

 Notes


外教社


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Fighting for a Greener Future

1 Over the past few years, China has seen remarkable environmental improvements. In 2020, the percentage of days with good air quality was 87 per cent in 337 cities. The proportion of reasonably good-quality water rose from 66 per cent in 2015 to 83.4 per cent in 2020. What has China done to achieve these and similar results? 5

From No Fish to No Fishing

2 On January 1st, 2021, a 10-year fishing ban was enforced on the Yangtze to help the river recover from the decrease in plant and animal life.

3 Song Bin is one of about 230,000 fishermen who relied on the river for their livelihoods but have now started new lives. Song Bin used the money the government gave him to open a restaurant and start a fish farm. The government has also provided job training and job opportunities for the fishermen so that they could find alternative livelihoods. 10

4 Over the past few years, a large number of factories, including more than 8,000 chemical plants along the Yangtze, have been closed, converted or relocated to cut down on pollution and energy consumption. 15

5 Song, who continues to live by the riverside, finds that some rare birds and fish are coming back to the river. "The water is even clearer than it used to be about 20 years ago when I started fishing," he said.

Greening the Grey

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6 Situated about 800 kilometres to the west of Beijing, the Kubuqi Desert Greening Project began 30 years ago and has succeeded in turning about 6,000 square kilometres of the desert, that is, one-third of it, green. The success of the project is based on government support, participation of local residents, private investment and new technology. Drought-tolerant plants that can improve the desert soil have been planted, special technologies have been invented to make sure the plants survive, desert and oasis tourism has been developed, and solar panels have been set up to feed electricity to the national power grid. Over the past 30 years, the annual rainfall in Kubuqi has increased from less than 100 millimetres to more than 400 millimetres, and about 102,000 local farmers and herdsman have been lifted out of poverty. 25 30

7 Kubuqi is just a small part of China's greening story. According to a NASA report in 2019, China has contributed 25% of the global increase in green area since the early 2000s.

Desert Tapped for Clean Energy

8 China plans to build massive wind and solar power facilities in the Gobi and other desert areas. The country aims to reach more than 1,200 gigawatts of installed solar and wind capacity by 2030, the same year it plans to peak carbon emissions, and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. 35

9 The first phase of the project in the desert has already started operating and can produce 100 GW of wind and solar power. That is four times as much power as the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River, which is the world's largest hydroelectric power station at present. 40

(498 words)