

Can Chinese innovation help address the climate crisis?

January 14 2014

A unique new UK-China project launches today, investigating the social and political drivers and implications of low-carbon innovation in China, the world's largest carbon dioxide emitter by volume, rather than focusing on technical change alone.

To mitigate climate change worldwide we need to transform the way we power our homes, travel and feed the planet's ever-growing population. And nowhere is the approach to innovation across these sectors more crucial than in China, whose decisions on this will impact the rest of the world.

With China throwing state support behind electric vehicles, solar energy and next-generation agricultural technologies, where bottom-up successes in electric two-wheelers, solar thermal and agro-ecological farming have also emerged, now is the time to understand the crucial impact of social and political issues on the successes and failures of low carbon innovations.

The ESRC-funded project 'Low Carbon Innovation in China – Prospects, Politics and Practice' will offer in-depth academic analysis seeking to inform opportunities for low-carbon transitions in China and beyond, with case studies spanning energy, mobility and agriculture.

Dr David Tyfield, Co-Investigator of the project said: "The success or failure of low [carbon](#) innovations rests not on how superior the technology is, but on how people use the technology and the issues of

power that surround it.

"This project is exploring these crucial social dynamics where they are arguably of greatest significance for global prospects of a 21st century shift to sustainability: China," Dr Tyfield added.

This new three-year [project](#) is an international collaboration between researchers in the UK and at leading institutions in China, led by Professor John Urry at Lancaster University.

Provided by Institute of Development Studies

Citation: Can Chinese innovation help address the climate crisis? (2014, January 14) retrieved 30 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-01-chinese-climate-crisis.html>

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