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GLAWCAL COMMENT

THE REAL EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CHINA

Based on

Haifeng Deng, and Farah, Paolo Davide.

“China’s Energy Policies and Strategies for Climate Change and Energy Security.” The Journal of World Energy Law & Business, 2020.

Over the last half century, the concerns surrounding climate change and global warming have reached new heights. Greenhouse gasses that are emitted each and every day by cars, corporations, and other sources are extremely harmful to the environment in large quantities. Trees and plants need carbon dioxide (CO₂) in order to live, but there is currently too much access in the air. Trees and plants cannot keep up with "the demand" if you will. Because of this, there have been a number of rules and regulations passed at all levels. Limitations on emissions and development of renewable energy sources tend to lead the pack in this regard. China has become a leader in the battle against climate change. Why might this be? As the largest developing country, with the largest population, and one of the largest needs for energy, they have been hit very, very hard by the effects of climate change. To start off, China's annual mean surface temperature has increased by 0.3 degrees Celsius. This is higher than the global warming average over the past two decades. Related to this, the country's surface air temperature is also rising. This may be mostly due to their very fast rate of industrialization, but that industrialization also affects climate change as an increased amount of greenhouse gasses are released each day. According to data that is listed in this article, the average temperature could raise three degrees by the year 2050. That is an incredible amount to rise in such a short time. The implications could be devastating, especially since the country is home to the largest population in the world. As with the surface temperature, average rainfall could raise nearly seven percent by the year 2050. As devastating as surface temperature would be, that much of an increase in rainfall could be much worse. Lakes, rivers, and creeks might not be able to handle that much rainfall, re-

sulting in increased flooding, loss of land, and potentially the loss of homes, jobs, and money. As devastating as the increase in average surface temperature and average rainfall are, the still might not be the most devastating effect of climate change in China. This title belongs to rising sea levels. Rising sea levels are absolutely devastating everywhere, but when it occurs in the largest developing country, with the largest population, and in the most economically developed regions of that country, the effects could be annihilating. Because of all of this and the potential for devastation, China has begun to turn things around. There have been laws, regulations, and agreements passed in order to protect the country, and the world, from further harm. The damage that has already been done has been done. There is no turning back. However, just as China is doing, we are to look towards the future and plan accordingly. China might be a developing country, and a country that is somewhat vulnerable to climate change, but they are doing everything in their power, and then some, to protect their future.



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