, China points out that a one-percent rise in GDP leads to an average 0.6 percent increase in carbon dioxide emissions worldwide, but the Chinese figure is only 0.38 percent.

"Even if China overtook the United States one day in total carbon dioxide discharges, given that the former's population is five times as much as the latter, China's per capita greenhouse gas emission would remain low compared with the United States," Ma said.

The minister advocated a more objective methodology to evaluate carbon dioxide emissions, pointing out that globalization had shifted a significant amount of production to developing countries, forcing up their energy consumption. Ma urged the international community to respect the developing countries right to develop, saying that China was ready to cooperate closely with other nations to combat climate change.

The 62-page action plan details the policies and measures China will take to mitigate and adapt itself to climate change. "By mitigation, we mean curbing carbon dioxide emissions, emitting as little as possible. By adaptation, we mean minimizing the negative impact of greenhouse gases by improving our ability to forecast and prevent disasters," Ma said.

The plan says that regional cooperation on climate change should function as "a helpful complement" to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol rather than replacing or weakening them. The China Meteorological Administration announced Friday that this year's Spring was the country's 11th warm Spring since 1997, with the temperature averaging 10.6 degrees Celsius from March to May, 1.2 degrees higher than normal years and the second highest since 1951.

The National Climate Change Program notes that the most significant temperature increases have occurred in winter with 20 consecutive warm winters from 1986 to 2005. The sea level has risen by 2.5 mm annually along China's coasts over the last 50 years, slightly faster than the global average. But the nation's mountain glaciers are retreating much more rapidly.

The program warns that the risk of desertification will intensify. "Climate change is a challenge China must cope with to realize sustainable development... Implementing a climate change containment policy may cost a fortune, but the cost will be even higher if we delay. Early action is imperative," Ma said.

### **Hu urges "common but differentiated responsibilities" to tackle climate change**

(Xinhua, 2007-06-08)

Chinese President Hu Jintao on Thursday called for upholding the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" for developing countries in tackling climate change.

"We should work together to make sure the international community upholds the goals and framework established in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities," Hu said while addressing a meeting of the leaders of five developing countries -- China, Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa.

The leaders met on the sidelines of the outreach session of the Group of Eight (G8) summit slated for Friday in Heiligendamm in northern Germany.

Developing countries should also carry out "active, practical and effective cooperation," Hu said. "Considering both historical responsibility and current capability, developed countries should take the lead in reducing carbon emission and help developing countries ease and adapt to climate change," he said.

"For developing countries, achieving economic growth and improving the lives of our people are top priorities," he said. "At the same time, we also need to make every effort to pursue sustainable development in accordance with



our national conditions." Climate change, which could cause swelling sea levels and climate swings, has become a major issue at the G8 summit, which runs from Wednesday to Friday.

Kyoto Protocol, a document signed in Japan in 1997 that requires industrialized countries to cut greenhouse gas emission by 5 percent from 1990 levels, will expire in 2012. Parties concerned hope to launch negotiations for its replacement at an early date. Skepticism, however, was evident at the summit for reaching a fixed, quantifiable targets for reducing the greenhouse gas emission.

Before the summit, China, as a developing country, released a masterplan outlining steps it would take to boost overall energy efficiency in 2010 by 20 percent over the 2005 level. Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said in an interview on Tuesday that the Chinese plan is "very encouraging."

"It really is an indication that the Chinese government sees acting on climate change as being part of a larger development agenda," he said. The Chinese president said at the meeting China gives high priority to "environmental protection and sustainable development."

"We follow the scientific thinking of development which is people-oriented and calls for all-round, coordinated and sustainable development," he said.

In addition to taking these steps at home, China is ready to carry out extensive cooperation with the international community, including other developing countries, Hu said. "China is ready to enhance exchanges with other countries and draw upon their strength in the framework of South-South cooperation and do what it can to help other developing countries," he said.

## **Recycling can help the environment**

(Tabitha Messick, 2007-06-08)

This week, China laid out a national plan to combat climate change, just days ahead of the G8 summit, where President Hu Jintao is discussing environmental policies, among other issues, with other world leaders.

The goals outlined in the plan include energy conservation and efficiency, eliminating air pollutants, making water safe, conserving land, and research on advanced technologies. And these will be accomplished by better public awareness, more recycling, and improved waste disposal among other strategies.

But what remains to be seen is if China's rhetoric will be matched with action. Environmental policy generally starts at the top and trickles down to the population. But if individual people can do little things now they will make a difference in the environmental situation. Individual choices, such as recycling, is one way that people can make a contribution to help improve the environment and reduce pollution.

Garbage is sent to landfills where it decomposes and emits methane gas. When garbage is burned carbon dioxide is given off. Both of these gases contribute to air pollution and global warming. According to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform in December 2006, 90 percent of the Beijing's garbage is buried in landfills. Only 2 percent of the garbage is burned and 8 percent is composted.

At that time, the commission launched a plan that by 2010, four large garbage disposal plants would incinerate, compost and bury garbage would be built in each quadrant of the city. And to reduce the amount of garbage in landfills, recycling is an important and easy thing for people to do.

Recycling in Beijing, though not entirely absent, is hard to recognize. Recycling bins that are marked as such are also stuffed with trash that cannot be recycled. People litter and throw garbage on the ground as they walk down the road. No one seems surprised as they pass by trash accumulating in piles on street corners.

In North America, people follow a simple "3R" policy: reduce, reuse and recycle. Reducing means consuming and throwing away less by purchasing longer-lasting goods and looking for products and packaging that can be used many times.

Reusing items involves repairing, donating and selling them. Sometimes this is even better than recycling. Recycling turns materials that would otherwise be trash into valuable resources. Things that can be recycled include: tin cans,



aluminum cans, glass, paper and bottles. And to make it easier for people to sort their garbage, there are usually recycle bins beside trashcans in the United States.

China should have more clearly marked recycling bins and inform the public about what they can recycle. If the process is streamlined, more items will be recycled.

In May 2007, officials at a press conference by the Organizing Committee for the Beijing Olympic Games (BOCOG) said, "We will carry out more economic and educational measures instead of merely administrative means this year to increase awareness around garbage classification."

They explained that waste bins for classified recycling in public places in Beijing are almost empty because people either don't know how to separate the garbage or don't care to dispose of things properly.

Guo Wei, a middle-aged woman said, "The government should add more recycling bins on the street because I have to walk a long distance to dispose of my trash." She added that the government should also have more training for the recycling staff so that they would know about the different categories of plastic and paper and sort them out properly instead of processing them altogether.

Some foreign students in Beijing said they don't see the Chinese recycling things as much as they do in the US. But a local student said, "I would recycle more if there were enough facilities."

While there is some public awareness about recycling, there should be more. And the best place to start is in schools. If children would get more involved earlier in their lives, they could become more environmentally friendly as they get older.

Environmental resources should be made available in local communities so that people can understand the many benefits of recycling such as reducing pollution, saving energy and keeping waste out of landfills.

### **China sets deadline for cleaning up Taihu Lake**

(Xinhua, 2007-06-12)

China has ordered all towns around Taihu, the lake that was covered with a foul-smelling algae last month, to establish sewage treatment plants and insisted that chemical factories meet a new water emission standard by the end of June 2008.

The plan was announced at a meeting here on Monday, after freshwater was shut off for more than 2 million people in Wuxi due to the blue-algae infestation of the lake.

Towns must set up sewage treatment plants and are forbidden from discharging untreated sewage to Taihu Lake and to rivers in the Taihu valley. Existing plants must install nitrogen and phosphorus removal facilities before the deadline, according to the plan.

Chemical factories that fail to meet the new water emission standard risk suspension. They will be shut down permanently if they still fail to meet the standard by the end of next June.

The new Chinese water emission standard for the Taihu valley will raise the bar for sulfur dioxide emissions and chemical oxygen demand.

The 20,000 chemical plants that cluster in the Taihu valley have had a drastic effect on the water quality of the lake.

The Taihu Lake crisis started last month, as the low water level and the accumulation of waste and untreated sewage triggered the rapid growth of blue algae, turning the water putrid and cutting freshwater supply to more than 2 million residents.

Authorities diverted water from the Yangtze River to flush out the pollution, and used chemicals to treat the algae.

Workers have collected 6,000 tons of blue-algae from the lake, and local health authorities say that tap water once again meets drinking standards.



Five officials in Yixing city were accused of dereliction of duty and received demerits and demotions in the wake of the Taihu Lake pollution crisis, local government sources said Monday.

### **China invests US\$930m to fight climate change**

(Xinhua, 2007-06-14)

China has earmarked more than 7.1 billion yuan (about 930 million US dollars) for technology innovations to cope with climate change since 2001, said Science and Technology Minister Wan Gang on Thursday.

Investment rose sharply in 2006 when China adopted its 11th five-year program, said Wan at a press conference. "China is determined to find answers to climate change through science and technology," said Wan.

China has made big efforts to cope with climate change, said Wan, adding that ministries and local governments had approved a series of environmental protection policies.

He also said some Chinese enterprises were using technology to reduce energy consumption and pollution discharge.

The Ministry of Science and Technology launched on Thursday China's Scientific and Technological Actions on Climate Change. It aims to enhance the role science and technology play in responding to climate change.

### **China should handle climate change issue for sustainable development: PSA President**

(Xinhua, 2007-06-18)

China should handle the issue of climate change from a development point of view, the newly-elected President of the Pacific Science Association (PSA) and leading Chinese scientist on climate change, Fu Congbin said Sunday.

In an interview here with Xinhua, the 67-year-old professor Fu said "The issue of climate change, in essence, is a topic of science. It has become increasingly prominent because in the past 100 years or so, human activities have played a more and more explicit role in climate change."

Fu noted that the major force behind climate change is still nature itself. "To date, we have yet to understand all the factors behind climate change and the contribution of each individual factor," he said.

It is widely agreed among international scientists, however, that most of the observed increase in global averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely to be due to human activities.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released assessment reports which are based on examination of many sorts of theories, hypothesis and models on climate change, which "still may not be the case," Fu said.

"But we cannot wait till the disaster happens to take actions," Fu said. "We should work to prevent the worst scenario. As a responsible member of the international society, China has made its efforts in coping with climate change and will continue to do so."

As a leading Chinese scientist working on climate variability and dynamics and a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Fu has been providing advises to policy-makers. "On the emission of carbon dioxide, the developed countries bear major responsibilities," he said.

"The greenhouse gas can stay in the atmosphere for as long as 100 years. Most of them are from the developed nations," Fu said. "In the process of development, China will try to avoid such damages to the environment and realize sustainable development."

Fu said that there are some local Chinese manufacturers who put economic interests first and ignore environmental protection measures. "That is a problem China has to deal with."

The scientist also noted that there could be some market opportunities as mitigation of greenhouse gases becomes increasingly important.



"Emission quota, trading of emission rights, as well as environment-friendly technology may be opportunities for us to realize development during the process of mitigation," he said, adding that due technological support would be needed.

On becoming the new president of the 87-year-old PAS, Fu said that he wished the organization could make more contributions to the sustainability of the Pacific region.

"The PSA is involved with disciplines of various kinds and I will work to realize more exchanges and cooperation among different areas of study and wish to contribute to the sustainable development in the Pacific region," Fu said after being announced as the new president of the organization at the conclusion of the 21st Pacific Science Congress in Okinawa of southern Japan.

The PSA, founded in 1920, is a non-governmental scholarly organization that seeks to advance science, technology, and sustainable development in and of the Asia-Pacific region.

The Hawaii-based academic organization is composed of both individual scientist members and national and regional member organizations including China, Australia, France, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, a range of Pacific island nations and others.

## Health

### HIV/AIDS Among Women on the Rise

(Xinhua News Agency June 5, 2007)

The ratio of men to women among newly reported HIV/AIDS cases in China has surged to 2:1, up from 5:1 in the 1990s, a senior official said in Nanchang on Monday.

The number of women sufferers has been rising rapidly since 1985 when China reported its first AIDS case, said Vice Health Minister Wang Longde at a national conference on AIDS prevention for women in Nanchang, capital of east China's Jiangxi Province. A total of 203,527 HIV/AIDS cases had been reported by April 30, up from 183,733 last October, according to the official.

Women accounted for 27.8 percent of all the reported HIV/AIDS cases in 2006, against 19.4 percent in 2000, and more than half of sexual transmission cases, the official added.

The total number of cases in China -- taking into account those who are unaware that they carry the HIV virus -- is probably around 650,000, according to estimates by experts from the United Nations and the Ministry of Health.

Contaminated needles shared by drug users and unprotected sex are the main causes of HIV transmission in China, according to the Ministry of Health.

### TCM Find New Avenue to Int'l Market

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-06-24)

China's military medical academy announced on Friday that it would licence a British company to use the patent of its new anti-dementia drug based on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), opening up a new avenue to the international market for TCM products.

After ten years of efforts, a group led by Ma Baiping of the Academy of Military Medical Sciences (AMMS) of the People's Liberation Army has finished pre-clinical research for its new anti-dementia drug, dubbed NJS, which is derived from TCM substances.

Under the deal, the academy will sell the patent licence to U.K.-based Phytopharm plc, disclose key NJS technologies, and rely on the pharmaceutical firm to do clinical trials and promote the product in the international market.



"This is the first time China has sold a TCM patent licence to a foreign firm and it represents a major stride toward international credibility," said AMMS President Sun Jianzhong. The deal gives TCM a better chance of penetrating the international market, he added.

Phytopharm chief executive officer Dr. Daryl Rees said that western countries have some negative perceptions of TCM. Many TCM drugs contain ingredients that can not be identified by western pharmaceutical standards, making them still very hard to get market entry approval as new herbal drugs.

They have a very different concept on TCM products' being safe, effective and controllable, Ma said. "Foreign firms can adopt a global approach in clinic research of NJS as well as its market strategy, helping find a new way for TCM to enter the international market," said Ma.

Linking up with an overseas company that can carry out clinical research and market promotion will help boost the credibility of TCM in the international market, Rees said. Pre-clinical results were very "exciting", he said, and he had an optimistic forecast for the new medicine.

When it began laboratory research, the AMMS patented NJS both in China and in its potential markets such as Europe, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States. "China's TCM manufacturers are now more aware of patent protection," Sun said.

Both sides declined to disclose the value of the deal. Dementia is a condition characterized by a progressive decline of mental abilities -- including loss of memory -- accompanied by changes in personality and behavior. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia.

With ageing populations swelling worldwide, the potential for a holistic new dementia treatment is enormous.

#### **China Builds First Provincial HIV/AIDS Care Center**

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-06-24)

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/health/215604.htm>