



ENVIRONMENTAL CHINA

*A weekly update of China's environmental news and analysis from
PACE*



www.pacechina.net

PACE is now in cooperation with

chinadialogue



Issue 132, October 28th to November 11th, 2011

By CC Huang, TimQuijano

Environmental China is now online.

Invite your friends and colleagues to subscribe to the e-mail newsletter [here](#).

WELCOME to *Environmental China*, PACE's electronic newsletter devoted to giving readers a comprehensive update of news concerning China's environment. Any comments, suggestions or questions can be directed to cc.huang2@gmail.com and/or timquijano@gmail.com.

OPINION

[Embracing the Opportunity for Sustainable Urban Development in China](#)

(Juan Carlos Munoz, TheCityFix, 11/10/2011) The speed and scale of China's growth offer a huge opportunity for game-changing urban development.

[Harmful omission](#) (China Daily, 11/9/2011) Suffocating smog has been covering Beijing like a greasy quilt recently.

Air monitoring data from the US embassy in Beijing started circulating on micro blogs last week suggesting the density of PM2.5, fine particles with a

diameter shorter than 2.5 microns, was about 250 to 350 on Oct 30 and the general air pollution index was 425, reaching the level of "poisonous".

[China's microblog furor over bad air days](#) (Steve LeVine, Foreign Policy, 11/10/2011) At first glance, one is not impressed that 37,000 Chinese are hopping mad about their air quality -- that is an infinitesimal fraction of a nation where descriptions of coal-choked cities are routine. But that is the point: A comparatively tiny number of angry folks seems to have helped trigger a Chinese response, if a small one -- evidence of official sensitivity to the unpredictable political impact of the nation's pollution crisis.

RESEARCH/CIVIL SOCIETY

[Is Europe breaking the law?](#) (International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, 11/4/2011) Cheng Shuaihua analyses the legal arguments against Europe's controversial plan to tackle plane emissions, setting out the worst case scenario for China's airlines.

[Chinese Scientists Warn of Significant Glacier Melt](#) (Markus Becker, Der Spiegel, 10/26/2011) Chinese scientists are not known for fear mongering, particularly when it comes to dangers that could affect large numbers of people. Officials frown upon news that could unsettle the masses -- which makes this week's publication by the Graduate University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing all the more stunning.

[Heavy metals pollute a tenth of China's farmland](#) (Reuters, 11/6/2011) About one tenth of China's farmland is polluted by lead, zinc and other heavy metals to "striking" levels exceeding official limits, a government expert said according to reports on Monday.

[Energy Forecast: Fracking in China, Nuclear Uncertain, CO2 Up](#) (Andrew Revkin, New York Times, 11/9/2011) This year's World Energy Outlook report has been published by the International Energy Agency, and says wealthy and industrializing countries are stuck on policies that threaten to lock in "an insecure, inefficient and high-carbon energy system."

[Green group accuses China of climate blackmail](#) (Jonathan Watts, Guardian, 11/9/2011) An environmental group has accused China of climate blackmail after threats to vent powerful greenhouse gases if Europe cuts off carbon credits next year. The row over hydrofluorocarbon-23 offsets—which have a much greater warming effect than carbon dioxide and linger in the

atmosphere for 200 years – has intensified before international climate negotiations in Durban this month.

[Slideshow: Tibet's snow leopards](#) (China Dialogue, 11/8/2011) Local herders are central to protecting the snow leopard in the source area of the Yangtze River. J Marc Foggin introduces a series of photos documenting the community conservation project.

[Chinese economic miracle fuels surge in carbon emissions](#) (Michael McCarthy, Independent, 11/5/2011) Soaring carbon dioxide emissions from China and the US have driven the world's output of greenhouse gases to its highest level, alarming new figures reveal.

[Climate Change Imperils Global Prosperity, U.N. Warns](#) (Rachel Nuwer, New York Times, 11/2/2011) [A new report](#) from the United Nations Development Program warns that if drastic measures are not taken to prepare nations for the impacts of climate change, the economic progress of the world's developing countries could stall or even be reversed by 2050.

[China Web Users Seek Closer Read on Pollution](#) (Jeremy Page, Wall Street Journal, 11/9/2011) Tens of thousands of Chinese are using an online vote to push for more accurate air-pollution measures, illustrating how the Internet challenges Beijing's hold on information.

[Celebrities pressure China over pollution gauge](#) (Agence France-Presse, 11/8/2011) Several Chinese celebrities have joined an online campaign aimed at pressuring the government into improving the way it measures air pollution, as residents increasingly worry about their health.

CORPORATIONS

[Latest China mine disaster kills 4, traps 50](#) (Ben Blanchard, Reuters, 11/4/2011) An accident at a colliery in central China has killed four miners and trapped 50, state media said on Friday, in the latest disaster to hit the accident-prone industry.

[China steps in where America finds it less necessary to tread](#) (Michael Peel, Financial Times, 10/31/2011) A deal to build a \$10bn oil refinery on the Red Sea coast of Saudi Arabia is expected to be signed soon – but under terms revealingly different from those originally foreseen.

[China-based corporate web behind troubled Africa resource deals](#) (By Beth Morrissey, Himanshu Ojha, Laura Rena Murray and Patrick Martin-Menard, Center for Public Integrity, 11/9/2011) China-Sonangol is part of a global network of companies extracting oil in Angola, buying gold in Zimbabwe, building luxury condominiums in Singapore and developing property in Manhattan. Its executives have met with African heads of state and challenged the global oil and mining giants who've been operating on the continent.

[China to slow solar output boom as price slips](#) (Leonora Walet, Reuters, 11/2/2011) Chinese solar companies plan to run their plants below capacity in order to shed inventory and slow capital spending as the sector battles shrinking profit margins amid tepid demand and depressed panel prices.

[Supply of Critical Rare-earth Elements About to Expand](#)

(Kerry Davis, IDG News, 11/1/2011) There are rare-earth elements in your computer, digital camera, television, smartphone, in the batteries of hybrid vehicles, in long-lasting lightbulbs and serving as critical magnets in guided missiles.

[China Warns of 'Lose-Lose' Situation on U.S. Solar Probe](#) (Owen Flectcher and Simon Hall, Wall Street Journal, 11/4/2011) China said Friday that it regrets that U.S. companies have asked for anti-dumping probes against Chinese solar power products and insisted that its policies on solar energy conform with World Trade Organization rules.

[Video: Gobi mega-mine puts Mongolia on brink of world's greatest resource boom](#) (Jonathan Watts, Guardian, 11/7/2011) Coal extraction in 'the last frontier' expected to triple economy by 2020 but will compete with nomads for scarce resources

[Building the green agenda](#) (Olivia Boyd, China Dialogue, 11/7/2011) Chris Brooke heads the Asian arm of one of the world's biggest real estate firms. He talks to Olivia Boyd about China's divided property sector, where big players are signing up to the green agenda fast while small firms still struggle to care.

[China's rising climate risk](#) (Wai-Shin Chan, China Dialogue, 11/9/2011) China is one of the countries in the world most vulnerable to climate impacts, writes HSBC strategist Wai-Shin Chan. Beijing is responding to the challenge, he writes, but it's time that investors followed suit.

[How Walmart Is Changing China](#) (Orville Schell, Atlantic) The world's biggest corporation and the world's most populous nation have launched a bold experiment in consumer behavior and environmental stewardship: to set green standards for 20,000 suppliers making several hundred thousand items sold to billions of shoppers worldwide. Will that effort take hold, or will it unravel in a recriminatory tangle of misguided expectations and broken promises?

[Chinese Appetite for Live Fish Drives Indonesian Aquaculture](#) (Solenn Honorine, Voice of America, 11/7/2011) China's soaring economy is also expanding the country's ecological footprint. As the Chinese middle class expands, more people can afford delicacies that used to be reserved for the lucky few. For example, Chinese consumers pay four to eight times more for the privilege of choosing their fish alive in restaurants' fish tanks. But as demand rises for live reef fish, the seas in Southeast Asia are feeling the impact. On the Indonesian island of Sumatra, fishermen have developed aquaculture for grouper, to feed this market.

[In China, E-Waste Is Turned Into Counterfeit Electronics Components](#) (Isaac Leung, Electronics News, 11/11/2011) E-Waste is currently exported to other countries for processing. This poses risks not just for the environment in those places, but in fact contributes to counterfeiting operations.

GOVERNMENT

[U.S. Embassy air quality data undercut China's own assessments](#) (Barbara Demick, Los Angeles Times, 10/29/2011) One day this month, the reading was so high compared with U.S. standards it was listed as 'beyond index.' But China's own assessment that day was that Beijing's air was merely 'slightly polluted.'

[With Anger Over Dirty Air Rising, Beijing Tries Tours of Monitoring Center](#) (Andrew Jacobs, New York Times, 11/9/2011) Environmental officials who have resisted releasing comprehensive data about air pollution here in the capital announced that they would take action to address increasing complaints that the government's monitoring system fails to report on the most dangerous airborne particles emitted by the growing ranks of cars and trucks.

[US car fumes: a call to arms for China](#) (Zhang Ke, China Business News, 11/8/2011) Gas-guzzling America has tightened controls on vehicle

emissions in a move green advocates hope will spur Beijing to greater action. Zhang Ke listens to the views of two experts.

[China to phase out energy-inefficient light bulbs](#) (Associated Press, 11/5/2011) China announced Friday it will phase out incandescent light bulbs within five years in an attempt to make the world's most polluting nation more energy efficient.

[Offshore oil rules may be overhauled](#) (Zhou Yan and Wang Qian, China Daily, 11/7/2011) The government may revise regulations covering joint offshore oil exploration with foreign companies following a spill off the northeastern coast at a field operated by ConocoPhillips China, sources said.

[Electric taxis to triple in Beijing next year](#) (Wang Chao, China Daily, 11/6/2011) Beijing will increase the number of its fleet of electric taxis from 50 to 150 by May 2012, said an official from Yanqing, a county in northwestern Beijing where an electric car pilot operation is underway.

[FDA Officials In China To Plug New Food Safety Law](#) (NANCY SHUTE, NPR, 11/2/2011) Fifteen percent of the food Americans eat is imported, including 80 percent of the seafood, and two-thirds of the fruit and vegetables. Our current food safety system can't even begin to keep tabs on the 24 million shipping containers loaded with food that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration estimates arrived this year from overseas. Increasingly, that food is coming from China, which has suffered a series of scandals involving tainted food.

[The Privileges of China's Elite Include Purified Air](#) (Andrew Jacobs, New York Times, 11/4/2011) Membership in the upper ranks of the Chinese Communist Party has always had a few undeniable advantages. There are the state-supplied luxury sedans, special schools for the young ones and even organic produce grown on well-guarded, government-run farms. When they fall ill, senior leaders can check into 301 Military Hospital, long considered the capital's premier medical institution.

[Beijing accuses US embassy of pollution 'hype'](#) (Agence France-Presse, 11/3/2011) Environmental authorities in Beijing have accused the US embassy of "hype" after its widely-publicised measurements of air quality in the Chinese capital sparked concern, state media said Friday.

[China official says air pollution rules too lax](#) (Reuters, 11/11/2011) China's air pollution standards are too lax, a senior environment official said in comments published on Friday, the highest level comment following

complaints that authorities are understating the extent of smog that often envelops Beijing.

[China moves, haltingly, to clean up environmental mess](#) (Patrice Hill, Washington Times, 11/7/2011) After two decades of nonstop development that devastated the environment in many areas, Chinese leaders now say they want to clean up and restore the nation's fabled rivers and ancient lands.

[China to give women bigger role as world seeks sustainable development: Vice President](#) (Xinhua, 11/10/2011) China will work to give women bigger role as the world strives to protect its environment and seeks a path of sustainable development, Vice President Xi Jinping said on Wednesday.

[China farms: 10% of land polluted, officials say](#) (BBC News, 11/7/2011) A government study has found that a tenth of China's farmland contains "excessive" levels of heavy metals such as lead, mercury and cadmium.