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International climate talks: where autocrats meet democrats. A comparative analysis of Xi Jinping's and Angela Merkel's climate discourses

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MÉMOIRE DE RECHERCHE MASTER 2

Langues Littératures, Civilisations Étrangères et Régionales
Études Chinoises
Parcours recherche

**« International Climate Talks: Where Autocrats meet
Democrats »**
***A Comparative Analysis of Xi Jinping's and Angela
Merkel's Climate Discourses***

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Imke Blume-Vidal

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Abstract:

Limiting climate change has become an urgent matter, and pressure on states is growing. Internationally, leaders from different nations need to cooperate closely and agree on international guidelines to tackle this global problem. To prepare for and guide through urgently needed political action, the international community first needs to agree on binding targets and allocation of responsibilities. In this process there is a risk of misunderstanding and misreading each other's public speeches and public commitments. This research aims to compare how China and Germany rhetorically deal with climate change and coal phase-out. By the means of critical discourse analysis, with both a quantitative and qualitative data analysis, this research examines and compares a selection of the most recent speeches by Chancellor Merkel and President Xi on climate change. Our aim is to highlight the big differences in public discourse on much the same kind of political commitment and thereby enhance understanding and possibly trust in the public promises of each side on climate issues.

Keywords:

environmental discourse, climate discourse, discourse analysis, China, Germany, coal phaseout, climate change, Xi Jinping, Angela Merkel, public discourse, international cooperation, climate politics, critical discourse analysis, keyword-based analysis.

Abbreviations:

BDA (*Bundesverband der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände*)

Confederation of German Employers' Associations

BRI *Belt and Road Initiative*

CDA *Critical Discours Analysis*

CFC *Chlorofluorocarbons*

CPC *Communist Party of China*

DA *Discourse Analysis*

EC *Ecological Civilization*

EU *European Union*

G20 *Group of Twenty*

IEA *International Energy Agency*

IMF *International Monetary Fund*

IPCC *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*

OECD *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*

PRC *People's Republic of China*

UBA *Umweltbundesamt (German Environment Agency)*

UN *United Nations*

WHO *World Health Organization*

WTO *World Trade Organisation*

I. Introduction

“Il n’y a pas d’exercice du pouvoir sans une certaine économie des discours de vérité fonctionnant dans, à partir de et à travers ce pouvoir. Nous sommes soumis par le pouvoir à la production de la vérité et nous ne pouvons exercer le pouvoir que par la production de la vérité.”

Michel Foucault¹

1. General Introduction:

“Right now, we’re facing a manmade disaster of global scale [...] if we don’t take action, the collapse of our civilization and the extinction of much the natural world is on the horizon” declared David Attenborough at the UN Climate Change Conference in 2018.² In October the same year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report, highlighting the advantages of limiting global warming to 1.5°C as compared to limiting it to 2°C. The consequences the report predicts for a 1.5°C increase in global temperature do not sound promising: the world would see a complete ice-free arctic summer per century and about 90% of the world’s corals would be destroyed. With a two-degree warming the arctic would see ice-free summers once per decade and corals would completely be extinct. But whether we aimed for limiting global warming to 1.5°C or 2°C, the IPCC report made clear that we do not have much time left. The “point of no return” was fixed to 2030 in the report, therewith giving us 12 years to act from 2018 on.³

Three years later, pressure on states is growing. “The Arctic is burning like never before” titled the British scientific journal *Nature* in September 2020, referring to the “unprecedented Arctic wildfires of 2019 and 2020”⁴. The academic journal *Science* wrote in July 2021: “Europe’s deadly floods leave scientists stunned”⁵, therewith referring to the floods in Western Europe that had caused nearly 200 deaths in Germany alone⁶. About the same time, floods in China also dominated the headlines which read for example: “Henan: 19 national meteorological stations measure highest daily precipitation values since stations were established”⁷. Scientists clearly link these events to climate change, saying the man-made 1,2 degree raise of global temperature observed since the industrial revolution, “made events such as this summer’s floods between 20 percent and 900 percent more likely”⁸. Time for

¹ Michel Foucault, (1976), « *Il faut défendre la société* » *Cours au Collège de France, 1976*, éd. Gallimard Le Seuil, coll. *Hautes Etudes, 1997, Cours du 14 janvier 1976*, p. 22

² Attenborough David, (2020), „A Life on Our Planet“, Documentary, 2020

³ IPCC Report 2018, online: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/download/> [last accessed: 08.07.2021]

⁴ Witze, Alexandra, (2020), „The Arctic is burning like never before- and that’s bad news for climate change“, *Nature* 585, 336-337 (2020), 10 September 2020, Online: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02568-y> [last accessed: 05.10.2021]

⁵ Cornwall, Warren, (2021), „Europe’s deadly floods leave scientist stunned“, *Science* Vol 373, Issue 6553, pp. 372-373, 23 July 2021

⁶ According to FACE (Federal Agency for Civic Education) information, the floods had caused more than 180 deaths till July 27th in Germany. See online: <https://www.bpb.de/politik/hintergrund-aktuell/337277/jahrhunderthochwasser-2021-in-deutschland> [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

⁷ Sina News article [in Chinese]: “河南：19 个国家级气象站日降水量突破建站以来历史日极值”，21.07.2021 online: <https://news.sina.com.cn/c/2021-07-21/doc-ikqciyzk6825037.shtml> [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

⁸ Mathisen, Karl, (2021), “Scientists see link between climate change and Europe’s floods”, Politico, August 24, 2021, Online: <https://www.politico.eu/article/climate-change-europe-floods-germany-belgium-global-warming-world-weather-attribution-study/> [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

limiting global warming is visibly running out and internationally governments need to react to this global crisis.

To tackle the global problem of climate change, the international community must closely cooperate. Leaders from different countries therefore aim to agree on binding climate targets and allocation of responsibilities. Limiting global warming is a challenging task. And since nations from the global North are historically the main polluters and main contributors to climate change⁹ whilst the main sufferers of global warming as it is seen today, are rather the countries of the global South¹⁰, this unfair distribution of guilt versus suffering makes global climate talks a delicate matter. In discussions where emotions are high, the risk of mutual misunderstanding grows and possible different political positions, not to mention ideologies, that exist between nations further complicate the debate. The importance of the climate discourses of international leaders should therefore not be underestimated.

Within the international community, when it comes to tackling a global problem like climate change, China and Germany each have an important weight. In terms of impact as much as in terms of power to act. Both countries are leading economies, with China ranking 2nd, Germany ranking 4th on the global level. China is Asia's, and Germany is Europe's biggest economy. The US economy is still the global leader.¹¹ But at the latest since the withdrawal from the Paris Agreement under the Trump administration, trust in the US climate engagement has been tested. Even Joe Bidens "political U-turn" may not be able to simply wipe away doubts that the USA might not be a partner as reliable as the international community had hoped when it comes to climate protection.

This even adds to the importance of China and Germany as Asia's and Europe's largest economic powers and the role they must play in climate protection. Since climate protection is closely linked to economic transition, China and Germany could demonstrate how to undergo the necessary changes. Compared to other countries, as leading economies, they have the necessary – at least financial- means for the successful green transition. Without a doubt, they merit being closely observed.

The political systems of China and Germany however differ to an extent that one could even say they are opposing systems. One could argue that comparing China and Germany will inevitably lead to comparing apples and oranges. But the sense of such comparison depends largely on its purpose and aim. The Dutch-American political scientist Arend Lijphart, who compared the advantages and disadvantages of the comparative method as compared to the case study, experimental, and statistical methods, defined the comparative method as the systematic analysis of a small number of cases. "Given inevitable scarcity of time, energy and financial resources," he argues, "the intensive analysis of a few cases may be more promising than the superficial statistical analysis of many cases."¹² For this reason, given the scope of a masters' thesis, this research focuses on China and Germany instead of wanting to analyze a

⁹ Pardikar, Rishika, (2020), "Global North is responsible for 92% of excess emissions", *Eos*, 101, 28 October 2020, Online: <https://eos.org/articles/global-north-is-responsible-for-92-of-excess-emissions> [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

¹⁰ IPCC, 2007: *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, Pachauri, R.K and Reisinger, A. (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 104 pp. Online: [AR4 Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report — IPCC](https://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_materials/assessment-reports/ar4_synthesis_report/) [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

¹¹ According to IMF Report: "International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook (April - 2021)" Online: [Report for Selected Countries and Subjects \(imf.org\)](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/04/06/wEO-apr-2021) [last accessed: 01.10.2021]

¹² Lijphard Arend as quoted by In Ada W Finifter (Ed.), Collier, David, (1993), "The Comparative Method", *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, Washington D.C.: American Political Science Association, pp. 105-119

larger number of countries. Although Lijphart emphasizes the advantage of the statistical method in particular, he also finds that the comparative method is most suitable for research with limited time and resources. According to Lijphart, when using the comparative method researchers should focus on “comparable cases” with many matching variables, and on cases that are different in terms of key variables¹³. Both is the case for China and Germany; they are different in terms of political systems but can also be seen as being comparable cases in terms of their economic weights and their therefor similar importance to the international community. When comparing the discourses of Xi and Merkel, this is even more important. When speaking of climate change, the two leaders inevitably speak about comparable scenarios yet using different rhetorical approaches. And whilst China and Germany are most different in terms of size and population, both countries face similar problems regarding climate protection with their dependency on coal for example. With the so called Kohleausstiegsgesetz (Coal phase-out Law) Germany has meanwhile brought about the legal frame for phasing out coal, whereas China faces international criticism for still investing in coal even after Xi Jinping’s announcement of the Chinese climate targets at the UN General Assembly 2020¹⁴.

By comparing how China and Germany discuss topics like climate change and coal phaseout differently we can broaden our view on possible solutions. As Michel Foucault puts it:

“There are moments in life when the question of whether one can think differently than one thinks, and whether one can perceive differently than one sees, is indispensable for looking ahead or thinking ahead.”¹⁵

By analyzing and comparing the climate discourses of the German and Chinese leaders, we can precisely learn to perceive differently what we see, understand the perspective of one another, think differently and hopefully think ahead. When wanting to limit global warming, when wanting to phaseout coal, or when wanting to undergo a green transition, we have no model of best practice that we could follow. We need to be creative and each country, each society, each economy and political system needs to find responses to these urgent global challenges. Within the limits and on the backdrop of its political system, each nation needs to do so in a way that such a response is feasible and acceptable at home.

In his groundbreaking work “The order of discourse” (1972) Foucault stipulated:

“I assume, that in any society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized, and channeled- and this by certain procedures whose aim it is to tame the forces and the dangers of discourse, to ban its unpredictable eventfulness, to circumvent its heavy and threatening materiality.”¹⁶

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ See for example: Nesbit, Jeff, (2021), “China finances most coal plants built today – it’s a climate problem and why US-China talks are essential”, *The Conversation*, 24.05.2021. Online: <https://theconversation.com/china-finances-most-coal-plants-built-today-its-a-climate-problem-and-why-us-china-talks-are-essential-161332> [last accessed: 03.10.2021]

¹⁵ Foucault, Michel, (1989), „Der Gebrauch der Lüste. Sexualität und Wahrheit, Zweiter Band“, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, pp. 15 [in German: „Es gibt im Leben Augenblicke, da die Frage, ob man anders denken kann, als man denkt, und anders wahrnehmen kann, als man sieht, zum Weiterschauen oder Weiterdenken unentbehrlich ist.“]

¹⁶ Foucault, Michel, (1970), „Die Ordnung des Diskurses“, Frankfurt: Fischer, German Edition: 1991, p.10 [in German: „Ich setze voraus, daß in jeder Gesellschaft die Produktion des Diskurses zugleich kontrolliert, selektiert, organisiert und kanalisiert wird – und zwar durch gewisse Prozeduren, deren Aufgabe es ist, die

Therefore, in analyzing the speeches of Xi and Merkel we will be motivated by the way Foucault looked at the general meaning of discourse in the society. Consequently, we need to assume that the ecological discourse of Xi and Merkel is also controlled, selected, organized and channeled by the Chinese or the German society.

In international cooperation, we must carefully listen to one another, and be open towards considering unusual approaches brought up by other countries. We can at least think about ideas brought into the discussion; ideas we would have never come up with ourselves in the context of our political system or national condition. The Chinese approach will not be adapted in Germany and vice versa, yet, by studying them and deeply understanding those different approaches, they may yet serve to enrich our thoughts. Listening to one another could inspire new ideas or deepen our understanding of the approaches of the other country. It can either bring about or further strengthen mutual understanding so that we can support one another on the path to transition even if we might not be walking down the same pathway.

Of course, it must be understood, that by analyzing only the climate discourses of Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel, we do not get to see the full picture. The speeches do not fully reflect each countries climate strategy. And neither will everything that is said be fully implemented, nor will every political measure planned be expressed in the discourses of Xi and Merkel. National policies are not necessarily explained in detail on international meetings, and even in speeches held nationally, do not always go into detail depending on the contexts of each speech and depending on the audience that is addressed. Nevertheless, studying these discourses does allow for some conclusions. When leaders from different nations speak at international events like the World Economic Forum or the UN Climate Summit, they explain themselves to the international community. They express what they aim for, defend their decisions and – sometimes- make promises to the international community. Although a gap between the political discourse and political actions can always be remarked, there is little doubt that political discourse and political action interact and influence one another, as for example Michel Foucault, the founder of discourse analysis has shown¹⁷.

In international cooperation, one could criticize, that even promises made (such as concrete targets) are not necessarily kept. Nonetheless, making a promise or declaring a target, is decisive as it puts pressure on a state and- maybe more importantly- it gives the international community the role of a supervisory authority. It is the promise made on an international level, that legitimizes international criticism in case a promise is not kept. This point might be of minor importance for Western democracies that are used to open criticism. For an autocratic country however, it might be challenging. In the past, China has repeatedly referred to its own culture of non-interference in other countries affairs to demand such non-interference in China's political affairs on the other hand¹⁸.

Kräfte und die Gefahren des Diskurses zu bändigen, sein unberechenbar Ereignishaftes zu bannen, seine schwere und bedrohliche Materialität zu umgehen.“]

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ The Chinese policy of non-interference goes back to the Bandung Conference in 1956, where the "Ten Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" became the centerpiece of China's actions on the international stage. They can be understood as a further development of the of the five principles existing between India and China already previously (mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence). For further information see for example: Seifert, Andreas, (2008), IMI Studie "China in Afrika oder: Zu einem anstehenden Paradigmenwechsel in der Frage der Nichteinmischung in die Angelegenheiten anderer Staaten", *IMI Studie Nr. 09/2008*, 28.08.2008. Online: [IMI-Studieafrika.indd\(vifapol.de\)](http://IMI-Studieafrika.indd(vifapol.de)) [last accessed: 02.10.2021]

The mechanisms of such attitude are abruptly interrupted in international cooperation. First, the fact that one agrees on having a common problem does no longer allow for such behavior. Since common problems take common solutions and “China’s affairs” (for example a national climate protection policy) are no longer just “China’s affairs” in this context. Second, agreeing on the necessity of allocation of responsibilities in the context of international cooperation demands mutual control. Third, promises made or binding targets agreed on, further emphasize the importance of mutual verifiability. China’s growing influence at the global stage and the country’s willingness to take a leading role in the international community which Xi Jinping expresses in quite some speeches¹⁹, does not only bring about challenges for the international community which needs to learn how to deal with China’s new leading role; it also challenges China, whose autocratic leadership will need to get used to what was avoided carefully in the past: open criticism on China’s political decisions.

The study of discourses made in such contexts is therefore highly relevant. We are still only about to find out whether China could be a reliable partner in such cooperation. But cooperation between nations takes the goodwill of any of these nations to be successful. Each participant to such cooperation, does contribute to the dialogue. It is the duty of each participating nation to prove the own trustworthiness and reliability but also to create a general condition that allows to meet on eyelevel. International cooperation between nations is about getting along. This of course, is easier when it is grounded on a general mutual understanding. And between nations with not only different viewpoints but even different ideologies, such dialogue takes a good dose of pragmatism to overcome ideological discussions and bring about real change. With the words of German philosopher Jürgen Habermas:

“The task of universal pragmatics is to identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible mutual understanding.”²⁰

Strengthening the awareness of Xi Jinping’s and Angela Merkel’s contributions to the intergovernmental discussion on climate change, and hopefully contributing to a better mutual understanding is the aim of this research.

2. Materials and Methods:

A selection of six of Xi Jinping’s as well as six of Angela Merkel’s recent speeches on climate change will be analysed in this paper. With a mixed-methods approach, this study uses critical discourse analysis and the comparative method, to analyse and compare the most recent “climate discourses” of Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel. Quantitative research is conducted as computer-assisted corpus analysis. With the help of a corpus tool (Antconc) keyword lists are gained from both corpuses for comparison. In a first step, qualitative research is undertaken during the process of translation of the full body of texts, which contributes to a deep understanding of the texts and a provides a first overview of the contents and topics. In a second step qualitative research is undertaken by examining the keywords gained from quantitative research in the precise context of the texts, when analysing concrete examples of how relevant keywords have been used. Inductive coding is used to select the topics of interest for this study. Deductive coding, as it is often used to analyse the environmental discourse²¹ to my mind, would have risked limiting the perception of Xi’s and Merkel’s

¹⁹ Examples for this can be found in each of the speeches analysed in this paper (see annexes)

²⁰ Habermas Jürgen, (1998), “On the Pragmatics of Communication”, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p.21

²¹ See for example: Herndl Carl, Brown Stuart, (1996), “Green Culture- Rhetorical Analyses of Environmental Discourse”, Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin UP

speeches and would have guided to artificially set questions. Instead, inductive coding allowed to deduce analytical categories from the corpuses themselves. Inspired by Foucault's idea of discourse analysis, in order to gain a general understanding of the power of the discourses, it therefore seemed logical to analyse and compare *the said and the unsaid* of each corpus²². The quantitative analysis provided keywords that could be of interest given their level of keyness or frequency of use in the texts under examination. On the other hand, it took qualitative research to understand that focusing on numerically less relevant keywords is often also highly relevant for understanding the discourses under examination. Some such numerically rather unimportant keywords are of particular interest to this research due to their rhetorical value, for example for their propagandistic use in the texts. "Consumption" for example, ranked very low in Xi Jinping's corpus (rank 243), but it was found to be highly relevant since it is remarkable how clearly consumption was linked to environmental and climate protection in Xi Jinping's speeches (compare section "Results"). In Angela Merkel's corpus on the other hand, it was the word "development", which ranked only 119th but was found to be relevant for this study since it is still a key topic in Merkel's speeches but also because the word is used quite differently by Merkel than by Xi Jinping in whose corpus it ranked higher (namely 5th). By selecting relevant keywords in this way, it was finally possible to bring about a categorization which allowed best to compare the use of these keywords in both corpuses. This research distinguishes the following four categories of keywords:

- Keywords that both corpuses have in common (1. common keywords)
- Keywords that only appear on the keyword list of one of the corpuses (2. individual keywords)
- Keywords that are environment related (3. environmental keywords). They can be environment related either by the meaning of the word itself (ex. nature, biodiversity etc.) or by the link each speaker creates when using the keyword (ex. development can refer to "sustainable development" then turning it into an environment related keyword which is not the case when development refers to "economic development")
- Keywords that are not environment related (4. non environmental keywords), which can even include words that are seemingly environment related such as "nature", when it refers for example to "the nature of politics" instead of "mother nature".

This categorization allows for the following conclusions: distinguishing between "common" and "individual" keywords allows to see which key topics both speeches have in common, then allowing to examine how they might be treated differently by Xi and Merkel. By distinguishing between "environmental" and "non environmental" keywords it becomes visible which keywords should be focused on when aiming to understand the rhetoric in the climate discourses of Xi and Merkel. Note, it is not forcibly only the environmental keywords that are interesting to study. Instead, let's imagine a word like "development" or "climate" would be used exclusively without any environmental link within the environmental discourse of Xi or Merkel, this would be important to remark.

Since in Foucault's eyes, discourse is a culturally constructed representation of reality, it constructs knowledge but also defines what is possible to talk about and what is not. It therefore produces and reproduces both power and knowledge simultaneously.²³ In this sense, this study aims to reveal what is said and what is unsaid when Xi and Merkel speak about climate change and climate protection. What differentiates the climate discourse of the two leaders and what do they have in common? We will therefore try to point out the

²² Compare for ex.: Foucault, Michel, (1972/1995 ed.), *"The Archeology of Knowledge"*, London: Routledge; or: Foucault, Michel, "Politics and The Study of Discourse" in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 53-72

²³ Ibid

leitmotifs of the speeches and compare which such leitmotifs both corpora have in common, and which topics are brought in by only one side. With a comparison of concrete examples from the texts, it will be shown whether or how common keywords are used and represented differently by Xi and Merkel. By highlighting the similarities and differences on the one hand, and on the other hand by elaborating the different meanings of seemingly common keywords in the discourses of Xi and Merkel, it is intended to show the modes of action of discourses described by Foucault.

It needs to be said that there are no pure “climate discourses” in neither case, since neither Xi nor Merkel gave speeches exclusively or even with a main focus on climate. Therefore, what is called “climate discourse” in this research, is part of the “environmental discourse” in a larger sense, but this research will focus on climate, as a topic which can be found in the selected speeches amongst others.

All speeches can be found attached to this work, as well as the full keyword lists and the analysis of each keyword (even those keywords that are not further mentioned in this paper). Each corpus analysed consists of my own translation of all speeches. In case of the Merkel corpus, the translations are based not on the transcriptions of the speeches as published by the German government, but on my own transcripts made after listening to the speeches²⁴. This procedure was necessary because I have noticed differences between the speeches held and the scripts published by the German government. Detailed information regarding these differences can be found in the annexe, in the introduction to the scripts and translations of the speeches.

The reason to translate all of Xi Jinping’s speeches myself, although most speeches have already been published in English language by the Chinese government, is that I did not find the official translations suitable when wanting to undertake a keyword-based analysis, simply because the official translations were made for a different purpose. When Xi Jinping’s speeches are translated for an international audience, the focus of such a translation is on a good readability and understandability. The aim is mainly to translate the message, whereas translating the rhetoric or precise wording is not in the focus of such translations. When it comes to languages so different in nature as Chinese and English, it is a legitimate choice by a translator, to focus on the one or the other (good readability or precise choice of words). Given the nature of the Chinese language which is based on a millennia old pictographic writing system, every single sentence could be translated in multiple ways since every Chinese character adds an “image”²⁵ to each word or expression. The expression “mama huhu” (马马虎虎) shall serve as an example here, to show the dilemma any translator faces when wanting to translate from Chinese into a Western language. As an adjective “mama huhu” it is often translated as “careless” or “casual” as for example when saying “mama huhu ke buxing” (马马虎虎可不行) which could be a reminder to do something carefully, then meaning something like “doing it carelessly is not ok”. The characters “ma” and “hu” however, have a meaning in themselves, which every Chinese speaker is inevitably aware of when hearing this sentence. “Ma” means “horse” and “hu” means “tiger”. Together they form a fixed expression that is well known but when just hearing a translation, the image of the horse and the tiger disappears. Of course, horse and tiger have no relevance in the example mentioned above and therefore no translator would ever mention it unless if for example a play on words would make an explanation necessary. When this is not the case, horse and tiger are

²⁴ Videos of most speeches can be found on www.bundeskanzlerin.de and on YouTube. The exact source of each speech is indicated on the scripts attached to this thesis.

²⁵ By “image” I refer to the “image” a character provokes in the mind of a Chinese speaker, when thinking of the character a word might be composed of.

irrelevant for the translation, but we should be aware, that an information is therewith disappearing.

In Xi Jinping's speeches however, some fixed expressions that are well known and therefore have fixed English translations, come with the same effect as "mama huhu". They also provoke further associations to the minds of Chinese speakers when thinking of the characters. It is a bit like translating the English expression "It's raining cats and dogs" into "it is raining heavily". The translation is correct but the funny image of the cats and dogs dropping from the sky is no longer visible. Of course, when it comes to understanding rhetorical choices made by the Chinese president, if we want to understand propagandistic elements in Xi Jinping's speeches for example, we do need this extra information, which is usually not translated in the official English versions for the sake of good readability. I therefore made my own translation of all Chinese speeches analysed in this study aiming to highlight the choice of words made by Xi Jinping. The translations can be found attached to this work, and alternative translations are explained in detail.

Literature Review:

"Discourse analysis (DA) is both an old and new discipline. Its origins can be traced back to the study of language, public speech, and literature more than 2000 years ago" writes Teun van Dijk in "The Handbook of Discourse Analysis" (1985)²⁶. As a scientific method, discourse analysis originates from linguistics, and, despite being applicable in versatile forms, which makes it suitable for research in many academic fields, DA is sometimes criticized as lacking credibility, as if it was more of an "intuitive" than a real scientific approach²⁷. Although, in my view, Foucault as the founder of critical discourse analysis (CDA) does not lack any credibility, computer-assisted corpus analysis can nevertheless add to the scientific credibility of discourse analysis, as for example Michael Stubbs argues²⁸. In this respect, it made sense to combine CDA and computer-assisted corpus analysis (here: keyword analysis), for the purpose of this thesis.

Within the study of discourses, the environmental discourse is increasingly booming as a topic of interest as for example Leipold, Feindt et al remarked²⁹. Not only scholars from relatively new discipline of environmental studies, but also scholars from other academic fields show an increasing interest in the study of environmental discourses and the link between environmental discourse and policies³⁰. Different theoretical framework models exist for analysing environmental discourses. In the editor's introduction of their book "Green Culture- Rhetorical Analyses of Environmental Discourse", Herndl and Brown for example introduce such a framework model, therein dividing the environmental discourse in three categories: the regulatory discourse, the scientific discourse and the poetic discourse³¹. The different categories of discourse either describe nature as "resource" (ethnocentric discourse), "spirit" (ecocentric discourse) or "object" (anthropocentric discourse). Gustafsson finds, that

²⁶ Introduction: Discourse analysis as a new cross-discipline, In: van Dijk, (Ed.), (1985), "Handbook of Discourse Analysis", Vol. 1., p. 1, Retrieved from: www.discourses.org [last accessed: 06.10.2021]

²⁷ see for example Peter Trudgill's comment in the Editor's Preface to Michael Stubbs book "Text and Corpus Analysis" (Stubbs, Michael, (1996) "Text and Corpus Analysis", Oxford, UK and Maiden Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.)

²⁸ Stubbs, Michael, (1996), „Text and Corpus Analysis“, Oxford UK and Maiden, Massachusetts USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

²⁹ Leipold Sina, Feindt Peter H., Winkel Georg, Keller Reiner, (2019), "Discourse analysis of environmental policy revisited: traditions, trends, perspectives", *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 21:5, pp. 445-463

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Herndl Carl, Brown Stuart, (1996), "Green Culture- Rhetorical Analyses of Environmental Discourse", Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin UP

the discourses of sustainable development and ecological modernization for example fall under the category of the ethnocentric “regulatory discourse”, for arguing that science and technology can manage environmental problems while maintaining economic and social growth³². According to Gustafsson, the anthropocentric “scientific discourse” subordinates nature to the human ability to scrutinize it³³, whilst the ecocentric “poetic discourse” highlights the mental and emotional values and the beauty of nature instead³⁴.

Although all three categories can also be found within the corpus of texts studied in this research, this threefold categorization is not the focus of this research. Instead, and without wanting to exclude this categorization, and furthermore without wanting to underestimate its relevance for my own work, this research does not place any particular framework model at the heart of this work. When following the Foucauldian idea of discourse analysis, it seems essential to me not to limit the research to categories in advance (by employing deductive coding), but to allow the research to lead to a categorisation instead (inductive coding). In this sense, it was our research questions that lead the way of this research, underlined with the examination of keywords gained through quantitative research as explained above.

For being as much political discourses as environmental discourses, the national and international climate discourses of different leaders have also been studied by scholars from several disciplines. The particular environmental discourse of Xi Jinping, however, has not often been subject to systematic study. Xi Jinping’s rhetoric (or in a larger sense that of the CPC), is mainly examined with a focus on propagandistic elements or (if related to environmental topics at all but mainly in a general context of political discourse) for the purpose of revealing the gap between political discourse and action³⁵.

Angela Merkel’s environmental discourse is also largely underrepresented in academic research. Still sometimes referred to as “climate chancellor” when taking office, Merkel’s environmental discourse was apparently not considered important enough to become a topic of study. In “Nachhaltige Nicht-Nachhaltigkeit: Warum die ökologische Transformation der Gesellschaft nicht stattfindet”³⁶ (sustainable unsustainability: why the ecological transition does not happen within the society) for example, the authors mention Angela Merkel rather accidentally for examining the situation in Germany under her rule. Though Merkel and her rhetoric are directly criticized here, the focus is not on systematically analyzing Merkel’s environmental discourse itself. Under the title „Die Entzauberung der Energiewende: Politik- und Diskurswandel unter schwarz-gelben Argumentationsmustern“ Nico Grasselt examines the changing discourse in Germany when under Angela Merkel’s rule Germany decided to phase out nuclear power. With a discourse analytical approach, the author examines the

³² Gustafsson, K.M., (2013), “Environmental discourses and biodiversity: The construction of a storyline in understanding and managing an environmental issue”, *J. Integr. Environ. Sci.* 2013, 10, 39-54

Dryzek, J.S., (2005), “The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses”, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK; New York, NY, USA

³³ Gustafsson, K.M., (2013), “Environmental discourses and biodiversity: The construction of a storyline in understanding and managing an environmental issue”, *J. Integr. Environ. Sci.* 2013, 10, p. 43

³⁴ Herndl, C.G.; Brown, S.C., (1996), “Introduction, In Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America”; Herndl, C.G., Brown, S.C., Eds.; University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, WI, USA, 1996; pp: 3-20

³⁵ Ex: Lo Alex, “Carbon Trading in China- Environmental Discourse and Politics”, New York US and Hampshire UK: Palgrave Macmillan (2016).

Klimeš, O., Marinelli, M., (2018), “Introduction: Ideology, Propaganda, and Political Discourse in the Xi Jinping Era”, *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 23, pp. 313–322

Marinelli, M., (2018), “How to Build a ‘Beautiful China’ in the Anthropocene. The Political Discourse and the Intellectual Debate on Ecological Civilization”, *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 23, pp. 365–386

³⁶ Blühdorn, Ingolfur, Butzlaff, Felix, Deflorian, Michael, Hausknost, Daniel and Mock, Mirijam, (2020), „Nachhaltige Nicht-Nachhaltigkeit: Warum die ökologische Transformation der Gesellschaft nicht stattfindet“, Bielefeld: transcript Verlag

changing tone in the political debate following the nuclear accident in Fukushima, which brought about a U-turn in the German energy policy. Once again, Merkel's discourse is not in the focus of this research.³⁷

The climate discourses of Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel have not been subject of systematic study and comparison so far. This is astonishing, given the importance of both countries in international climate cooperation on the one hand, and the coincidental temporal overlap of the reigns of both political leaders. With Angela Merkel's rule overlapping 100% that of Xi Jinping, a comparison of the Chinese and German climate discourse nearly forcibly leads to the comparison of Xi's and Merkel's discourses since as the leaders of their countries, they have been representing their countries position on climate protection and the international level simultaneously for about a decade now. The comparison of how Xi and Merkel talk about climate in the context of international climate talks was largely ignored so far. This study aims to fill this gap.

I even see it as a special duty for scholars from China Studies to analyse the discourses of Chinese leaders in general, since I believe language and translation is a widely underestimated problem when it comes to analysing the discourses of politicians from different nations in general but of Chinese politicians in particular. Existing studies focusing on the comparison of political discourses on an international level, and even analyses of the political discourse of a single countries leader that are held on an international level, all face one problem: namely that such discourses usually exist in two or more versions. When leaders from different non-anglophone nations speak to the international community, they mostly do so in their mother tongue. All of Xi Jinping's speeches, as well as all of Angela Merkel's speeches studied here, where for example given in Chinese and in German and not a single one was held in English. Often such speeches will be simultaneously translated into English or in some cases translations are made even posterior to the meetings where speeches are given. Research focusing on such discourse is therefore mostly based on English translations of speeches held in different languages. This might work when simply wanting to analyse and compare contents of the speeches (ex: when asking: "which promises are made?" or other similar questions).

Studying different analytical works focussing on international political or environmental discourses, I have not found a single example where it would have even been mentioned that the original speeches were given in other than the English language, or where it would have been explained which version or translation the analysis is based on. I believe this is a problem which merits more attention, particularly in the Chinese context. As mentioned before, when translating Chinese into English in the context of international conferences for example, any translator needs to make choices and mostly translations focus on a good understandability and on transporting the main messages of political speeches, instead of focusing on the choice of words. This same approach, however, is no longer suitable when wanting to analyse the rhetoric of a given Chinese discourse. In that case it is important to stay as close as possible to the words chosen in Chinese, even if this needs further explanations to make sense in English.

To give a concrete example:

In the translations of political speeches, the often blooming (some may say "propagandistic") language often disappears in the English translations of Xi Jinping's speeches. In the 2018 speech on eco-civilization building for example, the word "shengtai wenming" (生态文明)

³⁷ Grasselt Nico, (2016), "Die Entzauberung der Energiewende: Politik-und Diskurswandel unter schwarz-gelben Argumentationsmustern", Wiesbaden: Springer VS

literally meaning “ecological civilization”, is often translated as “sustainability” or “sustainable development” depending on the context. This translation is a good choice since the concept of “sustainability” or “sustainable development” is well-known in the West, whereas the idea of the “ecological civilization” may need further explanation. When comparing Xi’s and Merkel’s speeches however, this translation is not the best choice. In the context of a discourse analysis, and more importantly when the discourses of different leaders are being compared, the choice of a possible translation is decisive. It might precisely be what differentiates Xi’s rhetoric from that of Merkel.

When translating the speeches of the German Chancellor, the word “Nachhaltigkeit” (sustainability) as well as “nachhaltige Entwicklung” (sustainable development) appeared on several occasions. “Sustainability” and “sustainable development” are part of Angela Merkel’s, but not of Xi Jinping’s rhetoric and this difference disappears when simply basing a keyword-based discourse analysis on existing English translations that were made for another purpose. The Chinese word for sustainability is “kechixxing” (可持续性), and this word does not appear in Xi Jinping’s speeches that have been analysed here. When looking for the word “sustainable” as an adjective (in Chinese: “kechixu” 可持续), there are some hits, but they refer to fixed terms for example when Xi mentions the “China National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (in Chinese: 中国落实2030年可持续发展议程国别方案). Here, Xi uses the word “kechixu”, which literally means “sustainable” in the Western sense, since he is explicitly referring to the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” of the United Nations, and hence uses the Western term of “sustainable development”. While some scholars understand EC as wanting to replace the Western concept of “sustainable development”³⁸, it is yet a bad choice to systematically translate it as “sustainable development” or “sustainability”. They are different terminologies and need to be translated as such.

To my mind, this is where sinologues can provide more information, add explanations and try to not only translate a speech so that it sounds as English as a speech by the US president, but instead in a way that it sounds Chinese in a sense that we might learn to differentiate Xi’s from Biden’s speeches for recognizing the different tone and vocabulary used. I am convinced, that this is important to get a better understanding of China and of Chinese politics. We need to make sure we take the choice of words serious. After all, there might be a reason why Xi speaks of the Chinese concept of the “ecological civilization” and not of “sustainability”.

Similarly, after translating Angela Merkel’s speeches, and when comparing it to existing translations, I was surprised to find out how much “the tone of the speeches” had changed. The official translations sounded like the speeches of many politicians, whereas in my own translations, I tried to keep Merkel’s personal tone as much as possible and believe that it is recognizable that it is Angela Merkel who speaks. English translations of Angela Merkel’s speeches, just like the official transcripts of her speeches sound much more “smooth” than Merkel’s real speeches. Such scripts partly correct the speeches given. In one extreme part for example, Merkel speaks of the support for renewable energies as being “decreasing” whilst the transcript and translation read “increasing” instead. Quite often, the order of the words in one sentence change between the spoken speech and the written version. Those are minor differences, but still differences. The aim of providing my own scripts and translations is not to simply make every little mistake in Merkel’s speeches visible. But to my mind, these tiny but numerous differences are precisely what differentiates the tone of the official versions

³⁸ Ex. Goron, Coraline, (2018), « Civilisation écologique et limites politiques du concept chinois de développement durable », Perspectives Chinoises 2018 No. 4, pp. 41-55

from Merkel's personal tone when giving a speech. It is this little bit of imperfection, which to my mind sometimes even adds to the credibility of the German chancellor. Her tiny mistakes and sometimes unconventional phrases are what reminds us, that she is not simply reading out a speech.

Other than Xi Jinping, Merkel does speak freely. On the videos of her speeches, she rarely looks at her notes and if she does, it is mostly when she refers to facts and figures, as if she wanted to double check that she is using the precise figure for example. It is also visible, that Merkel's speeches sound rhetorically less sophisticated than Xi Jinping's speeches, which I understand as an indicator, that Xi's speeches are carefully "manufactured" and far less spontaneous than those of the German chancellor.

The Choice of the Texts for the analysis:

The concrete speeches were selected under the following criteria: they are speeches in which the focus is on environmental topics, they were delivered recently (no speech is older than 5 years). Each corpus contains mainly speeches held internationally, where possible I chose similar speeches from same the context (ex: Davos, UN Climate Summit) where both leaders spoke. For each corpus, there are also some national speeches. This is important in order to get "the full range of rhetoric", since an international audience might be addressed differently than a national one. Whilst it was easy to find a specific environmental speech held nationally by Xi Jinping, none such speech could be found for Angela Merkel. I therefore chose two different national speeches that are not "environmental speeches" as such, but where the German chancellor spoke about the environment in some parts. In this case, only the relevant extracts of the speeches were integrated in the corpus for a better comparability with Xi's environmental speech.

The different availability of speeches in China and Germany are due to systemic differences. In Germany, environmental speeches will not always necessarily be held by the Chancellor, but often by the minister for the environment whilst in China the minister hardly gives public speeches, or they are not published in full length. On the other hand, it shall also be mentioned that the Xi Corpus is longer than the Merkel corpus. This is not necessarily because Xi gives longer speeches than Merkel but rather because speeches held in Chinese get longer when being translated into English given the differences between the two languages. German-English translations do not vary significantly in length. The differences in length however shall not reduce the credibility of this comparison. Despite different lengths, the speeches are equal in terms of importance. They are held on equal or similar occasions, and similar topics are addressed.

When it comes to the systemic differences between China and Germany, one could argue, that it would be wise to compare the speeches of different members of the governments (like that of the minister for the environment) instead of just comparing the speeches of the leaders of the states. Yet, since this research focuses on international environmental cooperation and especially the dialogue between nations, it is important to focus on the comparison of Xi Jinping's and Angela Merkel's speeches. As the heads of their states, they represent their countries and defend and explain their political approaches to the international community at such meetings as the World Economic Forum or the United Nations Climate Change Conferences. A comparison of Xi's and Merkel's speeches is also interesting because of the time frame of their rule. Merkel is one of the few leaders of a Western democracy who has been in office ever since Xi Jinping came into power, and she was re-elected often enough to cover Xi's entire reign until this year without interruption. Both leaders, have therefore met at all international events where both countries participate and delivered speeches at the same events (Davos, UN Climate Summit etc.) for nearly a

decade now, which contributes to a high level of comparability despite all systemic and ideologic differences.

The fact that keyword lists from the Xi Corpus are longer than those from the Merkel corpus, not only depends on the speeches' lengths, but also on the different rhetoric. Keyword lists are not the same as wordlists that simply count the frequency of use of a word. Keywords are therefore not necessarily words that are used most often, but words that, as compared to the larger corpus of reference, are remarkable in terms of "keyness". A word being used only twice in an entire corpus, can therefore be ranked high given its keyness value. Hence, when Xi uses words that are typical Chinese propaganda words (ex: harmony, or comrade) such words will be given a relatively high keyness value. I decided not to limit the keyword lists by choosing a fixed number of keywords, as the programme would have allowed for. Although that would have reduced the amount of work, I believe it would have manipulated the result. Without such limits, the keywords can be understood as fully representing the entire corpus. If without limiting the program, the result for Xi Jinping is a list of 290 words as compared to 128 words on Merkel's list, it is the "natural result" influenced by the different lengths and the different rhetoric used but not an artificial limit.

Since all speeches are translated into American English, I have chosen the "Brown Corpus" as a reference in the corpus tool because it is a corpus of contemporary American English.

Qualitative analysis was undertaken by critical reading of the texts after having gained a profound general understanding during the process of translation. Quantitative analysis was undertaken via a numeric analysis which brought about the keyword lists for each of the corpuses. Based on the keyword lists, key topics were identified and topics of main interest for this research have been chosen and compared within the two corpuses. For each of the key topics selected for this work, concrete examples from the texts are then given to show how key topics are being represented differently in the texts. By comparing the two corpuses this research aims to show which leitmotifs dominate in each of the corpuses and which topics might be omitted in one corpus whilst being highlighted in the other. This will ultimately allow us to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the leitmotifs used by Xi and Merkel in their climate discourses?
2. How are key topics represented differently in the discourses of Xi and Merkel?

II. Results

Through a first corpus tool-based analysis of quantitative data, two keyword list were generated: a list of keywords from the Xi corpus (see Annexe I Figure 1) and a list of keywords from the Merkel corpus (see Annexe I Figure 2). Based on the two keyword lists, a comparative list was created (Annexe I Figure 3, below), showing which keywords appear in both of the corpuses and which appear in only Xi Jinping's or only Angela Merkel's speeches. Some keywords are clearly related to topics that are not of interest for this research (ex. Virus or pandemic). Therefore, only a selection of such common keywords is examined here (the words marked in yellow, see figure 3). Based on the result of this direct comparison, the following "common keywords" have been identified as being important in the corpuses of both speakers:

Development, cooperation, challenges, multilateralism, world, innovation, energy, prosperity, neutrality, connectedness/connectivity, targets, resilience, livelihood, technology, contribution/contributor, climate, protection.

Figure 3:

Common keywords

Xi Jinping Keywords (rank)	Angela Merkel Keywords (rank)
Development (5)	Development (119)
China (6)	China (67)
Countries (11) / Country (136)	Countries (16)
Cooperation (12)	Cooperation (91)
Protection (14)	Protection (20)
Covid (18) / Pandemic (40) / Virus (78) / coronavirus (210)	Pandemic (5) / Virus (36)
Climate (24)	Climate (2)
Challenges (28)	Challenges (86) / Challenge (114)
Multilateralism (30)	Multilateralism (60)
World (37)	World (22)
Innovation (65)	Innovation (127)
Vaccines (77)	Vaccine (47) / Vaccines (111)
Energy (84)	Energies (43) / Energy (69)
Prosperity (91)	Prosperity (68)
Chains (116)	Chains (55)
Neutrality (122)	Neutrality (83)
Connectivity (147)	Connectedness (97)
Targets (268)	Target (82)
Resilience (279)	Resilience (73)
Livelihood (267)	Livelihoods (59)
Technology (189)	Technologies (39)
Contributor (122)	Contribution (35)

II.1. The Use of Common Keywords in Xi's and Merkel's Speeches

All relevant words (marked in yellow) which both corpuses have in common have been fully analysed (see Annex I Figures 4 and 5). Nevertheless, given the limited scope of a Masters' thesis, only some examples will be represented and discussed in detail in the following sections. The results are organized in the following way: point II.1.1. represents the results for some common keywords that are environment related, point II.1.2. shows the result for some common keywords that are "non-environmental". Each keyword is at first represented in the context of its corpus, then, after giving examples from both corpuses, both results are summarized and compared before moving to the next keyword.

II.1.1. The use of environment-related common keywords in Xi's and Merkel's speeches:

Only two common keywords of the Xi and Merkel corpus were found to be clearly environment related by the nature of the words themselves as well as the use, namely "climate" and "protection", the latter for assuming that in the context of environmental discourses with a focus on climate, "protection" may largely refer to "climate protection".

Example "Climate"

In Xi's speeches, climate sometimes belongs to an expression consisting of two or more words, as when Xi speaks of "climate change", "climate action" or the "global climate challenge". But in

most cases “climate” refers to “climate change”. When speaking of climate change, Xi Jinping emphasizes the importance of multilateral governance, and global or bilateral agreements like for example the Paris Agreement or the Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis between China and the US.:

” To protect the natural environment and to respond to climate change, it takes the common effort of every nation in the world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” We need to follow the philosophy of green development, in order to respond to climate change, global cooperation must be carried on, [and we must] strictly implement the Paris Agreement to respond to climate change.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

” We need to deliver on the Paris Agreement on climate change and promote green development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone. There must be global action, global response and global cooperation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” The Paris Agreement on climate change charts the course for the world to transition to green and low-carbon development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

The Chinese President also clearly outlines what China wants to contribute to climate protection on both the national and international level. And Xi Jinping gives several answers on how China reacts to the challenge of climate change. He mainly proposes three ways for China to tackle climate change: 1. by financial contributions, 2. by taking over responsibilities in global climate cooperation, 3. Via the national climate protection strategy.

1. On financial contribution Xi Jinping says:

” China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and support other countries in restoring economic and social development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

➔ Here, the main focus is not on climate protection, instead “climate change” is one out of several fields of international cooperation where China contributes also financially.

2. On China’s willingness to take over responsibilities in international climate cooperation, Xi Jinping says for example:

” [We] need to adhere environmental friendly [attitudes], [and] guide the international cooperation responding to climate change.” (Xi on EC 2018)

And Xi Jinping further highlights the importance of international cooperation, though not missing the opportunity to criticize the USA at the same time, when saying:

” China welcomes the United States' return to the multilateral climate governance process. Not long ago, the Chinese and U.S. sides released a Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Or:

” I wish to thank President Biden for the kind invitation. It is good to have this opportunity to have an in-depth exchange of views with you on climate change, and to discuss ways to tackle this challenge and find a path forward for man and Nature to live in harmony.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→ By not taking the cooperation with the US for granted, both examples are indirect critiques towards the US role in global climate cooperation under the Trump administration.

3. On implementing the national strategy, the Chinese President says:

” [We] must implement a national strategy for actively responding to climate change, promote and guide the establishment of a fair and equitable global climate governance system featuring mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance the image of our nation as a responsible major country, [and] push forward the development of a human community with a common fate.” (Xi on EC 2018)

The example under point three also makes clear that China is willing to take over a leading role in global climate governance. It is once more an indirect criticism towards the West when the Chinese President emphasizes the need to establish a “fair and equitable global climate governance system” and when stating that China wants to feature “mutually beneficial cooperation”, which sounds as if none of this existed so far.

The second examples here furthermore shows that the idea of building an Ecological Civilization in China aims to educate the peoples and to develop a nation with “environment friendly attitudes”. One more time Xi Jinping expresses China’s willingness to take over a leading role when he says that China needs to “guide the international cooperation”.

In Merkel’s speeches, climate is either referred to in names, for ex. Paris Climate Agreement, Climate Fund etc. (examples A) or when literally speaking of the climate as a global phenomenon (examples B).

Examples A:

” That is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

” This year, during our G20 presidency, we adopted the G20 Action Plan on Climate and Energy for More Sustainable Economic Growth.” (Merkel 2017)

” We are very proud that the headquarters of the UN Climate Change Secretariat are located here in Bonn.” (Merkel 2017)

Examples B:

” The daily weather events and climate catastrophes around the world show us how urgent the matter is.” (Merkel 2017)

” There is no doubt that climate change, [that] global warming, is essentially man-made.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Main topics which “climate” is linked to in Merkel’s speeches are: “climate change”, “climate protection”, “climate neutrality” and “climate finance”.

Climate change is described as being “essentially man-made” as well as being a “vital question” or a “great human challenge” (Examples A) Therefore “**climate neutrality**” is pronounced of being an official aim of both the European Union and of course the Federal Republic of Germany (Examples B). From 2019 on, Merkel repeatedly states that climate neutrality shall be

reached by 2050 and she stresses that by reaching this target Europe would be the first “climate neutral continent”. Together with the idea of a “climate risk insurance”, **climate financing** seems to be one of the main strategies Germany wants to engage in climate protection. On seven occasions and in different speeches, Merkel mentions Germany's efforts in climate financing like when stating that Germany has doubled its “climate financing” or when mentioning the German financial contribution to the Global Climate Fund (Examples C). The Chancellor speaks of “the urgently needed progress on **climate protection**” and the risk of “increasing conflicts over natural resources” as being “virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection”.

But climate protection is also linked to economic and social topics such as jobs as when the Chancellor states the “issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role” or when the climate policy is described as also being a “future-oriented economic policy” (Examples D).

Examples A:

” There is no doubt that climate change, [that] global warming, is essentially man-made.” (Merkel UN 2019)

” Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and also, two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work - you know this from your practice - and on the other hand, the great human challenge of climate change.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

” There is the vital question of climate change, that of controlling and ordering migration, there is the fight against international terrorism.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

Examples B:

” I support Ursula von der Leyen when she says: The European continent should be the first to become climate-neutral and to set an example in terms of technology and innovation of how to achieve the future way of doing business.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

” The European Union will be climate-neutral by 2050 - and that of course also applies to the Federal Republic of Germany.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

” That is why we have set ourselves the goal of reducing our CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to the 1990 levels, and to be climate neutral by 2050.” (Merkel UN 2019)

” We have committed to climate neutrality for the year 2050, which, if we achieve that, can lead to Europe becoming the first climate-neutral continent.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

” In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Examples C:

” As industrialized countries, we have committed to providing 100 billion U.S. dollars a year in climate finance by 2020.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

” Therefore, I can only welcome the fact that President Macron, together with the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank, has invited us to a summit focusing on climate finance in Paris on December 12.” (Merkel 2017)

” This is also the reason why we in Germany have earmarked a doubling of public climate financing by 2020.” (Merkel 2017)

” In this context, we in Germany have doubled our climate financing to four billion euros per year by 2020 and will continue to make our fair contribution in the coming years.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

” The OECD has also made it clear what is at stake: only if we also gear our extensive investments to climate-friendly aspects can we secure our prosperity in the future.” (Merkel 2017)

” That means that more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

” Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Examples D:

” All this is being done in the conviction that the transformation to a low-emission economy - if properly implemented - offers great opportunities for growth. Renewable energies, resource- and cost-saving efficiency technologies, climate-friendly innovations in the building sector and in transport - these and more will gain in importance on markets worldwide.” (Merkel 2017)

” That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy.” (Merkel 2017)

” If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Comparison: When speaking about climate issues, both Xi and Merkel alike emphasize the importance of international cooperation and international agreements. They both express their commitment to the Paris Agreement. Both leaders also highlight the importance of engaging in international climate cooperation. Whilst in Merkel’s speeches, such engagement is mainly a financial one, Xi expresses that China is furthermore ready to take a leading political role in global climate cooperation.

Example “Protection”:

In the Xi corpus “protection” mainly refers to environmental protection. In only one example “protection” is linked to another than an environmental topic namely to “intellectual property protection”. In no case however, protection refers to “climate protection” but always to “environmental protection” more in general.

When speaking of environmental protection in general, the Chinese President sounds like a true autocrat. He sees the problem mainly in “lax laws and regulations” (A). Xi Jinping calls for more, but also for stricter environmental laws and regulations as well as strict law enforcement. China’s system of environmental protection under Xi Jinping relies on more institutions for environmental protection (B), stricter law enforcement (C), more officials for overlooking the success of environmental protection projects (D), a system of double responsibilities adding the duty of environmental protection to the particular duties of each Chinese official be it on

national, regional or on local level (E). It also relies on a system strict punishment (F). A signal of zero tolerance is send to those not contributing the environmental friendly attitudes Xi Jinping wants to enforce in China.

- A) ” Most of the outstanding problems in environmental protection existing in our country are related to inadequate systems, lax regulations, liberal laws, unsatisfying enforcement, and lenient punishment.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- B) ” [We] have already introduced a series of reform measures and interrelated institutions, which must be implemented with equal efficiency as the supervision of central environmental protection was put into effect.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” Faster progress was made with the system of environmental administration, including the vertical management by environmental protection institutions at sub-provincial level, which monitor, supervise and enforce [the environmental] laws, [and] take care of the quality of environmental monitoring data.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” Central governments inspections on environmental protection must be given greater resources so that they can push deeper and become more authoritative.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- C) ” [We] must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” In line with the principles of consolidating enforcement teams, raising their efficiency, [and] shortening their chains of command, [we] must optimize the assignment of functions to these teams [and] carry out unified enforcement of environmental protection laws.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” We must move faster to define and enforce strict controls including red lines for environmental protection, minimum standards for environmental quality, and ceilings on resource utilization.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” Environmental protection must rely on regulations, [it] must rely on laws.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” Fifth: The principles of applying strictest environmental protection regulations and laws.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- D) ” Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of the environmental protection corps, and actively support officials who are ready and willing to take action.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” [We] must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection, link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrate [our] efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, [and] from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- E) ” Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of the environmental protection corps, and actively support officials who are ready and willing to take action.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ”All relevant departments must fulfil their environmental protection duties, with everyone carrying their own baby; departments in charge of development, production, and industry [shall] fulfil their tasks according to the motto "one job, double responsibility" [making

them responsible not only for their domain but also for environmental protection].” (Xi on EC 2018)

” [We] must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and environmental quality in their administrative districts, [they] shall personally make arrangements for important tasks, personally respond to major problems, personally coordinate work in key projects, personally supervise important law cases, ensuring that duties are performed, and directives are put into effect at all levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

- F) ” [We] must improve [our] systems for credibility assessment based on environmental protection performance, for mandatory disclosure of environmental information, [and] for improving severe punishment on violators of environmental regulations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Apart from such rather unsurprising approaches by an autocratically ruled country, in other parts the Chinese President proves to be courageous enough to thematise a topic often avoided when speaking of environmental protection, namely the price of such efforts and the contribution which every nation as well as every individual must make when taking the task of environmental protection in serious. Xi Jinping clearly points out that a successful protection of the environment, a successful green transition of the economy and of the society will bring about some discomfort. He mentions that “thrift” needs to be practices and clearly announces the end of an economic development based on “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”. He says for example:

” It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” [We] must boost all people’s resource saving awareness, [their] environmental protection awareness [and] ecological awareness; cultivate (literally: nurture young plants) an ecological morality and code of conduct; give impetus to public ecological activities, encourage all members of the society to contribute as much as possible to the protection of the environment by cutting down the pollution they produce, [as well as] the energy and resources they consume.” (Xi on EC 2018)

”[This] takes development concepts that are innovative, coordinated, green, open[-minded] and shared, [it also takes] the acceleration of resource conservation, environmental protection, the formation of spatial patterns, [as well as] industrial structures, production modes, lifestyles conducted to resource conservation and environmental protection, [furthermore] economic activities and people’s behaviour [must be] restricted within the limits of what natural resources and the ecological environment can bear, giving nature room and time to recover. “ (Xi on EC 2018)

” Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, just consider the use without thinking of restoration, instead we need to protect the environment like we protect [our own] eyes, treat nature like we treat life, focusing on taking more positive measures that will provide solid foundations and long-term benefits, concrete steps that will help protect and restore the environment, and effective actions that will clean up our surroundings and reveal their natural beauty.” (Xi on EC 2018)

It is not related to the keyword “protection” but it is part of the argumentation on environmental protection, when Xi Jinping says:

” [We] must advocate thrift and moderation, and a green low-carbon lifestyle, [as well as] oppose luxury, waste [and] unreasonable consumption.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Xi Jinping also makes clear that environmental protection must happen on a worldwide level. He describes it as a “global challenge” and speaks of humanity as a “community that shares a common fate” and therefore also a community with a common responsibility for environmental protection:

” Humanity is a community that shares a common fate; hence the protection of the ecological environment is a global challenge we face together and are held responsible for together.” (Xi on EC 2018)

He then highlights the importance of global environmental governance and China's role in it, as when saying:

” [We] must get deeply involved in global environmental governance, strengthen the power of discourse and influence of our nation in the global environmental governance system, actively guide the transformation and circumstances of the change of the international order, shape international environmental protection, [as well as contribute to] a sustainable development and the creation of solution approaches.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

This statement leaves little doubt that China feels ready to take over the lead in the international order and sees itself as a nation ready to “shape international environmental protection”.

When it comes to defending the need of environmental protection, Xi Jinping uses three main arguments: a healthy environment improves people's livelihood, it is the historical moment that forces us to protect the environment (humanity has abused nature for too long) and, it serves the economy:

” Economic development serves people's livelihood; environmental protection alike serves people's livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

” The concept of considering „turquoise waters and green mountains“ as „being worth mountains of gold and silver“ expounds the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, revealing that by protecting the environment [we also]

protect the economic productivity, [and] that improving the ecological environment leads to the development of production.” (Xi on EC 2018)

The need for environmental protection is explained historically, as when saying “Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources”.

Environmental protection is described as needed for the economy and economic productivity when Xi states that “by protecting the environment we also protect the economic productivity”.

And last but not least, the Chinese President emphasizes that environmental protection “serves [the] people’s livelihood”, a statement that should not be underestimated. It is one of the core values of the communist rule in China that the CPC wants to serve the people. And in the past, the CPC rule has gained much of its legitimacy from improving people’s livelihoods through poverty alleviation³⁹. In the above example from the 2018 speech on Eco-Civilization building, Xi Jinping adds environmental protection to the needs of the people. Hence, when the CPC still wants to “serve the people” in the 21st century, environmental protection must be at the heart of the government’s national strategies. And Xi precisely expresses this when saying:

” Our Party has always attached great importance to the protection of the natural environment, establishing resource conservation and environmental protection as fundamental state policies [as well as] making sustainable development a national strategy.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Whether it can be said that the CPC has “always” attached great importance to the protection of the environment might be doubted. But there is no doubt, that it has become a priority at the latest since 2018, when the building of an Ecological Civilization was anchored in the Chinese Constitution as an official aim for the CPC.

In Angela Merkel’s speeches, protection nearly exclusively refers to climate protection. On only one occasion protection refers to forest protection, and once to biodiversity protection. Once, Merkel speaks of “issues of environmental protection”, but then mentions “climate protection” in the same breath:

” If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Climate protection is therefore seen as a leitmotif in Merkel’s discourse. When analysing what Merkel says about Germany’s climate protection engagement, as notices when analysing the keyword “climate”, it is again visible, that financing is at the core of Germany’s climate protection engagement. The German Chancellor says for example:

” That means that more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

” Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014.” (Merkel UN 2019)

³⁹ See for example: Wan, Hu, and Liu, (2021), “China’s poverty reduction miracle and relative poverty: Focusing on the roles of growth and inequality”, *China Economic Review* Volume 68, August 2021, where China’s tremendous success in reducing poverty is described in detail, as well as the country’s important contribution to global poverty alleviation.

But binding laws and regulations are also important in Merkel's speeches. She for example emphasizes:

"In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality." (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

"With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy." (Merkel 2017)

Just like Xi Jinping, when speaking of climate protection Merkel also uses the opportunity to blame former US President Donald Trump for his decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Referring to the pro-climate initiative "America's Pledge", she says:

"I would like to welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement." (Merkel 2017)

The need for climate protection is defended arguing that it is a question of social stability and peace. Merkel says:

"If we also consider the growing world population, we know: Increasing conflicts over natural resources are virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection." (Merkel 2017)

She also furthermore describes international climate protection efforts as depending on "trust" and "reliability", saying:

"That is precisely what is being worked on at this conference. It's about trust and reliability in our joint efforts to make urgently needed progress on climate protection." (Merkel 2017)

In one of her national speeches, namely at the German Employers Day, surprisingly Merkel brings up climate protection and indirectly accuses the Employers Associations to slow climate protection in Germany. She says:

"Let me just say one thing at this point, because this is not otherwise the BDA's core competence: You say that climate protection measures should not be rushed through." (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

And she responds to this with an argument, which one might have expected to hear rather from Greta Thunberg than from the German Chancellor. Merkel says:

"That is certainly true. But on the other hand, hundreds if not thousands of scientists tell us: You only have a certain budget of CO2 emissions that you can emit; otherwise, you will have global warming that is well above 2 degrees Celsius. What that will mean then in terms of damage and impact on our economies is hard to predict. In any case, we are then very likely to go into a future in the face of which we cannot say: Oh well, we didn't want to rush it; and it should take a little longer. - And that's our problem at this point."

Another astonishing sentence can be found in Merkel's 2017 speech at the COP23 World Climate Conference which (although hosted by Fiji) took place in Bonn. She there finishes her speech wishing "all those who are committed to climate protection": "good courage, good will and a lot of drive". This is obviously what the Chancellor believes it takes for climate protection.

She literally says:

” That's why I wish all those who are committed to climate protection - whether you're here representing your states, or whether you're working as non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal - good courage, good will and a lot of drive.” (Merkel 2017)

Comparison: Whilst in Xi Jinping’s speeches “protection” mainly refers more generally to “environmental protection”, Merkel mainly speaks of “climate protection” in particular. In both cases, protection is nearly exclusively environment related. The need for environmental protection in Xi Jinping’s – and climate protection in Angela Merkel’s case, is explained differently. Xi describes environmental protection as needed for the economy, but also and more importantly, he highlights that it serves the livelihoods of the people. Merkel argues that we simply have no choice but to engage in climate protection. She bases her argument on scientific knowledge and points to the fact that not responding to climate change, could come at an even higher cost than adapting our economies. Other than Xi, Merkel seems to see a conflict between economic interests and climate protection (it is in particular the fear of climate protection leading to unemployment that can be read out of Merkel’s discourse). Xi on the other side, simply explains that environmental protection not only does no harm to the economy, but quite the contrary: the economy will benefit from environmental protection. As if unemployment was not an issue in China.

II.1.2. The use of non-environmental common keywords in Xi’s and Merkel’s speeches:

Example Development:

Development is a keyword used quite differently by the German Chancellor and the Chinese President. Though it appears as a keyword on both lists, the difference is immediately visible. In the Xi corpus “development” ranks fifth with a keyness value of 580.27 and a frequency of hundred forty-three, whilst in Angela Merkel’s corpus, the words ranks hundred nineteenth for being used only twelve times with a keyness value of 18.48. But this does not mean development does not matter to the German Chancellor.

In Angela Merkel’s speeches, “development” is used in three ways:

1. Referring to non-environmental topics:

”And in doing so, of course, anything that curbs the pandemic is good; it's not only good for people's health, it's good for economic development, it's good for social opportunities, it's good for cultural opportunities.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

2. Directly referring to environmental topics:

”[And] if the world has succeeded in anything in recent years, which is basically the key against vulnerability, it's the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, which make clear in a comprehensive way how we have to act if we don't want to be as vulnerable as we are today.”(Merkel Davos 2021)

3. Indirectly referring to environmental topics:

” Because we believe that only the development of a price signal will really prevent us from exceeding the remaining budgets of climate-damaging gases.” (Merkel UN 2019)

➔ Although “development” here refers to the development of “a price signal”, it is yet related to environmental issues namely to the climate budget.

When dividing the examples into these 3 categories of use, it becomes clear, that “development” is mainly not environment related in Angela Merkel’s speeches. The above mentioned examples, are the only two that are directly or indirectly linked to the environment, whereas in all other examples, development is refers to “development aid”, “development cooperation”, “research and development spending”, etc⁴⁰. In Merkel’s speeches, development is mainly referred to in the classical sense of “economic development”. On the background that the speeches examined here are “environmental speeches”, it is remarkable, that the German Chancellor does not seem to see a link between economic development and the environment.

In Xi Jinping’s speeches, development is often referred to as “green”, sustainable” or “high-quality” development. It was found that development is mostly linked to the environment as the following examples show:

” [We can no] longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

” The Earth is our one and only home. To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” China will follow the Thought on Ecological Civilization and implement the new development philosophy. We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Development is also used to stress the “East-West differences” in Xi’s speeches. He often indirectly blames the development in other parts of the world as being unfair, whilst stating that China strives for a fairer development and wealth distribution. Often “development” is also linked with either “justice” or an unfair distribution of wealth in the world but also a lack of “openness”. The developed countries are indirectly blamed as being “selfish” whilst China takes a different path. It is in these parts, that Xi sounds the most like a communist leader and he takes the role of a defender of the rights of developing countries. Capitalism is also criticized explicitly or at least doubted as a model of development:

” Since the beginning of the 1930, some Western countries have continuously been stroked by natural disasters, shocking the world [with] the huge damage, making people deeply reflect the capitalist model of development.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peaceful development and win-win cooperation, [it should] fulfil the practical needs responding to global challenges.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

”Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

[We should say no to] “... narrow-minded, selfish beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and stop unilateral practice of keeping advantages in development all to oneself. Equal rights to

⁴⁰ For precise examples please refer to the full list of examples in the annex

development should be guaranteed for all countries to promote common development and prosperity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

”Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should be strengthened, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Development is also linked to the global order and world peace, as the following examples show:

” China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order. China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

” China will continue to work as a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order. “ (Xi UN Sept.2020)

” — China will provide US\$50 million to the China-FAO South-South Cooperation Trust Fund (Phase III). — China will extend the Peace and Development Trust Fund between the UN and China by five years after it expires in 2025.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Quite some examples do also link development to the BRI project, making it sound as if the main purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative was an ecological one:

”We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road Development, and other multilateral cooperation platforms.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

And development is also used to underline China’s success:

” [This] Forum has witnessed the extraordinary journey of China, Asia and the world, and had significant influence in boosting development in Asia and beyond.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

”Over twenty years, Asian countries have deeply promoted regional economic integration, accelerated social-economic development with joint efforts and propelled Asia to become the most vibrant and promising region in the global economy.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

On different occasions, development is used to describe China as a nation as well as China’s aims, good intentions, and possible contributions to the world:

”China as a country of people on the move, is [a land] full of vitality of prosperity and development. We are all running assiduously, we are all dream chasers.” (Xi New Year 2019)

”China is the largest developing country in the world, a country that is committed to peaceful, open, cooperative and common development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

”We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind.” (Xi New Year 2019)

But development is also used to stress that China longs for more tolerance towards its development path and indirectly its regime as when Xi says:

”More importantly, we should respect a country's independent choice of development path and model.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

The Chinese president also links development to people’s livelihoods describing it as having a similar impact on livelihoods as environmental protection does:

”Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

In some parts “development” refers more generally to “human development” instead of “economic development”:

”(...) climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

It can be said that in the vast majority of cases where Xi Jinping speaks of “development” in the examined speeches, development is linked to the environment and to environmental protection rather than to “economic development” in general. It is mainly described positively, as something that brings hope and that can be used to overcome as much inequality as well as environmental problems. “Development” is largely represented as something that could and should unite humanity. Although in many cases a hidden critique regarding western development concepts can be found and Xi visibly tries to stress the differences, ultimately the main message is yet a positive one, that such differences can be overcome, and that development can bring about peace and prosperity to humanity and contribute to building a “beautiful world”.

Comparison: In the direct comparison it becomes clear that the use of the word “development” is highly imbalanced in the different corpuses. It is one of the keywords that are more important in Xi’s than in Merkel’s speeches. Comparing the concrete examples from both corpuses also reveals the rhetorical differences. In Merkel’s speeches, development is rather an economic topic, and the tone is nearly neutral, whilst Xi overloads the passages where he speaks of development with propagandistic elements as when describing China as a “contributor to global development” or when linking development to eco-civilization building, than making it a precondition to making the world “beautiful”. The most obvious difference is that in Xi’s rhetoric, development is already largely referring to “green” or “sustainable” development, even in his early 2018 speech, whereas Merkel still seems to stick to old ideas of economic development, even in her most recent speeches.

Livelihood/s

While “development” ranked high in the Xi corpus and low in the Merkel corpus, “livelihood” ranks higher in Merkel’s speeches (rank 59), and low in Xi’s (rank 267). This is interesting since the frequency of use is similar (with a frequency of 3 in the Merkel corpus, compared to a frequency of 4 in the Xi corpus). The keyness value, however, is higher in Merkel’s corpus (29.44 as compared to 19.98 in the Xi corpus). It needs to be said that both keyness values and frequency of use are low in both corpuses. But it is the use of the word in the context of the full sets of speeches which contributes to the major difference in the ranking. Given their “keyness”, the word seems to be of minor importance in both speeches. However, when taking a look at the concrete examples, the analysis is highly relevant in order to understand the Chinese and German climate discourse. Note: on Merkel’s keyword list, we find “livelihoods” in the plural, whereas on Xi’s list it is “livelihood” in singular. Be it in the singular or the plural of the word, it is treated as the same keyword in this research because the meaning does not change.

In Merkel's speeches, “livelihoods” are mentioned in three passages. In one case she indirectly links it to climate change which she describes as a threat to “our livelihoods”.

(Referring to pictures of the earth sent from space which showed the consequences of global warming) she says:

” On the one hand, this overwhelming beauty, on the other hand, we know about the vulnerability of our livelihoods. And this in a comprehensive sense. There is the vital question of climate change, that of controlling and ordering migration, there is the fight against international terrorism.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the other two cases, people’s “livelihoods” are linked to the economy but therewith indirectly also serve to justify measures to protect the environment, since to my understanding, when speaking of “livelihood”, the chancellor indirectly refers to nature as a basis of human livelihood.

Examples:

” That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy. After all, preserving our livelihoods is a prerequisite for us to be able to do business successfully at all. (Merkel 2017)

“ The same goes for the millions of volunteers. To safeguard jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods, the German government is systematically taking the next steps in the structural shift from traditional to new technologies ...” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the last example, though Merkel speaks of “jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods” in the same breath, it only serves as a transition to the topic of structural change.

“Livelihood” is partly environment related in Merkel’s speeches. When linked to environmental topics (climate change, green transition), Merkel sounds rather like seeing such environmental topics as a threat to people’s livelihoods. Jobs, prosperity and livelihood need for example to be “safeguarded” in the process of the green transition, and climate change is used as an example showing the “vulnerability of our livelihoods”.

In Xi Jinping’s speeches, livelihood is mentioned only in the earlier speeches (2018 and 2019). In particular in the context of the 2018 speech on eco-civilization building, but also in his 1029 New Year Speech as speeches that were held nationally, one could have expected that “livelihood” is mainly linked to economic development as it is China’s extraordinary success in fighting poverty which has visibly improved the livelihoods of most Chinese withing the past decades. The contrary is the case however: When Xi speaks of “livelihood”, he does explicitly link it to the environment and not to the economy or wealth in the first place:

“The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the people; [with] green mountains representing beauty and blue skies bringing happiness. Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood. [We] also need to create more material wealth along with spiritual wealth to meet the people’s growing needs for a better life.” (Xi on EC 2018)⁴¹

⁴¹ This example is counted as two hits in the corpus tool for “livelihood” appearing in two different sentences. Since both sentences directly follow one another and are part of the same paragraph, they belong together and are therefore quoted as one example here.

“The ecological environment is a major political issue which bears upon the mission and purpose of the CPC, it is a major social issue concerning people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

“[We have] carried out successfully the war to protect the “pure land”, with blue sky and waters; [we have] intensified efforts to accelerate to improve the people’s livelihood, [so] living standards have risen steadily.” (Xi New Year 2019)

Comparison: When comparing how “livelihood/s” is used differently by Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel, it turns out that despite their different approaches, they both link “livelihood” to environmental/climate protection as well as to economic development but in nearly opposing manners. For Merkel, “preserving our livelihoods” is a prerequisite to “be able to do business successfully”, whereas for Xi it is development and environmental protection, which “serve people’s livelihood”. Xi puts positively what Merkel expressed negatively. Merkel seemingly wants to “preserve” people’s livelihoods to enable economic development, and environmental protection contributes to this. Xi on the other hand uses development as an argument to justify environmental protection and finally uses both (development and environment) as an argument to show that the CPC yet aims at “serving the people”. He makes this even clearer when stating that “the ecological environment is a major political issue” for the CPC because it concerns people’s livelihood. But other than Merkel, who seems to see our livelihoods under threat, Xi rather highlights that in China people’s livelihoods have “risen steadily” and efforts to further improve them have been “accelerated”.

II.2. The use of individual keywords in the speeches of Xi and Merkel

The analysis of individual keywords is based on the full list of keywords that appear each in only one of the corpuses. By going through and comparing the list of keywords that only appeared on Xi’s or that only appeared on Merkel’s list, it soon became clear that quite some of these words are not relevant for this research. It is unsurprising that “Germany” ranks third on Merkel’s list while not appearing on Xi’s. Others, like for example “Covax”, “healthcare” or “Biontec”, are clearly not related to the environmental discourses of Xi and Merkel. They appear as keywords rather as a side-effect of the pandemic, which is mentioned by both speakers even in the context of climate talks. Still other keywords, for example CPC (Communist Party of China) or “Asia”, are clearly of no particular importance for this study. It is not surprising that Merkel mentions “Europe” or Xi Jinping “Asia” in their speeches, and the CPC is mentioned in nearly all of Xi’s speeches. For not being meaningful for the environmental discourse, such keywords have been ignored. Most keywords, however, have been analysed and the full analysis can be found in the annex. Here, only the keywords I found to be most meaningful and important in order to understand the environmental discourses of Xi and Merkel are represented in detail.

Individual keywords are analysed in order to reveal which topics are brought into the discussion by either Xi or Merkel, therewith showing which topics might be important in each of the corpuses that are not mentioned by both speakers. It is one possibility to find leitmotifs in Xi’s and Merkel’s speeches. Nonetheless not every individual keyword represents a leitmotif, nor will all possible leitmotifs be identified here. Instead, when trying to see what was said and what was unsaid by the two leaders, this research aims at pointing to leitmotifs that are not the only ones in the speeches, but the ones that each side has brought up as a topic that might not be standard to the environmental discourse in general. It is about showing what is highlighted, what is omitted on the other side (in the other corpus). Given the limited scope of this thesis, I focus on two individual keywords per corpus. As mentioned above, these were chosen for being meaningful and representative for the discourses of Xi and Merkel. The results are represented as follows:

point II.2.1. shows the use of chosen individual keywords in the speeches of Angela Merkel. Each keyword will be introduced with an explanation why it was chosen before concrete examples from the text will be analysed. In point II.2.2., the same procedure is undertaken with individual keywords from Xi Jinping's speeches. In section III Discussion and Remarks, the results will then be compared and discussed in a larger context.

II.2.1. Individual keywords in Angela Merkel's speeches

CO2/emissions

The keywords CO2 and emissions can be treated as one keyword for being largely linked in Merkel's speeches. The German chancellor either directly speaks of "CO2 emissions" or refers to it when only saying "emissions" only. Emissions are an important topic in Merkel's speeches. When looking at the list of keywords which appear only on Merkel's keyword list, "emission" is the second highest-ranking word (rank 11) after "Germany" (which ranks third). It is also the first keyword that is clearly linked to the environmental discourse. CO2 ranks fifty-third and is therewith within the top ten keywords that are environment related on Merkel's list.

Emissions are often linked to concrete emission reduction targets by the German chancellor, for example in the following parts of her speeches:

"We in Europe are aware of our responsibility. We are implementing the European Union's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 compared with 1990 levels in a legally binding manner." (Merkel 2017)

"That is why we have set ourselves the goal of reducing our CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to the 1990 levels, and to be climate neutral by 2050." [Merkel UN 2019]

"[We] want to have at least 55 percent fewer emissions than in 1990." (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Here it is interesting to see how these targets have developed (or not) over time. In 2017, Merkel is proud that Germany implements the EU aim of a 40% emission reduction till 2030 compared to 1990. Two years later, in 2019, the German target is a 55% reduction within the same timeframe. From 2019 to 2021 however, the target has not changed as one could have hoped or even expected given the dramatic of the climate crisis.

Sometimes Merkel links CO2 emissions to concrete results of the German environmental policy, as when saying:

"Germany has already reduced its CO2 emissions by 40 percent compared with 1990." (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

When thinking that she says these words in 2021, and when looking back at her earlier statements, the national aim of a 55% reduction sounds little ambitious. But Merkel sounds satisfied with this development when saying:

"... throughout Europe, we have introduced national emissions trading..." (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

To my mind, when Merkel speaks of emissions in her speeches, the rhetorically most interesting examples are the following three:

"You only have a certain budget of CO2 emissions that you can emit; otherwise, you will have global warming that is well above 2 degrees Celsius." (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

“But the conclusion is that we are one percent of the world's population, but we produce two percent of the CO2 emissions.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

“If everyone acted like Germany, global emissions would double. Everyone knows what that means.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Here Merkel sounds brutally honest. It is also interesting to see that she pronounces such bitter truths towards both, a national as well as an international audience (at the German Employers' Day and at the UN Climate Summit. Here we can get a bit of an impression maybe why Merkel was sometimes called “climate Chancellor” at the beginning of her chancellorship. She sounds ready to face the truth and take over responsibility in these passages of her speeches.

Coal

Coal was chosen as a keyword for analysis since it is on the one hand an issue which unites Germany and China. As mentioned in the introduction, China and Germany both still depend on coal and coal is an important problem when speaking of climate protection. For this reason alone it is important to examine what the German Chancellor says about coal. But it is also interesting to study because it is not a word that does not appear on Xi Jinping's keyword list although it is not only a common problem but also one of the most common critiques towards the Chinese government that China still invests in coal. It is therefore remarkable, that Merkel chooses to make coal a topic of her speeches but not Xi.

And coal is mentioned in nearly all, namely five out of the six speeches by the German chancellor. And Germany's coal dependency is mentioned several times:

” In Germany, coal is still an important energy source today.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

” We know that Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets.” (Merkel 2017)

But the chancellor also highlights Germany's commitment to overcome this problem.

Examples:

”But we will, by 2038 at the latest, - I have heard António Guterres' words – phase out coal, and instead continue to invest in renewable energies in electricity generation.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

” We will phase out nuclear energy by 2022, and coal-fired power plants by 2038 at the latest.” (Merkel UN 2019)

“If we [really] want to overcome vulnerability to climate change here, then we have to implement tough policies where we [also] have to take people with us, that means: phasing out coal, switching to hydrogen with a view to process energies, and a complete change in mobility toward electromobility or hydrogen mobility; of course we have to keep our technology open.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

” So we are investing in renewable energies instead of coal.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

However, the German chancellor also highlights several obstacles on the way to coal phaseout.

Examples:

“... there are of course considerable conflicts in society that we have to resolve in a reasonable and reliable way. These are tough discussions. We know that Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets. But exactly how, is something we will have to discuss with each other precisely.” (Merkel 2017)

”On the other hand, it is also about social issues and jobs, for example in connection with the issue of reducing coal.” (Merkel 2017)

“This is also about economic efficiency; that means, about the affordability of energy.” (Merkel 2017)

In one case, the German chancellor decisively defends the coal phaseout, when saying:

”...we cannot say: Oh well, we didn't want to rush it; and it should take a little longer. - And that's our problem at this point. That's why the coal phase-out is right. (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

II.2.2. Individual keywords in Xi Jinping's speeches

Future

Future was chosen to be analysed since it is a largely environment related keyword in the Xi corpus. To my mind, it is an important component of Xi's environmental discourse- and possibly not exclusively the environmental discourse but also the political discourse in general. Within the environmental discourse, it is worth having a closer look at what Xi Jinping says about the future.

It can be remarked that Xi's narration of “future” is rarely one of the “Chinese future”, but rather that of the “worlds future”. The topic is often used to call for stronger international cooperation, better ties between the countries and to strengthen multilateralism. All this is defended as necessary since our common future depends on it.

Examples:

” International affairs should be handled through extensive consultation of all [parties], [and] the worlds future destiny must be decided by all countries working together.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

(On Chinas aim to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060): “This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

” Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, there is only one Earth and one shared future for humanity. As we cope with the current crisis and endeavour to make a better day for everyone, we need to stand united and work together.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, the problems facing the world are intricate and complex. The way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

” We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind.” (Xi New Year 2019)

Such narration is little surprising often filled with propagandistic elements. For example, in Xi Jinping’s 2020 speech at the United Nations, where he said:

” Let us join hands to uphold the values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom shared by all of us and build a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Or more recently in Davos, where Xi said:

” We must not return to the path of the past. The right approach is to act on the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

When “future” is visibly environment related, it is often mentioned in one breath with “generations”. This was the case on at least two occasions in the 2018 speech on eco-civilization building:

” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” We will absolutely not allow people to continue to engage in activities that violate these controls, follow old extensive models of growth, or seek short-term gain at the expense of future generations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Or in 2021 at the “Leaders’ Summit”:

” The environment concerns the well-being of people in all countries. We need to take into full account people’s longing for a better life and a good environment as well as our responsibility for future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Xi Jinping creates a positive vision of the future, for example when he says:

” This is why we should embrace the vision of a community with a shared future in which everyone is bound together. We should reject attempts to build blocs to keep others out and oppose a zero-sum approach.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

” Yet I am confident that as long as we unite in our purposes and efforts and work together with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

The Chinese President also appeals to our conscience and sense of responsibility, for example in when addressing the World Economic Forum saying:

”(…) History is moving forward and the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice and move we make today will shape the world of the future. It is important that we properly address the four major tasks facing people of our times. The first is to step up

macroeconomic policy coordination and jointly promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth (...)" (Xi Davos 2021)

Nature

Without a doubt "nature" is a keyword worth analysing when studying the environmental discourse. On the one hand it reveals how Xi Jinping- or as some may say- the Chinese CPC propaganda use the word. What images of nature are drawn in Xi's rhetoric? But on the other hand it is also important to highlight, that "nature" is missing on Angela Merkel's keyword list. Whilst Merkel's environmental discourse seems to ignore "nature" as a topic, it is an important topic in Xi's speeches. The keyword ranks high on the keyword list (23.) and is used excessively.

Rather foreseeably, when speaking of nature Xi's rhetoric is somewhere between propagandistic and poetic. A good example can be found when Xi spoke at the "Leaders' Summit" on invitation of US President Joe Biden:

" We need to act with a sense of responsibility and unity and work together to foster a community of life for man and Nature. – We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature. "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans. It provides everything essential for humanity to survive and thrive." (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Note: Xi used nearly the same choice of words in his 2018 speech in EC. He there said:

" – We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature. "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans." (Xi on EC 2018)

Generally, quite some rhetorical elements are repeating elements when speaking of nature. For example, that of the harmonic relationship between man and nature. Examples:

" We should protect Nature and preserve the environment like we protect our eyes, and endeavour to foster a new relationship where man and Nature can both prosper and live in harmony." (Xi Biden 04.2021)

" In order to develop an Ecological Civilization in the new era, [it is] indispensable to adhere to the following principles. First: Adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence between mankind and nature. Humanity and nature are a biotic community. The natural environment has no substitute." (Xi on EC 2018)

"It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of "mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution", making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc., match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature." (Xi on EC 2018)

The "warnings of nature" are employed to argue that an overall change of economies is necessary:

[We need to ...] "move faster to create a green way of development and life, preserve the environment and make Mother Earth a better place for all. Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of

extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

In this context Xi also speaks of the “needs of nature” linking them also to the “needs of future generations”. Example:

” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Nature is often described positively (ex. as “mother nature”, or as “nourishing”) but Xi also makes clear that “mother nature” can fight back when her warnings are ignored.

Examples:

” But, „If man, by dint of this knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him”.” (Xi on EC 2018)

” Mother Nature has nourished us, and we must treat Nature as our root, respect it, protect it, and follow its laws. Failure to respect Nature or follow its laws will only invite its revenge. Systemic spoil of Nature will take away the foundation of human survival and development, and will leave us human beings like a river without a source...” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

On several occasions the Chinese President tries to create the image of China as a nation with a special historical relation to nature. Examples:

” Colleagues, the Chinese civilization has always valued harmony between man and Nature as well as observance of the laws of Nature. It has been our constant pursuit that man and Nature could live in harmony with each other.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

” The Chinese nation has always valued and loved nature; its more than 5000- year-old civilization gave birth to a rich ecological culture.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Xi furthermore describes China as a defender of nature. For example when saying:

” Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that] respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

He even goes as far as formulating the following sentence:

” Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

Such “nature first” appeals might be propagandistic; in any case they seem in line with communist ideals. And the inventors of communism are even a source of reference for Xi Jinping when speaking of nature:

” Marx and Engels believed that „man lives on nature“, and that humans produce, live, and develop through their interactions with nature. If humans treat nature kindly, then nature will repay that kindness.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

Hence, the necessary steps are clear and Xi puts it this way:

”(…), [furthermore] economic activities and people’s behaviour [must be] restricted within the limits of what natural resources and the ecological environment can bear, giving nature room and time to recover.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Since:

“This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

But Xi also warns us that:

” Protecting the ecosystem requires more than a simplistic, palliative approach. We need to follow the innate laws of the ecosystem and properly balance all elements and aspects of Nature.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

It can be summarized that nature serves clearly a propagandistic purpose in Xi Jinping’s speeches and the propaganda often sounds unfamiliar- even kitschy to a non-Chinese audience. It is therefore surprising, that such statements are yet pronounced towards the international community as well. The tone is not changing dramatically between the national context (ex. the 2018 speech) or when addressing an international audience, as the very fist examples show, where Xi uses nearly the same rhetoric we have seen in the 2018 speech when addressing Joe Biden at the Leaders’ Summit.

III. Discussion and Remarks

A) Discussion of the use of common keywords:

As we have seen in the section “Results”, keywords which both the Xi and Merkel corpus have in common, can be separated in *environmental* and *non-environmental* words. While the words *climate* and *protection*, are examples of words that are used as environmental words by Xi and Merkel alike, *development* is an example showing that not all common keywords are linked to the environment by both speakers. Spoken of as “green-“ or “sustainable-development”, it is mainly environment related in Xi’s speeches. Merkel however mainly refers to “economic development” in a rather traditional sense in her speeches.

Even when common keywords are used as environmental words by Xi and Merkel, they can yet be linked to different topics. Protection for example is an environment related word in Xi’s and Merkel’s speeches. Merkel however nearly exclusively links it to “climate protection”, whilst Xi on the other side links it nearly exclusively to “environmental protection” more generally.

Nevertheless, such differences must be seen in the context: The speeches analysed here all belong to the climate- and environmental discourse of Xi and Merkel and both the climate discourse and the environmental discourse are closely linked. We need to keep in mind, that for Merkel it was easier to find rather “climate speeches” than speeches on the environment, whereas in Xi’s case the longest speech from the Xi corpus is the 2018 speech on eco-civilization building, which is a speech on environment protection and not exclusively on climate protection. This difference of

course influences the result. However, it should not reduce neither the importance of this comparison nor the credibility of this research. Instead, we need to accept, that climate is an important issue of Xi's speech on eco-civilization building which could therefore not be ignored when wanting to analyse the climate discourse. On the other hand, the climate discourse is part of the environmental discourse in both cases.

As explained in the introduction, it needs to be seen on the backdrop of the systemic differences in Germany and China, that speeches by the leaders of both countries may have different focuses. The fact that no similarly important environmental speech can be found for Angela Merkel, does not justify that one should ignore Xi Jinping's speech on building the Ecological Civilization, since this speech gives deep insights into environmental but also climate protection plans and provides detailed information on both environment and climate protection policies in China.

Generally speaking, it can be observed, that what is said nationally by Xi Jinping in the 2018 speech, is often repeated in similar words at the international level as well. A concrete example was given in the section results, where we have seen that Xi reproduced his rhetoric from 2018 nearly word for word when addressing President Joe Biden at the Leaders' Summit in 2021. It can be remarked that the rhetoric of the Chinese President might sound slightly less propagandistic when he addresses an international as compared to the national audience. Key elements of his environmental rhetoric however do not change.

This for example, is quite different in Angela Merkel's case. We have seen not only a change in the tone of her speeches depending on the audience addressed, but even her argumentation changes- sometimes dramatically: At the international level she for example states how difficult it is to implement climate change policies nationally, and how hard this is even for a rich country like Germany, then arguing that we also need to keep social stability and that we need to take people with us when wanting to undergo the green transition. On the national level on the other side, for example when addressing the BDI at the German Employers Day, she argues that the coal phase out should move faster, that unemployment is no longer such an important issue in Germany and that science clearly tells us we have not much time to act. On no occasion would we find such a dramatic change in the argumentation of Xi Jinping.

Keywords which both corpuses have in common show that certain topics are brought up by both speakers. This however, does not automatically mean that Xi and Merkel would share the opinion on these topics or attach the same importance to them. As some cases show, one can't even take it for granted that by using the same words, Xi and Merkel mean the same thing. *Development* is once more a suitable example indicating this. By the nature of the word (at least in the historical context of our time), development is classically an economic topic, and I believe this might even be the case in Xi's speeches when examining his "economic discourse". In the context of the environmental discourse, Xi however largely uses the word as environment related and never speaks of development or growth without emphasising the importance of environment- and resource protection in the same breath. Nearly the opposite is the case in Angela Merkel's speeches, even in her environment- or climate discourse. Development is still linked economic development and the protection of the environment or the climate are rather seen as conflicting with economic development. Merkel does try to stress that both is important and that we must manage to grow the economy whilst protecting the climate or environment, but in most parts she sounds as if the "how to do so" was a rather unsolved question. When reading through both

corpuses with a focus on “development”, it is obvious that Xi has a futuristic vision of the “new development” China aims for. Xi speaks of “green” and “new” development modes as if they were a reality already and even describes environmental protection as a precondition to economic development and productivity. For Xi, the question is not “how” but “how fast” can China grow a *Green Economy*.

B) Discussion of the use of individual keywords:

Under “Results” we have examined the use of different keywords that appear on only Xi’s or only Merkel’s keyword lists. We have examined the keywords “CO2 emissions” and “coal” in the context of Merkel’s speeches, and the keywords “Future” and “nature” from Xi’s list. The precise examples are representative for the general use of such keywords in Xi’s and Merkel’s corpuses, since they are very typical examples for topics that are chosen to be mentioned by Xi and Merkel. We have found that Merkel uses a more neutral tone, maybe that of the natural scientist which she is by education and speaks of concrete topics. Xi however, uses keywords like “future” or “nature” for creating a vision, using propagandistic elements to describe his visions.

When looking at the individual keywords, the words that we find on the keyword lists of one corpus but not in the other, a general phenomenon can be remarked, which is already visible within the first 10 results:

Xi	Merkel
1. Civilisation	1. Germany
2. Environment	2. Emissions
3. Governance	3. United States
4. Pollution	4. Euros
5. People	5. Course
6. Nature	6. Vulnerability
7. Humanity	7. Agreement
8. CPC	8. Davos
9. Carbon	9. Digitalization
10. Quality	10. Presidency

When considering the fact that these are the 10 most high-ranking individual keywords from Xi’s and Merkel’s speeches which focus on environment/climate protection, I believe it is an interesting result. Of course, we can rather easily explain the reason for each word to be there (example: “civilization” is of course part of Xi’s *eco-civilization rhetoric*, and it is not surprising that Merkel mentions Germany), however it also reveals the general differences between the rhetoric and the personal tone of Xi and Merkel.

With words like “environment, people, nature or humanity we find on Xi’s side words that can be considered to be general topics whilst Merkel speaks of rather concrete topics (Emission,

Euros, Agreement, Presidency). Merkel seems to focus more on precise contexts (Germany, United States, Davos) whereas Xi seems to focus on the bigger context (environment, nature, or people, humanity). On Merkel's keyword list, we barely find any keyword that would leave much room for different interpretations of the word itself. *Vulnerability* is one of the few such words which we need to see in the context in order to find out how Merkel describes what it means to her. On Xi's side, we find plenty of words that leave room for interpretations depending on the context, for example "nature", "quality", or of course "civilization".

When looking on the full keyword lists, it also becomes clear that Merkel's "environmental discourse" lacks any representation of nature itself. Whilst in Xi's discourse, nature is widely represented not only with keywords such as "environment" or "nature", but also more precisely with keywords like: rivers, lakes, heaven, grasslands, forests. This shows that Xi speaks of the environment directly, describes "nature" and creates a vision of the "beautiful environment" humanity should strive for. Whilst Merkel seem to keep a rhetorical distance to nature itself. She rather speaks of biodiversity, coal, or emissions, as concrete environmental issues which can be addressed by policymakers.

Conclusion:

We have seen that despite very different rhetorical patterns used by the speakers, in terms of topics, the environmental or climate discourses of Xi and Merkel do have a lot in common. As topics which have not been mentioned so far, when comparing the keyword lists, we find that two major points which both Xi and Merkel address are multilateralism and energy (compare Figure 3 in the Annex). Multilateralism and energy (or energy transition) can be said to be key topics in the speeches of Xi and Merkel alike. And in particular on multilateralism, Xi and Merkel do have comparable viewpoints. Similarly, as was found in the comparison of the use of *cooperation* in both corpuses, *multilateralism* is also emphasized by both leaders as being particularly important and unilateralism not an option.

Whilst rhetorically, Xi and Merkel are far from having a similar style, when it comes to the main topics of international climate cooperation, Xi and Merkel seem to agree on most points. They both seem to be strongly committed — promised by both — to climate protection and the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Xi and Merkel also agree that the Paris Agreement is a core element of global climate protection and that the international institutions play an important role and need to be supported and respected by all nations.

Merkel shows a tendency of wanting to solve climate issues largely with money. As the leader of one of the world's richest nations, she often highlights Germany's responsibility — and/or Europe's — to invest in climate protection. She points to the fact that the global North has contributed largely to global warming whilst countries of the global south are the main sufferers of climate change. Merkel clearly underlines Germany's role in particular when she stated that Germans are only 1% of the world population but produce 2% of the global CO₂ emissions. She therefore wants to take more responsibility apart from implementing international as well as European climate protection policies; and wanted to show that the German national strategy has lot of clarity. Merkel points out, for example, that Germany has binding laws on climate protection and strictly wants to implement internationally agreed targets. But finance is yet clearly a core strategy. Merkel repeatedly speaks of increasing the German contribution to the climate funds, or CO₂ pricing as an important strategy in Germany. She therefore risks being charged with wanting to buy Germany out of the responsibility it has on climate protection.

On the other hand, it is remarkable how Merkel articulates the responsibility of Germany on climate protection but also how clearly she pronounces such inconvenient truths about Germany's coal dependency or the massive emissions per capita which make Germany look like a true climate sinner. In such parts, Merkel sounds convincing and trustworthy. Recognizing such severe problems and accepting the responsibilities are important components of Merkel's climate discourse. When taking into consideration Foucault's ideas of the "regime of truth" which influences the discourses of any culture at a particular time in history, according to me this can be seen in the context of the German history. Accepting guilt might be our lesson learned from the Second World War. By saying this, I do not want to suggest that every German would accept the historical guilt regarding Germany's course of action during WWII. It is rather to be seen as the regime of truth under which any German discourse is created. It might be that as individuals some Germans do not accept the country's historical guilt, but in the official public discourse, it is simply unacceptable to deny this guilt. In much the same way as Willy Brandt's "Warschauer Kniefall"⁴² has influenced the German perception — and probably Polish perception too — of German self-reflection and willingness to recognize the own guilt, similar gestures are reproduced each year by German Chancellors⁴³ or Presidents⁴⁴, therefore undermining the importance of this recognition of guilt.

In Xi Jinping's speeches we can feel the autocratic tone as when Xi spoke of the implementation and enforcement of environmental protection laws in China, and even more while speaking of responsibilities and "strict punishment" when environmental laws are not respected. On the other hand, it is also remarkable that Xi emphasizes the need to practice thrift, avoid luxury and unnecessary consumption and furthermore highlights the need to end the system of "mass-production, mass-consumption and mass-distribution". These are all bitter pills to swallow for the Chinese society. But ultimately such statements by the Chinese President may not surprise Western observers since the autocratic tone seems to fit the image of the CPC leadership which is often called a dictatorship. And opposing luxury, avoid consumption and end mass-production and consumption sounds communist enough and it also fits the image of China as a communist country. Nevertheless, it must be noted, that the miraculous Chinese development of the past decades was so far essentially based on precisely mass production, mass distribution and mass consumption. To such an extent that China earned the nickname of "World's Factory"⁴⁵. What becomes visible here is the regime of truth which dominates the Chinese process of creating discourse. Although one could say that nowadays China has nothing to do with communism anymore and it is not a coincidence that the Chinese government brought up the term of "Communism with Chinese Characteristics" as China still describes itself as a communist country⁴⁶. And for the government, this is an essential key to power legitimization. How could the rule of the CPC be defended if China was not a communist country? It is a historically grown "narrative" much like the "narrative" of the Germany's post-war self-criticism. When the

⁴² The original article from 1970, referring to a survey regarding the perception of Brandt's "Kniefall" can be found online: <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/kniefall-angemessen-oder-uebertrieben-a-861df9eb-0002-0001-0000-000043822427> [last accessed: 08.10.2021]

⁴³ Merkel for example spoke in front of the Knesset in 2008. Full text available online: https://knesset.gov.il/description/eng/doc/speech_merkel_2008_eng.pdf [last accessed: 08.10.2021]

⁴⁴ President Frank-Walter Steinmeier for example travelled to Ukraine for this purpose only recently. See: <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/europa/steinmeier-ukraine-deutsche-weltkriegsverbrechen-103.html> [last accessed: 08.10.2021]

⁴⁵ Described for example by: Ghosh Prince, (2020), "The Exodus of Chinese Manufacturing: Shutting Down 'The World's Factory'", Forbes, 18.09.2020 online: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/princeghosh/2020/09/18/the-exodus-of-chinese-manufacturing-shutting-down-the-worlds-factory/?sh=2138c39fc2f2> [last accessed: 08.10.2021]

⁴⁶ See for ex.: Chen Mitchell, (2018), "Communism with Chinese Characteristics: Confucius and China's Future", PPR Global Edition, 16.02.2018 online: <https://pennpoliticalreview.org/2018/02/communism-chinese-characteristics-confucius-and-chinas-future/> [last accessed: 08.10.2021]

German discourse does not allow to deny the German guilt, in China it is unacceptable that the government does no longer believe in the communist ideology.

Another facet of the regime of truth in China becomes visible when Xi speaks of “nature” or “future”. In his speeches where he sounds most propagandist, we can also observe the other side of the “communist leadership narrative”. It might be considered pure propaganda by many and we may feel a tendency of not wanting to take it seriously for this reason. However, to my mind it is important to understand what the Chinese President does in these parts and why he does so. What I have just called “communist leadership narrative”, is based on two principles whose mentions we can find in Xi’s speeches over and over again. Firstly, that China still believes in communism, which is after all a utopia. Secondly, that it is the CPC which can effectively guide China into a better future. On several occasions the Chinese President calls for more authority and emphasizes that the CPC leadership needs the full support of everybody in China to successfully lead the country to a glorious future. Therefore, it is necessary to create a perfect vision of this “beautiful future” a utopia similar to that of communism. And this is what happens when Xi speaks about the future or when he describes nature. In most parts he uses an emotional and often semi-poetic language to describe the beauty of nature and the wonderful future that expects us if we manage to overcome the problems of our time. It is with this narrative of a beautiful future with a unpolluted natural environment that the tough efforts and major changes towards becoming an “ecological civilization” are defended. Communism and environmentalism are linked together in Xi Jinping’s speeches, and this is a novum.

In intergovernmental cooperation, when dealing with China, we need to be aware of the Chinese “regime of truth”, accept it as a given condition and see Xi’s speeches in this context. The same is true for Germany. Even for our own country, we should be aware of the rules of discourse and the limits the regime of truth creates. Foucault believed that such boundaries of discourse can be overcome by only becoming aware that they exist. And once we recognized them, it still takes time to get over them, if that is possible at all. As long as such regimes exist, we have no choice but to work within their boundaries. And in international climate talks, there is not only one regime of truth, but many. We need to know them and mutually accept them instead of criticizing them. Only then, I believe, will such talks become effective and can possibly bring about the best possible guidelines for climate protection which all countries can agree on. So far, we still have democrats that meet autocrats in international climate discussions. And as long as both sides perceive the other as a different system, and furthermore as an unacceptable system, we risk overlooking that we have as much in common as Merkel and Xi in their climate discourses.

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Annexes:

Annex I

Keyword Lists

Figure 1: Keywords from the Xi Corpus

Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword
1	122	927.55	environmental
2	349	709.89	We
3	87	680.85	Ecological
4	78	595.65	Global
5	143	580.27	development
6	101	578.56	China
7	164	405.46	Must
8	65	381.01	Civilization
9	64	372.17	environment
10	1027	372.05	and
11	78	339.14	countries
12	53	311.09	cooperation
13	36	289.52	governance
14	57	287.44	protection
15	36	255.29	pollution
16	55	218.62	green
17	56	211.26	international
18	26	209.09	covid
19	62	197	economic
20	67	180.87	need
21	22	176.91	sustainable
22	94	171.66	people
23	52	171.05	nature
24	26	137.94	climate
25	136	132.17	will
26	25	128.75	humanity
27	25	124.04	promote
28	18	124.03	challenges
29	15	120.62	cpc (Communist Party of China)
30	15	120.62	multilateralism
31	31	114.3	build
32	92	114.24	our
33	18	112.94	ensure
34	26	111.67	developing
35	22	104.08	carbon
36	22	103.1	protect
37	71	101.4	world

38	21	100.85	reform
39	31	100.75	quality
40	14	100.59	pandemic
41	18	98.31	strengthen
42	71	96.93	should
43	18	90.49	poverty
44	23	89.15	chinese
45	11	88.45	beijing
46	31	86.65	natural
47	32	86.32	building
48	13	86.13	implement
49	15	82.41	conservation
50	18	81.43	belt
51	10	80.41	globalization
52	13	78.89	uphold
53	26	78.08	forward
54	17	78.05	committed
55	18	75.06	improve
56	9	72.37	ecosystems
57	18	72.29	mountains
58	32	70.51	control
59	19	70.47	win
60	25	69.42	efforts
61	11	68.76	risks
62	17	68.68	shared
63	15	66.85	mutual
64	40	64.79	system
65	11	64.65	innovation
66	8	64.33	openness
67	30	61.17	change
68	11	59.75	resource
69	19	59.25	economy
70	13	59.15	forests
71	13	59.15	un (United Nations)
72	21	58.48	continue
73	8	58.08	oversight
74	28	56.48	future
75	7	56.29	hebei
76	7	56.29	tianjin
77	7	56.29	vaccines
78	11	55.82	virus
79	9	54.3	accelerate
80	27	53.66	common
81	17	52.89	principles
82	15	52.69	measures
83	17	52.5	resources
84	19	50.67	energy
85	11	50.61	rivers
86	10	50.53	overall
87	15	50.32	create
88	7	50.29	multilateral

89	11	49.71	comprehensive
90	9	49.15	implementation
91	10	48.31	prosperity
92	6	48.24	ecosystem
93	27	48.17	major
94	11	48.03	gentlemen
95	20	47.98	systems
96	12	47.97	prevention
97	18	47.87	fight
98	8	47.18	enhance
99	13	46.93	regarding
100	14	46.69	achieve
101	9	46.44	consultation
102	12	45.49	benefits
103	13	45.4	mankind
104	13	44.92	asia
105	9	44.12	actively
106	8	43.85	jointly
107	11	42.45	regulations
108	17	41.98	health
109	20	41.85	growth
110	16	41.38	laws
111	8	41.14	fulfill
112	9	40.28	improving
113	5	40.2	polluting
114	5	40.2	yangtze
115	7	40.17	agenda
116	8	39.96	chains
117	12	39.89	path
118	6	39.32	comprehensively
119	23	38.37	community
120	11	38.12	ladies
121	16	37.44	follow
122	6	36.9	neutrality
123	6	36.9	protecting
124	8	36.89	coordinated
125	8	36.89	promoting
126	8	36.89	resolve
127	24	36.52	together
128	20	36.11	nation
129	18	35.96	production
130	14	35.23	capacity
131	28	34.97	order
132	6	34.93	adhere
133	6	34.93	civilizations
134	7	34.68	humans
135	10	34.48	harmony
136	26	33.76	country
137	7	33.61	forum
138	10	33.54	industries
139	611	33.4	to

140	14	33.16	key
141	16	33.03	based
142	16	33.03	beautiful
143	8	32.88	technological
144	24	32.51	human
145	10	32.23	joint
146	4	32.16	bri (Belt and Road Initiative)
147	4	32.16	connectivity
148	4	32.16	ecology
149	4	32.16	emissions
150	4	32.16	iii (III.)
151	4	32.16	whilst
152	8	31.55	enforcement
153	8	31.55	pursue
154	8	31.55	transformation
155	13	30.9	rules
156	15	30.78	progress
157	10	30.63	investment
158	12	30.47	responsible
159	8	30.33	wealth
160	7	30.06	engage
161	10	29.88	heaven
162	16	29.85	industrial
163	12	29.66	standards
164	9	29.48	strictly
165	6	29.41	prosperous
166	7	29.31	boost
167	8	28.68	departments
168	8	28.68	responsibilities
169	6	28.38	enforce
170	8	28.17	overcome
171	5	27.98	contributor
172	7	27.93	foster
173	23	27.81	law
174	101	27.6	all
175	20	27.53	problems
176	17	27.43	support
177	7	27.29	faster
178	4	27.19	worldwide
179	9	27.08	focus
180	9	27.08	severe
181	10	26.89	push
182	9	26.71	regions
183	6	26.57	beneficial
184	6	26.57	restoration
185	5	26.52	exchanges
186	5	26.52	inclusive
187	5	26.52	safeguard
188	12	26.29	carry
189	9	26.01	technology
190	12	25.86	battle

191	6	25.76	coordination
192	12	25.65	security
193	7	25.56	launched
194	7	25.56	punishment
195	7	25.56	respond
196	5	25.26	grasslands
197	24	25.12	important
198	6	25.02	commitment
199	6	25.02	dialogue
200	6	25.02	monitoring
201	8	24.66	facing
202	4	24.6	dioxide
203	7	24.52	relevant
204	10	24.37	benefit
205	6	24.32	enterprises
206	5	24.16	equity
207	3	24.12	aquatic
208	3	24.12	biotic
209	3	24.12	boao
210	3	24.12	coronavirus
211	3	24.12	excellencies
212	3	24.12	harms
213	3	24.12	humankind
214	3	24.12	infrastructure
215	3	24.12	macroeconomic
216	3	24.12	optimize
217	3	24.12	pollutants
218	3	24.12	prioritize
219	3	24.12	shanghai
220	3	24.12	strategies
221	3	24.12	targeted
222	3	24.12	unilateralism
223	3	24.12	yangze
224	11	24.03	lives
225	9	23.78	fundamental
226	15	23.61	friends
227	10	23.61	issues
228	9	23.49	opportunities
229	15	23.19	river
230	5	23.17	lakes
231	5	23.17	reminds
232	6	23.04	adjust
233	6	23.04	confrontation
234	6	23.04	peak
235	4	22.71	inspections
236	4	22.71	turquoise
237	9	22.65	rural
238	31	22.47	take
239	6	22.46	seasons
240	10	22.21	fields
241	12	22.21	principle

242	14	22.05	needs
243	6	21.9	consumption
244	8	21.88	waters
245	7	21.87	tasks
246	5	21.47	tackle
247	6	21.38	priority
248	9	21.35	establish
249	17	21.23	hard
250	4	21.22	upholding
251	16	21.14	plan
252	17	20.92	party
253	15	20.88	basis
254	5	20.73	coexistence
255	5	20.73	equitable
256	5	20.73	integrated
257	5	20.73	launch
258	5	20.73	strict
259	5	20.73	unprecedented
260	11	20.69	institutions
261	12	20.57	responsibility
262	10	20.52	fully
263	8	20.41	trend
264	6	20.4	anniversary
265	7	20.38	damage
266	4	19.98	forestall
267	4	19.98	livelihood
268	6	19.94	targets
269	13	19.94	trade
270	10	19.93	prevent
271	11	19.67	management
272	3	19.66	deepen
273	3	19.66	implemented
274	3	19.66	inclusiveness
275	3	19.66	pm (in Pm2.5)
276	3	19.66	resilience
277	14	19.58	central
278	6	19.51	colleagues
279	6	19.51	generations
280	5	19.4	accelerated
281	5	19.4	diversity
282	5	19.4	stability
283	9	19.29	policies
284	7	19.07	stronger
285	15	18.94	peace
286	4	18.92	impetus
287	4	18.92	responding
288	4	18.92	socio
289	22	18.8	social
290	6	18.69	harm

Figure 2: Keywords from the Merkel Corpus

Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword
1	225	646.48	we
2	47	366.82	climate
3	38	222.99	germany
4	75	198.77	also
5	20	182.94	pandemic
6	76	182.49	our
7	18	155.88	global
8	201	127.73	that
9	22	124.64	percent
10	22	120.86	european
11	12	117.78	emissions
12	39	90	us
13	110	88.18	this
14	90	79.84	have
15	15	74.84	dear
16	19	69.67	countries
17	7	68.7	euros
18	26	64.81	why
19	12	63.77	thank
20	14	63.11	protection
21	7	62.69	renewable
22	35	61.41	world
23	26	58.72	course
24	33	58.32	very
25	8	57.89	vulnerability
26	22	56.37	want
27	58	54.52	has
28	14	52.53	agreement
29	5	49.07	davos
30	5	49.07	digitization
31	5	49.07	sustainable
32	7	46.9	industrialized
33	7	44.81	presidency
34	5	43.68	multilateral
35	9	43.4	contribution
36	7	42.99	virus
37	11	40.2	german
38	4	39.26	biodiversity
39	4	39.26	technologies
40	10	39.15	paris
41	14	38.33	union
42	8	37.32	coal
43	6	36.97	energies
44	11	36.41	continue
45	47	36.14	will
46	133	36.06	is
47	4	34.27	vaccine

48	4	34.27	worldwide
49	7	34.09	committed
50	5	34	investments
51	11	33.72	europe
52	14	32.41	change
53	10	30.62	co (in Co2)
54	11	30.56	trade
55	5	30.12	chains
56	5	30.12	warming
57	14	29.84	together
58	3	29.44	biontech
59	3	29.44	livelihoods
60	3	29.44	multilateralism
61	3	29.44	singapore
62	3	29.44	wto (World Trade Organization)
63	15	29.09	today
64	8	29.01	billion
65	68	28.77	are
66	13	27.85	economic
67	8	27.38	china
68	5	27.38	prosperity
69	9	27.07	energy
70	7	26.73	achieve
71	5	26.25	strengthen
72	13	25.88	already
73	3	24.96	resilience
74	4	24.1	ensure
75	22	23.86	good
76	8	23.83	shows
77	22	23.71	year
78	7	23.55	ourselves
79	3	22.74	schwab
80	4	22.65	nationally
81	4	22.02	framework
82	6	21.92	target
83	3	21.17	neutrality
84	9	20.79	international
85	9	20.22	especially
86	3	19.94	challenges
87	3	19.94	implement
88	3	19.94	internationally
89	3	19.94	strengths
90	4	19.92	agreements
91	5	19.7	cooperation
92	21	19.69	because
93	2	19.63	adlershof
94	2	19.63	bda (Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände) = Confederation of German Employers' Association
95	2	19.63	biden

96	2	19.63	concertedly
97	2	19.63	connectedness
98	2	19.63	covax
99	2	19.63	eu
100	2	19.63	fiji
101	2	19.63	guterres
102	2	19.63	healthcare
103	2	19.63	hoffmann
104	2	19.63	kunming
105	2	19.63	macron
106	2	19.63	multipolar
107	2	19.63	oecd
108	2	19.63	reset
109	2	19.63	sustainability
110	2	19.63	thuringia
111	2	19.63	vaccines
112	4	19.48	unemployment
113	13	19.3	important
114	5	19.2	challenge
115	19	19.08	here
116	47	18.87	all
117	7	18.72	everyone
118	4	18.66	transport
119	12	18.48	development
120	7	18.24	supply
121	3	18.07	cohesion
122	8	17.78	lot
123	8	17.6	g (in G7)
124	8	17.6	step
125	4	17.58	gentlemen
126	14	17.58	hand
127	3	17.33	innovation
128	4	17.26	reliable

Figure 3: Common keywords

Xi Jinping Keywords (rank)	Angela Merkel Keywords (rank)
Development (5)	Development (119)
China (6)	China (67)
Countries (11) / Country (136)	Countries (16)
Cooperation (12)	Cooperation (91)
Protection (14)	Protection (20)
Covid (18) / Pandemic (40) / Virus (78) / coronavirus (210)	Pandemic (5) / Virus (36)
Climate (24)	Climate (2)
Challenges (28)	Challenges (86) / Challenge (114)
Multilateralism (30)	Multilateralism (60)

World (37)	World (22)
Innovation (65)	Innovation (127)
Vaccines (77)	Vaccine (47) / Vaccines (111)
Energy (84)	Energies (43) / Energy (69)
Prosperity (91)	Prosperity (68)
Chains (116)	Chains (55)
Neutrality (122)	Neutrality (83)
Connectivity (147)	Connectedness (97)
Targets (268)	Target (82)
Resilience (279)	Resilience (73)
Livelihood (267)	Livelihoods (59)
Technology (189)	Technologies (39)
Contributor (122)	Contribution (35)

Annex II Analysis of Keywords

II.1.: Analysis of Common Keywords in Angela Merkel's Speeches

Development is a keyword used in many parts of Angela Merkel's speeches. Looking at the concrete examples, allows to conclude that the word is used in three ways:

1. Clearly referring to non-environmental topics,

Examples:

→ "Starting tomorrow, Germany will be a member of the UN Security Council for two years, and advocate for global solutions there. We are further increasing our funding for humanitarian- and development aid, but also our defence spending." (Merkel New Year 2018)

→ "... we must have an interest in the development of all parts of the world. That is why development aid is in the national interest; that is also how we see it in Germany." (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ "In this context, of course, the development banks and the World Bank play an important role." (Merkel 2017)

→ "[And] the big danger [now] after the pandemic is that we could all, focus on ourselves-I'm speaking here for developed countries-and neglect development efforts. [And] that must not happen. That's why the German political goal - and also the goal with regard to European spending - is not to cut back on development cooperation, but rather to step it up a notch. (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ "[And] everything we see [right now] in the development of vaccines, but also (of) other technologies, shows: to focus on research and development is definitely the right thing to do." (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ "And in doing so, of course, anything that curbs the pandemic is good; it's not only good for people's health, it's good for economic development, it's good for social opportunities, it's good for cultural opportunities." (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ "Since I became chancellor, we have [consistently] increased our research and development spending. We have [now] exceeded (their share of) three percent of gross domestic product (and)

want to move toward (a share of) 3.5 percent [now]. [And] everything we see [right now] in the development of vaccines, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

2. Clearly referring to environmental topics,

Example:

→”[And] if the world has succeeded in anything in recent years, which is basically the key against vulnerability, it's the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, which make clear in a comprehensive way how we have to act if we don't want to be as vulnerable as we are today.”(Merkel Davos 2021)

3. Indirectly referring to environmental topics.

Example:

→” Because we believe that only the development of a price signal will really prevent us from exceeding the remaining budgets of climate-damaging gases.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Although “development” here refers to the development of “a price signal”, it is yet related to environmental issues namely to the climate budget.

In the speeches of the German chancellor, “development” is mainly not environment related.

Cooperation appears in several parts of Merkel’s speeches, sometimes referring to cooperation in general,

Example:

→” But this conviction is no longer shared by everyone today. Certainties of international cooperation are coming under pressure. In such a situation, we must stand up, argue, fight for our convictions again.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

Sometimes referring to particular non environmental topics.

Example:

→Regarding Biontec: “... a start-up from Germany, where people from 60 nations are working and doing research. And [that] also shows us the value of international cooperation and what you can create with it. (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” That's why the German political goal - and also the goal with regard to European spending - is not to cut back on development cooperation, but rather to step it up a notch.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

And only twice cooperation is mentioned when referring to climate protection.

Examples:

→”[global warming is] essentially man-made. And therefore, we must follow the advice of science. It is a global challenge that can only be met in [international] cooperation because there is only one Earth.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→”..., Dear Colleagues, I am glad that the U.S. is back on climate policy, because it is absolutely indisputable that the world needs your cooperation if we are to meet the Paris Agreement.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

“Cooperation” is therefore partly environment related in Merkel’s speeches.

Challenges is being referred to in three ways: Without any specification as when speaking of the “challenges of our time” in general.

Example:

→”I am guided by the conviction that we will only master the challenges of our time if we stick together and work together with others across borders.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

Specifically linked to the “challenge of digitalization”,

Examples:

→”We need to find multilateral responses to the new challenges of digitalization at great speed.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→”Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and, also two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work -...” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

And in one case, though only in the second half of the sentence, it is used referring to “climate change”.

Example:

→”Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and, also two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work - you know this from your practice - and on the other hand, the great human challenge of climate change. (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

“Challenges” is therefore only partly environment related in the Merkel corpus.

Multilateralism is referred to several times within one paragraph, highlighting the general importance of multilateralism and cooperation.

Example:

→”I think it has been shown: This is the hour of multilateralism. What does multilateralism mean? After all, multilateralism does not just mean that we somehow cooperate, but that we [also] cooperate transparently.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Multilateralism is not environment related in Merkel’s speeches.

World is a keyword used excessively in Merkel’s speeches, though in very different ways:

It is of minor rhetoric relevance when appearing simply in names of organisations.

Examples:

→” [And] That's why Germany will work to strengthen the World Trade Organization [especially now after the pandemic] .” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→”We [once] launched the "Compact with Africa" during our G20 presidency, which is now [also] being [further] supported by the IMF and the World Bank. “ (Merkel Davos 2021)

→”I am pleased that yesterday we established a Global Partnership for Climate Risk Insurance in Developing Countries with the World Bank as a joint initiative between the G20 and countries most affected by climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Therefore, I can only welcome the fact that President Macron, together with the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank, has invited us to a summit focusing on climate finance in Paris on December 12. “ (Merkel 2017)

→” I am very happy that the World Bank is supporting these activities very intensively.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” In this context, of course, the development banks and the World Bank play an important role.” (Merkel 2017)

→”[And] We need to strengthen the WHO, the World Health Organization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” ... in terms of the information about the outbreak of the pandemic in China, and also in terms of the sharing of the information by the World Health Organization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Sometimes “world” is used in a historical context, referring to historical changes or to lessons the world can learn from history.

Examples:

→”During the period of German unity and European unification, many other things also happened in the world. The year 1989 changed the world, and not just here in Europe. In 1989, China's GDP was 8.8 percent of America's; today it is 66 percent.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” So, you see how the balance of power in the world has changed and that we have also come into a competition of systems.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→”Thank you, Professor Schwab, ladies and gentlemen at the screens, Covid-19 has changed the world - [and] this is also evident at this year's Davos Dialog. (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” That is the lesson of the two world wars of the last century. But this conviction is no longer shared by everyone today. Certainties of international cooperation are coming under pressure.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the most recent speeches, unsurprisingly, “world” is also linked to the pandemic in different ways.

Examples:

→”Biontec has, together with Pfizer and other companies in the world as well, developed a vaccine. “ (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” But let's not kid ourselves: The question of who in the world gets which vaccine and when, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→”[And] The fact that he and many others in the world have helped to ensure that today, twelve months later, we can use vaccines that are still not enough, but at least very promising, shows...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Because, if we take a look at how the virus from Wuhan in China has spread throughout the world, then we have actually been able to observe a kind of globalization...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In some cases “world” is rather used in a general context as when the chancellor speaks of “all over the world” etc.

Examples:

→” ...relatively hard, but also has growth prospects [next year again, respectively] this year. But this must happen as concertedly as possible all over the world; and of course [this also] requires concerted efforts. I see a central role for the G20 in this.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Innovation opportunities should, of course, benefit as many countries around the world as possible, especially the poorer ones.” (Merkel 2017)

→” [And] we have a big question to discuss now, and it is the question that the world must face. The word sovereignty is on everybody's lips again. Supply chains have not proven to be reliable in times of pandemic to ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” I already spoke about [this]: global connectedness means we must have an interest in the development of all parts of the world.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In some cases “world” is also linked to economic topics.

Examples:

→” We have a great interest in seeing economic recovery take place all over the world.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” ... , for me the WTO remains a core component of rules-based trade in the world. [And] That's why Germany will work to strengthen the World Trade Organization [especially now after the pandemic] .” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ “...we're going to have a relapse into regional protectionism and that I think has to be prevented if we really want to put the world back on a growth path.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In quite some cases, Merkel also links “world” and “environment”.

Examples:

→ (On the Paris Agreement): “This is a very important signal for the whole world community. Thank you also for organizing this meeting! We are facing a global Herculean task.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” [And] if the world has succeeded in anything in recent years, which is basically the key against vulnerability, it's the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030,...”(Merkel Davos 2021)

→”Climate change is - everybody in this room knows this, but I call this out to everyone else as well - a matter of destiny for our world.” (Merkel 2017)

→” If we also consider the growing world population, we know: Increasing conflicts over natural resources are virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Nationally, the situation is as follows: Germany has one percent of the world's population, and two percent of the world's emissions . If everyone acted like Germany, global emissions would double. Everyone knows what that means.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” The daily weather events and climate catastrophes around the world show us how urgent the matter is. That is why it is now a matter of following up our words with deeds.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Our common message is: We want to protect our world. That is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

As a keyword, “world” is mainly not environment related in Angela Merkel’s speeches. In seven different examples however, it is in fact linked to environmental topics and can therefore be understood as a partly environment related keyword.

Innovation is a keyword ranking relatively low on Merkel’s keyword list. In two out of three cases, “innovation” is mentioned together with “technology”. On one occasion, the chancellor speaks of “innovation opportunities”. In all three examples, “innovation” is seen as a response to climate change.

Examples:

→” The European continent should be the first to become climate-neutral and to set an example in terms of technology and innovation of how to achieve the future way of doing business. And that drives us a bit with a view to the timeline.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” ... we are seeing support for renewable energies increasing at a relatively rapid pace and their market maturity being achieved ever more quickly. Innovation opportunities should, of course, benefit as many countries around the world as possible, especially the poorer ones. (Merkel 2017)

→” The developing countries are the main sufferers. And that is why we, as representatives of the industrialized countries, have a duty to use innovation, technology, and money to pave the way to stop global warming.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Innovation is clearly linked to environmental topics in the Merkel corpus.

Energy

In some cases, “energy” is mentioned in the context of policies planned, or policies that exist either on EU or national level.

Examples:

→(On the German plans of introducing CO2 pricing) “..., not only - as it is already the case today within the framework of the European Union-, for the areas of industry and energy, but we will - starting nationally and hopefully then continued at the European level - also give a price to CO2 in the area of buildings...” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” This year, during our G20 presidency, we adopted the G20 Action Plan on Climate and Energy for More Sustainable Economic Growth.” (Merkel 2017)

Sometimes it is used to bring up some facts either to underline what has been achieved, or to outline what is still to do. In all these cases, energy is linked to renewable energies.

Examples:

→” Germany now already has about 40 percent of energy generation, or more than 40% of energy generation, from renewable sources .” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Let me tell you that in Germany, renewable energies are already the strongest pillar of the energy supply and that we are seeing support for renewable energies increasing at a relatively rapid pace and their market maturity being achieved...” (Merkel 2017)

→” To achieve this, we want to generate 65%, or two thirds, of our energy supply from renewable sources by 2030. We will phase out nuclear energy by 2022, and coal-fired power plants by 2038 at the latest.” (Merkel UN 2019)

In two particular cases, “energy” is used to define obstacles to achieve the green transition in Germany.

Examples:

→ (Regarding the aims of reducing coal⁴⁷) “This is also about economic efficiency; that means, about the affordability of energy. I just want to tell you that even in a rich country like we are, there are of course considerable conflicts in society...” (Merkel 2017)

→ In this case Merkel indirectly states that the transition of the energy sector is problematic since renewable energies might not be “affordable”. She even adds that although Germany is a rich country, this leads to “considerable conflicts” in the society.

→” In Germany, coal is still an important energy source today.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→ Here Merkel mentions Germany’s coal dependency without clearly highlighting it as an obstacle. But the fact that she mentions it, indicates, that she sees it as an unsolved problem (as of today).

In all cases, “energy” is directly or indirectly environment related in Merkel’s speeches.

Prosperity is a keyword that merits special attention in the speeches of the German chancellor. When looking at the phrases where the word is used, they sound quite ideological and to my mind nearly propagandistic, for example when the work of the German government is described or the project of the European Union.

Examples:

→” To safeguard jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods, the German government is systematically taking the next steps in the structural shift from traditional to new technologies and implementing its strategy for digital progress.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

→” In May, you can help ensure that the European Union will continue to be a project of peace, prosperity, and security by voting in the European elections. Dear fellow citizens, prosperity, security, and peace are things we must work for above all at home.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

But Merkel weakens this argument used in her 2018 New Year speech when speaking at the German Employers Day a year later.

Example:

→” You have just referred - and I liked this very much - to these changes, to the multipolar order and to the fact that there are no legal claims to prosperity.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

In one case only Merkel clearly links “prosperity” to “climate protection”.

Example:

→” The OECD also made it clear what is at stake: only if we also gear our extensive investments to climate-friendly aspects can we secure our prosperity in the future. That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy.” (Merkel 2017)

Merkel mainly does not link “prosperity” to environmental topics but rather treats it as an economic topic.

⁴⁷ Note: In 2017, Merkel still speaks of “reducing coal”, not yet “phaseout”.

Neutrality is mentioned at three occasions in Merkel's speeches. In all cases, neutrality refers to "climate neutrality". In all cases the chancellor highlights the German commitment to climate protection.

Examples:

→1. "With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy. We want to achieve extensive greenhouse gas neutrality by the middle of the century and cut between 80 and 95 percent of CO₂ emissions." (Merkel 2017)

→2. "We have committed to climate neutrality for the year 2050, which, if we achieve that, can lead to Europe becoming the first climate-neutral continent." (Merkel Davos 2021)

→3. "In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality." (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Example two furthermore emphasises the role of Europe as possibly being about to become the first climate-neutral continent.

As a keyword, "neutrality" is clearly environment related in the Merkel corpus.

Connectedness is mentioned on two occasions in Merkel's 2021 Davos speech. In one case it is linked to the pandemic.

Example:

→(On the question of what this pandemic has shown us) "I think it first of all showed us: our global interconnectedness or connectedness." (Merkel Davos 2021)

Whilst in the other case, it is linked to development.

Example:

→"I already spoke about [this]: global connectedness means we must have an interest in the development of all parts of the world." (Merkel Davos 2021)

In none of the cases does the chancellor link connectedness to environmental topics although the global connectedness is quite visible when thinking of climate protection or biodiversity protection.

"Target" in Angela Merkel's speeches, refers to "climate targets" in all cases. In some cases it refers to German national targets, in other it refers to EU targets.

Examples:

→(On emissions trading) "We reached an important agreement on this last week. The instrument will be aligned with the European Union's target. Above all, certificates are now being removed from trading so that the price can be developed into an effective signal." (Merkel 2017)

→"The member states of the European Union have agreed on how to share the common target. Everyone knows what contribution they have to make." (Merkel 2017)

→"The European Union has done what was expected. As a first step, we said we want to increase our [national or our] European target for CO₂ reductions from 40 percent to 55 percent with respect to the year 2030." (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” I want to speak quite frankly here: This is not easy in Germany either. We have set ourselves targets for 2020, 2030 and, indeed, 2050. Our target for 2020 is an ambitious one, namely a reduction of 40 percent compared to 1990.” (Merkel 2017)

→” We also know: with today's national commitments, we will not be able to meet the 2-degree or the 1.5-degree increase target.” (Merkel 2017)

→” The EU agreed on this target this week and has anchored it in a binding manner.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Target is therefore clearly environment related.

Resilience is used in three parts of the 2021 Davos speech. Whilst one could have expected it to be linked to the economy, instead it is linked to the pandemics in all three cases. In two out of three cases, it is used as a negative statement (referring to a lack of resilience).

Examples:

→”... we have a very good individual health system, but when it comes to community health and prevention, we do not yet have sufficient resilience. [And] that's why we need to learn from the crisis, from the pandemic. (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” This pandemic is something like a catastrophe of the century, a natural event of the century, and has revealed the resilience - Mr. Schwab has also just mentioned this - or [it has revealed] the non-existent resilience of our societies.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Resilience is not linked to environmental topics in the Merkel corpus.

Livelihoods is another interesting example to examine. Merkel speaks of “livelihoods” in three passages. In one case she indirectly links it to climate change as a threat to “our livelihoods”.

Example:

→(Referring to pictures of earth send from space): ” On the one hand, this overwhelming beauty, on the other hand, we know about the vulnerability of our livelihoods. And this in a comprehensive sense. There is the vital question of climate change, that of controlling and ordering migration, there is the fight against international terrorism.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the other two cases, people’s “livelihoods” are linked to the economy but therewith indirectly also serve to justify measures to protect the environment, since to my understanding, when speaking of “livelihood”, the chancellor indirectly refers to nature as a basis of human livelihood.

Examples:

→” That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy. After all, preserving our livelihoods is a prerequisite for us to be able to do business successfully at all. (Merkel 2017)

→ “ The same goes for the millions of volunteers. To safeguard jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods, the German government is systematically taking the next steps in the structural shift from traditional to new technologies ...” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the last example, though Merkel speaks of “jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods” in the same breath, it only serves as a transition to the topic of structural change.

“Livelihood” is partly environment related in Merkel’s speeches. When linked to environmental topics (climate change, green transition), Merkel sounds rather like seeing such environmental

topics as a threat to people's livelihoods. Jobs, prosperity and livelihood need for example to be "safeguarded" in the process of the green transition, and climate change is used as an example showing the "vulnerability of our livelihoods".

Technologies are clearly seen as a response to climate change, but also a key factor of modernization and digitalization in Angela Merkel's speeches.

Example:

→ "To safeguard jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods, the German government is systematically taking the next steps in the structural shift from traditional to new technologies and implementing its strategy for digital progress." (Merkel New Year 2018)

→ "Renewable energies, resource- and cost-saving efficiency technologies, climate-friendly innovations in the building sector and in transport - these and more will gain in importance on markets worldwide." (Merkel 2017)

→ "... to this end, together with the change in the building sector, [we] invest 54 billion euros in the next four years, in investments in new technologies, in new mobility, in insulation of our houses, in new heating systems." (Merkel UN 2019)

→ "[And] everything we see [right now] in the development of vaccines, but also (of) other technologies, shows: to focus on research and development is definitely the right thing to do." (Merkel Davos 2021)

"Technology" is mainly environment related in the Merkel corpus and it is a positive keyword used to highlight possible solutions to the challenges of our times.

Contribution in Merkel's speeches refers to the contribution to climate protection. She sometimes speaks of the contribution of other countries (as the US or the EU).

Examples:

→ (On the return of the US to international climate protection) "The U.S. national contribution also expresses your ambition. This is a very important signal for the whole world community. Thank you also for organizing this meeting!" (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→ "That's why every single contribution is incredibly important. That's why it's important that we are open to each other, that we make our contributions comparable." (Merkel 2017)

→ "Everyone knows what contribution they have to make. With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy." (Merkel 2017)

→ "I am convinced that the industrialized countries have a very special and major contribution to make because they have the capacity for the necessary technological developments that can set standards, but also, of course, because they have a historic responsibility and have contributed significantly to the CO₂ rise worldwide." (Merkel 2017)

→ "Every member state of the European Union must make its contribution to this. For Europe, this means that we have to set the appropriate rules, for example in emissions trading." (Merkel 2017)

And of course, in other cases she speaks of Germany's contributions.

Example:

→” ..., we in Germany have doubled our climate financing to four billion euros per year by 2020 and will continue to make our fair contribution in the coming years.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” We will make our contribution to a sustainable economy and to sustainable living worldwide. Thank you very much!” (Merkel UN 2019)

→”... Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets. But exactly how, is something we will have to discuss with each other precisely over the next few days.” (Merkel 2017)

“Contribution” is an environment related keyword in Merkel’s speeches.

Climate

Climate is naturally a mostly environment related word. This is also the case in the Merkel corpus. However, it can be said, that in Merkel’s speeches “climate” is either referred to in names, for ex. Paris Climate Agreement, Climate Fund etc. (examples A) or when literally speaking of the climate as a global phenomenon (examples B).

Examples A:

→” I would like to welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Our common message is: We want to protect our world. That is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

→” This year, during our G20 presidency, we adopted the G20 Action Plan on Climate and Energy for More Sustainable Economic Growth.” (Merkel 2017)

→” We are very proud that the headquarters of the UN Climate Change Secretariat are located here in Bonn.” (Merkel 2017)

→” I am pleased that yesterday we established a Global Partnership for Climate Risk Insurance in Developing Countries with the World Bank as a joint initiative between the G20 and countries most affected by climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

→” In keeping with tradition, Germany will also begin preparations for the Glasgow conference this year with the 12th Petersberg Climate Dialogue - together with the United Kingdom.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” But I think the vulnerability first and foremost goes back to the fact that a virus has passed from animals to humans, to the fact that all of our major global sustainability conventions - be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention, which finds its reflection in the Paris Agreement today - have, of course, proven to be absolutely right and that we have to work harder for them than we did before, that is more resolutely.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” In particular, we will contribute 1.5 billion euros to the Green Climate Fund.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy.” (Merkel 2017)

→” I am pleased that yesterday we established a Global Partnership for Climate Risk Insurance in Developing Countries with the World Bank as a joint initiative between the G20 and countries most affected by climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

Examples B:

→” The daily weather events and climate catastrophes around the world show us how urgent the matter is.” (Merkel 2017)

→” That is why Germany has always spoken out in the United Nations Security Council in favour of paying much more attention to the security aspects of climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

→” If we [really] want to overcome vulnerability to climate change here, then we have to implement tough policies where we [also] have to take people with us, that means: phasing out coal, switching to hydrogen with a view to process energies, and a complete change in mobility toward electromobility or hydrogen mobility; of course we have to keep our technology open.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Climate change is - everybody in this room knows this, but I call this out to everyone else as well - a matter of destiny for our world.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and also, two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work - you know this from your practice - and on the other hand, the great human challenge of climate change.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” There is no doubt that climate change, [that] global warming, is essentially man-made.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” There is the vital question of climate change, that of controlling and ordering migration, there is the fight against international terrorism.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

→” In 2016, Germany made 1.4 billion euros available to help developing countries adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

→” The conference here in Bonn will focus on the looming risks and adaptation to climate change.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Because we believe that only the development of a price signal will really prevent us from exceeding the remaining budgets of climate-damaging gases.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” As industrialized countries, we have committed to providing 100 billion U.S. dollars a year in climate finance by 2020.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” Therefore, I can only welcome the fact that President Macron, together with the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank, has invited us to a summit focusing on climate finance in Paris on December 12.” (Merkel 2017)

→” This is also the reason why we in Germany have earmarked a doubling of public climate financing by 2020.” (Merkel 2017)

→” It is up to all of us to create the right framework conditions to really mobilize private capital for climate financing.” (Merkel 2017)

→” In this context, we in Germany have doubled our climate financing to four billion euros per year by 2020 and will continue to make our fair contribution in the coming years.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” The OECD has also made it clear what is at stake: only if we also gear our extensive investments to climate-friendly aspects can we secure our prosperity in the future.” (Merkel 2017)

→” All this is being done in the conviction that the transformation to a low-emission economy - if properly implemented - offers great opportunities for growth. Renewable energies, resource- and cost-saving efficiency technologies, climate-friendly innovations in the building sector and in transport - these and more will gain in importance on markets worldwide.” (Merkel 2017)

→” I support Ursula von der Leyen when she says: The European continent should be the first to become climate-neutral and to set an example in terms of technology and innovation of how to achieve the future way of doing business.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” The European Union will be climate-neutral by 2050 - and that of course also applies to the Federal Republic of Germany.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” That is why we have set ourselves the goal of reducing our CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to the 1990 levels, and to be climate neutral by 2050.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” We have committed to climate neutrality for the year 2050, which, if we achieve that, can lead to Europe becoming the first climate-neutral continent.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” I am glad that the U.S. is back on climate policy, because it is absolutely indisputable that the world needs your cooperation if we are to meet the Paris Agreement.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy.” (Merkel 2017)

→” If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” That means that more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” I would like to welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

→” You say that climate protection measures should not be rushed through. That is certainly true. But on the other hand, hundreds if not thousands of scientists tell us: You only have a certain budget of CO2 emissions that you can emit; otherwise, you will have global warming that is well above 2 degrees Celsius.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” We all know that December 12 is a very special, magical date for Paris and climate protection. That is another reason why this conference should be a success.” (Merkel 2017)

→” If we also consider the growing world population, we know: Increasing conflicts over natural resources are virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” It's about trust and reliability in our joint efforts to make urgently needed progress on climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” That's why I wish all those who are committed to climate protection - whether you're here representing your states, or whether you're working as non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal - good courage, good will and a lot of drive.” (Merkel 2017)

→” We are committed to climate risk insurance, and we have been active for decades and will continue to do so, in the area of forest protection.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→”We also want to use the necessary economic recovery after the corona pandemic for innovative growth, and especially in the area of climate. So, we are investing in renewable energies instead of coal.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Main topics which “climate” is linked to in Merkel’s speeches are: “climate change”, “climate protection”, “climate neutrality” and “climate finance”.

Climate change is described as being “essentially man-made” as well as being a “vital question” or a “great human challenge”. Therefore “**climate neutrality**” is pronounced of being an official aim of both the European Union and of course the Federal Republic of Germany. From 2019 on, Merkel repeatedly states that climate neutrality shall be reached by 2050 and she stresses that by reaching this target Europe would be the first “climate neutral continent”. Together with the idea of a “climate risk insurance”, **climate financing** seems to be one of the main strategies Germany wants to engage in climate protection. On seven occasions and in different speeches, Merkel mentions Germany's efforts in climate financing like when stating that Germany has doubled its “climate financing” or when mentioning the German financial contribution to the Global Climate Fund. The Chancellor speaks of “the urgently needed progress on **climate protection**” and the risk of “increasing conflicts over natural resources” as being “virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection”.

But climate protection is also linked to economic and social topics such as jobs as when the Chancellor states the “issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role” or when the climate policy is described as also being a “future-oriented economic policy”.

Protection

As seen when analysing the keyword “climate”, “protection” often refers to climate protection in Merkel’s speeches and its importance is highlighted in several examples. The Chancellor expresses Germany’s willingness to further get financially engaged in climate protection.

Examples:

→” That means that more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014.” (Merkel UN 2019)

And Merkel also underlines the importance of governmental strategies and a binding legal basis for climate protection.

Examples:

→” In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy.” (Merkel 2017)

Nevertheless, “protection” is also linked to other than the climate topics. It is for example linked to biodiversity protection.

Example:

→” We are also committed to halting the loss of biodiversity worldwide. We believe that 30 percent of land and sea areas must be placed under protection.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Or forest protection.

Example:

→” We are committed to climate risk insurance, and we have been active for decades and will continue to do so, in the area of forest protection.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Further examples:

→” If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” I would like to welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Let me just say one thing at this point, because this is not otherwise the BDA's core competence: You say that climate protection measures should
d not be rushed through.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” We all know that December 12 is a very special, magical date for Paris and climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” If we also consider the growing world population, we know: Increasing conflicts over natural resources are virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” That is precisely what is being worked on at this conference. It's about trust and reliability in our joint efforts to make urgently needed progress on climate protection.” (Merkel 2017)

→” That's why I wish all those who are committed to climate protection - whether you're here representing your states, or whether you're working as non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal - good courage, good will and a lot of drive.” (Merkel 2017)

In all cases, “protection” is environment related in Merkel’s speeches with a main focus on climate protection.

11.2.: The Use of Common Keywords in Xi Jinping's Speeches

Development is mentioned on 128 occasions in Xi Jinping's speeches. Referred to as "green", sustainable" or "high-quality" development, in most cases, it is linked to the environment.

Examples:

→" [We can no] longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration." (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→" The Earth is our one and only home. To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone." (Xi Davos 2021)

→" China will follow the Thought on Ecological Civilization and implement the new development philosophy. We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy." (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Development is also used to stress the "East-West differences" in Xi's speeches. He often indirectly blames the development in other parts of the world as being unfair, whilst stating that China strives for a fairer development and wealth distribution. Often "development" is also linked with either "justice" or an unfair distribution of wealth in the world but also a lack of "openness". The developed countries are indirectly blamed as being "selfish" whilst China takes a different path. It is in these parts, that Xi sounds the most like a communist leader and he takes the role of a defender of the rights of developing countries. Capitalism is also criticized explicitly or at least doubted as a model of development. Examples:

→" Since the beginning of the 1930, some Western countries have continuously been stroked by natural disasters, shocking the world [with] the huge damage, making people deeply reflect the capitalist model of development." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peaceful development and win-win cooperation, [it should] fulfil the practical needs responding to global challenges." (Xi Boao April 2021)

→"Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit." (Xi Boao April 2021)

→[We should say no to] "... narrow-minded, selfish beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and stop unilateral practice of keeping advantages in development all to oneself. Equal rights to development should be guaranteed for all countries to promote common development and prosperity." (Xi Davos 2021)

→"Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should be strengthened, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development." (Xi Davos 2021)

Development is also linked to the global order and world peace, as the following examples show:

→" China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order. China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation..." (Xi Boao April 2021)

→" China will continue to work as a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order. " (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” — China will provide US\$50 million to the China-FAO South-South Cooperation Trust Fund (Phase III). — China will extend the Peace and Development Trust Fund between the UN and China by five years after it expires in 2025.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Quite some examples do also link development to the BRI project, making it sound as if the main purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative was an ecological one. Example:

→”We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road Development, and other multilateral cooperation platforms.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

Development is also used to describe China’s success. Examples:

→” [This] Forum has witnessed the extraordinary journey of China, Asia and the world, and had significant influence in boosting development in Asia and beyond.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Over twenty years, Asian countries have deeply promoted regional economic integration, accelerated social-economic development with joint efforts and propelled Asia to become the most vibrant and promising region in the global economy.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

On different occasions, development is used to describe China as a nation as well as China’s aims, good intentions, and possible contributions to the world. Examples:

→”China as a country of people on the move, is [a land] full of vitality of prosperity and development. We are all running assiduously, we are all dream chasers.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→”China is the largest developing country in the world, a country that is committed to peaceful, open, cooperative and common development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind.” (Xi New Year 2019)

But development is also used to stress that China longs for more tolerance towards its development path and indirectly its regime as when Xi says:

→”More importantly, we should respect a country's independent choice of development path and model.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

The Chinese president also links development to people’s livelihoods describing it as having a similar impact on livelihoods as environmental protection does. Example:

→”Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

In some parts “development” refers more generally to “human development” instead of “economic development”. Example:

→”(…) climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

It can be said that in the large majority of cases where Xi speaks of “development” in the examined speeches, development is linked to the environment and to environmental protection rather than to “economic development” in general. It is mainly described positively, as something that brings hope and that can be used to overcome as much inequality as well as environmental problems. “Development” is largely represented as something that could and should unite

humanity. Although in many cases a hidden critique regarding western development concepts can be found and Xi visibly tries to stress the differences, ultimately the main message is yet a positive one, that such differences can be overcome, and that development can bring about peace and prosperity to humanity and contribute to building a “beautiful world”.

Cooperation

In the Xi Corpus, “cooperation” is another important keyword, linked to a variety of topics. Of course, “cooperation” appears often in the context of existing government programs as for example the “Belt and Road cooperation”. But even in that context, it can be linked to ecological topics. Example:

→” China has also made ecological cooperation a key part of Belt and Road cooperation.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Generally, “cooperation” is often linked to environmental topics.

Example:

→” China has done its best to help developing countries build capacity against climate change through various forms of results-oriented South-South cooperation. (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Apart from the environmental aspect, “cooperation” is often used to describe China’s positive attitude towards other countries. In such parts it becomes visible, that China considers other countries to lack such positive attitude in international cooperation. The way Xi Jinping highlights China’s approach for “win-win cooperation”, sometimes seems to work mainly to blame Western countries of following a rather selfish path in international cooperation. Ideological difficulties are also brought up in such parts of the speeches. Cooperation is massively linked to “win-win”, “friendship”, “peace” or “equal rights” in the Chinese context.

Examples:

→” We should see each other as members of the same big family, pursue win-win cooperation, and rise above ideological disputes and do not fall into the trap of "clash of civilizations".” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation. (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”It is important that we stick to the cooperation concept based on mutual benefit, say no to narrow-minded, selfish beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and stop unilateral practice of keeping advantages ...” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits so as to ensure that all countries enjoy equal rights and opportunities and follow the same rules.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

“Cooperation” is also used to emphasize China’s role as a defender of the developing countries (in particular in the context of the South-South Cooperation). Examples:

→”As a steadfast member of developing countries, China will further deepen South-South cooperation, and contribute to the endeavour of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ease debt burden, and achieve more growth.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”[China has] hosted the annual Boao Forum for Asia, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Qingdao, the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and other main diplomatic activities, [where we have] put forward China's ideas, and made China's voice heard.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→(on South-South cooperation): “ ..., such cooperation has yielded real, tangible and solid results. (Xi Biden 04.2021)

In other parts, the Chinese president also points to China's willingness to cooperate in other fields as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and other, where Xi says China is open to exchange knowledge and make investments. Examples:

→”China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and support other countries in restoring economic recovery.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

No matter what topics it is linked to, “cooperation” is mostly a highly ideological topic in Xi Jinping's speeches. The Chinese president either aims to show what China has reached and how much it has invested in international cooperation, or he aims to highlight the importance of cooperating with China. Xi leaves no doubt that this is a global world in which most problems can only be overcome with united strengths. And cooperation is being linked to “solidarity” whilst “ideological prejudices” are interpreted as being a threat to international cooperation. Examples:

→” Differences in history, culture and social system should not be an excuse for antagonism or confrontation, but rather an incentive for cooperation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” No global problem can be solved by any one country alone. There must be global action, global response and global cooperation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

In such parts, the Chinese president also tries to highlight China's peaceful intentions, as when saying:

→”Nor will China ever engage in an arms race. China will take an active part in multilateral cooperation on trade and investment, fully implement the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

And he makes concrete promises, which often come with a touch of blame vis a vis the Western world, as when Xi says:

→” China will think and act with more openness with regard to international exchange and cooperation on science and technology.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”It is especially important to scale up cooperation on the R&D, production and distribution of vaccines and make them public goods that are truly accessible and affordable to people...” (Xi Davos 2021)

It can be seen that “cooperation” is linked to a multitude of topics in Xi Jinping's speeches, but it is often linked to environmental topics and in most parts of the speeches, when Xi speaks of China's way of cooperation, the “Chinese style” is indirectly opposed to that of other countries, and, in these cases, the message is that China is a “fairer” partner to cooperate with than maybe Western countries. As we have seen with the keyword “development”, also cooperation is described in a mainly positive manner, as offering opportunities and representing hope. Quite often, we are reminded that China is still a country which sees itself as being a communist

country. The link to “solidarity” but also the accent on “win-win” or the apparent people-orientation in China’s approach to international cooperation are proof to this. When speaking of the “anti-pandemic cooperation” for example, Xi emphasizes that vaccines should be made “global public goods”, therewith highlighting, that China thinks beyond its national borders. A similar attitude can be found when he speaks of the Belt and Road Cooperation. The BRI is sold as a “high quality” and “green” initiative. But Xi also tries to make it look like a win-win cooperation enabling less developed countries to participate in China’s development miracle.

Challenges

When Xi Jinping speaks of “challenges” in the speeches examined here, he excessively speaks of “global challenges” (sometimes “common challenges”) or the challenges in a global context. He therewith emphasizes that the world is a global place, and it takes solidarity and international cooperation to overcome such challenges.

Examples:

→” We cannot tackle common challenges in a divided world, and confrontation will lead us to a dead end.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Faced with unprecedented challenges in global environmental governance, the international community needs to come up with unprecedented ambition and action.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity.“ (Xi Davos 2021)

→”But I strongly believe that we only need to think with one mind and work with one heart, [that we only need to row together] to cross the turbulent river, [that we only need to] protect and help each other, so humanity will then inevitably be able to overcome the global climate and environmental challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Most challenges in Xi Jinping’s speeches are “environmental challenges” like climate change.

Examples:

→”Climate change poses real, severe and long-term challenges to humanity.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Faced with unprecedented challenges in global environmental governance, the international community needs to come up with unprecedented ambition and action.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”But I strongly believe that we only need to think with one mind and work with one heart, [that we only need to row together] to cross the turbulent river, [that we only need to] protect and help each other, so humanity will then inevitably be able to overcome the global climate and environmental challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”(…) the accumulation and spread of all types of environmental risks, [and] make sure that we are well-prepared to face environmental risks and challenges of any kind.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Climate change poses pressing, formidable and long-term challenges to us all.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” In recent years, climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Even when Xi Jinping does not speak of particular environmental challenges, in two out of three examples “challenge” can be linked to the environment at least indirectly:

When Xi says: “We have overcome all kinds of risks and challenges, pushed the economy towards a high-quality development, accelerated the replacement of the old drivers [of growth], (...)” it is clear that the challenge is of economic nature but it is also an ecological topic since the precise challenge is the green transition. And in the last examples, when Xi says: “Developing countries now face multiple challenges to combat COVID-19, grow the economy, and address climate change.”, the link to the environment is quite obvious. Though the main challenge seems to be “COVID-19” here, the second part of the sentence shows that “economic growth” and “addressing climate change” are also part of the challenge.

Whilst generally speaking, “challenge” is a rather negative keyword in itself it is remarkable that Xi Jinping does not mainly sound pessimistic when he speaks of challenges. Despite some heavy statements like: “We live at a time filled with challenges, ...” the overall message is never pessimistic. Example:

→” We live at a time filled with challenges, [but] this is also a time full of hope.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Mr. President, the history of development of human society is a history of our struggles against all challenges and difficulties and our victories over them.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

The second example here shows that “challenges” are described as something natural, as being part of human history and that history proves that challenges can be overcome. In several of Xi Jinping’s statements, it is humanity that is “challenged” and “challenges” are often described as “severe”, “pressing”, “long-term” etc. But the Chinese president never forgets to put the accent on the solution. The verbs used in this context show, that challenges can be “fought”, “tackled” and “overcome”.

Multilateralism

Multilateralism is an important keyword in Xi’s 2021 speech in Davos, but not in other speeches. When comparing the speeches held internationally (at the Boao Forum for Asia in 2021, the UN speech 2020 or the speech on invitation of President Joe Biden in 2021), it is rather surprising, that “multilateralism” is prominently mentioned only in Xi Jinping’s speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2021.

It is noticeable, that on many occasions in the 2021 Davos speech, “multilateralism” is used with the verb “to uphold”. Examples:

→” The problems facing the world are intricate and complex. The way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Xi Jinping wants to “uphold multilateralism” but he also describes what multilateralism means to him. Example:

→” Multilateralism is about having international affairs addressed through consultation and the future of the world decided by everyone working together.” (Xi Davos 2021)

He also describes multilateralism as a “fine tradition”. Example:

→” To uphold multilateralism in the 21st century, we should promote its fine tradition, take on new perspectives and look to the future.” (Xi Davos 2021)

But the Chinese president also differentiates “multilateralism” and “true multilateralism”.
Examples:

→” We need to follow the principles of discussing, cooperating and sharing, uphold true multilateralism, [and] make the global governance system fairer and more equitable.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Multilateralism should not be used as pretext for acts of unilateralism. Principles should be preserved and rules, once made, should be followed by all. “ (Xi Davos 2021)

→” “Selective multilateralism” should not be our option. Third, we should stay committed to consultation and cooperation instead of conflict and confrontation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

This implies that Xi Jinping observes how others use “multilateralism as a pretext for acts of unilateralism” or that there is “selective multilateralism” or simply multilateralism that is not “true multilateralism”. Once more this seems to be an indirect critique towards western countries, and it shows that China wants to avoid these mistakes.

Instead, the Chinese president describes China as being “firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action. Example:

→” As a participant, contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

And, in this particular context in Davos, where he is clearly addressing the international community, Xi Jinping reminds us of the importance of multilateral institutions as a mainstay of multilateralism, as well as of the core values and principles of multilateralism:

→” Multilateral institutions, which provide the platforms for putting multilateralism into action and which are the basic architecture underpinning multilateralism, should have their authority and effectiveness safeguarded.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We need to stand by the core values and basic principles of multilateralism. We also need to adapt to the changing international landscape and respond to global challenges as they arise.” (Xi Davos 2021)

He calls us to being “committed to multilateralism” and even quite pathetically wants multilateralism to “light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind”.

Examples:

→” – We must be committed to multilateralism. We need to work on the basis of international law, follow the principle of equity and justice, and focus on effective actions.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Multilateralism is seen as a solution to many global challenges. The importance of international institutions is highlighted; in particular their “authority” and “effectiveness” which Xi tries to defend when saying:” Multilateral institutions, which provide the platforms for putting multilateralism into action and which are the basic architecture underpinning multilateralism, **should have their authority and effectiveness safeguarded.**”

World

“World” in Xi Jinping’s speeches appears in three different contexts. 1. As part of a name of an organization (ex: World Trade Organization), 2. As a “superlative” (ex. The world’s leading country), 3. As the habitat of humanity (when Xi speaks about challenges facing the world for example). The first category is of no relevance for our study here.

The second category, where the “world” is used as a superlative, is of minor importance.

Examples:

→” China is the largest developing country in the world, a country that is committed to peaceful, open, cooperative and common development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Energy consumption patterns have undergone positive changes [and] our nation has become the world’s largest consumer of new and renewable energies.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We are the world’s largest developing country with a population of over 1.3 billion, [if we] carry forward the building of the Ecological Civilization [and if we] (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” China is the first major developing country in the world to launch large-scale PM2.5 control programs, having built the world’s largest wastewater treatment capacity.” (Xi on EC 2018)

This study will mainly focus on the last category, where the world is seen as the habitat of humanity. Where Xi Jinping speaks about the world as our shared planet.

There is one final category of its own, which is when the Chinese president speaks about the “world economy”. This is the case in several parts. Examples:

→” Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peaceful development and win-win cooperation, [it should] fulfil the practical needs responding to global challenges (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Global public health faced severe threat and the world economy was mired in deep recession.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Macroeconomic policy support should be stepped up to bring the world economy out of the woods as early as possible.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We should build an open world economy, uphold the multilateral trading regime, discard discriminatory and exclusionary standards, rules and systems, (...)” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We should pursue open and inclusive development, remain committed to building an open world economy, and uphold the multilateral trading regime with the World Trade Organization as the cornerstone.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

What is interesting here, is that there are similarities to what Xi does when describing the world as our habitat. He indirectly highlights systemic differences between China and the rest of the world when explaining what we should aim for in economic terms. Even when speaking of the world economy, the Chinese president sounds like a visionary aiming to build “an open world economy”. The existing system (which can be understood as being the economy build by

capitalist countries) is indirectly blamed as being unfair and narrow-minded for example when Xi says: “We should build an open world economy, uphold the multilateral trading regime, discard discriminatory and exclusionary standards...” which sounds as if such standards didn’t exist and as if the current economic system was a fully discriminatory one.

Something similar can be observed when examining the examples where the Chinese president speaks about the world more in general. Where we can see how the world is described by Xi Jinping and what his vision is for the world.

Like in case of the “world economy”, Xi highlights problems in a way that they can be understood as systemic criticism. For examples when saying: “*The world needs justice, not rule by force. Big countries should behave in a manner befitting their status and with a greater sense of responsibility.*”, it seems that he wants to say that this is not yet the case. As if he was observing an world that is ruled by force so far and it is China that tries to bring justice instead. This is an interesting example, because it is a typical “Western critique” towards China, that the CPC, and in particular president Xi rule the country be force and that justice is not guaranteed.

When speaking of the world in general, Xi Jinping once again sounds highly ideological. He says:

→” Together, we can make the world a better place for everyone.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Or

→” Diversity is what defines our world and makes human civilization fascinating.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Looking at the world at large, we are facing a period of major change never seen before in a century.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” The world is undergoing changes unseen in a century, and now is the time for major development and major transformation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” (...) the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice and move we make today will shape the world of the future. It is important that we properly address the four major tasks facing people of our times.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” (...) with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Innovation

In the Xi corpus, “innovation” is often but not always related to environmental topics. When environment related, “innovation” is described as a solution to environmental problems. It is for example seen as an important factor for reaching “high quality growth” or contributing to a better environment.

Examples:

→”China will invest more in science and technology, develop an enabling system for innovation as a priority, turn breakthroughs in science and technology into actual productivity at a faster pace, and enhance intellectual property protection, all for the purpose of fostering innovation-driven, higher-quality growth.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”Much to the contrary, we need to ride the trend of technological revolution and industrial transformation, seize the enormous opportunity in green transition, and let the power of innovation drive us to upgrade our economic, energy and industrial structures, and make sure that a sound environment is there to buttress sustainable economic and social development worldwide.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

At the same time “green development” is described as bringing about or being able to boost “innovation” on the other hand. Therefore, sustainability and innovation are fundamentally linked and seen as forces able to boost one another.

Example:

→”Green development is an important component of modern development concepts, bringing forth innovation, coordination, openness, [and] sharing [of ways of development] that supplement, complete, [and] mutually affect each other.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Sometimes the cheesiness of innovations is highlighted in Xi’s speeches and the Chinese president seems to want to send the message that “innovation” is one of China’s strengths and that China has something to offer to the world. Examples:

→”— China will continue to advance science, technology and innovation. Science, technology and innovation is a key engine for human progress, a powerful weapon in tackling many global challenges, (...)” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”— China will set up a UN Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and an International Research Centre of Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Big countries should behave in a manner befitting their status and with a greater sense of responsibility. — We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity. Openness is the right path leading to development and progress. It also holds the key to post-COVID economic recovery.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

Xi also links innovation to the aims of fair distribution, highlighting that innovation should serve everyone in the world. Example:

→”(…), boost the digital economy, and step up exchanges and cooperation in such areas as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and modern energy, so that the fruits of scientific and technological innovation can be turned into greater benefits for people in all countries.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

Surprisingly, Xi also creates a link between “innovation” and “regulations” when saying:

→”[We] must accelerate innovation of regulations, increase their output, improve regulations in a comprehensive way, intensify their implementation [and] ensure [they] have adequate peripheral support, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

In many speeches the motive of “regulation enforcement” can be found in Xi’s speeches and it might be little surprising that an authoritarian leader highlights the importance of strict laws and regulations. However, wanting to accelerate the “innovation of regulations” is new and in the examined speeches, no other example can be found where “innovation” and “regulation” is linked.

In six cases, “innovation” is environmental related in Xi’s speeches. Only on two occasions it is clearly not related to the environment and in one case (where it is related to regulations) it is not

directly environmental related but the link to the environment can be seen from the larger context, since the “regulations” mentioned by the Chinese president in this example, aim for environmental protection, where Xi sees existing laws and regulations as being too lax. It can therefore be said, that in Xi Jinping’s speeches, “innovation” is a topic mostly related to the environment.

Energy

By the nature of the word, “energy” is not always related to environmental topics in the Xi corpus. Instead, “energy” is sometimes used in the sense of “effort” as something that is been done with energy. Examples:

→”Only by fighting day and night with energy, by firmly preserving the willpower, [can we] step by step carry forward our unprecedented great cause.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” Policies to cut taxes and fees must take root to ease the burden on enterprises. We must value talents of all kinds and stimulate their creative energy. We must listen to our officials at the grassroots and bring energy and greater purpose to those who are ready to commit to making a difference.” (Xi New Year 2019)

But even when used this way, “energy” can be environment related. Example:

→” (...), nor can we shrink away, but bravely have to take courageous decisions, fight with the courage of a life-and-death struggle, strike camp to attack the city with energy and determination.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Here, it is the sentence that follows which makes the environmental link visible here. “Party committees and governments at all levels should consciously plan the socio-economic development together with the building of an Ecological Civilization [as a whole], (...)” This shows, that the bigger context of the sentence is about eco-civilization building and “to attack the city with energy and determination” is therefore still linked to an environmental topic though this is not visible in the sentence without context.

In most cases however, “energy” is clearly environment related, as when Xi speaks of “clean energy”, “green energy”, “renewable energy” or concrete measures in the energy sector. Examples:

→”We will build a closer partnership for green development. We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road Development, and other multilateral cooperation platforms (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”[we] need to ride the trend of technological revolution and industrial transformation, seize the enormous opportunity in green transition, and let the power of innovation drive us to upgrade our economic, energy and industrial structures, and make sure that a sound environment is there to buttress sustainable economic and social development worldwide.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”Energy consumption patterns have undergone positive changes [and] our nation has become the world’s largest consumer of new and renewable energies.” (Xi on EC 2018)

It is very clear that “energy” is mostly environment related in the Xi corpus. As with other keywords, the Chinese president also uses “energy” as a topic to indirectly point to an unfair distribution of material and immaterial things in the world; and it can be understood that the blame mainly goes to the western world and to the capitalist societies. As when Xi speaks of the

need to share “the fruits of scientific and technological innovation” which should be “turned into greater benefits for people in all countries” he therewith implies that this is not yet the case. “Energy” is one of the examples Xi mentions in this context.

Example:

→”We must seize the historical opportunities in a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, boost the digital economy, and step up exchanges and cooperation in such areas as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and modern energy, so that the fruits of scientific and technological innovation can be turned into greater benefits for people in all countries.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

Prosperity

It is little surprising the “prosperity” appears as a keyword in the Xi corpus since the building of a “society of moderate prosperity” is one of the aims of the CPC. Therefore, Xi uses the word in this precise context on several occasions. Examples:

the “beautiful China”. [For all this, we need to] fight with all our efforts!” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”As the Communist Party, it is our solemn promise to the people, to fulfil the aim of building a society of moderate prosperity until 2020. We cannot proclaim on the one hand, that moderate prosperity has been achieved, [whilst] on the other hand, we still lack environmental quality.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Prosperity is also linked to development and growth by Xi Jinping, which is also a typical CPC rhetoric. China’s fast development, which brought about prosperity for most Chinese, has served the legitimization of the CPC rule in the past⁴⁸ and it is still a model of reference proving China’s success. It is therefore seen as something China has to offer to the world. Example:

→”China will work with other countries to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”The third is to close the divide between developed and developing countries and jointly bring about growth and prosperity for all. Today, inequality continues to grow, the North-South gap remains to be bridged, and sustainable development faces severe challenges.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We will act in the spirit of openness and inclusiveness as we work hard with all willing participants to build the BRI into a pathway to poverty alleviation and growth, which will contribute positively to the common prosperity of humankind.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

In this context, Xi Jinping also describes China as a country “full of vitality of prosperity and development”. Example:

→”China as a country of people on the move, is [a land] full of vitality of prosperity and development. We are all running assiduously, we are all dream chasers.” (Xi New Year 2019)

A hidden criticism towards Western countries is also visible when Xi talks about “prosperity”. On several occasions he highlights the importance of reaching “global prosperity”, mentions the role of developing countries and even calls for “equal rights to development” for all countries, which once again can be understood as a critique since it reveals that Xi Jinping seems to believe that such “equal rights” do not exist until now, that the developed parts of the world (mostly western democracies) did hence not take care of such forms of equality.

⁴⁸ See for example: Blume-Vidal, Imke, „Ecological Civilization- How Xi Jinping Could Save the Planet“

Examples:

→”We should recognize that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid footing, and developed countries will stand to benefit from such growth.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” — We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity. Openness is the right path leading to development and progress.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Equal rights to development should be guaranteed for all countries to promote common development and prosperity. We should advocate fair competition, like competing with each other for excellence in a racing field, not beating each other on a wrestling arena.” (Xi Davos 2021)

The focus on “openness”, “fairness” and “common development” clearly shows that China want’s to install itself as the defender of the poor whilst blaming rich countries as lacking such attributes as “openness” and “fairness” in their development process.

Neutrality

“Neutrality” is a relatively new keyword in the Xi corpus. In all cases it refers to “carbon neutrality” and is mentioned by the Chinese president mainly in the 2021 speech on invitation of US president Joe Biden. Xi Jinping mentions it once in hie 2020 speech at the UN but in none of the prior speeches.

Examples:

→”China will scale up its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions by adopting more vigorous policies and measures. We aim to have CO2 emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”Last year, I made the official announcement that China will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable (...)” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”I have announced China’s goal of striving to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”The targets of carbon peak and carbon neutrality have been added to China's overall plan for ecological conservation. We are now making an action plan and are already taking strong nationwide actions toward carbon peak.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinarily hard efforts from China.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”We need to each take stronger actions, strengthen partnerships and cooperation, learn from each other and make common progress in the new journey toward global carbon neutrality.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

In one case the Chinese president links “neutrality” to the joint responsibility of all countries to reach global carbon neutrality. In all other cases, “neutrality” refers explicitly to China’s carbon

neutrality. In these parts Xi Jinping sounds confident, announces concrete dates till when China wants to reach these aims and it is highlighted that such targets are in fact ambitious ones for China. It is also mentioned several times that there are concrete plans for reaching carbon neutrality and that these aims form part of China's strategy. For example, when Xi says: "*This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind (...)*". The Chinese president therewith presents China as a nation willing to take over responsibility for other nations, and maybe even wants to blame other nations for not having taken over this responsibility before.

Connectivity

→ "We need to deepen partnerships for connectivity and strengthen infrastructural links to keep the arteries of economic activities unclogged. We must seize the historical opportunities in a new round of scientific and technological revolution (...)" (Xi Boao April 2021)

→ (On disease control and public health etc.): "— We will build a closer partnership for connectivity. China will work with all sides to promote "hard connectivity" of infrastructure and "soft connectivity" of rules and standards, ensure unimpeded channels for trade and investment cooperation, and actively develop Silk Road e-commerce, all in a bid to open up a bright prospect for (...)" (Xi Boao April 2021)

Connectivity is mentioned by Xi Jinping only in his 2021 speech at the Boao Forum for Asia. He there generally speaks of "partnerships for connectivity", which China wants to strengthen in many fields, such as in disease control and in the economic sector more generally. It is not environment related.

Target(s)

In all speeches from the Xi corpus, "targets" refer to environmental targets. Xi speaks either of concrete targets such as the target of reaching carbon neutrality, or he refers to more general targets such as the targets linked to eco-civilization building or development targets.

Examples:

→ "The targets of carbon peak and carbon neutrality have been added to China's overall plan for ecological conservation." (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→ "I have announced China's goal of striving to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China. Yet we believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, China must step forward, take action, and get the job done." (Xi Davos 2021)

→ "We have made comprehensive [and] systematic schedules to carry out the building of an Ecological Civilization covering areas such as overall targets, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, institutional safeguards etc." (Xi on EC 2018)

→ "[We] must set tough targets, engage with all [our] strength, [and] establish a full covering net of wastewater pipes to ensure the collection and treatment of wastewater at the earliest stage possible." (Xi on EC 2018)

→ "We have launched and implemented systems with functions including the assessment of Ecological Civilization development targets, the audit of natural resource assets under an official's purview when officials leave their posts, and the enforcement of accountability for environmental damages." (Xi on EC 2018)

→”China is drawing up action plans and taking specific measures already to make sure we meet the set targets. We are doing this as a concrete action to uphold multilateralism and as a contribution to protecting our shared home and realizing sustainable development of humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

When speaking of such targets, Xi calls those “tough targets”, or targets that “require hard work” for example. Once more China is being described as a nation ready to take over responsibility and in particular as being ready to act.

Resilience

Unsurprisingly, “resilience” is mainly linked to the economy in the Xi corpus. Only once it refers to the “resilience against climate change”. Examples:

→” Developed countries need to increase climate ambition and action. At the same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green ...” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” That said, there is no fundamental change in the trend toward a multi-polar world; economic globalization is showing renewed resilience; and the call for upholding multilateralism and enhancing communication and coordination has grown stronger.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We should ensure the sound operation of the global financial system, promote structural reform and expand global aggregate demand in an effort to strive for higher quality and stronger resilience in global economic development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Livelihood

“Livelihood” is an interesting keyword in the Xi corpus. Although it is not mentioned excessively and being mentioned only in the earlier speeches (2018 and 2019), it is interesting to take a look at what the Chinese president has to say regarding people’s livelihoods. Whilst in a national context one could expect that “livelihood” could be mainly linked to economic development in particular in a developing country like China with its extraordinary success in fighting poverty. The contrary is the case. When Xi Jinping speaks of “livelihood”, he does explicitly link it to the environment and not to the economy or wealth in the first place. Examples:

→” The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the people; [with] green mountains representing beauty and blue skies bringing happiness. Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood. [We] also need to create more material wealth along with spiritual wealth to meet the people’s growing needs for a better life.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The ecological environment is a major political issue which bears upon the mission and purpose of the CPC, it also is a major social issue concerning people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We have] carried out successfully the war to protect the “pure land”, with blue sky and waters; [we have] intensified efforts to accelerate to improve the people’s livelihood, [so] living standards have risen steadily. “(Xi New Year 2019)

In fact, economic development is mentioned only once in this context by Xi Jinping and it seems to aim to mainly make the point that economic development alone is no longer what decides over the livelihood of the people. Instead, Xi seems to highlight how important the environment

is for our livelihoods. It can therefore be said that Xi links livelihood to environmental protection without exception. He also states that environmental protection therewith becomes a “major political issue” to the CPC, the party that still wants to serve the people. It is remarkable how Xi Jinping makes environmental protection a main purpose of communism.

Technology/Technologies

Since “science”, “technology” and “innovation” are sometimes mentioned in the same breath in Xi’s speeches, we have seen some examples from this category under “Innovation” already and it is used in similar ways. As in the case of “innovation”, when speaking of “technology” the Chinese President also highlights systemic differences between China and the West. He highlights that China wants to create a “fair”, “equitable”, “non-discriminatory” environment for technological advancement and points out that such advancement should be “beneficial to all and shared by all”. That they should “benefit all humanity rather than be used to curb and contain other countries’ development” which sounds like criticism towards the rest of the world.

Examples:

→”We will work with other countries to create an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological advancement that is beneficial to all and shared by all.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Scientific and technological advances should benefit all humanity rather than be used to curb and contain other countries’ development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Xi also sees “technologies” as one of the answers to today’s challenges and a key factor for achieving the green transition.

Example:

→” At the same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green and low-carbon development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” China will continue to advance science, technology and innovation. Science, technology and innovation is a key engine for human progress, a powerful weapon in tackling many global challenges, (...)” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Much to the contrary, we need to ride the trend of technological revolution and industrial transformation, seize the enormous opportunity in green transition, and let the power of innovation drive us to upgrade our economic, energy and industrial structures, (...)” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Environmental governance is a systematic project requiring coordinated application of measures from multiple fields, including government, market, legislation, [as well as] science and technology. [We] must fully utilize market-based measures to make environmental protection more market based and leverage greater social capital in this regard.” (Xi on EC 2018)

It is a keyword being largely related to environmental topics in the Xi corpus.

Contributor

The keyword “contributor” reveals where China sees its strength and what role China wants to play in the international community. Xi Jinping describes China as a contributor to “ecological

conservation”, a “contributor and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization”, as well as a contributor to “global development”.

Examples:

→”As a participant, contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that] respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” China will continue to work as a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order.” (Xi UN Sept. 2020)

The examples reveal China’s self-esteem but also of China’s willingness to take a leading role on the global stage in particular in the field of environmental protection. Although it is not always a directly environment related keyword, it is at least partly environment related. And the above examples show that the environmental link is particularly strong. China might see itself as a contributor to global development, world peace etc. But Xi describes China as a “contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation” and as a “contributor and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization”. The choice of words reveals the importance given to environmental topics as compared to topics like “global development”.

Climate

In some examples from the Xi corpus, the Chinese President speaks of “climate action” or the global “climate challenge”.

Examples:

→” Developing countries now face multiple challenges to combat COVID-19, grow the economy, and address climate change. We need to give full recognition to developing countries' contribution to climate action and accommodate their particular difficulties and concerns.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Yet I am confident that as long as we unite in our purposes and efforts and work together with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” In recent years, climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Developed countries need to increase climate ambition and action. At the same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green and low-carbon development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

But in most cases (and partly even in the above-mentioned examples) “climate” is mentioned in the context of “climate change”. When speaking of climate change, Xi Jinping emphasizes the importance of multilateral governance, and global or bilateral agreements like for example the

Paris Agreement or the Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis between China and the US.
Examples:

→” To protect the natural environment and to respond to climate change, it takes the common effort of every nation in the world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We need to follow the philosophy of green development, in order to respond to climate change, global cooperation must be carried on, [and we must] strictly implement the Paris Agreement to respond to climate change.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We need to deliver on the Paris Agreement on climate change and promote green development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone. There must be global action, global response and global cooperation.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The Paris Agreement on climate change charts the course for the world to transition to green and low-carbon development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

On the other hand, the Chinese President also clearly outlines what China wants to contribute to climate protection on both the national and international level. Here Xi Jinping gives several answers on how China reacts to the challenge of climate change.

1. By the means of financial contribution:

Example:

→” China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and support other countries in restoring economic and social development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Here, the main focus is not on climate protection, instead “climate change” is one out of several fields of international cooperation where China contributes also financially.

2. By taking over responsibilities in international climate cooperation:

Examples:

Two examples from Xi’s 2021 speech given on invitation of US President Joe Biden need to be seen in context here:

A) →” The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance. Developing countries now face multiple challenges to combat COVID-19, grow the economy, and address climate change.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

The example points out to the double and under the pandemic even triple challenges developing countries face when confronted with climate change, and

B) →” China has done its best to help developing countries build capacity against climate change through various forms of results-oriented South-South cooperation.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

The second example can be seen as a response to the problem stated in example A. It shows that China wants to describe itself as a *defender of the poor*, and a nation that is successfully engaged in international cooperation. As a nation that still sometimes emphasizes its own status as a

developing country, this statements by the Chinese President sounds like more that of a fully developed nation, a nation that now starts helping other countries.

And Xi Jinping further highlights the importance of international cooperation, though not missing the opportunity to criticize the USA at the same time, when saying:

→” China welcomes the United States' return to the multilateral climate governance process. Not long ago, the Chinese and U.S. sides released a Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Or:

→” I wish to thank President Biden for the kind invitation. It is good to have this opportunity to have an in-depth exchange of views with you on climate change, and to discuss ways to tackle this challenge and find a path forward for man and Nature to live in harmony.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

3. By implementing a national strategy.

Example:

→” [We] must implement a national strategy for actively responding to climate change, promote and guide the establishment of a fair and equitable global climate governance system featuring mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance the image of our nation as a responsible major country, [and] push forward the development of a human community with a common fate.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] need to adhere environmental friendly [attitudes], [and] guide the international cooperation responding to climate change.” (Xi on EC 2018)

The examples under point three also make clear that China is willing to take over a leading role in global climate governance. It is once more an indirect criticism towards the West when the Chinese President emphasizes the need to establish a “fair and equitable global climate governance system” and when stating that China wants to feature “mutually beneficial cooperation”.

The second examples here furthermore shows that the idea of building an Ecological Civilization in China aims to educate the peoples and to develop a nation with “environment friendly attitudes”. One more time Xi Jinping expresses China’s willingness to take over a leading role when he says that China needs to “guide the international cooperation”.

Protection

In the Xi corpus “protection” mainly refers to environmental protection. In only one example “protection” is linked to another than an environmental topic namely to “intellectual property protection”.

Example:

→” China will invest more in science and technology, develop an enabling system for innovation as a priority, turn breakthroughs in science and technology into actual productivity at a faster pace, and enhance intellectual property protection, all for the purpose of fostering innovation-driven, higher-quality growth.” (Xi Davos 2021)

In no case however, protection refers to “climate protection” but always to “environmental protection” more in general. In one case it more precisely refers to the protection of the ozone layer.

Example:

→” China accounts for more than 50% of the elimination of ozone-depleting substances by developing countries, making it the world’s largest contributor to protection of the ozone layer.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Although the example is not of particular interest for this research it shall be remarked that this statement by the Chinese President to my mind is an incorrect interpretation of facts. China does indeed account for more than 50% of the elimination of ozone-depleting substances by developing countries. This however does not make it “the world’s largest contributor to protection of the ozone layer”. Instead, it shows that China still releases such substances in the first place. China therewith fails to fulfil the Montreal Protocol (in force since 1987), which bans Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as main contributors to ozone depletion. Despite having ratified the Montreal Protocol, China has made headlines as being the world first releaser of the officially banned CFCs⁴⁹.

When speaking of environmental protection in general, the Chinese President sounds like a true autocrat. He sees the problem mainly in “lax laws and regulations”. Xi Jinping calls for more, but also for stricter environmental laws and regulations as well as strict law enforcement. China’s system of environmental protection under Xi Jinping relies on more institutions for environmental protection, stricter law enforcement, more officials for overlooking the success of environmental protection projects, a system of double responsibilities adding the duty of environmental protection to the particular duties of each Chinese official be it on national, regional or on local level. It also relies on a system of award and punishment. A signal of zero tolerance is send to those not contributing the environmental friendly attitudes Xi Jinping wants to enforce in China.

Examples:

→” Most of the outstanding problems in environmental protection existing in our country are related to inadequate systems, lax regulations, liberal laws, unsatisfying enforcement, and lenient punishment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must improve [our] systems for credibility assessment based on environmental protection performance, for mandatory disclosure of environmental information, [and] for improving severe punishment on violators of environmental regulations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of the environmental protection corps, and actively support officials who are ready and willing to take action.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” All relevant departments must fulfil their environmental protection duties, with everyone carrying their own baby; departments in charge of development, production, and industry [shall]

⁴⁹ See for example: Rice Doyle, “China is shredding the ozone layer with banned chemical emissions, study says”, *USA Today*, Dec. 16, 2019

fulfil their tasks according to the motto "one job, double responsibility" making them responsible not only for their domain but also for environmental protection." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" The second is that [we] must strengthen integrated oversight [and] firmly enforce environmental protection, [as well as] link together red lines of environmental protection in order to promote ecological conservation and restoration." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" In particular, the central environmental protection inspection system is well established and successful, [being] ready for true change it does not fear the offenders, [and] won't let go of a problem till it is solved." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Faster progress was made with the system of environmental administration, including the vertical management by environmental protection institutions at sub-provincial level, which monitor, supervise and enforce [the environmental] laws, [and] take care of the quality of environmental monitoring data." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] must rigorously enforce red lines for environmental protection, keep watch over ecosystems including mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, [and] grasslands, [and] achieve oversight on environmental issues at every stage of their development." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" In line with the principles of consolidating enforcement teams, raising their efficiency, [and] shortening their chains of command, [we] must optimize the assignment of functions to these teams [and] carry out unified enforcement of environmental protection laws." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection, link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrate [our] efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, [and] from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" We must move faster to define and enforce strict controls including red lines for environmental protection, minimum standards for environmental quality, and ceilings on resource utilization." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Central governments inspections on environmental protection must be given greater resources so that they can push deeper and become more authoritative." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Environmental protection must rely on regulations, [it] must rely on laws." (Xi on EC 2018)

→(On the central environmental protection inspection system): " It is a practical and effective tool for pushing local party committees, governments, and their relevant departments to fulfil their environmental protection obligations." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Fifth: The principles of applying strictest environmental protection regulations and laws." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] have already introduced a series of reform measures and interrelated institutions, which must be implemented with equal efficiency as the supervision of central environmental protection was put into effect." (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Regarding the red lines of environmental protection, a strict system of controls [must be] build up, covering important ecological spaces so that these spaces do not change in character, become smaller or lose [their] ecological functions.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”[We] must improve environmental management systems for drainage basins and sea areas in all regions, promote trials to establish interregional environmental protection agencies, [and] consolidate the responsibilities of relevant governments with regard to air quantity management.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and environmental quality in their administrative districts, [they] shall personally make arrangements for important tasks, personally respond to major problems, personally coordinate work in key projects, personally supervise important law cases, ensuring that duties are performed, and directives are put into effect at all levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Apart from such rather unsurprising approaches by an autocratically ruled country, in other parts the Chinese President proves to be courageous enough to thematise a topic often avoided when speaking of environmental protection, namely the price of such efforts and the contribution which every nation as well as every individual has to make when taking the task of environmental protection in serious. Xi Jinping clearly points out that a successful protection, a successful green transition of the economy and of the society will bring about some discomfort. He mentions that “thrift” needs to be practices and clearly announces the end of an economic development based on “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”.

Examples:

→” It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must boost all people’s resource saving awareness, [their] environmental protection awareness [and] ecological awareness; cultivate (literally: nurture young plants) an ecological morality and code of conduct; give impetus to public ecological activities, encourage all members of the society to contribute as much as possible to the protection of the environment by cutting down the pollution they produce, [as well as] the energy and resources they consume.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”[This] takes development concepts that are innovative, coordinated, green, open[-minded] and shared, [it also takes] the acceleration of resource conservation, environmental protection, the formation of spatial patterns, [as well as] industrial structures, production modes, lifestyles conducted to resource conservation and environmental protection, [furthermore] economic activities and people’s behaviour [must be] restricted within the limits of what natural resources and the ecological environment can bear, giving nature room and time to recover. “ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, just consider the use without thinking of restoration, instead we need to protect the environment

like we protect [our own] eyes, treat nature like we treat life, focusing on taking more positive measures that will provide solid foundations and long-term benefits, concrete steps that will help protect and restore the environment, and effective actions that will clean up our surroundings and reveal their natural beauty.” (Xi on EC 2018)

It is not related to the keyword “protection” but it is part of the argumentation on environmental protection, when Xi Jinping says:

→” [We] must advocate thrift and moderation, and a green low-carbon lifestyle, [as well as] oppose luxury, waste [and] unreasonable consumption.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Xi Jinping also makes clear that environmental protection must happen on a worldwide level. He describes it as a “global challenge” and speaks of humanity as a “community that shares a common fate” and therefore also a community with a common responsibility for environmental protection.

Example:

→” Humanity is a community that shares a common fate; hence the protection of the ecological environment is a global challenge we face together and are held responsible for together.” (Xi on EC 2018)

He then highlights the importance of global environmental governance and China's role in it.

Example:

→” [We] must get deeply involved in global environmental governance, strengthen the power of discourse and influence of our nation in the global environmental governance system, actively guide the transformation and circumstances of the change of the international order, shape international environmental protection, [as well as contribute to] a sustainable development and the creation of solution approaches. “ (Xi on EC 2018)

This statement leaves little doubt that China feels ready to take over the lead in the international order and sees itself as a nation ready to “shape international environmental protection”.

When it comes to defending the need of environmental protection, Xi Jinping uses three main arguments: a healthy environment improves people's livelihood, it is the historical moment that forces us to protect the environment (humanity has abused nature for too long) and, it serves the economy.

Examples:

→” Economic development serves people's livelihood; environmental protection alike serves people's livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” The concept of considering „turquoise waters and green mountains“ as „being worth mountains of gold and silver“ expounds the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, revealing that by protecting the environment [we also] protect the economic productivity, [and] that improving the ecological environment leads to the development of production.” (Xi on EC 2018)

The need for environmental protection is explained historically, as when saying “Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources”.

Environmental protection is described as needed for the economy and economic productivity when Xi stated that “by protecting the environment we also protect the economic productivity”.

And last but not least, the Chinese President emphasizes that environmental protection “serves [the] people’s livelihood”, a statement that should not be underestimated. It is one of the core values of the communist rule in China that the CPC wants to serve the people. And in the past, the CPC rule has gained much of its legitimacy from improving people’s livelihoods through poverty alleviation⁵⁰. In the above example from the 2018 speech on Eco-Civilization building, Xi Jinping adds environmental protection to the needs of the people. Hence, when the CPC still wants to “serve the people” in the 21st century, environmental protection must be at the heart of the government’s national strategies. And Xi precisely expresses this when saying:

→” Our Party has always attached great importance to the protection of the natural environment, establishing resource conservation and environmental protection as fundamental state policies [as well as] making sustainable development a national strategy.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Whether it can be said that the CPC has “always” attached great importance to the protection of the environment might be doubted. But there is no doubt, that it has become a priority at the latest since 2018, when the building of an Ecological Civilization was anchored in the Chinese Constitution as an official aim for the CPC.

Further examples from the Xi corpus:

→” [We] must deeply implement integrated ecological protection and restoration of mountains, waters, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands; [we] must launch large-scale programs of land-greening, and comprehensively tackle losses of water, erosion of soil [as well] the spread of deserts and stony deserts.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We must foster growing industries that promote energy conservation and environmental protection, clean production, and clean energy, and develop efficient agricultural industries, advanced manufacturing industries, and modern service industries.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The formulation and implementation of economic policies on environmental issues such as green finance reform, the drafting of balance sheets for natural resource assets, the levy of environmental protection taxes, compensation for environmental protection etc. [also] progress smoothly.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Environmental protection and pollution prevention and control are inseparable issues interacting closely. Among them, pollution prevention and control functions like a numerator, environmental protection functions like a denominator. “ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” (...); efforts to control pollution are increasing, there is unprecedented progress in terms of the frequency with which new systems for environmental governance emerge, the rigor with which oversight and enforcement is carried out, and the rate at which the environment improves; therefore, pushing forward environmental protection has produced a historically significant global change.” (Xi on EC 2018)

⁵⁰ See for examples: Blume-Vidal, Imke, “China’s Ecological Civilization: How Xi Jinping Could Save the Planet”, dossier de recherche Master 1, Université de Paris, 2020

→” [This] clearly points out new ways and means to achieving [economic] development and environmental protection in a symbiotic manner.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must accelerate the building of systems for an Ecological Civilization, [in order to reach] significant improvement of the quality and efficiency of our nation’s economic development by 2035, [furthermore,] spatial pattern to ensure resource conservation and environmental protection, industrial structure, modes of production, ways of life will totally take shape [by then]; fundamental improvements of environmental quality [will be reached], regarding the ecological environment, fundamental modernization of our nation’s governance systems and capabilities will be achieved, [and] the goals of the Beautiful China Initiative will be met essentially.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Furthermore, we have drafted and revised laws such as the Environmental Protection Law and the Environmental Protection Tax Law, as well as laws on the prevention and control of air and water pollution and on nuclear safety.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must fully utilize market-based measures to make environmental protection more market based and leverage greater social capital in this regard.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must use various methods to encourage cooperation between government and private capital. Funds needed for environmental protection must be appropriated, [and we] must not pinch pennies on investment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” For example, [we must] successfully manage water pollution, well protect the aquatic environment, [we] must make plans taking the entire coasts into account, the rivers upper and lower reaches, the land surrounding them, surface- and subsurface sources of water, both aquatic ecosystems and aquatic resources, and both the prevention and control of pollution and the protection of ecosystems.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In the Yangtze River Economic Belt, [it] takes major environmental protection [programs].” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must conduct strict prevention and control of key environmental risks like those stemming from garbage incineration, p-xylene etc., forestall and defuse problems related to the “not in my backyard” effect, prevent this effect from cropping up in environmental protection projects, [and] focus on raising [our] capacity to deal with environmental emergencies.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The “Decisions of the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council on Comprehensively Enhancing Eco-Environmental Protection to Completely Win the Battle Against Pollution” introduced comprehensive plans for pollution prevention and control.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Annex II.2.1 Individual Keywords in Merkel's Speeches

Words analysed:

Euros, vulnerability, agreements, investments, Europe, trade, framework, strength, unemployment, cohesion, CO2/Emissions, biodiversity, coal, Kunming, sustainability.

Euros is an important keyword in Merkel's speeches, ranking relatively high (17.). Only once, the German chancellor uses the word in a context that is not related to climate protection.

Example:

→” ... , use instruments like short-time work, keep the economy going and launch an unprecedented economic stimulus program of more than 100 billion euros, which of course also helped stabilize the entire social life.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Once Euros is linked to climate protection only indirectly, via the investment into different measures that ultimately aim to protect the climate.

Example:

→”... to this end, together with the change in the building sector, [we] invest 54 billion euros in the next four years, in investments in new technologies , in new mobility, in insulation of our houses, in new heating systems.” (Merkel UN 2019)

In all other cases, Merkel refers to concrete investments in climate protection.

Examples:

→” In 2016, Germany made 1.4 billion euros available to help developing countries adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change. This year, we are raising an additional 100 million euros for the Adaptation Fund so that we can help the least developed countries with this difficult task.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014 . In particular, we will contribute 1.5 billion euros to the Green Climate Fund.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” In this context, we in Germany have doubled our climate financing to four billion euros per year by 2020 and will continue to make our fair contribution in the coming years.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Vulnerability is used several times in Merkel's 2021 Davos speech and once in her 2018 New Year speech. In the earlier 2018 speech the topic is indirectly linked to environmental protection since the chancellor speaks of the “vulnerability of our livelihoods” right after mentioning the pictures of the Earth send from space by the German astronaut, where the consequences of droughts were clearly visible. She therewith links “livelihood” to nature.

Example:

→” On the one hand, this overwhelming beauty, on the other hand, we know about the vulnerability of our livelihoods.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In her most recent speech in Davos however, “vulnerability” is nearly exclusively linked to the pandemics and the side-effects of the pandemics that can be seen in its impact on the economies worldwide.

Example:

→” [And] that already brings me (to the topic) of [our] vulnerability. [This] vulnerability has just shown up in the rupture of [such] supply chains. But I think the vulnerability first and foremost goes back to the fact that a virus has passed from animals to humans, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Secondly, our vulnerability has been shown. The virus has somehow passed from animals to humans.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” [And] we [now] need to draw in lessons from the pandemic, asking: Is it vulnerability if we are too dependent on global supply chains, or how do we make such supply chains so stable...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In two cases however, “vulnerability” is linked to the environment in the 2021 speech too.

Examples:

→” [And] if the world has succeeded in anything in recent years, which is basically the key against vulnerability, it's the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, which make clear in a comprehensive way how we have to act...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” If we [really] want to overcome vulnerability to climate change here, then we have to implement tough policies where we [also] have to take people with us, that means: phasing out coal...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

It can be remarked, that when “vulnerability” is linked to the virus, or the economy, it is used rather as a negative keyword (with “vulnerability” being negative in itself). Whilst when environmental related, Merkel uses it in a rather positive sense, making it sound like a strength to know about our vulnerabilities. In this sense, “vulnerability” can be “overcome” since we have “the key against vulnerability”.

Agreement in the Merkel corpus largely refers to the Paris Agreement. When referring to Paris, the chancellor strongly shows her appreciation and highlights its importance.

Examples:

→” Ladies and gentlemen, two years ago we achieved something that we could not yet have imagined in Copenhagen. But we know: The Paris Agreement is a starting point.” (Merkel 2017)

→” Our common message is: We want to protect our world. That is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement. That is why - and this is now the task after the great success that this agreement was reached in the first place - ...” (Merkel 2017)

→” This is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement. That is why - and this is now the task after the great success that this agreement was reached in the first place - we must now implement it together. To do this, we need a suitable set of rules.” (Merkel 2017)

→” The benchmark for our actions must be the Paris Agreement, which sets the framework to limit global warming to 1.5°C.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Merkel also refers to the Paris Agreement to emphasize its importance as a starting point for climate and biodiversity protection and backdrop for further cooperation.

Examples:

→” That's why a signal of seriousness needs to come out of this conference, that we see the Paris Agreement as a start and that it's just the beginning of the work.” (Merkel 2017)

→(On the German commitment to Biodiversity protection which the chancellor says can be done at the COP-15 in Kunming) “But above all, also through the implementation of the Paris Agreement.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” ... our global sustainability conventions - be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention, which finds its reflection in the Paris Agreement today - have, of course, proven to be absolutely right and that we have to work harder for them than we did before, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Of course, America’s role is also mentioned when speaking of the Paris Agreement. Merkel does so in 2017, praising the initiative of several States (America’s Pledge) using the opportunity to criticize Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. In 2021, she shows her appreciation for Biden’s return to climate policy.

Examples:

→(On “America’s Pledge”) ”I welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.” (Merkel 2017)

→ (On the return of the US on climate policy): “... it is absolutely indisputable that the world needs your cooperation if we are to meet the Paris Agreement. The U.S. national contribution also expresses your ambition. This is a very important signal for the whole world community.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

In two cases, “Agreement” refers to other agreements, but is still environmental related.

Examples:

→” For Europe, this means that we have to set the appropriate rules, for example in emissions trading. We reached an important agreement on this last week.” (Merkel 2017)

→(On Risk Insurance in Developing Countries) “This agreement reflects two things: on the one hand, that insurance solutions can be a reliable, lasting, good way of cushioning risks; on the other hand, ...” (Merkel 2017)

Finally, in two cases, “agreement” is not at all environment related.

Examples:

→” [And] during the German presidency, we took a step to knock down a peg and find political agreement on the EU-China investment agreement, which has been under negotiation in the European Union for a long time – [namely] since 2013.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” It is my understanding as Chancellor that our democracy thrives on the majority agreement that its public servants do everything in their power for the internal peace and cohesion of our country, ...” (Merkel New Year 2018)

It can be remarked that the Paris Agreement is not only the Agreement being mentioned most prominently in these speeches, but also that it is mentioned with great enthusiasm. It is described as a “starting point”, a “benchmark”, or as a “great success”. It is clearly linked with positive sentiment.

Investments is a keyword found only five times in the Merkel corpus, it yet ranks in the upper half of the keyword list (rank 50) given its high “keyness value”. It is related with environmental topics in two cases.

Examples:

→”... to this end, together with the change in the building sector, [we] invest 54 billion euros in the next four years, in investments in new technologies, in new mobility, in insulation of our houses, in new heating systems.” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” The OECD has also made it clear what is at stake: only if we also gear our extensive investments to climate-friendly aspects can we secure our prosperity in the future.” (Merkel 2017)

In the other cases, it refers to German investments in Africa and mutual investments between China and Europe.

Examples:

→” We will [also] further strengthen the connection to Africa and the investments in Africa.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Because [here], I believe, we can achieve a new quality also in Europe's investments in China and in China's investments in Europe, which on the one hand better corresponds to the demand for reciprocity, which makes clear more transparency in subsidies, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Together with the keyword “Euros”, it becomes visible, that the German chancellor sees investments as a key factor in Germany’s climate policy.

Europe is naturally an important keyword in Merkel’s speeches, since in particular when it comes to climate protection, Germany’s national policy cannot be seen as independent of European framework conditions or European targets. And when speaking of Germany as being “embedded in Europe” or speaking of Europe as “we”, Merkel makes clear that she truly sees Germany in the context of the European Union and that this Union matters to her.

Examples:

→”...throughout Europe, we have introduced national emissions trading for transport and heating - in other words, for sectors that are not yet priced throughout Europe - and are now making our first experiences with this.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” We in Europe are aware of our responsibility.” (Merkel 2017)

→” And that means, of course, that we are also challenged. This challenge is directed at Germany, it is directed at Europe as a whole.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” We have committed to climate neutrality for the year 2050, which, if we achieve that, can lead to Europe becoming the first climate-neutral continent.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Every member state of the European Union must make its contribution to this. For Europe, this means that we have to set the appropriate rules, for example in emissions trading. We reached an important agreement on this last week.” (Merkel 2017)

→” [And] It has also become clear that all of us, including Germany, embedded in Europe, we all have, made mistakes, [we] first of all reflexively withdrew on ourselves, but then learned that we [can] better act together.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Only in one case the chancellor emphasize what Germany does different from the EU, but not in order to go against the EU but rather hoping to become a raw model the EU might follow.

Examples:

→” We are relying on CO2 pricing. In addition to emissions trading, which we already have for industry throughout Europe, we have introduced national emissions trading for transport and heating - in other words, for sectors that are not yet priced throughout Europe - ..” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

On two occasions, “Europe” is mentioned rather technically once in the context of “European investments” and once in the context of worldwide economic recovery.

Examples:

→(On economic recovery worldwide): “We have seen the latest figures: There are regions where we have economic growth, Europe (on the other hand) has been hit relatively hard, but also has growth prospects [next year again, respectively] this year.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Because [here], I believe, we can achieve a new quality also in Europe's investments in China and in China's investments in Europe, ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In most cases “Europe” is linked to climate protection. And sometimes to the economy.

Trade is often mentioned in connection with the World Trade Organisation. Who’s role Merkel aims to strengthen.

Examples:

→” With all due respect and appreciation for international bilateral trade agreements, for me the WTO remains a core component of rules-based trade in the world.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” Germany will work to strengthen the World Trade Organization [especially now after the pandemic] . But we also see a lot of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” It's also about fair global trade-that's a broad area. The WTO is committed to shelf-based international trade structures, which we must strengthen.“ (Merkel Davos 2021)

On two occasions trade is simply part of the names of organisations addressed by Merkel.

Examples:

→” Dear Mr. Kramer, Dear presidents of the trade associations, Mr. Hoffmann, Mr. Hundt, Dear guests and members of the BDA , First of all, good morning..” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” I would also like to thank you - and I would also like to thank Mr. Hoffmann from the German Trade Union Federation (DGB) - for the reassuring contribution you made.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

Trade agreements are emphasized by the German chancellor.

Example:

→” [And] that's why these standards, [these] core standards of the International Labour Organization are very important for trade agreements. We were able to anchor that as well. We need to find multilateral responses to the new challenges of digitalization at great speed.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

And in one particular case, trade is also linked to environmental protection.

Example:

→” If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Framework is in all cases linked to environmental protection in Merkel’s speeches, even when she speaks of “the framework of the European Union”, she ultimately refers to CO2 pricing and therewith to climate protection.

Examples:

→” It is up to all of us to create the right framework conditions to really mobilize private capital for climate financing.” (Merkel 2017)

→” ... all of our major global sustainability conventions - be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention, which finds its reflection in the Paris Agreement today - ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” We will introduce CO2 pricing, not only - as it is already the case today within the framework of the European Union-, for the areas of industry and energy, but we will - starting nationally and hopefully then continued at the European level - ...” (Merkel UN 2019)

→” The benchmark for our actions must be the Paris Agreement, which sets the framework to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The industrialized countries are the [main] polluters of this global warming as we see it today.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Strengths as opposing weaknesses is in two cases linked to the pandemic in Merkel’s speeches.

Examples:

→(On the effects of the pandemics): “... weak points in our societies have [also] become visible. Strengths have also become visible. But, of course, we want to do everything we can to address the weaknesses.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→(On the effects of the pandemics): “[So,] Maybe I start with what Germany has learned - hence with mentioning our weaknesses and our strengths. I can report that we could build on something strong; and that is the public spirit, the commitment of people, the citizens.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

In one case, it is linked to the political structure in Germany. After mentioning the difficulties in connection with the federal system, Merkel also mentions the strength of such system.

Example:

→” [And] For all the troubles that a federal structure entails, it also has great strengths, simply because responsible action can take place everywhere in the country.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Unemployment is a keyword appearing only in the speech Merkel gave at the German Employers Day 2019. It is nevertheless interesting to examine how the chancellor refers to unemployment, since it is one of the main arguments against coal phaseout in the German political debate about energy transition.

Examples:

→(On the problems different Länder face): “... - even in my constituency in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania - the shortage of skilled workers, but not so much the issue of

unemployment anymore. We had times when we were used to over 20 percent [of unemployment]. Today, things are much better.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” The economic performance of the new Länder more than doubled between 1991 and 2018. Unemployment is now only a third of what it was in 2005, and we have lower unemployment rates in Thuringia, Saxony and Brandenburg than in North Rhine-Westphalia.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

In both cases, it can be noticed that Merkel turns the argument around. When addressing the Employers Unions, she states that unemployment is no longer a valid argument for denying the coal phaseout. It is in this same speech that Merkel later resumes: “And that is why, the coal phaseout is right!”

Cohesion is rather low-ranking on the keyword list of the Merkel corpus and it is mentioned only twice (in the same paragraph) in the 2019 speech at the Employers Day and once in the 2018 New Year speech.

Examples:

→” So, you pointed out that even in these times of a multipolar order, of a new struggle and competition between systems, social cohesion is the prerequisite for solving fundamental issues. Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and, also two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work - ...” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→” It is my understanding as Chancellor that our democracy thrives on the majority agreement that its public servants do everything in their power for the internal peace and cohesion of our country, that they constantly examine what they can personally contribute to this. That is what I have done.” (Merkel New Year 2018)

In the 2019 speech “cohesion” is described as a ”prerequisite to solve fundamental issues” at a time of a “multipolar order” and a time of “competition between systems”. Merkel highlights the importance of “social cohesion” here.

In the 2019 speech, Merkel speaks of “internal peace and cohesion”. In both cases “cohesion” refers to inner German cohesion. This is interesting, since Merkel herself mentions the topic of systemic rivalry and the multipolar order, although she there refers to past times. But “competition between systems” is still an issue today and cohesion could have been linked to a more global context as for example the European context or even to the international community, where cohesion would also be needed.

CO2/Emissions The keywords **CO2** and **emissions** can be treated as one keyword, because they are mostly used together in Merkel’s speeches. Emissions are often linked to concrete emission reduction targets by the German chancellor.

Examples:

→ “the European Union's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 compared with 1990...” (Merkel 2017)

→ [we have set] ourselves the goal of reducing our CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to the 1990 levels,...” [Merkel UN 2019]

→ “[We] want to have at least 55 percent fewer emissions than in 1990.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Or sometimes they are linked to concrete results,

Example:

→ “Germany has already reduced its CO2 emissions by 40 percent compared with 1990.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

or to concrete measures.

Example:

→ “... throughout Europe, we have introduced national emissions trading...” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Rhetorically more interesting passages, that will be analysed in detail in the next section are the following:

→ “[you] only have a certain budget of CO2 emissions that you can emit; ...” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→ “... we produce two percent of the CO2 emissions. We have to get down from that.” (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

→ “If everyone acted like Germany, global emissions would double. Everyone knows what that means.” (Merkel UN 2019)

Biodiversity is mentioned four times in the chancellor’s speeches, often bringing up the Biodiversity Conference in Kunming.

Examples:

→ regarding where Germany can prove its commitment to biodiversity protection, Merkel says Germany can do so “... at the Biodiversity Conference in Kunming in China.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ “... all of our major global sustainability conventions- be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention ...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→ “...we are interested in the success of the COP 15 in Kunming, when it comes to preserving biodiversity.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→ “We are also committed to halting the loss of biodiversity worldwide.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

Coal is mentioned in five out of the six speeches by the German chancellor.

Germany’s coal dependency is mentioned several times.

Examples:

→ “In Germany, coal is still an important energy source today.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→ “We know that Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets.” (Merkel 2017)

But the chancellor also highlights Germany’s commitment to overcome this problem.

Examples:

→ “But we will, by 2038 at the latest, - I have heard António Guterres' words – phase out coal, and instead continue to invest in renewable energies in electricity generation.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

→” We will phase out nuclear energy by 2022, and coal-fired power plants by 2038 at the latest.” (Merkel UN 1029)

→”... we have to implement tough policies where we [also] have to take people with us, that means: phasing out coal,...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→” So we are investing in renewable energies instead of coal.” (Merkel Biden 04.2021)

However, the German chancellor also highlights several obstacles on the way to coal phaseout.

Examples:

→”... there are of course considerable conflicts in society that we have to resolve in a reasonable and reliable way. These are tough discussions. We know that Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets. But exactly how, is something we will have to discuss with each other precisely.” (Merkel 2017)

→”On the other hand, it is also about social issues and jobs, for example in connection with the issue of reducing coal.” (Merkel 2017)

→”This is also about economic efficiency; that means, about the affordability of energy.” (Merkel 2017)

In only one case, the German chancellor decisively defends the coal phaseout, when saying:

→”...we cannot say: Oh well, we didn't want to rush it; and it should take a little longer. - And that's our problem at this point. That's why the coal phase-out is right. (Merkel Employers Day 2019)

Sustainability is brought up twice by Angela Merkel. In one case the importance sustainability is highlighted. In the other the word is used rather technically, speaking of the “sustainability conventions”.

Examples:

→”...more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization. [That means] this is a real investment in the future in the direction of more sustainability.” (Merkel Davos 2021)

→”But I think the vulnerability first and foremost goes back to the fact that a virus has passed from animals to humans, to the fact that all of our major global sustainability conventions - be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention, which finds its reflection in the Paris Agreement today - have, of course, proven to be absolutely right...” (Merkel Davos 2021)

Annex II.2.2 Individual Keywords in Xi's Speeches

Words analysed:

Nature, pollution, carbon, ecosystems, mountains, rivers, ecology, heaven, grasslands, lakes, seasons, pollutants, fields, waters, priority, coexistence, generations, inspections, consumption, tasks, civilization, responsibilities, governance, future, law, humanity/ mankind/ humankind, poverty, enforcement, globalization, transformation, efforts, restoration, rules, risks, problems, security, progress, punishment, stability, investment, commitment, peace, wealth, lives, opportunities.

Priority. When looking at how the word “priority” is used in the Xi corpus, we can see that only on few occasions, priority is not referring to environmental topics. This is the case for example when Xi speaks about the pandemic. Example:

→ “[...], these vaccines will be made a global public good, and they will be provided to other developing countries on a priority basis.” (Xi UN Sept.2021)

Here, it is not an environmental topic that is highlighted as being a priority. In other cases, it environmental topics are indirectly made a priority, as when speaking of innovation. Example:

→ “China will invest more in science and technology, develop an enabling system for innovation as a priority, turn breakthroughs in science and technology into actual productivity at a faster pace, and enhance intellectual property protection, all for the purpose of fostering innovation-driven, higher-quality growth.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Here it is the development of a “system for innovation” that is given priority by the Chinese president. It can be interpreted as being indirectly linked to the environment since in the last part of the sentence Xi explains that all this serves the purpose of reaching “higher-quality growth” and this is ultimately an economic but also an environmental topic.

When priority is given to economic development, it is never an economic topic alone but Xi always links economic development to environmental protection in the selected speeches. Examples:

→ “We need to give continued priority to development, implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and make sure that all countries, especially developing ones, share in the fruits of global development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

In the above example Xi gives priority to development but also makes clear that he explicitly refers to sustainable development by referring to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In other parts of the Xi corpus, environmental protection is more or less directly mentioned as being a priority for the Chinese government. Examples:

→ “Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature] ...” (Xi on EC 2018)

In the above example, though still speaking of development, it is visible that Chinese government has undergone a major strategic change. It is no longer a strategic of “development first” but

rather a strategic of “nature first”- at least rhetorically. Xi even goes as far as to say that for this reason it will be necessary to “practice thrift”.

In another example Xi highlight which “battlegrounds” should be given priority. Example:

→”The battlegrounds [we] will give priority to are mainly the regions of Beijing, Tianjin, and the neighbouring Hebei Province [as well as those of] the Yangtze Delta, [...]” (Xi on EC 2018)

Here it is the bigger context which shows that the Chinese president refers to environmental protection. The regions named here are the regions China aims to turn into models of reference for green development.

In a last example, Xi Jinping directly links environmental protection to the improvement of people’s well-being. He states that the “resolution of environmental problems” have become a priority in China. Example:

→” Third: make the resolution of environmental problems a priority to improve the people’s well-being.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Throughout the Xi corpus “priority” mainly refers to environmental protection. The only example is that from the Davos speech 2021, where “priority” refers to the vaccinations. This is clearly given the particular context of the global pandemic.

Coexistence

Coexistence in the Xi corpus is used either in the context of environmentalism (coexistence of mankind and nature), or in a geopolitical context referring to the coexistence of countries and political systems. In three of five cases, Xi uses this keyword in the political context. Examples:

→” China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promote a new type of international relations.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” The right choice is for countries to pursue peaceful coexistence based on mutual respect and on expanding common ground while shelving differences, and to promote exchanges and mutual learning.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The second is to abandon ideological prejudice and jointly follow a path of peaceful coexistence, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. No two leaves in the world are identical, and no histories, cultures or social systems are the same.” (Xi Davos 2021)

In two cases, “coexistence” refers to the coexistence between man and nature. Examples:

→” In order to develop an Ecological Civilization in the new era, [it is] indispensable to adhere to the following principles. First: Adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence between mankind and nature. Humanity and nature are a biotic community. The natural environment has no substitute.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, who’s purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other

to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature. Accelerate evolving green development models is a key to resolving environmental problems.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Generations

→” Where should humanity go from here? What kind of future should we create for future generations?” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We will absolutely not allow people to continue to engage in activities that violate these controls, follow old extensive models of growth, or seek short-term gain at the expense of future generations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Yet I am confident that as long as we unite in our purposes and efforts and work together with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden April 2021)

→[Referring to Chinese philosophy:] „Each of the myriad things must be in a harmonious relation with Heaven in order to grow, and each must obtain from Heaven the proper nurture in order to become complete.“ There are numerous vivid examples of this. Like the Dujiang Weirs, an ecological irrigation system from the period of the Warring States (475-221 BC), with its more than 2000 year-old history, that was build following the flooding patterns of the Minjiang River [and in harmony with] the topographical circumstances of the city of Chengdu with its flat plains and rivers prone to overflow, being beneficial not only at the time, but also for generations to follow.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The environment concerns the well-being of people in all countries. We need to take into full account people’s longing for a better life and a good environment as well as our responsibility for future generations.” (Xi Biden April 2021)

Inspections

The keyword “inspections” appears only in Xi Jinping’s 2018 speech and is always related to eco-civilization building. This shows that Xi bases the idea of eco-civilization building on strict governmental control. Examples:

→” Government departments responsible for environmental issues must effectively perform their duties, take steps to standardize monitoring and assessment, oversight of law enforcement, accountability inspections, [and] the formulation of environmental policies, plans [and] standards. [We] must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” People’s congresses at all levels and their standing committees must make the building of the Ecological Civilization a focal point of their work, conduct compliance inspections, and regularly hear and deliberate work reports from governments at the corresponding levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” According to information gleaned through environmental inspections carried out by the Central Government, large amounts of sewage are released directly into nearby bodies of waters, even in municipalities directly under the Central Government, developed provinces along the coast, and special economic zones.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Central governments inspections on environmental protection must be given greater resources so that they can push deeper and become more authoritative.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Consumption

→” It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Energy consumption patterns have undergone positive changes [and] our nation has become the world’s largest consumer of new and renewable energies. Saving natural resources has proven to be effective, [and] the intensity of resource consumption has fallen markedly.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” China will strictly control coal-fired power generation projects, and strictly limit the increase in coal consumption over the 14th Five-Year Plan period and phase it down in the 15th Five-Year Plan period.” (Xi Biden April 2021)

→” Green ways of living relate to clothing, food, shelter, and transportation, [the basic needs] of ordinary people. [We] must advocate thrift and moderation, and a green low-carbon lifestyle, [as well as] oppose luxury, waste [and] unreasonable consumption.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Tasks

Tasks is a keyword mainly used in Xi’s speech on eco-civilization building in 2018. It is therefore mainly environmental related. Examples:

→” All relevant departments must fulfil their environmental protection duties, with everyone carrying their own baby ; departments in charge of development, production, and industry [shall fulfil their tasks according to the motto "one job, double responsibility" [making them responsible not only for their domain but also for environmental protection].” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We have made comprehensive [and] systematic schedules to carry out the building of an Ecological Civilization covering areas such as overall targets, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, institutional safeguards etc.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must be committed to matching funding with the tasks of pollution prevention and control.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must guarantee the safety of drinking water, make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the Bohai region, [and] protecting [and] restoring the ecosystems of the Yangzi River.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and environmental quality in their administrative districts, [they] shall personally make arrangements for important tasks, personally respond to major problems, personally coordinate work in key projects, personally supervise important law cases, ensuring that duties are performed, and directives are put into effect at all levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Only in the context of the 2021 speech in Davos, “tasks” are described more generally and not exclusively as environmental tasks. At least the first of the four major tasks which Xi mentions in this speech is partly environment related, namely the first one which includes “sustainable growth”. The fourth task, “to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity” can also be understood as being partly environment related if we look at the biggest global challenges of our times which are climate change and biodiversity loss. Examples:

→” History is moving forward, and the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice and move we make today will shape the world of the future. It is important that we properly address the four major tasks facing people of our times.” (Xi Davos 2021)
[Regarding the four tasks it reads: “The first is to step up macroeconomic policy coordination and jointly promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth of the world economy.”, “The second is to abandon ideological prejudice and jointly follow a path of peaceful coexistence, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation.”, “The third is to close the divide between developed and developing countries and jointly bring about growth and prosperity for all.”, “The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity.”]

Civilization

Little surprising, the keyword “civilization” can be found relatively often (62 times) in the Xi corpus. In most of the cases, it is part of the expression “Ecological Civilization” and therefore mainly appears in the 2018 speech on EC. But the Chinese president also speaks of “economic, political, cultural, and social civilizations, therewith referring to Hu Jintao’s “Four-sphere Plan” which covered the advancement of economic, political, cultural and social development. The ecological aspect was added in 2012 at the 18th National Congress of the CPC, where the “five-sphere Integrated Plan” was introduced. Examples:

→” By the middle of the century, [we] will have built a prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialism [and a] modernized strong nation, [by then we will also fully have developed] an economic civilization, a political civilization, a cultural civilization, a social civilization and an ecological civilization; [...]” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” This is a very important aspect to consider when we talk about China’s national conditions. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have made building an Ecological Civilization a major component of coordinated implementation of the five-sphere integrated plan and the four-pronged comprehensive strategy; [...] (Xi on EC 2018)

→” People’s congresses at all levels and their standing committees must make the building of the Ecological Civilization a focal point of their work, conduct compliance inspections, and regularly hear and deliberate work reports from governments at the corresponding levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Not only did the Chinese Nation fulfil the great leap from standing up and growing rich, to becoming stronger, but it [therewith] also made a notable contribution to human civilization and progress.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We have gradually promulgated the „Guidelines Regarding the Acceleration of Pushing on the Development of an Ecological Civilization“, and the „Institutional Reform Plan for Promoting the Ecological Civilization“. We have worked out more than 40 reform plans regarding the development of an Ecological Civilization. (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We are the world’s largest developing country with a population of over 1.3 billion, [if we] carry forward the building of the Ecological Civilization [and if we] establish a prosperous democratic civilization and powerful nation, [this] will have worldwide impact. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, our party has profoundly answered theoretical and practical questions regarding why to build the Ecological Civilization, [...] (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Ecological advancement and conservation have been written into China's Constitution and incorporated into China's overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics. China will follow the Thought on Ecological Civilization and implement the new development philosophy. We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”(..); [we need to] make full use of the materialistic basis which 40 years of reform and opening up have brought about, redouble our efforts to build the Ecological Civilization and solve the problems of the natural environment. (Xi on EC 2018)

→” II. Principles that must be upheld in order to reinforce the building of an Ecological Civilization” [one of the headlines in the 2018 speech] (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have gone through the comprehensive deepening of the reform, [we] have accelerated the top-level plan to push forward the development of an Ecological Civilization and set up a system of institutions for building [the Ecological Civilization]. We have gradually promulgated the „Guidelines Regarding the Acceleration of Pushing on the Development of an Ecological Civilization“, and (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We are the world’s largest developing country with a population of over 1.3 billion, [if we] carry forward the building of the Ecological Civilization [and if we] establish a prosperous democratic civilization and powerful nation, [this] will have worldwide impact.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Party committees and governments at all levels should consciously plan the socio-economic development together with the building of an Ecological Civilization [as a whole], Party committees [should] provide leadership, governments [should] give guidance, enterprises [should] bear responsibility, and determinedly reject the old path of „polluting first, cleaning up later“, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Pushing the Development of an Ecological Civilization in Our Nation to a New Stage Xi Jinping I. Deeply understanding the importance of stepping up development of an ecological civilization. Building an ecological civilization is the fundamental basis for sustaining the development of the Chinese nation.” (Headlines of the speech) (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that]

respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Sixth: The principle of planning to build a Global Ecological Civilization together. The making of the Ecological Civilization concerns the future of humanity, [and] it is the common dream of mankind to create a green home(land).” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We have made comprehensive [and] systematic schedules to carry out the building of an Ecological Civilization covering areas such as overall targets, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, institutional safeguards etc.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Humanity is a community that shares a common fate; hence the protection of the ecological environment is a global challenge we face together and are held responsible for together. If we successfully build an Ecological Civilization, credit [will] be given to China’s socialism; otherwise, it will turn into the pretext used by forces with hidden agendas to attack us.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We have launched and implemented systems with functions including the assessment of Ecological Civilization development targets, the audit of natural resource assets under an official’s purview when officials leave their posts, and the enforcement of accountability for environmental damages.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In this context, I would like to announce that once the pandemic gets under control, China will host the second Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations as part of our active efforts to promote inter-civilization dialogue in Asia and beyond.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Diversity is what defines our world and makes human civilization fascinating.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” IV. Strengthen the leadership of the Communist Party of China to establish the Ecological Civilization.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Building an ecological civilization is the fundamental basis for sustaining the development of the Chinese nation. The Chinese nation has always valued and loved nature; its more than 5000-year-old civilization gave birth to a rich ecological culture.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The responsibility of building the Ecological Civilization has already fallen upon the shoulders of our generation.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” (...); we have launched some fundamental, creative, forward-thinking work, and introduced a whole series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies, and thus the concept of an Ecological Civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people; (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Colleagues, The Chinese civilization has always valued harmony between man and Nature as well as observance of the laws of Nature.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Regarding the question of building an Ecological Civilization, I have repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking [it] seriously and handling [it] properly; the reason being, that the environmental capacity of our nation is limited, our ecosystems are vulnerable, and (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” If the ecological [environment] flourishes, so does the civilization, if the ecological [environment] falters, so does the civilization. The ecological environment is the basis of human

existence and development, and changes to it have direct influence on the rise and fall of civilizations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, our party has profoundly answered theoretical and practical questions regarding why to build the Ecological Civilization, what kind of an Ecological Civilization to build and how to build the Ecological Civilization, putting forward a series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies. In order to develop an Ecological Civilization in the new era, [it is] indispensable to adhere to the following principles. First: Adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence between mankind and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must accelerate the building of systems for an Ecological Civilization, [in order to reach] significant improvement of the quality and efficiency of our nation’s economic development by 2035, [furthermore,] spatial pattern to ensure resource conservation and environmental protection, industrial structure (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Developing an Ecological Civilization is a cause in which the entire public participates and has a stake, in order to build a beautiful China, [we] must change conscious actions of the entire public.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” At the same time, it must be clearly seen, that building the Ecological Civilization is a hard challenge with immense pressure, and prominent obstacles, in order to establish the Ecological Civilization, we have to overcome difficulties, [we will have to] gnaw hard bones, we will have to fight quite some stubborn [and] infectious diseases, [and] the terrain will be [almost] impassable.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Fifth: [regarding] the Ecological Civilization, the implementation of the structural reforms must be accelerated [and] come into effect [as soon as possible]. Structural reform promoting the Ecological Civilization is an important aspect of comprehensively furthering reform.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The building of an Ecological Civilization is now in a phase with immense pressure, [it is] a decisive stage in which this heavy load needs to be carried forward, [and] in order to meet the peoples growing demand of a graceful natural environment, [we have] entered a period of strong [economic] performance supplying more ecological high-quality products.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since time of the industrial civilization, mankind has created massive material wealth.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” For example, the once glorious civilization of Loulan lies buried under tons of desert sand, where once were beautiful lush pasture grounds.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Difference in itself is no cause for alarm. What does ring the alarm is arrogance, prejudice, and hatred; it is the attempt to impose hierarchy on human civilization or to force one’s own history, culture and social system upon others.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”(...) [instead, we] must make overall plans and take all factors into consideration, simultaneously implement multiple comprehensive measures to ensure that our efforts to build the Ecological Civilization permeate all fields, regions, and processes.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”We [must] actively respond to the people’s desires, hopes, and worries, vigorously push forward the building of the Ecological Civilization, provide more high-quality ecological goods, and consistently meet the people’s growing demands for a beautiful ecological environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The entire Party and people of all ethnic groups of the whole nation must unite closely around the Party Central Committee, work as one, tackle the problem and overcome this challenge, firmly push forward the building of the Ecological Civilization, strive to fully establish the society of moderate prosperity, and open a new stage in the development of the “beautiful China”.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that] respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We need to] give full play to the Party leadership and our country’s socialist system who’s political dominant position enables [them] to concentrate great strength to deal with serious affairs; [we need to] make full use of the materialistic basis which 40 years of reform and opening up have brought about, redouble our efforts to build the Ecological Civilization and solve the problems of the natural environment.

→” II. Principles that must be upheld in order to reinforce the building of an Ecological Civilization The ecological environment is a major political issue which bears upon the mission and purpose of the CPC, it also is a major social issue concerning people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” This is the way to add impetus to the progress of human civilization. The third is to close the divide between developed and developing countries and jointly bring about growth and prosperity for all.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Fifth: [regarding] the Ecological Civilization, the implementation of the structural reforms must be accelerated [and] come into effect [as soon as possible]. Structural reform promoting the Ecological Civilization is an important aspect of comprehensively furthering reform.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The different histories, cultures and social systems are as old as human societies, and they are the inherent features of human civilization. There will be no human civilization without diversity, and such diversity will continue to exist for as long as we can imagine.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” [We] need to carry on the Belt and Road Initiative, allowing the idea of an Ecological Civilization to bring practical benefits to all peoples along the way.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Now [we] must concentrate all our strength, adopt more efficacious policies and measures, to fight this tough battle [against pollution]. First: accelerate building systems for an Ecological Civilization.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Sixth: The principle of planning to build a Global Ecological Civilization together. The making of the Ecological Civilization concerns the future of humanity, [and] it is the common dream of mankind to create a green home(land).” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have gone through the comprehensive deepening of the reform, [we] have accelerated the top level plan to push forward the development of an Ecological Civilization and set up a system of institutions for building [the Ecological Civilization]. We have gradually promulgated the „Guidelines Regarding the Acceleration of Pushing on the Development of an Ecological Civilization“, and the „Institutional Reform Plan for Promoting the Ecological Civilization“. (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We have worked out more than 40 reform plans regarding the development of an Ecological Civilization. We have made comprehensive [and] systematic schedules to carry out the building of an Ecological Civilization covering areas such as overall targets, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, institutional safeguards etc.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The rigidity and authority of these institutions must be firmly established, leaving no room for choice, flexibility, or compromise. [We] must implement a system of responsibility for building the Ecological Civilization, where cadres will be strictly checked [and] held responsible.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” To insure that the decision of the CPC Central Committee to build the Ecological Civilization will be rooted and taken into effect, it is necessary to make strict use of the regulations, to control and limit the power of officials, protect blue skies and increase green vegetation, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

Responsibilities

→” In particular, major countries should act like major countries. They should provide more global public goods, take up their due responsibilities and live up to people's expectations. Mr. President, Since the start of this year, we, the 1.4 billion Chinese, undaunted by the strike of COVID-19, and with the government and the people united as one, (...)” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”(...) aspects lead to these main considerations: The first is that “nine dragons can't control one river”, [therefore we] must consolidate roles in pollution prevention and control in order to end the confusing division of responsibilities between different ministries and provide support for the fight to prevent and control pollution.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”[we] must accelerate the establishment and improvement of an ecological culture system based on ecological values, an ecological economic system with industrial ecologicalization and ecological industrialization as the main body, a system of responsibilities focusing on improving environmental quality as the core, and modernized governance systems and capacity, that guarantees the maintenance of well-functioning ecosystems and the effective prevention and control of environmental risks.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” All relevant departments must fulfil their environmental protection duties, with everyone carrying their own baby; departments in charge of development, production, and industry [shall] fulfil their tasks according to the motto "one job, double responsibility" [making them responsible not only for their domain but also for environmental protection]. [We] must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection _____ responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” – We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be upheld, [and] concerns of developing countries on capital, technology and capacity building must be addressed. — We need commitment to justice to create a future of mutual respect and mutual learning.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” [We] must improve environmental management systems for drainage basins and sea areas in all regions, promote trials to establish interregional environmental protection agencies, [and] consolidate the responsibilities of relevant governments with regard to air quantity management.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” China looks forward to working with the international community including the United States to jointly advance global environmental governance. – We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Governance

“Governance” is a relatively high-ranking keyword in the Xi corpus (rank 13). Given the fact that the 2021 Boao Forum was held under the motto “A World in Change: Joint Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation”, it is little surprising that Xi Jinping speaks of “governance” on several occasions in this speech. Examples:

→” Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, This year’s annual conference is convened against a very special background. The theme of the conference—“A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation”—is most opportune and relevant under the current circumstances.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” China calls on all countries in Asia and in the world to respond to the call of our times, jointly overcome the pandemic, strengthen global governance, and keep pursuing a community where mankind shares a common destiny.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Instability and uncertainty are clearly on the rise. Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit. The task to achieve universal security and common development it as arduous as ever and the way [to reach this] is long.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Comprehensive measures to improve global governance on public health security must be taken [and] a global community of health for humanity must be established.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” — We need consultation on an equal footing to create a future of shared benefits and win-win. Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peaceful development and win-win cooperation, [it should] fulfil the practical needs responding to global challenges.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We need to follow the principles of discussing, cooperating and sharing, uphold true multilateralism, [and] make the global governance system fairer and more equitable.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

At the Boao Forum, the Chinese president calls for stronger global governance in general but in the backdrop of a global pandemic, he also highlights the importance of “global governance on public health security” whilst also remarking an “ever increasing governance deficit”. In Boao, governance is not linked to environmental topics as in other speeches (see for example the 2018 speech on EC). Instead it is rather used to emphasize systemic differences between Asia and the West. The “governance deficit” Xi remarks, clearly does not refer to China and most probably not to Asia. It sounds like a critique towards Western democracies. The same can be said about the passages where Xi calls for “win-win cooperation”, “consultation on an equal footing”, or a generally “fairer and more equitable” global governance system. Such statements can also be found in other speeches by the Chinese president. Examples:

→” China will get more actively engaged in global economic governance and push for an economic globalization that is more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits so as to ensure that all countries enjoy equal rights and opportunities and follow the same rules. The global governance system should adapt itself to evolving global political and economic dynamics, meet global challenges and embrace the underlying trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

Here, Xi makes it also very clear that he sees China as one of the countries doing better than others in this respect. Example:

→” As a participant, contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation. China will host COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity this October and looks forward to working with all parties to enhance global governance on biodiversity.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

But he also emphasizes the importance of the G20. Example:

→” We should strengthen the G20 as the premier forum for global economic governance, engage in closer macroeconomic policy coordination, and keep the global industrial and supply chains stable and open.” (Xi Davos 2021)

In many cases however, Xi Jinping links “governance” to environment protection and he does so on different occasions, as for example when addressing US President Joe Biden, in front of the UN, or at Davos. But most excessively he does so in his 2018 speech regarding the building of an ecological civilization in China. Examples:

→” [We] must seek out a new path for environmental governance by treating it as a systematic project [and] looking at it from an overall angle; [we] cannot „heal [only] the head if the head aches, [or only] cure the foot when the foot aches; (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” – We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have made building an Ecological Civilization a major component of coordinated implementation of the five sphere integrated plan and the four pronged comprehensive strategy; we have launched some fundamental, creative, forward-thinking work, and introduced a whole series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies, and thus the concept of an Ecological Civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people; efforts to control pollution are increasing, there is unprecedented progress in terms of the frequency with which new systems for environmental governance emerge, the rigor with which oversight and enforcement is carried out, and the rate at which the environment improves; therefore pushing forward environmental protection has produced a historically significant global change.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must refine environmental management systems in sea areas, [and] set up oversight bodies for each of these areas. Sixth: improve the quality of environmental governance. Environmental governance is a systematic project requiring coordinated application of measures from multiple fields, including government, market, legislation, [as well as] science and technology.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” – We must be committed to systemic governance. Mountains, rivers, forests as well as farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts all make indivisible parts of the ecosystem. Protecting the ecosystem requires more than a simplistic, palliative approach.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” As a participant, contributor and trailblazer in global ecological conservation, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation. China will host COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity this October and looks forward to working with all parties to enhance global governance on biodiversity.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” China welcomes the United States' return to the multilateral climate governance process.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Second, we should stay committed to international law and international rules instead of seeking one’s own supremacy. Ancient Chinese believed that “the law is the very foundation of governance”. International governance should be based on the rules and consensus reached among us, not on the order given by one or the few. The Charter of the United Nations is the basic and universally recognized norms governing state-to-state relations.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” [We] must get deeply involved in global environmental governance, strengthen the power of discourse and influence of our nation in the global environmental governance system, actively guide the transformation and circumstances of the change of the international order, shape international environmental protection, [as well as contribute to] a sustainable development (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must implement a national strategy for actively responding to climate change, promote and guide the establishment of a fair and equitable global climate governance system featuring mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance the image of our nation as a responsible major country, [and] push forward the development of a human community with a common fate.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Fourth, COVID-19 reminds us that the global governance system calls for reform and improvement. COVID-19 is a major test of the governance capacity of countries; it is also a test of the global governance system. We should stay true to multilateralism and safeguard the

international system with the UN at its core. Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits (...)" (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→" We also need to adapt to the changing international landscape and respond to global challenges as they arise. We need to reform and improve the global governance system on the basis of extensive consultation and consensus-building. We need to give full play to the role of the World Health Organization in building a global community of health for all." (Xi Davos 2021)

→" [We] must accelerate the building of systems for an Ecological Civilization, [in order to reach] significant improvement of the quality and efficiency of our nation's economic development by 2035, [furthermore,] spatial pattern to ensure resource conservation and environmental protection, industrial structure, modes of production, ways of life will totally take shape [by then]; fundamental improvements of environmental quality [will be reached], regarding the ecological environment, fundamental modernization of our nation's governance systems and capabilities will be achieved, [and] the goals of the Beautiful China Initiative will be met essentially." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" To accelerate the resolution of environmental problems during this historic convergence of the Two Centenary Goals , [we] must accelerate the establishment and improvement of an ecological culture system based on ecological values, an ecological economic system with industrial ecologicalization and ecological industrialization as the main body, a system of responsibilities focusing on improving environmental quality as the core, and modernized governance systems and capacity, that guarantees the maintenance of well-functioning ecosystems and the effective prevention and control of environmental risks." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" By the middle of the century, [we] will have built a prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialism [and a] modernized strong nation , [by then we will also fully have developed] an economic civilization, a political civilization, a cultural civilization , a social civilization and an ecological civilization; green development modes and eco-friendly life styles will be fully developed, humans and nature will coexist in harmony, modernization of our national governance systems and capacity in the environmental field will be fully realized, [and] our efforts to build a beautiful China will be successful." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" China looks forward to working with the international community including the United States to jointly advance global environmental governance. – We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance." (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→" For developing countries, they are aspiring for more resources and space for development, and they are calling for stronger representation and voice in global economic governance. We should recognize that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid footing, and developed countries will stand to benefit from such growth." (Xi Davos 2021)

→" We need to follow a people-cantered and fact-based policy orientation in exploring and formulating rules on global digital governance. We need to deliver on the Paris Agreement on climate change and promote green development. We need to give continued priority to development, implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and (...)" (Xi Davos 2021)

In quite some parts “governance” is also related to the pandemic. Examples:

→” In the era of economic globalization, public health emergencies like COVID-19 may very well recur, and global public health governance needs to be enhanced.” (Xi Davos 2021)

And sometimes it is related to both, Covid-19 and the environment. Examples:

→” The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has added difficulty to economic and social development across countries. Faced with unprecedented challenges in global environmental governance, the international community needs to come up with unprecedented ambition and action.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Generally, it can be said that “governance” is an important topic in Xi’s speeches which appears in many contexts and although referring to topics such as “economy”, “Covid-19”, “public health” or “digital governance”, it is mostly environment related either directly (as when speaking of “global climate governance” and “environment governance”) or indirectly, as when “digital governance” is linked to the Paris Agreement and “green development” in the sentence that follow the part on digital governance.

Future

→” International affairs should be handled through extensive consultation of all [parties], [and] the worlds future destiny must be decided by all countries working together.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→ (On Chinas aim to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060): “This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, there is only one Earth and one shared future for humanity. As we cope with the current crisis and endeavour to make a better day for everyone, we need to stand united and work together.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, the problems facing the world are intricate and complex. The way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” Let us join hands to uphold the values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom shared by all of us and build a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

- ” We must not return to the path of the past. The right approach is to act on the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)
- ” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” The environment concerns the well-being of people in all countries. We need to take into full account people’s longing for a better life and a good environment as well as our responsibility for future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)
- ” We will absolutely not allow people to continue to engage in activities that violate these controls, follow old extensive models of growth, or seek short-term gain at the expense of future generations.” (Xi on EC 2018)
- ” Yet I am confident that as long as we unite in our purposes and efforts and work together with solidarity and mutual assistance, we will rise above the global climate and environment challenges and leave a clean and beautiful world to future generations.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)
- ” This is why we should embrace the vision of a community with a shared future in which everyone is bound together. We should reject attempts to build blocs to keep others out and oppose a zero-sum approach.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)
- ”(…) History is moving forward and the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice and move we make today will shape the world of the future. It is important that we properly address the four major tasks facing people of our times. The first is to step up macroeconomic policy coordination and jointly promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth (…)” (Xi Davos 2021)
- ” First, COVID-19 reminds us that we are living in an interconnected global village with a common stake. All countries are closely connected, and we share a common future.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)
- ” Big countries should behave in a manner befitting their status and with a greater sense of responsibility. — We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity.” (Xi Boao April 2021)
- ”— We are crossing the river in the same boat and need to pull together in times of trouble to create a future of health and security. “ (Xi Boao April 2021)
- ” The making of the Ecological Civilization concerns the future of humanity, [and] it is the common dream of mankind to create a green home(land). (Xi on EC 2018)
- ”— We need consultation on an equal footing to create a future of shared benefits and win-win.” (Xi Boao April 2021)
- ” To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)
- ”— We need commitment to justice to create a future of mutual respect and mutual learning.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Multilateralism is about having international affairs addressed through consultation and the future of the world decided by everyone working together.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We live at a time filled with challenges, [but] this is also a time full of hope. Where should humanity go from here? What kind of future should we create for future generations? In order to answer these important questions, we need to make responsible and wise choices based on the shared interests of mankind.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We may at times encounter stormy waves and dangerous rapids, but as long as we pool our efforts and keep to the right direction, the giant vessel of human development will stay on an even keel and sail toward a brighter future.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→(On solving environmental problems): ” It is a process of rebirth, like the rise of a phoenix from the ashes. If we do not react now, it will be harder to solve [the problem] in the future, the price will be higher, and it will be harder. We must grid our teeth, conquer this mountain [and] climb up onto this sloping path.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” To uphold multilateralism in the 21st century, we should promote its fine tradition, take on new perspectives and look to the future. We need to stand by the core values and basic principles of multilateralism. We also need to adapt to the changing international landscape and respond to global challenges as they arise.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Law

→” China will take an active part in multilateral cooperation on trade and investment, fully implement the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, cut further the negative list on foreign investment, continue to develop the Hainan Free Trade Port, and develop new systems for a higher-standard open economy.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” China will promote institutional opening-up that covers rules, regulations, management and standards. We will foster a business environment that is based on market principles, governed by law and up to international standards, and unleash the potential of the huge China market and enormous domestic demand.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” When those who uphold the law are strong, the state is strong; when those who uphold the law are weak, the state is weak. Governmental orders must be trustworthy, and laws must be executed. The vital strength of [our] institutions depends on concrete enforcement, the key lays in true efficiency, relaying on strict management.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Furthermore, we have drafted and revised laws such as the Environmental Protection Law and the Environmental Protection Tax Law, as well as laws on the prevention and control of air and water pollution and on nuclear safety.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and environmental quality in their administrative districts, [they] shall personally make arrangements for important tasks, personally respond to major problems, personally coordinate work in key projects, personally supervise important law cases, ensuring that duties are performed, and directives are put into effect at all levels.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Government departments responsible for environmental issues must effectively perform their duties, take steps to standardize monitoring and assessment, oversight of law enforcement, accountability inspections, [and] the formulation of environmental policies, plans

[and] standards. [We] must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In this age of economic globalization, openness and integration is an unstoppable historical trend. Attempts to “build walls”, “cut ties”, go against the law of economics and market principles only harm others without benefiting oneself.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Without international law and international rules that are formed and recognized by the global community, the world may fall back to the law of the jungle, and the consequence would be devastating for humanity. We need to be resolute in championing the international rule of law, and steadfast in our resolve to safeguard the international system centred around the UN and the international order based on international law.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→“ Laozi says [in the Book of changes]: „Mankind follows the law of Earth, Earth follows the law of Heaven; Heaven follows the law of the Dao; Dao follows the law of nature.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must also [ensure] the comprehensive implementation of the action plan for preventing and controlling soil pollution, [and] push forward the formulation and implementation of the “Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution”. (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Mother Nature has nourished us, and we must treat Nature as our root, respect it, protect it, and follow its laws. Failure to respect Nature or follow its laws will only invite its revenge.” (Xi Biden April 2021)

Humanity/mankind/humankind

→” Humanity and nature are a biotic community. The natural environment has no substitute. We may not realize how precious it is until thoughtless use has damaged it to the point of being unsalvageable.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→(On Chinas climate goals): “Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China. Yet we believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, China must step forward, take action, and get the job done.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We are doing this as a concrete action to uphold multilateralism and as a contribution to protecting our shared home and realizing sustainable development of humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Humanity encountered multiple crises rarely seen in human history. The past year also bore witness to the enormous resolve and courage of people around the world in battling the deadly coronavirus.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Since humanity entered the industrial age, the industrialization happened extremely fast, bringing about tremendous material wealth but at the same time also accelerated the exploitation of natural resources, destroyed the original balance and cycles of global ecosystems [thereby] created tension in the relationship between man and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We live at a time filled with challenges, [but] this is also a time full of hope. Where should humanity go from here? What kind of future should we create for future generations?” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” However, when humans immoderately exploit [and] grossly plunder nature, nature’s revenge [will] certainly be merciless. It is an unavoidable rule, that when humanity harms nature, it comes back to us like injuries to our own body.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”Humanity has learned lessons the hard way, and that history is not long gone. We must not return to the path of the past.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We must not return to the path of the past. The right approach is to act on the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind. We should uphold the common values of humanity, i.e. peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, rise above ideological prejudice, make the mechanisms, principles and policies of our cooperation as open and inclusive as possible, and jointly safeguard world peace (...).” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”Now, the combined forces of changes and a pandemic both unseen in a century have brought the world into a phase of fluidity and transformation. Instability and uncertainty are clearly on the rise. Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Humanity is a community that shares a common fate; hence the protection of the ecological environment is a global challenge we face together and are held responsible for together.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→(On Covid-19): “Comprehensive measures to improve global governance on public health security must be taken [and] a global community of health for humanity must be established.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” The Earth is our one and only home. To scale up efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Scientific and technological advances should benefit all humanity rather than be used to curb and contain other countries’ development. China will think and act with more openness with regard to international exchange and cooperation on science and technology.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” (...); This biotic community is the material basis for humanity’s subsistence and development. [We] must calculate generously, holistically, comprehensively [and] for the long term.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, (...).” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” COVID-19 will not be the last crisis to confront humanity, so we must join hands and be prepared to meet even more global challenges.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→“(.) Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans. It provides everything essential for humanity to survive and thrive.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Without international law and international rules that are formed and recognized by the global community, the world may fall back to the law of the jungle, and the consequence would be devastating for humanity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” There is no doubt that humanity will prevail over the virus and emerge even stronger from this disaster.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” People of different countries have come together. With courage, resolve and compassion which lit the dark hour, we have confronted the disaster head on. The virus will be defeated. Humanity will win this battle!” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” What kind of future should we create for future generations? In order to answer these important questions, we need to make responsible and wise choices based on the shared interests of mankind.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Since time of the industrial civilization, mankind has created massive material wealth. Yet, it has come at a cost of intensified exploitation of natural resources, which disrupted the balance in the Earth's ecosystem, (...)” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” China calls on all countries in Asia and in the world to respond to the call of our times, jointly overcome the pandemic, strengthen global governance, and keep pursuing a community where mankind shares a common destiny.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The making of the Ecological Civilization concerns the future of humanity, [and] it is the common dream of mankind to create a green home(land).” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” Third, COVID-19 reminds us that humankind should launch a green revolution and move faster to create a green way of development and life, preserve the environment and make Mother Earth a better place for all.” (Xi UN 2020)

→” Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN 2020)

→” We will build a closer partnership for openness and inclusiveness . A World Bank report suggests that by 2030, Belt and Road projects could help lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty and 32 million people from moderate poverty across the world. We will act in the spirit of openness and inclusiveness as we work hard with all willing participants to build the BRI into a pathway to poverty alleviation and growth, which will contribute positively to the common prosperity of humankind.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

Poverty

→” We need to look for ways to protect the environment, grow the economy, create jobs and remove poverty all at the same time, so as to deliver social equity and justice in the course of green transition and increase people's sense of benefit, happiness and security.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”In the report to the 19th National Congress of the CPC in 2017, I said we must focus on priorities, shore up and tackle areas of weakness, [I] stressed out, that we must take steps to forestall and defuse major risks, carry out targeted poverty alleviation, fight the battle to prevent and control pollution, so that the moderately prosperous society we build, earns the people’s approval and stands the test of time. Now [we] must concentrate all our strength, adopt more efficacious policies and measures, to fight this tough battle [against pollution].” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” After decades of strenuous efforts by the Chinese people, China is on course to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. We have made historic gains in ending extreme poverty and have embarked on a new journey toward fully building a modern socialist country. As China enters a new development stage, we will follow a new development philosophy and foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other. China will work with other countries to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” A World Bank report suggests that by 2030, Belt and Road projects could help lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty and 32 million people from moderate poverty across the world.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” To achieve the task of lifting another 10 million-plus rural residents out of poverty as planned, we must remain focused and work hard on this. We shall take better care of our military veterans who have done much to defend the country.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” As a steadfast member of developing countries, China will further deepen South-South cooperation, and contribute to the endeavour of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ease debt burden, and achieve more growth. China will get more actively engaged in global economic governance and push for an economic globalization that is more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We have every confidence to achieve our goals within the set time frame, that is, to finish the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, lift out of poverty all rural residents living below the current poverty line, and meet ten years ahead of schedule the poverty eradication target set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and support other countries in restoring economic and social development.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Over the past year, lots of good news have also come from the poverty reduction front. Another 125 poor counties and 10 million poverty-stricken rural residents were lifted out of poverty.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→”The prices of 17 cancer-fighting drugs have been reduced and at the same time, they were included on the medical insurance list, [and] the problem of disease-related poverty is being further addressed. I often worry about the comrades on the front lines of the fight against poverty.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” In Lianzhang Village in Qingyuan in Guangdong Province, I discussed with a villager named Lu Yihe how we could help to relieve his household’s poverty. Till now, I bear in mind their honest and unpretentious faces.” (Xi New Year 2019)

Security

→” Instability and uncertainty are clearly on the rise. Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit. The task to achieve universal security and common development is as arduous as ever and the way [to reach this] is long. Much remains to be done to achieve universal security and common development.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” China will work with other countries to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Today, with the same sense of responsibility, China is actively involved in the international fight against COVID-19, contributing its share to upholding global public health security.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Environmental security, is a principle component of national security, [it] is an important guarantee for the continuation of a healthy socioeconomic development. [As the saying goes], “Preventive measures [must be taken] before the problem takes roots, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→ (On covid): “ Comprehensive measures to improve global governance on public health security must be taken [and] a global community of health for humanity must be established. We need to follow the philosophy of green development, in order to respond to climate change, (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Hand in hand with the other countries in the world Asia has also stood firm against terrorism, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the international financial crisis, COVID-19 and other traditional and non-traditional security threats. [Asia has therewith] worked hard to defend stability and security in the region.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”We need to look for ways to protect the environment, grow the economy, create jobs and remove poverty all at the same time, so as to deliver social equity and justice in the course of green transition and increase people's sense of benefit, happiness and security.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”- We are crossing the river in the same boat and need to pull together in times of trouble to create a future of health and security. Whilst the fight against the pandemic is going on, victory will be ours at the end of the day. We must put people, [we must put] lives above anything else, (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” Looking at the world at large, we are facing a period of major change never seen before in a century. No matter what cloudy changes international winds will bring, Chinas defence of national sovereignty and security will not change; Chinas good intentions and good faith in

upholding world peace and accelerating common development will not change.” (Xi New Year 2019)

Progress

→”Science, technology and innovation is a key engine for human progress, a powerful weapon in tackling many global challenges, and the only way for China to foster a new development paradigm and achieve high-quality development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The best criteria are whether a country’s history, culture and social system fit its particular situation, enjoy people’s support, serve to deliver political stability, social progress and better lives, and contribute to human progress. The different histories, cultures and social systems are as old as human societies, and they are the inherent features of human civilization.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Not only did the Chinese Nation fulfil the great leap from standing up and growing rich, to becoming stronger, but it [therewith] also made a notable contribution to human civilization and progress. China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→(On the pandemic): “ Guided by science, reason and a humanitarian spirit, the world has achieved initial progress in fighting COVID-19. That said, the pandemic is far from over.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→(On fulfilling the Paris Agreement): “ We need to each take stronger actions, strengthen partnerships and cooperation, learn from each other and make common progress in the new journey toward global carbon neutrality. In this process, we must join hands, not point fingers at each other; we must maintain continuity, not reverse course easily; and we must honour commitments, (...)” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”(...) the concept of an Ecological Civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people; efforts to control pollution are increasing, there is unprecedented progress in terms of the frequency with which new systems for environmental governance emerge, the rigor with which oversight and enforcement is carried out, and the rate at which the environment improves; (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”As an important member of the big Asian family, China has kept deepening reform and opening-up while promoting regional cooperation, to achieve progress in tandem with the rest of Asia and development in tandem with the rest of the world.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” — We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity. Openness is the right path leading to development and progress.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” [We] must thoughtfully implement the action plan for preventing and controlling water pollution. [We] must guarantee the safety of drinking water, make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the Bohai region, [and] protecting [and] restoring the ecosystems of the Yangzi River.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The formulation and implementation of economic policies on environmental issues such as green finance reform, the drafting of balance sheets for natural resource assets, the levy of environmental protection taxes, compensation for environmental protection etc. [also] progress smoothly.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”[Faster progress was also made] with regard to emission permits, river and lake chief systems, the prohibition on the import of foreign waste etc.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Faster progress was made with the system of environmental administration, including the vertical management by environmental protection institutions at sub-provincial level, which monitor, supervise and enforce [the environmental] laws, [and] take care of the quality of environmental monitoring data.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Punishment

→” [We] must establish empirical, rational evaluation and assessment systems, making their results an important basis for decisions on rewarding, punishing, and promoting officials at all levels. “The basis of punishment and reward is based on the suggestion of the good and the punishment of the evil.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Environmental problems happen frequently and often, [they] are discussed, [and] make public appearance, yet [some] government officials have not received punishment, but instead have been promoted to important positions: this is absolutely absurd! [We] must take certain representative cases of negative behaviour as a negative example, particularly those involving damage to the environment, [we must] strictly investigate [these cases] in order to ensure a correct understanding of the facts and deal with them according to the outcome of the investigation, [we must use these examples] as a warning to others.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, the Supreme People’s Court, [and] the Supreme People’s Procuratorate have defined standards criminalizing environmental pollution and ecological destructions making punishment more severe [and] shaping a situation of high pressure [against such crimes]. In particular, the central environmental protection inspection system is well established and successful, [being] ready for true change it does not fear the offenders, [and] won’t let go of a problem till it is solved.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must improve [our] systems for credibility assessment based on environmental protection performance, for mandatory disclosure of environmental information, [and] for improving severe punishment on violators of environmental regulations.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Most of the outstanding problems in environmental protection existing in our country are related to inadequate systems, lax regulations, liberal laws, unsatisfying enforcement, and lenient punishment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] need to exert great effort taking environmental destruction as a negative example [and] send out a strong signal that [such behaviour] will be met with harsh punishment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Stability

→”Hand in hand with the other countries in the world Asia has also stood firm against terrorism, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the international financial crisis, COVID-19 and other traditional and

non-traditional security threats. [Asia has therewith] worked hard to defend stability and security in the region.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” First, COVID-19 reminds us that we are living in an interconnected global village with a common stake. All countries are closely connected, and we share a common future. No country can gain from others' difficulties or maintain stability by taking advantage of others' troubles.” (Xi UN Sept 2020)

→” The second is to abandon ideological prejudice and jointly follow a path of peaceful coexistence, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. No two leaves in the world are identical, and no histories, cultures or social systems are the same. Each country is unique with its own history, culture and social system, and none is superior to the other. The best criteria are whether a country's history, culture and social system fit its particular situation, enjoy people's support, serve to deliver political stability, social progress and better lives, and contribute to human progress. The different histories, cultures and social systems are as old as human societies, and they are the inherent features of human civilization. There will be no human civilization without diversity, and such diversity will continue to exist for as long as we can imagine. Difference in itself is no cause for alarm. What does ring the alarm is arrogance, prejudice and hatred; it is the attempt to impose hierarchy on human civilization or to force one's own history, culture and social system upon others. The right choice is for countries to pursue peaceful coexistence based on mutual respect and on expanding common ground while shelving differences, and to promote exchanges and mutual learning. This is the way to add impetus to the progress of human civilization.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The right approach is to act on the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind. We should uphold the common values of humanity, i.e. peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, rise above ideological prejudice, make the mechanisms, principles and policies of our cooperation as open and inclusive as possible, and jointly safeguard world peace and stability.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” For developing countries, they are aspiring for more resources and space for development, and they are calling for stronger representation and voice in global economic governance. We should recognize that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid footing, and developed countries will stand to benefit from such growth. The international community should keep its eyes on the long run, honour its commitment, and provide necessary support to developing countries and safeguard their legitimate development interests. Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should be strengthened, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Investment

→”We should build an open world economy, uphold the multilateral trading regime, discard discriminatory and exclusionary standards, rules and systems, and take down barriers to trade, investment and technological exchanges.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”China will work with all sides to promote “hard connectivity” of infrastructure and “soft connectivity” of rules and standards, ensure unimpeded channels for trade and investment cooperation, and actively develop Silk Road e-commerce, all in a bid to open up a bright prospect for integrated development. — We will build a closer partnership for green development.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→(On the impact of Covid-19 on the world economy): "For the first time in history, the economies of all regions have been hit hard at the same time, with global industrial and supply chains clogged and trade and investment down in the doldrums. Despite the trillions of dollars in relief packages worldwide, global recovery is rather shaky and the outlook remains uncertain." (Xi Davos 2021)

→" China will take an active part in multilateral cooperation on trade and investment, fully implement the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, cut further the negative list on foreign investment, continue to develop the Hainan Free Trade Port, and develop new systems for a higher-standard open economy." (Xi Boao April 2021)

→"Openness is the right path leading to development and progress. It also holds the key to post-COVID economic recovery. We need to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, deepen regional economic integration, and enhance supply, industrial, data and human resources chains, with a view to building an open world economy. (Xi Boao April 2021)

→" As a longstanding supporter of economic globalization, China is committed to following through on its fundamental policy of opening-up. China will continue to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, help keep the global industrial and supply chains smooth and stable, and advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation." (Xi Davos 2021)

→"— We will build a closer partnership for green development. We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road Development, and other multilateral cooperation platforms to make green a defining feature of Belt and Road cooperation." (Xi Boao April 2021)

→" Funds needed for environmental protection must be appropriated, [and we] must not pinch pennies on investment. [We] must be committed to matching funding with the tasks of pollution prevention and control." (Xi on EC 2018)

Commitment

→"All government departments and local authorities must raise "the four awareness", [the awareness of the need to maintain political integrity, think in terms of the big picture, follow the leadership core, and stay aligned with the centre, firmly uphold the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, undertake their political duties in building an ecological civilization with determined commitment, and fully implement the Central Committee's decisions and plans]." (Xi on EC 2018)

→"The international community should keep its eyes on the long run, honour its commitment, and provide necessary support to developing countries and safeguard their legitimate development interests." (Xi Davos 2021)

→" China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and (...)" (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→"Yesterday, the high-level meeting to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the UN was held. The meeting was a significant one, as it reaffirmed our abiding commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter on the basis of reviewing the historical experience and lessons of the World Anti-Fascist War." (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be upheld, [and] concerns of developing countries on capital, technology and capacity building must be addressed. — We need commitment to justice to create a future of mutual respect and mutual learning.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Winning the battle to defend [our] blue sky is of the utmost importance. It is something that the people eagerly expect, it also is a commitment we have made to the international community as hosts of the 2022 Winter Olympics.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Peace

→” China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order. China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation with other countries (...)” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” China will continue to work as a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”No matter what cloudy changes international winds will bring, Chinas defence of national sovereignty and security will not change; Chinas good intentions and good faith in upholding world peace and accelerating common development will not change.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→”— China will extend the Peace and Development Trust Fund between the UN and China by five years after it expires in 2025.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Zero-sum game or winner-takes-all is not the guiding philosophy of the Chinese people. As a staunch follower of an independent foreign policy of peace, China is working hard to bridge differences through dialogue and resolve disputes through negotiation and to pursue friendly and cooperative relations with other countries on the basis of mutual respect, (...)” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit. The task to achieve universal security and common development it as arduous as ever and the way [to reach this] is long.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order. China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promote a new type of international relations.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→”Those who frequently [and arrogantly] order other countries around or interfere in others’ internal affairs would not get one any support . We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We should uphold the common values of humanity, i.e. peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, rise above ideological prejudice, make the mechanisms, principles and policies of our cooperation as open and inclusive as possible, and jointly safeguard world peace and stability (...)” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” Let us join hands to uphold the values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom shared by all of us and build a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→(On the difficulties due to the pandemic): “Yet, peace and development remain the underlying trend of the times, and people everywhere crave even more strongly for peace, development and win-win cooperation. COVID-19 will not be the last crisis to confront humanity, so we must join hands and be prepared to meet even more global challenges.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” The global governance system should adapt itself to evolving global political and economic dynamics, meet global challenges and embrace the underlying trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” China will work with other countries to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Wealth

→”[This] clearly points out new ways and means to achieving [economic] development and environmental protection in a symbiotic manner. „Turquoise waters and green mountains“ [not only represent] natural [and] ecological wealth, [but] also [represent] social wealth [as well as] economic success. By protecting the natural environment, [we] also protect ecological wealth and increase nature’s capital.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since humanity entered the industrial age, the industrialization happened extremely fast, bringing about tremendous material wealth but at the same time also accelerated the exploitation of natural resources, destroyed the original balance and cycles of global ecosystems [thereby] created tension in the relationship between man and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We should not dodge the challenges of economic globalization. Instead, we must face up to major issues such as the wealth gap and the development divide.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→”Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood. [We] also need to create more material wealth along with spiritual wealth to meet the people’s growing needs for a better life. [We] also need to provide more quality ecological goods to meet the people’s growing needs for a graceful natural environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since time of the industrial civilization, mankind has created massive material wealth. Yet, it has come at a cost of intensified exploitation of natural resources, which disrupted the balance in the Earth’s ecosystem, and laid bare the growing tensions in the human-Nature relationship.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

Lives

→”Whilst the fight against the pandemic is going on, victory will be ours at the end of the day. We must put people, [we must put] lives above anything else, scale up information sharing, joint defence [and] joint control, enhance public health and medical cooperation, and give full play to the key role of the World Health Organization.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We must [also] remember Comrade Wang Jicai, who served for 32 years on a border island; and those who lost their lives after stepping forward bravely to protect an experimental offshore

platform. Comrades Huang Qun, Song Yuecai, and Jiang Kaibin, and the other heroes who have died for the fatherland and its people.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” We will expand cooperation with various parties in infectious disease control, public health, traditional medicine and other areas to jointly protect the lives and health of people in all countries. — We will build a closer partnership for connectivity.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” The best criteria are whether a country’s history, culture and social system fit its particular situation, enjoy people’s support, serve to deliver political stability, social progress and better lives, and contribute to human progress.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” The Xunzi states: „Axes must not enter the forests when the plants and trees are flourishing, lest their lives be cut short.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” On the occasion of this New Year’s Eve, I wish [our] fellow villagers that their lives constantly flourish further and ultimately fully blossom.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→”In Sanjianxi Village in Jinan City, Shandong Province, I sat down with the family of Zhao Shunli to hear about their day-to-day lives. In the Donghuanyuan community in the city of Fushun in Liaoning Province, I visited Chen Yufang’s family to learn about how they were settling in after they had to flee from a dangerous area.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” Concerning those leading officials that harm the environment, only by having the will to strictly and earnestly hold [them] responsible for the rest of their lives, [it] can be prevented, that [our] institutions become “scarecrows” and “paper tigers”, and [appear laxer than] “rubber bands”.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Even as we speak, there are deliverymen, streetcleaners, taxi drivers, and thousands upon thousands of others who are working hard. We need to be thankful to those guardians [for] making our lives more beautiful.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→” — China will continue to take an active part in international cooperation on COVID-19. Containing the coronavirus is the most pressing task for the international community. This is because people and their lives must always be put before anything else.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” During the ceremony, I stressed that when studying Marx, we must study and practice Marx thoughts on the relationship between man and nature. Marx and Engels believed that „man lives on nature“, and that humans produce, live, and develop through their interactions with nature. If humans treat nature kindly, then nature will repay that kindness.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Opportunities

→”Equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules should be strengthened, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→”Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits so as to ensure that all countries enjoy equal rights and opportunities and follow the same rules.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Only by fighting day and night with energy, by firmly preserving the willpower, [can we] step by step carry forward our unprecedented great cause. In 2019, there will [also] be opportunities as well as hardships, [and] we must work together, shoulder to shoulder.” (Xi New Year 2019)

→”We need to deepen partnerships for connectivity and strengthen infrastructural links to keep the arteries of economic activities unclogged. We must seize the historical opportunities in a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, boost the digital economy, and step up exchanges and cooperation in such areas as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and modern energy, so that the fruits of scientific and technological innovation can be turned into greater benefits for people in all countries. In this age of economic globalization, openness and integration is an unstoppable historical trend.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” All are welcome to share in the vast opportunities of the Chinese market.” (Xi Boao April 2021)

→” We need to advance reform of the World Trade Organization and the international financial and monetary system in a way that boosts global economic growth and protects the development rights, interests and opportunities of developing countries.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” We hope these efforts will bring more cooperation opportunities to other countries and give further impetus to global economic recovery and growth. — China will continue to promote sustainable development. China will fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” (Xi Davos 2021)

Nature

→”It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc., match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We need to act with a sense of responsibility and unity and work together to foster a community of life for man and Nature. – We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature. "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans. It provides everything essential for humanity to survive and thrive.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→[We need to ...] “move faster to create a green way of development and life, preserve the environment and make Mother Earth a better place for all. Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of Nature and go down the beaten path of extracting resources without investing in conservation, pursuing development at the expense of protection, and exploiting resources without restoration.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity’s and the present time’s needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”More importantly, we should respect a country's independent choice of development path and model. The world is diverse in nature, and we should turn this diversity into a constant source of inspiration driving human advancement. This will ensure that human civilizations remain colourful and diversified.” (Xi UN Sept.2020)

→” Second, comprehensively promote green development. Green is the symbol of life and the basic colour of nature, [but] even more it represents the basis for a better life [and it is] what the masses expect.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We should protect Nature and preserve the environment like we protect our eyes, and endeavour to foster a new relationship where man and Nature can both prosper and live in harmony.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that] respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” But, „If man, by dint of this knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him”.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In order to develop an Ecological Civilization in the new era, [it is] indispensable to adhere to the following principles. First: Adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence between mankind and nature. Humanity and nature are a biotic community. The natural environment has no substitute.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Regarding those who cause serious consequences through blind policy decisions that don't take nature into consideration, their cases must be investigated, and they shall be held responsible lifelong. We cannot be soft-hearted regarding a behaviour that harms the environment, [such behaviour] cannot be accepted.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Colleagues, the Chinese civilization has always valued harmony between man and Nature as well as observance of the laws of Nature. It has been our constant pursuit that man and Nature could live in harmony with each other.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” The Chinese nation has always valued and loved nature; its more than 5000- year-old civilization gave birth to a rich ecological culture.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” – We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature. "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The Manual of Important Art for the People [an agricultural encyclopaedia of the 6th century] reads: „Act according to the seasons and the nature of the land, and you will enjoy great success through little effort.“ Those ideas all highlight the importance of heaven, earth and man becoming one in order to connect nature and human culture, act according to the laws of nature, take [what nature offers] at the right time, and use [it] in a responsible way. [The ideas] demonstrate the important knowledge our ancestors had regarding human-nature interaction.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Mother Nature has nourished us, and we must treat Nature as our root, respect it, protect it, and follow its laws. Failure to respect Nature or follow its laws will only invite its revenge. Systemic spoil of Nature will take away the foundation of human survival and development, and will leave us human beings like a river without a source...” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Yet, it has come at a cost of intensified exploitation of natural resources, which disrupted the balance in the Earth's ecosystem, and laid bare the growing tensions in the human-Nature relationship.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”(…), [furthermore] economic activities and people’s behaviour [must be] restricted within the limits of what natural resources and the ecological environment can bear, giving nature room and time to recover.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Those ideas all highlight the importance of heaven, earth and man becoming one in order to connect nature and human culture, act according to the laws of nature, take [what nature offers] at the right time, and use [it] in a responsible way. [The ideas] demonstrate the important knowledge our ancestors had regarding human-nature interaction.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Laozi says [in the Book of changes]: „Mankind follows the law of Earth, Earth follows the law of Heaven; Heaven follows the law of the Dao; Dao follows the law of nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Protecting the ecosystem requires more than a simplistic, palliative approach. We need to follow the innate laws of the ecosystem and properly balance all elements and aspects of Nature.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” I wish to thank President Biden for the kind invitation. It is good to have this opportunity to have an in-depth exchange of views with you on climate change, and to discuss ways to tackle this challenge and find a path forward for man and Nature to live in harmony.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” We need to act with a sense of responsibility and unity, and work together to foster a community of life for man and Nature. – We must be committed to harmony between man and Nature. "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature." Mother Nature is the cradle of all living beings, including humans.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, just consider the use without thinking of restoration, instead we need to protect the environment like we protect [our own] eyes , treat nature like we treat life, focusing on taking more positive measures that will provide solid foundations and long-term benefits, concrete steps that will help protect and restore the environment, and effective actions that will clean up our surroundings and reveal their natural beauty. This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”Mother Nature has nourished us, and we must treat Nature as our root, respect it, protect it, and follow its laws. Failure to respect Nature or follow its laws will only invite its revenge. Systemic spoil of Nature will take away the foundation of human survival and development, and will leave us human beings like a river without a source and a tree without its roots. We should protect Nature and preserve the environment like we protect our eyes, and endeavour to foster a new relationship where man and Nature can both prosper and live in harmony.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→”(…); green development modes and eco-friendly life styles will be fully developed, humans and nature will coexist in harmony, modernization of our national governance systems and capacity in the environmental field will be fully realized, [and] our efforts to build a beautiful China will be successful.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” When humans use nature in a responsible way and carefully protect it, nature will generously pay back [for it]. However, when humans immoderately exploit [and] grossly plunder nature, natures revenge [will] certainly be merciless. It is an unavoidable rule, that when humanity harms nature, it comes back to us like injuries to our own body.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Marx and Engels believed that „man lives on nature“, and that humans produce, live, and develop through their interactions with nature. If humans treat nature kindly, then nature will repay that kindness. But, „If man, by dint of this knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

Pollution

Within the Xi corpus, “pollution” is prominently mentioned in the 2018 speech on eco-civilization building, but in none of the other speeches. This is due to the speeches contexts. Giving detailed information on such topics as pollution on national and regional levels is not common in speeches given to the international community. It rather belongs to speeches held nationally and typically speeches on environmental issues. It is therefore not surprising, that Xi does not speak about “pollution” in his New Year Speech for example. It is remarkable however, how much the Chinese president goes into details when speaking of pollution in his 2018 speech on eco-civilization building. All kinds of pollution (soil, water, air) are brought up separately, and concrete measures for pollution control and prevention are announced. Examples:

→” With history as a mirror, we can understand the rise and the fall [of a state]. Regarding the question of building an Ecological Civilization, I have repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking [it] seriously and handling [it] properly; the reason being, that the environmental capacity of our nation is limited, our ecosystems are vulnerable, and we have still not achieved a fundamental reversal of environmental conditions that cause heavy pollution, significant damage, and high risk, [which] also aggravates the imbalance between different regions due to their particular geographical conditions.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have made building an Ecological Civilization a major component of coordinated implementation of the five-sphere integrated plan and the four-pronged comprehensive strategy; (...) the concept of an Ecological Civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people; efforts to control pollution are increasing, (...)” (Xi on EC 2018)

→”[Our efforts] to control air pollution in the Provinces of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei [and to] protect the environment in the Yangtze River Economic Belt have gradually shown results. Furthermore, we have drafted and revised laws such as the Environmental Protection Law and

the Environmental Protection Tax Law, as well as laws on the prevention and control of air and water pollution and on nuclear safety. The standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the Supreme People's Court, [and] the Supreme People's Procuratorate have defined standards criminalizing environmental pollution and ecological destructions making punishment more severe [and] shaping a situation of high pressure [against such crimes]." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Saving natural resources has proven to be effective, [and] the intensity of resource consumption has fallen markedly. We have put into effect the three action plans to prevent air-, water-, and soil pollution." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" In the tough battle to prevent and control pollution, no matter how hard [it may seem], we cannot remain undecided, nor can we shrink away, but bravely have to take courageous decisions, fight with the courage of a life-and-death struggle, strike camp to attack the city with energy and determination." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" For example, [we must] successfully manage water pollution, well protect the aquatic environment, [we] must make plans taking the entire coasts into account, the rivers upper and lower reaches, the land surrounding them, surface- and subsurface sources of water, both aquatic ecosystems and aquatic resources, and both the prevention and control of pollution and the protection of ecosystems." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" In the report to the 19th National Congress of the CPC in 2017, I said we must focus on priorities, shore up and tackle areas of weakness, [I] stressed out, that we must take steps to forestall and defuse major risks, carry out targeted poverty alleviation, fight the battle to prevent and control pollution, so that the moderately prosperous society we build, earns the people's approval and stands the test of time. Now [we] must concentrate all our strength, adopt more efficacious policies and measures, to fight this tough battle [against pollution]." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" In order to successfully fight the tough battle against pollution, [we] must fight a number of major symbolic campaigns, focusing our energy on overcoming prominent environmental issues that directly impact the ordinary people." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] must focus on managing pollution from diesel trucks and push forward the reorganization and improvement of freight transport operations, promoting higher quality and efficiency [and] large-scale growth.

[We] must thoughtfully implement the action plan for preventing and controlling water pollution. [We] must guarantee the safety of drinking water, make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the Bohai region, [and] protecting [and] restoring the ecosystems of the Yangzi River. [We] must eliminate essentially all of the unpleasant pollution in urban waterways, providing clean water and green shores to the ordinary people, with fish dancing underneath the scenery." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" [We] must also [ensure] the comprehensive implementation of the action plan for preventing and controlling soil pollution, [and] push forward the formulation and implementation of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution. [We] must prioritize key regions, industries, [and] pollutants, boost the management and restoration of areas suffering from soil pollution, effectively forestall risks, [so that] the ordinary people [can] trust the food they eat and live without worries." (Xi on EC 2018)

→" Environmental protection and pollution prevention and control are inseparable issues interacting closely. Among them, pollution prevention and control functions like a numerator,

environmental protection functions like a denominator. Just like with any equation, both sides need to be considered: [we] must subtract from the numerator by reducing pollution levels, [and] add to the denominator by expanding the capacity of the environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Two aspects lead to these main considerations: The first is that “nine dragons can’t control one river”, [therefore we] must consolidate roles in pollution prevention and control in order to end the confusing division of responsibilities between different ministries and provide support for the fight to prevent and control pollution. The second is that [we] must strengthen integrated oversight [and] firmly enforce environmental protection, [as well as] link together red lines of environmental protection in order to promote ecological conservation and restoration. [We] must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection, link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrate [our] efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, [and] from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must be committed to matching funding with the tasks of pollution prevention and control. [We] must boost research on factors contributing to heavy air pollution, taking further steps to bring these factors under control, overcome key scientific and technical hurdles including those related to major projects for improving the overall environment of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. [We] must carry out dedicated, forward-looking research on the management of ozone, volatile organic compounds, [and] new pollutants, conduct research on how to deal with major environmental problems that impact socioeconomic development, [and] expedite the application of research achievements, thereby offering support for scientific decision making, environmental management, targeted pollution control, [and] public services.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Fighting the battle to prevent and control pollution is a pressing matter. For this heavy task, this great difficulty, [for] this tough battle and hardship [we] need to strengthen the CPC’s leadership. The “Decisions of the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council on Comprehensively Enhancing Eco-Environmental Protection to Completely Win the Battle Against Pollution” introduced comprehensive plans for pollution prevention and control. All government departments and local authorities must raise “the four awareness”, [the awareness of the need to maintain political integrity, think in terms of the big picture, follow the leadership core, and stay aligned with the centre, firmly uphold the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, undertake their political duties in building an ecological civilization with determined commitment, and fully implement the Central Committee’s decisions and plans].” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In the battle to prevent and fight pollution, some will have to be found guilty. Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of the environmental protection corps, and actively support officials who are ready and willing to take action.” (Xi on EC 2018)

In his 2018 speech, Xi Jinping does not even shy away from clearly mentioning that fighting pollution is not an easy task, that it takes the participation of all members of the society and that it also takes thrift and moderation. Examples:

→” [We] must boost all people’s resource saving awareness, [their] environmental protection awareness [and] ecological awareness; cultivate (literally: nurture young plants) an ecological morality and code of conduct; give impetus to public ecological activities, encourage all members of the society to contribute as much as possible to the protection of the environment by cutting down the pollution they produce, [as well as] the energy and resources they consume.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We must adjust the economic and energy structures in order to raise the level of economic development and reduce the amount of pollution released.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must pool our strength and mobilize the support of all involved, making the fight to prevent and control pollution a popular struggle in which we work as a team to push forward from one battle to the next.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must adjust the structure of production, reduce excessive and outdated production, [and] add new growth drivers. [We] must promote compliance with emission standards, reduce the amount of pollution discharged by key industries, [and] implement ultralow emission upgrades in industries such as thermal power and steel.” (Xi on EC 2018)

It is not directly related to the keyword “pollution”, but it clearly expresses the idea of what Xi Jinping or the CPC might be expecting from the people when Xi says:

→” It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution”, making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.”

The Chinese president herewith clearly states that the times of mass production, but also that of mass consumption are over in China. If we take these words serious, this means a massive change for the entire Chinese society and would impact the everyday life of every single Chinese in China. It is one of the uncomfortable truths politicians elsewhere in the world often try to avoid.

Carbon

→” We need to each take stronger actions, strengthen partnerships and cooperation, learn from each other and make common progress in the new journey toward global carbon neutrality. In this process, we must join hands, not point fingers at each other; we must maintain continuity, not reverse course easily; and we must honour commitments, not go back on promises. “ (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” At the same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green and low-carbon development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy. We will continue to prioritize ecological conservation and pursue a green and low-carbon path to development.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Last year, I made the official announcement that China will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable development. China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinarily hard efforts from China. The targets of

carbon peak and carbon neutrality have been added to China's overall plan for ecological conservation. We are now making an action plan and are already taking strong nationwide actions toward carbon peak. Support is being given to peaking pioneers from localities, sectors and companies. China will strictly control coal-fired power generation projects, and strictly limit the increase in coal consumption over the 14th Five-Year Plan period and phase it down in the 15th Five-Year Plan period. Moreover, China has decided to accept the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and tighten regulations over non-carbon dioxide emissions. China's national carbon market will also start trading.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→(On South-South Cooperation): ” From remote sensing satellites for climate monitoring in Africa to low-carbon demonstration zones in Southeast Asia and to energy-efficient lights in small island countries, such cooperation has yielded real, tangible and solid results.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” China will fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will do more on the ecological front, by transforming and improving its industrial structure and energy mix at a faster pace and promoting a green, low-carbon way of life and production. I have announced China’s goal of striving to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.” (Xi Davos 2021)

→” [We] must advocate thrift and moderation, and a green low-carbon lifestyle, [as well as] oppose luxury, waste [and] unreasonable consumption.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection, link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrate [our] efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, [and] from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The Paris Agreement on climate change charts the course for the world to transition to green and low-carbon development. It outlines the minimum steps to be taken to protect the Earth, our shared homeland, and all countries must take decisive steps to honour this Agreement. China will scale up its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions by adopting more vigorous policies and measures. We aim to have CO2 emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.” (Xi UN Sept 2020)

Ecosystems

→” With history as a mirror, we can understand the rise and the fall [of a state]. Regarding the question of building an Ecological Civilization, I have repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking [it] seriously and handling [it] properly; the reason being, that the environmental capacity of our nation is limited, our ecosystems are vulnerable, and we have still not achieved a fundamental reversal of environmental conditions that cause heavy pollution, significant damage, and high risk, [which] also aggravates the imbalance between different regions due to their particular geographical conditions.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→ “The land to the southeast of the Heihe-Tengchong Line, accounts for 43% of the territory [of China] but is home to about 94% of its population. Dominated by plains, rivulets, low mountains, hills, and karst landforms, this part of China is under immense environmental pressure. The land to the northwest of the line accounts for 57% of the area but is home to only about 6% of the population. Dominated by grasslands, the Gobi Desert, oases, and snowy

plateaus, the ecosystems in this part are extremely fragile. This is a very important aspect to consider when we talk about China's national conditions.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” I have requested that competent authorities be rigorous in their investigation and handling of environmental issues and not let up until these issues have been completely resolved, to truly protect the green waters and turquoise mountains so they may last forever, and all ecosystems will be stable.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Since humanity entered the industrial age, the industrialization happened extremely fast, bringing about tremendous material wealth but at the same time also accelerated the exploitation of natural resources, destroyed the original balance and cycles of global ecosystems [thereby] created tension in the relationship between man and nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” For example, [we must] successfully manage water pollution, well protect the aquatic environment, [we] must make plans taking the entire coasts into account, the rivers upper and lower reaches, the land surrounding them, surface- and subsurface sources of water, both aquatic ecosystems and aquatic resources, and both the prevention and control of pollution and the protection of ecosystems.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” To accelerate the resolution of environmental problems during this historic convergence of the Two Centenary Goals, [we] must accelerate the establishment and improvement of an ecological culture system based on ecological values, an ecological economic system with industrial ecologicalization and ecological industrialization as the main body, a system of responsibilities focusing on improving environmental quality as the core, and modernized governance systems and capacity, that guarantees the maintenance of well-functioning ecosystems and the effective prevention and control of environmental risks.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must guarantee the safety of drinking water, make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the Bohai region, [and] protecting [and] restoring the ecosystems of the Yangzi River.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must rigorously enforce red lines for environmental protection, keep watch over ecosystems including mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, [and] grasslands, [and] achieve oversight on environmental issues at every stage of their development.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Mountains, Rivers, Grasslands, Fields, Waters, Heaven, Lakes, Seasons

→” This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The concept of considering „turquoise waters and green mountains“ as „being worth mountains of gold and silver“ expounds the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, revealing that by protecting the environment [we also] protect the economic productivity, [and] that improving the ecological environment leads to the development of production.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Also, at a very early stage in the history of our nation, environmental concepts have been elevated to our country's administration, a special institution in charge of overseeing mountains, forests, rivers, and marshes was established, to formulate relevant laws and decrees through a monitoring system.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” The land to the southeast of the Heihe-Tengchong Line, accounts for 43% of the territory [of China], but is home to about 94% of its population. Dominated by plains, rivulets, low mountains, hills, and karst landforms, this part of China is under immense environmental pressure.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” By protecting the natural environment, [we] also protect ecological wealth and increase nature’s capital. [This] safeguards the capacity of socio-economic development and its after-effects, [thus] turquoise waters and green mountains lead to long-lasting ecological and socio-economic benefits.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” „Turquoise waters and green mountains“ [not only represent] natural [and] ecological wealth, [but] also [represent] social wealth [as well as] economic success. By protecting the natural environment, [we] also protect ecological wealth and increase nature’s capital.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” We need to fulfil the wishes of the people [and] avoid what people fear. The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the people; [with] green mountains representing beauty and blue skies bringing happiness. Economic development serves people’s livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people’s livelihood.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” – We must be committed to systemic governance. Mountains, rivers, forests as well as farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts all make indivisible parts of the ecosystem.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” Fourth: The principle, that mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grassland together form a biotic system. An ecosystem is an integrated natural unity made up of organic chains that are tightly bound and dependent on each other.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must rigorously enforce red lines for environmental protection, keep watch over ecosystems including mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, [and] grasslands, [and] achieve oversight on environmental issues at every stage of their development.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Fields are humanities lifelines, rivers are the lifelines of the fields, mountains are the source of life to rivers, soil is the mountains source of life, forests and grasslands are the sources of life of the soil; This biotic community is the material basis for humanity’s subsistence and development.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” When, on the southern slopes of the mountains, the Italians of the Alpes used up the pine forests so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of water for the greater part of the year, with the effect that these would be able to pour still more furious flood torrents on the plains during the rainy seasons.“ (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Green mountains are gold mountains.” (Xi Biden 04.2021)

→” [We] must deeply implement integrated ecological protection and restoration of mountains, waters, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands; [we] must launch large-scale programs of land-greening, and comprehensively tackle losses of water, erosion of soil [as well] the spread of deserts and stony deserts.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Ecology

“Ecology” is mentioned only in the 2018 speech on EC. It appears only on three occasions, however all three examples found shall not be underestimated. In the last example, Xi announces the establishment of the “Ministry of Ecology and Environment” which is an important step. In the second examples Xi clearly states the “ecology must be given precedence” over economic growth, and the first examples even speaks of “ecology” as “serving the people”, which is what usually the Communist Party claims to want.

→” [We] must ensure that the environment benefits the people, [that] ecology is favourable to the people, [that] ecology serves the people; [we] need to focus on solving the severe environmental problems, that harm people’s health, accelerate the improvement of the quality of the ecological environment, and offer more high quality ecological goods, [as well as] aim for social fairness and fulfil the people’s growing needs of a beautiful environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” Excessive growth cannot be carried on, [instead,] ecology must be given precedence, [and we must uphold to] sustainable development, making it a precondition that all economic activities in this area do not harm the environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” In the current campaign to bolster reform of the Party and national government institutions, the CPC Central Committee decided to establish the Ministry of Ecology and Environment.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Pollutants

→”Only if [we] succeed in comprehensively reducing the discharge of pollutants at source-level, will the environmental quality distinctly improve.”(Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must prioritize key regions, industries, [and] pollutants, boost the management and restoration of areas suffering from soil pollution, effectively forestall risks, [so that] the ordinary people [can] trust the food they eat and live without worries” (Xi on EC 2018)

→” [We] must carry out dedicated, forward-looking research on the management of ozone, volatile organic compounds, [and] new pollutants, conduct research on how to deal with major environmental problems that impact socioeconomic development, [and] expedite the application of research achievements, thereby offering support for scientific decision making, environmental management, targeted pollution control, [and] public services.” (Xi on EC 2018)

Annex III Text Corpus (Speeches, Transcripts and Translations)

Annex III 1. Angela Merkel's Speeches

Introduction:

In the context of this research, when starting to listen to a number of speeches by Angela Merkel and reading the transcripts of these same speeches as published by the German government, I noticed some discrepancies between the two versions. These tiny differences between the chancellor's words and the transcription of the speeches, are clearly related to the way Merkel speaks. Of course, not every little "um" or unnecessary "and" appears in the official transcription of Merkel's speech. Other small mistakes, as when she changes the order of the words in a sentence or starts a sentence one way then immediately corrects herself—as when she speaks first of "weather" and then restarts the same sentence, choosing the word "climate" instead. These small mistakes may not belong in a government-sanctioned transcription of the speech, but they have a special importance in my own transcription. I believe it is important to retain these hesitations and small errors because they give us insight into what defines Angela Merkel as a speaker, especially in relation to Xi. We can see, for example, that while the German Chancellor speaks rather freely, the Chinese president never seems to stray from a prepared text.

The small correction Merkel makes from "weather" to "climate," in the context at a climate conference, is particularly relevant to my study. Where "climate" describes a global, long-term phenomenon, "weather" describes a local and temporary phenomenon. Merkel is a natural scientist by training, and we can assume that she understands this distinction. My transcription preserves this mistake in order to expose and analyze what might be more than a mere simple slip of the tongue. By preserving the two terms used by Merkel, and therefore the tension between them, we are invited to consider just how global Merkel's vision for climate protection really is.

I felt that if we want to analyze Merkel's rhetoric and compare it to Xi Jinping's, it is important to translate Merkel's words, and transcribe her hesitations, as literally as possible. It is for this reason that I transcribed Merkel's speeches in German, my mother tongue, then translated them into English.

For Merkel's speech on German Employer's Day, I did not find a video that allowed me to listen to the original speech, and for other speeches there was no English translation but only the transcription. I therefore was not always able to compare the differences between speech and transcript or between transcript and translation. However, whenever possible, I highlight these differences in the text and in the annotations.

In the context of this research, it is obviously impossible to analyze all speeches on climate change and coal by Xi and Merkel. Therefore, I have selected five of Merkel's speeches from different contexts. For example, I have chosen speeches from the World Economic Forum in Davos and from the UN climate conferences where both Xi and Merkel frequently speak. I also chose national speeches, for example one that Merkel gave in the context of the German Employer's Day. This broad but select range of examples allows me to compare the rhetoric used by the two leaders within an international as well as a national context.

Although more research is needed, this study is a first step toward a comparative analysis of the rhetoric on climate change and coal in Germany and China.

In order to analyze how climate and coal are rhetorically dealt with by the federal government in Germany at a national level, I have chosen only speeches by the chancellor—instead of analyzing, for

example, the “Kohleausstiegsgesetz”⁵¹ or other official documents, like press statements. Such official documents are written in a bureaucratic tone and are thus less rhetorically interesting since they do not aim to convince but rather to inform. This study focusses on rhetorical language in order to find out how the coal phaseout is being defended, who is specifically being addressed, and what arguments are being used. This rhetorical language is particularly prevalent in the political sphere. I chose to focus on Merkel’s speeches in order to offer a more direct comparison to the Chinese discourse. As the head of the German government, Merkel’s rhetoric was more relevant for my purposes than that of the Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, for example, even though a figure like this might be more thoroughly versed on the topic. When aiming to compare German and Chinese rhetoric, it is of special importance not to analyze the speeches of a Minister in Germany, since in China the role of the Minister is so different, and it is Xi Jinping who dominates the debate, not the Minister. For a direct comparison it was important to focus on Xi Jinping and Merkel as the heads of their respective governments.

The speeches translated here date from between 2017 and 2021. We start with a speech by the German chancellor held a year prior to Xi Jinping’s speech on Eco Civilization (2018) and we end with the most recent speech in Davos (2021). I have chosen this time frame since it is a critical phase of discussion both in China and Germany. It starts before the Chinese government officially announced binding climate targets, and also before the German government officially agreed on the coal phase out. We end with the most recent speech, but it would be interesting to continue this research, especially to compare how the rhetoric might change with a new chancellor in Germany after the election to be held in September 2021.

[Speech by Chancellor Angela Merkel at the COP23 world climate conference hosted by Fiji, in Bonn \(2017\)](#)

[Transcript](#)⁵²:

Sehr geehrter Herr Vorsitzender, sehr geehrter Herr Generalsekretär der Vereinten Nationen, sehr geehrter Herr Präsident, lieber Emmanuel Macron, sehr geehrte Minister, Gäste, Exzellenzen, ich möchte Sie alle ganz herzlich hier in Bonn – und damit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland – willkommen heißen. Wir sind sehr stolz darauf, dass der Sitz des UN-Klimasekretariats hier in Bonn ist.

Wir sind hier zusammengekommen, weil wir vor einer, wenn nicht sogar vor der zentralen Herausforderung der Menschheit stehen. Der Klimawandel – alle, die hier im Raum sind, wissen das; aber ich rufe dies auch allen anderen zu – ist für unsere Welt eine Schicksalsfrage. Sie entscheidet über das Wohlergehen von uns allen. Sie entscheidet ganz konkret darüber, ob Menschen auch in Zukunft noch zum Beispiel auf den Pazifikinseln leben können. Es hat also eine ganz besondere Aussagekraft, dass die Republik Fidschi als Inselstaat die Präsidentschaft der COP 23 übernommen hat. Es ist uns in Deutschland eine Ehre, die Republik Fidschi hierbei zu unterstützen – das sage ich im Namen der ganzen Bundesregierung.

⁵¹ Coal phase-out law

⁵² As published on www.bundestkanzlerin.de

Unsere gemeinsame Botschaft lautet: Wir wollen unsere Welt schützen. Daher stehen wir zum Pariser Klimaabkommen. Daher – das ist jetzt die Aufgabe nach dem großen Erfolg, dass dieses Abkommen überhaupt zustande gekommen ist – müssen wir es jetzt gemeinsam umsetzen. Hierfür brauchen wir ein geeignetes Regelwerk. Genau daran wird ja auf dieser Konferenz gearbeitet. Es geht um Vertrauen und es geht um Verlässlichkeit in dem gemeinsamen Bemühen um dringend notwendige Fortschritte im Klimaschutz. Dazu soll auch der „Talanoa Dialog“ dienen.

Wir in Europa wissen um unsere Verantwortung. Das europäische Ziel, das Ziel der Europäischen Union, die Treibhausgasemissionen gegenüber 1990 um mindestens 40 Prozent bis 2030 zu senken, setzen wir in der Europäischen Union rechtsverbindlich um. Jeder Mitgliedstaat der Europäischen Union muss dazu seinen Beitrag leisten. Für Europa bedeutet das, dass wir dazu die entsprechenden Regeln setzen müssen, zum Beispiel im Emissionshandel. Hierbei haben wir in der letzten Woche eine wichtige Einigung erreicht. Das Instrument wird auf das Ziel der Europäischen Union ausgerichtet. Dabei werden jetzt vor allen Dingen Zertifikate aus dem Handel herausgenommen, um den Preis zu einem wirksamen Signal entwickeln zu können. Die Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union haben sich auf die Aufteilung des gemeinsamen Ziels geeinigt. Jeder weiß, welchen Beitrag er zu leisten hat.

Mit dem Klimaschutzplan 2050 hat Deutschland seine mittel- und langfristige Strategie festgelegt. Wir wollen bis Mitte des Jahrhunderts weitgehende Treibhausgasneutralität erreichen und zwischen 80 und 95 Prozent der CO₂-Emissionen einsparen. Der nächste Schritt ist, diese Strategie mit konkreten Maßnahmen auszufüllen. Ich will hier ganz offen sprechen: Das ist auch in Deutschland nicht einfach. Wir haben uns Ziele für 2020, 2030 und eben auch 2050 vorgenommen. Unser Ziel für 2020 ist ein ehrgeiziges Ziel, nämlich eine Reduktion um 40 Prozent bezogen auf 1990. Jetzt, gegen Ende des Jahres 2017, wissen wir, dass uns dahin noch ein ganzes Stück fehlt. Gerade auch in den Gesprächen zur Bildung einer neuen Regierung spielt diese Frage in diesen Tagen eine zentrale Rolle. Dabei geht es auf der einen Seite um die Erfüllung dessen, was wir uns vorgenommen haben. Dabei geht es auf der anderen Seite aber auch um soziale Fragen und Arbeitsplätze zum Beispiel im Zusammenhang mit der Frage der Reduktion der Kohle. Dabei geht es auch um Wirtschaftlichkeit; das heißt, um die Bezahlbarkeit von Energie.

Ich will Ihnen nur sagen, dass auch in einem reichen Land, wie wir es sind, natürlich erhebliche Konflikte in der Gesellschaft vorhanden sind, die wir vernünftig und verlässlich lösen müssen. Es sind harte Diskussionen. Wir wissen, dass Deutschland als ein Land, das noch in hohem Maße Kohle, insbesondere Braunkohle, verwendet, natürlich einen wesentlichen Beitrag leisten muss, um die Ziele zu erfüllen. Aber wie genau, darüber werden wir in den nächsten Tagen miteinander präzise diskutieren müssen.

Wir haben während der deutschen G7-Präsidentschaft 2015 den gemeinsamen Willen bekräftigt, als Industriestaaten insgesamt den Weg der Dekarbonisierung zu gehen. Ich bin davon überzeugt, dass die Industriestaaten einen sehr speziellen und großen Beitrag leisten müssen, weil sie die Fähigkeit zu den notwendigen technologischen Entwicklungen haben, die Maßstäbe setzen können, aber natürlich auch, weil sie eine historische Verantwortung haben und zum CO₂-Anstieg weltweit wesentlich beigetragen haben.

In diesem Jahr haben wir in unserer G20-Präsidentschaft den G20-Aktionsplan zu Klima und Energie für ein nachhaltigeres Wirtschaftswachstum beschlossen. Auch die OECD hat deutlich gemacht, worum es geht: Nur wenn wir die umfangreichen Investitionen auch klimafreundlich ausrichten, können wir unseren Wohlstand in Zukunft sichern. Deshalb sind wir der Überzeugung, dass Klimapolitik auch zukunftsorientierte Wirtschaftspolitik ist. Denn die Bewahrung unserer Lebensgrundlagen ist ja die Voraussetzung dafür, dass wir überhaupt erfolgreich wirtschaften können. Vor diesem Hintergrund hat sich auch in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika ein breites

Bündnis aus zahlreichen Staaten, Städten und Unternehmen formiert, das die Verpflichtung „America’s Pledge“ vorgelegt hat. Ich möchte das sehr begrüßen, denn es unterstreicht die Bedeutung des Klimaschutzes in weiten Teilen der USA, ungeachtet der Entscheidung von Präsident Trump, aus dem Klimaabkommen von Paris auszusteigen.

Dies alles geschieht ja auch in der Überzeugung, dass die Transformation hin zu einer emissionsarmen Wirtschaftsweise – richtig angelegt – große Wachstumschancen bietet. Erneuerbare Energien, ressourcen- und kostensparende Effizienztechnologien, klimaschonende Neuerungen im Gebäudebereich und im Verkehr – das und anderes mehr wird auf den Märkten weltweit an Bedeutung gewinnen. Ich darf Ihnen sagen, dass in Deutschland erneuerbare Energien bereits die stärkste Säule der Energieversorgung ist und dass wir erleben, dass in einem relativ schnellen Tempo die Unterstützung für erneuerbare Energien steigt und deren Marktreife immer schneller erreicht wird.

Die Innovationschancen sollen selbstverständlich möglichst allen Ländern auf der Welt zugutekommen, gerade auch den ärmeren. Daher steht Deutschland gemeinsam mit den anderen Industrieländern zu der Zusage, Entwicklungsländer ab 2020 jährlich mit 100 Milliarden US-Dollar an öffentlichem und privatem Kapital zu unterstützen. Das ist auch der Grund dafür, warum wir in Deutschland eine Verdoppelung der öffentlichen Klimafinanzierung bis 2020 vorgesehen haben.

Aber es kommt neben öffentlichen Investitionen gerade auch auf private Investitionen an. Wir alle gemeinsam sind gefordert, die geeigneten Rahmenbedingungen zu schaffen, um auch wirklich Privatkapital für die Klimafinanzierung zu mobilisieren. In diesem Zusammenhang spielen natürlich die Entwicklungsbanken und die Weltbank eine wichtige Rolle. Wir alle als Mitgliedstaaten sollten diese Rolle stärken. Daher kann ich es nur begrüßen, dass Staatspräsident Macron gemeinsam mit dem UN-Generalsekretär und dem Präsidenten der Weltbank zu einem Gipfel mit dem Schwerpunkt Klimafinanzierung in Paris am 12. Dezember eingeladen hat. Wir alle wissen, dass der 12. Dezember für Paris und den Klimaschutz ein ganz spezielles, magisches Datum ist. Auch deshalb sollte diese Konferenz ein Erfolg werden.

Bei der Konferenz hier in Bonn stehen die drohenden Risiken und die Anpassung an den Klimawandel im Mittelpunkt. Wir haben auf der einen Seite schmelzende Gletscher, steigende Meeresspiegel und Überschwemmungen und auf der anderen Seite Stürme, unerträgliche Hitze, Dürrekatastrophen. Niemand – ich sage: niemand – darf und kann das ignorieren. Wenn wir uns zudem die wachsende Weltbevölkerung vor Augen führen, wissen wir: Zunehmende Konflikte um natürliche Ressourcen sind geradezu vorprogrammiert, wenn wir beim Klimaschutz nichts tun. Deutschland hat sich deshalb auch im Sicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen stets dafür ausgesprochen, Sicherheitsaspekte des Klimawandels viel stärker in den Blick zu nehmen. In diesem Sinne wird sich Deutschland auch weiter engagieren.

Um Entwicklungsländer zu unterstützen, damit sie sich an nicht mehr vermeidbare Folgen des Klimawandels anpassen können, hat Deutschland im Jahr 2016 1,4 Milliarden Euro zur Verfügung gestellt. Wir bringen dieses Jahr zusätzlich noch 100 Millionen Euro für den Anpassungsfonds auf, damit wir den am wenigsten entwickelten Ländern bei dieser schwierigen Aufgabe helfen können.

Es freut mich, dass wir gestern mit der Weltbank eine globale Partnerschaft für Klimarisikoversicherungen in Entwicklungsländern als eine gemeinsame Initiative der G20 und der vom Klimawandel besonders betroffenen Länder gegründet haben. In dieser Vereinbarung spiegeln sich zwei Dinge wider: Auf der einen Seite, dass Versicherungslösungen eine verlässliche, dauerhafte, gute Möglichkeit sein können, um Risiken abzufedern; auf der anderen Seite ist es für uns wichtig, dass wir dies gemeinsam mit den betroffenen Ländern vereinbart haben, denn es geht darum, dass wir auf Augenhöhe miteinander arbeiten und unsere Erfahrungen gegenseitig immer wieder mit

einbringen. Eine gute Nachricht ist auch, dass die von Marokko und Deutschland initiierte „Nationally Determined Contributions“-Partnerschaft mittlerweile auf über 70 Länder angewachsen ist.

Meine Damen und Herren, vor zwei Jahren ist etwas gelungen, das wir uns in Kopenhagen noch nicht vorstellen konnten. Aber wir wissen: Das Pariser Abkommen ist ein Ausgangspunkt. Wir wissen auch: Mit den heutigen nationalen Verpflichtungen werden wir das 2-Grad- oder das 1,5-Grad-Anstiegsziel nicht einhalten können. Deshalb ist jeder einzelne Beitrag unglaublich wichtig. Deshalb ist es wichtig, dass wir uns gegenseitig offen zeigen, dass wir unsere Beiträge vergleichbar machen. Deshalb muss von dieser Konferenz ein Signal der Ernsthaftigkeit ausgehen, dass wir das Pariser Abkommen als Anfang sehen und dass die Arbeit damit erst richtig losgegangen ist. Die täglichen Wetterereignisse und Klimakatastrophen auf der Welt zeigen uns, wie drängend die Sache ist.⁵³ Daher heißt es jetzt, unseren Worten auch Taten folgen zu lassen. Wir in Deutschland werden uns bemühen, auch wenn das viele Kontroversen hervorruft. Deshalb bin ich auch nicht leichtfertig, wenn ich anderen sage: Tut etwas. Ich weiß, wie schwer es auch im eigenen Land ist, das zu erkämpfen.

Daher wünsche ich allen, die sich für den Klimaschutz engagieren – sei es, dass Sie als Vertretung Ihrer Staaten hier sind, sei es, dass Sie sich als Nichtregierungsorganisationen für dieses Ziel stark machen –, guten Mut, guten Willen und viel Tatkraft. Vielen Dank.

Translation:

Dear Mr. Chairperson, Dear Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dear Mr. President, Dear Emmanuel Macron, Dear Ministers, Guests, Excellencies,

I would like to welcome you all very warmly here in Bonn - and thus to the Federal Republic of Germany. We are very proud that the headquarters of the UN Climate Change Secretariat⁵⁴ are located here in Bonn.

We have come together here because we are facing a, if not the central challenge of humanity. Climate change is - everybody in this room knows this, but I call this out to everyone else as well - a matter of destiny for our world. It will determine the well-being of all of us. It decides in concrete terms, for example, whether people will still be able to live on the Pacific islands, in the future. It is therefore particularly significant that the Republic of Fiji, as an island state, has taken over the presidency of COP23. It is an honor for us in Germany to support the Republic of Fiji in this - and I say this on behalf of the entire German government.

Our common message is: We want to protect our world. That is why we stand by the Paris climate agreement. That is why - and this is now the task after the great success that this agreement was reached in the first place - we must now implement it together. To do this, we need a suitable

⁵³ Here the transcript of the speech reads: “Die täglichen Wetterereignisse und Klimakatastrophen auf der Welt zeigen uns, wie drängend die Sache ist “ [the daily weather-events and climate-catastrophes in the world show us how urgent the matter is] but Merkel really said: “...die täglichen Ereignisse über Katastrophen auf der Welt gerade, im Bereich des Wetters, des Klimas, zeigen uns wie drängend die Sache ist.” [The daily events (she probably wanted to say “news”) about the catastrophes in the world, particularly in terms of weather, [corrects herself] of climate, show us how urgent the matter is.] She here confuses the words “weather” and “climate”. The transcription published on the chancellor’s official website corresponds to the written version of the speech. It might be what Merkel was meant to say or it might be what was agreed on later as the “official version.” If the latter is true it would mean that the chancellor’s advisers noticed the mistake and tried to correct in the official publication of the speech by slightly changing or adapting the sentence.

⁵⁴ UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)

set of rules. That is precisely what is being worked on at this conference. It's about trust and reliability in our joint efforts to make urgently needed progress on climate protection. The Talanoa Dialogue is also intended to serve this purpose.

We in Europe are aware of our responsibility. We are implementing the European Union's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 compared with 1990 levels in a legally binding manner. Every member state of the European Union must make its contribution to this. For Europe, this means that we have to set the appropriate rules, for example in emissions trading. We reached an important agreement on this last week. The instrument will be aligned with the European Union's target. Above all, certificates are now being removed from trading so that the price can be developed into an effective signal. The member states of the European Union have agreed on how to share the common target. Everyone knows what contribution they have to make.

With its Climate Protection Plan 2050, Germany has defined its medium- and long-term strategy. We want to achieve extensive greenhouse gas neutrality by the middle of the century and cut between 80 and 95 percent of CO₂ emissions. The next step is to flesh out this strategy with concrete measures. I want to speak quite frankly here: This is not easy in Germany either. We have set ourselves targets for 2020, 2030 and, indeed, 2050. Our target for 2020 is an ambitious one, namely a reduction of 40 percent compared to 1990. Now, toward the end of 2017, we know that we still have a long way to get there. This issue is also playing a central role in the talks on forming a new government these days. On the one hand, it is about fulfilling what we have set out to do. On the other hand, it is also about social issues and jobs, for example in connection with the issue of reducing coal. This is also about economic efficiency; that means, about the affordability of energy.

I just want to tell you that even in a rich country like we are, there are of course considerable conflicts in society that we have to resolve in a reasonable and reliable way. These are tough discussions. We know that Germany, as a country that still uses coal, especially lignite, to a large extent, will of course have to make a significant contribution to meeting the targets. But exactly how, is something we will have to discuss with each other precisely over the next few days.

During the German G7 presidency in 2015, we reaffirmed our common will to follow the path of decarbonization as industrialized nations as a whole. I am convinced that the industrialized countries have a very special and major contribution to make because they have the capacity for the necessary technological developments that can set standards, but also, of course, because they have a historic responsibility and have contributed significantly to the CO₂ rise worldwide.

This year, during our G20 presidency, we adopted the G20 Action Plan on Climate and Energy for More Sustainable Economic Growth. The OECD has also made it clear what is at stake: only if we also gear our extensive investments to climate-friendly aspects can we secure our prosperity in the future. That is why we are convinced that climate policy is also future-oriented economic policy. After all, preserving our livelihoods is a prerequisite for us to be able to do business successfully at all. Against this background, a broad alliance of numerous states, cities and companies has also been formed in the United States of America, which has presented the "America's Pledge". I would like to welcome this very much, because it underscores the importance of climate protection in large parts of the USA, notwithstanding President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.

All this is being done in the conviction that the transformation to a low-emission economy - if properly implemented - offers great opportunities for growth. Renewable energies, resource- and cost-saving efficiency technologies, climate-friendly innovations in the building sector and in transport - these and more will gain in importance on markets worldwide. Let me tell you that in Germany, renewable energies are already the strongest pillar of the energy supply and that we are

seeing support for renewable energies increasing at a relatively rapid pace and their market maturity being achieved ever more quickly.⁵⁵

Innovation opportunities should, of course, benefit as many countries around the world as possible, especially the poorer ones. That is why Germany, together with the other industrialized countries, stands by its commitment to support developing countries with 100 billion U.S. dollars in public and private capital every year from 2020. This is also the reason why we in Germany have earmarked a doubling of public climate financing by 2020.

But private investment is just as important as public investment. It is up to all of us to create the right framework conditions to really mobilize private capital for climate financing. In this context, of course, the development banks and the World Bank play an important role. All of us as member states should strengthen this role. Therefore, I can only welcome the fact that President Macron, together with the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank, has invited us to a summit focusing on climate finance in Paris on December 12. We all know that December 12 is a very special, magical date for Paris and climate protection. That is another reason why this conference should be a success.

The conference here in Bonn will focus on the looming risks and adaptation to climate change. We have melting glaciers, rising sea levels and floods on the one hand, and storms, unbearable heat, drought disasters on the other. No one - I say no one - should and can ignore this. If we also consider the growing world population, we know: Increasing conflicts over natural resources are virtually pre-programmed if we do nothing about climate protection. That is why Germany has always spoken out in the United Nations Security Council in favor of paying much more attention to the security aspects of climate change. Germany will continue to work in this direction.

In 2016, Germany made 1.4 billion euros available to help developing countries adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change. This year, we are raising an additional 100 million euros for the Adaptation Fund so that we can help the least developed countries with this difficult task.

I am pleased that yesterday we established a Global Partnership for Climate Risk Insurance in Developing Countries with the World Bank as a joint initiative between the G20 and countries most affected by climate change⁵⁶. This agreement reflects two things: on the one hand, that insurance

⁵⁵ The official version reads: „we are seeing support for renewable energies increasing“ (die Unterstützung für erneuerbare Energien steigt), whilst when listening to Merkels speech in the video, we hear her say the contrary. There she says: „support (which I understood and therefore translated as „financial support“) for renewable energies is being reduced, and market maturity being achieved“ (wir erleben [...], dass [...] die Unterstützung für die erneuerbaren Energien reduziert und die Marktreife immer schneller erreicht wird.“).

While listening to Merkels speech I found the formulation unusual, but believed I understood in any case what the chancellor was trying to say. Now, after reading the official transcription, I am not so sure. Is Merkel speaking about the financial support that is less necessary now because renewables are close to reaching market maturity? Or is she referring to the psychological support that is less necessary – meaning that the Germans are now in favour of (they now „support“) renewables?

⁵⁶ In the official version Merkel speaks of the countries that are „most affected by climate change“ but this is not what she really said at the conference. When watching the video of her speech we simply hear her speak of the countries „affected by climate change“ as if only some countries were affected whilst others- like Germany- were not affected at all. The signal the chancellor is unwillingly sending out with this statement is that the rich country of Germany is taking care of a problem that only affects some less developed countries. Of course, she also says the developed world has a special responsibility. But her speech seems to downplay this responsibility, which is not what she intends. Merkel uses imprecise language apparently without noticing its implications since she does not correct herself as she does in other parts of the speech.

solutions can be a reliable, lasting, good way of cushioning risks; on the other hand, it is important for us that we have agreed this together with the affected countries, because the idea is that we work together as equals and always bring our experience to bear on each other. It is also good news that the Nationally Determined Contributions partnership initiated by Morocco and Germany has now grown to include more than 70 countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, two years ago we achieved something that we could not yet have imagined in Copenhagen. But we know: The Paris Agreement is a starting point. We also know: with today's national commitments, we will not be able to meet the 2-degree or the 1.5-degree increase target. That's why every single contribution is incredibly important. That's why it's important that we are open to each other, that we make our contributions comparable. That's why a signal of seriousness needs to come out of this conference, that we see the Paris Agreement as a start and that it's just the beginning of the work. The daily weather events and climate catastrophes around the world show us how urgent the matter is. That is why it is now a matter of following up our words with deeds. We in Germany will make an effort, even if it causes a lot of controversy. That's why I'm not flippant when I tell others: do something. I know how difficult it is to fight for this, even in our own country.

That's why I wish all those who are committed to climate protection - whether you're here representing your states, or whether you're working as non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal - good courage, good will and a lot of drive. Thank you very much!

New Year's Speech by Chancellor Angela Merkel Berlin 2018

Transcript:

Liebe Mitbürgerinnen und Mitbürger,

ein Jahr liegt hinter uns mit Höhen und Tiefen, mit frohen und traurigen Momenten. Jedem von uns wird dazu etwas ganz Persönliches einfallen. Ich denke heute Abend vor allem an das überaus schwierige politische Jahr, das heute zu Ende geht. Ich weiß, viele von Ihnen haben sehr mit der Bundesregierung gehadert: erst haben wir lange gebraucht, um überhaupt eine Regierung zu bilden und als wir sie hatten, da gab es Streit und viel Beschäftigung mit uns selbst. Es ist mein Verständnis als Bundeskanzlerin, das unsere Demokratie von der mehrheitlich getragenen Übereinkunft lebt, dass ihre Staatsdiener alles in ihrer Machtstehende für den inneren Frieden und den Zusammenhalt unseres Landes tun. Dass sie sich immer wieder prüfen, was sie auch ganz persönlich dazu beitragen können. Das habe ich getan. Und zwar auch unabhängig davon wie unbefriedigend das vergangene Jahr war. Weil ganz grundsätzlich 13 Jahre Amtszeit als Bundeskanzlerin dafür allemal Grund genug sind. So habe ich Ende Oktober einen Neubeginn eingeleitet und gesagt, dass ich nach Ende dieser Legislaturperiode keine politischen Ämter mehr ausüben werde. Die Demokratie lebt vom Wechsel und wir alle stehen in der Zeit. Wir bauen auf dem auf, was unsere Vorgänger uns überlassen haben und gestalten in der Gegenwart, für die, die nach uns kommen. Dabei leitet mich die Überzeugung: die Herausforderungen unserer Zeit werden wir nur meistern, wenn wir zusammenhalten und mit anderen über Grenzen hinweg zusammenarbeiten. Geradezu sinnbildlich dafür sind für mich die Bilder, die uns unser Astronaut Alexander Gerst in den letzten Monaten von der Internationalen Raumstation ISS geschickt hat. Es sind Bilder, die uns immer wieder eine neue Sicht auf unseren Planeten geben. Auf Naturgewalten wie Hurricanes, mit denen wir Menschen leben müssen, auf unsere mitteleuropäischen Landschaften, die in diesem ungewöhnlich trockenen Sommer auch aus dem All ganz braun statt grün aussahen. Immer wieder sind es auch einfach Bilder von der überwältigenden Schönheit unserer Erde. Einerseits diese überwältigende Schönheit, andererseits

wissen wir um die Verletzlichkeit unserer Lebensgrundlagen. Und zwar im umfassenden Sinne. Da ist die Schicksalsfrage des Klimawandels, die der Steuerung und Ordnung der Migration, da ist der Kampf gegen den internationalen Terrorismus. In unserem eigenen Interesse wollen wir all diese Fragen lösen. Und das können wir am besten, wenn wir die Interessen anderer mitbedenken. Das ist die Lehre aus den zwei Weltkriegen des vergangenen Jahrhunderts. Aber diese Überzeugung wird heute nicht mehr von allen geteilt. Gewissheiten der internationalen Zusammenarbeit geraten unter Druck. In einer solchen Situation müssen wir für unsere Überzeugungen wieder stärker eintreten, - argumentieren, - kämpfen. Und wir müssen im eigenen Interesse mehr Verantwortung übernehmen. Deutschland wird ab morgen für zwei Jahre Mitglied im UN-Sicherheitsrat sein und sich dort für globale Lösungen einsetzen. Wir steigern unsere Mittel für humanitäre Hilfe und Entwicklungshilfe, aber auch unsere Verteidigungsausgaben weiter. Wir setzen uns dafür ein, die Europäische Union robuster und entscheidungsfähiger zu machen. Und mit Großbritannien wollen wir trotz des Austritts aus der Europäischen Union weiter eine enge Partnerschaft bewahren. Im Mai können Sie durch Ihre Teilnahme an der Europawahl dazu beitragen, dass die Europäische Union auch in Zukunft ein Projekt von Frieden, Wohlstand und Sicherheit sein wird.

Liebe Mitbürgerinnen und Mitbürger, Wohlstand, Sicherheit und Frieden, dafür müssen wir vor allem aber bei uns zuhause arbeiten. Millionen Menschen stellen sich bereitwillig in den Dienst der Gesellschaft. Ich danke an diesem Silvesterabend besonders allen Polizistinnen und Polizisten, Soldatinnen und Soldaten, den vielen Rettungskräften und all denjenigen, die sich in Krankenhäusern und in der Pflege um andere kümmern. Genauso wie den Millionen ehrenamtlich Tätigen. Um Arbeitsplätze, Wohlstand und unsere Lebensgrundlagen zu sichern, geht die Bundesregierung konsequent die nächsten Schritte beim Strukturwandel von traditionellen zu neuen Technologien und setzt ihre Strategie für den digitalen Fortschritt um. Mit unserer Arbeit für gleichwertige Lebensverhältnisse wollen wir erreichen, dass jede und jeder einen guten Zugang zu Bildung, Wohnraum und Gesundheitsversorgung hat. Auf dem Land genauso wie in der Stadt. Dabei ringen wir um die besten Lösungen in der Sache, immer häufiger aber auch um den Stiel unseres Miteinanders. Unsere Werte. Offenheit, Toleranz und Respekt. Diese Werte haben unser Land stark gemacht. Für sie müssen wir uns gemeinsam einsetzen. Auch wenn es unbequem und anstrengend ist. Da, wo wir an unsere Werte glauben, und unsere Ideen mit Tatkraft umsetzen, da kann Neues und Gutes entstehen. Daraus können die Kräfte erwachsen, die wir brauchen, um Schritt für Schritt die Probleme zu lösen und so den Boden für eine sichere, friedliche Zukunft für uns und unsere Kinder zu bereiten. Den Mut dazu wünsche ich uns allen. Verbunden mit all meinen guten Wünschen für Sie und Ihre Familien, für ein gesundes, frohes und gesegnetes neues Jahr 2019.

Translation:

Dear fellow citizens,

A year lies behind us with ups and downs, with happy and sad moments. Each of us will have something very personal to think about. Tonight, I am thinking first and foremost of the extremely difficult political year that is coming to an end today. I know that many of you have had a lot of trouble with the German government: first, it took us a long time to form a government at all, and once we had one, there were arguments and a lot of preoccupation with ourselves. It is my understanding as Chancellor that our democracy thrives on the majority agreement that its public servants do everything in their power for the internal peace and cohesion of our country, that they constantly examine what they can personally contribute to this. That is what I have done. And I did so regardless of how unsatisfactory the past year was. Because, in principle, 13 years in office as Chancellor are reason enough for that. So, at the end of October, I made a fresh start and said that I

would no longer hold any political office after the end of this legislative period. Democracy thrives on change, and we all stand in time. We build on what our predecessors left us, and shape the present for those who come after us. I am guided by the conviction that we will only master the challenges of our time if we stick together and work together with others across borders. For me, the images that our astronaut Alexander Gerst has sent us from the International Space Station (ISS) in recent months are emblematic of this. They are images that give us a new perspective on our planet time and again. On the forces of nature, such as hurricanes, that we humans must live with, on our Central European landscapes, which looked brown instead of green from space during this unusually dry summer. Again, and again, there are also simply pictures of the overwhelming beauty of our earth. On the one hand, this overwhelming beauty, on the other hand, we know about the vulnerability of our livelihoods. And this in a comprehensive sense. There is the vital question of climate change, that of controlling and ordering migration, there is the fight against international terrorism. In our own interest, we want to solve all these issues. And we can do that best if we also consider the interests of others. That is the lesson of the two world wars of the last century. But this conviction is no longer shared by everyone today. Certainties of international cooperation are coming under pressure. In such a situation, we must stand up, argue, fight for our convictions again. And we must assume more responsibility in our own interest. Starting tomorrow, Germany will be a member of the UN Security Council for two years, and advocate for global solutions there. We are further increasing our funding for humanitarian- and development aid, but also our defense spending. We are committed to making the European Union more robust and more capable of taking decisions. And we want to maintain a close partnership with the United Kingdom despite its exit from the European Union. In May, you can help ensure that the European Union will continue to be a project of peace, prosperity, and security by voting in the European elections.

Dear fellow citizens, prosperity, security, and peace are things we must work for above all at home. Millions of people willingly put themselves at the service of society. On this New Year's Eve, I would like to thank, in particular, all the police officers, soldiers, the many rescue workers and all those who care for others in hospitals and in care facilities. The same goes for the millions of volunteers. To safeguard jobs, prosperity and our livelihoods, the German government is systematically taking the next steps in the structural shift from traditional to new technologies and implementing its strategy for digital progress. With our work for equal living conditions, we want to ensure that everyone has good access to education, housing, and healthcare. In the countryside as well as in the city. In the process, we are struggling to find the best solutions for the issues at hand, but increasingly also for the style of our interaction, our values, openness, tolerance, and respect. These values have made our country strong. We must stand up for them together. Even if it is uncomfortable and exhausting.

Where we believe in our values and implement our ideas with drive, new and good things can arise. This can give rise to the forces we need to solve the problems step by step and thus prepare the ground for a secure, peaceful future for us and our children. I wish us all the courage to do so. Together with all my good wishes for you and your families, for a healthy, happy and blessed new year 2019.

[Speech by German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the Climate and Sustainability Summit and the opening of the 74th United Nations General Assembly in New York \(2019\)](#)

Transcript:

Meine Damen und Herren, Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen,

wir alle haben den Weckruf der Jugend gehört und ich möchte dem Generalsekretär Antonio Guterres ganz herzlich danken, dass er dieses Ereignis hier abhält im Vorfeld der Generalversammlung.

Es gibt keinen Zweifel, dass der Klimawandel, die Erderwärmung, im Wesentlichen von Menschen gemacht ist. Und deshalb müssen wir dem Ratschlag der Wissenschaft folgen. Es ist eine globale Herausforderung, die nur gemeinsam bewältigt werden kann, denn wir haben alle nur eine Erde.⁵⁷ Der Maßstab für unser Handeln muss das Pariser Abkommen sein, das den Rahmen setzt, um die Erderwärmung auf 1,5°C zu beschränken. Die Industriestaaten sind die Verursacher⁵⁸ dieser Erderwärmung wie wir sie heute sehen. Die Entwicklungsländer sind die Hauptleidtragenden. Und deshalb haben wir als Vertreter der Industrieländer die Pflicht, Innovation, Technologie und Geld einzusetzen, um die Wege zu ebnen, um die Erderwärmung zu stoppen.

Deutschland sieht seine Verantwortung international und national. International werden wir unsere Mittel für den weltweiten Klimaschutz von 2 auf 4 Mrd. Euro erhöhen im Verhältnis zu 2014⁵⁹. Insbesondere werden wir 1,5 Mrd. Euro in den Green Climate Fund einzahlen. Wir setzen uns ein für Klimarisikoversicherungen, und wir sind seit Jahrzehnten aktiv und werden dies fortsetzen, im Bereich des Waldschutzes. National stellt sich die Lage folgendermaßen dar: Deutschland hat 1 Prozent der Weltbevölkerung, und 2 Prozent der weltweiten Emissionen⁶⁰. Wenn alle so handeln würden wie Deutschland, würden sich die Emissionen weltweit verdoppeln. Jeder weiß was das bedeutet.

Deshalb haben wir uns vorgenommen bis 2030 55% unserer CO2 Emissionen gegenüber 1990 einzusparen und im Jahre 2050 klimaneutral zu sein. Dazu wollen wir 2030 65%, das heißt 2/3 unserer Energieversorgung aus erneuerbaren Energien erwirtschaften. Wir werden 2022 aus der Kernenergie aussteigen und spätestens 2038 aus der Kohlekraftwerkswirtschaft. Wir werden eine Wende einleiten, im Bereich des Verkehrs, in den nächsten Jahren, und haben dazu gemeinsam mit der Veränderung im Gebäudebereich, für die nächsten 4 Jahre [vor] 54 Mrd. Euro in Investitionen in neue Technologien, in neue Mobilität, in Isolierung unserer Häuser, in neue Heizungssysteme zu investieren. Wir werden eine CO2 Bepreisung einführen, - nicht nur wie wir es heute schon im Rahmen der Europäischen Union haben-, für die Bereiche Industrie und Energie- sondern, wir werden - national beginnend und hoffentlich dann europäisch fortgesetzt- auch dem CO2 im Bereich von Gebäuden und Verkehr einen Preis geben. Weil wir glauben, dass nur die Entwicklung eines Preissignals, uns wirklich dazu bringt die noch verfügbaren Budgets an klimaschädlichen Gasen nicht zu überschreiten.

⁵⁷ Merkel says: „wir haben alle nur eine Erde“, the subtitles read: „Wir alle haben nur eine Erde“ [the word „alle“ (all) is placed differently in the two versions which slightly changes the meaning. When placed in the subtitles, it means “we all, have one earth” in the sense that we all share a single earth. The way Merkel says it, it can be understood as if „we all” had “one earth” meaning „each of us” which would than mean there is an earth per person. In the context of the speech, it is clear that it is not what Merkel means and probably only few would have even noticed the mistake.

⁵⁸ Merkel speaks of „Verursacher“ (literally meaning „causal agents”), the subtitle says “Hauptverursacher” (literally: “main causal agents”) I’d translate it rather as “polluter” or “main polluter”.

⁵⁹ Merkel says: „im Verhältnis zu 2014“ (in relation to 2014) the subtitle says what she means, namely: „im Vergleich zu 2014“ (compared to 2014).

⁶⁰ She says: “Deutschland hat 1% der Weltbevölkerung und 2% der weltweiten Emissionen” (literally: Germany **has** 1% of the world’s population and **has** 2% of the worldwide emission” the subtitle once again states what she means, namely: “Deutschland hat 1% der Weltbevölkerung und **verursacht** 2% der Emissionen” (Germany has 1% of the worlds population **and accounts for** 2% of the worldwide emissions). This is one more example for Merkel’s rhetorical imperfections that can be found every now and then. In this case it does not change the meaning, but simply sounds a bit unusual. But it gives the speech the special “Merkel-touch”.

Insgesamt sehen wir uns und unser Land vor einem tiefgreifenden Wandel, bei dem wir durch Anreize auch die Menschen mitnehmen müssen. Es gibt diejenigen die aktiv sind, und demonstrieren, und uns Druck machen, aber es gibt auch die Zweifler. Und Aufgabe jeder Regierung ist es, alle Menschen mitzunehmen. Dieser Aufgabe stellt sich Deutschland mit seinen gerade am letzten Freitag beschlossenen Maßnahmen und dem was wir bisher getan haben.

Wir werden unseren Beitrag zu einer nachhaltigen Wirtschaft und zu einem nachhaltigen Leben weltweit leisten.

Herzlichen Dank!

Translation

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues,

We have all heard the wake-up call from the youth⁶¹, and I would like to thank Secretary-General Antonio Guterres very much for holding this event here in the run-up to the General Assembly.

There is no doubt that climate change, [that] global warming, is essentially man-made. And therefore, we must follow the advice of science. It is a global challenge that can only be met in [international] cooperation because there is only one Earth⁶². The benchmark for our actions must be the Paris Agreement, which sets the framework to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The industrialized countries are the [main] polluters⁶³ of this global warming as we see it today. The developing countries are the main sufferers. And that is why we, as representatives of the industrialized countries, have a duty to use innovation, technology, and money to pave the way to stop global warming.

Germany sees its responsibility internationally and nationally. Internationally, we will increase our funding for global climate protection from two to four billion euros compared to 2014⁶⁴. In particular, we will contribute 1.5 billion euros to the Green Climate Fund. We are committed to climate risk insurance, and we have been active for decades and will continue to do so, in the area of forest protection.

Nationally, the situation is as follows: Germany has one percent of the world's population, and two percent of the world's emissions⁶⁵. If everyone acted like Germany, global emissions would

⁶¹ Merkel here refers to Greta Thunberg.

⁶² Merkel says: „wir haben alle nur eine Erde“, the subtitles read: „Wir alle haben nur eine Erde“ [the word “alle” (all) is positioned differently]. The sentence means “there is only one earth” or “we have only one earth” but since literally Merkel speaks of “us all”, the tiny word “all” slightly changes the meaning in German. It is clear what Merkel means but it is interesting to note the rhetorical “mistake” she makes. In a different context, if we were speaking of coins, for example, we’d say, “we all have just one coin” and it would be understood that we have one coin each, meaning there are as many coins as people. In the given context, it is clear that Merkel is not saying that we have one planet per person, but this slightly unprecise language is typical for the German chancellor. It makes her sound more natural, as if she hadn’t prepared a speech but spoke spontaneously.

⁶³ Merkel says „polluters “, but the subtitle reads „main polluters “.

⁶⁴ Merkel says: „im Verhältnis zu 2014“ (in relation to 2014) the subtitle says what she means, namely: „im Vergleich zu 2014“ (compared to 2014).

⁶⁵ She says: “Deutschland hat 1% der Weltbevölkerung und 2% der weltweiten Emissionen” (Germany has 1% of the world’s population and has 2% of the worldwide emission” the subtitle once again states what she means, namely: “Deutschland hat 1% der Weltbevölkerung und verursacht 2% der Emissionen” (Germany has 1% of the worlds population and accounts for 2% of the worldwide emissions). This is one more example for

double. Everyone knows what that means. That is why we have set ourselves the goal of reducing our CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to the 1990 levels, and to be climate neutral by 2050. To achieve this, we want to generate 65%, or two thirds, of our energy supply from renewable sources by 2030. We will phase out nuclear energy by 2022, and coal-fired power plants by 2038 at the latest.

We will initiate a turnaround, within the next few years, in the area of transport, and to this end, together with the change in the building sector, [we] invest 54 billion euros in the next four years, in investments in new technologies⁶⁶, in new mobility, in insulation of our houses, in new heating systems. We will introduce CO2 pricing, not only - as it is already the case today within the framework of the European Union-, for the areas of industry and energy, but we will - starting nationally and hopefully then continued at the European level - also give a price to CO2 in the area of buildings and transport. Because we believe that only the development of a price signal will really prevent us from exceeding the remaining budgets of climate-damaging gases⁶⁷.

Overall, we see ourselves and our country facing a profound change, where we also need to bring people with us through incentives. There are those who are active, and demonstrate, and put pressure on us, but there are also the doubters. And it is the task of every government to bring all people along with it. Germany is facing up to this task with the measures it just adopted last Friday and what we have done so far.

We will make our contribution to a sustainable economy and to sustainable living worldwide.

Thank you very much!

Merkel's rhetorical imperfections that can be found every now and then. In this case it does not change the meaning, but simply sounds a bit unusual. But it gives the speech the special "Merkel-touch".

⁶⁶ „plan to invest in investments in new technologies...“ may sound bizarre but I'm staying very close to Merkel's words here. In German, sentences can be long sometimes, and a speaker can then get lost in the wording. This is what seems to happen to Merkel here. She should have said "make investments in..." but she had already started with the wrong verb when reaching the part with the detailed investments that are planned. It is another example for Merkel's way of speaking, that might sound unperfect but makes her also sound natural. Funnily these tiny mistakes sometimes add to her credibility. It makes her sound as if she was being very honest. As if she just said what she really thinks without having carefully prepared the perfect rhetoric in advance.

⁶⁷ What Merkel calls „budget“ here, should rather be called "limits". She refers to the calculated amount of CO2 that can still be emitted until reaching the 1,5°C. Of course, this is not a budget but a boundary we should never cross. Therefore "limit" seems more appropriate. But "budget" is the word commonly used in this context.

Selected passages from the press statement by Chancellor Merkel at the Climate and Sustainability Summit and the opening of the 74th United Nations General Assembly in New York (24.09.2019)⁶⁸

Transcript:

Frage: Frau Bundeskanzlerin, Sie haben gestern mit Greta gesprochen. Um was ging es? Was haben Sie ihr gesagt und was hat sie Ihnen mit auf den Weg gegeben?

Bk'in Merkel: Aus solchen Gesprächen berichtet man ja nicht. Ich habe sie getroffen. Ich will aber vielleicht die Gelegenheit nutzen, doch zu sagen, dass ich ihr durchaus in einer Sache widerspreche. Sie hat gestern ja eine aufrüttelnde Rede gehalten, aber auch eine Rede, in der aus meiner Sicht nicht ausreichend zum Ausdruck kam, in welcher Weise Technologie und Innovation gerade im Energiebereich, aber auch im Energieeinsparbereich uns Möglichkeiten eröffnen, die Ziele zu erreichen. Solche Möglichkeiten wollen wir nutzen, und ich messe Innovation und Technologie hier eine sehr große Bedeutung bei. Das ist ein Widerspruch zu dem, was ich da gestern gehört habe.

Frage: Fühlen Sie sich von ihrer Rede direkt angesprochen? Das war ja eine Anklage an die Vereinten Nationen - sie fühlt sich verraten, sie sieht ihre Zukunft gefährdet. Sie saßen ja auch im Auditorium. Nehmen Sie sich das zu Herzen?

Bk'in Merkel: Jeder aufmerksame Mensch hört zu und fühlt sich damit auch angesprochen, das ist selbstverständlich. Trotzdem habe ich mit Überzeugung auch unser Vorgehen deutlich gemacht sowohl was unsere internationale Verantwortung für den Klimaschutz angeht als auch was unser nationales Programm angeht. Wir werden sehr sorgsam überprüfen, ob wir unsere Ziele erreichen können. Wenn wir sie nicht erreichen können, müssen wir nachschärfen, das ist ganz klar. Aber mit der Erreichung dieser Ziele leisten wir einen Beitrag zur Umsetzung des Pariser Abkommens.

Translation:

Question: Chancellor, you spoke to Greta yesterday. What did you talk about? What did you say to her and what did she tell you?

Chancellor Merkel: You don't report on conversations like that. I met her. But I'd like to take this opportunity to say that I do disagree with her on one point. Yesterday, she gave a stirring speech, but also a speech that, in my view, did not sufficiently express the ways in which technology and innovation, particularly in the energy sector, but also in the energy-saving sector, open up opportunities for us to achieve our goals. We want to take advantage of such opportunities, and I attach great importance to innovation and technology here. That is a contradiction to what I heard there yesterday.

Question: Do you feel directly addressed by her speech? After all, that was an indictment of the United Nations - she feels betrayed, she sees her future endangered. You were also sitting in the auditorium. Are you taking this to heart?

⁶⁸ Source: <https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/bkin-de/aktuelles/pressestatement-von-bundeskanzlerin-merkel-beim-klima-und-nachhaltigkeitsgipfel-sowie-der-eroeffnung-der-74-generalversammlung-der-vereinten-nationen-1674748> [last accessed: 07.04.2021]

Chancellor Merkel: Every attentive person listens and feels addressed, that goes without saying. Nevertheless, I have also made our approach clear with conviction, both in terms of our international responsibility for climate protection and in terms of our national program. We will check very carefully whether we can achieve our goals. If we cannot achieve them, we will have to tighten up, that's quite clear. But by achieving these targets, we are contributing to the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Speech by Chancellor Merkel on participation in the German Employers' Day 2019 in Berlin (Extract)

Transcript:

Sehr geehrter, lieber Herr Kramer, sehr geehrte Präsidenten der Wirtschaftsverbände, Herr Hoffmann, Herr Hundt, sehr geehrte Gäste und Mitglieder der BDA, guten Morgen erst einmal und herzlichen Dank für die Einladung. Ich bin die Erste in einem langen Reigen politischer Repräsentanten heute und möchte zuallererst Herrn Kramer zu seiner Wiederwahl gratulieren. Herzlichen Glückwunsch. [...]

Meine Damen und Herren, wenn wir hier in der Sonnenallee sind, in diesem nicht nur gemütlichen, aber offensichtlich ganz praktischen Gebäude, lieber Steffen Kampeter, dann erinnert uns das daran, dass wir vor drei Tagen den 30. Jahrestag des Mauerfalls gefeiert haben. Ich persönlich habe unweit von hier, in Adlershof, mein forschendes Leben als Physikerin verbracht, bin damals von der Friedrichstraße – sozusagen immer an der Mauer entlang – bis Adlershof gefahren. Dass wir heute ein wiedervereinigtes Land sind, ist ein großes Glück. Und dass die Soziale Marktwirtschaft dazu beigetragen hat, dass die Deutsche Einheit in weiten Teilen gelungen ist, zeigt, was für eine Klasse Marke das ist. Allen, die dazu beigetragen haben, möchte ich noch einmal ein herzliches Dankeschön sagen.

Die wirtschaftliche Leistungsfähigkeit der neuen Länder hat sich zwischen 1991 und 2018 mehr als verdoppelt. Die Arbeitslosigkeit beträgt heute nur noch ein Drittel des Wertes von 2005. Wir haben in Thüringen, Sachsen und Brandenburg geringere Arbeitslosenraten als in Nordrhein-Westfalen. Wir haben als großes Thema – selbst in meinem Wahlkreis in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern – den Fachkräftemangel, aber nicht mehr so sehr das Thema Arbeitslosigkeit. Wir hatten Zeiten, da waren wir über 20 Prozent gewohnt. Heute ist das schon wesentlich besser. Thüringen hat die höchste Industriedichte mit Unternehmen von zwanzig und mehr Beschäftigten. Es ist also vieles entstanden. Wir alle wissen aber: es bleibt auch vieles zu tun, denn das Ablegen einer Diktatur und der Aufbruch in die Freiheit sind etwas, das auch Biografien durcheinanderbringt. Deshalb müssen wir in Ost und West vor allen Dingen weiter im Gespräch miteinander bleiben. Und allen, die das tun, ein herzliches Dankeschön dafür.

In der Zeit, in der sich die Deutsche Einheit vollzogen hat und die europäische Einigung vorangegangen ist, ist aber auch vieles andere auf der Welt passiert. Das Jahr 1989 hat nicht nur bei uns in Europa die Welt verändert. 1989 machte das chinesische Bruttoinlandsprodukt im Vergleich zum amerikanischen 8,8 Prozent aus, heute sind es 66 Prozent. Sie sehen also, wie sich die Kräfteverhältnisse auf der Welt verändert haben und dass wir auch in einen Wettbewerb der Systeme gekommen sind. Wir dachten 1989, das sei der endgültige Siegeszug der Freiheit, der sich einfach so fortentwickeln würde. Aber wenn man ehrlich ist, stellt man heute fest, dass sehr

unterschiedliche politische Systeme wie das chinesische, das amerikanische und das europäische miteinander im Wettbewerb stehen. Und das heißt natürlich, dass auch wir herausgefordert sind. Diese Herausforderung richtet sich an Deutschland, sie richtet sich an ganz Europa.

Sie haben eben – und das hat mir sehr gut gefallen – auch auf diese Veränderungen hingewiesen, auf die multipolare Ordnung und auf die Tatsache, dass es keine Rechtsansprüche auf Wohlstand gibt. Das ist im Übrigen auch eine Lehre der Deutschen Einheit. Das haben wir, die wir in der ehemaligen DDR gelebt haben, hautnah erfahren, denn es war ja nicht die böse Treuhandanstalt, sondern der ökonomische Bankrott, der schon von Herrn Schürer vom Politbüro konstatiert worden war, der uns in diese schwierigen Anfangsphasen gebracht hat.

Sie haben also darauf hingewiesen, dass auch in diesen Zeiten einer multipolaren Ordnung, eines neuen Kampfs und Wettbewerbs der Systeme der gesellschaftliche Zusammenhalt die Voraussetzung für die Lösung grundsätzlicher Fragen ist. Im Grunde wird durch die Erfordernisse der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und des gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhalts die gesamte politische Debatte getrieben; und auch durch zwei große Herausforderungen: auf der einen Seite die Digitalisierung, die unsere Art zu arbeiten völlig verändert – Sie wissen das aus Ihrer Praxis –, und auf der anderen Seite die große Menschheitsherausforderung des Klimawandels.

Lassen Sie mich an dieser Stelle, weil das ja sonst nicht die Urkompetenz der BDA ist, nur ein Wort sagen: Sie sagen, man darf Klimaschutzmaßnahmen nicht übers Knie brechen. Das ist sicherlich richtig. Aber auf der anderen Seite sagen uns Hunderte, wenn nicht Tausende von Wissenschaftlern: Ihr habt nur ein bestimmtes Budget an CO₂-Emissionen, die ihr emittieren könnt; ansonsten werdet ihr eine Erderwärmung haben, die deutlich über 2 Grad Celsius liegt. Was das dann an Schäden und Auswirkungen für unsere Wirtschaftsweise bedeutet, ist schwer vorauszusagen. Auf jeden Fall gehen wir dann mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit in eine Zukunft, angesichts derer wir nicht sagen können: Ach ja, wir wollten es nicht übers Knie brechen; und es sollte ein bisschen länger dauern. – Und das ist unser Problem an dieser Stelle.

Deshalb ist der Kohleausstieg richtig. Ich möchte mich auch dafür bedanken, dass Sie da – den Dank richte ich auch an Herrn Hoffmann vom DGB – wirklich auch beruhigend mitgewirkt haben. Das war ja keine simple Veranstaltung. Aber die Feststellung lautet: Wir sind ein Prozent der Weltbevölkerung, erzeugen aber zwei Prozent der CO₂-Emissionen. Davon müssen wir runterkommen. Und die Frage stellt sich: Wie schnell muss ein hochentwickeltes Land wie Deutschland eigentlich beispielgebend sein? Ich unterstütze Ursula von der Leyen, wenn sie sagt: Der europäische Kontinent sollte der erste sein, der klimaneutral wird und der technologisch und innovationsmäßig vormacht, wie man die zukünftige Art des Wirtschaftens erreichen kann. Und das treibt uns ein bisschen an mit Blick auf die Zeitachse. Das müssen Sie auch sehen. [...]

Translation:

Dear Mr. Kramer, Dear presidents of the trade associations, Mr. Hoffmann, Mr. Hundt,

Dear guests and members of the BDA⁶⁹,

⁶⁹ BDA = Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände e. V. (Confederation of German Employers' Associations)

First of all, good morning and thank you very much for the invitation. I am the first in a long line of political representatives today and would first of all like to congratulate Mr. Kramer on his re-election. Congratulations. [...]

Ladies and gentlemen, when we are here at the Sonnenallee, in this not only cozy but obviously very practical building, dear Steffen Kampeter, it reminds us that three days ago we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. I personally spent my research life as a physicist not far from here, in Adlershof. Back then, I drove from Friedrichstrasse - always along the Wall, so to speak - to Adlershof. The fact that we are a reunified country today is a great good fortune. And the fact that the social market economy has helped to make German reunification a success to a large extent shows what a great brand it is. Once again, I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have contributed to this.

The economic performance of the new Länder⁷⁰ more than doubled between 1991 and 2018. Unemployment is now only a third of what it was in 2005, and we have lower unemployment rates in Thuringia, Saxony and Brandenburg than in North Rhine-Westphalia. We have as a major issue - even in my constituency in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania - the shortage of skilled workers, but not so much the issue of unemployment anymore. We had times when we were used to over 20 percent [of unemployment]. Today, things are much better. Thuringia has the highest industrial density, with companies employing twenty or more people. So, a lot has been created. But we all know that there is still a lot of work to be done, because leaving behind a dictatorship and setting out on the path to freedom is something that also upsets biographies. That is why, in East and West [all of] us must, above all, continue to talk to each other. And I would like to thank all those who are doing this.

During the period of German unity and European unification, many other things also happened in the world. The year 1989 changed the world, and not just here in Europe. In 1989, China's GDP was 8.8 percent of America's; today it is 66 percent. So, you see how the balance of power in the world has changed and that we have also come into a competition of systems. In 1989, we thought that this was the final triumph of freedom, that it would just continue to develop. But if we are honest, today there are very different political systems, such as the Chinese, the American and the European, that are competing with each other. And that means, of course, that we are also challenged. This challenge is directed at Germany, it is directed at Europe as a whole.

You have just referred - and I liked this very much - to these changes, to the multipolar order and to the fact that there are no legal claims to prosperity. That, by the way, is also a lesson of German unity. Those of us who lived in the former GDR experienced this firsthand, because it was not the evil Treuhandanstalt⁷¹, but the economic bankruptcy, which Mr. Schürer from the Politburo had already stated, that brought us into these difficult initial phases.

So, you pointed out that even in these times of a multipolar order, of a new struggle and competition between systems, social cohesion is the prerequisite for solving fundamental issues. Basically, the requirements of competitiveness and social cohesion are driving the entire political debate; and, also two major challenges: on the one hand, digitization, which is completely changing the way we work - you know this from your practice - and on the other hand, the great human challenge of climate change.

Let me just say one thing at this point, because this is not otherwise the BDA's core competence: You say that climate protection measures should not be rushed through. That is

⁷⁰ „Neue Länder“ is the German expression referring to the „Bundesländer“ in the East of Germany which used to be part of the German Democratic Republic before the German reunification.

⁷¹ „Trust Agency“, an agency that was established to privatize East German enterprises, the so called Volkseigene Betriebe, prior to German reunification.

certainly true. But on the other hand, hundreds if not thousands of scientists tell us: You only have a certain budget of CO2 emissions that you can emit; otherwise, you will have global warming that is well above 2 degrees Celsius. What that will mean then in terms of damage and impact on our economies is hard to predict. In any case, we are then very likely to go into a future in the face of which we cannot say: Oh well, we didn't want to rush it; and it should take a little longer. - And that's our problem at this point.

That's why the coal phase-out is right. I would also like to thank you - and I would also like to thank Mr. Hoffmann from the German Trade Union Federation (DGB) - for the reassuring contribution you made. This was not a simple event. But the conclusion is that we are one percent of the world's population, but we produce two percent of the CO2 emissions. We have to get down from that. And the question arises: How quickly does a highly developed country like Germany actually have to set an example? I support Ursula von der Leyen when she says: The European continent should be the first to become climate-neutral and to set an example in terms of technology and innovation of how to achieve the future way of doing business. And that drives us a bit with a view to the timeline. You have to see that as well. [...]

Speech by chancellor Merkel at World Economic Forum in Davos 2021 (videoconference)⁷²

Transcript:

Danke schön, Herr Professor Schwab, meine Damen und Herren an den Bildschirmen,

Covid-19 hat die Welt verändert –[und] das zeigt sich auch am diesjährigen Davos-Dialog. (Er findet virtuell statt). [er ist virtuell]. Im Mai soll er dann physisch stattfinden, aber nicht in Davos, sondern in Singapur. [Und] Ich habe gerade im Vorgespräch schon zu Herrn Prof. Schwab gesagt: Ich hoffe, Sie tauschen die schönen Berge von Davos nicht langfristig in die Hochhäuser von Singapur um, obwohl Singapur auch ein wunderbarer, lebendiger und dynamischer Ort auf der Welt ist.

Heute vor einem Jahr war noch nicht allen klar, dass wir in einer Pandemie leben werden. Aber manche haben es schon gewusst oder geahnt; und dazu gehörte auch Herr Şahin, der Chef von BioNTech, der mir erzählte, dass er am 24. Januar die Entscheidung gefällt hat, das gesamte BioNTech-Forschungsprogramm umzuwerfen und einen mRNA-Impfstoff gegen dieses Virus zu entwickeln. [Und] Dass er und viele andere auf der Welt dazu beigetragen haben, dass wir heute, zwölf Monate später, zwar noch nicht genug, aber immerhin sehr vielversprechende Impfstoffe einsetzen können, zeigt, wozu die Menschheit in der Lage ist, wozu Wissenschaft und Forschung in der Lage sind; denn damit haben wir, glaube ich, auch einen Weg aus der Pandemie gefunden⁷³, auch wenn er noch mühselig und auch nicht so kurz sein wird, wie es sich viele von uns erhofft haben.

⁷² Full speech in German youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkiewGDLu78> [last accessed: 17.04.2021], Text of the German transcription from <https://www.bundestkanzlerin.de/bkin-de/suche/rede-von-bundestkanzlerin-merkel-anlaesslich-des-davos-dialogs-des-world-economic-forum-am-26-januar-2021-videokonferenz--1844594> [last accessed: 17.04.2021], words in square brackets are the words as Merkel said them when different from the transcription. Words in round brackets mean they are found in the transcription but have not been pronounced like this by the chancellor. More important differences are mentioned in the footnotes.

⁷³ Here, in fact, the chancellor does not say „gefunden“ [found]. During the speech, as can be heard on the video, she forgets to mention the verb of the phrase. What she says is understandable, but it is one of the little mistakes Merkel frequently makes in her speeches.

BioNTech hat [zusammen mit Pfizer und anderen auch, anderen Firmen auf der Welt auch] (also – zusammen mit Pfizer; auch andere Firmen auf der Welt haben das getan –) einen Impfstoff entwickelt. Das ist ein Start-up aus Deutschland, in dem Menschen aus 60 Nationen arbeiten und forschen. (Das) [Und] zeigt uns auch, welchen Wert internationale Zusammenarbeit hat und was man damit [auch] schaffen kann.

[Nun zeigt die Pandemie natürlich tiefe Spuren in unserer Wirtschaft und in unserer Gesellschaft] (Die Pandemie hinterlässt allerdings tiefe Spuren in unserer Wirtschaft und in unserer Gesellschaft); und das wird mit Sicherheit auch unser Leben in den nächsten Monaten und Jahren prägen. 100 Millionen Menschen (weltweit⁷⁴) haben sich bereits mit diesem Virus angesteckt. Mehr als zwei Millionen Menschen sind gestorben. Es gibt sicherlich eine sehr große Dunkelziffer. [Und] Wir verzeichnen Wirtschaftseinbrüche an vielen Stellen.

[Und deshalb ist natürlich] Das Davos-Forum (ist) der richtige Ort, (um) Diskussionen über die Zeit nach der Pandemie und die Wege aus der (Krise) [Pandemie] zu führen. [Und] Dabei gilt natürlich: alles, was die Pandemie eindämmt, ist gut; das ist nicht nur gut für die Gesundheit der Menschen, sondern auch gut für die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung, für die gesellschaftlichen und die kulturellen Möglichkeiten.

Sie haben das Motto [gewählt] „The Great Reset“ (gewählt); das ist das diesjährige Thema. [Und] Ich frage einmal: Brauchen wir wirklich [diesen] (einen) „Great Reset“ oder ist es nicht [mehr] (eher) so, dass wir (einen Neuanfang) weniger (hinsichtlich der) [in den] Zielsetzungen [einen Neuanfang brauchen, sondern] (und mehr hinsichtlich) [in] der Entschlossenheit unseres Handelns (brauchen)? [Und] Deshalb will ich drei Fragen nachgehen, die [zusammenhängen] mit der Frage (zusammenhängen), was [hat] (uns) diese Pandemie [uns] gezeigt (hat).

Ich glaube, sie hat uns (zunächst einmal) [erst mal gezeigt:] unsere globale [Verknüpftheit oder] Verbundenheit (gezeigt). [Denn] Wenn wir uns nämlich einmal anschauen, wie sich das Virus aus Wuhan in China [verbreitet hat] in der gesamten Welt (verbreitet hat), dann hat man (hierbei) eigentlich (auch eine Art der) Globalisierung (beobachten) [sehen] können – nicht anhand von menschlichem Tun, sondern anhand der Verbreitung dieses [soeines] Virus. [Und] Es hat sich gezeigt, dass in so einem existenziellen Fall auch der Versuch (einer) [der] dauerhaften Abschottung (ziemlich) [relativ] fehlschlägt; jedenfalls ist er im Zusammenhang mit diesem Virus fehlgeschlagen.

Zweitens hat sich unsere Verwundbarkeit gezeigt. Das Virus ist irgendwie vom Tier auf den Menschen übergegangen. [Und es] (Das) hat uns [noch] einmal (mehr) deutlich gemacht, dass wir [eingebettet] in unsere natürliche Umwelt (eingebettet) leben. [Und] Bei aller Technik, die wir beherrschen, (und) bei allem, das wir können, zeigt sich doch, dass wir [abhängig sind und bleiben] von der Natur (abhängig sind und bleiben). Das hat ja [auch] etwas sehr Beruhigendes, aber das hat natürlich auch Folgen.

Drittens (will ich), bezogen auf Deutschland, [will ich] ganz deutlich sagen: Diese Pandemie ist ja so etwas wie eine Jahrhundertkatastrophe, ein Jahrhundertnaturereignis, [und damit hat ja auch die Widerstandsfähigkeit] bei dem sich auch die Widerstandsfähigkeit – Herr Schwab [hat das ja eben auch benannt] (hat auch eben davon gesprochen) – oder die nicht vorhandene Widerstandsfähigkeit unserer Gesellschaften gezeigt (hat). Das heißt also, Schwachstellen in unseren Gesellschaften sind [auch] sichtbar geworden. Stärken sind auch sichtbar geworden. Aber wir wollen natürlich alles tun, um die Schwachstellen zu beheben.

⁷⁴ Official transcription reads: „weltweit“ (worldwide) but Merkel does not say it.

[Also,] Vielleicht fange[n wir an] (ich mit dem an), was Deutschland gelernt hat – also (damit), was [sind] unsere Schwachstellen und was [sind] unsere Stärken (sind). Ich kann berichten, dass wir [auf etwas start bauen konnten] (sehr stark auf etwas bauen konnten); und das (war und) ist der Gemeinsinn, der Einsatz von Menschen, der Bürgerinnen und Bürger. [Die sind...⁷⁵] Das ist unser (größter) [stärkster] Schatz. [Und] Bei allen Mühen, die eine föderale Struktur mit sich bringt, hat sie auch große Stärken, weil [einfach] verantwortliches Handeln (einfach) (auch) überall im Land [auch] erfolgen kann. [Und] Es hat (sich aber) auch gezeigt, dass (wir alle, auch) Deutschland, (obwohl wir in Europa) eingebettet (sind) [ist in Europa, wir haben alle], am Anfang Fehler gemacht (haben und) uns erst einmal reflexartig auf uns selbst zurückgezogen, aber dann doch gelernt (haben), [dass wir] besser gemeinsam (zu) handeln.⁷⁶

(Welche Dinge haben wir in Deutschland gesehen?) [Was sind aber die Dinge, die wir in Deutschland gesehen haben?] Die Schnelligkeit unseres Handelns lässt sehr zu wünschen übrig. Prozesse sind oft sehr bürokratisch [geworden]⁷⁷ (und) dauern (zu) lange. (Daran haben wir also noch zu arbeiten.) [Und wir haben da also nachzuarbeiten.]

(Aber wir konnten auf ein gutes Fundament in Deutschland aufbauen, nämlich auf soliden Finanzen). [Wir haben ein gutes Fundament in Deutschland gehabt das sind die soliden Finanzen, und] So konnten wir [doch] entschlossen handeln, unseren Unternehmen helfen, den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern helfen, Instrumente wie (etwa die) Kurzarbeit anwenden, die Wirtschaft am Laufen halten und ein nie dagewesenes Konjunkturprogramm (in Höhe) von über 100 Milliarden Euro auflegen, (das) [was] natürlich (auch) zur Stabilisierung [auch] des gesamten gesellschaftlichen Lebens beigetragen hat.

[Wo wir nicht gut aussahen, das (Nicht gut sahen wir aus – dieser Mangel) zeigt sich bis in die

⁷⁵ Merkel here starts saying „they are“ (die sind) then corrects herself saying „this is“... she then wanted to say „biggest treasure“ but says: „strongest treasure“ which makes no sense but is probably related to the fact that she was speaking of the citizens in the last phrase. She probably had the citizens in mind, which also explains why she starts the sentence with „they are“ before correcting it to „this is,“ since „this“ refers to „treasure“.

⁷⁶ Here we can observe a big difference between what Merkel says and what can be read in the official print of the speech. Merkel really says: „Und bei allen Mühen, die eine föderale Struktur mit sich bringt, hat sie auch große Stärken, weil einfach verantwortliches Handeln überall im Lande auch erfolgen kann. Und es hat auch gezeigt, dass Deutschland eingebettet ist in Europa. Wir haben alle am Anfang Fehler gemacht, uns reflexartig erst einmal auf uns selbst zurückgezogen, aber dann doch gelernt, dass wir besser gemeinsam handeln.“ The text reads, however: „Bei allen Mühen, die eine föderale Struktur mit sich bringt, hat sie auch große Stärken, weil verantwortliches Handeln einfach auch überall im Land erfolgen kann. Es hat sich aber auch gezeigt, dass wir alle, auch Deutschland, obwohl wir in Europa eingebettet sind, am Anfang Fehler gemacht haben und uns erst einmal reflexartig auf uns selbst zurückgezogen, aber dann doch gelernt haben, besser gemeinsam zu handeln.“ The difference is just in the order of the words except for the part when Merkel speaks about Europe, where the sense also slightly changes. The biggest difference between the two versions, however, is the tone. The written version sounds more official and authoritative while Merkel's spoken sentences sometimes sound a bit unusual, even incorrect. She sometimes starts a sentence one way, then corrects herself. Merkel's speeches are often presented like this – like everyday speech. This affords her a more spontaneous tone even when we can clearly see that she holds a paper in hand and sometimes seems to be reading. Merkel adopts this personal, spontaneous tone in order to sound convincing and credible—more like a person and less like a politician. Sometimes, however, her imprecise language and mistakes lead to ambiguity and can be easily misunderstood.

⁷⁷ The sentence translates: „processes are often very bureaucratic, and take too long.“ Merkel adds the word „geworden“ (have become) turning it into „processes have become very bureaucratic and take too long“. This is rather a small difference, but an interesting one to note. Since bureaucratic processes have a long tradition in Germany, they are probably not a consequence of the pandemic. Instead, the pandemic—which necessitates fast reactions—reveals that bureaucracy can be less than efficient.

heutigen Tage –, (was die) [das ist der Mangel an] Digitalisierung unserer Gesellschaft (angeht). Das beginnt bei der überregionalen Vernetzung der Gesundheitsämter. Das [beginnt oder] zeigt sich bei der Digitalisierung der Verwaltung. Das zeigt sich (auch) bei der Digitalisierung unseres Bildungssystems, (etwa mit Blick auf Fernunterricht und Fernstudiengänge) [wenn es um Fernunterricht, wenn es um Fernstudiengänge geht, d.h.]. Hier haben wir (also auch) mit unserem Konjunkturprogramm [auch] angesetzt [und gesagt da müssen wir] (, weil wir hier) besser (und) schneller werden (müssen). [Und] Wir wissen, dass wir hier nachzuarbeiten haben.

(Außerdem) [genauso] hat sich gezeigt, von welcher großer Bedeutung ein resilientes Gesundheitssystem ist. [Und] Für Deutschland hat sich gezeigt, dass wir ein sehr gutes individuelles Gesundheitssystem haben, (dass wir) aber, wenn es um „community health“, um Gemeinschaft und um Prävention geht, [dann haben wir] noch keine ausreichende Resilienz (haben). [Und] Deshalb müssen wir [hier] (in dieser Hinsicht) aus der Krise, aus der Pandemie lernen.

Wir fühlen uns [bestätigt] in unserer Forschungspolitik (bestätigt). Seitdem ich Bundeskanzlerin bin, haben wir [beständig] unsere Forschungs- und Entwicklungsausgaben (ständig) gesteigert. Wir haben (deren Anteil von) [die] drei Prozent [Anteil] am Bruttoinlandsprodukt [jetzt] überschritten (und) wollen auf (einen Anteil von) 3,5 Prozent [jetzt] zugehen. [Und] Alles, was wir (derzeit) [jetzt gerade] bei der Entwicklung von Impfstoffen, aber auch (von) anderen Technologien sehen, zeigt: Auf Forschung und Entwicklung (zu) setzen, ist mit Sicherheit richtig.

[Und] Wir haben jetzt (über) eine große Frage zu diskutieren, [und es ist die Frage, die] (der sich) die Welt [sich] stellen muss. Das Wort [der] Souveränität ist wieder in aller Munde. Lieferketten haben sich [nicht bewährt] in Zeiten der Pandemie zum Teil (nicht bewährt), (sondern) sind zerbrochen. [Und] Wir müssen [jetzt], (um) [in den] Lehren aus der Pandemie (zu ziehen), [bei] fragen: Sind es Schwachstellen, wenn wir zu abhängig [sind] von globalen Lieferketten (sind), oder wie machen wir solche Lieferketten [so stabile und so verlässlich] für die Zukunft (so stabil und so verlässlich), dass sie auch in Zeiten [des] großen Stresses halten? [Denn ansonsten werden wir natürlich ein Zurückfallen] (Ein Rückfall) in regionalen Protektionismus [haben und das] muss meiner Meinung nach verhindert werden, wenn wir die Welt wirklich wieder auf Wachstumskurs bringen (wollen). Aber (diese) [das ist eine] Frage [, die] muss ehrlich (und) redlich diskutiert werden. Und Lieferketten müssen besser abgesichert werden, wenn man sich wirklich auch in schwierigen Situationen auf sie verlassen (will) [möchte].

[Und] Damit bin ich schon (beim Thema) [bei unserer] Verwundbarkeit. [Diese] Verwundbarkeit hat sich eben beim Zerreißen (von) [solcher] Lieferketten gezeigt. Aber ich [glaube die Verwundbarkeit] möchte [ich] (die Verwundbarkeit) vor allen Dingen [festmachen bei der] (auf die) Tatsache (beziehen), dass ein Virus vom Tier auf (den) Menschen übergegangen ist, (und) daran festmachen, dass (sich) all unsere großen globalen Konventionen zur Nachhaltigkeit – sei es die Biodiversitätskonvention, sei es die Klima(rahmen)konvention, die (heute) im Pariser Abkommen [heute] ihr Abbild findet –[sich natürlich] als absolut richtig erwiesen haben und dass wir stärker für [sie] (deren Umsetzung) arbeiten müssen, als wir es vorher getan haben, [also] entschiedener und resoluter.

[Da können wir] Sozusagen (den) [unseren] Beweis [erbringen] (dafür können wir) [und] schon [in diesem] (dieses) Jahr (erbringen, nämlich) bei der Biodiversitätskonferenz in Kunming in China (und) [aber] vor allen Dingen auch bei der Umsetzung des Pariser Abkommens. Die Europäische Union hat das getan, was erwartet wird. In einem ersten Schritt [jedenfalls] haben wir [gesagt wir wollen] unser [nationales oder unser] europäisches Ziel für die CO₂-Reduktionen (bezüglich des Jahres 2030) von

40 Prozent auf 55 Prozent (erhöht) [erhöhen, bezüglich des Jahres 2030]. Wir haben uns zur Klimaneutralität für das Jahr 2050 verpflichtet, was, (wenn wir das erreichen), dazu führen kann, [wenn wir das erreichen,] dass Europa der erste klimaneutrale Kontinent (wird) [werden kann]. [Und] Vor uns liegen jetzt – ich vermute, (dass auch) die Kommissionspräsidentin [hat] darüber [auch] gesprochen (hat) – sehr harte Monate, in denen wir den sogenannten „Green Deal“ ausformulieren [müssen], also die Wege aufzeigen müssen, wie wir diese [55%] Reduktion (in Höhe von 55 Prozent) erreichen können.

Deutschland hat inzwischen [bereits etwa] (mehr als) 40 Prozent der Energieerzeugung [oder mehr als 40% der Energieerzeugung] aus regenerativen Energien. Aber wir wissen auch, welche Anstrengungen (damit) verbunden sind. Wenn wir [hier wirklich] die Verwundbarkeit durch (den) Klimawandel (wirklich) überwinden wollen, (dann) müssen wir harte politische Maßnahmen durchführen, bei denen wir [auch] die Menschen mitnehmen müssen. Für uns heißt das: Ausstieg aus der Kohle, Umstieg auf Wasserstoff auch (mit) [im] Blick auf Prozessenergien und ein völliger Wandel der Mobilität hin zur Elektromobilität oder auch Wasserstoffmobilität; (natürlich) [hier] müssen wir [die Technologien natürlich auch offen halten, die wir verwenden wollen] (uns Technologieoffenheit bewahren).

Die Europäische Union hat in ihrer Anstrengung zu einem Wiederaufbauplan – ein ganz außergewöhnlicher Schritt – als Antwort auf diese außergewöhnliche Krise festgelegt, dass wir [hier] nicht einfach so [weitermachen wie wir das immer gemacht hätten] mit Konjunkturprogrammen (weitermachen, wie wir das immer gemacht hätten), sondern dass wir ganz klare Prioritäten setzen. Das heißt, mehr als 35 Prozent der verwendeten Gelder müssen dem Klimaschutz dienen (und) mehr als 20 Prozent der Digitalisierung. [Das heißt] Das ist [eine] wirklich[e] (eine) Zukunftsinvestition in Richtung [von] mehr Nachhaltigkeit.

[Und] Wenn der Welt [etwas gelungen ist] in den letzten Jahren (etwas gelungen ist), (worin) [was] im Grunde der Schlüssel gegen Verwundbarkeit (liegt) [ist], dann ist das die (Festlegung der) [dann sind das die] Sustainable Development Goals, (der) [die] Nachhaltigkeitsziele für 2030, die in umfassender Weise [eigentlich] deutlich machen, wie wir handeln müssen, wenn wir nicht (mehr) so verwundbar sein wollen, wie wir es heute sind. Allerdings hat der Gipfel der Vereinten Nationen im vergangenen Jahr gezeigt, dass wir an (dieser) [der] Stelle [doch] immer noch weit hinter den Erwartungen zurückliegen. [Und] Die große Gefahr [jetzt] nach der Pandemie besteht darin, dass wir [uns alle, auf uns selbst erst einmal konzentrieren] (– ich spreche hier von den) [für] Industrieländer(n) [spreche]– (uns erst einmal auf uns selbst konzentrieren) und die Entwicklungsanstrengungen [dann] vernachlässigen könnten. [Und] Das darf nicht passieren. Deshalb ist es das deutsche politische Ziel – und auch das Ziel mit Blick auf die europäischen Ausgaben –, [sehr stark zu sagen wir werden nicht sparen] bei (der) Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (nicht zu sparen), sondern eher [müssen wir hier] noch eine Schippe draufzulegen.

Der dritte Punkt [das] ist die Frage der globalen Vernetztheit, der globalen Verbundenheit, (der) [die] Abhängigkeiten, in denen wir leben. [Und] Das ist natürlich ein Punkt, der uns in den letzten Jahren immer wieder beschäftigt hat und [wo man jetzt- wo ich für mich] (bei dem für mich jetzt) noch klarer ist als vorher – das war für mich auch vorher schon klar –, dass wir einen multilateralen Ansatz wählen müssen und (dass) ein Abschottungsansatz uns nicht [dabei] helfen wird, die Probleme zu lösen.

Wir sehen das als Erstes beim großen Thema Impfen, [weil das natürlich] (denn das Impfen ist natürlich ein) [der] Weg aus der Pandemie heraus [ist]. Hier beweist sich [natürlich] dann (auch), wie

[ist] das Verhältnis von Worten und Taten (ist). Ich bin sehr dankbar (dafür) – (darauf hat) [und hier haben] auch die G20 (unter der saudischen Präsidentschaft) sehr gut (hingewirkt) [bewirkt] –, dass wir [unter der saudischen Präsidentschaft, dass wir] uns zu einem multilateralen Ansatz für das Impfen entschieden haben und (dass) [dann] in der Folge COVAX gegründet wurde. Hier müssen einerseits die reicheren Länder einzahlen; das ist richtig. Deutschland beteiligt sich dabei, die Europäische Union beteiligt sich dabei, und wir werden uns auch weiter engagieren. Geld ist (dabei) das eine. [Aber] Das andere ist [natürlich] in Zeiten der Knappheit (aber natürlich) auch die Verfügbarkeit des Impfstoffs. [Und] Hier geht es (also) um [eine faire] Verteilung und eben nicht nur um die Frage (des) [von] Geld(s). Deshalb bin ich sehr froh, dass Gavi als Verhandlungsführer für COVAX erste Verträge abschließen konnte, und zwar auch mit den Unternehmen, die zum Beispiel bei der Europäischen Arzneimittel-Agentur ihre Zulassungen bekommen. Ich bin sehr froh, dass die Weltbank diese Aktivitäten sehr intensiv unterstützt. [Und] Wir werden natürlich alles dafür tun, dass [jetzt auch schnell] die Verteilung (schnell erfolgen) [beginnen] kann. Aber machen wir uns nichts vor: Die Frage, wer auf der Welt welchen Impfstoff wann bekommt, wird natürlich auch neue Verbundenheiten und neue Erinnerungen schaffen; denn wer in einer solchen Not Hilfe bekommt, erinnert sich daran natürlich sehr viel stärker, als [wenn] das in guten Zeiten der Fall (wäre) [ist].

Ich glaube, es hat sich gezeigt: Dies ist die Stunde des Multilateralismus. Was bedeutet Multilateralismus? Multilateralismus bedeutet ja nicht nur, dass wir irgendwie zusammenarbeiten, sondern (bedeutet auch), dass wir [auch] transparent zusammenarbeiten. Man muss ganz ehrlich sagen: Zu Beginn der Pandemie war die Transparenz vielleicht nicht ausreichend, was die Informationen über den Ausbruch der Pandemie in China [anbelangt hat] (und) auch was die Weitergabe der Informationen durch die Weltgesundheitsorganisation anbelangt [hat]. [Aber] Das heißt (aber) nicht, dass wir jetzt zurückblicken, [und] (um) das Versäumte (zu) betonen, sondern das heißt, dass wir die Lehren daraus ziehen müssen. [Und] Deshalb finde ich es gut, dass jetzt auch eine WHO-Delegation in China ist und die Dinge noch einmal untersucht.

[Und] Wir müssen die WHO, die Weltgesundheitsorganisation, stärken. [Und] Deshalb ist es eine sehr gute Botschaft, dass die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika [jetzt] nach dem Amtsantritt von Joe Biden [auch] wieder Mitglied [sind] (der WHO sind) und [mitarbeiten] bei der WHO (mitarbeiten). Das ist ein gutes und wichtiges Zeichen.

Ich sprach schon davon: [dass] Globale Verbundenheit bedeutet, (dass) wir [müssen] an der Entwicklung aller Teile der Welt ein Interesse haben (müssen). Deshalb ist (Entwicklungszusammenarbeit auch) [Entwicklungshilfe] im nationalen Interesse; so sehen wir das (auch) in Deutschland [auch]. Wir werden [auch] gerade (auch) die Verbindung nach Afrika (und die Investitionen in Afrika) weiter stärken [und die Investitionen in Afrika]. Wir haben [einmal] während unserer G20-Präsidentschaft den „Compact with Africa“ angestoßen, der heute (weiterhin) [auch] vom IWF und der Weltbank [weiter] unterstützt wird. [Und] Diese Initiative werden wir weiter begleiten.

Es geht [dann um einen fairen weltweiten Handel] – das ist ein weites Feld – (auch um einen fairen weltweiten Handel). Die WTO setzt sich für regelbasierte internationale Handelsstrukturen ein, (die) [diese müssen] wir stärken (müssen). Es hat hier (bei) [auch] in den letzten Jahren einen Stillstand gegeben, der [muss] überwunden werden (muss). Dadurch, dass im Augenblick keine Schiedsurteile gefällt werden können, ist die WTO im Grunde nicht richtig handlungsfähig. [Und] Bei aller Achtung und Wertschätzung für internationale bilaterale Handelsabkommen bleibt für mich die WTO doch Kernbestandteil eines regelbasierten [Handelns äh] Handels in der Welt. [Und] Deshalb wird sich Deutschland (auch nach der Pandemie) für die Stärkung der Welthandelsorganisation [gerade jetzt

nach der Pandemie] einsetzen.

Wir [sehen] (haben) aber auch eine Vielzahl [von] bilaterale(r)[n] und multilaterale(r)[n] Handelsabkommen. [So] (Ich) will [ich hier das, im Asiatischen Raum] das doch beachtliche RCEP(-Abkommen) nennen, das (im asiatischen Raum) Länder ganz unterschiedlicher gesellschaftlicher Strukturen [doch] im Handelsbereich miteinander verknüpft.

[Und] Wir haben während der deutschen (EU-Rats)präsidentschaft [auch noch mal] einen Schritt gemacht, um [bei dem] (in Bezug auf das) seit langem [in der Europäischen Union]– seit 2013 – (in der Europäischen Union) verhandelte EU-China-Investitionsabkommen einen Pflock einzuschlagen und eine politische Übereinstimmung zu (erreichen) [finden]. Warum bin ich sehr zufrieden, dass uns dieser Schritt gelungen ist? Weil wir [hier], glaube ich, [doch] eine neue Qualität [auch bei den] (hinsichtlich der) Investitionen Europas in China und Chinas in Europa erreichen können, was auf der einen Seite dem Verlangen nach Reziprozität besser entspricht, was mehr Transparenz bei Subventionen gerade (auch) im Zusammenhang mit Staatsunternehmen deutlich macht, was [aber] auch (einen berechenbaren) Zugang [berechenbaren Zugang] in Hochtechnologiebereichen ermöglicht und – (das ist) für mich sehr wichtig – was darüber hinaus auch etwas [zu tun hat] mit Arbeitsnormen, gerade (auch) in (Bezug auf die) [den] Normen der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation, (zu tun hat). Wenn wir (gerade auch im Bereich des Handels) nachhaltige multilaterale Institutionen haben wollen, [gerade auch im Handel, dann] werden Fragen des Umweltschutzes, des Klimaschutzes und der fairen (und) gerechten Arbeit eine zunehmende Rolle spielen. [Und] Deshalb sind die[se Normen,] Kernnormen der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation für Handelsabkommen [auch] von [einer] große(r)[n] Bedeutung. Auch das konnten wir verankern.

Wir müssen in großer Geschwindigkeit multilaterale Antworten auf die neuen Herausforderungen der Digitalisierung finden. [Und] Ich hoffe, dass wir gerade auch mit der neuen US-amerikanischen Administration die Arbeiten der OECD [fortsetzen und intensivieren können] zur Mindestbesteuerung von digitalen Unternehmen (fortsetzen und intensivieren können) und dass es uns besser gelingt, [global] die zentrale Rolle des Wettbewerbsrechts (global) [noch ein mal] zu verankern, um die Entstehung von Monopolen zu verhindern. (Es gibt) [Denn wir haben solche Tendenzen] natürlich (solche Tendenzen). [Und] Darüber müssen wir auch international sprechen, (denn) sonst wird sich jeder alleine auf unzureichende Art und Weise mit solchen Monopolstrukturen auseinandersetzen.

Wir haben ein großes Interesse daran, dass eine wirtschaftliche Erholung überall auf der Welt einsetzt. Wir haben [jetzt] die neuesten Zahlen gesehen: Es gibt Regionen, (in denen es) [da haben wir] wirtschaftliches Wachstum (gibt), Europa (hingegen) ist relativ schwer getroffen, hat aber auch [nächstes Jahr wieder beziehungsweise] dieses Jahr wieder Wachstumsaussichten. [Aber das muss möglichst konzertiert geschehen überall auf der Welt] (Das muss aber überall auf der Welt möglichst konzertiert geschehen); und dazu sind natürlich [auch] abgestimmte Anstrengungen notwendig. Hier(bei) sehe ich eine zentrale Rolle für die G20. [Und] Die italienische Präsidentschaft arbeitet ja auch genau in diese Richtung.

[Deshalb ist mein Fazit:] Wenn wir uns anschauen, was die Pandemie mit uns gemacht hat, (ist mein Fazit,) dass sie als Bestätigung all dessen gelten kann, was in den letzten Jahren [doch] immer den Geist von Davos ausgemacht hat. Die Fragen, die dort diskutiert wurden, [die] waren richtig. [Aber entsprechend dem deutschen Schriftsteller Erich Kästner haben wir ein Sprichwort das heißt:] (Es gibt ein Sprichwort des deutschen Schriftstellers Erich Kästner, das lautet): „Es gibt nichts Gutes, außer man tut es.“ [Und] Die Pandemie hat uns vor Augen geführt, dass das Reden, [und] das

Diskutieren und das gedankliche Klarmachen wichtig (sind) [ist]. [Aber] Ich glaube (aber), die Pandemie hat uns (auch) vor Augen geführt, dass jetzt eine Zeit[punkt] des Handelns kommt, in der möglichst konzertiert, möglichst gemeinsam und möglichst nach gleichen und [auch] gemeinsam diskutierten Prinzipien agiert wird, [aber wo] (in der) eben etwas getan wird, um die Schwachstellen, die wir alle erlebt haben, möglichst zu überwinden.

Damit bin ich am Ende und bedanke mich für die Aufmerksamkeit.

Translation:

Thank you, Professor Schwab, ladies and gentlemen at the screens,

Covid-19 has changed the world - [and] this is also evident at this year's Davos Dialog. Which is [a] virtual [one]. In May, it's going to take place physically once again, however not in Davos, but in Singapore. [And] I have just said to Prof. Schwab in the preliminary discussion: I hope you will not exchange the beautiful mountains of Davos for the skyscrapers of Singapore in the long run, although Singapore is also a wonderful, lively and dynamic place in the world.

A year ago today, not everyone knew that we would be living in a pandemic. But some already knew or suspected it; and that included Mr. Şahin, the head of BioNTech, who told me that on January 24, he made the decision to overturn the entire BioNTech research program and develop an mRNA vaccine against this virus. [And] The fact that he and many others in the world have helped to ensure that today, twelve months later, we can use vaccines that are still not enough, but at least very promising, shows what humanity is capable of, what science and research are capable of; because with this, I think we have also found a way out of the pandemic, even if it will still be arduous and also not as short as many of us had hoped. BioNTech has together with Pfizer and other companies in the world as well, developed a vaccine. This is a start-up from Germany, where people from 60 nations are working and doing research. And [that] also shows us the value of international cooperation and what you can create with it.

Now, of course, the pandemic is leaving deep traces in our economy and in our society; and this will certainly also shape our lives in the coming months and years. 100 million people have already contracted this virus. More than two million people have died. There is certainly a very large number of unreported cases. [And] We are seeing economic collapses in many places.

And so, of course, the Davos Forum is the right place for discussions about the post-pandemic period and the ways out of the crisis/pandemic⁷⁸. And in doing so, of course, anything that curbs the pandemic is good; it's not only good for people's health, it's good for economic development, it's good for social opportunities, it's good for cultural opportunities.

You chose "The Great Reset" as this year's theme. [And] I ask: Do we really need this "Great Reset" or don't we rather need a fresh start, less in terms of the objectives, but more in terms of the determination of our actions? [And] Therefore, I want to pursue three questions that are related to the question of what this pandemic has shown us.

I think it first of all showed us: our global interconnectedness or connectedness. Because, if we take a look at how the virus from Wuhan in China has spread throughout the world, then we have actually been able to observe a kind of globalization - not on the basis of human activity, but on the basis of

⁷⁸ Transcript reads: „crisis“ but Merkel say „pandemic“.

the spread of such a virus. [And] it has been shown that in such an existential case also the attempt of a permanent isolation relatively fails; at least it has failed in connection with this virus.

Secondly, our vulnerability has been shown. The virus has somehow passed from animals to humans. And this has made us realize once again, that we live embedded in our natural environment. [And] with all the technology that we have mastered, with everything that we can do, it still shows that we are and remain dependent on nature. That also has something very reassuring, but of course that also has consequences.

Thirdly, with regard to Germany, I want to say very clearly: This pandemic is something like a catastrophe of the century, a natural event of the century, and has revealed the resilience - Mr. Schwab has also just mentioned this - or [it has revealed] the non-existent resilience of our societies. That means that weak points in our societies have [also] become visible. Strengths have also become visible. But, of course, we want to do everything we can to address the weaknesses.

[So,] Maybe I start with what Germany has learned - hence with mentioning our weaknesses and our strengths. I can report that we could build on something strong; and that is the public spirit, the commitment of people, the citizens. [They are...] That is our greatest/strongest treasure⁷⁹. [And] For all the troubles that a federal structure entails, it also has great strengths, simply because responsible action can take place everywhere in the country. [And] It has also become clear that all of us, including Germany, embedded in Europe, we all have, made mistakes, [we] first of all reflexively withdrew on ourselves, but then learned that we [can] better act together.

But what are the things we have seen in Germany? The speed of our actions is insufficient. Processes have often [become] very bureaucratic and take too long. And we have to catch up there.

We have had a good foundation [to build on] in Germany, that is the solid finances, and so we were able to act decisively, help our companies, help the citizens, use instruments like short-time work, keep the economy going and launch an unprecedented economic stimulus program of more than 100 billion euros, which of course also helped stabilize the entire social life.

We didn't look good - and this deficiency shows up to the present day - in terms of the lack of digitization of our society. That starts with the cross-regional networking of health departments. That started or shows up in the digitization of the administration. That also shows up in the digitization of our education system, when it comes to distance learning, when it comes to distance study courses. This is where we started with our economic stimulus program, because we have to become better and faster here. [And] we know that we have to catch up here.

It has also become clear how important it is to have a resilient healthcare system. For Germany, it has been shown that we have a very good individual health system, but when it comes to community health and prevention, we do not yet have sufficient resilience. [And] that's why we need to learn from the crisis, from the pandemic.

We feel confirmed in our research policy. Since I became chancellor, we have [consistently] increased our research and development spending. We have [now] exceeded (their share of) three percent of gross domestic product (and) want to move toward (a share of) 3.5 percent [now]. [And] everything

⁷⁹ Here Merkel struggles with the sentence that describes the "people's commitment" and "the citizens" as Germany's „greatest treasure“. She starts by saying „They are“, then changes this to „this is“ before saying „our strongest treasure“ instead of saying „greatest treasure“. This is a revealing, and rather delightful, mistake. The adjective she uses (strong), refers to the people, not to the treasure which, to my mind, shows that Merkel has difficulties seeing real people (the citizens) as something abstract like a treasure. A treasure might be „great“, but Merkel speaks of a „strong treasure“. It is the citizens and the people's commitment, mentioned before, that Merkel unconsciously describes as being "strong" here.

we see [right now] in the development of vaccines, but also (of) other technologies, shows: to focus on research and development is definitely the right thing to do.

[And] we have a big question to discuss now, and it is the question that the world must face. The word sovereignty is on everybody's lips again. Supply chains have not proven to be reliable in times of pandemic to some extent but have broken. [And] we [now] need to draw in lessons from the pandemic, asking: Is it vulnerability if we are too dependent on global supply chains, or how do we make such supply chains so stable and so reliable for the future that they last in times of [great] stress? Because otherwise, of course, we're going to have a relapse into regional protectionism and that I think has to be prevented if we really want to put the world back on a growth path. But that's a question, that needs to be debated honestly. And supply chains need to be better secured if you really want to rely on them even in difficult situations.

[And] that already brings me (to the topic) of [our] vulnerability. [This] vulnerability has just shown up in the rupture of [such] supply chains. But I think the vulnerability first and foremost goes back to the fact that a virus has passed from animals to humans, to the fact that all of our major global sustainability conventions - be it the Biodiversity Convention, be it the climate (framework) convention, which finds its reflection in the Paris Agreement today - have, of course, proven to be absolutely right and that we have to work harder for them than we did before, that is more resolutely.

We can, so to speak, provide our proof of this [commitment] already this year, namely at the Biodiversity Conference in Kunming in China. But above all, also through the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The European Union has done what was expected. As a first step, we said we want to increase our [national or our] European target for CO₂ reductions from 40 percent to 55 percent with respect to the year 2030⁸⁰. We have committed to climate neutrality for the year 2050, which, if we achieve that, can lead to Europe becoming the first climate-neutral continent. [And] Ahead of us lay now - I assume that the President of the Commission has talked about this as well - very hard months in which we have to formulate the so-called "Green Deal", that is, to show the ways in which we can achieve this 55% reduction.

Germany now already has about 40 percent of energy generation, or more than 40% of energy generation, from renewable sources⁸¹. But we also know what efforts are involved in this. If we [really] want to overcome vulnerability to climate change here, then we have to implement tough policies where we [also] have to take people with us, that means: phasing out coal, switching to hydrogen with a view to process energies, and a complete change in mobility toward electromobility or hydrogen mobility; of course we have to keep our technology open.

In its effort toward a recovery plan – a very extraordinary step - the European Union has determined in response to this extraordinary crisis that we will not simply continue as we always would have done with economic stimulus programs, but that we will set very clear priorities. That means that more than 35 percent of the money used must go to climate protection and more than 20 percent to digitization. [That means] this is a real investment in the future in the direction of more sustainability.

[And] if the world has succeeded in anything in recent years, which is basically the key against vulnerability, it's the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, which make clear in a comprehensive way how we have to act if we don't want to be as vulnerable as we are today. However, last year's

⁸⁰ Merkel here first speaks of „national targets“ then corrects this, saying „or our European target“. This is a typical example of the little inaccuracies that can often be found in Merkel's speeches.

⁸¹ Once more Merkel is being inaccurate when first saying „about 40%“, before correcting herself by saying „or more than 40%“.

United Nations summit showed that we are still far behind on that front. [And] the big danger [now] after the pandemic is that we could all, focus on ourselves-I'm speaking here for developed countries-and neglect development efforts⁸². [And] that must not happen. That's why the German political goal - and also the goal with regard to European spending - is not to cut back on development cooperation, but rather to step it up a notch.

The third point is the question of global interconnectedness, global interdependence, the dependencies in which we live. [And] This is, of course, a point that has occupied us time and again in recent years and where it is now even clearer to me than before - it was already clear to me before - that we have to take a multilateral approach and that a compartmentalization approach will not help us to solve the problems.

We see this first of all with the big issue of vaccination, because that is of course the way out of the pandemic. This [of course] then [also] reveals the relation between words and deeds. I am very grateful - and here the G20 has also contributed a lot to the decision that -[the G20] under the Saudi presidency, - so that we decided on a multilateral approach to vaccination and then COVAX was subsequently founded⁸³. Here, on the one hand, the richer countries must pay in; that's [the] right [thing to do]⁸⁴. Germany is involved in this, the European Union is involved in this, and we will continue to be involved. Money is one thing. But the other thing [of course] in times of shortage is also the availability of the vaccine. [And] this is about fair⁸⁵ distribution and not just about the question of money. That's why I'm very happy that Gavi, as the lead negotiator for COVAX, has been able to conclude initial agreements, including with the companies that get their approvals from the European Medicines Agency, for example. I am very happy that the World Bank is supporting these activities very intensively. [And] we will of course do everything we can to ensure that distribution can now also begin quickly. But let's not kid ourselves: The question of who in the world gets which vaccine and when, of course, also create new bonds and new memories; because anyone who receives help in such an emergency naturally remembers it much more strongly than it would be the case in good times.

I think it has been shown: This is the hour of multilateralism. What does multilateralism mean? After all, multilateralism does not just mean that we somehow cooperate, but that we [also] cooperate transparently. You have to say, quite honestly, at the beginning of the pandemic, maybe there was not enough transparency, in terms of the information about the outbreak of the pandemic in China, and also in terms of the sharing of the information by the World Health Organization. [But] that doesn't mean that we look back now, [and] emphasize what we missed, but that means that we have to learn the lessons. [And] That's why I think it's good that there's also a WHO delegation in China now, looking at things again.

⁸² It is interesting to note that Merkel adds the word „now“ here. It changes the sentence from reading „the big danger after the pandemic is“ into „the big danger now after the pandemic is“ which sounds as if we had already overcome the pandemic when in fact we are clearly far from a post-pandemic era.

⁸³ Here it seems that Merkel originally wanted to mention the special contribution the G20 made under the presidency of Saudi Arabia, but then initially forgot to mention the Saudi presidency. She then suddenly adds the subordinate phrase „-under the Saudi presidency-“, but only after it no longer makes any sense. For this reason, in my translation, I added „[the G20]“ at the beginning of the sentence though Merkel did not repeat G20 here.

⁸⁴ In German, Merkel just says „Das ist richtig so,“ which literally means: That's right. In English, this sounds funny in the given context so I translated it as: it is the right thing to do. It is clear from the German that this is what Merkel means.

⁸⁵ Merkel added the word „fair“ in her speech though the transcription just speaks of distribution, not fair distribution.

[And] We need to strengthen the WHO, the World Health Organization. [And] That's why it's a very good news that the United States of America [now] after Joe Biden took office has become a member [again] and cooperates with the WHO. That's a good and important sign.

I already spoke about [this]: global connectedness means we must have an interest in the development of all parts of the world. That is why development aid⁸⁶ is in the national interest; that is also how we see it in Germany. We will [also] further strengthen the connection to Africa and the investments in Africa. We [once] launched the "Compact with Africa" during our G20 presidency, which is now [also] being [further] supported by the IMF and the World Bank. [And] we will continue to support this initiative.

It's also about fair global trade-that's a broad area. The WTO is committed to shelf-based international trade structures, which we must strengthen. There has been a standstill here in recent years, and this must be overcome. The fact that no arbitration rulings can be made at present, means that the WTO is basically unable to act properly. With all due respect and appreciation for international bilateral trade agreements, for me the WTO remains a core component of rules-based trade in the world. [And] That's why Germany will work to strengthen the World Trade Organization [especially now after the pandemic]⁸⁷.

But we also see a lot of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. I would like to mention here the RCEP⁸⁸, which is quite remarkable in the Asian region and links countries with very different social structures in the area of trade.

[And] during the German presidency⁸⁹, we took a step to knock down a peg and find political agreement on the EU-China investment agreement, which has been under negotiation in the European Union for a long time – [namely] since 2013. Why am I very pleased that we succeeded in taking this step? Because [here], I believe, we can achieve a new quality also in Europe's investments in China and in China's investments in Europe, which on the one hand better corresponds to the demand for reciprocity, which makes clear more transparency in subsidies, especially in connection with state-owned enterprises, but [it] also enables predictable access in high-tech areas and which – very important for me - furthermore also has something to do with labor standards, especially with regard to the standards of the International Labor Organization⁹⁰. If we want to have sustainable multilateral institutions, [especially in trade, then] issues of environmental protection, climate protection, and fair (and) equitable work will play an increasing role. [And] that's why these standards, [these] core standards of the International Labor Organization are very important for trade agreements. We were able to anchor that as well.

We need to find multilateral responses to the new challenges of digitalization at great speed. [And] I hope that, especially with the new U.S. administration, we can continue and intensify the work of the

⁸⁶ Merkel says „Entwicklungshilfe“ [development aid], though the script reads „Entwicklungszusammenarbeit“ [development cooperation].

⁸⁷ Once again Merkel adds a couple of words that are not in the written version of the speech. She adds „especially now, after the pandemic“, once again insinuating that the pandemic is over, which is clearly not the case.

⁸⁸ The written version reads: RCEP-agreement, but Merkel does not say agreement, she just says RCEP (which stands for Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership).

⁸⁹ In the written version it reads „EU-presidency“, whilst Merkel simply speaks of „presidency“. Given the context, however, it is quite clear what she is referring to.

⁹⁰ To my mind, this phrase truly represents the „Merkel-style“. When translating it into English one feels a need to divide the sentence into several sentences. I decided not to do so, however, since my aim is to show how Merkel really speaks. She sometimes makes very long sentences and does not always pay much attention to the structure and the order of the words. She is usually still clear, one knows what she means, but it often sounds unfamiliar in German too, and one notices how she struggles expressing her thoughts in a logical order.

OECD on minimum taxation of digital companies and that we will succeed better in anchoring [globally] the central role of competition law [once again] to prevent the emergence of monopolies. Because we have such tendencies, of course. [And] we have to talk about that internationally as well, otherwise everybody will deal with such monopoly structures on their own in an inadequate way.

We have a great interest in seeing economic recovery take place all over the world. We have seen the latest figures: There are regions where we have economic growth, Europe (on the other hand) has been hit relatively hard, but also has growth prospects [next year again, respectively] this year⁹¹. But this must happen as concertedly as possible all over the world; and of course [this also] requires concerted efforts. I see a central role for the G20 in this. [And] the Italian presidency is working precisely in this direction.

So, my conclusion is that if we look at what the pandemic has done to us, that it can be seen as a confirmation of everything that has [yet] always been the spirit of Davos in recent years. The questions that were discussed there were the right ones. But according to the German writer Erich Kästner, we have a proverb that goes: "There is nothing good unless you do it."⁹² [And] the pandemic has made us realize that talking, [and] discussing, and thoughtfully making things clear is important. [But] I think the pandemic has made us realize that now comes a time of action, where action is taken as concertedly as possible, as jointly as possible, and as much as possible according to the same and [also] jointly discussed principles, but where something is done precisely, to overcome, if possible, the weak points that we have all experienced.

That brings me to the end, and I thank you for your attention.

[Speech by Angela Merkel at Leader's Summit on Climate \(invitation of President Joe Biden\)](#)

Transcript:

Sehr geehrter Herr Präsident, lieber Joe Biden,

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen,

ich bin froh, dass die USA wieder zurück in der Klimapolitik sind, denn es ist ja vollkommen unstrittig, dass die Welt Ihr Mitwirken braucht, wenn wir das Pariser Abkommen erfüllen wollen. Der nationale

⁹¹ Here, once again, Merkel at first speaks of „next year“ and then corrects herself by saying „this year“.

⁹² Kästner said: „Es gibt nichts Gutes, außer man tut es.“ In German, this sentence rhymes, making it sound quite funny. It is also worth considering how wise the choice of this quote really is in the context of an international event. It works well in German, but it loses power when translated into another language because in most languages the phrase can not easily be translated into a rhyme. It may be telling that Merkel is either not aware of the problem or uninterested in what her speeches may sound like after being translated.

Beitrag der USA drückt auch Ihre Ambitionen aus. Das ist ein sehr wichtiges Zeichen für die ganze Weltgemeinschaft. Herzlichen Dank auch für die Organisation dieses Treffens!

Wir stehen vor einer globalen Herkulesaufgabe. Es geht um nicht mehr und nicht weniger als die Transformation unserer ganzen Lebens- und Wirtschaftsweise. Dabei sind alle großen Emittenten gefordert, ganz besonders natürlich die Industrieländer. Deutschland hat seine CO₂-Emissionen bereits um 40 Prozent gegenüber 1990 reduziert. Die Europäische Union wird bis 2050 klimaneutral sein - das gilt natürlich auch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Und bis 2030 wollen wir mindestens 55 Prozent weniger Emissionen haben als 1990.

Die EU hat sich diese Woche auf dieses Ziel verständigt und es auch verbindlich festgeschrieben. Und Deutschland wird seinen Anteil natürlich leisten. Wir haben in Deutschland ein verbindliches Klimaschutzgesetz, das den Weg zur Klimaneutralität beschreibt. Wir setzen auf CO₂-Bepreisung. Neben dem Emissionshandel, den wir für die Industrie bereits europaweit haben, haben wir einen nationalen Emissionshandel für Verkehr und Wärme eingeführt - also für Sektoren, die europaweit noch nicht bepreist sind - und machen damit jetzt unsere ersten Erfahrungen.

In Deutschland ist Kohle heute noch ein wichtiger Energieträger. Aber wir werden bis spätestens 2038 - ich habe die Worte von António Guterres gehört - aus der Kohle aussteigen und stattdessen bei der Stromerzeugung weiter in erneuerbare Energien investieren. Wir haben im letzten Jahr, 2020, bereits 46 Prozent Strom aus erneuerbaren Energien erzeugt und wollen das bis 2030 auf 65 Prozent steigern. Wir wollen die notwendige wirtschaftliche Erholung nach der Coronapandemie auch für innovatives Wachstum nutzen und das gerade im Bereich des Klimas. Wir investieren also in erneuerbare Energien statt in Kohle.

Wir setzen uns auch dafür ein, dass der Verlust biologischer Vielfalt weltweit gestoppt wird. Wir sind der Meinung, dass 30 Prozent der Flächen an Land und auf dem Meer unter Schutz gestellt werden müssen.

Wir brauchen vor allen Dingen Solidarität mit den Entwicklungsländern. Als Industrieländer haben wir uns verpflichtet, bis 2020 jährlich 100 Milliarden US-Dollar für die Klimafinanzierung aufzubringen. Das soll bis 2025 mindestens fortgeschrieben werden. Wir haben in Deutschland in diesem Zusammenhang unsere Klimafinanzierung bis 2020 auf vier Milliarden Euro pro Jahr verdoppelt und werden auch in den kommenden Jahren unseren fairen Beitrag leisten.

Mit all diesen Maßnahmen unterstreichen wir, dass wir an einem Erfolg der COP26 interessiert sind, die in diesem Herbst in Glasgow in Großbritannien stattfinden wird, genauso wie an einem Erfolg der COP15 in Kunming, wenn es um den Erhalt der Biodiversität geht. Deutschland wird traditionsgemäß in diesem Jahr mit dem 12. Petersberger Klimadialog - gemeinsam mit dem Vereinigten Königreich - auch die Vorbereitung der Glasgower Konferenz aufnehmen.

Wir sind aktiv mit dabei und freuen uns auf die Zusammenarbeit mit Ihnen allen!

Translation:

Dear Mr. President, Dear Joe Biden,

Dear Colleagues,

I am glad that the U.S. is back on climate policy because it is absolutely indisputable that the world needs your cooperation if we are to meet the Paris Agreement. The U.S. national contribution also expresses your ambition. This is a very important signal for the whole world community. Thank you also for organizing this meeting!

We are facing a global Herculean task. It is about nothing more and nothing less than the transformation of our entire way of life and economy. This is a challenge for all major emitters, especially of course the industrialized countries. Germany has already reduced its CO₂ emissions by 40 percent compared with 1990. The European Union will be climate-neutral by 2050 - and that of course also applies to the Federal Republic of Germany. And by 2030 we want to have at least 55 percent fewer emissions than in 1990.

The EU agreed on this target this week and made has anchored it in a binding manner. And Germany will of course do its part. In Germany, we have a binding climate protection law that describes the path to climate neutrality. We are relying on CO₂ pricing. In addition to emissions trading, which we already have for industry throughout Europe, we have introduced national emissions trading for transport and heating - in other words, for sectors that are not yet priced throughout Europe - and are now making our first experiences with this.

In Germany, coal is still an important energy source today. But we will, by 2038 at the latest, - I have heard António Guterres' words - phase out coal, and instead continue to invest in renewable energies in electricity generation. We already generated 46 percent of electricity from renewables last year, in 2020, and we want to increase that to 65 percent by 2030. We also want to use the necessary economic recovery after the corona pandemic for innovative growth, and especially in the area of climate. So we are investing in renewable energies instead of coal.

We are also committed to halting the loss of biodiversity worldwide. We believe that 30 percent of land and sea areas must be placed under protection.

Above all, we need solidarity with developing countries. As industrialized countries, we have committed to providing 100 billion U.S. dollars a year in climate finance by 2020. This is to be continued at least until 2025. In this context, we in Germany have doubled our climate financing to four billion euros per year by 2020 and will continue to make our fair contribution in the coming years.

With all these measures, we are underlining that we are interested in the success of COP26, which will take place in Glasgow in the UK this fall, just as we are interested in the success of COP15 in Kunming, when it comes to preserving biodiversity. In keeping with tradition, Germany will also begin preparations for the Glasgow conference this year with the 12th Petersberg Climate Dialogue - together with the United Kingdom.

We are actively involved and look forward to working with you all!

Annex III 2. Xi Jinping's Speeches

Speech on EC 2018

Translation:

“Pushing the Development of an Ecological Civilization⁹³ in Our Nation⁹⁴ to a New Stage”

Xi Jinping

- I. Deeply understanding the importance of stepping up development of an ecological civilization⁹⁵

Building an ecological civilization is the fundamental basis for sustaining the development of the Chinese nation⁹⁶. The Chinese nation has always valued and loved nature; its more than 5000-year-old civilization gave birth to a rich ecological culture. The *Book of Changes* reads: „We look at the ornamental figures of the sky, and thereby ascertain the changes of the seasons. We look at the ornamental observances of society, and understand how the processes of transformation are accomplished all under heaven“, and: „the ruler divides and completes the course of heaven and earth; he furthers and regulates the gifts of heaven and earth, and so aids the people.“ Laozi says [in the *Book of changes*]: „Mankind follows the law of Earth, Earth follows the law of Heaven; Heaven follows the law of the Dao; Dao follows the law of nature.“⁹⁷ The Mencius states: „If the

⁹³ Ecological Civilization (in Chinese: shengtai wenming [生态文明]) refers to an ideology lately promoted by and written into the Chinese Constitution under Xi Jinping. In the Introduction to this thesis, we will see where the expression comes from and how it developed historically. I will also try to explain why this expression has been chosen. In the context of this translation we need to keep in mind that „civilization“ is a meaningful word, often used in the context of Chinese propaganda. „Civilizing“ needs to be understood as a process of education.

⁹⁴ 推动我国生态文明建设迈上新台阶 the official translation reads „Pushing China's Development of an Ecological Civilization to a New Stage“ I decided to translate wo guo [我国] into „Our Nation“ instead of „China“. (For a more detailed explanation see Introduction to the translation)

⁹⁵ I have chosen to remain close to the official translation in this section of the text but would also like to note that the original Chinese is more strongly persuasive. The original sentence reads: 深刻认识加强生态文明建设的重大意义 it is a sentence overloaded with strong adjectives like 深刻 = deeply and 重大 = significant, great. It literally means „deeply understand the significant importance of stepping up development of an ecological civilization. The official translation reads: „Recognizing the importance of stepping up development of an ecological civilization“. The word 加强 (= strengthening) has not even been translated in the official English version. The word is difficult to translate in this context, which is why I use nearly the same translation as the CPC, only adding the word „deeply“ at the beginning, but not without mentioning the problem. As far as my understanding goes, „strengthening“ here refers to „deep understanding“. It is the „deep understanding“ [of the Chinese people] that is to be strengthened.

⁹⁶ Here the term used is „zhonghua minzu“ [中华民族] which really means „Chinese nation“.

⁹⁷ 人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然 CPC translation: „Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes his law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Dao. The law of the Dao is its being what it is.“ I translate 人 as „mankind“ not „man“, but it's a rather slight difference. As to the last part of the sentence: 道法自然 I understand it as „Dao follows the laws of nature“. It is the same structure as in the parts before where 法 was interpreted as a verb, translated each time as „following the law“. To my understanding, the official translation seems to be limiting the importance of nature in this sentence. 自然 is not translated as „nature“ but as „what it is“. Possibly the translator has used an existing translation (there are several English translations). The *Book of Changes* is written in archaic Chinese, which is a different language. The meaning of the characters in archaic Chinese can be very different from the meaning of the same character in modern Chinese. It is also a language having changed throughout the centuries generally leaving much room for interpretation since every word/character can function as verb, noun or have a strictly grammatical function, meaning nothing by itself

seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten. If close nets are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fish and turtles will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hill-forests only at the proper times, the wood will be more than can be used.⁹⁸ The Xunzi states: „Axes must not enter the forests when the plants and trees are flourishing, lest their lives be cut short.“⁹⁹ *The Manual of Important Art for the People* [an agricultural encyclopedia of the 6th century] reads: „Act according to the seasons and the nature of the land, and you will enjoy great success through little effort.“¹⁰⁰ Those ideas all highlight the importance of heaven, earth and man becoming one in order to connect nature and human culture, act according to the laws of nature, take [what nature offers] at the right time, and use [it] in a responsible way. [The ideas] demonstrate the important knowledge our ancestors had regarding human-nature interaction. Also, at a very early stage in the history of our nation, environmental concepts have been elevated to our country’s administration, a special institution in charge of overseeing mountains, forests, rivers, and marshes was established, to formulate relevant laws and decrees through a monitoring system. In the *Rites of Zhou*¹⁰¹ it is recorded that wardens were responsible for protecting the natural environment by restricting access to certain areas and enforcing relevant prohibitions. During the Qin and Han Dynasties¹⁰², different officers were responsible for forests, rivers, shorelines, gardens, and farmlands. In fact, the monitoring system continued up to the Qing Dynasty¹⁰³. Quite a lot of our country’s dynasties had environmental protections laws and violators of these laws were severely punished. For example, the order issued by King Wen of Zhou on the attack of Chong was: „not to destroy houses, not to close wells, not to cut trees, not to disturb animals. Those who do not comply with this order shall be put to death“.

If the ecological [environment] flourishes, so does the civilization, if the ecological [environment] falters, so does the civilization.¹⁰⁴ The ecological environment is the basis of human existence and development, and changes to it have direct influence on the rise and fall of civilizations.¹⁰⁵ Ancient Egypt, ancient Babylon, ancient India, and ancient China, all four major ancient civilizations originate from regions with dense forests, abundant water and fertile fields. The mighty infinite Yangze and Yellow rivers formed the cradle of the Chinese nation [here: 中华民族 „Chinese

but serving to link the subject and object of the sentence. Those characteristics, proper to the ancient Chinese language, make translation into English a particular challenge. What is more, the Book of Changes is a philosophical text and its meanings have quite possibly shifted over the centuries. The word 自然 (meaning nature in modern Chinese) probably doesn’t mean „nature“ in the modern sense but rather something „natural“ in the sense of „pure, untouched, not manipulated by human influence“. I still consider „nature“ a better translation, particularly in this context where Xi Jinping tries to show the importance of „nature“ in Chinese culture. We must take into account his understanding of the text. When quoting it in order to prove the close ties between nature and the Chinese culture, it seems that he understands the word as „nature“.

⁹⁸ I chose the CPC translation here since I agree that the word choice is in this instance most appropriate.

⁹⁹ Same as CPC translation

¹⁰⁰ Same as CPC translation

¹⁰¹ A book on bureaucracy and state organization being part of the classics of Confucianism.

¹⁰² Qin (221-206 BC), Han (206 BC -220 AC)

¹⁰³ The last imperial dynasty (1644- 1911 AC)

¹⁰⁴ 生态兴则文明兴，生态衰则文明衰 the Qiushi translation reads: “A civilization may thrive if its natural surroundings thrive, and will suffer if its natural surroundings suffer.” I miss the expression „ecological“ in this interpretation. This is Xi Jinping’s speech on „ecological civilization“ and he chooses a metaphor with both words in it twice but the translation does not mention the word „ecological“ even once. Although the meaning of the sentence did not change, much of its rhetorical power is lost.

¹⁰⁵ In this passage it is remarkable, how Xi Jinping creates a connection between the words shengtai (生态) „ecological“ and the word wenming (文明) „civilization. The same two words that build the term of Ecological Civilization as inscribed in the Chinese constitution under Xi Jinping. In this, and the following part, he highlights the dependency of civilizations on ecology.

nation“], and have nourished the splendid Chinese culture.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, environmental degradation, in particular severe desertification, led to the decline of ancient Egypt and Babylon. Some areas of our nation also went through painful lessons in ancient times. For example, the once glorious civilization¹⁰⁷ of Loulan¹⁰⁸ lies buried under tons of desert sand, where once were beautiful lush pasture grounds.¹⁰⁹ The Hexi Corridor¹¹⁰ and the Loess Plateau were once abundant with water and vegetation, but excessive and reckless deforestation to open up land for cultivation, lead to severe environmental damage, which in turn aggravated economic decline. The gradual shift of China’s economic centers to the east and south since the middle of the Tang Dynasty was largely a result of environmental changes in the west [of the country].

On May 4, 2018, we held a ceremony marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx. During the ceremony, I stressed that when studying Marx, we must study and practice Marx thoughts on the relationship between man and nature. Marx and Engels believed that „man lives on nature“, and that humans produce, live, and develop through their interactions with nature.¹¹¹ If humans treat nature kindly, then nature will repay that kindness. But, „If man, by dint of this knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him.“ In *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels wrote, „The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, destroyed the forests to obtain cultivable land, never dreamed that they were laying the basis for the present devastated condition of their countries, by removing along with the forests the collecting centers and reservoirs of moisture. When, on the southern slopes of the mountains, the Italians of the Alpes used up the pine forests so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of

¹⁰⁶ It says: 奔腾不息的长江(...) in the original text. The English translation reads: „The surging Yangze (...)“ 奔腾 can be translated as surging but in that case 不息 (meaning continually, without a break, ceaselessly) is not translated. I translate 不息 „infinite“ and 奔腾 „mighty“. Xi uses figurative language throughout the speech and here he mystifies the two rivers as sources of the Chinese civilization. I think translating „the infinite mighty rivers“ is the closest to the original and adequately conveys this mythical aspect. The word “surging” is a simple description of the water’s movement. It is a suitable translation in this sense, but I don’t think it is quite strong enough here. As for 哺育了灿烂的中华文明 it has been translated: „..., and nurtured our country’s development into a magnificent civilization.“ But the Chinese phrase is more straight forward. There is no development mentioned. It simply says „..., have nourished the splendid Chinese culture.“ I find it a very strong statement on its own without the addition of „the country’s development into a magnificent civilization“. The addition in fact seems to weaken Xi’s straightforward reference to his country’s civilization as magnificent (or splendid, as I translated it). The original Chinese seems to suggest that the Chinese civilization has always been magnificent and therefore has a more confident tone than that of the official translation.

¹⁰⁷ Xi speaks of 楼兰文明 (Loulan civilization) which is translated into „kingdom of Loulan“ in the official translation. I keep the term „civilization“, which is the same as in 生态文明 „ecological civilization“. I believe the word was chosen carefully by the Chinese president and there is no need to change it here.

¹⁰⁸ Loulan (original name of the ancient Shanshan State located in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang)

¹⁰⁹ ..., 那里当年曾经是一块水草丰美之地 literally means: at that time the land there [referring to Loulan] used to be rich of water and grass and was beautiful. 水草丰美之地 is actually an elaborate, poetic description. In the official translation, the phrase is reduced to the single word „lush,“ a choice that underrepresents the lyrical tone of the speech.

¹¹⁰ Hexi Corridor: lies to the west of the Yellow River (therefore the name) in the Province of Gansu.

¹¹¹ I believe this refers to: Karl Marx, (1844), “Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte” where it reads: “Der Mensch lebt von der Natur, heißt: Die Natur ist sein Leib, mit dem er in beständigem Prozeß bleiben muß, um nicht zu sterben. Daß das physische und geistige Leben des Menschen mit der Natur zusammenhängt, hat keinen andren Sinn, als daß die Natur mit sich selbst zusammenhängt, denn der Mensch ist ein Teil der Natur.

water for the greater part of the year, with the effect that these would be able to pour still more furious flood torrents on the plains during the rainy seasons.”¹¹²

With history as a mirror, we can understand the rise and the fall [of a state].¹¹³ Regarding the question of building an Ecological Civilization, I have repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking [it] seriously and handling [it] properly; the reason being, that the environmental capacity of our nation is limited, our ecosystems are vulnerable, and we have still not achieved a fundamental reversal of environmental conditions that cause heavy pollution, significant damage, and high risk, [which] also aggravates the imbalance between different regions due to their particular geographical conditions.¹¹⁴ The land to the southeast of the Heihe-Tengchong Line¹¹⁵, accounts for 43% of the territory [of China], but is home to about 94% of its population. Dominated by plains, rivulets, low mountains, hills, and karst landforms, this part of China is under immense environmental pressure. The land to the northwest of the line accounts for 57% of the area but is home to only about 6% of the population. Dominated by grasslands, the Gobi Desert, oases, and snowy plateaus, the ecosystems in this part are extremely fragile. This is a very important aspect to consider when we talk about China’s national conditions.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have made building an Ecological Civilization a major component of coordinated implementation of the *five sphere integrated plan* and *the four pronged comprehensive strategy*; we have launched some fundamental, creative, forward-thinking work, and introduced a whole series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies, and thus the concept of an Ecological Civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people; efforts to control pollution are increasing, there is unprecedented progress in terms of the frequency with which new systems for environmental governance emerge, the rigor with which oversight and enforcement is carried out, and the rate at which the environment improves; therefore pushing forward environmental protection has produced a historically significant global change.¹¹⁶

Environmental work has always been important to me. When working in Zhengding, Xiamen, Ningde, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Shanghai, I always made environmental work one of my priorities. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, I have delivered several comments and instructions on incidents that caused serious damage to the environment as well as on promoting well-coordinated environmental conservation and avoiding excessive development in the Yangze River Economic Belt. I have requested that competent authorities be rigorous in their investigation and handling of environmental issues and not let up until these issues have been completely resolved,

¹¹² I see no need of altering the translation of this long passage from Marx from how it appears in the official English translation.

¹¹³ 以史为鉴，可以知兴替 in this the word 兴替 is difficult to accurately translate because although the rise and fall of power it describes could refer to the power of a specific state or Dynasty or to an entire civilization. This ambiguity needs to be kept in mind in the English translation. In my translation, I’ve chosen „of a state“ since I felt „of a civilization“ risks being an overinterpretation. I initially hesitated to make this decision because Xi has previously spoken of the rise and fall of civilizations, but in the end I decided that here Xi is most likely referring not to entire „civilizations“ but to „states“ as mentioned by Marx.

¹¹⁴ In this long sentence Xi Jinping speaks of the „building of the ecological civilization“ directly but the word 生态文明 „ecological civilization“ is not mentioned in the official translation and instead the phrase is translated as „environmental issues“. Since „ecological civilization“ is the specific topic of Xi’s speech, it seems important that the term should be translated directly.

¹¹⁵ An imaginary line dividing China in two. It stretches from Heihe to Tengchong (therefore the name). It was invented by a Chinese geographer who called it a „geo-demographic demarcation line“. This imaginary division is still often referred to in order to describe the imbalance of population density in China.

¹¹⁶ 推动生态环境保护发生历史性，转折性，全局性变化。Official translation: „Therefore, our efforts to promote environmental protection have gone through a historical turnaround with wide-ranging implications.

to truly protect the green waters and turquoise mountains¹¹⁷ so they may last forever, and all ecosystems will be stable.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have gone through the comprehensive deepening of the reform, [we] have accelerated the top-level plan to push forward the development of an Ecological Civilization and set up a system of institutions for building [the Ecological Civilization]. We have gradually promulgated the „Guidelines Regarding the Acceleration of Pushing on the Development of an Ecological Civilization“ and the „Institutional Reform Plan for Promoting the Ecological Civilization“. We have worked out more than 40 reform plans regarding the development of an Ecological Civilization. We have made comprehensive [and] systematic schedules to carry out the building of an Ecological Civilization covering areas such as overall targets, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, institutional safeguards etc.¹¹⁸ We have launched and implemented systems with functions including the assessment of Ecological Civilization development targets¹¹⁹, the audit of natural resource assets under an official’s purview when officials leave their posts, and the enforcement of accountability for environmental damages. A system of main functional zones was built up step by step. Faster progress was made with the system of environmental administration, including the vertical management by environmental protection institutions at sub-provincial level, which monitor, supervise and enforce [the environmental] laws, [and] take care of the quality of environmental monitoring data. [Faster progress was also made] with regard to emission permits, river and lake chief systems, the prohibition on the import of foreign waste etc. The formulation and implementation of economic policies on environmental issues such as green finance reform, the drafting of balance sheets for natural resource assets, the levy of environmental protection taxes, compensation for environmental protection etc. [also] progress smoothly. [Our efforts] to control air pollution in the Provinces of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei¹²⁰ [and to] protect the environment in the Yangtze River Economic Belt have gradually shown results. Furthermore, we have drafted and revised laws such as the Environmental Protection Law and the Environmental Protection Tax Law, as well as laws on the prevention and control of air and water pollution and on nuclear safety. The standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, the Supreme People’s Court, [and] the Supreme

¹¹⁷ 确保绿水青山常在 the four words 绿水青山 are often used by Xi Jinping. Literally meaning „green water turquoise mountains“ it is a well-known metaphor for „beautiful scenery“ or „good environment“. This is not translated in the official English version, since it does not work in English without explanation. This symbolic language is characteristic of Xi’s speech. One other thing to note here is that, although 常在 does not mean „forever“, I’ve translated it in that way because I believe it is closer to what Xi means here. He wants to show that he is thinking about the future. The official translation reads: „ (...) ensure that the pristine environments are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations and that the security and stability of all types of ecosystems are maintained.“ Even if „enjoyment of future generations“ cannot be found in the original speech this phrase conveys the translator’s understanding of Xi’s words.

¹¹⁸ The whole paragraph is one long sentence in Chinese: 党的十八大以来, 我们通过全面深化改革、加快推进生态文明顶层设计和制度体系建设, 相继出台《关于加快推进生态文明建设的意见》、《生态文明体制改革总体方案》, 制定了 40 多项涉及生态文明建设的改革方案, 从总体目标、基本理念、主要原则、重点任务、制度保障等方面对生态文明建设进行全面系统部署安排。In this sentence Ecological Civilization is directly mentioned 5 times. The official translation mentions it 4 times. I tried to stick to the Chinese version but that meant mentioning it 6 times since in Chinese the subject or object of a phrase can sometimes be left out. I added “Ecological Civilization” in square brackets when Xi refers to EC but doesn’t explicitly mention it by name. When translating the text into English it is necessary, for grammatical reasons, to add the subject of the sentence back in.

¹¹⁹ The official translation reads: „the assessment of ecological development targets... but in the Chinese version it reads “生态文明建设目标...” which literally means „targets of building the Ecological Civilization“. I therefore translated it into „assessment of ecological civilization development targets“. Xi refers to the EC and does not simply speak of „sustainable development“.

¹²⁰ Abbreviated as 京津冀 in the Chinese text.

People's Procuratorate have defined standards criminalizing environmental pollution and ecological destructions making punishment more severe [and] shaping a situation of high pressure [against such crimes]. In particular, the central environmental protection inspection system is well established and successful¹²¹, [being] ready for true change¹²² it does not fear the offenders, [and] won't let go of a problem till it is solved. It is a practical and effective tool for pushing local party committees, governments, and their relevant departments to fulfill their environmental protection obligations.

We vigorously promote a green development, [and] have achieved clear results. We have optimized the layout of [China's] territorial space, and set red lines for environmental protection in 15 provincial-level units including those in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the Yangze River Economic Belt, Ningxia and others. [We have] strongly pushed forward supply-side structural reforms, constantly improving the structure of production with a large number of highly polluting enterprises being systematically shut down¹²³, [and] in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and its neighboring surroundings, messy polluting industries are strictly being disciplined in an unprecedented manner.¹²⁴ Energy consumption patterns have undergone positive changes [and] our nation has become the world's largest consumer of new and renewable energies. Saving natural resources has proven to be effective, [and] the intensity of resource consumption has fallen markedly. We have put into effect the three action plans to prevent air-, water-, and soil pollution. China is the first major developing country in the world to launch large-scale PM2.5 control programs, having built the world's largest wastewater treatment capacity. Compared to 2013, in 2017 the average density of inhalable particulate matter (PM10) in 338 cities at or above prefectural levels throughout the country has dropped by 22.7%. In the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, PM2.5 concentration has fallen by 39.6%, that of Beijing decreased from 89.5 micrograms per cubic meter to 58 micrograms per cubic meter. The proportion of surface water body sections under the national monitoring program that met Grade I-III water quality standards rose to 67.9%, the proportion of those failing to meet Grade V standard fell to 8.3%. Forest coverage rose from about 16.6% at the beginning of the century to about 22% today.

China took a lead by releasing the „China National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development“, by implementing the „National Plan on Climate Change (2014-2020) and by submitting the ratification documents for the Paris Agreement to the United Nations.

¹²¹ In Chinese: 建得好、用得好, ... the official version translates: „solid and put to good use“ I understand that 建 refers to the inspection system. To my mind, „well established and successful“ is closer to Xi's intended meaning.

¹²² 敢于动真格 (literally: 敢于 dare to, 动真格 be serious about something) Here it refers to the system and means that it is a serious affair, made to bring about real change. I therefore translated this phrase as „ready for true change“

¹²³ 一大批高污染企业有序退出... literally: „a large number of highly polluting enterprises systematically retire.“ I translated 推出 as „shut down“ as it seems to me the most direct and accurate representation of the original text.

¹²⁴ The official translation reads: „...scattered, non-compliant, and polluting industries in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and its surrounding areas have been put under unprecedented scrutiny.“ 散乱污 (literally: messy pollution) is translated as „non-compliant and polluting“ which is not strong enough here. I chose to keep „messy polluting“ in order to retain the force of the original. Also 整治 (meaning: 1. renovate; repair, 2. punish; fix, 3. do; work as) is translated as „scrutiny,“ making it sound as if industries are simply being checked more strictly. I understand Xi to be saying, instead, that industries are strictly punished. It is for this reason that I chose to translate 整治 as „disciplined“.

China accounts for more than 50% of the elimination of ozone-depleting substances by developing countries, making it the world's largest contributor to protection of the ozone layer. In 2017, as a common initiative with the UN Environment Program and other international organizations, the „Belt and Road Initiative“, an international coalition for green development was founded.

Throughout untiring efforts, the quality of China's ecological environment continues to ameliorate. At the same time, it must be clearly seen, that building the Ecological Civilization is a hard challenge with immense pressure, and prominent obstacles, in order to establish the Ecological Civilization, we have to overcome difficulties, [we will have to] gnaw hard bones, we will have to fight quite some stubborn [and] infectious diseases, [and] the terrain will be [almost] impassable.¹²⁵

Looking at the big picture, the quality of the ecological environment continues to improve, showing a steady tendency to get better, but [the] effects [of such improvement] are not solid at all, when slacking off [performance] only a tiny bit this might immediately cause a setback, just like when rowing a boat upstream, one falls back as soon as one stops moving forward. The building of an Ecological Civilization is now in a phase with immense pressure, [it is] a decisive stage in which this heavy load needs to be carried forward, [and] in order to meet the peoples growing demand of a graceful natural environment, [we have] entered a period of strong [economic] performance supplying more ecological high-quality products. This is also a time frame with the right conditions; when we have the capability to solve main environmental issues. China's economy has quickly shifted from a stage of rapid growth to one of high-quality growth, [yet] it needs to overcome some conventionally and some unconventionally critical moments. It is a process of rebirth, like the rise of a phoenix from the ashes. If we do not react now, it will be harder to solve [the problem] in the future, the price will be higher, and it will be harder. We must grid our teeth, conquer this mountain [and] climb up onto this sloping path.¹²⁶

As the Communist Party, it is our solemn promise to the people, to fulfill the aim of building a society of moderate prosperity until 2020. We cannot proclaim on the one hand, that moderate prosperity has been achieved, [whilst] on the other hand, we still lack environmental quality. This would not win the people 's approval, nor would it stand up to the test of history. In the tough battle to prevent and control pollution, no matter how hard [it may seem], we cannot remain undecided, nor can we shrink away, but bravely have to take courageous decisions, fight with the courage of a life-and-death struggle, strike camp to attack the city with energy and determination.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ „...，还有不少硬骨头啃，还有不少顽瘴痼疾要治，形势仍然十分严峻。“ Literally meaning: „...there will be hard bones to chew, there will be quite some infectious and stubborn diseases to fight, the territory will be difficult/stony/[almost] impassable“ The official translation reads: „... there are still many difficult obstacles that we must overcome, tough problems that we must face, and longstanding issues that we must resolve.“ This translates the sense and sound of the text into proper English, but again the tone of the language is not accurately conveyed and the strong metaphors Xi chose completely disappear.

¹²⁶ 我们需要咬紧牙关、爬过这个坡、迈过这道坎。The official translation reads: „..., so we must grit our teeth and conquer the challenges that lie ahead.“ I chose to keep all three metaphors from the Chinese version 咬紧牙关 „grit teeth“, 爬坡 „conquer a mountain“ and 道坎 which I understand as „sloping path“. It is a more elaborate description of the hardships that lie ahead for China in its plan to build the EC and I find the metaphors quite suitable even in English.

¹²⁷ The CPC translation reads: „No matter the difficulty, we must not flinch or hesitate. In the battle to prevent and control pollution, we must have the determination to make painful changes, the courage to stand and fight, and the will to commit every last ounce of our effort.“ I have chosen a more literal (nearly word-for-word)

Party committees and governments at all levels should consciously plan the socio-economic development together with the building of an Ecological Civilization [as a whole], Party committees [should] provide leadership, governments [should] give guidance, enterprises [should] bear responsibility, and determinedly reject the old path of „polluting first, cleaning up later“, growth models harming or even destroying the natural environment [should] be rejected determinedly.

[We need to] give full play to the Party leadership and our country's socialist system who's political dominant position enables [them] to concentrate great strength to deal with serious affairs; [we need to] make full use of the materialistic basis which 40 years of reform and opening up have brought about, redouble our efforts to build the Ecological Civilization and solve the problems of the natural environment.

II. Principles that must be upheld in order to reinforce the building of an Ecological Civilization

The ecological environment is a major political issue which bears upon the mission and purpose of the CPC, it also is a major social issue concerning people's livelihood. Our Party has always attached great importance to the protection of the natural environment, establishing resource conservation and environmental protection as fundamental state policies [as well as] making sustainable development a national strategy. Following [the path of] socio-economic development with determination¹²⁸ has continuously and deeply improved our understanding of the overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics¹²⁹. The [developing of theories] starting from „the two cultures“, over the „three pronged“ overall plan up to the „four prongs“ and finally today's „five prongs“, is a practice that has brought forth new ideas and has profoundly transformed how we think and go about development.¹³⁰

Today, the main contradiction in our country's society has transformed into that between an imbalanced and insufficient development and the people's demands for a beautiful environment

translation since I wanted to translate the images Xi Jinping creates in this passage. It is nothing less than a war-scenario that is being described by the Chinese text, with words like 功成 (literally: attack a city), 拔寨 (literally: strike a camp) which refers to a military camps, and 背水一战 (literally: fight with one's back to the water), which means fight the decisive battle, with no way out. This last example is a fixed expression in Chinese which I find is best translated as „life-and-death struggle“.

¹²⁸ 随着经济社会发展和实践深入 literally: „following socio-economic growth and carry out/practice in-depth/deeply“ I translated here as: „Following [the path of] socio-economic development with determination“ which is the general meaning here.

¹²⁹ 中国特色社会主义 a fixed expression usually translated as „Socialism with Chinese characteristics“. The CPC translation speaks of „Chinese socialism,“ but I prefer to use the expression more commonly known in the West.

¹³⁰ „从当年的“两个文明“到“三位一体“、“四位一体“,再到今天的“五位一体“,这是重大理论和实践创新,更带来了发展理念和发展方式的深刻转变。“ Xi Jinping here uses the abbreviations 两个文明 (literally „two cultures“), 三位一体 (literally: the three pronged [strategy]), 四位一体 (the four pronged [strategy]) and 五位一体 (the five pronged [strategy]) each referring to concepts well-known in the Chinese context but that need explanation for Western readers. The CPC here gives the following translation and explanation: „It started from the distinction between material and non-material culture [Note: this refers to the Chinese terms (that are not directly mentioned in the text): „物质文明“ and „精神文明“, literally meaning „material culture“ and „spiritual culture“] before transforming into the „Three Pronged“ overall plan, which covered economic, political, and cultural development, and finally five prongs with the addition of ecological development. This was a process of great theoretical and practical innovation, which profoundly transformed how we think about and how we go about development.“

has already become an important aspect of this challenge, with the broader masses of the people eagerly awaiting faster improvements in environmental quality. Responding to the people's yearning for a beautiful environment is the objective of our party's struggle, [and] resolving problems that are of the greatest, most direct and most practical concern to the people, is the mission of the governing party. The people's affection is the most important political concern.¹³¹ We [must] actively respond to the people's desires, hopes, and worries, vigorously push forward the building of the Ecological Civilization, provide more high-quality ecological goods, and consistently meet the people's growing demands for a beautiful ecological environment.

Humanity is a community that shares a common fate; hence the protection of the ecological environment is a global challenge we face together and are held responsible for together. If we successfully build an Ecological Civilization, credit [will] be given to China's socialism; otherwise, it will turn into the pretext used by forces with hidden agendas to attack us. Since humanity entered the industrial age, the industrialization happened extremely fast, bringing about tremendous material wealth but at the same time also accelerated the exploitation of natural resources, destroyed the original balance and cycles of global ecosystems [thereby] created tension in the relationship between man and nature. Since the beginning of the 1930s, some Western countries have continuously been stroked by natural disasters, shocking the world [with] the huge damage, making people deeply reflect the capitalist model of development. In the more than 200 years of modernization, no more than 30 countries have industrialized, with a combined population of less than a billion. We are the world's largest developing country with a population of over 1.3 billion, [if we] carry forward the building of the Ecological Civilization [and if we] establish a prosperous democratic civilization and powerful nation, [this] will have worldwide impact.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, our party has profoundly answered theoretical and practical questions regarding why to build the Ecological Civilization, what kind of an Ecological Civilization to build and how to build the Ecological Civilization, putting forward a series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies. In order to develop an Ecological Civilization in the new era, [it is] indispensable to adhere to the following principles.

First: Adhere to the principle of harmonious coexistence between mankind and nature.

Humanity and nature are a biotic community. The natural environment has no substitute. We may not realize how precious it is until thoughtless use has damaged it to the point of being

¹³¹ 人心是最大的政治。Literally: the people's sentiment (or sympathy/feelings or sometimes „the will“) is the most important political issue (or affair/concern). To my understanding, Xi Jinping here tries to explain that the CPC still serves the people. The will or the sentiment of the people is considered by the party. The word 人心 (translated as „public sentiment“ in the official version) merits a little extra attention. It consists of two characters namely 人 (human/person/people) and 心 (heart or feeling). It can be translated as „public sentiment“, „the people's will“ or „people's affection“ but it needs to be noted that the two characters „human“ and „heart“ creates a specific picture in people's mind. It is not an uncommon word to use but I would like to highlight the association it provokes. As to the word 政治, it can simply mean „politics“ or „political affair“. The official translation speaks of „political efficacy“ which is actually not referred to by Xi. The translator may have felt, as I did, that Xi is trying to gain „recognition“ and that „political efficacy“ is something that creates „recognition“. I have chosen to translate the term as „political concern,“ which I think does more to express the link between the party and the people that Xi is trying to emphasize. Over and above, „efficacy,“ Xi is insisting here that he cares for and is „concerned“ for the people's sentiments.

unsalvageable.¹³² „Heaven, Earth and I were produced together, and all things and I are one.“ „Heaven does not speak, yet the four seasons move in order. Earth does not speak, yet the myriad beings come to life.“¹³³ When humans use nature in a responsible way and carefully protect it, nature will generously pay back [for it]. However, when humans immoderately exploit [and] grossly plunder nature, nature's revenge [will] certainly be merciless.¹³⁴ It is an unavoidable rule, that when humanity harms nature, it comes back to us like injuries to our own body. „Each of the myriad things must be in a harmonious relation with Heaven in order to grow, and each must obtain from Heaven the proper nurture in order to become complete.“¹³⁵ There are numerous vivid examples of this. Like the Dujiang Weirs, an ecological irrigation system from the period of the Warring States (475-221 BC), with its more than 2000 year-old history, that was built following the flooding patterns of the Minjiang River¹³⁶ [and in harmony with] the topographical circumstances of the city of Chengdu with its flat plains and rivers prone to overflow, being beneficial not only at the time, but also for generations to follow.

Throughout the entire process of development, we need to continue giving priority to practicing thrift¹³⁷, prioritize environmental protection and put the restoration of nature first, [furthermore, we must] think about giving back instead of only discussing [how to] take [from nature], we cannot just talk about development without mentioning environmental protection, just consider the use without thinking of restoration, instead we need to protect the environment like we protect [our own] eyes¹³⁸, treat nature like we treat life, focusing on taking more positive measures that will provide solid foundations and long-term benefits, concrete steps that will help protect and restore the environment, and effective actions that will clean up our surroundings and reveal their natural beauty. This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.

¹³² Here the part 用之不觉, 失之难存 is probably the most difficult part to translate. Word for word it means: use without awareness/thoughtless use of something, loose/a loss, hard/difficult, exist/live. Subject, object, or verbs are not easy to recognize here. The official translation reads: „..., and we may not realize how truly precious it is until it is damaged to the point of being unsalvageable.“ It may seem long to translate only eight Chinese characters and, obviously, this translation is an interpretation of the words in the context of the speech. To build a sentence in English, we need to add quite a lot of elements since Chinese can sometimes work like a mathematical formula. Just as, for example, when we express something as „ $A^2+B^2=C^2$ “ and then can use the formula to attain meaning even when the values of A, B and C are constantly being replaced.

¹³³ Xi Jinping here quotes from ancient Chinese philosophy. The CPC translation reads: „To borrow the words of ancient masters,...“ to make clear those are quotations. Xi Jinping however does not say this, which is why I did not add it to my translation. I have used the translation of the philosophical quotes from the CPC version since I could not have done it any better.

¹³⁴ Here 惩罚 (literally: punishment/penalty or to punish/to penalize) is translated „revenge“. I found it more suitable in this context. The official translation is: „However, when humans exploit nature indiscriminately and aggressively plunder its resources, then nature will be ruthless in its punishment.“

¹³⁵ It is Xunzi who is quoted here, however, the Chinese version does not mention Xunzi whilst the official translation adds: „As Xunzi said,...“ I borrowed the translation of the quote itself from the CPC translation for being just perfect.

¹³⁶ A river in Sichuan Province.

¹³⁷ 坚持节约优先 (literally: continue giving priority to practicing thrift). For some reason the CPC translation here reads: „..., we must prioritize environmental conservation...“. My understanding is that Xi is referring here to the fact that we need to change our lifestyle, get used to living less extravagantly and less wastefully. 节约 means to save, to economize etc. The term does not appear in the official translation at all.

¹³⁸ 要像保护眼睛一样保护生态环境 (literally: protect the natural environment like [we] protect [our] eyes). CPC translation: „We should protect our natural environment in the same way we would protect our own wellbeing, ...“ I see no need to change this powerful metaphorical image used by Xi, so I kept it..

Second: [Adhere to the principle of] seeing the environment as a treasure¹³⁹

This is an important development concept and a major principle for advancing modernization. The concept of considering „turquoise waters and green mountains“ as „being worth mountains of gold and silver“ expounds the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, revealing that by protecting the environment [we also] protect the economic productivity, [and] that improving the ecological environment leads to the development of production. [This] clearly points out new ways and means to achieving [economic] development and environmental protection in a symbiotic manner. „Turquoise waters and green mountains“ [not only represent] natural [and] ecological wealth, [but] also [represent] social wealth [as well as] economic success.¹⁴⁰ By protecting the natural environment, [we] also protect ecological wealth and increase nature’s capital. [This] safeguards the capacity of socio-economic development and its after-effects, [thus] turquoise waters and green mountains lead to long-lasting ecological and socio-economic benefits.¹⁴¹

At their roots, environmental problems are problems [resulting from our] ways of life and development methods. Environmental problems must be solved on the fundamental level. [This] takes development concepts that are innovative, coordinated, green, open[-minded] and shared, [it also takes] the acceleration of resource conservation, environmental protection, the formation of spatial patterns, [as well as] industrial structures, production modes, lifestyles conducted to resource conservation and environmental protection, [furthermore] economic activities and people’s behavior [must be] restricted within the limits of what natural resources and the ecological environment can bear, giving nature room and time to recover. We must move faster to define and enforce strict controls including red lines for environmental protection, minimum standards for environmental quality, and ceilings on resource utilization¹⁴². We will absolutely not allow people to continue to engage in activities that violate these controls, follow old extensive models of growth, or seek short-term gain at the expense of future generations. Regarding the red lines of environmental protection, a strict system of controls [must be] build up, covering important ecological spaces so that these spaces do not change in character, become smaller, or lose [their] ecological functions. Regarding the minimum standards for environmental quality, [we] need baselines [guaranteeing, that] environmental quality can only improve and not worsen. Also, on

¹³⁹ 绿水青山就是金山银山 (word for word: turquoise water green mountain equals mountain of gold mountain of silver). Actually, it is green water and turquoise mountains but since both colors 绿 and 青 describe nuances of green in Chinese, I decided I could slightly alter the description. “Green waters and turquoise mountains” is a well-known metaphor in Chinese for a clean and healthy environment, but to Westerners „green water“ may not sound so healthy. I chose „turquoise water“, which I believe more accurately conveys in English the freshness suggested by the original text. As for the mountains, I believe that the Chinese idea was that mountains seem „turquoise“ when melting into the background of a blue sky. The mountains of gold and silver obviously represent wealth. Xi Jinping often uses this expression in the context of environmental protection. It means that a clean natural environment is a treasure to humans and (as he sometimes adds) necessary to the country’s economy.

¹⁴⁰ Compare CPC translation (p. 12 second paragraph). It makes it easier to read but loses some of the symbolic aspects used in the Chinese text. I therefore chose to translate this passage more literally.

¹⁴¹ As compared to the official translation, this is once again a more literal translation. I wanted to show how often Xi Jinping uses the metaphor of “turquoise waters and green mountains”. By contrast to the official translation, I avoid trying to make anything “sound better” than the original. In fact, the Chinese speech is quite repetitive and also sometimes uses different words to say the same thing several times in the same sentence or paragraph. In such cases, the official translation often takes a “shortcut”, saying only once what Xi said several times with different words (see the passage I refer to in footnotes 47 and 48: when comparing the translation, the official one is far shorter than my translation of the same paragraph) .

¹⁴² 上线三条红线 is here translated as „minimum standards“ and „ceilings“

this basis [we should] not stop improving the severe harms [which] the environment faces [and] must strictly enforce accountability in areas [where] environmental quality is worsening. Regarding the ceilings of resource utilization, we must not only think of humanity's and the present time's needs, but also take into account the needs of nature and future generations, keeping a firm handle on the intensity of exploitation and use of natural resources, [in order to] avoid [that we] exceed the bearing capacity of natural resources.

Third: The principle that there is no welfare more universally beneficial than a sound natural environment.¹⁴³

We need to fulfill the wishes of the people [and] avoid what people fear.¹⁴⁴ The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the people; [with] green mountains representing beauty and blue skies bringing happiness¹⁴⁵. Economic development serves people's livelihood, environmental protection alike serves people's livelihood. [We] also need to create more material wealth along with spiritual wealth¹⁴⁶ to meet the people's growing needs for a better life. [We] also need to provide more quality ecological goods to meet the people's growing needs for a graceful natural environment. [We] must ensure that the environment benefits the people, [that] ecology is favorable to the people, [that] ecology serves the people; [we] need to focus on solving the severe environmental problems, that harm people's health, accelerate the improvement of the quality of the ecological environment, and offer more high quality ecological goods, [as well as] aim for social fairness and fulfill the people's growing needs of a beautiful environment.¹⁴⁷

Developing an Ecological Civilization is a cause in which the entire public participates and has a stake, in order to build a beautiful China, [we] must change¹⁴⁸ conscious actions of the entire public. Every single [citizen] is a protector of the environment, [and its] beneficiary, no one is a spectator, outsider, (or) critic; no one can just talk without acting¹⁴⁹, [or] stay aloof from the matter. [We] must boost all people's resource saving awareness, [their] environmental protection awareness [and] ecological awareness; cultivate (literally: nurture young plants) an ecological morality and code of conduct; give impetus to public ecological activities, encourage all members of the society to

¹⁴³ 良好生态环境是最普惠的民生福祉 I have borrowed from the official translation here, since I believe it is in this case impossible to stay much closer to Xi Jinping's words.

¹⁴⁴ 民之所好好之，民之所恶恶之。Literally: All things people love/like, need to be supported, all things that people hate needs to be fought against/avoided. The official translation here reads: "In all things, we must act according to the will of the public."

¹⁴⁵ 环境就是民生，青山就是美丽，蓝天就是幸福。has been translated as follows in the official version: "The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the public, since blue skies and verdant surroundings allow us to feel the beauty and joy of life." I again chose to translate this passage more literally in order to retain the images used by Xi Jinping, which are significant to the overall tone, as well as the meaning, of the speech.

¹⁴⁶ 精神财富 literally: spiritual wealth. The official translation speaks of "cultural wealth". In fact, the meaning here it is something in between spiritual and cultural wealth. I keep the more traditional translation of "spiritual" wealth here, which allows for more possible interpretations of Xi's words.

¹⁴⁷ Here I nearly give a word-for-word translation in order to show how repetitive Xi Jinping is in this part of the speech.

¹⁴⁸ 转化 (=transform, change) the CPC translation here reads: "...we must translate the idea of building a beautiful China into the conscious actions of all people," with *translate* referring to 转化. My own translation may be a bit stronger than the original text here, but again I chose to translate literally in order to allow for different interpretations of the words used by Xi Jinping.

¹⁴⁹ 谁也不能只说不做

contribute as much as possible to the protection of the environment by cutting down the pollution they produce, [as well as]the energy and resources they consume.

Fourth: The principle, that mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grassland together form a biotic system.

An ecosystem is an integrated natural unity made up of organic chains that are tightly bound and dependent on each other. Fields are humanities lifelines¹⁵⁰, rivers are the lifelines of the fields, mountains are the source of life to rivers, soil is the mountains source of life, forests and grasslands are the sources of life of the soil; This biotic community is the material basis for humanity's subsistence and development. [We] must calculate generously, holistically, comprehensively [and] for the long term. If we spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar, attend to one thing and neglect another, at the end [this] necessarily leads to system wide long-term damage of the natural environment.

[We] must seek out a new path for environmental governance by treating it as a systematic project [and] looking at it from an overall angle; [we] cannot „heal [only] the head if the head aches, [or only] cure the foot when the foot aches;¹⁵¹ with government departments each looking out for their own immediate problems while hindering one another, [instead, we] must make overall plans and take all factors into consideration, simultaneously implement multiple comprehensive measures to ensure that our efforts to build the Ecological Civilization permeate all fields, regions, and processes. For example, [we must] successfully manage water pollution, well protect the aquatic environment, [we] must make plans taking the entire coasts into account, the rivers upper and lower reaches, the land surrounding them, surface- and subsurface sources of water, both aquatic ecosystems and aquatic resources, and both the prevention and control of pollution and the protection of ecosystems. [We] must deeply implement integrated ecological protection and restoration of mountains, waters, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands; [we] must launch large-scale programs of land-greening, and comprehensively tackle losses of water, erosion of soil [as well] the spread of deserts and stony deserts. In the Yangtze River Economic Belt, [it] takes major environmental protection [programs]. Excessive growth cannot be carried on, [instead,] ecology must be given precedence, [and we must uphold to] sustainable development, making it a precondition that all economic activities in this area do not harm the environment.

Fifth: The principles of applying strictest environmental protection regulations and laws.

Environmental protection must rely on regulations, [it] must rely on laws.¹⁵² Most of the outstanding problems in environmental protection existing in our country are related to inadequate

¹⁵⁰ 人的命脉在田 (literally: humanities lifeline is on the field) meaning: “humans need the field for food”, as the CPC translation reads. The metaphor that is being used here is actually much stronger than this since 命脉 (which means lifeline) consists of the two characters 命 for life, fate, destiny, or lifespan and 脉 arteries and veins, pulse, vein. With this in mind, I chose a stronger image than the pragmatic “humans need the field for food”. In the rest of the paragraph the word 命脉 is used another four times. I translated it sometimes as “lifeline”, sometimes as “source of life,” both of which I consider to be suitable translations.

¹⁵¹ 不能再是头痛医头、脚痛医脚, Qiushi here translates: „continuing to treat superficial symptoms“ but it literally means „treating only the head when the head ached, treating the foot when the foot aches“. The passage refers to traditional Chinese medicine where, in case of a headache, for example, the whole system will be treated, since the “headache” is considered only a symptom of something influencing the whole system.

¹⁵² 保护生态环境必须依靠制度, 依靠法治。The official translation is: “Environmental protection must have legal and regulatory backing.” What is here translated as regulatory also means “system”, “order”, “rule” or “regulation”. *Yi kao* (依靠) is here translated as “have...backing” but the term can also be translated as “depend on”, “rely on” etc. Xi Jinping repeats the verb, literally saying: “Environmental protection must rely on

systems, lax regulations, liberal laws, unsatisfying enforcement, and lenient punishment.¹⁵³ [We] must accelerate innovation of regulations, increase their output, improve regulations in a comprehensive way, intensify their implementation [and] ensure [they] have adequate peripheral support, and that they are rigorously enforced. To insure that the decision of the CPC Central Committee to build the Ecological Civilization will be rooted and taken into effect, it is necessary to make strict use of the regulations, to control and limit the power of officials, protect blue skies and increase green vegetation, [furthermore,] power must be used responsibly, responsibility must be taken and failure must be hold accountable.¹⁵⁴

When those who uphold the law are strong, the state is strong; when those who uphold the law are weak, the state is weak.¹⁵⁵ Governmental orders must be trustworthy, and laws must be executed.¹⁵⁶ The vital strength of [our] institutions depends on concrete enforcement, the key lays in true

regulations, [it] must rely on laws.” I kept the repetition of the verb in my translation since I feel it highlights the dependent relationship Xi suggests for Environmental protection, and further emphasizes its importance.¹⁵³ Official translation: „Most of China’s outstanding problems in environmental protection are related to inadequate systems, lax regulations, imperfect laws, lacking enforcement, and ineffectual punishment.“ I paid special attention to the adjectives used in this sentence. In Chinese they are: *tizhi bu jianquan* (体制不健全), *zhidu bu yange* (制度不严格), *fazhi bu yanmi* (法治不严密), *zhixing bu daowei* (执行不到位), and *chengchu bu de li* (惩处不得力), they all are negative adjectives, using *bu* 不 to turn the adjective into its opposite. When for example *yange* 严格 means “strict”, “rigorous” or “stringent”, *bu yange* 不严格 means the complete opposite. When seeing it like this, some words are slightly stronger in their meaning than in the official translation. The official translation speaks of “inadequate” systems, “lax” regulations, “imperfect” laws, “lacking” enforcement, and “ineffectual” punishment. As for the first two, I chose the same translation but translated “liberal” laws (instead of “imperfect” laws) since in Chinese we have the negative form of *yanmi* (严密) meaning “tight” or when referring to laws, we would say “strict”. If what is being referred to is the opposite of “strict”, I found “liberal” a possible translation. I chose “unsatisfying” enforcement over “lacking” enforcement, since *daowei* 到位 as an adjective means “satisfactory” or “good” so in the negative form it becomes “unsatisfying”. For the last adjective, I chose “lenient” punishment over “ineffectual” punishment. The word that is used is the negative form of *bu de li* 得力 which, according to my understanding, means “strongly” or—when referring to punishments—“severely,” making the opposite of the word “lenient” in this context. Xi Jinping is trying to point out what he believes is not working in China. The adjectives he uses are meaningful since they were chosen to express what Xi Jinping is critiquing: an inadequate system, lax regulations, liberal laws, unsatisfying enforcement (of laws and regulations) and lenient punishments. Or, to say it the other way around, they imply what he wants: adequate systems, strict regulations, strict laws, satisfying enforcement (of laws) and strict or severe punishment. The words I’ve chosen are stronger than those chosen by the official translation, but they are also closer to the words chosen by Xi. By using the stronger words we can see more clearly that Xi is choosing an authoritarian approach. Environmental protection can be reached with strict laws and severe punishment.

¹⁵⁴ As in many parts of the speech, Xi Jinping uses a formulaic language here with many words strung together that have to be reformulated in English. There is an inherent complexity to translating this formulaic language and the problems that result are not only linguistic, but also a question of interpretation. For example, when 要用制度官权治吏 is translated as „We must use our regulations to check the use of power“ in the official version, I translated it: „it is necessary to make strict use of the regulations, to control and limit the power of officials“. To my understanding, Xi Jinping here addresses corrupt government officials, with *li* 吏 meaning “official.” The CPC translation leaves out this aspect of the text, perhaps considering it to have little importance. The word “strict” also disappears in the CPC version, but *yanse* 严格 means to „rigorously enforce“ a rule and translating it simply as „use our regulations“ does not seem strong enough to me. It is a more authoritarian language that is chosen by Xi Jinping in this part of the speech and I believe this choice should be considered and conveyed.

¹⁵⁵ The official translation reads: „As Han Feizi said, „...“ referring to the fact that Xi quotes Han Feizi here. Xi however does not indicate that. Han Feizi was a Chinese philosopher from the period of the warring states. He belonged to the Legalist School and believed that it takes strict laws to avoid chaos in the world.

¹⁵⁶ Short form of: *Zhengling bixu jiang xinyong, falü bixu zhixing* (政令必须讲信用, 法律必须执行) from Song Dynasy’s philosopher Ouyang Xiu. It literally means „governmental decrees need to be honest and reliable, and laws need to be executed.“ This section has not been translated in the official version.

efficiency, relying on strict management. [We] have already introduced a series of reform measures and interrelated institutions, which must be implemented with equal efficiency as the supervision of central environmental protection was put into effect. The rigidity and authority of these institutions must be firmly established, leaving no room for choice, flexibility, or compromise.¹⁵⁷ [We] must implement a system of responsibility for building the Ecological Civilization, where cadres will be strictly checked [and] held responsible. Regarding those who cause serious consequences through blind policy decisions that don't take nature into consideration, their cases must be investigated and they shall be held responsible lifelong.¹⁵⁸ We cannot be soft-hearted¹⁵⁹ regarding a behavior that harms the environment, [such behavior] cannot be accepted.¹⁶⁰ [We] need to exert great effort taking environmental destruction as a negative example [and] send out a strong signal that [such behavior] will be met with harsh punishment. We must persist in getting to the bottom of these issues, and never let our institutions and regulations become "toothless tigers".

Sixth: The principle of planning to build a Global Ecological Civilization together.¹⁶¹

The making of the Ecological Civilization concerns the future of humanity, [and] it is the common dream of mankind to create a green home(land)¹⁶². To protect the natural environment and to respond to climate change, it takes the common effort of every nation in the world. We all are in

¹⁵⁷ The last part of the sentence reads: „..., 不得作选择、搞变通、打折扣。“ literally meaning: no choices should be made, [we should/they should] not engage in accommodation/flexibility, no discounts should be given.“ In particular, it is the last three words that need clarifying: 打折扣 (give a discount or fall short of a promise/requirement). The CPC translations here reads: „..., leaving no room for choice, flexibility or compromise.“ I have borrowed the wording of this translation as there seems to be no better way to translate the phrase into English.

¹⁵⁸ CPC translation here: „We must hold to account on a permanent basis those who cause serious consequences through blind decisions that disregard the environment.“ I understand 终身追责 (literally: lifelong accountability) as meaning that accountability for such behavior does not come under the statute of limitations (will not become statute-barred). This phrase is not translated in the official translation, though it is an important idea. In Western countries, it is usually only very severe crimes, such as murder, that are not statute-barred. My translation thus makes it clear to a Western audience that Xi aims to solve the problem with a maximum of strictness.

¹⁵⁹ In Chinese shou ran (手软) literally: „soft-handed“, meaning „irresolute“ or „soft-hearted“

¹⁶⁰ It is 不能下不为例 that (referring to „such behavior“) I translate as „cannot be accepted“. It literally means something like „cannot serve as an example“ meaning „something that should not happen again“.

¹⁶¹ CPC translation: “The sixth principle is that joint efforts must be made in building a global ecological civilization.” Chinese: 六是共谋全球生态文明坚持 (共谋 meaning “plan something together”) and what shall be planed together is the building of the 全球生态文 (global ecological civilization). To my understanding, Xi announces that it is the aim of the CPC to build the Ecological Civilization not only in China, but also on a global level. The implication is that the CPC’s aim is to take over global environmental leadership. Here and throughout this thesis I choose to capitalize “Ecological Civilization” because I consider it to be the name of a project or an institution. It is for the same reason that, in this sentence, I choose to capitalize “Global Ecological Civilization.”

¹⁶² In Chinese: „..., 建设绿色家园是人类的共同梦想, ...“ The term 家园 is an interesting choice by Xi. It means as well „home“ as „homeland“ but also „garden“. The Chinese-German dictionary even translates it as „Heimat“ (similar to „patrie“ in French but not quite the same since it does not necessarily refer to the borders of or idea of a nation), a word that does not have an equivalent translation in English. When Xi speaks of the creation of a „green 家园“ he is deliberately choosing an evocative, poetic term. The CPC translates it: „..., and building a green living environment is humanity’s common aspiration,“ with „aspiration“ referring to „梦想“ though the word literally means „dream.“ I find „dream“ to be a more appropriate translation here as it emphasizes the distance and difficulty of attaining what is sought after. „Aspirations“ tend to be realistic and attainable goals whereas dreams can extend beyond realistic aspirations and can have a slightly more „fantastic“ character. It is impossible to translate all the possible meanings of 家园, but it is quite possible to retain the primary meaning of 梦想, which, once again, is “dream.”

the same boat and need to row together to cross the river and overcome times of trouble,¹⁶³ [it takes our] common efforts, and no county can stay aloof from the matter or dealing with it all alone. Our nation has already become a major player, contributor, and leader in building a Global Ecological Civilization, [China] advocates speeding up the construction [of a civilization, that] respects nature, [contributes to] the system of sustainable development, and cooperates for a cleaner and more beautiful world. [We] must get deeply involved in global environmental governance, strengthen the power of discourse and influence of our nation in the global environmental governance system, actively guide the transformation and circumstances of the change of the international order, shape international environmental protection, [as well as contribute to] a sustainable development and the creation of solution approaches. [We] need to adhere environmental friendly [attitudes], [and] guide the international cooperation responding to climate change¹⁶⁴ [We] need to carry on the Belt and Road Initiative, allowing the idea of an Ecological Civilization to bring practical benefits to all peoples along the way.

I. Waging a determined battle to prevent and control pollution

In the report to the 19th National Congress of the CPC in 2017, I said we must focus on priorities, shore up and tackle areas of weakness, [I] stressed out, that we must take steps to forestall and defuse major risks, carry out targeted poverty alleviation, fight the battle to prevent and control pollution, so that the moderately prosperous society we build, earns the people's approval and stands the test of time¹⁶⁵. Now [we] must concentrate all our strength, adopt more efficacious policies and measures, to fight this tough battle [against pollution].¹⁶⁶

First: accelerate building systems for an Ecological Civilization.

To accelerate the resolution of environmental problems during this historic convergence of the Two Centenary Goals¹⁶⁷, [we] must accelerate the establishment and improvement of an ecological culture system based on ecological values, an ecological economic system with industrial ecologicalization and ecological industrialization as the main body, a system of responsibilities focusing on improving environmental quality as the core, and modernized governance systems and

¹⁶³ The Chinese expression used is: 同舟共济 (Word for word: same boat same river). This expression describes a particular situation and I aim to maintain this particularity in my translation. The CPC avoided the complications implicit in the metaphor, but the metaphor is indispensable to Xi's meaning here. I have chosen to translate these four words as „We all are in the same boat and need to row together to cross the river and overcome times of trouble,“ which, though cumbersome, manages to adequately convey both the meaning and metaphorical aspect of Xi's phrase.

¹⁶⁴ Compare Qiushi p. 15: the official translation of the whole passage is quite different here. I chose a literal word-for-word translation to make sure all aspects of Xi's words are visible in the English text. To give one precise example: the last verb in this passage is 引导 (to guide or to lead). The CPC translation changed this to „take an active role“. My understanding is that, rather than speaking of „taking leadership“ here, Xi refers to „taking an active role.“ There seems to be quite a difference between these two phrasings—the latter being more active and assertive.

¹⁶⁵ Literally: the test of history (历史检验)

¹⁶⁶ 打好这场攻坚战 (literally meaning: storming a heavily fortified position in a war). The word choice here indicates that Xi has declared war on pollution and that this war will not be won easily.

¹⁶⁷ *Lishe jiaohuiqi* (历史交汇期) literally: „period of historical convergence.“ Xi here refers to the period of reaching the „Two Centenary Goals,“ a period which spans the 19th and 20th National Congress, ending in 2049. Although the Two Centenary Goals are not mentioned directly in the speech, they are evidently what Xi is referring to here.

capacity, that guarantees the maintenance of well-functioning ecosystems and the effective prevention and control of environmental risks.

[We] must accelerate the building of systems for an Ecological Civilization, [in order to reach] significant improvement of the quality and efficiency of our nation's economic development by 2035, [furthermore,] spatial pattern to ensure resource conservation and environmental protection, industrial structure, modes of production, ways of life will totally take shape [by then]; fundamental improvements of environmental quality [will be reached], regarding the ecological environment, fundamental modernization of our nation's governance systems and capabilities will be achieved, [and] the goals of the Beautiful China Initiative will be met essentially. By the middle of the century, [we] will have built a prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialism¹⁶⁸ [and a] modernized strong nation¹⁶⁹, [by then we will also fully have developed] an economic¹⁷⁰ civilization, a political civilization, a cultural civilization¹⁷¹, a social civilization and an ecological civilization;¹⁷² green development modes and eco-friendly life styles will be fully developed, humans and nature will coexist in harmony, modernization of our national governance systems and capacity in the environmental field will be fully realized, [and] our efforts to build a beautiful China will be successful.

Second, comprehensively promote green development.

Green is the symbol of life and the basic color of nature, [but] even more it represents the basis for a better life [and it is] what the masses expect¹⁷³. Green development is an important component of modern development concepts, bringing forth innovation, coordination, openness, [and] sharing [of ways of development] that supplement, complete, [and] mutually affect each other. It is essential for achieving a comprehensive transformation, and setting up the inevitable requirements for a high quality modernized economic system, whose purpose is to transform the traditional models of "mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution", making key factors such as natural resources, production, consumption etc. match up and adapt to each other to achieve coordination

¹⁶⁸ 富强民主文明和谐美丽的社会主义 in this context, the word *wenming* (文明) as in *shengtai wen ming* (生态文明) „Ecological Civilization“, is an adverb meaning „civilized“. This is an example showing that the word originally describes a process. The process of „civilizing“. Xi Jinping speaks of the “building of the ecological civilization”, which (as I argue in chapter 2.1.) happens through an educational process.

¹⁶⁹ 现代化强国

¹⁷⁰ Literally: „material civilization“ *wuzhi wenming* (物质文明) I chose to translate this term as „economic“ in this context, since I believe Xi refers to the Five-pronged approach *wuwei yiti* (五位一体) which aims to promote: 1. economy, 2. politics, 3. culture, 4. society and 5. the Ecological Civilization. I considered the order of the goals listed here in arriving at my translation decision.

¹⁷¹ *Jingshen wenming* (精神文明) literally: spiritual civilization; The CPC translation speaks of „intellectual civilization,“ but I chose to translate this terms as „cultural civilization,“ since I believe it again refers to the five-pronged approach.

¹⁷² The CPC translation reads: „...complete all-round improvements in the material, political, intellectual, social, and ecological domains.“ In the Chinese text, however, the word „civilization“ *wenming* (文明) appears not less than 5 times. I chose to repeat it the full five times, since I believe its repetition is rhetorically important. „Domain“ is a neutral word; „civilization“ is not.

¹⁷³ *Renmin qunzhong* 人民群众 [literally: masses of people] was translated as „the people“ in the CPC translation. I chose the stronger „the masses,“ a term I hope emphasizes the scope and power of the populace, as Xi Jinping intended. I also chose to translate *dise* 底色 as „basic color“ not as „color,“ like the CPC translation. The Chinese word is not the same as *yanse* 颜色, which really does mean „color.“ The first character *di* 底 means „deep, profound, fundamental“. I believe „basic color“ is the best way to translate the meaning here because it makes an important clarification. In using „Color“ alone the implication is that everything in nature is green, and if it is not green it is not nature. The key idea here is rather that „green“ is the dominant color in nature.

and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection as well as the harmonic coexistence between mankind and nature.¹⁷⁴

Accelerate evolving green development models is a key to resolving environmental problems. Only if [we] succeed in comprehensively reducing the discharge of pollutants at source-level, will the environmental quality distinctly improve. [We] must emphasize structural changes, optimize overall arrangements, strengthen the industry, [and] improve¹⁷⁵ the chain [of production].¹⁷⁶ We must adjust the economic and energy structures in order to raise the level of economic development and reduce the amount of pollution released. We must carry out environmental assessments of major plans involving economic policies and the distribution of industries, optimize the distribution of territorial space available for development, and adjust the distribution of industries within regions and river basins. We must foster growing industries that promote energy conservation and environmental protection, clean production, and clean energy, and develop efficient agricultural industries, advanced manufacturing industries, and modern service industries. We must promote all-round conservation and recycling of resources and ensure that the system of production and everyday life overlap in their circular use of resources.

Green ways of living relate to clothing, food, shelter, and transportation, [the basic needs]¹⁷⁷ of ordinary people. [We] must advocate thrift and moderation, and a green low-carbon lifestyle, [as well as] oppose luxury, waste [and] unreasonable consumption. [We] need to carry out extensive campaigns to build conservation-minded public offices¹⁷⁸, engage in activities to promote green families, green schools, [and] green communities, popularize green transportation; our lifestyles must undergo a green revolution, [and we] will set off a shift toward greener modes of production.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ The entire passage starting from: „Green development is an important component,“ up to the end, is one long sentence in Chinese, separated only with commas. This long sentence is hard to understand even in the original language as it is not always clear what the verbs or adjectives refer to precisely. An important part I absolutely wanted to translate here is Xi Jinping’s description of the existing economic model, which was put between quotation marks in the Chinese version. It reads: 转传统的“大量生产、大量消耗、大量排放”的生产模式和消费模式... literally: the traditional production system and consumption model of “mass production, mass consumption, mass distribution” ... This part is not easy to translate into English in the context of the rest of the sentence because it sounds like a repetition of what was previously said. This may be the reason the CPC translation chooses the simpler „wasteful models of production and consumption,“ however, I find a literal translation to be edifying here. Xi Jinping directly criticizes “mass production, mass consumption and mass distribution” and, as these have been major factors giving rise to China’s economic growth within the past decades, it is a remarkable statement by the Chinese president. The full statement uses very clear words that leave no room for speculation as to what will have to change for China.

¹⁷⁵ 全链条 literally means „complete the chain“ which sounds a bit strange in English. I believe Xi refers to the chain of production here and implies that the whole chain of production should be done locally. “Complete the chain” it is not a very accurate formulation, however, so I therefore decided to translate „improve the chain of production“ which leaves as much room for speculation as the Chinese version does.

¹⁷⁶ This sentence is missing in the CPC translation.

¹⁷⁷ The Chinese text simply reads: 衣食住行 literally: „clothing, food, shelter, transportation“. It is a fixed expression in Chinese meaning „basic necessities of life.“

¹⁷⁸ 广泛开展节约型机关 literally: 广泛 = extensively, 开展 = develop, 节约 = thrift, 型 = type or model (of), 机关 = agency/office. I understand the idea is to extensively build public offices that are economical. The CPC translation speaks of „conservation-minded public offices,“ a phrase which I borrow here.

¹⁷⁹ In Chinese the key words of the sentence are: “(…) 绿色家庭、绿色学校、绿色社区(…) 绿色出行(…) 绿色革命(…) 绿色转型。” The CPC translates these as: „green modes of transportation, (...) eco-friendly families, schools and communities. (...) lifestyles to become more environmentally friendly, (...) greener production.“ For each of these combinations, Xi has chosen the adjective „green“ (绿色), which I kept in my translation. The CPC translation is the better translation in terms of meaning and readability in English, but I chose to translate 绿色

Third: make the resolution of environmental problems a priority to improve the people's well-being.

No matter how small they may seem, any action that benefits common people must be taken, no matter how small they may seem, any matter that endangers the common people, needs to be eliminated. In order to successfully fight the tough battle against pollution¹⁸⁰, [we] must fight a number of major symbolic campaigns, focusing our energy on overcoming prominent environmental issues that directly impact the ordinary people. At present, heavily smoggy weather, black and fetid water bodies, waste flooded cities, and deterioration of the rural environment are causing pain to the feelings of the public, harm peoples life's, seriously affect the life's of the people; public opinion gets loud, complaints get common, [these problems] have even become significant factors that may lead to social instability, and therefor [we] must put every effort into finding solutions. [We] must pool our strength and mobilize the support of all involved, making the fight to prevent and control pollution a popular struggle in which we work as a team to push forward from one battle to the next.

Winning the battle to defend [our] blue sky is of the utmost importance.¹⁸¹ It is something that the people eagerly expect, it also is a commitment we have made to the international community as hosts of the 2022 Winter Olympics. The battlegrounds [we] will give priority to are mainly the regions of Beijing, Tianjin, and the neighboring Hebei Province [as well as those of] the Yangtze Delta, [and] the plains of the Fen¹⁸² and Wei He River¹⁸³, with a focus on Beijing. For visible improvements of the air quality it takes rigidity, [we must] strengthen [our] joint efforts to profoundly eliminate heavy smog¹⁸⁴, guarantee that the people will see blue skies and white clouds again¹⁸⁵, and bright-shining stars in the sky.¹⁸⁶ [We] must adjust the structure of production, reduce excessive and outdated production, [and] add new growth drivers¹⁸⁷. [We] must promote compliance with emission standards, reduce the amount of pollution discharged by key industries, [and] implement ultralow emission upgrades in industries such as thermal power and steel. Throughout the country [we] must control polluting enterprises¹⁸⁸, take resolute steps shutting down, reforming and upgrading some [of those enterprises] whilst moving others into industrial parks. [We] must adjust the energy mix, cutting the share of coal and speeding up the development of clean energy. As we resolutely advance clean winter heating in the north [of China], [we] must be responsive to local conditions and adopt multiple concurrent measures, using electricity or

as „green“ for its symbolic meaning. „Green“ is the topic of the entire paragraph and it seems no coincidence that Xi Jinping chooses to use this word so often here.

¹⁸⁰ 污染防治 literally „prevent and fight pollution“ is here translated as „fight pollution“ (not prevent and fight). In this case, it was necessary to keep the metaphor used in Chinese 打好攻坚战 fight the hard battle (literally: storming of heavily fortifies positions in a war).

¹⁸¹ 坚决打赢蓝天保卫战是重中之重。In particular the formulation of 蓝天保卫战 (literally: war to defend/safeguard the blue sky), which the CPC translated as „campaign to make our skies blue again,“ is an interesting symbolic choice. The phrase may provoke a reflection upon Chai Jing's documentary *Under the Dome*, where a young girl states that she has never seen a blue sky or a real star in her entire life due to smog. This documentary is said to have had a tremendous impact on the awareness of environmental problems in China.

¹⁸² Fen River in Shanxi Province

¹⁸³ Wie He River (Rising in Gansu Province, flowing into the Yellow River in Shaanxi Province)

¹⁸⁴ 重污染天气 literally: „heavy polluted weather“. I translate the term as „heavy smog,“ which I believe is what is meant.

¹⁸⁵ 还老百姓蓝天白云 literally: return/give back to the people blue sky and white clouds.

¹⁸⁶ All sounding like a response to Chai Jing. Blue sky, white cloud and shining stars is what the girl of the documentary has never seen in her life.

¹⁸⁷ 增加新的增长动能

¹⁸⁸ 散乱污企业治理 literally: disorderly/messy polluting enterprises/businesses

natural gas wherever appropriate. [We] must expedite the development of systems for the production, supply, storage, and sale of natural gas, improve the layout of natural gas sources, boost interconnectivity in the pipeline network, and guarantee adequate gas supply. At the same time, [we] should offer subsidies and support to ensure that heating is still accessible and affordable to ordinary people after the switch from coal to gas or electricity. [We] must step up elimination small coal-fired boilers, suspend operations of some heavily polluting coal power units, [and] speed up the retrofitting and upgrading of power plants. [We] must adjust the transportation structure, shifting freight volume from highways to railways. [We] must focus on managing pollution from diesel trucks and push forward the reorganization and improvement of freight transport operations, promoting higher quality and efficiency [and] large-scale growth.

[We] must thoughtfully implement the action plan for preventing and controlling water pollution. [We] must guarantee the safety of drinking water, make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the Bohai region, [and] protecting [and] restoring the ecosystems of the Yangzi River. [We] must eliminate essentially all of the unpleasant pollution in urban waterways, providing clean water and green shores to the ordinary people, with fish dancing underneath the scenery¹⁸⁹. Regarding water management, there are many problems that need to be solved, but one of them, an extremely urgent one is the need to rectify deficiencies in the collection and treatment of urban sewage since there are far too many unfulfilled obligations in this regard. According to information gleaned through environmental inspections carried out by the Central Government, large amount of sewage are released directly into nearby bodies of waters, even in municipalities directly under the Central Government, developed provinces along the coast, and special economic zones. [We] must set tough targets, engage with all [our] strength, [and] establish a full covering net of wastewater pipes to ensure the collection and treatment of wastewater at the earliest stage possible. Otherwise, if we [try] to manage [the problem] on the one hand, whilst continuing [like before], [we] will be getting half the result for twice the effort.

[We] must also [ensure] the comprehensive implementation of the action plan for preventing and controlling soil pollution, [and] push forward the formulation and implementation of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution. [We] must prioritize key regions, industries, [and] pollutants, boost the management and restoration of areas suffering from soil pollution, effectively forestall risks, [so that] the ordinary people [can] trust the food they eat and live without worries.¹⁹⁰ [We] must enforce a comprehensive ban on importing foreign refuse, [and] significantly reduce the amount and variety of solid waste that we import. [We] must crack down illegal acts that damage the environment with dangerous waste, [and] strictly restrict the illicit transfer, dumping, use, or disposal [of such waste].

The rural environment is like the cities back garden, it has a direct impact [by filling our] rice bag, fruit and vegetable basket and [by filling our] cups with water.¹⁹¹ [Therefore, we] must adjust the

¹⁸⁹ 鱼翔浅底的景象: 鱼 = fish, 翔 = to circle (in the air or in the water), 浅 = line, (sometimes horizon), 底 = under (here I understand it together with 浅 as meaning „beneath the horizon line“ which concretely means, in this case, in the water, that (if we see the scenery as divided in two parts) are part of the bottom, 景象 = scenery. Xi Jinping employs an image of a typical Chinese landscape here. In the previous sentence he speaks of the clean (literally: green) waters and green shores, so here the fish circling in the water complete the image. I translate „circling“ as „dancing“ to emphasize the poetic aspects of the Chinese expressions that are used here.

¹⁹⁰ 让老百姓吃得放心、住得安心。Literally: leave the ordinary people to eat at ease and live without worries. The CPC translation reads: „...make sure that people have peace of mind about what they eat and where they live.“

¹⁹¹ 农村环境真接影响米袋子、菜篮子、水缸子，城镇后花园。

structure of agricultural input, cut down the amount of chemical fertilizers and pesticides used, apply more organic fertilizer, [and] improve systems of recycling and disposing of old and used plastic mulch. [We] must continue carrying out campaigns to improve rural living environments, make sure that environmental remediation covers all administrative villages in the whole country, [and] fundamentally resolve the garbage, sewage, [and] lavatory problems of rural areas so [we may] build a beautiful countryside and preserve rural sceneries full of singing birds and fragrant flowers for the ordinary people¹⁹².

Environmental protection and pollution prevention and control are inseparable issues interacting closely. Among them, pollution prevention and control functions like a numerator, environmental protection functions like a denominator. Just like with any equation, both sides need to be considered: [we] must subtract from the numerator by reducing pollution levels, [and] add to the denominator by expanding the capacity of the environment. [We] must rigorously enforce red lines for environmental protection, keep watch over ecosystems including mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, [and] grasslands, [and] achieve oversight on environmental issues at every stage of their development. Rather than rushing to redevelop urban land made available after the removal of illegal structures, [we] should turn it into green space, thereby ensuring that the people have access to pleasant leisure spaces.

Fourth: effectively forestall environmental risks.

Environmental security, is a principle component of national security, [it] is an important guarantee for the continuation of a healthy socioeconomic development. [As the saying goes], “Preventive measures [must be taken] before the problem takes roots, [and the problem] must be considered before it arises to avoid it from happening“¹⁹³ [Therefore, we] must maintain a high level of vigilance from the beginning to the end, [we must] prevent the accumulation and spread of all types of environmental risks, [and] make sure that we are well-prepared to face environmental risks and challenges of any kind.

[We] must make management of environmental risks a regular practice, carefully constructing a multi-leveled environmental risk prevention system that monitors these risks at every stage. [We] must conduct strict prevention and control of key environmental risks like those stemming from garbage incineration, p-xylene¹⁹⁴ etc., forestall and defuse problems related to the “not in my backyard” effect¹⁹⁵, prevent this effect from cropping up in environmental protection projects, [and]

¹⁹² 为老百姓留住鸟语花香田园风光。The CPC translation reads: „... preserve pleasant rural landscapes for the people.“ There is a rhetorical loss here as the text literally (and more persuasively and poetically) reads: „rural sceneries with singing birds and fragrant flowers“.

¹⁹³ “图之于未萌，虑之于未有。 This idiom is not easy to translate. It is classical Chinese and the words have a different meaning than in modern Chinese. 图 does not mean „picture“, „image“, „map“ or „chart“ here but functions as a verb meaning „to pursue“, „to seek“ or „make a plan,“ or more precisely here it means: „develop a strategy or stratagem“. 萌 means „to bud“, „to sprout“, „(of plants) to germinate“ and refers to the stated problem. In other words, what is being discussed is the necessity of having a stratagem at an early stage to prevent environmental problems from growing. I translate: „take preventive measures before the problem takes roots“. As for the second part of the sentence, it completes the first part by saying: „consider something before it happens to avoid it from happening“. The CPC translation reads: „It is imperative that we take precautions so that we are prepared for the worst before it happens.“ I added a “[As the saying goes:]” at the beginning to show that Xi quotes an idiom. In the Chinese text, it is put in quotation marks. The CPC version refrains from mentioning that Xi is referring, rhetorically, to a fixed expression.

¹⁹⁴ 对二甲苯 a chemical component used for example in the production of PET and polyester materials. Here Xi Jinping refers to it being emitted when garbage is burned. It is also emitted by different sources such as automobile exhaust and tobacco smoke.

¹⁹⁵ “领避”问题 Chinese translation of the „Not in My Backyard Phenomenon (NIMBY)“. For detailed information see description in “Encyclopaedia Britannica”: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Not-in-My->

focus on raising [our] capacity to deal with environmental emergencies. [We] must strengthen supervision over nuclear and radiation safety by improving oversight systems, refining oversight mechanisms, [and] upgrading oversight capacity, ensuring that there are absolutely no missteps in this regard.

Fifth: [regarding] the Ecological Civilization, the implementation of the structural reforms must be accelerated [and] come into effect [as soon as possible].

Structural reform promoting the Ecological Civilization¹⁹⁶ is an important aspect of comprehensively furthering reform. With the resolution of major problems in the environmental domain as a goal, [we] must focus on implementing reform measures that have already been launched while also formulating new reform plans in a timely manner. [We] must see that measures related to ecological structural reform are put in place as soon as possible so that they may serve their intended functions. Central governments inspections on environmental protection must be given greater resources so that they can push deeper and become more authoritative. [We] need to explore sustainable, market-based ways to realize the value of ecological goods that feature government leadership and participation from enterprises and all social sectors, launching trials and accumulate experience in this regard. [We] must improve [our] systems for credibility assessment based on environmental protection performance, for mandatory disclosure of environmental information, [and] for improving severe punishment¹⁹⁷ on violators of environmental regulations.

In the current campaign to bolster reform of the Party and national government institutions, the CPC Central Committee decided to establish the Ministry of Ecology and Environment. Two aspects lead to these main considerations: The first is that “nine dragons can’t control one river”¹⁹⁸, [therefore we] must consolidate roles in pollution prevention and control in order to end the confusing division of responsibilities between different ministries and provide support for the fight to prevent and control pollution. The second is that [we] must strengthen integrated oversight [and] firmly enforce environmental protection, [as well as] link together red lines of environmental protection in order to promote ecological conservation and restoration. [We] must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection, link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrate [our] efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, [and] from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide. Government departments responsible for environmental issues must effectively perform their duties, take steps

[Backyard-Phenomenon](#) [accessed: 07/06/2020] Xi Jinping here refers to the second definition, the one linked to environmental protection.

¹⁹⁶ It says 生态文明 (=Ecological Civilization) in the Chinese text. The CPC here translates: „ecological advancement,“ which I consider incorrect.

¹⁹⁷ In Chinese: „..., 严惩重罚等制度。“ Literally and word-for-word this means: 严惩 (= punish severely), 重罚 (= punish severely) 等 (= kind of, sort, class) 制度 (= system, institution). Literally: „An institution that punishes severely“. Xi uses two different words, both meaning „to punish severely“. In the English text this is not visible or clear, but the Chinese emphasizes „severe punishment“ as a response to the violation of environmental laws.

¹⁹⁸ In Chinese: 九龙治水 (literally: nine dragons manage the water) is a Chinese saying meaning something like „too many cooks spoil the broth“. The phrase can be traced back to an ancient Chinese myth where nine dragons guarded the water in the rivers and no dragon was made responsible for rainwater management. As a consequence of the oversight the myth elaborates, there was very soon no rain and therefore no rivers to manage. By referring to this myth, Xi suggests that many people in charge of the same affair will most probably have just as many opinions and will spend their time discussing their differences of opinion rather than doing their job. In this part of the speech I borrowed the CPC translation because it is very clear and I could not have done better. However, I have added back in the specific reference to the nine dragons, which is not mentioned in the official English translation. Because of this, my translation is now longer than the Chinese version, but the added length allows me to encompass the allusion Xi makes to China’s rich mythological history.

to standardize monitoring and assessment, oversight of law enforcement, accountability inspections, [and] the formulation of environmental policies, plans [and] standards. [We] must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection. In line with the principles of consolidating enforcement teams, raising their efficiency, [and] shortening their chains of command, [we] must optimize the assignment of functions to these teams [and] carry out unified enforcement of environmental protection laws. [We] must improve environmental management systems for drainage basins and sea areas in all regions, promote trials to establish interregional environmental protection agencies, [and] consolidate the responsibilities of relevant governments with regard to air quantity management. [We] must refine environmental management systems in sea areas, [and] set up oversight bodies for each of these areas.

Sixth: improve the quality of environmental governance.

Environmental governance is a systematic project requiring coordinated application of measures from multiple fields, including government, market, legislation, [as well as] science and technology. [We] must fully utilize market-based measures to make environmental protection more market based and leverage¹⁹⁹ greater social capital in this regard. [We] must refine resource and environmental pricing mechanisms, taking ecological costs into account in economic operations. [We] must use various methods to encourage cooperation between government and private capital. Funds needed for environmental protection must be appropriated, [and we] must not pinch pennies on investment. [We] must be committed to matching funding with the tasks of pollution prevention and control. [We] must boost research on factors contributing to heavy air pollution, taking further steps to bring these factors under control, overcome key scientific and technical hurdles including those related to major projects for improving the overall environment of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. [We] must carry out dedicated, forward-looking research on the management of ozone, volatile organic compounds, [and] new pollutants, conduct research on how to deal with major environmental problems that impact socioeconomic development, [and] expedite the application of research achievements, thereby offering support for scientific decision making, environmental management, targeted pollution control, [and] public services. [We] must implement a national strategy for actively responding to climate change, promote and guide the establishment of a fair and equitable global climate governance system featuring mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance the image of our nation as a responsible major country, [and] push forward the development of a human community with a common fate.

II. Strengthen the leadership of the Communist Party of China to establish the Ecological Civilization

Fighting the battle to prevent and control pollution is a pressing matter. For this heavy task, this great difficulty, [for] this tough battle and hardship [we] need to strengthen the CPC's leadership. The "Decisions of the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council on Comprehensively Enhancing Eco-Environmental Protection to Completely Win the Battle Against Pollution" introduced comprehensive plans for pollution prevention and control. All government departments and local authorities must raise "the four awareness"²⁰⁰, [the awareness of the need to

¹⁹⁹ In this context „leverage“ translates: 撬

动, which literally means „make something move“

²⁰⁰ In Chinese: 四个意识 literally: „the four awareness“, which can be described as the „ruling principles“ Xi Jinping proposed in 2016. These principles mainly include ideas of loyalty towards the CPC and the leadership

maintain political integrity, think in terms of the big picture, follow the leadership core, and stay aligned with the center, firmly uphold the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, undertake their political duties in building an ecological civilization with determined commitment, and fully implement the Central Committee's decisions and plans].

Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and environmental quality in their administrative districts, [they] shall personally make arrangements for important tasks, personally respond to major problems, personally coordinate work in key projects, personally supervise important law cases, ensuring that duties are performed and directives are put into effect at all levels. All relevant departments must fulfill their environmental protection duties, with everyone carrying their own baby²⁰¹; departments in charge of development, production, and industry [shall] fulfill their tasks according to the motto "one job, double responsibility"²⁰² [making them responsible not only for their domain but also for environmental protection]. [We] must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort. People's congresses at all levels and their standing committees must make the building of the Ecological Civilization a focal point of their work, conduct compliance inspections, and regularly hear and deliberate work reports from governments at the corresponding levels.

[We] must establish empirical, rational evaluation and assessment systems, making their results an important basis for decisions on rewarding, punishing, and promoting officials at all levels.²⁰³ "The basis of punishment and reward is based on the suggestion of the good and the punishment of the evil."²⁰⁴ Concerning those leading officials that harm the environment, only by having the will to strictly and earnestly hold [them] responsible for the rest of their lives, [it] can be prevented, that [our] institutions become "scarecrows" and "paper tigers", and [appear laxer than] "rubber bands"²⁰⁵. Environmental problems happen frequently and often, [they] are discussed, [and] make public appearance, yet [some] government officials have not received punishment, but instead have

of Xi Jinping. The CPC translation did not translate the expression of “四个意识” but added a description of the ideas behind it. I borrowed this description and integrated it into my translation in brackets.

²⁰¹ 谁的孩子谁抱 literally: “who's child who to carry”, meaning: every parent takes care of his own child. This idea is omitted from the CPC version.

²⁰² 一岗双责 literally: “one job/post/duty, double responsibility”. This is a motto, initiated by Xi Jinping. It means that environmental protection is the second duty of every government official. CPC translation: “..., with departments in charge of development, production, and industry working with the understanding that they are also bound to protect the environment.”

²⁰³ 奖惩和提拔使用的重要依据 Literally: „important basis to employ rewarding, punishing and promoting.“ This formulation emphasizes that punishment is once again a measure of choice and that the building of an Ecological Civilization really is all about “civilizing through education”, whether that be through education of the people or of government officials.

²⁰⁴ “形赏之本，在乎劝善而惩恶。” This is a quotation from an historical book on political theory written by Wu Jing in the Tang Dynasty. The book puts forward the people-orientated idea that the Emperor depends on the country and the country depends on the people. The book promotes the „rule of virtue“, but also „the rule of punishment,“ as the citation chosen by Xi Jinping shows. The CPC translation reads: „Ancient Chinese wisdom tells us that the purpose of reward and punishment is to uphold virtue and condemn evil.“ The translation softens the quote considerably and qualifies it; Xi himself does not mention that it is a quotation.

²⁰⁵ „(...), 制度才不成为“稻草人”、“纸老虎”、“橡皮筋”。” Literally: Institutions not to become “scarecrow”, “paper tiger”, rubber band”. Meaning: Scarecrows and paper tigers both look scary but are harmless; rubber bands are extremely elastic. The general idea here is that institutions should be strict and powerful. The CPC translation reads: “...ensure that our rules do not become superficial threats that bend at will with no substance to back them up.” This translation effectively translates the meaning of the phrase but it fails to retain the rhetorical power of the original metaphors.

been promoted to important positions: this is absolutely absurd!²⁰⁶ [We] must take certain representative cases of negative behavior as a negative example, particularly those involving damage to the environment, [we must] strictly investigate [these cases] in order to ensure a correct understanding of the facts and deal with them according to the outcome of the investigation, [we must use these examples] as a warning to others.

[We] must build up an iron army to protect the natural environment²⁰⁷, composed of capable, uncompromising members with strong political consciousness and a willingness to take over responsibility, who will fight through any hardship in their devotion to the cause. In the battle to prevent and fight pollution, some will have to be found guilty.²⁰⁸ Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of the environmental protection corps, and actively support officials who are ready and willing to take action.

The responsibility of building the Ecological Civilization has already fallen upon the shoulders of our generation. The entire Party and people of all ethnic groups of the whole nation must unite closely around the Party Central Committee, work as one, tackle the problem and overcome this challenge, firmly push forward the building of the Ecological Civilization, strive to fully establish the society of moderate prosperity, and open a new stage in the development of the “beautiful China”. [For all this, we need to] fight with all our efforts!²⁰⁹

Transcript (Chinese version as published in Qiushi Journal)

习近平：推动我国生态文明建设迈上新台阶

一、深刻认识加强生态文明建设的重大意义

²⁰⁶ In Chinese Xi uses the expression: 咄咄怪事 which the online dictionaries „Pleco“ and „zdic“ translate even as „monstrous absurdity“. With 咄咄 meaning „threatening“ or „aggressive“, and 怪事 meaning „strange affair“ or „absurdity“, it might be a bit less than a „monstrous absurdity“ (rather a “disgusting strange affair”) but it is an expression that reveals an emotion. In the Chinese text, the expression is followed by an exclamation mark, which disappears in the English text of the CPC translation. I consider this a reduction of the rhetorical power of the expression in the Chinese text.

²⁰⁷ 要建设一支生态环境保护铁军 literally means „iron army“ not a “strong environmental protection corps” as the CPC has translated it. I have opted to keep the original expression in order to make visible the rhetorical choice Xi Jinping made in his speech.

²⁰⁸ In Chinese: 打好污染防治攻坚战，是得罪人的事。The CPC translated it: „In the fight to prevent and control pollution, there are some that must face uncomfortable realities.“ In fact, I understand this phrase slightly differently, with 罪人 literally meaning „sinner“, or „guilty person“. To be found „guilty“ is far more grave – and far more specific – than to „face an uncomfortable reality“. This more literal translation also allows room for more and multiple interpretations. If we translate the phrase as “facing uncomfortable realities” we may suggest simply that corrupt officials may have to modify their behavior. However, if we translate it as “found guilty” we force the reader to consider the role of justice and judgment in dealing with corruption and to reflect on the question, “what *will* happen to these officials if and when they are found guilty of their crimes?”.

²⁰⁹ In Chinese, the sentence ends with the words: „...努力奋斗!“ followed by an exclamation mark. It literally means „to struggle, fight or strive with great efforts“. To my understanding, with this last four words of the speech, Xi Jinping makes an emphatic appeal to the Chinese people. The exclamation mark underlines the rhetorically expressive finish of the speech. Though the CPC translation kept the exclamation mark, the English version here sounds less appealing. The expression 努力奋斗 however has disappeared. Which makes the exclamation mark look a bit out of place when it comes after the words “...and open a new stage in the development of a beautiful China!” As to “beautiful China”, I have chosen to put it in quotation marks since it is a kind of a slogan for a campaign initiated by Xi and promoted by the CPC.

生态文明建设是关系中华民族永续发展的根本大计。中华民族向来尊重自然、热爱自然，绵延 5000 多年的中华文明孕育着丰富的生态文化。《易经》中说，“观乎天文，以察时变；观乎人文，以化成天下”，“财成天地之道，辅相天地之宜”。《老子》中说：“人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。”《孟子》中说：“不违农时，谷不可胜食也；数罟不入洿池，鱼鳖不可胜食也；斧斤以时入山林，材木不可胜用也。”《荀子》中说：“草木荣华滋硕之时，则斧斤不入山林，不夭其生，不绝其长也。”《齐民要术》中有“顺天时，量地利，则用力少而成功多”的记述。这些观念都强调要把天地人统一起来，把自然生态同人类文明联系起来，按照大自然规律活动，取之有时，用之有度，表达了我们的先人对处理人与自然关系的重要认识。

同时，我国古代很早就把关于自然生态的观念上升为国家管理制度，专门设立掌管山林川泽的机构，制定政策法规，这就是虞衡制度。《周礼》记载，设立“山虞掌山林之政令，物为之厉而为之守禁”，“林衡掌巡林麓之禁令，而平其守”。秦汉时期，虞衡制度分为林官、湖官、陂官、苑官、畴官等。虞衡制度一直延续到清代。我国不少朝代都有保护自然的律令并对违令者重惩，比如，周文王颁布的《伐崇令》规定：“毋坏室，毋填井，毋伐树木，毋动六畜。有不如令者，死无赦。”

生态兴则文明兴，生态衰则文明衰。生态环境是人类生存和发展的根基，生态环境变化直接影响文明兴衰演替。古代埃及、古代巴比伦、古代印度、古代中国四大文明古国均发源于森林茂密、水量丰沛、田野肥沃的地区。奔腾不息的长江、黄河是中华民族的摇篮，哺育了灿烂的中华文明。而生态环境衰退特别是严重的土地荒漠化则导致古代埃及、古代巴比伦衰落。我国古代一些地区也有过惨痛教训。古代一度辉煌的楼兰文明已被埋藏在万顷流沙之下，那里当年曾经是一块水草丰美之地。河西走廊、黄土高原都曾经水丰草茂，由于毁林开荒、乱砍滥伐，致使生态环境遭到严重破坏，加剧了经济衰落。唐代中叶以来，我国经济中心逐步向东、向南转移，很大程度上同西部地区生态环境变迁有关。

2018 年 5 月 4 日，我们召开了纪念马克思诞辰 200 周年大会。我在会上特别强调，学习马克思，就要学习和实践马克思主义关于人与自然关系的思想。马克思、恩格斯认为，“人靠自然界生活”，人类在同自然的互动中生产、生活、发展，人类善待自然，自然也会馈赠人类，但“如果说人靠科学和创造性天才征服了自然力，那么自然力也对人进行报复”。恩格斯在《自然辩证法》中写到：美索不达米亚、希腊、小亚细亚以及其他各地的居民，为了得到耕地，毁灭了森林，但是他们做梦也想不到，这些地方今天竟因此而成为不毛之地，因为他们使这些地方失去了森林，也就失去了水分的积聚中心和贮藏库。阿尔卑斯山的意大利人，当他们在山南坡把那些在山北坡得到精心保护的枞树林砍光用尽时，没有预料到，这样一来，他们把本地区的高山畜牧业的根基毁掉了；他们更没有预料到，他们这样做，竟使山泉在一年中的大部分时间内枯竭了，同时在雨季又使更加凶猛的洪水倾泻到平原上。

以史为鉴，可以知兴替。我之所以反复强调要高度重视和正确处理生态文明建设问题，就是因为我国环境容量有限，生态系统脆弱，污染重、损失大、风险高的生态环境状况还没有根本扭转，并且独特的地理环境加剧了地区间的不平衡。“胡焕庸线”东南方 43% 的国土，居住着全国 94% 左右的人口，以平原、水网、低山丘陵和喀斯特地貌为主，

生态环境压力巨大；该线西北方 57%的国土，供养大约全国 6%的人口，以草原、戈壁沙漠、绿洲和雪域高原为主，生态系统非常脆弱。说基本国情，这就是其中很重要的内容。

党的十八大以来，我们把生态文明建设作为统筹推进“五位一体”总体布局和协调推进“四个全面”战略布局的重要内容，开展一系列根本性、开创性、长远性工作，提出一系列新理念新思想新战略，生态文明理念日益深入人心，污染治理力度之大、制度出台频度之密、监管执法尺度之严、环境质量改善速度之快前所未有，推动生态环境保护发生历史性、转折性、全局性变化。

我对生态环境工作历来看得很重。在正定、厦门、宁德、福建、浙江、上海等地工作期间，都把这项工作作为一项重大工作来抓。党的十八大以来，我分别就严重破坏生态环境事件以及长江经济带“共抓大保护、不搞大开发”作出指示批示，要求严肃查处，扭住不放，一抓到底，不彻底解决绝不松手，确保绿水青山常在、各类自然生态系统安全稳定。

党的十八大以来，我们通过全面深化改革，加快推进生态文明顶层设计和制度体系建设，相继出台《关于加快推进生态文明建设的意见》、《生态文明体制改革总体方案》，制定了 40 多项涉及生态文明建设的改革方案，从总体目标、基本理念、主要原则、重点任务、制度保障等方面对生态文明建设进行全面系统部署安排。生态文明建设目标评价考核、自然资源资产离任审计、生态环境损害责任追究等制度出台实施，主体功能区制度逐步健全，省以下环保机构监测监察执法垂直管理、生态环境监测数据质量管理、排污许可、河（湖）长制、禁止洋垃圾入境等环境治理制度加快推进，绿色金融改革、自然资源资产负债表编制、环境保护税开征、生态保护补偿等环境经济政策制定和实施进展顺利。京津冀大气污染治理、长江经济带生态环境保护取得阶段性成效。我们还制定和修改环境保护法、环境保护税法以及大气、水污染防治法和核安全法等法律。全国人大常委会、最高人民法院、最高人民检察院对环境污染和生态破坏界定入罪标准，加大惩治力度，形成高压态势。

特别是中央环境保护督察制度建得好、用得好，敢于动真格，不怕得罪人，咬住问题不放松，成为推动地方党委和政府及其相关部门落实生态环境保护责任的硬招实招。

我们大力推动绿色发展，取得明显成效。国土空间布局得到优化，京津冀、长江经济带省区市和宁夏等 15 个省区市的生态保护红线已经划定。供给侧结构性改革深入推进，产业结构不断优化，一大批高污染企业有序退出，京津冀及周边地区“散乱污”企业整治力度空前。能源消费结构发生积极变化，我国成为世界利用新能源和可再生能源第一大国。全面节约资源有效推进，资源消耗强度大幅下降。

我们深入实施大气、水、土壤污染防治三大行动计划，我国是世界上第一个大规模开展 PM_{2.5} 治理的发展中大国，形成全世界最大的污水处理能力。同 2013 年相比，2017 年全国 338 个地级及以上城市可吸入颗粒物（PM₁₀）平均浓度下降 22.7%，京津冀地区 PM_{2.5} 平均浓度下降 39.6%，北京 PM_{2.5} 平均浓度从 89.5 微克/立方米降至 58 微克/立方米。地表水国控断面Ⅰ—Ⅲ类水体比例增加到 67.9%，劣Ⅴ类水体比例下降到 8.3%。森林覆盖率由本世纪初的 16.6%提高到 22%左右。

我国率先发布《中国落实 2030 年可持续发展议程国别方案》，实施《国家应对气候变化规划（2014—2020 年）》，向联合国交存《巴黎协定》批准文书。我国消耗臭氧层物质的淘汰量占发展中国家总量的 50%以上，成为对全球臭氧层保护贡献最大的国家。2017 年，同联合国环境署等国际机构一道发起，建立“一带一路”绿色发展国际联盟。

经过不懈努力，我国生态环境质量持续改善。同时，必须清醒看到，我国生态文明建设挑战重重、压力巨大、矛盾突出，推进生态文明建设还有不少难关要过，还有不少硬骨头要啃，还有不少顽瘴痼疾要治，形势仍然十分严峻。

总体上看，我国生态环境质量持续好转，出现了稳中向好趋势，但成效并不稳固，稍有松懈就有可能出现反复，犹如逆水行舟，不进则退。生态文明建设正处于压力叠加、负重前行的关键期，已进入提供更多优质生态产品以满足人民日益增长的优美生态环境需要的攻坚期，也到了有条件有能力解决生态环境突出问题的窗口期。我国经济已由高速增长阶段转向高质量发展阶段，需要跨越一些常规性和非常规性关口。这是一个凤凰涅槃的过程。如果现在不抓紧，将来解决起来难度会更高、代价会更大、后果会更重。我们必须咬紧牙关，爬过这个坡，迈过这道坎。

到 2020 年全面建成小康社会，是我们党向人民作出的庄严承诺。不能一边宣布全面建成小康社会，一边生态环境质量仍然很差，这样人民不会认可，也经不起历史检验。不管有多么艰难，都不可犹豫、不能退缩，要以壮士断腕的决心、背水一战的勇气、攻城拔寨的拼劲，坚决打好污染防治攻坚战。各级党委和政府要自觉把经济社会发展同生态文明建设统筹起来，坚持党委领导、政府主导、企业主体、公众参与，坚决摒弃“先污染、后治理”的老路，坚决摒弃损害甚至破坏生态环境的增长模式。要充分发挥党的领导和我国社会主义制度能够集中力量办大事的政治优势，充分利用改革开放 40 年来积累的坚实物质基础，加大力度推进生态文明建设、解决生态环境问题。

二、加强生态文明建设必须坚持的原则

生态环境是关系党的使命宗旨的重大政治问题，也是关系民生的重大社会问题。我们党历来高度重视生态环境保护，把节约资源和保护环境确立为基本国策，把可持续发展确立为国家战略。随着经济社会发展和实践深入，我们对中国特色社会主义总体布局的认识不断深化，从当年的“两个文明”到“三位一体”、“四位一体”，再到今天的“五位一体”，这是重大理论和实践创新，更带来了发展理念和发展方式的深刻转变。

现在，随着我国社会主要矛盾转化为人民日益增长的美好生活需要和不平衡不充分的发展之间的矛盾，人民群众对优美生态环境需要已经成为这一矛盾的重要方面，广大人民群众热切期盼加快提高生态环境质量。人民对美好生活的向往是我们党的奋斗目标，解决人民最关心最直接最现实的利益问题是执政党使命所在。人心是最大的政治。我们要积极回应人民群众所想、所盼、所急，大力推进生态文明建设，提供更多优质生态产品，不断满足人民日益增长的优美生态环境需要。

人类是命运共同体，保护生态环境是全球面临的共同挑战和共同责任。生态文明建设做好了，对中国特色社会主义是加分项，反之就会成为别有用心势力攻击我们的借口。人类进入工业文明时代以来，传统工业化迅猛发展，在创造巨大物质财富的同时也加速了对自然资源的攫取，打破了地球生态系统原有的循环和平衡，造成人与自然

关系紧张。从上世纪 30 年代开始，一些西方国家相继发生多起环境公害事件，损失巨大，震惊世界，引发了人们对资本主义发展模式的深刻反思。在人类 200 多年的现代化进程中，实现工业化的国家不超过 30 个、人口不超过 10 亿。在我们这个 13 亿多人口的最大发展中国家推进生态文明建设，建成富强民主文明和谐美丽的社会主义现代化强国，其影响将是世界性的。

党的十八大以来，我们党深刻回答了为什么建设生态文明、建设什么样的生态文明、怎样建设生态文明的重大理论和实践问题，提出了一系列新理念新思想新战略。新时代推进生态文明建设，必须坚持好以下原则。

一是坚持人与自然和谐共生。人与自然是生命共同体。生态环境没有替代品，用之不觉，失之难存。“天地与我并生，而万物与我为一。”“天不言而四时行，地不语而百物生。”当人类合理利用、友好保护自然时，自然的回报常常是慷慨的；当人类无序开发、粗暴掠夺自然时，自然的惩罚必然是无情的。人类对大自然的伤害最终会伤及人类自身，这是无法抗拒的规律。“万物各得其和以生，各得其养以成”。这方面有很多鲜活生动的事例。始建于战国时期的都江堰，距今已有 2000 多年历史，就是根据岷江的洪涝规律和成都平原悬江的地势特点，因势利导建设的大型生态水利工程，不仅造福当时，而且泽被后世。

在整个发展过程中，我们都要坚持节约优先、保护优先、自然恢复为主的方针，不能只讲索取不讲投入，不能只讲发展不讲保护，不能只讲利用不讲修复，要像保护眼睛一样保护生态环境，像对待生命一样对待生态环境，多谋打基础、利长远的善事，多干保护自然、修复生态的实事，多做治山理水、显山露水的好事，让群众望得见山、看得见水、记得住乡愁，让自然生态美景永驻人间，还自然以宁静、和谐、美丽。

二是绿水青山就是金山银山。这是重要的发展理念，也是推进现代化建设的重大原则。绿水青山就是金山银山，阐述了经济发展和生态环境保护的关系，揭示了保护生态环境就是保护生产力、改善生态环境就是发展生产力的道理，指明了实现发展和保护协同共生的新路径。绿水青山既是自然财富、生态财富，又是社会财富、经济财富。保护生态环境就是保护自然价值和增值自然资本，就是保护经济社会发展潜力和后劲，使绿水青山持续发挥生态效益和经济社会效益。

生态环境问题归根结底是发展方式和生活方式问题，要从根本上解决生态环境问题，必须贯彻创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的发展理念，加快形成节约资源和保护环境的空间格局、产业结构、生产方式、生活方式，把经济活动、人的行为限制在自然资源和生态环境能够承受的限度内，给自然生态留下休养生息的时间和空间。要加快划定并严守生态保护红线、环境质量底线、资源利用上线三条红线。对突破三条红线、仍然沿用粗放增长模式、吃祖宗饭砸子孙碗的事，绝对不能再干，绝对不允许再干。在生态保护红线方面，要建立严格的管控体系，实现一条红线管控重要生态空间，确保生态功能不降低、面积不减少、性质不改变。在环境质量底线方面，将生态环境质量只能更好、不能变坏作为底线，并在此基础上不断改善，对生态破坏严重、环境质量恶化的区域必须严肃问责。在资源利用上线方面，不仅要考虑人类和当代的需要，也要考虑大自然和后人的需要，把握好自然资源开发利用的度，不要突破自然资源承载能力。

三是良好生态环境是最普惠的民生福祉。民之所好好之，民之所恶恶之。环境就是民生，青山就是美丽，蓝天也是幸福。发展经济是为了民生，保护生态环境同样也是为了民生。既要创造更多的物质财富和精神财富以满足人民日益增长的美好生活需要，也要提供更多优质生态产品以满足人民日益增长的优美生态环境需要。要坚持生态惠民、生态利民、生态为民，重点解决损害群众健康的突出环境问题，加快改善生态环境质量，提供更多优质生态产品，努力实现社会公平正义，不断满足人民日益增长的优美生态环境需要。

生态文明是人民群众共同参与共同建设共同享有的事业，要把建设美丽中国转化为全体人民自觉行动。每个人都是生态环境的保护者、建设者、受益者，没有哪个人是旁观者、局外人、批评家，谁也不能只说不做、置身事外。要增强全民节约意识、环保意识、生态意识，培育生态道德和行为准则，开展全民绿色行动，动员全社会都以实际行动减少能源资源消耗和污染排放，为生态环境保护作出贡献。

四是山水林田湖草是生命共同体。生态是统一的自然系统，是相互依存、紧密联系的有机链条。人的命脉在田，田的命脉在水，水的命脉在山，山的命脉在土，土的命脉在林和草，这个生命共同体是人类生存发展的物质基础。一定要算大账、算长远账、算整体账、算综合账，如果因小失大、顾此失彼，最终必然对生态环境造成系统性、长期性破坏。

要从系统工程和全局角度寻求新的治理之道，不能再是头痛医头、脚痛医脚，各管一摊、相互掣肘，而必须统筹兼顾、整体施策、多措并举，全方位、全地域、全过程开展生态文明建设。比如，治理好水污染、保护好水环境，就需要全面统筹左右岸、上下游、陆上水上、地表地下、河流海洋、水生态水资源、污染防治与生态保护，达到系统治理的最佳效果。要深入实施山水林田湖草一体化生态保护和修复，开展大规模国土绿化行动，加快水土流失和荒漠化石漠化综合治理。推动长江经济带发展，要共抓大保护，不搞大开发，坚持生态优先、绿色发展，涉及长江的一切经济活动都要以不破坏生态环境为前提。

五是用最严格制度最严密法治保护生态环境。保护生态环境必须依靠制度、依靠法治。我国生态环境保护中存在的突出问题大多同体制不健全、制度不严格、法治不严密、执行不到位、惩处不得力有关。要加快制度创新，增加制度供给，完善制度配套，强化制度执行，让制度成为刚性的约束和不可触碰的高压线。要严格用制度管权治吏、护蓝增绿，有权必有责、有责必担当、失责必追究，保证党中央关于生态文明建设决策部署落地生根见效。

奉法者强则国强，奉法者弱则国弱。令在必信，法在必行。制度的生命力在于执行，关键在真抓，靠的是严管。我们已出台一系列改革举措和相关制度，要像抓中央环境保护督察一样抓好落实。制度的刚性和权威必须牢固树立起来，不得作选择、搞变通、打折扣。要落实领导干部生态文明建设责任制，严格考核问责。对那些不顾生态环境盲目决策、造成严重后果的人，必须追究其责任，而且应该终身追责。对破坏生态环境的行为不能手软，不能下不为例。要下大气力抓住破坏生态环境的反面典型，释放出严加惩处的强烈信号。对任何地方、任何时候、任何人，凡是需要追责的，必须一追到底，决不能让制度规定成为“没有牙齿的老虎”。

六是共谋全球生态文明建设。生态文明建设关乎人类未来，建设绿色家园是人类的共同梦想，保护生态环境、应对气候变化需要世界各国同舟共济、共同努力，任何一国都无法置身事外、独善其身。我国已成为全球生态文明建设的重要参与者、贡献者、引领者，主张加快构筑尊崇自然、绿色发展的生态体系，共建清洁美丽的世界。要深度参与全球环境治理，增强我国在全球环境治理体系中的话语权和影响力，积极引导国际秩序变革方向，形成世界环境保护和可持续发展的解决方案。要坚持环境友好，引导应对气候变化国际合作。要推进“一带一路”建设，让生态文明的理念和实践造福沿线各国人民。

三、坚决打好污染防治攻坚战

在党的十九大报告中，我强调要突出抓重点、补短板、强弱项，特别是要坚决打好防范化解重大风险、精准脱贫、污染防治的攻坚战，使全面建成小康社会得到人民认可、经得起历史检验。现在，我们就要集中优势兵力，采取更有效的政策举措，打好这场攻坚战。

第一，加快构建生态文明体系。加快解决历史交汇期的生态环境问题，必须加快建立健全以生态价值观念为准则的生态文化体系，以产业生态化和生态产业化为主体的生态经济体系，以改善生态环境质量为核心的目标责任体系，以治理体系和治理能力现代化为保障的生态文明制度体系，以生态系统良性循环和环境风险有效防控为重点的生态安全体系。

要通过加快构建生态文明体系，使我国经济发展质量和效益显著提升，确保到 2035 年节约资源和保护环境的空间格局、产业结构、生产方式、生活方式总体形成，生态环境质量实现根本好转，生态环境领域国家治理体系和治理能力现代化基本实现，美丽中国目标基本实现。到本世纪中叶，建成富强民主文明和谐美丽的社会主义现代化强国，物质文明、政治文明、精神文明、社会文明、生态文明全面提升，绿色发展方式和生活方式全面形成，人与自然和谐共生，生态环境领域国家治理体系和治理能力现代化全面实现，建成美丽中国。

第二，全面推动绿色发展。绿色是生命的象征、大自然的底色，更是美好生活的基础、人民群众的期盼。绿色发展是新发展理念的重要组成部分，与创新、协调、开放、共享发展相辅相成、相互作用，是全方位变革，是构建高质量现代化经济体系的必然要求，目的是改变传统的“大量生产、大量消耗、大量排放”的生产模式和消费模式，使资源、生产、消费等要素相匹配相适应，实现经济社会发展和生态环境保护协调统一、人与自然和谐共处。

加快形成绿色发展方式，是解决污染问题的根本之策。只有从源头上使污染物排放大幅降下来，生态环境质量才能明显好上去。重点是调结构、优布局、强产业、全链条。调整经济结构和能源结构，既提升经济发展水平，又降低污染排放负荷。对重大经济政策和产业布局开展规划环评，优化国土空间开发布局，调整区域流域产业布局。培育壮大节能环保产业、清洁生产产业、清洁能源产业，发展高效农业、先进制造业、现代服务业。推进资源全面节约和循环利用，实现生产系统和生活系统循环链接。

绿色生活方式涉及老百姓的衣食住行。要倡导简约适度、绿色低碳的生活方式，反对奢侈浪费和不合理消费。广泛开展节约型机关、绿色家庭、绿色学校、绿色社区创建活动，推广绿色出行，通过生活方式绿色革命，倒逼生产方式绿色转型。

第三，把解决突出生态环境问题作为民生优先领域。有利于百姓的事再小也要做，危害百姓的事再小也要除。打好污染防治攻坚战，就要打几场标志性的重大战役，集中力量攻克老百姓身边的突出生态环境问题。当前，重污染天气、黑臭水体、垃圾围城、农村环境已成为民心之痛、民生之患，严重影响人民群众生产生活，老百姓意见大、怨言多，甚至成为诱发社会不稳定的重要因素，必须下大气力解决好这些问题。要集中优势兵力，动员各方力量，群策群力，群防群治，一个战役一个战役打，打一场污染防治攻坚的人民战争。

坚决打赢蓝天保卫战是重中之重。这既是国内民众的迫切期盼，也是我们就办好北京冬奥会向国际社会作出的承诺。要以京津冀及周边、长三角、汾渭平原等为主战场，以北京为重点，以空气质量明显改善为刚性要求，强化联防联控，基本消除重污染天气，还老百姓蓝天白云、繁星闪烁。要调整产业结构，减少过剩和落后产能，增加新的增长动能。要推进达标排放，降低重点行业污染物排放，实施火电、钢铁等重点行业超低排放改造。要在全中国推开“散乱污”企业治理，坚决关停取缔一批，整改提升一批，搬迁入园一批。要调整能源结构，减少煤炭消费比重，加快清洁能源发展。要坚持因地制宜、多措并举，宜电则电、宜气则气，坚定不移推进北方地区冬季清洁取暖，加快天然气产供储销体系建设，优化天然气来源布局，加强管网互联互通，保障气源供应。要提供补贴政策和价格支持，确保“煤改气”、“煤改电”后老百姓用得上、用得起。要加大燃煤小锅炉淘汰力度，暂停一部分污染重的煤电机组，加快升级改造。要调整运输结构，减少公路运输量，增加铁路运输量。要抓紧治理柴油货车污染，推动货运经营整合升级、提质增效，加快规模化发展、连锁化经营。

要深入实施水污染防治行动计划，打好水源地保护、城市黑臭水体治理、渤海综合治理、长江保护修复攻坚战，保障饮用水安全，基本消灭城市黑臭水体，还给老百姓清水绿岸、鱼翔浅底的景象。在治水上有不少问题要解决，其中有一个问题非常迫切，就是要加快补齐城镇污水收集和处理设施短板。这方面欠账太多。根据中央环境保护督察提供的情况，甚至一些直辖市、沿海发达省份、经济特区都有大量污水直排。要定个硬目标，全力攻克，尽快实现污水管网全覆盖、全收集、全处理。否则，一边治，一边排，效果就会事倍功半。

要全面落实土壤污染防治行动计划，推动制定和实施土壤污染防治法。突出重点区域、行业和污染物，强化土壤污染管控和修复，有效防范风险，让老百姓吃得放心、住得安心。要全面禁止洋垃圾入境，大幅减少进口固体废物种类和数量，严厉打击危险废物破坏环境违法行为，坚决遏制住危险废物非法转移、倾倒、利用和处理处置。

农村环境直接影响米袋子、菜篮子、水缸子、城镇后花园。要调整农业投入结构，减少化肥农药使用量，增加有机肥使用比重，完善废旧地膜回收处理制度。要持续开展农村人居环境整治行动，实现全国行政村环境整治全覆盖，基本解决农村的垃圾、污水、厕所问题，打造美丽乡村，为老百姓留住鸟语花香田园风光。

生态保护和污染防治密不可分、相互作用。其中，污染防治好比是分子，生态保护好比是分母，要对分子做好减法降低污染物排放量，对分母做好加法扩大环境容量，协同发力。要严格管控生态保护红线，实现山水林田湖草系统监管和事前事中事后的全过程监管。要推进城镇留白增绿，使老百姓享有惬意生活休闲空间。

第四，有效防范生态环境风险。生态环境安全是国家安全的重要组成部分，是经济社会持续健康发展的重要保障。“图之于未萌，虑之于未有。”要始终保持高度警觉，防止各类生态环境风险积聚扩散，做好应对任何形式生态环境风险挑战的准备。

要把生态环境风险纳入常态化管理，系统构建全过程、多层次生态环境风险防范体系，严密防控垃圾焚烧、对二甲苯（PX）等重点领域生态环境风险，推进“邻避”问题防范化解，破解涉环保项目“邻避”问题，着力提升突发环境事件应急处置能力。要加强核与辐射安全监管，健全监管体系，完善监管机制，提升监管能力，确保万无一失。

第五，加快推进生态文明体制改革落地见效。生态文明体制改革是全面深化改革的重要领域，要以解决生态环境领域突出问题为导向，抓好已出台改革举措的落地，及时制定新的改革方案。对涉及生态文明体制改革的一些重要举措要尽快到位、发挥作用。中央环境保护督察要强化权威，加强力量配备，向纵深发展。要探索政府主导、企业和社会各界参与、市场化运作、可持续的生态产品价值实现路径，开展试点，积累经验。要健全环保信用评价、信息强制性披露、严惩重罚等制度。

这次深化党和国家机构改革，党中央决定组建生态环境部。主要考虑有两点：一是在污染防治上改变九龙治水的状况，整合职能，为打好污染防治攻坚战提供支撑。二是在生态保护修复上强化统一监管，坚决守住生态保护红线。要打通地上和地下、岸上和水里、陆地和海洋、城市和农村、一氧化碳和二氧化碳，贯通污染防治和生态保护，加强生态环境保护统一监管。生态环境部门要履行好职责，统一政策规划标准制定，统一监测评估，统一监督执法，统一督察问责。要整合组建生态环境保护综合执法队伍，按照减少层次、整合队伍、提高效率的原则，优化职能配置，统一实行生态环境保护执法。要健全区域流域海域生态环境管理体制，推进跨地区环保机构试点，整合相关部门和地方政府大气环境管理职责；加快组建流域环境监管执法机构，增强流域环境监管和行政执法合力。要完善海域生态环境管理体制，按海域设置监管机构。

第六，提高环境治理水平。环境治理是系统工程，需要综合运用行政、市场、法治、科技等多种手段。要充分运用市场化手段，推进生态环境保护市场化进程，撬动更多社会资本进入生态环境保护领域。要完善资源环境价格机制，将生态环境成本纳入经济运行成本。要采取多种方式支持政府和社会资本合作项目。生态环境保护该花的钱必须花，该投的钱决不能省。要坚持资金投入同污染防治攻坚任务相匹配。要加强大气重污染成因研究和治理、京津冀环境综合治理重大项目等科技攻关，对臭氧、挥发性有机物以及新的污染物治理开展专项研究和前瞻研究，对涉及经济社会发展的重大生态环境问题开展对策性研究，加快成果转化与应用，为科学决策、环境管理、精准治污、便民服务提供支撑。要实施积极应对气候变化国家战略，推动和引导建立公平合理、合作共赢的全球气候治理体系，彰显我国负责任大国形象，推动构建人类命运共同体。

四、加强党对生态文明建设的领导

打好污染防治攻坚战时间紧、任务重、难度大，是一场大仗、硬仗、苦仗，必须加强党的领导。党中央、国务院印发《关于全面加强生态环境保护坚决打好污染防治攻坚战的意见》，对打好污染防治攻坚战作出全面部署。各地区各部门要增强“四个意识”，坚决维护党中央权威和集中统一领导，坚决担负起生态文明建设的政治责任，全面贯彻落实党中央决策部署。

地方各级党委和政府主要领导是本行政区域生态环境保护第一责任人，对本行政区域的生态环境质量负总责，要做到重要工作亲自部署、重大问题亲自过问、重要环节亲自协调、重要案件亲自督办，压实各级责任，层层抓落实。各相关部门要履行好生态环境保护职责，谁的孩子谁抱，管发展的、管生产的、管行业的部门必须按“一岗双责”的要求抓好工作。要抓紧出台中央和国家机关相关部门生态环境保护责任清单，使各部门守土有责、守土尽责，分工协作、共同发力。各级人大及其常委会要把生态文明建设作为重点工作领域，开展执法检查，定期听取并审议同级政府工作情况报告。

要建立科学合理的考核评价体系，考核结果作为各级领导班子和领导干部奖惩和提拔使用的重要依据。要实施最严格的考核问责。“刑赏之本，在乎劝善而惩恶。”对那些损害生态环境的领导干部，只有真追责、敢追责、严追责，做到终身追责，制度才不会成为“稻草人”、“纸老虎”、“橡皮筋”。有些地方生态环境问题多发频发，被约谈、被曝光，当地党政负责人不但没受处罚，反倒升迁了、重用了，真是咄咄怪事！这种事情决不允许再发生！要狠抓一批反面典型，特别是要抓住破坏生态环境的典型案例不放，严肃查处，以正视听，以儆效尤。

要建设一支生态环境保护铁军，政治强、本领高、作风硬、敢担当，特别能吃苦、特别能战斗、特别能奉献。打好污染防治攻坚战，是得罪人的事。各级党委和政府要关心、支持生态环境保护队伍建设，主动为敢干事、能干事的干部撑腰打气。

建设生态文明的时代责任已经落在了我们这代人的肩上。全党全国各族人民要紧密团结在党中央周围，齐心协力，攻坚克难，大力推进生态文明建设，为全面建成小康社会、开创美丽中国建设新局面而努力奋斗！

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Pushing China's Development of an Ecological Civilization to a New Stage

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I. Recognizing the importance of stepping up development of an ecological civilization

Building an ecological civilization is vital for sustaining the development of the Chinese nation. The Chinese people have always revered and loved nature, and China's 5000-year-long civilization embodies a rich ecological cultural component. The *Book of Changes* states, "We look at the ornamental figures of the sky, and thereby ascertain the changes of the seasons. We look at the ornamental observances of society, and understand how the processes of transformation are

accomplished all under heaven,” and, “the ruler divides and completes the course of heaven and earth; he furthers and regulates the gifts of heaven and earth, and so aids the people.” The *Dao De Jing* states, “Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Dao. The law of the Dao is its being what it is.” The *Mencius* states, “If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten. If close nets are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fish and turtles will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hill-forests only at the proper times, the wood will be more than can be used.” The *Xunzi* states, “Axes must not enter the forest when the plants and trees are flourishing, lest their lives be cut short.” *The Manual of Important Arts for the People*, a sixth-century agricultural encyclopedia, states, “Act according to the seasons and the nature of the land, and you will enjoy great success through little effort.” These concepts all stress the importance of uniting heaven, earth, and man, following the rules of nature, and using what nature has to offer with patience and restraint, and show that our ancestors well understood the need to properly handle the relationship between man and nature.

Environmental concepts were elevated to the level of state institutions in China at a very early time in history. A special organization overseeing the mountains, forests, rivers, and marshes was established, and it instituted relevant policies and decrees through the warden system. In the *Rites of Zhou*, it is recorded that wardens were responsible for protecting the natural environment by restricting access to certain areas and enforcing relevant prohibitions. During the Qin (221-206 BC) and Han (206 BC-AD 220) dynasties, there were separate officers responsible for forests, rivers, shorelines, gardens, and farmlands, and the warden system in fact carried on all the way to the Qing Dynasty. Many of China’s dynasties had laws for the protection of nature, and violators of these laws faced severe punishment. For example, the order issued by King Wen of Zhou (1152-1056 BC) on the attack of Chong said, “It is forbidden to destroy houses, close wells, cut trees, or disturb animals. Those who do not comply with this order shall be put to death.”

A civilization may thrive if its natural surroundings thrive, and will suffer if its natural surroundings suffer. The natural environment is the basis of human survival and development, and changes to it directly impact the rise and fall of civilizations. The four great ancient civilizations of Egypt, Babylon, India, and China all began in regions with thick forests, abundant water, and fertile soil. The surging Yangtze and Yellow rivers formed the cradle of the Chinese nation, and nurtured our country’s development into a magnificent civilization. Meanwhile, environmental degradation, particularly severe desertification, led to the decline of ancient Egypt and Babylon. Some areas of China also went through painful lessons in ancient times. For example, the desert sands swallowed up the once glorious and lush kingdom of Loulan. The Hexi Corridor and the Loess Plateau also once boasted adequate vegetation and water, but excessive deforestation to open up land for cultivation caused severe environmental damage, which in turn aggravated economic decline. The gradual shift of China’s economic centers to the east and south of the country since the middle of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) was largely a result of environmental changes in western China.

On May 4, 2018, we held a ceremony marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx. During the ceremony, I made a point of saying that in studying Marx, we must study and practice Marxist thought on the relationship between man and nature. Marx and Engels believed that “man lives on nature,” and that humans produce, live, and develop through their interactions with nature. If humans treat nature kindly, then nature will repay that kindness. However, “If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him.” In *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels wrote, “The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, destroyed the forests to obtain cultivable land, never dreamed that they were laying the basis for the present devastated condition of these countries, by removing along with the forests the collecting centers and reservoirs of moisture. When, on the southern slopes of the

mountains, the Italians of the Alps used up the pine forests so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of water for the greater part of the year, with the effect that these would be able to pour still more furious flood torrents on the plains during the rainy seasons.”

With history as a mirror, one can understand the rise and fall of a state. The reason why I have repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking environmental issues seriously and handling them properly is that China’s environmental capacity is limited, our ecosystems are vulnerable, and we have still not achieved a fundamental reversal of environmental conditions that cause heavy pollution, significant damage, and high risk. Meanwhile, our unique geographical surroundings have exacerbated interregional imbalances. The land to the southeast of the Heihe-Tengchong Line accounts for 43% of China’s total area, but is home to about 94% of its population. Dominated by plains, rivulets, low mountains, hills, and karst landforms, this part of China is under immense environmental pressure. The land to the northwest of the line accounts for 57% of China’s total area, but is home to only about 6% of our population. Dominated by grasslands, the Gobi Desert, oases, and snowy plateaus, the ecosystems in this part of the country are extremely fragile. This is a very important aspect to consider when we talk about China’s national conditions.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC held in 2012, we have made building an ecological civilization a major component of coordinated implementation of the five-sphere integrated plan and the four-pronged comprehensive strategy. We have carried out a long list of creative, forward-thinking, and fundamentally important work and introduced a whole series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies, and thus the notion of an ecological civilization has increasingly taken root in the hearts of the people. As our efforts to control pollution have intensified, we have seen unprecedented progress in terms of the frequency with which new systems for environmental governance have emerged, the rigor with which oversight and enforcement has been carried out, and the rate at which the environment has improved. Therefore, our efforts to promote environmental protection have gone through a historic turnaround with wide-ranging implications.

I have always seen our environmental work as being extremely important. When working in places such as Zhengding, Xiamen, Ningde, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Shanghai, I always made environmental work one of my prime areas of focus. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, I have delivered several comments and instructions on incidents that caused serious damage to the environment as well as on promoting well-coordinated environmental conservation and avoiding excessive development in the Yangtze River Economic Belt. I have requested that competent authorities be rigorous in their investigation and handling of environmental issues and not let up until these issues have been completely resolved. By doing so, we will ensure that pristine environments are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations and that the security and stability of all types of natural ecosystems are maintained.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, we have comprehensively boosted reform and accelerated the development of top-level design and a system of institutions for an ecological civilization. In this process, we have introduced the Guidelines on Accelerating Ecological Civilization and the Integrated Reform Plan for Promoting Ecological Civilization, and formulated more than 40 reform plans regarding ecological development. We have thus made comprehensive and systematic arrangements for building an ecological civilization covering areas such as overall objectives, basic concepts, main principles, key tasks, and institutional safeguards. We have launched and implemented systems with functions including the assessment of ecological development targets, the audit of natural resource assets under an official’s purview when officials leave their posts, and the enforcement of accountability for environmental damage. Meanwhile, the

system of main functional zones has gradually improved. Faster progress has been made with environmental governance systems including those for vertical management of monitoring, supervision, and enforcement activities conducted by environmental protection agencies at the sub-provincial level, and for controlling the quality of environmental monitoring data. We have also made progress with regard to emission permits, the river and lake chief systems, and the prohibition on importing foreign refuse into China. Meanwhile, the formulation and implementation of economic policies on environmental issues such as green finance reform, the drafting of balance sheets for natural resource assets, the levy of environmental protection taxes, and compensation for environmental protection has progressed smoothly. Our efforts to control air pollution in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and protect the environment in the Yangtze River Economic Belt have gradually shown results. We have also drafted and revised laws including the Environmental Protection Law and the Environmental Protection Tax Law, as well as laws on nuclear safety and the prevention and control of air and water pollution. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate have defined the criteria for determining criminal liability with regard to environmental pollution and ecological destruction and made punishments more severe, thus forming a powerful deterrent against such crimes.

The central environmental protection inspection system is a particular example of an institution that is solid and put to good use. It is prepared to take real action and do what is necessary, and once it looks into a particular issue it will not let go until the issue is resolved. It has therefore become a practical and effective tool for pushing local CPC committees and governments as well as their relevant departments to fulfill their environmental protection obligations.

We have put great energy into promoting green development, and achieved marked results. We have optimized the layout of China's territorial space, and set red lines for environmental protection in 15 provincial-level units including Ningxia and those in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and the Yangtze River Economic Belt. Deeper progress has been made with supply-side structural reform, the industrial structure has constantly improved, a large number of highly polluting enterprises have withdrawn from operation in an orderly manner, and scattered, non-compliant, and polluting industries in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and its surrounding areas have been put under unprecedented scrutiny. We have seen positive changes take place in energy consumption patterns, and China has become the world's largest user of new and renewable sources of energy. We have made effective progress with our efforts to conserve resources across the board, and the intensity of resource consumption has fallen markedly.

We have moved forward with implementation of three major action plans for preventing and controlling air, water, and soil pollution. China was the first major developing country in the world to launch a large-scale PM2.5 control program, and has also built the world's largest wastewater treatment capacity. Average concentration of inhalable particulate matter (PM10) in 338 cities at or above the prefectural level throughout China fell by 22.7% between 2013 and 2017, average PM2.5 concentration in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region dropped by 39.6%, and that in Beijing decreased from 89.5 micrograms per cubic meter to 58 micrograms per cubic meter. The proportion of surface water body sections under the national monitoring program that met Grade I-III water quality standards rose to 67.9%, while the proportion of those failing to meet Grade V standard fell to 8.3%. Meanwhile, forest coverage rose from about 16.6% at the beginning of the century to about 22% today.

China has shown great initiative through its release of China's National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its implementation of China's National Plan on Climate Change (2014-2020), and its submission of documents ratifying the Paris Agreement to

the UN. China accounts for more than half of the elimination of ozone-depleting substances by developing countries, making it the world's largest contributor to protection of the ozone layer. In 2017, the Belt and Road International Green Development Coalition was established with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme and other international organizations.

Through untiring effort, China has seen consistent improvement in environmental quality. However, we must be soberly aware that in our efforts to build an ecological civilization, we face grave challenges, immense pressure, and prominent contradictions. The situation remains extremely serious, since in order to make progress there are still many difficult obstacles that we must overcome, tough problems that we must face, and long-standing issues that we must resolve.

Although environmental quality in China is continuing to take a turn for the better and showing trends of steady improvement, the results are still tenuous. The situation is much like rowing a boat against the current; if we let up even slightly then we risk undoing all of the progress we have made. Our efforts to build an ecological civilization are now in a crucial phase in which we must carry forward despite heavy strain and immense pressure, a decisive stage in which we will supply more high-quality ecological goods to meet the growing demands of the people for a pristine environment, and also a period of opportunity in which we have the conditions and abilities necessary to resolve prominent environmental issues. China's economy has already begun shifting from a stage of rapid growth to one of high-quality growth, and there are thus a number of both conventional and unconventional hurdles that must be overcome. This is a process of rebirth, like a phoenix rising from the ashes. If we do not act now, these issues will bring about even graver consequences as they become more difficult and costly to resolve, so we must grit our teeth and conquer the challenges that lie ahead.

Achieving moderate prosperity throughout society by 2020 is our Party's solemn commitment to the people. We cannot say that moderate prosperity has been achieved while environmental quality remains poor, otherwise this statement would not win the people's approval or stand up to the test of time. No matter the difficulty, we must not flinch or hesitate. In the battle to prevent and control pollution, we must have the determination to make painful changes, the courage to stand and fight, and the will to commit every last ounce of our effort. Party committees and governments at all levels must take the initiative to incorporate construction of an ecological civilization into plans for economic and social development. We must ensure that Party committees provide leadership, governments give direction, enterprises bear responsibility, and members of the public can participate, and firmly reject the old path of polluting first and fixing it later or any growth model that would damage or destroy the environment. To resolve environmental issues, we must fully exert the political strength of CPC leadership and China's socialist system which can bring together the resources necessary to take on great tasks, take full advantage of the solid material foundations built up over 40 years of reform and opening up, and step up our efforts to build an ecological civilization.

II. Principles that must be upheld in strengthening development of an ecological civilization

The environment is a major political issue which bears upon the mission and purpose of the CPC as well as a major social issue which bears upon public wellbeing. The CPC has always attached great importance to ecological conservation, establishing resource conservation and environmental protection as fundamental state policies and making sustainable development a national strategy. As we have made further progress and gained socioeconomic development, our understanding of the overall plan for building Chinese socialism has grown. It started from the distinction between material and non-material culture before transforming into the "Three-Pronged" overall plan, which covered economic, political, and cultural development. This grew to four prongs with the addition of social development, and finally five prongs with the addition of ecological development.

This was a process of great theoretical and practical innovation, which profoundly transformed how we think about and how we go about development.

The primary contradiction in Chinese society has transformed into that between imbalanced and inadequate development and the people's growing needs for a better life, and now the people's demands for a beautiful environment have already become an important aspect of this challenge, with the public eagerly awaiting faster improvements in environmental quality. The goal of the CPC is to help the people reach the better lives for which they are yearning, and its mission as the governing party is to resolve problems that are of the greatest, most direct, and most practical concern to the people. Public sentiment is the greatest test of political efficacy. We must actively respond to the people's desires, hopes, and anxieties, vigorously advance development of an ecological civilization, provide more high-quality ecological goods, and consistently meet the people's growing demands for a beautiful environment.

Humanity is a community with a shared future, and thus protecting the environment is a challenge and a duty which all of us around the globe must face together. If development of an ecological civilization goes smoothly, it will be an achievement of Chinese socialism, otherwise the reverse will be used as an excuse by forces with hidden agendas to attack us. After humanity entered the industrial age, traditional industrialization unfolded at an incredible pace. This created immense material wealth, but also accelerated the scramble for natural resources and disrupted the original balance and cycles within the earth's ecosystems, and thereby caused the relationship between man and nature to become strained. Beginning in the 1930s, a number of Western countries experienced multiple environmental disasters. Shocking the world with the massive losses that they caused, these events led people to reflect deeply on the capitalist model of development. In over two centuries of modernization, no more than 30 countries have industrialized, with a combined population of less than a billion. China is the world's largest developing country with a population of more than 1.3 billion, and therefore our efforts to build an ecological civilization and turn China into a strong and modern socialist country that is prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious, and beautiful will be global in their impact.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, our Party has thoroughly answered important theoretical and practical questions concerning the how, what, and why of ecological civilization, and introduced a whole series of new concepts, ideas, and strategies. To develop an ecological civilization in the new era, the following principles must be upheld.

The first principle is that harmonious coexistence between humans and nature must be upheld.

Man and nature form a biotic community with a shared future. The environment has no substitute, and we may not realize how truly precious it is until it is damaged to the point of being unsalvageable. To borrow the words of ancient masters, "Heaven, Earth, and I were produced together, and all things and I are one." "Heaven does not speak, yet the four seasons move in order. Earth does not speak, yet the myriad beings come to life." When humans use nature in a reasonable manner and protect it with care, then nature will typically reward them generously. However, when humans exploit nature indiscriminately and aggressively plunder its resources, then nature will be ruthless in its punishment. By harming nature, humans are ultimately harming themselves – this is an irrefutable truth. As Xunzi said, "Each of the myriad things must be in a harmonious relation with Heaven in order to grow, and each must obtain from Heaven the proper nurture in order to become complete." There are numerous vivid examples of this, such as the Dujiang Weirs. This great water conservancy project was built more than 2000 years ago during the Warring States Period according to the flooding patterns of the Minjiang River and the topographical characteristics of Chengdu with its flat plains and rivers prone to overflow. It was beneficial not only at the time, but also for countless generations that have followed.

Throughout the process of development, we must prioritize environmental conservation and protection and put the restoration of nature first. We cannot think about what we can take from nature without considering how we can give back to it; we cannot think about development while ignoring our responsibility to protect the environment; and we cannot think about how we can use nature without looking at how we can restore it. We should protect our natural environment in the same way we would protect our own wellbeing, focusing on taking more positive measures that will provide solid foundations and long-term benefits, concrete steps that will help protect and restore the environment, and effective actions that will clean up our surroundings and reveal their natural beauty. This will allow the people to be close to mountains and waters and recall their rural roots with fond memories, ensure that pristine natural vistas are never too far away, and preserve the serenity, harmony, and beauty of nature.

The second principle is that our natural environment is precious.

This is an important concept for development, and a major principle for advancing modernization. The phrase “green is gold” has expounded the relationship between economic development and environmental protection and shown us the truth that by protecting the environment we are protecting productive forces, and that by improving the environment we are developing productive forces. It has therefore pointed out a new path for achieving coordination between development and conservation. Lucid waters and lush mountains are not only examples of natural and ecological wealth, but they are also social and economic assets. By protecting nature, we are safeguarding the value of the environment and increasing environmental capital, while also safeguarding the potential for future economic and social development, ensuring that our natural assets have lasting ecological and socioeconomic effects.

At their roots, environmental problems are problems with the ways in which we live and develop. In order to resolve them at the fundamental level, we must implement principled development that is innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared, and accelerate the formation of spatial patterns, industrial structures, modes of production, and lifestyles conducive to resource conservation and environmental protection. We must also keep economic activities and human activity in general within the limits of what our environment and natural resources can bear, giving the environment the time and space that it needs to rest and recuperate. We must move faster to define and enforce strict controls including red lines for environmental protection, minimum standards for environmental quality, and ceilings on resource utilization. We will absolutely not allow people to continue to engage in activities that violate these controls, follow old extensive models of growth, or seek short-term gain at the expense of future generations. In terms of red lines for environmental protection, we should establish a strict system of controls that covers important ecological spaces so that these spaces do not change in character, become smaller, or lose ecological functions. In terms of minimum standards for environmental quality, we should make it the basic requirement that environmental quality must not worsen and may only get better. We should strive for constant improvements on this basis, and strictly enforce accountability in areas with serious ecological degradation or where environmental quality has worsened. In terms of ceilings on resource utilization, we must consider not only the needs of people and the world today, but also those of the environment and future generations. We must keep a firm handle on the intensity with which we exploit and utilize natural resources, ensuring that we do not exceed the carrying capacity of these resources.

The third principle is that there is no welfare more universally beneficial than a sound natural environment.

In all things, we must act according to the will of the public. The environment is crucial to the wellbeing of the public, since blue skies and verdant surroundings allow us to feel the beauty and

joy of life. Just as economic development is for the wellbeing of the people, so is environmental protection. In addition to creating more material and cultural wealth to meet people's growing needs for a better life, we need also to provide more quality ecological goods to meet people's growing demands for a beautiful environment. We must ensure that the environment benefits the people, stressing the resolution of prominent environmental problems that impact public health, accelerating the improvement of environmental quality, and providing more high-quality ecological goods as we strive to achieve social equity and justice and consistently meet the people's growing needs for a beautiful environment.

Since developing an ecological civilization is a cause in which the entire public participates and has a stake, we must translate the idea of building a beautiful China into the conscious actions of all people. Every person is a protector, contributor, and beneficiary of the environment. No one can remain aloof, choosing to critique from the sidelines rather than participate. We must boost all people's awareness of the need to conserve resources, protect the environment, and maintain our ecosystems, foster standards for ecological ethics and conduct, launch public activities promoting sustainability, and encourage all members of society to contribute to protecting the environment by cutting down on the amount of pollution they produce and energy and resources they consume as much as possible.

The fourth principle is that our mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands together form a biotic community.

An ecosystem is an integrated natural entity made up of organic chains that are tightly bound and dependent on each other. Just as humans need the fields for food, the fields need the rivers, the rivers need the mountains, the mountains need the soils, and the soils need the forests and grasslands. This biotic community is the material basis for humanity's subsistence and development. We must take all of the ways that we impact nature into account from a broad and long-term perspective, and avoid being penny-wise and pound-foolish, biting off more than we can chew or emphasizing one thing while neglecting another, for this would ultimately cause long-term environmental damage on a system-wide scale.

We must seek out a new path for environmental governance by treating it as a systematic project and looking at it from an overall perspective. Rather than continuing to treat superficial symptoms through stopgap measures with government departments each looking out for their own immediate problems while holding each other back, we must make plans that take all factors into consideration and simultaneously implement multiple comprehensive measures to ensure that our efforts to build an ecological civilization permeate all fields, regions, and processes. For example, to effectively control water pollution and protect our aquatic environments, we must take everything into account, such as entire bodies of water and the lands that surround them, both surface and subsurface sources of water, both rivers and oceans, both aquatic ecosystems and aquatic resources, and both the prevention and control of pollution and the protection of ecosystems. By doing so, we will attain the optimal results of systematic environmental governance. We must thoroughly implement integrated ecological protection and restoration for mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grasslands, carry out large-scale national greening campaigns, and accelerate comprehensive control of soil erosion and desertification. In promoting growth of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, we must ensure well-coordinated environmental protection, avoid excessive development, put the environment first, remain committed to green development, and make it a precondition that all related economic activities do not damage the environment.

The fifth principle is that the strictest regulations and laws must be applied in protecting the environment.

Environmental protection must have legal and regulatory backing. Most of China's outstanding problems in environmental protection are related to inadequate systems, lax regulations, imperfect laws, lacking enforcement, and ineffectual punishment. We must accelerate innovation of regulations, ensuring that they offer more, have adequate peripheral support, and that they are rigorously enforced. By doing so, we will turn our regulations into rigid and inviolable constraints. We must use our regulations to check the use of power, protect blue skies and increase green coverage, and ensure accountability, thus guaranteeing that the CPC Central Committee's decisions and arrangements on building an ecological civilization are firmly implemented and produce real results.

As Han Feizi said, "When those who uphold the law are strong, the state is strong; when they are weak, the state is weak." Institutions depend on concrete enforcement and rigorous oversight. We have already introduced a series of reform measures and related institutions, and these must be implemented with the same intensity as central environmental protection inspections. The rigidity and authority of these institutions must be firmly established, leaving no room for choice, flexibility, or compromise. We must implement a system under which officials bear the responsibility for building an ecological civilization, and ensure that they are accountable through strict assessments. We must hold to account on a permanent basis those who cause serious consequences through blind decisions that disregard the environment. When dealing with actions that damage the environment, we must not be soft or make exceptions. Instead, we must keep a forceful grip on representative cases of environmental destruction and send out a signal that such behavior will be met with harsh punishment. Accountability must be ensured, no matter the person, place, or time frame being investigated. We must persist in getting to the bottom of these issues, and never let our institutions and regulations become "toothless tigers."

The sixth principle is that joint efforts must be made in building a global ecological civilization.

Development of an ecological civilization concerns the future of humanity, and building a green living environment is humanity's common aspiration. The whole world must work together to protect the environment and respond to climate change. No country can ignore these issues, and no country will fare well by going it alone. China has already become a major participant, contributor, and champion in the movement to build a global ecological civilization, advocating the cultivation of ecosystems in which Mother Nature and green development come first, and promoting joint efforts toward making the world cleaner and more beautiful. We must be deeply involved in global environmental governance, build China's say and influence in the global environmental governance system, actively guide the transformation of the international order, and create solutions for environmental protection and sustainable development around the world. We must remain committed to being environmentally friendly, and take an active role in international cooperation on climate change. Finally, we must drive the Belt and Road Initiative forward, seeing that the principles and practices of ecological civilization benefit the peoples of all countries along the B&R route.

III. Waging a determined battle to prevent and control pollution

In the report to the 19th National Congress of the CPC in 2017, I said that we must focus on priorities, address inadequacies, and shore up points of weakness, and stressed that we must take tough steps to forestall and defuse major risks, carry out targeted poverty alleviation, and prevent and control pollution, so that the moderately prosperous society we build earns the people's approval and stands the test of time. Now is the time for us to focus our strength and adopt more effective measures and policies to make sure that we are up to the fight in preventing and controlling pollution.

First, we must move faster to build systems for an ecological civilization.

In order to expedite the resolution of environmental problems during the historic convergence of the Two Centenary Goals, we must act quickly to establish the following ecologically focused systems: a cultural system in which environmental concepts and values are norms, an economic system aimed at integrating industries and ecosystems, a system of responsibilities and objectives centered on improving environmental quality, a system of institutions backed by modernized governance systems and capacity, and a safety system that emphasizes the maintenance of well-functioning ecosystems and the effective prevention and control of environmental risks.

By moving faster to build systems for an ecological civilization, we will bring marked increases to the quality and effectiveness of China's economic development, and guarantee that spatial patterns, industrial structures, modes of production, and lifestyles conducive to resource conservation and environmental protection have totally taken shape by 2035. We will also see that fundamental improvements are made in environmental quality, that modernization of our national governance systems and capacity in the environmental sphere is basically achieved, and that the goals of the Beautiful China Initiative are essentially met. By the middle of the century, we will reach our objective of building a strong and modern socialist country that is prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious, and beautiful, and complete all-round improvements in the material, political, intellectual, social, and ecological domains. At that time, environmentally friendly ways of living and developing will be fully formed, humans and nature will coexist in harmony, modernization of our national governance systems and capacity in the environmental field will be fully realized, and our efforts to build a beautiful China will be successful.

Second, we must promote green development across the board.

Green is the symbol of life and the color of nature, but it also represents the foundations of a better life and the expectations of the people. Green development is an integral component of the new development philosophy alongside innovation, coordination, openness, and sharing, and is essential for achieving comprehensive transformation and establishing a modern and high-quality economic system. The objective of green development is to transform traditional wasteful models of production and consumption and make factors such as resources, production, and consumption match up and adapt to each other so that we may achieve coordination and integration between socioeconomic development and environmental protection and ensure harmony between people and nature.

Fostering green modes of development is the key to resolving our pollution problems. Environmental quality will only go up if emissions of pollutants at the source come down. We must adjust the economic and energy structures in order to both raise the level of economic development and reduce the amount of pollution released. We must carry out environmental assessments of major plans involving economic policies and the distribution of industries, optimize the distribution of territorial space available for development, and adjust the distribution of industries within regions and river basins. We must foster growing industries that promote energy conservation and environmental protection, clean production, and clean energy, and develop efficient agricultural industries, advanced manufacturing industries, and modern service industries. We must promote all-round conservation and recycling of resources, and ensure that the systems of production and everyday life overlap in their circular use of resources.

Green ways of living relate to the basic needs of ordinary people, like food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. We must advocate a green and low-carbon lifestyle of moderation and frugality and oppose extravagance and unjustifiable consumption. We must carry out extensive campaigns to build conservation-minded public offices, engage in activities to promote green modes of

transportation, and develop eco-friendly families, schools, and communities. By revolutionizing our lifestyles to become more environmentally friendly, we will set off a shift toward greener production.

Third, we must make the resolution of environmental issues a priority for improving public wellbeing.

No matter how small or insignificant they may seem, any action that will benefit the people must be taken, and any issue that may endanger the people must be dealt with. In order for us to prevail in the battle to prevent and control pollution, we must fight a number of major and symbolic campaigns, concentrating our energy on overcoming prominent environmental problems that impact the people directly. At present, heavy smog, dark and fetid water bodies, growing heaps of urban waste, and deterioration of the rural environment have become problems that generate great public anxiety due to their serious harm to the lives of the people. These problems have also invited large amounts of comments and complaints from the people and even become significant factors that may lead to social instability, and therefore we must put every effort into finding solutions to them. We must pool our strength and mobilize the support of all involved, making the fight to prevent and control pollution a popular struggle in which we work as a team to push forward from one battle to the next.

We must make it a priority to win a decisive victory in the campaign to make our skies blue again. This is something that the people eagerly expect, as well as a commitment we have made to the international community as hosts of the 2022 Winter Olympics. We must strengthen joint efforts to prevent and control pollution, essentially eliminate heavy smog, and ensure that the people can once again see white clouds against a blue sky during the day and bright stars in a clear sky at night. In these efforts, we must focus on the main battlegrounds of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, the Yangtze River Delta, and the Fenwei Plain, putting particular emphasis on Beijing, and make it absolutely mandatory that we achieve marked improvements in air quality. We must adjust industrial structures, reduce excess and outdated production, and add new growth drivers. We must promote compliance with emission standards, reduce the amount of pollution discharged by key industries, and implement ultra-low emission upgrades in industries such as thermal power and steel. We must bring scattered, non-compliant, and polluting industries under control throughout the country, taking firm steps in which some are shut down, some are reformed and upgraded, and some are moved into industrial parks. We must adjust the energy mix, cutting the share of coal and speeding up the development of clean energy. As we resolutely advance clean winter heating in northern China, we must be responsive to local conditions and adopt multiple concurrent measures, using electricity or natural gas wherever appropriate. We must expedite the development of systems for the production, supply, storage, and sale of natural gas, improve the layout of natural gas sources, boost interconnectivity in the pipeline network, and guarantee adequate gas supply. At the same time, we should offer subsidies and pricing support to ensure that heating is still accessible and affordable to ordinary people after the switch from coal to gas or electricity. We must step up eliminating small coal-fired boilers, suspend operations of some heavily polluting coal power units, and speed up the retrofitting and upgrading of power plants. We must adjust the transportation structure, shifting freight volume from highways to railways. We must focus on managing pollution from diesel trucks and push forward the reorganization and improvement of freight transport operations, promoting higher quality and efficiency, franchising, and large-scale growth.

We must thoroughly implement our action plan for preventing and controlling water pollution. We must guarantee the safety of drinking water, and make progress on the key tasks of safeguarding water sources, dealing with dark and fetid bodies of water in urban areas, improving the overall environment of the Bohai region, and protecting and restoring Yangtze River ecosystems. We must

eliminate essentially all of the unpleasant pollution in urban waterways, so that the people can once again sit on green banks and enjoy waters so clear that fish can be seen swimming around in them. There are many issues in water management that need to be resolved, but an extremely urgent one is the need to rectify deficiencies in the collection and treatment of urban sewage since there are far too many unfulfilled obligations in this regard. According to information gleaned through environmental inspections carried out by the Central Government, large amounts of untreated sewage are released directly into nearby bodies of water, even in municipalities directly under the Central Government, developed provinces along the coast, and special economic zones. We must set hard targets and put in every effort so that we can achieve complete coverage for wastewater pipe networks and make sure that all sewage is collected and treated as early as possible. If we instead try to deal with the problem while continuing to release sewage untreated, then we will be putting in twice the effort for half the result.

We must also see that our action plan for preventing and controlling soil pollution is comprehensively executed, and push forward the formulation and implementation of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution. We must prioritize key regions, industries, and pollutants, boost the management and restoration of areas affected by soil pollution, effectively forestall risks, and make sure that people have peace of mind about what they eat and where they live. We must enforce a comprehensive ban on importing foreign refuse, and significantly reduce the amount and variety of solid waste that we import. We must crack down illegal acts that damage the environment with dangerous waste, and firmly restrict the illicit transfer, dumping, use, or disposal of such waste.

Rural areas are like back gardens of cities, and the environment in these areas has a direct impact on the food on our plates and water in our cups. With this in mind, we must adjust the structure of agricultural input, cut down on the amounts of chemical fertilizers and pesticides used, apply more organic fertilizer, and improve systems for recycling and disposing of old and used plastic mulch. We must continue carrying out campaigns to improve rural living environments, see that environmental remediation covers all administrative villages in China, and fundamentally resolve the garbage, sewage, and lavatory problems of rural areas so that we may build a beautiful countryside and preserve pleasant rural landscapes for the people.

Environmental protection and pollution prevention and control are inseparable issues due to how closely they interact with one another. They function like a fraction, with pollution prevention and control as the numerator and environmental protection as the denominator. Just like with any equation, we need to consider both sides: we must subtract from the numerator by reducing pollution levels, and add to the denominator by expanding the capacity of the environment. We must rigorously enforce red lines for environmental protection, keep watch over our ecosystems including mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grasslands, and achieve oversight on environmental issues at every stage of their development. Rather than rushing to redevelop urban land made available after the removal of illegal structures, we should turn it into green space, thereby ensuring that the people have access to pleasant leisure spaces.

Fourth, we must effectively forestall environmental risks.

Environmental security is a key component of national security, and an important safeguard for the continuation of healthy socioeconomic development. It is imperative that we take precautions so that we are prepared for the worst before it happens. We must always maintain a high level of vigilance, prevent the accumulation and spread of all types of environmental risks, and ensure that we are well prepared to face environmental risks or challenges of any kind.

We must make management of environmental risks a regular practice, carefully constructing a multi-leveled environmental risk prevention system that monitors these risks at every stage. We must conduct strict prevention and control of key environmental risks such as those stemming from garbage incineration and p-xylene, forestall and defuse problems related to the so-called “not in my back yard” effect, prevent this effect from cropping up in environmental protection projects, and focus on raising our capacity to deal with environmental emergencies. We must strengthen supervision over nuclear and radiation safety by improving oversight systems, refining oversight mechanisms, and upgrading oversight capacity, thus making sure that there are absolutely no missteps in this regard.

Fifth, we must move faster to ensure that structural reforms in the ecological domain are implemented and take effect.

Structural reform promoting ecological advancement is an important aspect of comprehensively furthering reform. With the resolution of prominent problems in the environmental domain as our goal, we must focus on implementing reform measures that have already been launched while also formulating new reform plans in a timely manner. We must see that measures related to ecological structural reform are put in place as soon as possible so that they may serve their intended functions. Central government inspections on environmental protection must be given greater resources so that they can push deeper and become more authoritative. We should explore sustainable and market-based ways to realize the value of ecological goods that feature government leadership and participation from enterprises and all social sectors, launching trials and accumulating experience in this regard. We need to improve our systems for credibility assessment based on environmental protection performance, for mandatory disclosure of environmental information, and for imposing severe punishment on violators of environmental regulations.

In the current campaign to bolster reform of Party and government institutions, the CPC Central Committee decided to establish the Ministry of Ecology and Environment. There were two main considerations in this decision. The first was the need to consolidate roles in pollution prevention and control in order to end the confusing division of responsibilities between different ministries and provide support for the fight to prevent and control pollution. The second was the need to strengthen integrated oversight and firmly enforce environmental protection red lines in order to promote ecological conservation and restoration. We must strengthen unified supervision over environmental protection and link together environmental conservation and pollution prevention and control, integrating our efforts across the spectrum from the surface to the underground, from the banks and shores to the rivers and lakes, from the land to the sea, from the cities to the countryside, and from carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide. Government departments responsible for environmental issues must effectively perform their duties, and take steps to standardize monitoring and assessment, oversight of law enforcement, accountability inspections, and the formulation of environmental policies, plans, and standards. We must establish coordinated law enforcement teams for environmental protection. In line with the principles of consolidating enforcement teams, raising their efficiency, and shortening their chains of command, we must optimize the assignment of functions to these teams and carry out unified enforcement of environmental protection law. We must improve environmental management systems for drainage basins and sea areas in all regions, promote trials to establish interregional environmental protection agencies, and consolidate the responsibilities of relevant government departments and local governments with regard to air quality management. We must expedite the establishment of environmental oversight and law enforcement bodies for drainage basins, and build greater synchronicity between environmental oversight and government law enforcement in these areas. We must refine environmental management systems in sea areas, setting up oversight bodies for each of these areas.

Sixth, we must improve environmental governance.

Environmental governance is a systematic project that requires the coordinated application of measures from multiple fields, including the government, the market, the rule of law, and science and technology. We must fully utilize market-based measures in order to make environmental protection more market based and leverage greater social capital in this regard. We must refine resource and environmental pricing mechanisms, taking ecological costs into account in economic operations. We must use various methods to encourage cooperation between government and private capital. Funds needed for environmental protection must be appropriated, and we must not pinch pennies on investment. We must be committed to matching funding with the tasks of pollution prevention and control. We must boost research on factors contributing to heavy air pollution, taking further steps to bring these factors under control, and overcome key scientific and technical hurdles including those related to major projects for improving the overall environment of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. We must carry out dedicated, forward-looking research on the management of ozone, volatile organic compounds, and new pollutants, conduct research on how to deal with major environmental problems that impact socioeconomic development, and expedite the application of research achievements, thereby offering support for scientific decision making, environmental management, targeted pollution control, and public services. We must implement a national strategy for actively responding to climate change, promote and guide the establishment of a fair and equitable global climate governance system featuring mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance China's image as a responsible major country, and push forward the development of a human community with a shared future.

IV. Strengthening CPC leadership in building an ecological civilization

The battle to prevent and control pollution is one in which we must act with urgency to overcome burdensome tasks and difficult challenges. In this bitter and unrelenting fight, it is essential that we strengthen the leadership of the CPC. The Decisions of the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council on Comprehensively Enhancing Eco-environmental Protection to Completely Win the Battle Against Pollution introduced comprehensive plans for pollution prevention and control. All government departments and local authorities must raise their awareness of the need to maintain political integrity, think in terms of the big picture, follow the leadership core, and stay aligned with the center, firmly uphold the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, undertake their political duties in building an ecological civilization with determined commitment, and fully implement the Central Committee's decisions and plans.

Local CPC committee and government leaders bear primary responsibility for environmental protection and overall responsibility for environmental quality in their administrative districts. Therefore, they should personally make arrangements for important tasks, conduct inquiries into major issues, coordinate work in key processes, and supervise cases of note, ensuring that duties are performed and directives are put into effect at all levels. All relevant departments must properly fulfill their environmental protection obligations and stay on top of environmental responsibilities in their jurisdictions, with departments in charge of development, production, and industry working with the understanding that they are also bound to protect the environment. We must move quickly to introduce a list of environmental protection responsibilities for the relevant departments of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Government so that all departments abide by their duties, coordinate with each other to effectively divide tasks, and put forth a concerted effort. People's congresses at all levels and their standing committees must make building an ecological civilization a focal point of their work, conduct compliance inspections, and regularly hear and deliberate work reports from governments at the corresponding level.

We must establish empirical and rational evaluation and assessment systems, making the results of these assessments an important basis for decisions on rewarding, punishing, or promoting officials at all levels. We must put in place the strictest checks on accountability. Ancient Chinese wisdom tells us that the purpose of reward and punishment is to uphold virtue and condemn evil. Only by having the will to strictly and earnestly hold officials that harm the environment to account and making them bear responsibility for the rest of their lives can we ensure that our rules do not become superficial threats that bend at will with no substance to back them up. There are some areas which have seen numerous and incessant environmental problems, and despite being exposed and admonished, the Party and government officials responsible have not only just escaped punishment, but even been transferred and promoted to more important positions. This is absolutely absurd, and cannot be allowed to continue. We must put a spotlight on certain representative cases of negative behavior, particularly those involving damage to the environment. By rigorously investigating and strictly handling these cases, we will ascertain the truth of the facts and warn others against engaging in similar behavior.

We must foster a strong environmental protection corps composed of capable and uncompromising members with strong political consciousness and a willingness to take on responsibility who will fight through any hardship in their devotion to the cause. In the fight to prevent and control pollution, there are some that must face uncomfortable realities. Party committees and governments at all levels must show care and support for the development of our environmental protection corps, and actively assist officials who are ready and willing to take action.

The great responsibility of building an ecological civilization has already fallen upon the shoulders of our generation. The entire Party and people of all ethnic groups throughout the country must rally closely around the CPC Central Committee and work together as one as we face the challenges ahead, vigorously promote an ecological civilization, and strive to achieve moderate prosperity throughout society and open a new stage in the development of a beautiful China!

This speech was delivered by General Secretary Xi Jinping at the National Conference on Environmental Protection, May 18, 2018.

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Xi Jinping New Year's Address 2019

(Speech as published on: http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2019/content_5358672.htm [last accessed on 14/05/2021])

国家主席习近平发表二〇一九年新年贺词

新年前夕，国家主席习近平通过中央广播电视总台和互联网，发表了二〇一九年新年贺词。全文如下：

²¹⁰大家好！“岁月不居，时节如流。”2019年马上就要到了，我在北京向大家致以新年的美好祝福！

2018年，我们过得很充实、走得很坚定。这一年，我们战胜各种风险挑战，推动经济高质量发展，加快新旧动能转换，保持经济运行在合理区间。蓝天、碧水、净土保卫战顺利推进，各项民生事业加快发展，人民生活持续改善。京津冀协同发展、长江经济带发展、粤港澳大湾区建设等国家战略稳步实施。我在各地考察时欣喜地看到：长江两岸绿意盎然，建三江万亩大地号稻浪滚滚，深圳前海生机勃勃，上海张江活力四射，港珠澳大桥飞架三地……这些成就是全国各族人民撸起袖子干出来的，是新时代奋斗者挥洒汗水拼出来的。

这一年，中国制造、中国创造、中国建造共同发力，继续改变着中国的面貌。嫦娥四号探测器成功发射，第二艘航母出海试航，国产大型水陆两栖飞机水上首飞，北斗导航向全球组网迈出坚实一步。在此，我要向每一位科学家、每一位工程师、每一位“大国工匠”、每一位建设者和参与者致敬！

这一年，脱贫攻坚传来很多好消息。全国又有125个贫困县通过验收脱贫，1000万农村贫困人口摆脱贫困。17种抗癌药降价并纳入医保目录，因病致贫问题正在进一步得到解决。我时常牵挂着奋战在脱贫一线的同志们，280多万驻村干部、第一书记，工作很投入、很给力，一定要保重身体。

²¹⁰ Xi starts the speech saying: 《同志们，朋友们，女士们，先生们》 meaning “Dear comrades and friends, Ladies and Gentlemen” before he continuous saying: “dajiahao” (大家好) which can be understood as “Greetings to you all”. These first words have been left out in the official script of the speech but will be reintegrated in the translation.

我始终惦记着困难群众。在四川凉山三河村，我看望了彝族村民吉好也求、节列俄阿木两家人。在山东济南三涧溪村，我和赵顺利一家围坐一起拉家常。在辽宁抚顺东华园社区，我到陈玉芳家里了解避险搬迁安置情况。在广东清远连樟村，我和贫困户陆奕和交谈脱贫之计。他们真诚朴实的面容至今浮现在我的脑海。新年之际，祝乡亲们生活蒸蒸日上，越过越红火。

这一年，我们隆重庆祝改革开放 40 周年，对党和国家机构进行了系统性、整体性、重构性的改革，推出 100 多项重要改革举措，举办首届中国国际进口博览会，启动建设海南自由贸易试验区。世界看到了改革开放的中国加速度，看到了将改革开放进行到底的中国决心。我们改革的脚步不会停滞，开放的大门只会越开越大。

我注意到，今年，恢复高考后的第一批大学生大多已经退休，大批“00 后”进入高校校园。1 亿多非户籍人口在城市落户的行动正在继续，1300 万人在城镇找到了工作，解决棚户区问题的住房开工了 580 万套，新市民有了温暖的家。很多港澳台居民拿到了居住证，香港进入了全国高铁网。一个流动的中国，充满了繁荣发展的活力。我们都在努力奔跑，我们都是追梦人。

此时此刻，我特别要提到一些闪亮的名字。今年，天上多了颗“南仁东星”，全军英模挂像里多了林俊德和张超两位同志。我们要记住守岛卫国 32 年的王继才同志，为保护试验平台挺身而出、壮烈牺牲的黄群、宋月才、姜开斌同志，以及其他为国为民捐躯的英雄们。他们是新时代最可爱的人，永远值得我们怀念和学习。

这一年，又有很多新老朋友来到中国。我们举办了博鳌亚洲论坛年会、上海合作组织青岛峰会、中非合作论坛北京峰会等主场外交活动，提出了中国主张，发出了中国声音。我和同事们出访五大洲，参加了许多重要外交活动，同各国领导人进行了广泛交流，巩固了友谊，增进了信任，扩大了我们的朋友圈。

2019 年，我们将隆重庆祝中华人民共和国 70 周年华诞。70 年披荆斩棘，70 年风雨兼程。人民是共和国的坚实根基，人民是我们执政的最大底气。一路走来，中国人民自力更生、艰苦奋斗，创造了举世瞩目的中国奇迹。新征程上，不管乱云飞渡、风吹浪打，我们都要紧紧依靠人民，坚持自力更生、艰苦奋斗，以坚如磐石的信心、只争朝夕的劲头、坚韧不拔的毅力，一步一个脚印把前无古人的伟大事业推向前进。

2019 年，有机遇也有挑战，大家还要一起拼搏、一起奋斗。减税降费政策措施要落地生根，让企业轻装上阵。要真诚尊重各种人才，充分激发他们创新创造活力。要倾听基层干部心声，让敢担当有作为的干部有干劲、有奔头。农村 1000 多万贫困人口的脱贫任务要如期完成，还得咬定目标使劲干。要关爱退役军人，他们为保家卫国作出了

贡献。这个时候，快递小哥、环卫工人、出租车司机以及千千万万的劳动者，还在辛勤工作，我们要感谢这些美好生活的创造者、守护者。大家辛苦了。

放眼全球，我们正面临百年未有之大变局。无论国际风云如何变幻，中国维护国家主权和安全的信心和决心不会变，中国维护世界和平、促进共同发展的诚意和善意不会变。我们将积极推动共建“一带一路”，继续推动构建人类命运共同体，为建设一个更加繁荣美好的世界而不懈努力。

新年的钟声即将敲响，让我们满怀信心和期待，一同迎接 2019 年的到来。

祝福中国！祝福世界！

谢谢大家！

(新华社北京 2018 年 12 月 31 日电)

Translation:

Comrades, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen, Greetings to you all!

Years don't stop [passing by], seasons keep changing²¹¹, the year 2019 is about to arrive. I'd like to extend my New Year's wishes from Beijing to all of you! We have had a full/ample/rich/substantial²¹² year 2018, which we've gone through with determination (firmly/with strength?)²¹³. We have overcome all kinds of risks and challenges, pushed the economy towards a high-quality development, accelerated the replacement of the old drivers [of growth], [and we have] kept the major economic indicators within a reasonable range throughout the year²¹⁴. [We have] carried out successfully the war²¹⁵ to protect the "pure land²¹⁶", with blue sky and waters; [we have] intensified efforts to accelerate to improve the people's livelihood, [so] living standards have risen steadily. National strategies like the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, [and] the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area were steadily implemented. During my inspection tours around the country, I was pleased to see: the lush green banks of the Yangtze

²¹¹ “岁月不居，时节如流” is a version of “岁月如流” literally “the passage of the years”, meaning “time flies by”. Xi here adds a second part to this popular proverb when he says 时节如流 literally meaning “the seasons flow [like water]”. Altogether he means “times passes by and seasons keep changing”.

²¹² 我们过得很充实

²¹³ [我们]走得很坚定

²¹⁴ 这一年 literally “this year” which here refers to the past year, 2018.

²¹⁵ 保卫战

²¹⁶ 净土 is the expression used by Xi which I translated as “Pure Land”. In Buddhism it refers to a paradise-like place where one can attain final Enlightenment. Otherwise, it generally refers to a place that is clean and free of pollution. I found “Pure Land” to be a good translation since it can be understood in both senses.

River, the ocean of rice sprouting at the Jiansanjiang²¹⁷ agricultural base, the lively Shenzhen Qianhai Harbour, the bustling Shanghai Zhangjian High-tech Park, [and] the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, spanned over [and therewith connecting] the three lands. All these achievements have been realized by people of all ethnic groups from throughout the country, which have rolled up their sleeves, these workers of the modern era, that have spared no sweat²¹⁸ [to build them].

Over the past year²¹⁹, the combined forces of Chinese manufacturing, Chinese innovation, and Chinese construction, have continued to change the face of the country. We successfully launched the Chang'e-4 lunar probe; our second aircraft carrier set sail on its maiden voyage; our domestically made large amphibious aircraft performed its first water launch; and the BeiDou Satellite Navigation System has gone global. I herewith wish²²⁰ to pay my respect to every scientist, every engineer, and every nation builder who made these achievements possible!

Over the past year, lots of good news have also come from the poverty reduction front²²¹. Another 125 poor counties and 10 million poverty-stricken rural residents were lifted out of poverty. The prices of 17 cancer-fighting drugs have been reduced and at the same time, they were included on the medical insurance list, [and] the problem of disease-related poverty is being further addressed. I often worry about the comrades on the front lines of the fight against poverty. The more than 2.8 million officials stationed in the village, as well as the local village leaders have worked very committedly, and powerfully, they must take good care of their health.²²²

My concern is constantly with the people living in hardship.²²³ In Sanhe Village of Liangshan in Sichuan Province, I paid a visit to the families of Ji Hao Ye Qiu and Tie Lie'e A Mu, two villagers from the Yi people²²⁴. In Sanjianxi Village in Jinan City, Shandong Province, I sat down with the family of Zhao Shunli to hear about their day-to-day lives. In the Donghuanyuan community in the city of Fushun in Liaoning Province, I visited Chen Yufang's family to learn about how they were settling in after they had to flee from a dangerous area²²⁵. In Lianzhang Village in Qingyuan

²¹⁷ Administrative area of the north Chinese province of Heilongjiang, famous for its modern farming methods and rice planting.

²¹⁸ 这些成就是全国各族人民撸起袖子干出来的，是新时代奋斗者挥洒汗水拼出来的。The first part means „These achievements were made by people from all ethnic groups from all over the country, which [literally] ‘rolled up their sleeves.’” The last part literally meaning “the fighters (I translated “workers”) that have sprinkled sweat to make or build [something] together. The subtitles on the video read: “These achievements are all thanks to the hard work of people from all of Chin’s ethnic groups, who are the trail-blazers of the new era.” It is better English, but the rhetorical highlights “sweat”, “roll up the sleeves” etc. all disappeared.

²¹⁹ It is again the expression “这一年” [this year] which refers to the past year (2018) in Xi’s speech.

²²⁰ I translate 在此 (literally just meaning “here”) as “I herewith wish to...”

²²¹ 这一年，脱贫攻坚传来很多好消息 Since 脱贫 means “shake off poverty” and 攻坚 means “to storm a fortified position” in order to keep the military tone in this part I translated 脱贫攻坚 as “poverty reduction front” which to my understanding well translates, that “poverty reduction” is seen as a fight by Xi Jinping here.

²²² The video subtitles here read “I wish them good health” whilst Xi says: 一定要保重身体 which rather generally means something like “must take care of health” which I understand more as meaning “they must take good care of themselves”...

²²³ 我始终惦记着困难群众 I here translate 始终 as constantly, 惦记 as concern. I believe the 着 after 惦记 means that it is an ongoing action, therefore, it can be understood as “being constantly concerned”.

²²⁴ The names of the two families here are not mentioned in the subtitles to Xi’s speech but appear in the official Chinese transcript of the speech and on the video it can be clearly heard that Xi mentions both name just like the names of all the other villagers in this passage.

²²⁵ 了解避险搬迁安置情况 literally: learn about their situation [since they have] relocated to a suitable place [after they] had to flee from danger. The structure of the sentence leaves it open whether they have been

in Guangdong Province, I discussed with a villager named Lu Yihe how we could help to relieve his household's poverty. Till now, I bear in mind their honest and unpretentious faces²²⁶. On the occasion of this New Year's Eve, I wish [our] fellow villagers that their lives constantly flourish further and ultimately fully blossom.²²⁷

This year²²⁸, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up, carried out systematic, holistic and reconstructive reforms of the Party and state institutions, launched more than 100 important reform initiatives, held the first China International Import Expo, [and] launched the construction of a pilot free trade zone in Hainan. The world saw the acceleration of China's reform and opening up, and its determination to carry out reform and opening-up to the end. Our reforms will never stop, [but our] doors will [instead] open up even wider.

I have noticed that this year, most of the university students that were the first to resume the Gaokao examination again,²²⁹ have all retired, and many people born after 2000 have entered university. More than 100 million unregistered people²³⁰ are gradually settling²³¹ in our cities. 13 million have found jobs in [our] towns and cities, and construction has begun on 5.8 million houses to solve the problem of housing in slums²³²; the new city residents now have warm homes. Many

relocated by the authorities or have taken initiative to move by themselves. "being relocated from a dangerous area" however, sounds as if they had been officially relocated.

²²⁶Xi says: 他们真诚朴实的面容至今浮现在我的脑海, the subtitles read: "I can vividly recall their down-to-earth sincerity." Which is roundabout the meaning. However, with my translation I'm trying to stay closer to Xi's vocabulary, who describes the villagers "mainrong" 面容 (= face or facial features), as being "zhencheng" 真诚 (= sincere; true), and "pushi" 朴实 (=simple, plain, but also sincere or unpretentious).

²²⁷新年之际, 祝乡亲们生活蒸蒸日上, 越过越红火 word by word it means: this new year's eve, I wish the fellow villagers lives may daily "heat" more, [and] step by step reach the [stage of] the "red flame". 蒸蒸日上 and 红火 are hard to translate in this context. Based on the characters, both expressions deal with "heat" and "fire", but as fixed expressions 红火 means "to develop perfectly" or "to blossom" whilst 蒸蒸日上 means "to flourish" or "to bloom", so I decided to keep the metaphors of the "blooming lives".

²²⁸ Like the last few sections, Xi once again starts the paragraph saying "这一年" (literally: this year) referring to the passing year of 2018.

²²⁹ Xi here refers to the first generation of students that could undergo the "Gaokao"-examinations after the chaos of the cultural revolution, which ended in 1976. Therefore, the subtitle read "people enrolled in college when the entrance exam resumed in 1977", though Xi does not mention the year 1977 here.

²³⁰ Xi says: 非户籍人口 = people who are not officially registered (meaning: in the cities). The subtitles translate it as "people from our rural areas" which is the logical consequence, but not what was said. In fact, the expression chosen by Xi unwillingly highlights that people from the countryside, when coming to the city, are something like illegal migrants in their own country, not having the same rights as city residents (i.e., they can't simply enrol their children in schools in the city etc.).

²³¹ (...) 在城市落户的行动正在继续 was translated: "are gradually becoming permanent residents in our cities" which I consider an unprecise translation. To my mind, "becoming permanent residents" sounds as if their status was getting "legalized". 在城市落户的 however, simply means "people who have settled in the cities" (be it legally or illegally), and 行动正在继续 only means "the action [of settlement] is still in progress". What Xi says here, perfectly leaves it open, what this means and how the government deals with it. I therefore chose a more "neutral" translation.

²³² Xi uses the expression 棚户区 (= slum). The subtitles read "new homes for those people living in dilapidated houses" whilst 棚户 is a bit stronger than "dilapidated house" it rather literally translates as "barrack, shanty or hovel". The Chinese sentence also leaves it open if the new houses are necessarily meant for the migrants. Xi rather speaks of "solving the slum problem" in this part. But in the next part of the sentence, he states that the "new residents have warm houses", so he clearly wants to send the message, that China is taking care of the poor. It shall be mentioned however, that building houses for migrant workers, is not the same as "legalizing" them by changing their status in the household register.

Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan residents have obtained residence permits [for the mainland]²³³ and Hong Kong has become a stop on the national high-speed rail network. China as a country of people on the move, is [a land] full of vitality of prosperity and development. We are all running assiduously, we are all dream chasers.²³⁴

At this point, I'd like to mention several leading lights²³⁵. Besides Nan Rendong²³⁶, two more comrades, Lin Junde and Zhang Chao have joined the sky as shining examples of soldiers in the People's Liberation Army.²³⁷ We must [also] remember Comrade Wang Jicai, who served for 32 years on a border island; and those who lost their lives after stepping forward bravely to protect an experimental offshore platform. Comrades Huang Qun, Song Yuecai, and Jiang Kaibin, and the other heroes who have died for the fatherland and its people. They are the most admirable people in China's new era, and they are always worth remembering and learning from. They deserve being remembered forever and serve as examples.

This year, many old and new friends came to China. We have hosted the annual Boao Forum for Asia, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Qingdao, the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and other main diplomatic activities, [where we have] put forward China's ideas, and made China's voice heard. My colleagues and I have visited five continents, participated in many important diplomatic activities. We held extensive exchanges with world leaders, consolidated friendship, enhanced trust and expanded our circle of friends.

2019, we will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the PR of China. 70 years of hacking through brambles and thorns, 70 years of wind and rain. The people are the solid foundation of the Republic, and our main source of confidence to govern. Along the way, the Chinese people have been self-reliant and hard-working, and created the Chinese miracles that got worldwide attention. On this new journey, regardless of the clouds flying, wing blowing or the waves roaring²³⁸, We shall always closely rely on the people, adhere to self-reliance and hard work, with rock-solid confidence. Only by fighting day and night with energy, by firmly preserving the willpower, [can we] step by step carry forward our unprecedented great cause.

In 2019, there will [also] be opportunities as well as hardships, [and] we must work together, shoulder to shoulder. Policies to cut taxes and fees must take root to ease the burden on enterprises. We must value talents of all kinds and stimulate their creative energy. We must listen to our officials at the grassroots and bring energy and greater purpose to those who are ready to commit to making a difference. To achieve the task of lifting another 10 million-plus rural residents out of poverty as planned, we must remain focused and work hard on this. We shall take better care of our military veterans who have done much to defend the country. Even as we speak, there are deliverymen²³⁹,

²³³ Note: so regarding people coming from Taiwan and Hong Kong, Xi now mentions that they have got official residence permits, which is not so clearly said about the mainland-Chinese migrant workers.

²³⁴ 我们都在努力奔跑，我们都是追梦人。

²³⁵ 一些闪亮的名字 literally "some sparkling names", the translation offered in the subtitles is "leading lights" which I took over here, since I believe it is the best way to translate both, sense and symbolics.

²³⁶ A Chinese scientist after whom an asteroid was named.

²³⁷ 今年，天上多了颗“南仁东星”，全军英模挂像里多了林俊德和张超两位同志。I understand 天上多了颗“南仁东星” as “heaven has gained more stars like that of Nan Rendong. The last part translates “the two comrades Lin Junde and Zhang Chao” (literally:) are models of heroes of the whole armed forces”. I translate the full sentence more freely trying to keep the image of the stars at the sky (天上多了颗星).

²³⁸ 不管乱云飞渡、风吹浪打 literally speaking of “flying clouds, blowing winds and roaring waves”, this part was translated as “complexities and difficulties” in the English subtitles. I felt it is worth keeping the images.

²³⁹ Xi uses the term: 快递小哥 literally meaning “the boys from the delivery service” xiaoge (小哥) actually means “little brother” and usually refers to any male person at a younger brothers age.

streetcleaners, taxi drivers, and thousands upon thousands²⁴⁰ of others who are working hard. We need to be thankful to those guardians [for] making our lives more beautiful²⁴¹. They have all worked very hard.²⁴²

Looking at the world at large, we are facing a period of major change never seen before in a century. No matter what cloudy changes international winds will bring, China's defense of national sovereignty and security will not change; China's good intentions and good faith in upholding world peace and accelerating common development will not change.²⁴³ We will continue to push forward the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and continue to advocate for the development of a community of shared future for mankind. To build an even more prosperous and beautiful world, we will not spare any efforts.

As we ring in the new year, let's be full of confidence and anticipation, together let us welcome the year 2019.

Best wishes to China! Best wishes to the world!

Thank you!

Speech by Xi Jinping at 75th General Assembly of the UN 2020

Transcript:

在第七十五届联合国大会一般性辩论上的讲话

(2020年9月22日，北京) 来源：新华社

中华人民共和国主席 习近平

主席先生，

各位同事：

今年是世界反法西斯战争胜利 75 周年，也是联合国成立 75 周年。昨天，联合国隆重举行纪念峰会，铭记世界反法西斯战争历史经验和教训，重申对联合国宪章宗旨和原则的坚定承诺，具有重要意义。

主席先生！

人类正在同新冠肺炎疫情进行斗争。病毒肆虐全球，疫情不断反复。我们目睹了各国政府的努力、医务人员的付出、科学工作者的探索、普通民众的坚守。各国人民守望相助，展现出

²⁴⁰ 千千万万 literally „thousands and ten thousands“.

²⁴¹ 我们要感谢这些美好生活的创造者、守护者。Literally “defenders and creators of a more beautiful life”

²⁴² 大家辛苦了 literally: everybody has worked hard. The English subtitle reads: “Their hard work is much appreciated”. It is what Xi means, but I keep a more “word for word translation”.

²⁴³ 无论国际风云如何变幻，中国维护国家主权和安全的信心和决心不会变 The subtitles translate the first part as “No matter what these changes bring,...” however it literally says: 无论 = no matter what, 国际 = international, 风云 = wind and clouds, 如何 = how; what, 变幻 change unpredictably; fluctuate. Especially since the sentence continuous with a passage on national strategies, I believe the word “international” should not be left out in the first part. These changes, symbolized by wind and clouds here, are clearly attributed to the “international” level. As if “winds and clouds” would mainly come from abroad.

人类在重大灾难面前的勇气、决心、关爱，照亮了至暗时刻。疫情终将被人类战胜，胜利必将属于世界人民！

——面对疫情，我们要践行人民至上、生命至上理念。要调集一切资源，科学防治，精准施策，不遗漏一个感染者，不放弃一位患者，坚决遏制疫情蔓延。

——面对疫情，我们要加强团结、同舟共济。要秉持科学精神，充分发挥世界卫生组织关键领导作用，推进国际联防联控，坚决打赢全球疫情阻击战，反对政治化、污名化。

——面对疫情，我们要制定全面和常态化防控措施。要有序推进复商复市复工复产，创造就业，拉动经济，恢复经济社会秩序和活力，主要经济体要加强宏观政策协调，不仅要重启本国经济，而且要为世界经济复苏作出贡献。

——面对疫情，我们要关心和照顾发展中国家特别是非洲国家。国际社会要在减缓债务、援助等方面采取及时和强有力举措，确保落实好《联合国 2030 年可持续发展议程》，帮助他们克服困难。

75 年前，中国为赢得世界反法西斯战争胜利作出了历史性贡献，支持建立了联合国。今天，秉持同样的担当精神，中国积极投身国际抗疫合作，为维护全球公共卫生安全贡献中国力量。我们将继续同各国分享抗疫经验和诊疗技术，向有需要的国家提供支持和帮助，确保全球抗疫物资供应链稳定，并积极参与病毒溯源和传播途径全球科学研究。中国已有多支疫苗进入Ⅲ期临床实验，研发完成并投入使用后将作为全球公共产品，优先向发展中国家提供。中国将落实好两年提供 20 亿美元国际援助的承诺，深化农业、减贫、教育、妇女儿童、气候变化等领域国际合作，助力各国经济社会恢复发展。

主席先生！

人类社会发展史，就是一部不断战胜各种挑战和困难的历史。新冠肺炎疫情全球大流行和世界百年未有之大变局相互影响，但和平与发展的时代主题没有变，各国人民和平发展合作共赢的期待更加强烈。新冠肺炎疫情不会是人类面临的最后一次危机，我们必须做好携手迎接更多全球性挑战的准备。

第一，这场疫情启示我们，我们生活在一个互联互通、休戚与共的地球村里。各国紧密相连，人类命运与共。任何国家都不能从别国的困难中谋取利益，从他国的动荡中收获稳定。如果以邻为壑、隔岸观火，别国的威胁迟早会变成自己的挑战。我们要树立你中有我、我中有你的命运共同体意识，跳出小圈子和零和博弈思维，树立大家庭和合作共赢理念，摒弃意识形态争论，跨越文明冲突陷阱，相互尊重各国自主选择的发展道路和模式，让世界多样性成为人类社会进步的不竭动力、人类文明多姿多彩的天然形态。

第二，这场疫情启示我们，经济全球化是客观现实和历史潮流。面对经济全球化大势，像鸵鸟一样把头埋在沙里假装视而不见，或像堂吉珂德一样挥舞长矛加以抵制，都违背了历史规律。世界退不回彼此封闭孤立的状态，更不可能被人为割裂。我们不能回避经济全球化带来的挑战，必须直面贫富差距、发展鸿沟等重大问题。我们要处理好政府和市场、公平和效率、增长和分配、技术和就业的关系，使发展既平衡又充分，发展成果公平惠及不同国家不同阶层不同人群。我们要秉持开放包容理念，坚定不移构建开放型世界经济，维护以世界贸易组织为基石的多边贸易体制，旗帜鲜明反对单边主义、保护主义，维护全球产业链供应链稳定畅通。

第三，这场疫情启示我们，人类需要一场自我革命，加快形成绿色发展方式和生活方式，建设生态文明和美丽地球。人类不能再忽视大自然一次又一次的警告，沿着只讲索取不讲投

入、只讲发展不讲保护、只讲利用不讲修复的老路走下去。应对气候变化《巴黎协定》代表了全球绿色低碳转型的大方向，是保护地球家园需要采取的最低限度行动，各国必须迈出决定性步伐。中国将提高国家自主贡献力度，采取更加有力的政策和措施，二氧化碳排放力争于2030年前达到峰值，努力争取2060年前实现碳中和。各国要树立创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的新发展理念，抓住新一轮科技革命和产业变革的历史性机遇，推动疫情后世界经济“绿色复苏”，汇聚起可持续发展的强大合力。

第四，这场疫情启示我们，全球治理体系亟待改革和完善。疫情不仅是对各国执政能力的大考，也是对全球治理体系的检验。我们要坚持走多边主义道路，维护以联合国为核心的国际体系。全球治理应该秉持共商共建共享原则，推动各国权利平等、机会平等、规则平等，使全球治理体系符合变化了的世界政治经济，满足应对全球性挑战的现实需要，顺应和平发展合作共赢的历史趋势。国家之间有分歧是正常的，应该通过对话协商妥善化解。国家之间可以有竞争，但必须是积极和良性的，要守住道德底线和国际规范。大国更应该有大的样子，要提供更多全球公共产品，承担大国责任，展现大国担当。

主席先生！

今年以来，14亿中国人民不畏艰难、上下同心，全力克服疫情影响，加快恢复生产生活秩序。我们有信心如期全面建成小康社会，如期实现现行标准下农村贫困人口全部脱贫，提前10年实现《联合国2030年可持续发展议程》减贫目标。

中国是世界上最大的发展中国家，走的是和平发展、开放发展、合作发展、共同发展的道路。我们永远不称霸，不扩张，不谋求势力范围，无意跟任何国家打冷战热战，坚持以对话弥合分歧，以谈判化解争端。我们不追求一枝独秀，不搞你输我赢，也不会关起门来封闭运行，将逐步形成以国内大循环为主体、国内国际双循环相互促进的新发展格局，为中国经济发展开辟空间，为世界经济复苏和增长增添动力。

中国将继续做世界和平的建设者、全球发展的贡献者、国际秩序的维护者。为支持联合国在国际事务中发挥核心作用，我宣布：

- 中国将向联合国新冠肺炎疫情全球人道主义应对计划再提供5000万美元支持；
- 中国将设立规模5000万美元的第三期中国－联合国粮农组织南南合作信托基金；
- 中国－联合国和平与发展基金将在2025年到期后延期5年；
- 中国将设立联合国全球地理信息知识与创新中心和可持续发展大数据国际研究中心，为落实《联合国2030年可持续发展议程》提供新助力。

主席先生、各位同事！

历史接力棒已经传到我们这一代人手中，我们必须作出无愧于人民、无愧于历史的抉择。让我们团结起来，坚守和平、发展、公平、正义、民主、自由的全人类共同价值，推动构建新型国际关系，推动构建人类命运共同体，共同创造世界更加美好的未来！

Translation:

Mr. President,
Colleagues,

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the World's victory in the Anti-Fascist War, it is also the 75th anniversary of the United Nations (UN). Yesterday, the UN has solemnly held a high-level meeting for commemoration in order to remember the experiences and lessons from that World Anti-Fascist War and reaffirm our solemn pledge through the purposes and principles of the UN Charter which is of great significance.

Mr. President,

Mankind is fighting against the covid-19 pandemic. Relentlessly and without pause, the virus rages worldwide. We have witnessed with our own eyes the efforts of each country's governments, the dedication of medical workers, the exploration of scientific personnel and the perseverance of the ordinary people. People of different countries have mutually helped and protected each other²⁴⁴ [therewith] showing that confronted with great suffering, mankind is able to illuminate [such] dark times with courage, resolution and compassion²⁴⁵. The virus will be defeated. Humanity will win this battle!

— Facing the virus, we should put people and life first. We should mobilize all resources to make a science-based and targeted response. No case should be missed and no patient should be left untreated. The spread of the virus must be contained.

— Facing the virus, we should enhance solidarity and row the boat together to cross the turbulent river²⁴⁶. We should adhere to the spirit of science, give full play to the leading role of the World Health Organization, and launch a joint international response²⁴⁷ to beat this pandemic, without politicizing or stigmatizing²⁴⁸.

— Facing the virus, we should adopt comprehensive and long-term prevention and control measures²⁴⁹. We must reopen businesses and schools in an orderly way, so as to create jobs, boost the economy, and restore economic and social order and vitality. The major economies need to step up macro policy coordination. We should not only restart our own economies, but also contribute to global recovery.

— Facing the virus, we should show concern for and accommodate the need of developing

²⁴⁴ 各国人民守望相助, [...] Literally: People from different countries have given each other mutual help and protection. The official translation reads: "People of different countries have come together." which in my view does not really translate the idea. "shou wang xiang zhu" (守望相助) consists of four words. A word for word translation gives an idea of what it expresses: "shou" means: guard, defend, keep watch, observe; "wang" means: gaze into the distance, look over; "xiang" means: each other; mutually; and "zhu" means: help, assist, aid. So it is much more than just "come together" but describes a situation where people start helping each other by taking care of, and look after one another.

²⁴⁵ [...], 展现出人类在重大灾难面前的勇气、决心、关爱, 照亮了至暗时刻。Xi here literally speaks of "illuminating" ("zhaoliang" 照亮), "dark times" ("an shike" 暗时刻), and "compassion" ("guan ai" 关爱 which can also be translated as "love and care"). It nearly sounds like a religious message.

²⁴⁶ 同舟共济 is a Chinese idiom often used by Xi Jinping. It literally translates as "rowing with joint forces to cross a river in the same boat" and means "pull together in times of trouble". It mentioned in other speeches translated in the context of this paper. I translate it slightly different depending on the context, always trying to keep the boat and river rhetoric but also translate the sense.

²⁴⁷ [...], 推进国际联防联控, [...]

²⁴⁸ [...], 反对政治化、污名化。[...] Literally: "oppose to politization and stigmatization".

²⁴⁹ 防控措施 was officially translated "control measures" but "fang kong" (防控) literally means "prevent and control". I believe it is an important detail in the given context since preventing a pandemic is better than control it.

countries, especially African countries. The international community needs to take timely and robust measures in such fields as debt relief and international assistance, ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and help these countries overcome difficulties.

Seventy-five years ago, China made historic contributions to winning the World Anti-Fascist War and supported the founding of the United Nations. Today, in the very same spirit²⁵⁰, China is actively involved in the international fight against COVID-19, contributing its share to upholding global public health security. Going forward, we will continue to share our epidemic control practices as well as diagnostics and therapeutics with other countries, provide support and assistance to countries in need, ensure stable global anti-epidemic supply chains, and actively participate in the global research on tracing the source and transmission routes of the virus. At the moment, several COVID-19 vaccines developed by China are in Phase III clinical trials. When their development is completed and they are available for use, these vaccines will be made a global public good, and they will be provided to other developing countries on a priority basis. China will honour its commitment of providing US\$2 billion of international assistance over two years, further international cooperation in such fields as agriculture, poverty reduction, education, women and children, and climate change, and support other countries in restoring economic and social development.

Mr. President,

The history of development of human society is a history of triumph over all kinds of challenges and difficulties. The global COVID-19 pandemic and the profound changes never seen in a century influence each other. But peace and development remain unchanged the underlying trend of the times, and people everywhere crave even more strongly for peace, development and win-win cooperation. COVID-19 will not be the last crisis to confront humanity, so we must join hands and be prepared to meet even more global challenges.

First, COVID-19 has revealed, that we live in an interconnected²⁵¹ global village where joy and sorrow are shared²⁵². All countries are closely connected, and humanity shares a common destiny²⁵³. No country can gain from the difficulties of other countries or gain stability by taking advantage of other countries turbulent situations²⁵⁴. Using the neighbours field as a drain or just watch the fire from the other side of the river, [with such a policy] other countries threats will sooner or later turn into our own problems.²⁵⁵ Therefore we should embrace the vision of a

²⁵⁰ [...], 秉持同样的担当精神, [...] was translated „with the same sense of responsibility” in the official English version, though “responsibility” is not mentioned in Chinese.

²⁵¹ 我们的生活在一个互联互通、休戚与共的地球村里。“Hulian hutong” (互联互通) means “interconnected” and “interoperating”

²⁵² 休戚与共 is a Chinese idiom meaning “to share weal and woe” or “stand together through thick and thin”.

²⁵³ 人类命运与共

²⁵⁴ [...], 从他国的动荡中收获稳定。“dong dang” (动荡) means “chaotic”, “unstable” or “turbulent” and refers to political situations here. “Wen ding” (稳定) is the opposite of it, meaning “steady” or “stable”.

²⁵⁵ 如果以邻为壑、隔岸观火, 别国的威胁迟早会变成自己的挑战。The official English version translates this sentence as follows: “To pursue a beggar-thy-neighbour policy or just watch from a safe distance when others are in danger will eventually land one in the same trouble faced by others.” It perfectly translates the sense. However I try to keep the metaphors used in Chinese here. 以邻为壑 is an idiom literally meaning “use the neighbor’s field as a drain”. 隔岸观火 is another idiom literally describing how someone watches a fire from the safe distance, being at the other side of the river. It means “to look at somebody’s troubles without interfering”.

community with a shared future in which everyone is bound together²⁵⁶. We should reject staying in small circles, keeping others out²⁵⁷ and oppose a zero-sum approach. We should see each other as members of the same big family, pursue win-win cooperation. We need to overcome patterns [leading to] ideological disputes and do not fall into the trap of "clash of civilizations". We should mutually respect each country's independent choice of development path and model. [We should] turn the world's diversity into a constant source of inspiration and drive for human civilization. This will ensure that human civilizations remain colourful and diversified.

Second, COVID-19 shows us, that economic globalization is an indisputable reality and a historical trend. Burying one's head in the sand like an ostrich when confronted with economic globalization or trying to fight it with Don Quixote's lance goes against the law of history. The world will never return to isolation, even less can one sever the ties between countries. We cannot not dodge the challenges of economic globalization but we must face up to major issues such as the wealth gap and the development divide. We should strike a proper balance between the government and the market, fairness and efficiency, growth and income distribution, and technology and employment so as to ensure full and balanced development that delivers benefit to people from all countries, sectors and backgrounds in an equitable way. We should pursue open and inclusive development, remain committed to building an open world economy, and uphold the multilateral trading regime with the World Trade Organization as the cornerstone. [We should] face up to and have a clear-cut stand on unilateralism and protectionism, and work to ensure the stable and smooth functioning of global industrial and supply chains.

Third, COVID-19 teaches us, that humankind itself needs to change drastically²⁵⁸, [we need to] launch a green revolution and move faster to create green ways of development and life. [We also need to speed up] building the Ecological Civilization and a beautiful world²⁵⁹. Humankind cannot go on ignoring the warnings Nature [sends] over and over again. [We cannot] go on walking down old paths [of development] and only speak of taking [from nature] but not of giving back, [or just] speak of development but not of environmental protection. When it comes to climate change, the "Paris Agreement" charts the course for the world to transition to green and low-carbon development. It outlines the minimum steps to be taken to protect [our] homeland, the Earth [and] all countries must take decisive steps to honour [this Agreement]. China will scale up its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions by adopting more vigorous policies and measures. We aim to have CO2 emissions peak before 2030 and work hard to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. Every country needs to bring forth new ideas for innovative, coordinated, green and open development for all to share, seize the historic opportunities presented by the new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, achieve a green recovery of the world economy in the post-COVID era

²⁵⁶ I here take over the official translation since I have no better proposal. The Chinese sentence however reads: 我们要树立你中有我、我中有你的命运共同体意识, [...] which literally means "we need to establish the awareness [that we are] a community of common fate [and that] you include me and I include you". The wording sounds strange in English, but the message is quite clear in Chinese: we are inseparably connected.

²⁵⁷ It actually says: 跳出 (to jump out) 小圈子 (small [social] circle) here. But "we must jump out of small social circles" sounds extremely unusual in English. Therefore I interpret it as "avoid staying in small circles and keeping others out" which I believe is the idea of it.

²⁵⁸ This part was not translated in the official English version. In Chinese it reads: [...], 人类需要一场自我革命, [...] which word for word means: humanity, needs, a, self, revolution. I understand it means that mankind itself needs to revolutionize.

²⁵⁹ It literally says „build the Ecological Civilization and a beautiful world“ (建设生态文明和美丽地球). The English version of the text does not mention the Ecological Civilization although it is one of Xi Jinping's main-ideas. It translates the Ecological Civilization as "conservation", which to my mind is not precise.

[and thus] create a powerful force driving sustainable development.

Fourth, COVID-19 shows us, that the global governance system calls for reform and improvement. COVID-19 is a major test of the governance capacity of countries; it is also a test of the global governance system. We should persist in following the path of multilateralism and safeguard the international system with the UN at its core. Global governance should be based on the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits so as to ensure that all countries enjoy equal rights and opportunities and follow the same rules. The global governance system should adapt itself to evolving global political and economic dynamics, meet global challenges and embrace the underlying trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation. It is natural for countries to have differences, [they] must be addressed through dialogue and consultation. Countries may engage in competition, but [such competition] should be positive and healthy in nature, not breach the moral standard but should comply with international norms. In particular, major countries should act like major countries. They should provide more global public goods, take up their due responsibilities and live up to people's expectations.

Mr. President,

Since the start of this year, the 1.4 billion people of China all old and young²⁶⁰ have worked with one heart²⁶¹, defied the hardships, fought with full strength to overcome the impact of the pandemic and to restore economic production and life to normalcy as soon as possible.²⁶²

We have every confidence to achieve our goals within the set time frame, that is, to finish the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, lift out of poverty all rural residents living below the current poverty line, and meet ten years ahead of schedule the poverty eradication target set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

China is the largest developing country in the world, [and has decided to] follow a path of peaceful, open, cooperative and common development. We will never seek domination, expansion, nor strive for [new] spheres of influence. [We] have no intention to fight either a Cold War or a hot war with any country. We will continue to narrow differences and resolve disputes with others through dialogue and negotiation. We do not seek to become the blooming branch at the tree that outshines all the others²⁶³, we do not engage in an “you lose, I win”-[strategy]²⁶⁴, nor

²⁶⁰ 上下 literally “up and down” or “high and low” can also be translated as “old and young” meaning “everybody” like in this case “all Chinese people”.

²⁶¹ 同心 literally: “with one heart” means to “fight as one man”.

²⁶² For comparison: the official English version speaks of “the strike of COVID-19” though in Chinese it says “bu wei jian nan” (不畏艰难) “defy difficulties”. It is clear that Xi refers to COVID-19 here but I kept the translation of “hardship” here. “Shangxia tongxin” (上下同心) was officially translated as “and with the government and the people united as one, ...” which is an alternative interpretation of “shangxia” if we wanted to see “up and down” as hierarchic. It would then mean “government and people” but I am not sure if that is what is meant here since to me the sentence highlights “the people of China” (中国人民). It literally says “the 1.4 billion Chinese people...” not “China” for example, which could include the government. To my mind this part is meant to praise the people of China for what they have achieved during these hard times, not so much the government, which praises itself enough in other parts of the speech.

²⁶³ “我们不追求一枝独秀, [...]” The idiom “yi shi du xiu” (一枝独秀) means „to outshine others“. Word for word it says “one branch [of the tree] alone blossoms”. I try to keep this image and yet translate the meaning here.

²⁶⁴ 不搞你输我赢 word for word: not carry out you lose I win. I understand it as not being selfish, not wanting the other to lose so that I can win but rather seek for win-win.

in an economic policy of “closed doors”²⁶⁵ [instead we] aim to progressively foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other. This will create more space for China's economic development and add impetus to global economic recovery and growth.

China will continue to work as a builder of global peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of international order. To support the UN in playing its central role in international affairs, I hereby announce [that]:

— China will provide another US\$50 million to the UN COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

— China will provide US\$50 million to the China-UN Food and Agriculture Organization South-South Cooperation Trust Fund (Phase III).

— China will extend the Peace and Development Trust Fund between the UN and China by five years after it expires in 2025.

— China will set up a UN Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and an International Research Centre of Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. President,
Colleagues,

The baton of history has been passed to our generation, and we must make a choice in such a way that we can have a clear conscience towards people and towards history²⁶⁶. Let us unite to uphold the values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy, and freedom shared by all humans, and build a new type of international relations and a community of fate with a shared future for mankind. Together, we can create a better future for the world.²⁶⁷

[Speech by Xi Jinping at World Economic Forum in Davos 2021 \(25.01.2021\)](#)

[Transcript:](#)

习近平在世界经济论坛“达沃斯议程”对话会上的特别致辞

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²⁶⁵ [...]也不会关起门来封闭运行, [...] literally: “[we] will also not bolt the door and stop activities”

²⁶⁶ [...], 我们必须作出无愧于人民、无愧于历史的抉择。

²⁶⁷ It says: [...] 共同创造世界更加美好的未来! which the official version translates as “Together, we can make the world a better place for everyone.” Although it actually says “together we can create a better future for the world”. It is a minor difference but I see no need to change the words of the Chinese president here.

让多边主义的火炬照亮人类前行之路

——在世界经济论坛“达沃斯议程”对话会上的特别致辞

(2021年1月25日，北京)

中华人民共和国主席 习近平

1月25日，国家主席习近平在北京以视频方式出席世界经济论坛“达沃斯议程”对话会并发表特别致辞。新华社记者 李学仁 摄

尊敬的施瓦布主席，

女士们，先生们，朋友们：

过去一年，突如其来的新冠肺炎疫情肆虐全球，全球公共卫生面临严重威胁，世界经济陷入深度衰退，人类经历了史上罕见的多重危机。

这一年，各国人民以巨大的决心和勇气，同病魔展开殊死搏斗，依靠科学理性的力量，弘扬人道主义精神，全球抗疫取得初步成效。现在，疫情还远未结束，近期又出现反弹，抗疫仍在继续，但我们坚信，寒冬阻挡不了春天的脚步，黑夜遮蔽不住黎明的曙光。人类一定能够战胜疫情，在同灾难的斗争中成长进步、浴火重生。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

历史总在不断前进，世界回不到从前。我们今天所作的每一个抉择、采取的每一项行动，都将决定世界的未来。我们要解决好这个时代面临的四大课题。

第一，加强宏观经济政策协调，共同推动世界经济强劲、可持续、平衡、包容增长。人类正在遭受第二次世界大战结束以来最严重的经济衰退，各大经济板块历史上首次同时遭受重创，全球产业链供应链运行受阻，贸易和投资活动持续低迷。各国出台数万亿美元经济救助措施，但世界经济复苏势头仍然很不稳定，前景存在很大不确定性。我们既要把握当下，统筹疫

情防控和经济发展，加强宏观经济政策支持，推动世界经济早日走出危机阴影，更要放眼未来，下决心推动世界经济动力转换、方式转变、结构调整，使世界经济走上长期健康稳定发展的轨道。

第二，摒弃意识形态偏见，共同走和平共处、互利共赢之路。世界上没有两片完全相同的树叶，也没有完全相同的历史文化和社会制度。各国历史文化和社会制度各有千秋，没有高低优劣之分，关键在于是否符合本国国情，能否获得人民拥护和支持，能否带来政治稳定、社会进步、民生改善，能否为人类进步事业作出贡献。各国历史文化和社会制度差异自古就存在，是人类文明的内在属性。没有多样性，就没有人类文明。多样性是客观现实，将长期存在。差异并不可怕，可怕的是傲慢、偏见、仇视，可怕的是想把人类文明分为三六九等，可怕的是把自己的历史文化和社会制度强加给他人。各国应该在相互尊重、求同存异基础上实现和平共处，促进各国交流互鉴，为人类文明发展进步注入动力。

第三，克服发达国家和发展中国家发展鸿沟，共同推动各国发展繁荣。当前，公平问题日益突出，南北差距有待弥合，可持续发展事业面临严峻挑战。疫情之下，各国经济复苏表现分化，南北发展差距面临扩大甚至固化风险。广大发展中国家普遍期望获得更多发展资源和空间，要求在全球经济治理中享有更多代表性和发言权。应该看到，发展中国家发展起来了，整个世界繁荣稳定就会有更加坚实的基础，发达国家也将从中受益。国际社会应该着眼长远、落实承诺，为发展中国家发展提供必要支持，保障发展中国家正当发展权益，促进权利平等、机会平等、规则平等，让各国人民共享发展机遇和成果。

第四，携手应对全球性挑战，共同缔造人类美好未来。在经济全球化时代，类似新冠肺炎疫情的突发公共卫生事件绝不会是最后一次，全球公共卫生治理亟待加强。地球是人类赖以生存的唯一家园，加大应对气候变化力度，推动可持续发展，关系人类前途和未来。人类面临的所有全球性问题，任何一国想单打独斗都无法解决，必须开展全球行动、全球应对、全球合作。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

世界上的问题错综复杂，解决问题的出路是维护和践行多边主义，推动构建人类命运共同体。

——我们要坚持开放包容，不搞封闭排他。多边主义的要义是国际上的事由大家共同商量着办，世界前途命运由各国共同掌握。在国际上搞“小圈子”、“新冷战”，排斥、威胁、恐吓他人，动不动就搞脱钩、断供、制裁，人为造成相互隔离甚至隔绝，只能把世界推向分裂甚至对抗。一个分裂的世界无法应对人类面临的共同挑战，对抗将把人类引入死胡同。在这个问题上，人类付出过惨痛代价。殷鉴不远，我们决不能再走那条老路。

我们要秉持人类命运共同体理念，坚守和平、发展、公平、正义、民主、自由的全人类共同价值，摆脱意识形态偏见，最大程度增强合作机制、理念、政策的开放性和包容性，共同维护世界和平稳定。要建设开放型世界经济，坚定维护多边贸易体制，不搞歧视性、排他性标准、规则、体系，不搞割裂贸易、投资、技术的高墙壁垒。要巩固二十国集团作为全球经济治理主要平台的地位，密切宏观经济政策协调，维护全球产业链供应链稳定顺畅，维护全球金融体系稳健运行，推进结构性改革，扩大全球总需求，推动世界经济实现更高质量、更有韧性的发展。

——我们要坚持以国际法为基础，不搞唯我独尊。中国人讲：“法者，治之端也。”国际社会应该按照各国共同达成的规则和共识来治理，而不能由一个或几个国家来发号施令。联合国宪章是公认的国与国关系的基本准则。没有这些国际社会共同制定、普遍公认的国际法，世界最终将滑向弱肉强食的丛林法则，给人类带来灾难性后果。

我们要厉行国际法治，毫不动摇维护以联合国为核心的国际体系、以国际法为基础的国际秩序。多边机构是践行多边主义的平台，也是维护多边主义的基本框架，其权威性和有效性理应得到维护。要坚持通过制度和规则来协调规范各国关系，反对恃强凌弱，不能谁胳膊粗、拳头大谁说了算，也不能以多边主义之名、行单边主义之实。要坚持原则，规则一旦确定，大家都要有效遵循。“有选择的多边主义”不应成为我们的选择。

——我们要坚持协商合作，不搞冲突对抗。各国历史文化和社会制度差异不是对立对抗的理由，而是合作的动力。要尊重和包容差异，不干涉别国内政，通过协商对话解决分歧。历史和现实一再告诉我们，当今世界，如果走对立对抗的歧路，无论是搞冷战、热战，还是贸易战、科技战，最终将损害各国利益、牺牲人民福祉。

我们要摒弃冷战思维、零和博弈的旧理念，坚持互尊互谅，通过战略沟通增进政治互信。要恪守互利共赢的合作观，拒绝以邻为壑、自私自利的狭隘政策，抛弃垄断发展优势的片面做法，保障各国平等发展权利，促进共同发展繁荣。要提倡公平公正基础上的竞争，开展你追我赶、共同提高的田径赛，而不是搞相互攻击、你死我活的角斗赛。

——我们要坚持与时俱进，不搞故步自封。世界正在经历百年未有之大变局，既是大发展的时代，也是大变革的时代。21世纪的多边主义要守正出新、面向未来，既要坚持多边主义的核心价值和基本原则，也要立足世界格局变化，着眼应对全球性挑战需要，在广泛协商、凝聚共识基础上改革和完善全球治理体系。

我们要发挥世界卫生组织作用，构建人类卫生健康共同体。要推进世界贸易组织和国际金融货币体系改革，促进世界经济增长，保障发展中国家发展权益和空间。要秉持以人民为中心、基于事实的政策导向，探讨制定全球数字治理规则。要落实应对气候变化《巴黎协定》，促进绿色发展。要坚持发展优先，落实联合国2030年可持续发展议程，确保各国特别是发展中国家分享全球发展带来的好处。

女士们、先生们、朋友们!

中国人民经过长期艰苦奋斗，全面建成小康社会胜利在望，脱贫攻坚取得历史性成果，开启了全面建设社会主义现代化国家新征程。我们将立足新发展阶段，贯彻新发展理念，积极构建以国内大循环为主体、国内国际双循环相互促进的新发展格局，同各国一道，共建持久和平、普遍安全、共同繁荣、开放包容、清洁美丽的世界。

——中国将继续积极参与国际抗疫合作。抗击疫情是国际社会面临的最紧迫任务。这既是坚持人民至上、生命至上的基本要求，也是稳定恢复经济的基本前提。我们要深化团结合作，加强信息共享和联防联控，坚决打赢全球疫情阻击战。特别是要加强疫苗研发、生产、分配合作，让疫苗真正成为各国人民用得上、用得起的公共产品。中国迄今已向 150 多个国家和 13 个国际组织提供抗疫援助，为有需要的国家派出 36 个医疗专家组，积极支持并参与疫苗国际合作。中国将继续同各国分享疫情防控有益经验，向应对疫情能力薄弱的国家和地区提供力所能及的帮助，促进疫苗在发展中国家的可及性和可负担性，助力世界早日彻底战胜疫情。

——中国将继续实施互利共赢的开放战略。经济全球化是社会生产力发展的客观要求和科技进步的必然结果，利用疫情搞“去全球化”、搞封闭脱钩，不符合任何一方利益。中国始终支持经济全球化，坚定实施对外开放基本国策。中国将继续促进贸易和投资自由化便利化，维护全球产业链供应链顺畅稳定，推进高质量共建“一带一路”。中国将着力推动规则、规制、管理、标准等制度型开放，持续打造市场化、法治化、国际化营商环境，发挥超大市场优势和内需潜力，为各国合作提供更多机遇，为世界经济复苏和增长注入更多动力。

——中国将继续促进可持续发展。中国将全面落实联合国 2030 年可持续发展议程。中国将加强生态文明建设，加快调整优化产业结构、能源结构，倡导绿色低碳的生产生活方式。我已经宣布，中国力争于 2030 年前二氧化碳排放达到峰值、2060 年前实现碳中和。实现这个目标，中国需要付出极其艰巨的努力。我们认为，只要是对全人类有益的事情，中国就应该义不容辞地做，并且做好。中国正在制定行动方案并已开始采取具体措施，确保实现既定目标。中国这么做，是在用实际行动践行多边主义，为保护我们的共同家园、实现人类可持续发展作出贡献。

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——中国将继续推进科技创新。科技创新是人类社会发展的重要引擎，是应对许多全球性挑战的有力武器，也是中国构建新发展格局、实现高质量发展的必由之路。中国将加大科技投入，狠抓创新体系建设，加速科技成果向现实生产力转化，加强知识产权保护，推动实现依靠创新驱动的内涵型增长。科技成果应该造福全人类，而不应该成为限制、遏制其他国家发展的手段。中国将以更加开放的思维和举措推进国际科技交流合作，同各国携手打造开放、公平、公正、非歧视的科技发展环境，促进互惠共享。

——中国将继续推动构建新型国际关系。你输我赢、赢者通吃不是中国人的处世哲学。中国坚定奉行独立自主的和平外交政策，努力以对话弥合分歧、以谈判化解争端，在相互尊重、平等互利基础上，积极发展同各国友好合作关系。作为发展中国家的坚定一员，中国将不断深化南南合作，为发展中国家消除贫困、缓解债务压力、实现经济增长作出贡献。中国将更加积极地参与全球经济治理，推动经济全球化朝着更加开放、包容、普惠、平衡、共赢的方向发展。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

人类只有一个地球，人类也只有一个共同的未来。无论是应对眼下的危机，还是共创美好的未来，人类都需要同舟共济、团结合作。实践一再证明，任何以邻为壑的做法，任何单打独斗的思路，任何孤芳自赏的傲慢，最终都必然归于失败！让我们携起手来，让多边主义火炬照亮人类前行之路，向着构建人类命运共同体不断迈进！

谢谢大家。

Translation:

Professor²⁶⁸ Klaus Schwab,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The past year was marked by the sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which relentlessly tyrannized the entire world, posed serious challenges to the world's public health, plunged the global economy into deep recession, [and] humanity into crises of a variety rarely seen in history before²⁶⁹.

The past year also bore witness to the enormous resolve and courage of people around the world in battling the demons of the deadly disease²⁷⁰. Relying on science and on the strength of reason,

²⁶⁸ Xi says „zhuxi“ (主席) which means “president” or “chairman”. The official English version translated it as “Professor” and I lend this translation since I find it the more appropriate term in this context since both “president” and “chairman” could be misunderstood.

²⁶⁹ 过去一年，突如其来的新冠肺炎疫情肆虐全球，全球公共卫生面临严重威胁，世界经济陷入深度衰退，人类经历了史上罕见的多重危机。I translate “si nüe” (肆虐) as “relentlessly tyrannized”. It was not translated in the official English version at all but it is an interesting choice. The dictionary “Pleco” translates it “indulge in wanton massacre (or persecution); wreak havoc”. Separately the two words mean: 1. “si”= act recklessly, 2. “nüe”= as a verb: maltreat; abuse, as an adjective: cruel; tyrannical, as a noun: disaster; calamity.

²⁷⁰ 同病魔展开殊死搏斗 word for word: together (同), demon of disease (病魔), spread out; unfold (展开), desperate (or: life-and-death) (殊死), fight; struggle (搏斗). Whilst the official English version speaks of “fighting Covid-19” here, Xi Jinping actually used a bit more of an emotional vocabulary with words such as “demon of disease” which simply disappears in both the English and German official translations.

guided by a humanistic spirit, the world has achieved initial success in the fight against the pandemic.

As of now, the pandemic is far from over, recently [we have seen] another rebound [which shows, that] the fight against the pandemic is still ongoing, but we are convinced that a hard winter cannot stop the arrival of spring, [that] the darkness of the night can never shroud the light of dawn.²⁷¹

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

History is moving forward, and the world will not go back to what it was in the past. Every choice we make and move we take today, will decide over the future of the world. We must properly address the four major tasks this generation faces.

The first is to step up macroeconomic policy and jointly promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth of the world economy. Humanity is going through the worst economic recession since the end of World War II and for the first time in history, the economies of all regions have been hit hard at the same time, with global industrial and supply chains clogged and trade and investment continuously stagnant. Despite the trillions of dollars in relief packages worldwide, global recovery is rather shaky, and the outlook remains uncertain. We need to focus on current priorities, and balance pandemic prevention and control as well as economic development²⁷². Strengthen macroeconomic policy support and step up to bring the world economy out of the shadow of the crisis as early as possible.²⁷³ More importantly, we need to take a broad view, strengthen our will and resolve for change. We need to shift the driving forces and growth models of the global economy and improve its structure, so as to set the course for long-term, sound and steady development of the world economy.

The second is to abandon ideological prejudice and jointly follow a path of peaceful coexistence, mutual benefit and win-win. No two leaves in the world are identical, and there are also no histories, cultures or social systems that are exactly the same. Each country is unique with its own history, culture and social system, and there is no division of superior or inferior [systems]. The crux is whether or not [the system] corresponds to a country's national condition,

²⁷¹ 人类一定能够战胜疫情，在同灾难的斗争中成长进步、浴火重生。literally: "Humanity is absolutely capable of defeating the pandemic, (and) this painful fight will make us mature and bring progress (so that humanity will ultimately) rise from the ashes." The official translation reads: "There is no doubt that humanity will prevail over the virus and emerge even stronger from this disaster." The metaphor "rising from the ashes" disappears as much as the "painful fight". It is one more example showing how the translation limits our understanding of Xi Jinping's rhetoric.

²⁷² The official translation speaks of „COVID control“ whilst Xi says „yiqing fangkong“ (疫情防控) which means "pandemic prevention and control"

²⁷³ The official English version reads: "Macroeconomic policy support should be stepped up to bring the world economy out of the woods as early as possible". Xi says: [...], 加强宏观经济政策支持, 推动世界经济早日走出危机阴影, [...] literally: strengthen support for macroeconomic policies and lift the world economy out of the shadow of the crisis as early as possible.

whether it can gain the support of [its] people, whether it can bring about political stability, social progress, improve people's livelihood, [and] whether it can make a contribution to the progress of humanity.²⁷⁴ The differences between the countries histories, cultures and social systems have existed since ancient times, and are the inherent attributes of human civilization. Without [such] diversity there would be no human civilization. Diversity is an objective reality, that will continue to exist.²⁷⁵ Difference in itself is not a frightening thing, what is frightening²⁷⁶ is arrogance, prejudice, and enmity; what is frightening is wanting to divide human civilization into grades and ranks [and create a hierarchy]; what is frightening is wanting to force one's history, culture and social system upon others. Countries should pursue peaceful coexistence based on mutual respect [and by] seeking consensus while reserving differences. Exchange and mutual learning between countries should be promoted to push development and progress of human civilization forward.

The third is to close the development gap between developed and developing countries and jointly bring about growth and prosperity for all. Today, inequality²⁷⁷ appears more prominently day by day, the North-South gap remains to be bridged, and sustainable development faces severe challenges. During the pandemic, economic recoveries have proven to follow divergent trajectories in different countries, [and] the North-South gap risks are further widening and even perpetuation. For developing countries, they are aspiring for more resources and space for development, and they are calling for stronger representation and a more say in global economic governance. [We] need to recognize that with the growth of developing countries, global prosperity and stability will be put on a more solid foundation, [and] developed countries will also benefit [from their development]. The international community should keep its eyes on the long run, keep its promises, provide the necessary support to developing countries, [as well as] defend the development interests of developing countries, promote equal rights, equal opportunities, [and] equal rules, so that all countries will benefit from the opportunities and fruits of development.

The fourth is to come together against global challenges and jointly create a better future for humanity. In the era of economic globalization, COVID-19 will not be the last public

²⁷⁴ [...], 关键在于是否符合本国国情, 能否获得人民拥护和支持, 能否带来政治稳定、社会进步、民生改变, 能否为人类进步事业作出贡献。Important keywords here are: "gain the support of the people", "bring about political stability", "improve people's livelihoods", those are classical elements used by the CPC to defend its power. The argument is that the CPC is still largely supported by the people, that it works as a guarantee of stability and has remarkably improved people's livelihoods with its tremendous success in fighting poverty. Although Xi seemingly speaks about political "systems" in general here, in fact he clearly defends China's own system. The message is that China's system works very well and therefore should not be criticized.

²⁷⁵ In Chinese: 没有多样性, 就没有人类文明。多样性是客观实, 将长期存在。Official translation: "There will be no human civilization without diversity, and such diversity will continue to exist for as long as we can imagine." The whole second sentence was not translated at all.

²⁷⁶ 差异并不可怕, 可怕的是[...] literally: "difference is not frightening at all, what is frightening is..." In the official English version, it was translated "Difference in itself is no cause for alarm. What does ring the alarm is[...]" There is no reason to translate "bingbu kepa" (并不可怕) as "not cause for alarm" when Xi literally says "not cause alarm at all". The word "bingbu" (并不) meaning "not at all" disappears and the word "kepa" (可怕) which can also be translated as "frightening" was chosen to be translated as "cause alarm". To my mind the Chinese version is rhetorically stronger in this part. I consider "frightening" a stronger word than "cause alarm" in particular in combination with the addition "not at all".

²⁷⁷ It literally says: "equality problem" or "issue of equality" (公平问题) but it unnecessarily complicates the sentence in English if we wanted to keep this structure. I therefore translate it as "inequality" just like in the official English version.

health emergency to occur, [therefore,] global public health governance urgently needs to be enhanced²⁷⁸. The Earth is our home and the only place where humanity can survive²⁷⁹. To scale up efforts to address climate change, and promote sustainable development bears on the future of humanity. No global problem can be solved by any one country alone. There must be global action, global response and global cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The problems the world faces, are intricate and complex. The way out of them is through upholding multilateralism and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

We should stay committed to openness and inclusiveness not to closeness and exclusion. Multilateralism is about having international affairs addressed through consultation [and] the future destiny of the world [will be] shaped by everyone working together. To build small circles or start a new Cold War, to reject, threaten or intimidate others, to easily impose decoupling, supply disruption or sanctions, and to create isolation or estrangement will only push the world into division and even confrontation. We cannot tackle common challenges in a divided world, and confrontation will lead humanity to a dead end. Humanity has paid a grievous price on these issues²⁸⁰. We need not look far back for a warning so we must not return to the path of the past²⁸¹.

We need to adhere to the vision of a community with a shared fate for mankind, uphold humanity's common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, cast off ideological prejudice, strengthen cooperation mechanisms and principles to the highest degree, and make our policies as open and inclusive as possible, and jointly safeguard world peace and stability. We should build an open world economy, uphold the multilateral trading regime, discard discriminatory and exclusionary standards, rules and systems, and take down barriers to trade, investment and technological exchanges. We should strengthen the G20 as the premier forum for global economic governance, engage in closer macroeconomic policy coordination, and keep the global industrial and supply chains stable and open. We should ensure the sound operation of the global financial system, promote structural reform and expand global

²⁷⁸ Xi says 全球公共卫生治理亟待加强。The official English version does not translate the word “jidai” (亟待) “to need urgently” or “to need doing without delay”. Hence, the tone of the official English version is slightly less dramatic than that of the original speech here.

²⁷⁹ Literally: The earth is the only home humanity depends on to survive. [地球是人类赖以生存的唯一家园, (...)]

²⁸⁰ In Chinese: 在这个问题上，人类付出过惨痛代价。The English version reads: “Humanity has learned lessons the hard way, and that history is not long gone.” The part “that history is not long gone” refers to the next sentence. Literally Xi says: “Humanity has paid a painful price on these issues or problems.”

²⁸¹ 殷鉴不远，我们决不能再走那条老路。It is the idiom “yinjian buyuan” (殷鉴不远) which I translate as “we need not look far back for a warning”. The official English version turned it into “history is not long gone” which personally I find a bit blurry. I understand that Xi explicitly refers to history here so it may serve us as a warning as the next part of the sentence shows when he says that therefore we must not return to the old path.

aggregate demand in an effort to strive for higher quality and stronger resilience in global economic development.²⁸²

We should stay committed to international law and international rules instead of seeking one's own supremacy²⁸³. Ancient Chinese believed that “the law is the very foundation of governance”²⁸⁴. The international society should act according to the rules we jointly agreed on and the consensus reached, but must not follow the order given by one or just a few countries.²⁸⁵ The Charter of the United Nations is the basic and universally recognized norm for state-to-state relations. Without these laws and rules that are formulated and recognized by the international community, the world may fall back to the law of the jungle²⁸⁶, which would bring about catastrophic consequences for humanity.²⁸⁷

We must strictly enforce the international rule of law, and not waver in the least but safeguard the international system centered around the UN and the international order based on international law. Multilateral institutions, which provide the platforms for putting multilateralism into action and which are the basic architecture underpinning multilateralism, should have their authority and effectiveness safeguarded. State-to-state relations should be coordinated and regulated through proper institutions and rules. The strong should not bully the weak. Decision should not be made by simply showing off strong muscles or waving a big fist, [and] multilateralism should also not be used as pretext for acts of unilateralism. Principles should be preserved and rules, once made, should be followed by all. “Selective multilateralism” should not be our option.²⁸⁸

We should stay committed to consultation and cooperation instead of conflict and confrontation. Differences in history, culture and social systems should not be an excuse for antagonism or confrontation, but rather be an impetus to cooperation. We should respect and uphold differences, not interfere in other countries' internal affairs, [and] resolve disagreements through consultation and dialogue. History and reality have made it clear, time and again, that the misguided approach of antagonism and confrontation, be it in the form of cold war, hot war, trade war or tech war, would eventually hurt all countries' interests and sacrifice²⁸⁹ their peoples well-being.

²⁸² I took over the entire last passage of the text from the official English version since I find it a perfect translation.

²⁸³ 唯我独尊 is a Chinese idiom meaning “overweening”; “extremely conceited”; self-centered“ the official version translated it as “seek one's own supremacy” which I take over here because it very well translates the idea.

²⁸⁴ 《法者，治之端也》 is a quote in classical Chinese. I lend the translation of it from the official English text.

²⁸⁵ The English version reads: “International governance should be based on the rules and consensus reached among us, not on the order given by one or the few.” But in Chinese it is 国际社会应该按照各国共同达成的规则和共识来治理， (...) and “guoji shehui” (国际社会) means “international society” which I find an important keyword and therefore did not want to leave it out in my translation.

²⁸⁶ It literally says „law of the jungle“ (丛林法则)

²⁸⁷

²⁸⁸ In this entire part my translation does not differ much from the official English version which is very close to the Chinese version here.

²⁸⁹²⁸⁹ It says: xisheng (牺牲) which means „sacrifice“; originally referring to animals being offered as a sacrifice in ancient times. Here it is the verb referring to the “well-being of the people” (人民福祉)

We should reject the outdated Cold War and zero-sum game mentality, adhere to mutual respect and accommodation, and enhance political trust through strategic communication. [We] should strictly adhere to the cooperation concept based on mutual benefit and win-win, say no to narrow-minded, selfish beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and stop unilateral practice of keeping advantages in development all to oneself. Equal rights to development should be guaranteed for all countries to promote common development and prosperity. We should advocate fair competition, like competing with each other for excellence in a racing field, not killing each other on a wrestling arena²⁹⁰.

We should stay committed to keeping up with the times instead of rejecting change. The world is undergoing changes unseen in a century, and now is the time for major development as well as the time for major transformation. To uphold multilateralism in the 21st century, [we need to] take new perspectives and look to the future, uphold the basic values and principles of multilateralism which needs to find a foothold in the changing world. [We need to] look out for answers to global challenges, reform and improve the global governance system based on extensive consultation and consensus-building.²⁹¹

We need to give full play to the role of the World Health Organization [and] build a community of health for humanity²⁹². We need to advance reform of the World Trade Organization and the international financial and monetary system, boosts global economic growth and protect the development rights, interests and opportunities of developing countries. We need to follow a people-centered, fact-based policy orientation, and explore as well as formulate rules on global digital governance. We need to respond to climate change by fulfilling [the promises of] the Paris Agreement, and accelerate green development. We need to persist in giving priority to development and fulfill the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, making sure that all countries, in particular developing ones, get their share of the benefits which worldwide development brings about.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

²⁹⁰ [...], 而不是搞相互攻击、你死我活的角斗赛。[Word for word: but not carry out mutual attacks, “you die, I live” wrestling match]. This is to show the metaphors used here. It means “to avoid mutual attacks like in a life-and-death fight in a wrestling competition”, which I found best translates “not killing each other on a wrestling arena” in this sentence.

²⁹¹ Official translation: “To uphold multilateralism in the 21st century, we should promote its fine tradition, take on new perspectives and look to the future. We need to stand by the core values and basic principles of multilateralism. We also need to adapt to the changing international landscape and respond to global challenges as they arise. We need to reform and improve the global governance system on the basis of extensive consultation and consensus-building.”

²⁹² 构建人类卫生健康共同体

The Chinese people have gone through long times of arduous struggle, and the victory of building the moderately prosperous society in all respects is [finally] in sight²⁹³ [Our] war against poverty has shown historic gains²⁹⁴, [and we] have embarked on a new journey toward fully building a modern socialist country. As we enter a new development stage, [we will] carry out a new development concepts and actively set up new development patterns based on domestic circulation with domestic and international circulation mutually stimulating each other. [China] will work with other countries to bring about lasting peace, universal security, common prosperity, [and build an] open and inclusive, clean and beautiful world.²⁹⁵

— **China will continue to take an active part in international pandemic cooperation**²⁹⁶.

Fight against the pandemic is the most pressing task the international community faces.²⁹⁷ Putting people and their lives before anything else is a fundamental requirement and also the prerequisite for a stable economic recovery.²⁹⁸ We need to intensify friendly cooperation, strengthen information sharing and joint prevention and control to win the battle against the global pandemic with resolution.²⁹⁹ It is especially important to strengthen cooperation on the research, the development, the production and the distribution of vaccines, to make them truly accessible and affordable to people in all countries, [and to] make them become public goods. Up to now, in the fight against the pandemic China has provided assistance to over 150 countries and 13 international organizations, sent 36 medical expert teams to countries in need, and stayed

²⁹³ 全面建成小康社会 literally: overall establish a moderately prosperous society; 胜利在望 literally: victory is in sight

²⁹⁴ 脱贫攻坚取得历史性成果, [...] was officially translated “We have made historic gains in ending extreme poverty, ...”. However I would like to highlight the words chosen by Xi Jinping here: “tuopin” (脱贫) means “shake off poverty”, “gongjian” (攻坚) literally means “storm a fortification” or “assault a fortified position” it therefor is an expression from a military context making it sound like in a war. “qude” (取得) means “to gain”, and “lishixing Chenggong” (历史性成果) means “historic success”. So the idea is that historic success in shaking off poverty was gained through “storming a fortification”. I chose to translate it “[Our] war against poverty has shown historic gains” since I believe it contains all this. When the official translation speaks of “ending extreme poverty” we need to know that Xi does not speak of “extreme poverty” here. It is the understanding of the translator that it is “extreme poverty” that Xi refers to here.

²⁹⁵ The official version translates: “build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.” But in the Chinese sentence, 持久和平 (=lasting peace) is the very first point mentioned. Since the order of such lists of aims often works as a hierarchy I tried not to change the order of words.

²⁹⁶ The official translation speaks of „international cooperation on COVID-19“ whilst Xi says 国际抗疫合作 with „kang yi“ (抗疫) literally meaning „combat epidemic disease“ which I believe refers to a more general cooperation, and does not limit it to COVID-19.

²⁹⁷ Official translation: “Containing the coronavirus is the most pressing task for the international community.” Chinese: 抗击疫情是国际社会面临的最紧迫任务。Literally: fight back the pandemic is the most pressing task that the international community faces. (In this context, it could be “fighting Covid-19” as well as “fighting pandemics” in general) I believe it is rather referring to Covid-19 in this case and therefore translate “the pandemic” instead of “pandemic”.

²⁹⁸ Official translation here reads: “This is because people and their lives must always be put before anything else. It is also what it takes to stabilize and revive the economy.” “Jiben qiantu” (基本前提) literally “fundamental prerequisite” is here translated as “it is what it takes” which I find a bit “understating”.

²⁹⁹ Again the official translation uses slightly different words. It reads: “Closer solidarity and cooperation, more information sharing, and a stronger global response are what we need to defeat COVID-19 across the world.” The Chinese sentence is: 我们要深化团结合作, 加强信息共享和联防联控, 坚决打赢全球疫情阻击战。The words “solidarity”, “global response” and “Covid-19” are not directly mentioned in the Chinese sentence but are subject to the interpretation of the translator. Once again, the rhetoric is being understated in the English version that no longer speaks of a “battle” (literally “war”) against the pandemic but instead of a “response” to defeat the pandemic.

strongly supportive and actively engaged in international cooperation on vaccines³⁰⁰. China will continue to share information about its experience in epidemic prevention and control with other countries, provide every help it has to offer to countries and regions with weaker abilities to address the pandemic³⁰¹, and work for greater accessibility and affordability of COVID vaccines in developing countries to help the world to triumph over the pandemic soon.

— **China will continue to implement an all-win opening-up strategy.** Economic globalization meets the need of growing social productivity and is a natural outcome of scientific and technological advancement. Using the pandemic to go against globalization, for isolation and to cut ties serves no one's interest. As a longstanding supporter of economic globalization, China is committed to following through on its fundamental policy of opening-up. China will continue to promote trade, investment liberalization and facilitation, help keep the global industrial and supply chains smooth and stable, as well as advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. China will promote institutional opening-up that covers rules, regulations, management and standards, create a business environment that is based on market principles, governed by law and up on international standards, and unleash the potential of the huge China market and enormous domestic demand in order to create more opportunities for cooperation with other countries and give further impetus to global economic recovery and growth.

— **China will continue to promote sustainable development.** China will fully implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China will intensify the efforts of eco-civilization building³⁰², accelerate the adjustment and optimization of the industrial and energy supply structures, as well as the initiation of green low-carbon ways of production and life. I already have announced China's goal of striving to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China³⁰³. Yet we believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, it is China's undeniable duty to step forward to do the job and moreover do a good job³⁰⁴. China is drawing up action plans and taking specific measures already to make sure we meet the set targets. China does this as a concrete action to uphold multilateralism and to protect our shared home and realizing sustainable development of humanity.

— **China will continue to advance science, technology and innovation.** Science, technology and innovation is an important engine for the progress of human society, it is a powerful weapon to address many global challenges, and the only way for China to foster a new development

³⁰⁰ The official translation speaks of „international cooperation on Covid-19 vaccines“ but in Chinese it reads just 疫苗国际合作 which means “international cooperation on vaccination” leaving it open whether it is a cooperation on vaccinations in general or maybe on Covid in particular.

³⁰¹ [...], 向应对疫情能力薄弱的国家和地区提供力所能及的帮助, [...]

³⁰² 中国将加强生态文明建设 was officially translated: “It will do more on the ecological front” The word “China (zhongguo 中国) was probably replaced since the last two sentences started with “China...”. However Xi Jinping did say it that way and did not avoid using the word three times so I think it should be reflected in the translation as well. More importantly, the term “Ecological Civilization building” (shengtai wenming jianshe 生态文明建设) is translated as “do more on the ecological front” which is not only a very vague expression but also underestimates the importance of the political concept of the Ecological Civilization.

³⁰³ 实现这个目标，中国需要付出及其艰巨的努力。Literally: to realize these targets, China needs to invest extremely arduous efforts.

³⁰⁴ 我们人为，只要是对全人类有益的事情，中国就应该义不容辞地做，并且做好。

paradigm and achieve high-quality development. China will invest more in science and technology, develop an enabling system for innovation as a priority, turn breakthroughs in science and technology into actual productivity at a faster pace, and enhance intellectual property protection, all for the purpose of fostering innovation-driven, higher-quality growth. Scientific and technological advances should benefit all humanity rather than be used to curb and contain other countries' development. China will think and act with more openness with regard to international exchange and cooperation on science and technology and work with other countries to create an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological advancement that is beneficial to all and shared by all.

— **China will continue to promote a new type of international relations.** Zero-sum game³⁰⁵ or winner-takes-all³⁰⁶ is not the guiding philosophy of the Chinese people. China firmly pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, [we] work hard to bridge differences through dialogue and resolve controversies through negotiation. It is with mutual respect, and on the basis of mutual benefit that [China] pursues friendly and cooperative relations with other countries. As a steadfast member of developing countries, China will further deepen South-South cooperation, and contribute to the endeavor of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ease debt burden, and contribute to the realization of economic growth. China will get more actively engaged in global economic governance and push for an economic globalization that is more open, inclusive³⁰⁷, balanced and beneficial to all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

Humanity has only one planet, and humanity has only one common future. Be it in responding to the current crisis or be it in striving together for a better future, humanity needs to row the boat together to cross the turbulent water³⁰⁸, [we] need to stand united and work together. Practice has proven that to beggar thy neighbor, to go it alone, and to slip into arrogant isolation will always fail. Let us all join hands and let multilateralism light our way toward building a community with a shared fate for mankind that continues advancing!³⁰⁹

Thank you everyone.

³⁰⁵ 你输我赢 literally: “you lose I win” often translates as “zero-sum game”

³⁰⁶ 赢者通吃 literally: “the winner eats it all” which is usually translated as “the winner takes all”.

³⁰⁷ [...]包容、普惠、平衡、共赢的方向发展。Here the two words “baorong” (包容) and “puhui” (普惠) both can be translated as “inclusive”. The first is often used to describe an inclusive political orientation, the second is the abbreviation for “inclusive finance”

³⁰⁸ 同舟共济 Chinese idiom meaning: cross a river in the same boat or pull together in times of trouble/ unite in difficult times.

³⁰⁹ It's a bit of a complex structure here saying in only one sentence: 让我们携起手来，让多边主义火炬照亮人类前行之路，向着构建人类命运共同体不断迈进！ Word for word: “Let us take [each other by the] hands, let multilateralism be the torch illuminates our way forwards, towards the building of a community of fate for humanity which will forge ahead forever!” The official translation takes a little shortcut here, leaving out the words such as “torch” or “always forge ahead” for example. Furthermore 人类命运共同体 was translated as “community of shared future for humanity” whilst it literally means a “community of common fate or destiny for mankind”.

Transcript:

尊敬的各位国家元首、政府首脑，

尊敬的各位国际组织负责人，

尊敬的各位博鳌亚洲论坛理事，

各位来宾，

女士们，先生们，朋友们：

“与君远相知，不道云海深。”很高兴出席博鳌亚洲论坛 2021 年年会，同大家在“云端”相聚。首先，我代表中国政府和中国人民，并以我个人的名义，对出席会议的线上线下所有嘉宾，表示热烈的欢迎！对各位新老朋友，表示诚挚的问候和美好的祝愿！

今年是论坛成立 20 周年。20 年来，亚洲国家深入推动区域经济一体化，协力促进经济社会发展，推动亚洲成为全球经济最具活力和增长潜力的地区。亚洲和世界各国携手应对恐怖主义、印度洋海啸、国际金融危机、新冠肺炎疫情等传统安全和非传统安全威胁，努力维护地区稳定和安全。作为亚洲大家庭重要成员，中国不断深化改革开放，积极推动地区合作，与亚洲同进步，与世界共发展。论坛见证了中国、亚洲、世界走过的不平凡历程，为促进亚洲和世界发展发挥了重要影响力、推动力。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

本届年会是在特殊背景下召开的。年会以“世界大变局：共襄全球治理盛举，合奏‘一带一路’强音”为主题，恰逢其时，具有重要现实意义。

当前，百年变局和世纪疫情交织叠加，世界进入动荡变革期，不稳定性不确定性显著上升。人类社会面临的治理赤字、信任赤字、发展赤字、和平赤字有增无减，实现普遍安全、促进共同发展依然任重道远。同时，世界多极化趋势没有根本改变，经济全球化展现出新的韧性，维护多边主义、加强沟通协作的呼声更加强烈。我们所处的是一个充满挑战的时代，也是一个充满希望的时代。

人类社会应该向何处去？我们应该为子孙后代创造一个什么样的未来？对这一重大命题，我们要从人类共同利益出发，以负责任态度作出明智选择。

中方倡议，亚洲和世界各国要回应时代呼唤，携手共克疫情，加强全球治理，朝着构建人类命运共同体方向不断迈进。

——我们要平等协商，开创共赢共享的未来。全球治理应该符合变化了的世界政治经济格局，顺应和平发展合作共赢的历史趋势，满足应对全球性挑战的现实需要。我们应该秉持共商共建共享原则，坚持真正的多边主义，推动全球治理体系朝着更加公正合理的方向发展。要维护以联合国为核心的国际体系，维护以国际法为基础的国

际秩序，维护以世界贸易组织为核心的多边贸易体制。国际上的事应该由大家共同商量着办，世界前途命运应该由各国共同掌握，不能把一个或几个国家制定的规则强加于人，也不能由个别国家的单边主义给整个世界“带节奏”。世界要公道，不要霸道。大国要有大国的样子，要展现更多责任担当。

——我们要开放创新，开创发展繁荣的未来。开放是发展进步的必由之路，也是促进疫后经济复苏的关键。我们要推动贸易和投资自由化便利化，深化区域经济一体化，巩固供应链、产业链、数据链、人才链，构建开放型世界经济。要深化互联互通伙伴关系建设，推进基础设施联通，畅通经济运行的血脉和经络。要抓住新一轮科技革命和产业变革的历史机遇，大力发展数字经济，在人工智能、生物医药、现代能源等领域加强交流合作，使科技创新成果更好造福各国人民。在经济全球化时代，开放融通是不可阻挡的历史趋势，人为“筑墙”、“脱钩”违背经济规律和市场规则，损人不利己。

——我们要同舟共济，开创健康安全的未来。战疫仍在进行，胜利终将到来。我们要坚持人民至上、生命至上，加强信息共享和联防联控，提升卫生医疗合作水平，充分发挥世界卫生组织关键作用。要加强疫苗研发、生产、分配国际合作，提高疫苗在发展中国家的可及性和可负担性，让各国人民真正用得上、用得起。要全面加强全球公共卫生安全治理，共同构建人类卫生健康共同体。要坚持绿色发展理念，共同推进应对气候变化国际合作，加大落实应对气候变化《巴黎协定》。要坚持共同但有区别的责任原则，解决发展中国家在资金、技术、能力建设方面的关切。

——我们要坚守正义，开创互尊互鉴的未来。多样性是世界的基本特征，也是人类文明的魅力所在。经历了疫情洗礼，各国人民更加清晰地认识到，要摒弃冷战思维和零和博弈，反对任何形式的“新冷战”和意识形态对抗。国与国相处，要把平等相待、互尊互信挺在前面，动辄对他国颐指气使、干涉内政不得人心。要弘扬和平、发展、公平、正义、民主、自由的全人类共同价值，倡导不同文明交流互鉴，促进人类文明发展。

在此，我宣布，中方将在疫情得到控制后即举办第二届亚洲文明对话大会，为促进亚洲和世界文明对话发挥积极作用。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

我多次说过，“一带一路”是大家携手前进的阳光大道，不是某一方的私家小路。所有感兴趣的国家都可以加入进来，共同参与、共同合作、共同受益。共建“一带一路”追求的是发展，崇尚的是共赢，传递的是希望。

面向未来，我们将同各方继续高质量共建“一带一路”，践行共商共建共享原则，弘扬开放、绿色、廉洁理念，努力实现高标准、惠民生、可持续目标。

——我们将建设更紧密的卫生合作伙伴关系。中国企业已经在印度尼西亚、巴西、阿联酋、马来西亚、巴基斯坦、土耳其等共建“一带一路”伙伴国开展疫苗联合生产。我们将在传染病防控、公共卫生、传统医药等领域同各方拓展合作，共同护佑各国人民生命安全和身体健康。

——我们将建设更紧密的互联互通伙伴关系。中方将同各方携手，加强基础设施“硬联通”以及规则标准“软联通”，畅通贸易和投资合作渠道，积极发展丝路电商，共同开辟融合发展的光明前景。

——我们将建设更紧密的绿色发展伙伴关系。加强绿色基建、绿色能源、绿色金融等领域合作，完善“一带一路”绿色发展国际联盟、“一带一路”绿色投资原则等多边合作平台，让绿色切实成为共建“一带一路”的底色。

——我们将建设更紧密的开放包容伙伴关系。世界银行有关报告认为，到2030年，共建“一带一路”有望帮助全球760万人摆脱极端贫困、3200万人摆脱中度贫困。我们将本着开放包容精神，同愿意参与的各相关方共同努力，把“一带一路”建成“减贫之路”、“增长之路”，为人类走向共同繁荣作出积极贡献。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

2021年，是中国共产党成立100周年。100年来，中国共产党筚路蓝缕、求索奋进，为中国人民谋幸福，为中华民族谋复兴，为世界谋大同，不仅使中华民族迎来了从站起来、富起来到强起来的伟大飞跃，也为人类文明和进步事业作出了卓越贡献。中国将继续做世界和平的建设者、全球发展的贡献者、国际秩序的维护者。

中国将始终高举和平、发展、合作、共赢旗帜，在和平共处五项原则基础上拓展同各国友好合作，积极推动构建新型国际关系。中国将继续同世界卫生组织以及各国开展抗疫合作，坚守疫苗作为全球公共产品的承诺，为发展中国家战胜疫情提供更多帮助。中国无论发展到什么程度，永远不称霸、不扩张、不谋求势力范围，不搞军备竞赛。中国将积极参与贸易和投资领域多边合作，全面实施《外商投资法》和相关配套法规，继续缩减外资准入负面清单，推进海南自由贸易港建设，推动建设更高水平开放型经济新体制。欢迎各方分享中国市场的巨大机遇。

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

同舟共济扬帆起，乘风破浪万里航。尽管有时会遭遇惊涛骇浪和逆流险滩，但只要我们齐心协力、把准航向，人类社会发展的巨轮必将行稳致远，驶向更加美好的未来！

谢谢大家。³¹⁰

Translation:

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies Heads of International Organizations,

Your Excellencies Members of the Board of Directors of the Boao Forum for Asia,

Distinguished Guests,

³¹⁰ Full Chinese text from: http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2021-04/20/c_1127350811.htm

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

“No matter how vast the ocean of clouds that lays between us may seem, nothing can separate us as friends, as long as we know and understand one another mutually.”³¹¹ I am pleased to attend the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 and meet you all in this meeting “high in the clouds”³¹². First of all, let me express, on behalf of the Chinese government and people but also in my own name, a warm welcome to all the guests participating both in person and online! [My] sincere greetings and best wishes to all friends, old and new.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Forum³¹³. Over twenty years, Asian countries have deeply promoted regional economic integration, accelerated social-economic development with joint efforts and propelled Asia to become the most vibrant and promising region in the global economy. Hand in hand with the other countries in the world Asia has also stood firm against terrorism, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the international financial crisis, COVID-19 and other traditional and non-traditional security threats. [Asia has therewith] worked hard to defend stability and security in the region. As an important member of the big Asian family, China has kept deepening reform and opening-up while promoting regional cooperation, to achieve progress in tandem with the rest of Asia and development in tandem with the rest of the world³¹⁴. [This] Forum has witnessed the extraordinary journey of China, Asia and the world, and had significant influence in boosting development in Asia and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

This year’s annual conference is convened against a very special background. The theme of the conference—“A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation”—is most opportune and relevant under the current circumstances.

³¹¹ Xi says: “与君远相知，不道云海深” therewith quoting Tang Dynasty poet Wang Changling (698-756). The official translation of the speech as published on: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-04/20/c_139893137.htm translates it as: “True friendship brings people close however far apart they may be”. The real meaning is that even though they are separated by oceans and clouds by knowing and understanding each other, no distance can separate true friends. I try to keep the image of the ocean and clouds in my translation and have chosen to highlight the meanings of “xiang” 相 (each other; mutual) and “zhi” 知 (know; comprehend; in literature it can also have the meaning “intimate friend”). I believe by opening his speech which addresses the international community with this quote, Xi tries to stress the importance of mutual understanding.

³¹² Xi uses the expression 《“云端”相聚》 (literally: meeting or assembly at a place high in the clouds) and puts the words yunduan (云端) (literally: place high in the clouds) in quotes. I believe he therewith tries to refer to Wang Changling’s expression that also uses the word “cloud” yun (云).

³¹³ Refers to the „Boao Forum for Asia“ but Xi just says „forum“ here.

³¹⁴ 与亚洲同进步，与世界共发展。 Was translated “achieving progress and development in tandem with Asia and the rest of the world”. However, Xi separates the sentence and speaks of “progressing simultaneously with Asia” and “developing simultaneously with the world”

Now, the combined forces of changes and a pandemic both unseen in a century have brought the world into a phase of fluidity and transformation. Instability and uncertainty are clearly on the rise. Humanity is facing an ever increasing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit. The task to achieve universal security and common development is as arduous as ever and the way [to reach this] is long. Much remains to be done to achieve universal security and common development. That said, there is no fundamental change in the trend toward a multi-polar world; economic globalization is showing renewed resilience; and the call for upholding multilateralism and enhancing communication and coordination has grown stronger. We live at a time filled with challenges, [but] this is also a time full of hope.

Where should humanity go from here? What kind of future should we create for future generations? In order to answer these important questions, we need to make responsible and wise choices based on the shared interests of mankind.

China calls on all countries in Asia and in the world to respond to the call of our times, jointly overcome the pandemic, strengthen global governance, and keep pursuing a community where mankind shares a common destiny³¹⁵.

— We need consultation on an equal footing to create a future of shared benefits and win-win³¹⁶. Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peaceful development and win-win cooperation, [it should] fulfill the practical needs responding to global challenges. We need to follow the principles of discussing, cooperating and sharing, uphold true multilateralism, [and] make the global governance system fairer and more equitable. We need to safeguard the UN-centered international system, preserve the international order underpinned by international law, and uphold the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. International affairs should be handled through extensive consultation of all [parties], [and] the world's future destiny must be decided by all countries working together³¹⁷. Neither must we let rules set by a single or a few countries impose on others, nor must we allow unilateralism pursued by certain countries to set the pace for the whole world³¹⁸. The world needs justice, not rule by force³¹⁹. Big countries should behave in a manner befitting their status and with a greater sense of responsibility.

³¹⁵ [...], 朝着构建人类命运共同本方向不断迈进。

³¹⁶ 我们要平等协商，开创共赢共享的未来。This literally means “We need consultation on the basis of equality, initiate a future of win-win and shared benefits.” To my mind, 平等协商 could also be translated as “equal dialogue” or a “dialogue on eye-level”.

³¹⁷ [...] 世界前途命运应该由各国共同掌握，[...] literally: the world's future destiny must be “mastered” by every nations cooperation.

³¹⁸ [...] 也不能由个别国家的单边主义给整个世界 “带节奏”。Literally 带节奏 means “lead the rhythm”

³¹⁹ It is “badao” (霸道) which I translate as „rule by force“ here. The official translation speaks of “hegemony”. But “hegemony” in the modern sense of the word is usually translated rather as “baquan” (霸权) whilst “badao” (霸道) sounds outdated and was being used rather to describe the inappropriate rule of an emperor in the past.

— We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity. Openness is the right path leading to development and progress³²⁰. It also holds the key to post-COVID economic recovery. We need to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, deepen regional economic integration, and enhance supply, industrial, data and human resources chains, with a view to building an open world economy. We need to deepen partnerships for connectivity and strengthen infrastructural links to keep the arteries of economic activities unclogged. We must seize the historical opportunities in a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, boost the digital economy, and step up exchanges and cooperation in such areas as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and modern energy, so that the fruits of scientific and technological innovation can be turned into greater benefits for people in all countries. In this age of economic globalization, openness and integration is an unstoppable historical trend. Attempts to “build walls”, “cut ties”, go against the law of economics and market principles only harm others without benefiting oneself³²¹.

— We are crossing the river in the same boat and need to pull together in times of trouble to create a future of health and security.³²² Whilst the fight against the pandemic is going on, victory will be ours at the end of the day. We must put people, [we must put] lives above anything else, scale up information sharing, joint defense [and] joint control, enhance public health and medical cooperation, and give full play to the key role of the World Health Organization. We need to strengthen vaccine research, development [and] production, [as well as] international cooperation. [We need to] strengthen international cooperation [and] increase the accessibility and affordability of vaccinations in developing countries so that everyone in the world can access and afford the vaccines they need. Comprehensive measures to improve global governance on public health security must be taken [and] a global community of health for humanity must be established. We need to follow the philosophy of green development³²³, in order to respond to climate change, global cooperation must be carried on, [and we must] strictly implement the Paris Agreement to respond to climate change³²⁴. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be upheld, [and] concerns of developing countries on capital, technology and capacity building must be addressed.

— We need commitment to justice to create a future of mutual respect and mutual learning³²⁵. Diversity is what defines our world and makes human civilization fascinating. Through the difficult experience of the pandemic, the people of all nations have come to understand clearly,

³²⁰ 开放是发展进步的必由之路[...] here 必由之路 is an idiom meaning “the road one must follow” or “the only way”. In the given context I have chosen to translate it as “the right path leading to...”.

³²¹ [...] 人为“筑墙”、“脱钩”违背经济规律和市场规则，损人不利己。Here 损人不利己 is a Chinese idiom meaning “harm others without benefiting oneself”.

³²² 我们要同舟共济，开创健康安全的未来。Literally: we need to cross the river in the same boat and create a future of health and security. 同舟共济 is a idiom literally meaning “sit in one boat [and] cross the river [with] common [strength]”. The official translation reads “We need solidarity and cooperation to create a future of health and security.” It is what the idiom means, but I have chosen to make it a longer sentence keeping the metaphors of the boat and the river which then needs the addition of “in times of trouble” in order to make sense in English.

³²³ 绿色发展理念

³²⁴ 加大落实应对气候变化《巴黎协定》。Literally: increase implementing the Paris Agreement to respond to climate change. It is “jiada” 加大 (increase), I here translate as „strictly“ implement the Paris Agreement.

³²⁵ 互尊互鉴

that cold-war-thinking and zero-sum mentality must be rejected [and] we need to oppose any sort of “new Cold War” and ideological confrontation. In state-to-state relations, the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual trust must be put front and center. Those who frequently [and arrogantly] order other countries around or interfere in others’ internal affairs would not get one any support³²⁶. We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.³²⁷

In this context, I would like to announce that once the pandemic gets under control, China will host the second Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations as part of our active efforts to promote inter-civilization dialogue in Asia and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

I have noted on various occasions that the “Belt and Road Initiative” is not a private path owned by one single party, but a highway full of sunshine open to everyone.³²⁸ All interested countries are welcome aboard to join in the cooperation, take part, cooperate, and share in its benefits. Belt and Road cooperation pursues development, aims at mutual benefits, and brings hope.

Going forward, we will continue to work with other parties in high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. We will follow the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. [We will] enhance the philosophy of open, green and honest [cooperation], work hard to realize high-standards, [and make the BRI] sustainable [and] beneficial for the people.

— We will build a closer partnership for health cooperation. Chinese businesses have already started joint vaccine production in BRI participating countries such as Indonesia, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey. We will expand cooperation with various parties in infectious disease control, public health, traditional medicine and other areas to jointly protect the lives and health of people in all countries.

³²⁶ This is an interesting part. Right after highlighting the importance of mutual respect and trust, Xi finishes the sentence saying: [..., 动辄对他国颐指气使、干涉内政不得人心。] He uses the idiom 颐指气使 which means “order people about by gestures; be insufferably arrogant” and therefore is quite an unpolite- one could even say a disrespectful expression. It is what China is sometimes being blamed for. In the last part, Xi says: 干涉内政不得人心 (meaning: interfering in other countries inner affairs will not find any support). This is rather unsurprising since it is what China historically finds unacceptable.

³²⁷ Remarkable how Xi turns from the unfriendly last sentence which nearly sounds like a threat, to promoting “peace”, “freedom”, and “democracy”.

³²⁸ [...], „一带一路“是大家携手前进的阳光大道，不是某一方的私家小路。 Word for word: the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)- is- everybody- joint hands- move forward- sunlight- main road-, is not- just any- private owned- small- street. 阳光大道 can be understood as “main road in the bright sunshine”, the particle 的 makes clear that everything beforehand is the description of 阳光大道. I find the word for word sentence makes the sense quite visible. Xi describes the BRI as the shiny path for everybody to follow here.

— We will build a closer partnership for connectivity. China will work with all sides to promote “hard connectivity” of infrastructure and “soft connectivity” of rules and standards, ensure unimpeded channels for trade and investment cooperation, and actively develop Silk Road e-commerce, all in a bid to open up a bright prospect for integrated development.

— We will build a closer partnership for green development. We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road Development, and other multilateral cooperation platforms to make green a defining feature of Belt and Road cooperation.

— We will build a closer partnership for openness and inclusiveness³²⁹. A World Bank report suggests that by 2030, Belt and Road projects could help lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty and 32 million people from moderate poverty across the world. We will act in the spirit of openness and inclusiveness as we work hard with all willing participants to build the BRI into a pathway to poverty alleviation and growth, which will contribute positively to the common prosperity of humankind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The year 2021 marks the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Over the last century, the CPC has not avoided any hardships in a relentless pursuit of happiness for the Chinese people, rejuvenation for the Chinese nation, and harmony for the world³³⁰. Not only did the Chinese Nation fulfill the great leap from standing up and growing rich, to becoming stronger, but it [therewith] also made a notable contribution to human civilization and progress. China will continue being a creator of world peace, a contributor to global development, [and] a defender of the global order.

China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promote a new type of international relations. China will continue to carry out

³²⁹ In some of the previous sentences, Xi used keywords that refer to China’s foreign policy strategy, the 《亲、诚、惠、容的周边外交理念》 (the concept of “closeness, sincerity, shared prosperity, and inclusiveness) here Xi speaks of “kaifang” 开放 (openness) and “baorong” 包容 (inclusiveness).

³³⁰ The official translation here speaks of “the common good for the world” but Xi says: 《为世界谋大同》. I understand “datong” 大同 (consisting of the words “big” and “common”) in the philosophic sense of the word as “Great Harmony” (the ideal or perfect society). It is a well-known term in Chinese and in this part of the speech, Xi Jinping is using a highly ideological language.

anti-pandemic cooperation³³¹ with the WHO and other countries, keep its promise of making vaccines a global public good, and do more to help developing countries defeat the virus. However strong it may grow, China will never seek hegemony, expansion, or a sphere of influence. Nor will China ever engage in an arms race. China will take an active part in multilateral cooperation on trade and investment, fully implement the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, cut further the negative list on foreign investment, continue to develop the Hainan Free Trade Port, and develop new systems for a higher-standard open economy. All are welcome to share in the vast opportunities of the Chinese market.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

“By setting sail together in one boat, we could ride the wind, break the waves, and brave the journey of ten thousand miles.”³³² We may at times encounter stormy waves³³³ and dangerous rapids, but as long as we pool our efforts and keep to the right direction, the giant vessel of human development will stay on an even keel and sail toward a brighter future.

Thank you everyone.

[Speech Xi Jinping at Leaders' Summit on Climate on Invitation of President Joe Biden \(22.04.2021\)](#)

[Transcript:](#)

习近平在“领导人气候峰会”上的讲话（全文）

2021-04-22 21:43:19 来源： 新华网

共同构建人与自然生命共同体

——在“领导人气候峰会”上的讲话

（2021年4月22日，北京）

中华人民共和国主席 习近平

尊敬的拜登总统，

³³¹ The official translation here speaks of “anti-Covid cooperation” but Xi says “kang yi hezuo” (抗议合作) which means “anti-pandemic cooperation” and does not limit it to the currently ongoing COVID pandemic.

³³² The sentence 同舟共济杨帆起，乘风破浪万里航 consists of two idioms: 1. 同舟共济杨 (cross a river in the same boat), which Xi Jinping has used before in this speech. 2. 乘风破浪 (ride the wind and cleave the waves). It gives the speech a poetic touch here.

³³³ Once again Xi says it with an idiom: 惊涛骇浪 (terrifying waves; stormy sea)

尊敬的各位同事：

很高兴在“世界地球日”到来之际出席领导人气候峰会，感谢拜登总统的邀请。借此机会，我愿同大家就气候变化问题深入交换意见，共商应对气候变化挑战之策，共谋人与自然和谐共生之道。

人类进入工业文明时代以来，在创造巨大物质财富的同时，也加速了对自然资源的攫取，打破了地球生态系统平衡，人与自然深层次矛盾日益显现。近年来，气候变化、生物多样性丧失、荒漠化加剧、极端气候事件频发，给人类生存和发展带来严峻挑战。新冠肺炎疫情持续蔓延，使各国经济社会发展雪上加霜。面对全球环境治理前所未有的困难，国际社会要以前所未有的雄心和行动，勇于担当，勠力同心，共同构建人与自然生命共同体。

——坚持人与自然和谐共生。“万物各得其和以生，各得其养以成。”大自然是包括人在内一切生物的摇篮，是人类赖以生存发展的基本条件。大自然孕育抚养了人类，人类应该以自然为根，尊重自然、顺应自然、保护自然。不尊重自然，违背自然规律，只会遭到自然报复。自然遭到系统性破坏，人类生存发展就成了无源之水、无本之木。我们要像保护眼睛一样保护自然和生态环境，推动形成人与自然和谐共生新格局。

——坚持绿色发展。绿水青山就是金山银山。保护生态环境就是保护生产力，改善生态环境就是发展生产力，这是朴素的真理。我们要摒弃损害甚至破坏生态环境的发展模式，摒弃以牺牲环境换取一时发展的短视做法。要顺应当代科技革命和产业变革大方向，抓住绿色转型带来的巨大发展机遇，以创新为驱动，大力推进经济、能源、产业结构转型升级，让良好生态环境成为全球经济社会可持续发展的支撑。

——坚持系统治理。山水林田湖草沙是不可分割的生态系统。保护生态环境，不能头痛医头、脚痛医脚。我们要按照生态系统的内在规律，统筹考虑自然生态各要素，从而达到增强生态系统循环能力、维护生态平衡的目标。

——坚持以人为本。生态环境关系各国人民的福祉，我们必须充分考虑各国人民对美好生活的向往、对优良环境的期待、对子孙后代的责任，探索保护环境和经济发展、创造就业、消除贫困的协同增效，在绿色转型过程中努力实现社会公平正义，增加各国人民获得感、幸福感、安全感。

——坚持多边主义。我们要坚持以国际法为基础、以公平正义为要旨、以有效行动为导向，维护以联合国为核心的国际体系，遵循《联合国气候变化框架公约》及其《巴黎协定》的目标和原则，努力落实2030年可持续发展议程；强化自身行动，深化伙伴关系，提升合作水平，在实现全球碳中和新征程中互学互鉴、互利共赢。要携手合作，不要相互指责；要持之以恒，不要朝令夕改；要重信守诺，不要言而无信。

中方欢迎美方重返多边气候治理进程。中美刚刚共同发布了《应对气候危机联合声明》，中方期待同包括美方在内的国际社会一道，共同为推进全球环境治理而努力。

——坚持共同但有区别的责任原则。共同但有区别的责任原则是全球气候治理的基石。发展中国家面临抗击疫情、发展经济、应对气候变化等多重挑战。我们要充分肯定发展中国家应对气候变化所作贡献，照顾其特殊困难和关切。发达国家应该展现更大雄心和行动，同时切实帮助发展中国家提高应对气候变化的能力和韧性，为发展中国家提供资金、技术、能力建设等方面支持，避免设置绿色贸易壁垒，帮助他们加速绿色低碳转型。

各位同事！

中华文明历来崇尚天人合一、道法自然，追求人与自然和谐共生。中国将生态文明理念和生态文明建设写入《中华人民共和国宪法》，纳入中国特色社会主义总体布局。中国以生态文明思想为指导，贯彻新发展理念，以经济社会发展全面绿色转型为引领，以能源绿色低碳发展为关键，坚持走生态优先、绿色低碳的发展道路。

去年，我正式宣布中国将力争 2030 年前实现碳达峰、2060 年前实现碳中和。这是中国基于推动构建人类命运共同体的责任担当和实现可持续发展的内在要求作出的重大战略决策。中国承诺实现从碳达峰到碳中和的时间，远远短于发达国家所用时间，需要中方付出艰苦努力。中国将碳达峰、碳中和纳入生态文明建设整体布局，正在制定碳达峰行动计划，广泛深入开展碳达峰行动，支持有条件的地方和重点行业、重点企业率先达峰。中国将严控煤电项目，“十四五”时期严控煤炭消费增长、“十五五”时期逐步减少。此外，中国已决定接受《〈蒙特利尔议定书〉基加利修正案》，加强非二氧化碳温室气体管控，还将启动全国碳市场上线交易。

作为全球生态文明建设的参与者、贡献者、引领者，中国坚定践行多边主义，努力推动构建公平合理、合作共赢的全球环境治理体系。中方将在今年 10 月承办《生物多样性公约》第十五次缔约方大会，同各方一道推动全球生物多样性治理迈上新台阶，支持《联合国气候变化框架公约》第二十六次缔约方会议取得积极成果。中方秉持“授人以渔”理念，通过多种形式的南南务实合作，尽己所能帮助发展中国家提高应对气候变化能力。从非洲的气候遥感卫星，到东南亚的低碳示范区，再到小岛国的节能灯，中国应对气候变化南南合作成果看得见、摸得着、有实效。中方还将生态文明领域合作作为共建“一带一路”重点内容，发起了系列绿色行动倡议，采取绿色基建、绿色能源、绿色交通、绿色金融等一系列举措，持续造福参与共建“一带一路”的各国人民。

各位同事！

“众力并，则万钧不足举也。”气候变化带给人类的挑战是现实的、严峻的、长远的。但是，我坚信，只要心往一处想、劲往一处使，同舟共济、守望相助，人类必将能够应对好全球气候环境挑战，把一个清洁美丽的世界留给子孙后代。

谢谢大家。

Translation:

Jointly Building a Community of Life for Mankind and Nature³³⁴

Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China

At the "Leaders Summit on Climate"

22 April 2021

Honourable President Joe Biden,

Distinguished Colleagues,

On [today's] "Earth Day", it is a great pleasure to take part in the Leaders' Summit on Climate, thank you President Biden for the invitation. I want to use this opportunity to profoundly exchange views on climate change with you all, and to discuss ways to tackle the challenge of climate change and find a path forward for man and Nature to coexist harmoniously.³³⁵

Since time of the industrial civilization³³⁶, mankind has created massive material wealth [but] at the same time, intensified exploitation of natural resources has also accelerated, which disrupted the balance in the Earth's ecosystem, [and] the high level of conflict and contradiction between mankind and nature becomes more visible day by day³³⁷. In recent years, climate change, biodiversity loss, worsening desertification and frequent extreme weather events have all posed severe challenges to human survival and development. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has added difficulty to economic and social development across countries. Faced with unprecedented challenges in global environmental governance, the international community needs to come up with unprecedented ambition and action. With joint strength and with one heart we courageously need to start building a community of life for mankind and nature together.³³⁸

— **We must be committed to the harmonious coexistence between man and nature.** "All things that grow live in harmony and benefit from the nourishment of Nature."³³⁹ Nature³⁴⁰ is the

³³⁴ 共同构建人与自然生命共同体 Official translation: "For Man and Nature: Building a Community of Life Together"

³³⁵ [...], 共谋人与自然和谐共生之道。

³³⁶³³⁶ 工业文明时代以来

³³⁷ [...], 人与自然深层次矛盾日益显现。

³³⁸ 勇于担当, 戮力同心, 共同构建人与自然生命共同体。Literally, 勇于担当 means "be brave" (or "have the courage to"), "take on; undertake" (it then refers to "building a community of life" which follows at the end of the sentence. 戮力同心 literally means with joint strength and with one heart. For comparison, the official translation here reads: "[...] We need to act with a sense of responsibility and unity and work together to foster a community of life for man and Nature." In terms of keywords, the official translation here highlights "responsibility" and "unity", whilst literally, the Chinese text accentuates "courage" and "joint strength".

³³⁹ This is a quote from Chinese philosopher Xunzi (313-238 BC)

³⁴⁰ Xi says „da ziran“ (大自然) which often translates as "nature" though "ziran" alone means "nature" and "da" usually means "big". But "da ziran" is a fixed expression commonly used to speak of "nature" in Chinese. It is also a commonly used expression in classical and philosophical Chinese texts. The official English version translates it as "mother nature" which is a Western concept however, that does not exist in China. In Chinese philosophic texts where the word comes from, "da ziran" differs from "mother earth" because it describes nature as female. In Chinese philosophy it is not undisputed whether "da ziran" means at all what is called "nature" today. Some say the concept of "nature" did not exist and the translation of "ziran" as "nature" is a modern phenomenon. But if one interprets it as nature, the word cannot be associated with attributes of femininity at all, unlike "Mother Nature". The idea of the exclusively female or exclusively male contradicts the Chinese philosophy which is based exactly on the idea that even Yin and Yang the complementary elementary

cradle of all living beings, including humans and a basic need for human survival and development. Nature has brought into life and nourishes mankind, humanity must treat Nature as its root, respect it, follow its laws [and] protect it³⁴¹. Failure to respect Nature or violation of the laws of nature, will only invite its revenge. When mankind systematically spoils nature, human survival and development will become like a river without a source [or] a tree without roots³⁴². We should protect Nature and preserve the environment like we protect our eyes, and endeavour to shape a new relationship where man and nature can both coexist in harmony.

— **We must be committed to green development.** Turquoise waters and green mountains are gold and silver mountains.³⁴³ To protect the environment is to protect productivity, and to improve the environment is to boost productivity — the truth is as simple as that. We must abandon development models that harm or undermine the environment, [we] must reject short-sighted approaches of going after near-term development gains by sacrificing³⁴⁴ the environment. [We] need to follow the trend of technological revolution and industrial transformation, seize the enormous opportunity which green transition brings about, and let the power of innovation drive us to upgrade our economic, energy and industrial structures, and make sure that a sound environment [functions as] a pillar to sustainable economic and social development worldwide³⁴⁵.

— **We must be committed to systemic governance.** Mountains, rivers, forests [as well as] farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts all make indivisible parts of the ecosystem. Protecting the ecological environment³⁴⁶ [takes an holistic approach], we must not just treat the head when the head aches nor only treat the foot when the foot hurts³⁴⁷. We need to follow the innate laws of the ecosystem³⁴⁸, plan as a whole [and] see the natural ecology as an essential factor, and thus [we must] aim to preserve the natural equilibrium for an ecosystem in sound circulation.

forces themselves are only predominantly male or female, but always also contain a part of the other. I therefore find “nature” a more appropriate translation being free of such judgments. It is also worth mentioning that Xi speaks of “ziran” (自然) in the sentence before (in a more general context) whilst saying “da ziran” (大自然) only directly after the philosophic quote from the Xunzi. To my mind, this also shows that Xi here refers to the philosophic idea and it is no coincidence that he says “da ziran” instead of “ziran”.

³⁴¹ I translate „shunying ziran“ (尊应自然) as „follow the laws of nature“ although “shunying” literally means “comply with” or “conform with”. Note: Here and in the rest of the passage, Xi uses “ziran”, not “da ziran” to speak of “nature”.

³⁴² 自然遇到系统性破坏，人类生存发展就成了无源之水，无本之木。

³⁴³ 绿水青山就是金山银山。An idiom often used by Xi Jinping. Literally meaning “green waters, turquoise mountains, are gold and silver mountains”. It is a formula for the Chinese concept of sustainability. Meaning that a healthy and prosper environment pays back. It literally speaks of “green water” and “turquoise mountains” referring to the effect that a green mountain may appear as turquoise against a blue sky. However, since to my mind “green water” does not sound so healthy, I turned it around and speak of “turquoise water” and “green mountains” which I believe is easier to understand as an image.

³⁴⁴ [...], 摒弃以牺牲环境换取一时发展的短视做法。

³⁴⁵ [...], 让良好生态环境成为全球经济社会可持续发展的支撑。It is “zhichang” (支撑) that I translate as “pillar” in this context.

³⁴⁶ In the sentence before, Xi uses the word „shengtai xitong“ (生态系统) which literally means „ecosystem“. Here he speaks of protecting the „shengtai huanjing“ (生态环境) the „natural environment“. In the official translation, both expressions were translated as „ecosystem“ which is possible since the meaning is close in Chinese. For my own translation however, I do insist on the differentiation.

³⁴⁷ 保护生态环境，不能头痛医头、脚痛医脚。The later part of the sentence is a Chinese idiom literally meaning “treat the head when the head aches, treat the foot when the foot hurts. It means “treating symptoms but not the disease” which is the opposite of the approaches in traditional Chinese medicine. Therefore I added “[takes an holistic approach]” in order to translate the meaning behind the idiom whilst keeping the idiom in its original form in the same sentence.

³⁴⁸ Here Xi says „shengtai xitong“ (生态系统) once again, so I translate it as „ecosystem“ as I did before.

— **We must be committed to a people-oriented³⁴⁹ approach.** The environment concerns the well-being of people in all countries. We need to take the longing for a better life and a good environment of peoples from all countries into full account, [as well as our] responsibility for future generations³⁵⁰. We need to look for ways to protect the environment, grow the economy, create jobs and remove poverty all at the same time, so as to deliver social equity and justice in the course of green transition and increase people’s sense of benefit, happiness and security.

— **We must be committed to multilateralism.** We need to adhere to the basis of international law, follow the principle of equity and justice and take effective actions³⁵¹. We need to uphold the UN-centred international system, comply with the objectives and principles laid out in the “UN Framework Convention on Climate Change” (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, and strive to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We all need to take stronger actions, intensify partnerships and deepen the level of cooperation, learn from each other and draw lessons during the new journey toward global carbon neutrality from which we will mutually benefit and which results in a win-win situation.³⁵² [We] must cooperate join hands, not point fingers at each other; we must maintain continuity³⁵³, not make unpredictable changes in policy³⁵⁴; and we must strictly keep our promises³⁵⁵, not go back on promises³⁵⁶.

China welcomes the United States’ return to the multilateral climate governance process. The Chinese and US sides have just released the “Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Crisis”³⁵⁷. China looks forward to working with the international community including the United States to jointly advance global environmental governance.

— **We must be committed to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.** The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the cornerstone of global climate governance. Developing countries now face such multiple challenges as to combat the pandemic, grow the economy, address climate change etcetera. We need to give full recognition to developing countries’ contribution to climate action and accommodate their particular difficulties and concerns. Developed countries need to increase climate ambition and action. At the same time, they need to make concrete efforts to help developing countries strengthen the capacity and resilience against climate change, support them in financing, technology, and capacity building, and refrain from creating green trade barriers, so as to help developing countries accelerate the transition to green and low-carbon development.

Colleagues,

³⁴⁹ 以人为本

³⁵⁰ [...], 对子孙后代的责任, [...]

³⁵¹ 我们要坚持以国际法为基础、以公平正义为要旨、以有效行动为导向, [...]

³⁵² The sentence sounds a bit unnatural in English, but I wanted to keep the original „wording“. The Chinese sentence reads: [...]; 强化自身行动, 深化伙伴关系, 提升合作水平, 在实现全球碳中和新征程中互学互鉴、互利共赢。The official translation skips the last part (互利 mutual benefit 共赢 all-win or win-win) which sounds a bit repetitive in English. However, I keep this part which is an important keyword for this research. Xi already used the same expression in earlier parts of the speech. It is a significant part of his rhetoric and his way to describe the benefits of environmental protection.

³⁵³ 持之以恒 a Chinese idiom meaning “keep preserving” or “firmly continue”.

³⁵⁴ [...], 不要朝令夕改... zhao ling xi gai (朝令夕改) is another Chinese idiom literally describing how a government issues an order in the morning only to rescind it in the evening.

³⁵⁵ 要重信守诺言

³⁵⁶ 不要言而无信 here “yan er wu xin” (言而无信) is an idiom meaning “fail to keep faith” or “back on one’s word”. It literally means “to speak without faith”. It does remind a bit of Greta Thunbergs accusation towards the world’s leaders as only speaking “empty words”.

³⁵⁷ 《应对气候危机联合声明》

The Chinese civilization has always valued the unity of man and Nature³⁵⁸ as well as observance of the laws of Nature³⁵⁹. It has been our constant pursuit that man and Nature could live in harmony with each other. The concept of the Ecological Civilization and eco-civilization building have been written into China's Constitution and incorporated into China's overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics.³⁶⁰ China takes the Ideology of Ecological Civilization as guidance to implement a new development philosophy. We will aim to achieve greener economic and social development in all aspects, with a special focus on developing green and low-carbon energy. We will continue to prioritize ecological conservation and pursue a green and low-carbon path to development.

Last year, I made the official announcement that China will realize the carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. This major strategic decision is made based on our sense of responsibility to build a community with a shared future for mankind and our own need to secure sustainable development. China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinarily hard efforts from China. The targets of carbon peak and carbon neutrality have been added to China's overall plan for building the Ecological civilization³⁶¹. We are now making an action plan and are already taking strong nationwide actions toward carbon peak. Support is being given to peaking pioneers from localities, sectors and companies. China will strictly control coal-fired power generation projects, and strictly limit the increase in coal consumption over the 14th Five-Year Plan period and phase it down³⁶² in the 15th Five-Year Plan period. Moreover, China has decided to accept the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and tighten regulations over non-carbon dioxide emissions. China's national carbon market will also start trading.

As a participant, contributor and leader in global eco-civilization building³⁶³, China is firmly committed to putting multilateralism into action and promoting a fair and equitable system of global environmental governance for win-win cooperation. China will host COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity this October and looks forward to working with all parties to

³⁵⁸ 天人合一 literally: heaven and man are one. It refers to the idea of seeing mankind as an integral part of nature. The concept is an integral part of Chinese philosophy being used in all three Chinese schools (Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism).

³⁵⁹ 道法自然 an expression drawn from the Daoist book "Dao De Jing" (道德经). It can be interpreted as meaning "The laws of the Dao are natural" or as "follow the laws of nature". The official translation follows the second interpretation which I would have chosen as well since surely the Chinese president is not speaking as a Daoist. It is clear however, that Xi Jinping refers to the Daoist culture when quoting 道法自然.

³⁶⁰ The official translation reads: "Ecological advancement and conservation have been written into China's Constitution and incorporated into China's overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics." In Chinese it reads: 中国将生态文明理念和生态文明建设写入《中华人民共和国宪法》，纳入中国特色社会主义总体布局。The Chinese text twice reads "shengtai wenming" (生态文明) "ecological civilization" or "eco-civilization", but the English version translates it "ecological advancement" and "conservation" instead. Without reading the Chinese version, it is not clear that Xi Jinping refers to the "Ecological Civilization" which is one of the ideologies he prominently highlights since he came into power.

³⁶¹ Xi says „shengtai wenming jianshe“ (生态文明建设) = building of the Ecological Civilization. The official version translates Shengtai wenming as „ecological conservation“ and does not translate „jianshe“ at all.

³⁶² “十五五”时期逐步减少 is what Xi actually said. “zhubu jian shao” (逐步减少) literally means “to reduce or cut down step by step” which is more vague than the English expression of “coal phase out”. When speaking of the phase out of nuclear power for example, I found “tao tai” (淘汰) as the translation for “phase out” which is clearer since it means “to wash out”, “to eliminate”. The official version of Xi's speech translates it as “phase down” and all English quotations from the speech also speak of “phase down” or “phase out”. I therefore chose to translate it as “phase down” although I am afraid it might be less clear in Chinese.

³⁶³ In the official translation „eco-civilization building“ is once more translated „ecological conservation“

enhance global governance on biodiversity. We support COP26 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in achieving positive outcomes. China adheres to the principle that “It is more important to show people how to fish than just giving them fish³⁶⁴.” China has done its best to help developing countries build capacity against climate change through various forms of results-oriented South-South cooperation. From remote sensing satellites for climate monitoring in Africa to low-carbon demonstration zones in Southeast Asia and to energy-efficient lights in small island countries, Chinas South-South cooperation to face climate change cooperation has yielded visible, tangible and solid results. China has also made cooperation in the field of ecological civilization become a key part of Belt and Road cooperation³⁶⁵. A number of green action initiatives have been launched, covering wide-ranging efforts in green infrastructure, green energy, green transport and green finance, to bring enduring benefits to the people of all Belt and Road partner countries.

Colleagues,

“When people pull together, nothing is too heavy to be lifted.”³⁶⁶ Climate change poses real, severe and long-term challenges to humanity. But I strongly believe that we only need to think with one mind and work with one heart³⁶⁷, [that we only need to row together] to cross the turbulent river³⁶⁸, [that we only need to] protect and help each other, so humanity will then inevitable be able to overcome the global climate and environmental challenges and leave a clean a beautiful world to future generations.

Thank you everyone.

³⁶⁴ 中方秉持“授人以渔”理念，(...)

³⁶⁵ “Shengtai wenming” (生态文明) is again translated as „ecological conservation“ which fits better in this context than in the examples before.

³⁶⁶ 众力并，则万钧不足举也。 This is a quote in classical Chinese meaning that with common efforts of many people everything can be done. I took over the translation from the official English version in this case.

³⁶⁷ 心往一处想，劲往一处使

³⁶⁸ Xi here uses the metaphor of “crossing the river in the same boat” (同舟共济) which we’ve seen before, but here the sense is slightly different. Here it means we have to row with unite forces.

Résumé en français :

Limiter le changement climatique est devenu une question urgente, et la pression sur les États s'accroît. Au niveau international, les dirigeants des différents pays doivent coopérer étroitement et convenir de lignes directrices internationales pour s'attaquer à ce problème mondial. Pour préparer et guider cette action politique urgente, la communauté internationale doit tout d'abord s'entendre sur des objectifs contraignants ainsi que sur la répartition des responsabilités des uns et des autres. Dans ce processus, il existe néanmoins un risque de malentendu et de mauvaise interprétation des discours et des engagements publics de chacun. Cette recherche vise à comparer la façon dont la Chine et l'Allemagne traitent rhétoriquement le changement climatique et l'élimination progressive de l'utilisation du charbon. Au moyen d'une analyse critique du discours, avec une analyse quantitative et qualitative des données, cette recherche examine et compare une sélection des discours les plus récents de la chancelière Merkel et du président Xi sur le changement climatique. Notre objectif est de mettre en évidence les grandes différences dans le discours public sur un engagement politique pratiquement identique et, par conséquent, d'améliorer la compréhension et éventuellement la confiance dans les promesses publiques de chaque partie sur les questions climatiques.

Mots clés en français : Changement climatique, Analyse de Discours, Angela Merkel, Xi Jinping, Coopération internationale

Résumé en anglais:

Limiting climate change has become an urgent matter, and pressure on states is growing. Internationally, leaders from different nations need to cooperate closely and agree on international guidelines to tackle this global problem. To prepare for and guide through urgently needed political action, the international community first needs to agree on binding targets and allocation of responsibilities. In this process there is a risk of misunderstanding and misreading each other's public speeches and public commitments. This research aims to compare how China and Germany rhetorically deal with climate change and coal phase-out. By the means of critical discourse analysis, with both a quantitative and qualitative data analysis, this research examines and compares a selection of the most recent speeches by Chancellor Merkel and President Xi on climate change. Our aim is to highlight the big differences in public discourse on much the same kind of political commitment and thereby enhance understanding and possibly trust in the public promises of each side on climate issues.

Mots clés en anglais:

Climate change, discourse analysis, Angela Merkel, Xi Jinping, international cooperation