

New Chinese 'commitments' to tackle spiralling emissions: EU

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China's Prime Minister Wen Jiabao (C) sits with China's Minister of Commerce Chen Deming (2ndR) and Zhou Xiaochuan (R) the Governor of the People's Bank of China during the EU-CHINA Summit in Brussels. China has made a "commitment" to tackle spiralling greenhouse gas emissions in return for EU financial aid and expertise, the European Union announced.

China has made a "commitment" to tackle spiralling greenhouse gas emissions in return for EU financial aid and expertise, the European Union announced Thursday.

One of the measures mentioned included a polluting permits trading market in Beijing.

European Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs welcomed the development in a statement released after a summit between

European Union leaders and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao.

"We commend China's commitments and we'll support their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas [emissions](#); to make cities cleaner and to better manage water, waste and heavy [metal pollution](#)," he said.

Piebalgs and Chinese Minister of Commerce Chen Deming signed a deal for aid worth 25 million euros (\$32 million).

It is intended to help China "in the long run contribute towards achieving a global reduction of greenhouse [gas emissions](#)," the [European Commission](#) statement said.

The money will be used over four years for three projects including the "design and implementation of Emissions Trading Systems in China," along the lines of the carbon-emissions permits market operated in Europe.

It was this system that raised the ire of Chinese and other international airlines when aviation was brought into the EU system earlier this year.

EU experts will help in "designing and implementing successful emissions trading pilot programmes that lead over time to effective, nation-wide action," the Commission said.

While the sums and deadlines involved suggest [small steps](#), the cooperation agreement is designed to help ensure China met "its environmental, energy- and carbon-intensity targets," the statement added.

A report earlier this year by the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre showed that China's [carbon dioxide](#) (CO₂) emissions had soared in 2011. That

put it level with Europe on a per-capita basis.

Last year, China's [CO2 emissions](#) rose 9.0 percent to the equivalent of 7.2 tonnes of the gas for each resident, compared with 7.5 tonnes in the 27-member EU and 17.3 tonnes in the United States.

"It makes a significant difference when now also China wants to use carbon markets to reduce emissions cost-effectively and boost low-carbon technologies," added EU Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard.

"This is a huge opportunity to modernise our economies, stimulate growth and create jobs in new dynamic industries with innovative technologies and clean energy," she added.

[Greenhouse gas emissions](#) are a sensitive issue with major developing nations such as China and India arguing that it is the developed world which should do most to curb them since they had got a free ride as they industrialised.

To impose limits on them puts them at a disadvantage as they seek the same economic progress long enjoyed by developed countries, they say, arguing that their total emissions may be high, but on a per capita basis they are low.

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