



China Still in the Climate Change Headlines

Disappointing Updated Targets

On October 28, 2021, China submitted [updated nationally determined contributions \(NDCs\)](#) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fight climate change. NDCs are non-binding plans submitted to the United Nations as part of the 2015 Paris Agreement. The disappointment comes because the updates offer essentially nothing new; and indeed show some backtracking.

China targets a peak of carbon dioxide emissions before 2030. It has a “carbon neutral” goal before 2060 – a decade later than the collective target of 2050. On the plus side, as the world’s biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, the update provides a commitment to raising the share of non-fossil fuels in its primary energy consumption to 25% by 2030, higher than the earlier pledge of 20%, and increasing wind and solar power capacity to more than 1,200 gigawatts.

One commentator among many, expressed disappointment. Li Shuo, a policy adviser at Greenpeace China, said in a Twitter feed:

China’s choice epitomizes the lack of determination to step up action among major economies. It reflects Beijing’s mistrust of the US ability to fulfill its carbon & finance targets. There’s real fear that Washington’s empty words will intensify an unfair global climate order.

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