

ENVIRONMENTAL CHINA

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OPINION

[New law allows NGOs to pursue legal action against environmental offenders](#) (Global Times, 01/19/2015) Granting some NGOs the legal standing necessary to sue polluters, the revised version of China's Environmental Protection Law is expected to allow social organizations to play a bigger role in fighting environmental crimes. The high cost of litigation and the interference of local governments, however, will pose challenges to these eco-warriors.

[Policy: Four gaps in China's new environmental law](#) (Nature, 01/21/2015) On 1 January, a new environmental protection law (EPL) took effect in China. It is the nation's first attempt to harmonize economic and social development with environmental protection. The EPL is perceived as the most progressive and stringent law in the history of environmental protection in China. It details harsher penalties for environmental offences — for example, for acts of tampering and falsifying data, discharging pollutants covertly and evading supervision.

[Protecting the environment](#) (Daily Times, 01/27/2015) President Xi has urged the Chinese people to raise their ecological awareness, enhance relevant systems, safeguard ecological security and improve the environment. China's economic rise comes with a caveat. The Occident, which looks upon the swift development of China in awe, is also quick to highlight the challenges it poses to the environment. As early as October 1995, then US President Bill Clinton commented to then China President Jiang Zemin that the greatest threat China presented to US security was environmental, not military.

[The Mayor of Beijing Says His City Is 'Unlivable'](#) (VICE News, 01/29/2015) China's smog-shrouded, overcrowded, traffic-choked capital has become unlivable. And that's not the assessment of some tourist or disgruntled cubicle-dweller: That's the mayor talking. Speaking to Beijing's local Communist Party conference this week, Mayor Wang Anshun said efforts to limit the city's notorious air pollution have fallen short of targets and that the city faced "worrisome" environmental problems.

[The US-China climate agreement](#) (Hydrocarbon Engineering, 01/30/2015) Last November, President Obama reached a climate agreement with China where he agreed

to reduce US carbon dioxide emissions by 26 – 28% below the 2005 level in 2025 and China agreed to make ‘best efforts’ to have its carbon dioxide emissions peak around 2030 and to increase the share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption to approximately 20% by 2030. To achieve the goals of this agreement, China needs to increase its natural gas use in lieu of coal and to increase its renewable share of generation. But, it faces obstacles to achieving both needs, the Institute for Energy Research (IER) highlights.

RESEARCH AND CIVIL SOCIETY

[Beijing's smog is increasingly toxic for China's politicians](#) (The Guardian, 01/20/2015)
The smog is back and the threat of another “airpocalypse” hangs heavy over Beijing. Late last week, PM2.5 readings hit 550 micrograms per cubic meter, more than 20 times higher than the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended limit of 25µg/m³. There’s no mystery to the cause of this soupy, polluted, metallic-tasting concoction that makes up the capital’s air: fossil fuel combustion.

[China's smog provides cover for burglar in novel by environment official](#) (InterAksyon, 01/23/2015)
China's pollution crisis has inspired an environmental regulator in a smog-blanketed northern province to write a novel whose extracts have gone viral online, spurring plans for two more books. Environmental degradation is fuelling people's discontent in China, where critics say years of breakneck economic growth have left a dire crisis. Major cities are shrouded in perennial smoke and half the groundwater in the country is tainted.

[China Thermal Power Denitration Industry Report 2014-2017](#) (Press Release Rocket, 01/28/2015)
With rapid economic development and enhanced industrialization in China, the air pollution is worsening, while environmental control measures become increasingly stringent. As of June 2014, China's installed generating capacity totaled 1.3 billion kilowatts, of which thermal power installed capacity reached 880 million kilowatts with a share of 67.7% which was lower than before. Thermal power consumes about 1.7 billion tons of coal each year, and discharged 8.8 million tons of NO_x (accounting for 39.5% of the total NO_x emission) in 2013.

[China GM crop cultivation shrinks](#) (Xinhua, 01/28/2015)
China's genetically modified (GM) crop planting areas declined in 2014 amid heated discussions over safety concerns, a study revealed on Wednesday. Chinese farmers grew 3.9 million hectares of GM cotton in 2014, down some 300,000 hectares from the previous year, according to a study done by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA).

[Environmental Agency in China using drones to catch polluters](#) (The News International, 01/30/2015)
Drones have been used to deliver packages, but their most common civilian use in Pakistan is by news organizations deploying drones to enhance their coverage of news and events. However in China, the environmental watchdog in the

city of Foshan has started using a drone camera to inspect a plant – suspected of polluting the environment – that was unwilling to cooperate.

CORPORATE SECTOR

[US firm designing green center in China](#) (China Daily, 01/21/2015) California-based architecture firm 5+design is creating Wuhan's first environmentally-sustainable lifestyle center. The mixed-use project will take up about 172 acres of the capital city of Hubei province, with neighborhoods centered around metro stations, open spaces and pedestrian-friendliness.

[GE Signs Its Largest Wind Turbine Deal in China](#) (Triple Pundit, 01/27/2015) Renewable energy resources are bound to play a larger and larger role in China's energy mix as the world's second largest economy – and largest emitter of greenhouse gases – strives to reduce pollution and forge a healthier, more sustainable economy and society. Renewable energy technology also is playing a growing role in driving growth among U.S. industrial companies – blue-chips as well as fast-growing small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs).

[China coal production falls for first time this century](#) (The Guardian, 01/27/2015) The impact of China's clean air and renewable energy policies are beginning to have an impact on the country's coal industry, according to reports suggesting domestic coal production fell last year. State media reported on Monday that coal production fell in 2014 for the first time this century, with production totalling 3.5bn tonnes between January and November representing a 2.1% fall on the same period in 2013.

[Giant Shenhua Watermark coal mine in the Liverpool Plains approved](#) (Sydney Morning Herald, 01/29/2015) The NSW government has been accused of "signing the death warrant for the Liverpool Plains" after the Planning Assessment Commission approved the \$1.2 billion Shenhua Watermark open-cut coal mine for the farming region. The commission found the proposed 268 million-tonne mine in northern NSW did not intrude on to the region's fertile black soils. It also sought expert advice and modified the plan to provide "additional protection to the [area's] critical groundwater resource", according to its final report.

[Aquaculture Improvement Projects Launched in Indonesia, China and Thailand](#) (The Fish Site, 01/29/2015) The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), with funding from the Walmart Foundation is launching Aquaculture Improvement Projects in Indonesia, China, and Thailand. Shrimp farmers in Indonesia and Thailand and tilapia farmers in China will receive training and knowledge to help them improve their livelihoods and increase collaboration to manage and improve water quality and reduce incidences of disease outbreaks.

[China's Hottest Tech Giants Join the 'War on Pollution'](#) (The Diplomat, 01/31/2015) China's hottest tech giants – Alibaba, Xiaomi, and Baidu – are making a splash on a global scale. But even as they battle for market shares, they are also helping Chinese

people fight against pollution with newly released tech products that monitor air, water, and food pollution. While the government struggles to keep the country's airways clean, these companies are enabling ordinary Chinese citizens to take environmental health into their own hands.

GOVERNMENT

[Xi Jinping: China Must Protect Its Environment](#) (Yibada, 01/22/2015) As part of statements publicized in the wake of President Xi Jinping's first domestic inspection tour of 2015, undertaken in the Yunnan Province, the leader spoke strongly in favor of conservationism, describing the environment as akin to one's "own eyes." President Xi further developed the analogy, stating that "we should [...] treat the environment in the same way as one treats his own life."

[China records 471 environment emergencies in 2014](#) (East Day, 01/23/2015) China recorded 471 pollution emergencies in 2014, 241 less than in 2013, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) announced on Friday. The MEP disclosed the top three worst incidents of the year.

[New environment minister set to boost Beijing carbon cut push](#) (Financial Times, 01/27/2015) China's commitment to rein in carbon emissions is set for a boost with the likely appointment of Chen Jining, head of Beijing's Tsinghua University, as environment minister, local environmentalists say. Zhou Shengxian, the incumbent, is due to step down in March. Previously director of the State Forestry Administration, he has disappointed China's growing environmental movement, which had hoped for a more activist stance. Two years ago, he received the lowest number of votes of any ministerial candidate from delegates to the annual National People's Congress, who were voting to approve appointments.

[Weighing in on justice in China](#) (China Daily, 01/28/2015) After 40 years of development, China's judicial system has yet to meet the expectations of the country's general public, but a series of reforms aim to achieve fairness and justice for all, according to a member of China's highest court. Tao Kaiyuan, grand justice and vice-president of the Supreme People's Court of China (SPC), made the comment on Monday in a keynote address in Houston at the Asia Society Texas Center.