

China's Measures and Position on addressing Climate Change

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1. Recent Policy Progress in China

The Standing Committee of the 11th People's Congress adopted a resolution requiring to actively address climate change on August 27th, 2009. The Resolution contains six parts:

1. It is an important opportunity and challenge of China's economic and social development to address climate change.
2. It needs to implement the scientific development outlook in addressing climate change.
3. It needs to take active measures to address climate change.
4. It needs to strengthen legislation to address climate change.
5. It needs to raise public awareness and the capacity of the whole society to participate in the effort in addressing climate change.
6. It is needed to actively to participate in the international cooperation in addressing climate change.

2. Recent Progress on Measures to Address Climate Change(1)

From 2006 to 2008, China has shut down small scale power generators with the capacity of 34.21 million Kilo watts. China has phased out backward iron production capacity of 60.59 million tons, steel production capacity of 43.47 million tons, cement production capacity of one hundred and forty million tons, ferroalloy production capacity of 2.46 million tons, calcium carbide production capacity of 2.44 million tons and coke production capacity of 64.45 million tons. These measures have led to a conservation of energy of 72 millions tons of coal equivalent, which equals to a reduction of one hundred and sixty-six million tons of CO₂.

2. Recent Progress on Measures to Address Climate Change(2)

In 2009, it is planned to shut down small scale power generators with the capacity of 15 million Kilo watts, to phase out backward iron production capacity of 10 million tons, steel production capacity of 6 million tons, cement production capacity of 50 million tons and coke production capacity of 6 million tons.

2. Recent Progress on Measures to Address Climate Change(3)

Compared with 2005, energy consumption per unit GDP has decreased 10.3% in 2008. The decreasing trend is increasing year by year. From 2006 to 2008, China has accumulatively saved two hundred and ninety million tons of coal equivalent, which equals to a reduction of seven hundred million tons of CO₂. There are great difficulties in achieving the goal to reduce energy intensity of 20% in 2010 on the basis of 2005, but with great efforts, it is hopeful that China will achieve that goal. In this way, China will conserve six hundred million tons of coal equivalent, which equals to a reduction of 1.5 billion tons of CO₂.

3. China's Position on Copenhagen Conference

China believes that the Copenhagen Conference provides a good opportunity and platform for the international community to jointly address climate change. The UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Bali Road Map have laid good foundation for the success of the Copenhagen Conference. The key to the success of the Copenhagen Conference is to strictly abide by the mandate of the Bali Road Map. The objective is to strengthen the comprehensive, effective and sustained implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. The major elements are mitigation, adaptation, technology and financial resources. In order to achieve a successful conference in Copenhagen,

1. developed countries should substantially reduce their emission by 2020,
2. developed countries should fulfil their commitment to provide financial resources, to transfer technology and to support capacity building in developing countries,
3. developing countries should take appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with their national circumstances and within the framework of sustainable development.

4. Essential Elements in Achieving a Deal

- Two basic common understandings are needed
- Urgency in dealing with climate change
- The issue of competitiveness
- Impacts of climate change
- Economic development

Two basic common understandings are needed

- A. The changing climate: It is needed to have a common understanding that climate is changing due to anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases. This is the precondition to address climate change. If there are doubts about that, it will be difficult.
- B. Equality in emissions: If global action is envisaged to address climate change, it must be made clear from the very beginning that no human being has the right to emit more greenhouse gases than the others. It is needed to address historical emissions and per capita emission in an equitable way. So CBDR is essential in addressing climate change.

Urgency in dealing with climate change

There should be an urgency to deal with climate change so as to keep global warming under 2 Degree Celsius. Developed countries often argue that if developing countries do not take quantified emissions reductions now, even if developed countries cut to zero, it is not possible to achieve that goal. People can also argue that if everybody in developing countries emits the same as people in developed world, the earth would have been destroyed already. People may also argue that if developed countries cut to zero now, the 50% global reduction goal by 2050 has been achieved today.

The Issue of Competitiveness

If developed countries maintain a high per capita emission, this has and will continue to put developing countries as nations, not just a company, in a disadvantageous position. This competitiveness must be taken into account.

Impacts of climate change

Developing countries are not the trouble maker of our troubled climate, but due to poor infrastructure and lack of financial resources, they are the sufferers of climate change. It is apparent that developing countries should not bear the cost for something which was caused by someone else.

Economic development

It seems to me that no country is in a position to address climate change at the cost of their development. There is no doubt that each country has the right to develop at a low cost. I often hear some US officials say that the US has no intention to contain developing countries' development, but only hopes they grow smarter. People will argue that if the US with advanced technology can not grow smart (with 24 tons per capita emission, it is very difficult to demonstrate as smart growth), how can developing countries with backward technology achieve that?

Many Thanks !!