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Chinese Environmental Attitudes and Climate Change:  
Survey Findings on Precursors of China's Domestic and  
International Policies on Global Warming

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**Abstract**

*Attitudes toward the environment in China are ambiguous at best and anti-environment at worst. These attitudes are indicators of how the Chinese view the natural environment and how they are likely to behave toward it and respond to efforts to protect it—whether they will practice "green" development and preservation of nature, or instead contribute to practices that are turning China's air, land and water brown (or even black) with pollution. These attitudes are also important precursors to individual Chinese behaviours and the policies and actions of the Chinese government to combat global warming and climate change. As such, attitudes toward all manner of environmental issues are connected to the issue of climate change. Gathering, synthesizing and comparing findings on Chinese environmental attitudes and related behaviours can help us assess*

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*them and ascertain how they influence environmental protection (or harm) and energy use in China. Different people in different parts of China have different environmental attitudes. Environmental awareness and attitudes are associated with individuals' educational level, socio-economic status, living environment and exposure to mass media. By understanding the Chinese view of the environment and the degree to which the Chinese prioritize it (or not) relative to other important issues, we can perhaps enhance our capacity to start shifting attitudes, values and behaviours toward those that might at least do somewhat less harm to the environment of the Chinese and the world. With this in mind, this essay seeks to summarize some findings on environmental awareness, attitudes and behaviours, while also making some observations regarding their implications. Information is drawn from Chinese survey data, secondary sources (e.g., Chinese print media and scholarly reports), and analyses in tertiary literature (including some non-Chinese sources). The list of materials translated from the original Chinese is unique.*