

Can China go green? (script)
An extract from a radio programme

Presenter : And now for the first of a pair of programmes that look at China in the lead up to the climate change conference in Copenhagen. With China's announcement that it will limit carbon emissions by 40% before 2020, Jonathan Porritt explores what's actually happening across the vast country. While the Chinese are avid to grow their economy, are they leapfrogging the older industrial societies of Europe and America, to bring real long-term sustainable power solutions and pioneering green-tech design. Can China go green?

Jonathan Porritt : In these 2 programmes I'll be investigating the potential for China to become the powerhouse of sustainable economic development, a surprising challenge given that this country is still choked with pollution. China is now the world's largest emitter of CO₂ and its citizens are as besotted with the motorcar (and air travel for that matter) as those of the United States. But China, rapidly growing as it is, is also being driven by growing pressures to clean up its act. I'm talking to Peggy Liu, Chairperson of JUCCE, the joint US-China collaboration on clean energy.

Peggy Liu : If we don't go green, if China doesn't go green, then the rest of the world can't. It's just a matter of scale, it's a matter of pace, it's a matter of simple math. They're trying to reduce the number of small and inefficient coal-fire power plants. They closed down over 50 gigawatts, that's 7% of the entire generation capacity of China at the time. Also China has the largest installed base of solar hotwater heaters and has outstripped our original target of building wind farms.

Jonathan Porritt : The ambition in China is astounding. Here there are plans to provide roughly 20% of total consumption from renewables. Now that's exactly the same ambition level as we're hoping to achieve here in Europe, and in China the urgency is driving a whole new generation of green-tech entrepreneurs.

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