

Top China weather expert warns on climate change

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China's top weather official has issued a stark warning on climate change, saying that rising temperatures could have "huge impacts" on the world's most populous country, state media reported Sunday.

Global [climate change](#) will reduce [crop yields](#), lead to "ecological

degradation" and create unstable river flows, Xinhua news agency quoted Zheng Guoguang, chief of China's Meteorological Administration, as saying.

"As the world warms, risks of climate change and climate disasters to China could become more grave," Zheng said.

China is the world's largest source of [carbon dioxide emissions](#), which cause climate change. Beijing has said it aims for those emissions to peak "around 2030".

Temperature increases in China over the past century have been more extreme than global averages, Zheng added.

He described climate change as a "serious threat" to several Chinese mega-projects including the vast Three Gorges Dam, a railway connecting Tibet with northwest China, and a huge scheme to divert water from the country's south to its dry north.

Zheng called for China to take a "low-carbon development path." But Xinhua also quoted him as saying that the potential for wind and solar energy was "limited", without giving further details.

China and the US, which together produce around 45 percent of the world's carbon dioxide, will be key to ensuring a global deal on reducing emissions after 2020 at a Paris summit later this year.

China's ruling Communist party has for decades emphasised economic growth, which has caused demand for energy—especially coal—to skyrocket.

Coal use in China grew by an average of nine percent each year from 2000 to 2010, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Beijing has pushed alternatives to coal use in the face of public anger at widespread smog. But some schemes—such as facilities which convert coal into gas—have been criticised by environmentalists as resulting in greater carbon emissions.

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