



Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

Despite strong commitment, China is not yet on track in reversing the loss of its environmental resources. China's large and growing population, combined with inappropriate land use practices, have harmed the quality of scarce productive land and other natural resources. This has led to various forms of land degradation including grassland destruction, soil erosion, and soil and water pollution, all of which threaten China's rich biodiversity.

China's energy consumption ranks second in the world, and China has become the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases after the United States. China managed to "decouple" the growth of GDP from the growth of energy consumption - largely because it started from a low level of energy efficiency at the outset. Currently China is at one-quarter of the energy efficiency of industrialized countries. The use of enhanced technologies may therefore lead to a more rapid increase in energy efficiency.

With 75% of its population ensured access to safe drinking water, China is slightly behind target, and in view of the many agencies involved, coordination of rural water management needs to be improved. Access to safe drinking water has improved more in cities than in rural areas, and in coastal more than remote and minority areas. About 94% of the urban population and 66% of the rural population have access to improved water sources.

QUICK FACTS

CURRENT PORTFOLIO BUDGET

Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:	\$441,138,000
Total UNDP and Co-Finance:	\$51,320,275
Total MPU and Bilateral:	\$57,202,900
Total:	\$549,661,174

Cumulative Total ODS Phased-Out: 11,891.1 ODP tonnes

Environmental spending in China will increase from 0.7% of GDP in 1996 to a planned 1.7% in 2010. The country has enacted a considerable body of environmental laws and regulations in order to achieve this goal. A sustainable development strategy has been highlighted in China's Tenth Five-Year Plan, which emphasizes coordination between socio-economic development, population management, and environmental protection. The plan sets forth a series of environmental improvement targets for lake, river and coastal water quality, city environment, the agricultural setting, and forest and grassland coverage.¹

SPOTLIGHT



Successfully Phasing-out ODS in Solvents to Protect the Ozone Layer²

China is the world's largest producer and consumer of man-made ozone-depleting substances (ODS), which have been found to damage the ozone layer, the earth's shield against ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Increased UV radiation levels lead to higher rates of skin cancer, damage to human immune systems and diminished productivity of food crops.

In 1997, China's solvent sector accounted for about 11,500 tons of ODS or 16% of the country's total ODS consumption, and in 2000 over 2,200 widely dispersed small- and medium-sized enterprises used ODSs. UNDP worked with Chinese authorities to develop a multi-year Solvent Sector Phase-Out Plan to comply with its commitments to the Montreal Protocol, by developing viable alternatives for cleaning processes where solvents were used, and providing companies with new cleaning equipment. Technical assistance activities, training programmes and public awareness campaigns were developed to support the introduction of alternative cleaning processes and ozone-friendly substances. In March 2002 the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund approved a US\$ 52 million grant to support China's bid to phase-out consumption of carbon tetrachloride (CTC), trichlorotrifluoroethane (CFC-113) and 1,1,1 trichloroethane (TCA), used as cleaning solvents by 1 January 2004, 2006 and 2010 respectively.

China successfully phased-out CTC by 2004 and a ban on its use as a cleaning solvent has been in effect since 2003. China has also consistently met the annual national consumption control targets for CTC, CFC-13 and TCA since 2000 and CFC-13 is set to be phased-out on schedule. Furthermore, China has implemented effective regulatory and policy measures and continues to work with industry to facilitate the phase-out. With UNDP's assistance ozone-depleting, solvent-consuming enterprises are expected to realize their phase-out targets and it is anticipated that China will be able to completely phase-out TCA by 2010 or earlier.

UNDP supports the Chinese government in integrating its environmental commitments with national development goals and macroeconomic policies. The Chinese Government has begun a renewed commitment towards 'xiaokang' (all round, well adjusted development). The pro-development xiaokang also places an emphasis on efficient management of natural resources and development of environmentally-friendly behaviour in order to ensure environmental sustainability.³ "UNDP strongly believes, as the country takes even broader steps in economic growth and expanding people's choices, China is in a unique position to achieve all the sustainable human development goals targeted by the MDGs and xiaokang."



Khalid Malik, Resident Representative

PORTFOLIO

FSSD*

China has adopted its Tenth Five Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development which included sustainable development as a major objective. UNDP is assisting China in implementing a National Capacity Self Assessment process to ensure that the country's development plans are consistent with national priorities at both the national and local level.

ENERGY

In terms of access to sustainable energy resources, China is coping with the combined challenges of growing energy needs, limited high quality energy resources, environmental pollution and energy security. The country realizes the need to increase energy savings, energy efficiency and the use of renewable resources while at the same time promoting industrial adjustment and developing energy efficient processes and standards, especially in the major energy consuming sectors. UNDP has supported several projects, an example of which is the promotion of hydrogen fuel cell buses.

BIODIVERSITY

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity is one of the priorities in China. The UN system aims to strengthen the national coordination mechanism for effective biodiversity management, to mainstream biodiversity into the planning and investment process, and to provide management support in targeted pilot areas. Underlining the importance of sustainable agriculture in China and the agricultural way of life, the UN system is supporting the development of an environmentally sustainable agricultural development strategy, and on land improvement and management. An example of UNDP's support through GEF funding is the development and implementation by demonstration of China's National Wetland Action Plan.

CHEMICALS

The partnership between China and UNDP in the area of chemicals management began in 1992 and has resulted in the formulation and implementation of more than 140 projects. The Montreal Protocol's MLF-funded institutional strengthening programme has served to enhance the management capacities of the State Environmental Protection Administration with regard to ozone related matters. Furthermore, the solvent sector phase-out plan, a multi-year, performance-based programme worth US \$52 million, will ensure total phase-out in this important sector. The successful China-UNDP partnership has also resulted in mobilization of GEF funding for POPs project preparation to support development of a full sized project to reduce production and eliminate use of DDT as an intermediate in Dicofol production for leaf mite control, and introduce available and cost-effective alternative products and IPM technology.



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¹China MDGR 2003 http://www.undg.org/documents/3635-China_MDG_Report.pdf; ²Carvalho, S, "Protecting the Ozone Layer: Montreal Protocol", http://www.undp.org/seed/eap/montreal/docs/scarvalho_choices_p30-31.pdf, UNDP Choices Magazine, Aug 2002 and SEPA and UNDP China: 'Progress Report On The Implementation Of The Solvent Sector Plan For OSD Phase-out in China For 2003/2004 and 2005 Annual Implementation Programme, 2003'; ³http://www.undg.org/documents/5988-China_UNDAF__2006-2010_-_UNDAF_China_Narrative.pdf; ⁴Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development