



Framing it right: China-EU relations and patterns of interaction on climate change

EU, Emerging Powers and Climate change
Conference on the EU & the Emerging Powers, Brussels, April 28, 2013, 11:30 am

Research Questions

Scenario of this paper:

- What shapes Chinese frames on climate change?
- How do they compare with European frames?
- Who are the stakeholders in the domestic policy network behind the Chinese position?
- What effects do overlaps have on EU-China climate relations?

Structure

- Research question
- What are frames?
- Frames of Climate Change
- Determinants
- Stakeholders
- EU-China relations



Theoretical Framework

Social movements theory (Snow/Benford 1988)

Three core tasks of framing:

diagnostic framing for the identification of a problem and assignment of blame

prognostic framing to suggest solutions, strategies, and tactics to a problem

motivational framing that serves as a call to arms or rationale for action

Theoretical Framework

Social movements theory (Snow/Benford 1988)

Three core tasks of framing:

Assumption: the more frames align, the better cooperation can emerge

framing for the problem

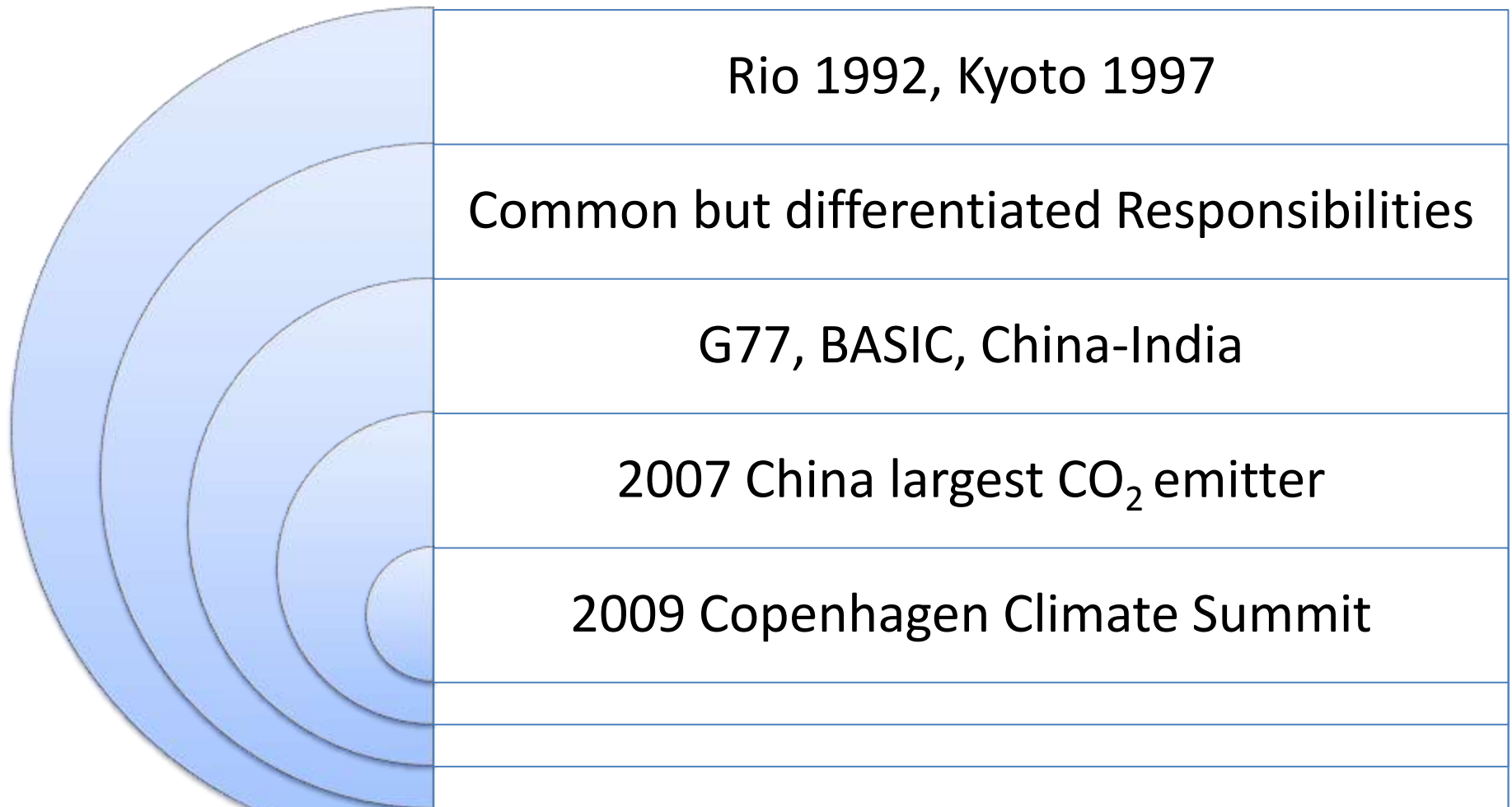
suggests and tactics

motivational framing that serves as a call to arms or rationale for action

Methodology

- Literature review (esp. Chinese writing and policy papers)
- Semi-structured interviews with academics, public think tanks, NGOs, and policy makers in Beijing.
- Questions about frames, norms, policies, motivations, personal history

Chinese behaviour in international CC negotiations is a two-level game of international and domestic pressures.



1. Diagnostic Frame

- Support of climate science: Anthropogenic
- Problem definition: climate change effects felt in China
- International power struggle
- Historical responsibility by the developed countries (CBDR)

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EU: scientific frame, sunk costs, responsibility through financial mechanisms

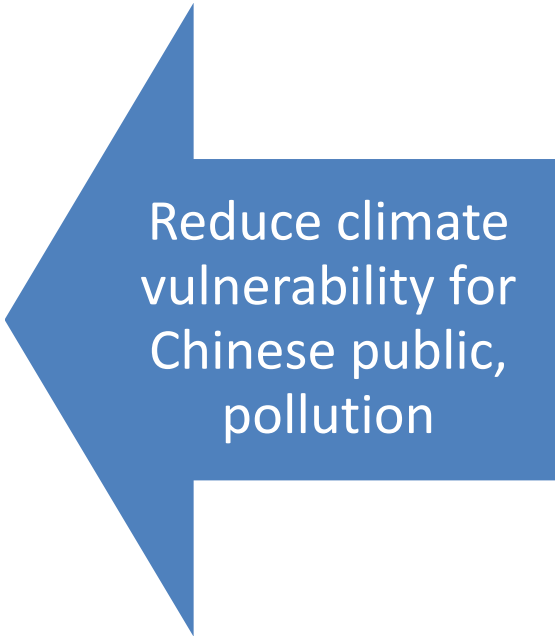
2. Prognostic Frame

Strategies advocated by China:

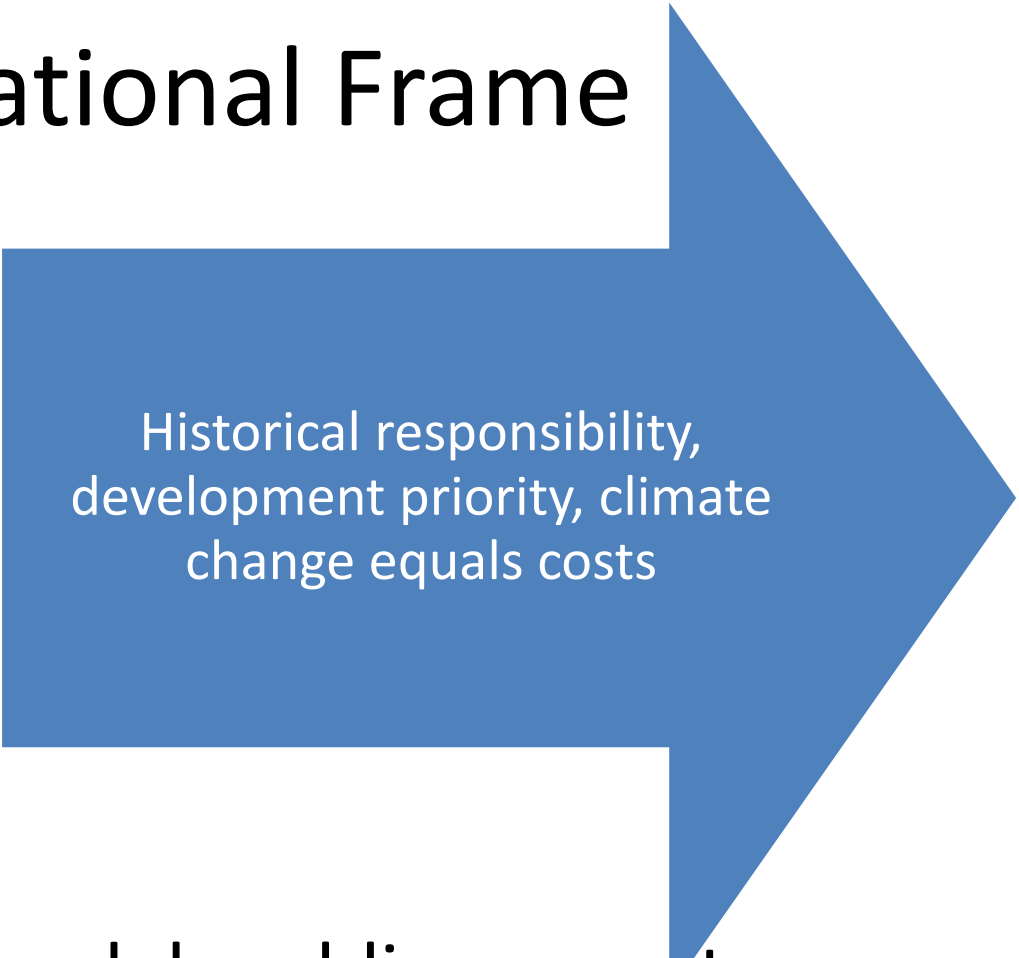
- Global emissions reductions based on CBDR
- Protection of the status quo: extension of the Kyoto Protocol or new calculation of reduction targets
- Local policy changes since 2007 – energy intensity targets, renewable energy law, carbon intensity

EU goal: global climate deal including all countries,
esp. China and India

3. Motivational Frame



Reduce climate
vulnerability for
Chinese public,
pollution



Historical responsibility,
development priority, climate
change equals costs

EU motivation: rolemodel, public support,
responsibility by the global community,
debt crisis

Determinants of changing frames

1. dramatic shift of energy usage, drop in energy intensity 1990-2002, increase in energy intensity after 2003
2. increasing environmental pollution and awareness of climate change effects

Determinants of changing frames

IPCC Fourth Assessment Report

Increase in mean temperature by 0.7° (1961-2000) in Northwest China

Increase Rainfall by 22-33% (1961-2000) in Northwest China

Extreme Rains and short duration heat waves

Tibetan and Himalaya-Hindukush glacial melting

Sea level rise (eg Zhujiang)

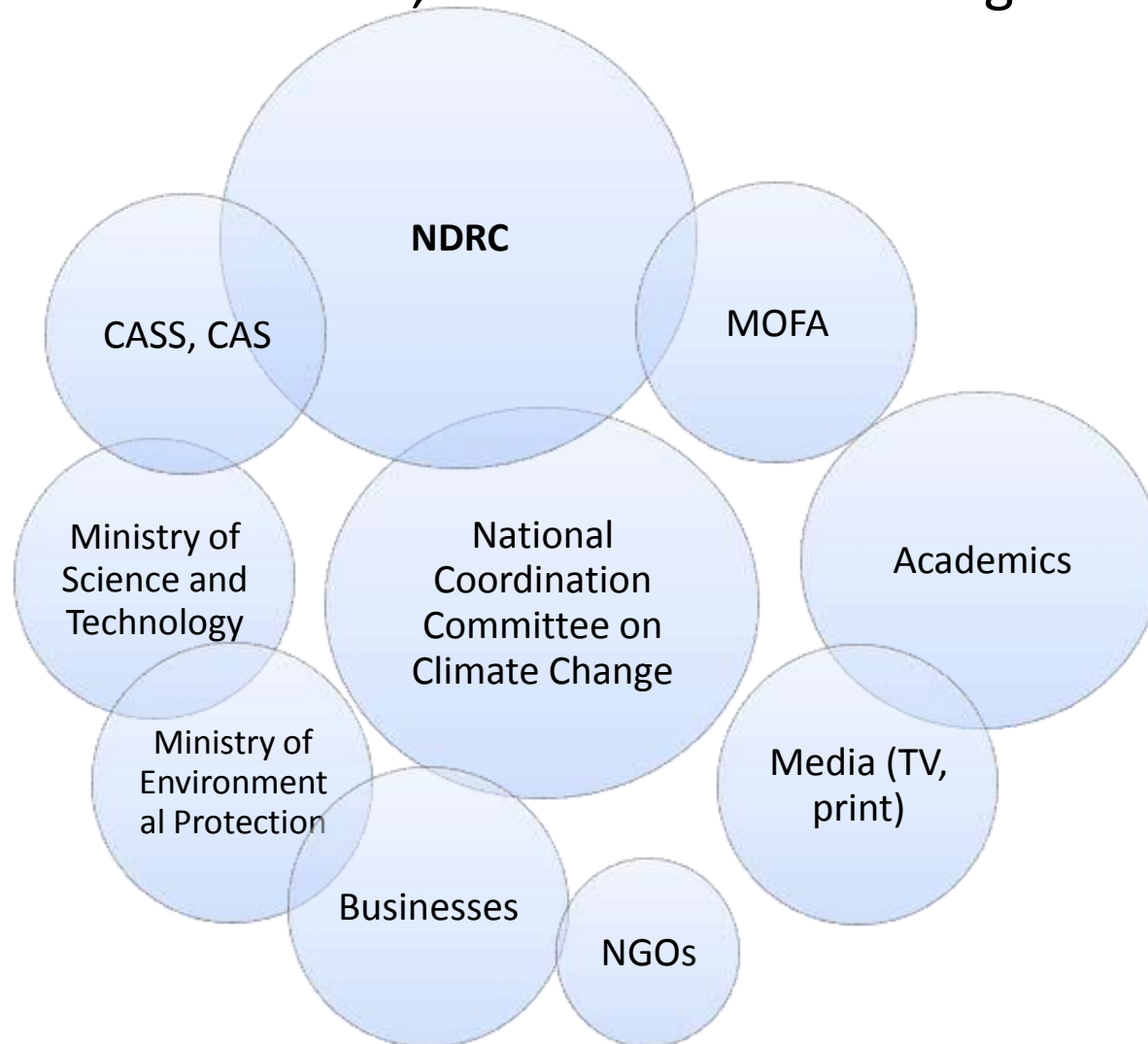
Tibet increased livestock production

Warmer climate, precipitation decline and droughts in most delta regions of China

Determinants of changing frames

1. dramatic shift of energy usage, drop in energy intensity 1990-2002, increase in energy intensity after 2003
2. increasing environmental pollution
3. change in industrial policy – which was actually beneficial for Chinese industry (Wuxi, Dezhou etc)
4. Great power status

The Chinese position at the UNFCCC tends to be informed by a variety of stakeholders, with the NDRC having final power.



China-EU relations are affected by Chinese stakeholders' frames on climate change.

“EU important, but incomparable“

- stronger association with the United States or Chinese particularism
- Academics, policy-makers, think tanks

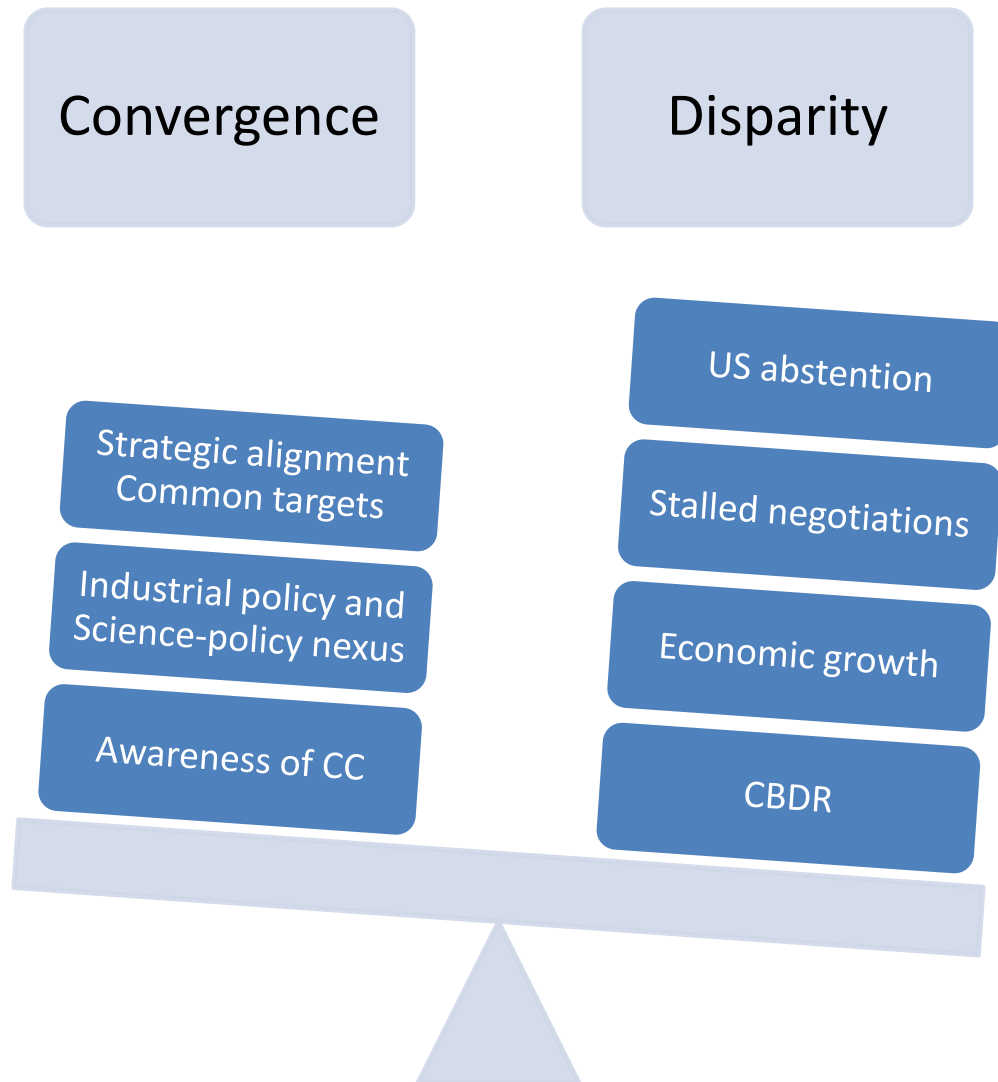
"CC commitments part of EU neo-imperialist agenda"

- Eventual "natural" alliance of EU and US
- Media, selected individuals

"EU as a leader, worth analyzing"

- NGOs, selected individuals

The determinants of EU-China climate relationship are changing.



Conclusion

- EU-China relations in the field of climate change have evolved over the past decade due to
 - changes in the framing of the climate change debate
 - changes of determinants of Chinese policy-making in general
 - changes in the domestic decision-making structures of the Chinese climate change network.

Thank you very much.

**For the full paper, please kindly send me an email. I am looking forward to your feedback:
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