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EU-China Relations on Climate Change Policies and The Role of Bilateral Cooperation for a Global Climate Change Regime

Astrid Carrapatoso¹

Abstract

What must the European Union do to make China commit to binding regulations on greenhouse gases? China has been one of the major veto players with regard to binding rules on carbon emissions in context of the Kyoto Protocol and the negotiations of a Post-Kyoto arrangement. And yet, China is one of the largest polluters in this respect. Because of its economic growth rates, emissions are likely to rise in the future. It is therefore necessary to find viable solutions that encourage China to limit and finally reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In contrast, the EU has internationally showed leadership in climate change policy. The EU is often considered as a normative power, i.e. having the ideational power to define what can be perceived 'normal' on the international level.

The question is whether the bilateral cooperation between the EU and China on climate issues can help to (a) promote norms and values and generate an increased awareness of climate change both on the political and societal level, (b) establish comprehensive environmental policy frameworks on a bilateral basis with a positive impact on national policy making and (c) positively influence environmental policy making on the international level such as the Post-Kyoto negotiations on climate change.

This paper seeks to set a research agenda for the exploration of the EU's normative power with regard to climate change policy in China. As the main research objective will be to find out about the acceptance and adaptation of norms related to climate change, the concept of normative power and the discussion on norm diffusion and norm localization will be central to this analysis. Furthermore, this study will be embedded in the debate on 'new bilateralism', thus concentrating on new actors, agendas and instruments in bilateral relations.

Introduction

To institutionalize and enhance their cooperation on climate change issues, the European Union (EU) and China agreed on a partnership agreement in 2005, which sets out key objectives for further efforts to jointly address the issue of climate change. This declaration was translated into a Rolling Action Plan (RWP) in 2006. Since then, the EU and China regularly launched bilateral consultations and summits to further develop joint projects such as, for example, the COACH project (Cooperation Action with CCS China-EU). The joint declaration is meant to "fully complement the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. It will strengthen cooperation and dialogue on climate change including clean energy, and will promote sustainable development" (EC 2009). This comment raises three questions that will guide this research: (a) Will this cooperation merely include technical issues or does it have the potential to promote the norm of sustainable development and climate change being part of it? (b) Will such a bilateral cooperation be successful in establishing sound environmental policy frameworks on a national basis? (c) Will bilateral cooperation on climate change such as the one between the EU and China help or hinder the development of a global climate change regime after the Kyoto Protocol will have expired? These questions will become crucial in the light of the upcoming negotiations of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen in December 2009. Here, member states will decide on the future directions of global climate change policy making and the integration of China into such an agreement and China's

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acceptance on quantitative emission goals will be decisive. At the UNFCCC conference in Bali in 2007, China for the first time agreed on discussing these issues in context of a Post-Kyoto-Protocol. Whether this leads into a binding commitment will not only depend on China's willingness to do so but also on the industrialized nations' assistance in developing and implementing climate change policies in China and in giving the right incentives for China to also independently set up policies to address problems causing and caused by climate change. Both the EU and the U.S. will play an important role in this respect.

The objective of this research project is to explore the sources of EU and Chinese climate change policy making and the role and function of EU-China relations on climate change policy for international relations. To find out about the sources will help to map existing or potential cooperation between European and Chinese actors. Based on the assumption that official cooperation frameworks such as the above mentioned joint declaration are not only implemented through political actors but also through business and civil society actors, one research goal of this project is to find out about both political and societal actors involved in this cooperation. Furthermore, this analysis wants to illustrate EU-China cooperation on different levels, i.e. projects on the political, business and civil society level to explore the nature and key aspects of EU-China bilateral relations.

The analysis will be embedded in the debate on 'new bilateralism' (Kiatpongsan 2008), 'bilateral inter-regionalism' (Ponjaert 2008) or 'quasi-interregionalism' (Hänggi 2006) and blended with insights gained from foreign policy analysis (Hudson 2005; Goldstein/Keohane 1993; Boekle/Rittberger/Wagner 1999; Risse 2000). New bilateralism focuses on new actors beyond government-to-government relations, new agendas also emphasizing issue linkages such as trade and environment or sustainable development and new instruments that include 'multiple issue-specific alliances', which means that bilateral agreements focus on specific policy areas (Kiatpongsan 2008; Smith/Tsatsas 2002). The study of EU-China relations on climate change policy therefore seeks to explore both the political and societal actors involved in climate change policy making, their objectives and motivations, the climate change agenda, the instruments to be used, including strategic dialogues, summits, track-two-diplomacy and policy networks and the effect of these bilateral relations on the international system. Furthermore, as this study deals with the promotion and establishment of the norm of sustainable development in context of climate change, this analysis will be guided by the literature on the EU as a normative power and the aspect of norm localization (Manners 2002; Acharya 2004). Here, the question refers to the ideational power of the EU "to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international relations" (Manners 2002: 239), i.e. to promote its ideas on climate change policies in a multilateral and bilateral context. Acharya reflects this process from the perspective of the norm-taker, which means that he asks about the process of adapting external norms and ideas "to meet local practices" (Acharya 2004: 251). The question is on which levels such norms are promoted and localized. The analysis of both the political and societal level is therefore necessary.

Methodologically, the analysis of EU-China relations on climate change issues consists of two parts. First, a theoretical discussion of 'new bilateralism', 'interregionalism' in addition to Europe as a normative power and norm localization will lead to an analytical framework for the exploration of environmental foreign policy making in context of bilateral inter-regional relations. Constructing an analytical framework out of these concepts and theories is challenging on several counts:

- (a) the major focus of the 'new bilateralism' and 'interregionalism' debate has been on trade and economic issues and has not been applied to environmental issues yet,
- (b) considering the EU as a normative power leads us to constructivist foreign policy theory, which deals with norms, values and belief systems. This not only bears

- definitional problems but requires profound cultural knowledge; moreover, the security agenda still dominates foreign policy analysis so that an analysis of environmental foreign policy making needs a clarification of environmental norms,
- (c) the concept of the EU as a normative power is highly contested and needs further clarification with regard to environmental issues.
- (d) foreign policy analysis of both international and bilateral environmental cooperation is close to non-existent so that only few academic writings can serve as reference points.

The major objective of the theoretical part will thus be to work out the main characteristics of 'new bilateralism' such as actors, agendas and instruments (e.g. Kiatpongsan 2008), the sources of climate change policy making, the functions of interregional relations such as agenda-setting or identity-building (e.g. Rüländ 2001), and the role of norms as part of the constructivist agenda (e.g. Risse 2000; Sedelmaier 2004), including the EU's role as a normative power (e.g. Manners 2002) and the perception of this role or reaction by China.

The theoretical part will be followed by an empirical analysis of EU-China relations with regard to climate change policy. The analysis will be done in three stages:

- (a) On a sub-systemic level, the sources of the EU's and China's climate change policy behaviour will be identified. This is crucial to explain the two parties' motivations for bilateral cooperation in environmental issues. Here, the focus lies in domestic and societal aspects of climate change policy making.
- (b) On a systemic level, the EU and China will be considered as the primary actors in bilateral relations and their interaction on the bilateral level will be explored.
- (c) The analysis will then continue to link the sub-systemic with the systemic level, thus highlighting the role of societal actors including business in the implementation of policies decided on at the systemic level.
- (d) In a final step, the interplay between bilateral cooperation and the international system will be analyzed. The challenge is here to work out causalities between the bilateral and multilateral level.

The research will follow a discourse analytical design. To begin with the research process, I will explore the relevant discourses regarding EU-China cooperation on climate change. The discourses will be identified on both the sub-systemic and systemic level, i.e. discourses on the business and civil society level as well as on the level of EU-China political relations. The analysis will be based on a document analysis and qualitative interviews. The study of EU-China relations with regard to climate change will be based on the analysis of primary and secondary sources, i.e. academic literature to be found in university libraries and the internet, legal documents, official (government) websites and press releases (such as <http://europa.eu>), media releases (official newspapers), websites from societal actors such as environmental non-governmental organizations or foundations (e.g. Asia-Europe Foundation), websites and documents from business, documentation of strategic dialogues and summits (including the Asia-Europe Meeting, ASEM), documentation of the work of policy and scientific networks (e.g. Green Diplomacy Network). This document analysis will be complemented by qualitative interviews – narrative and expert interviews -, which are based on a semi-structured questionnaire to allow for greater flexibility in more or less informal interview situations. The selection of interviewees will be based on a network approach.

The methodological tools will be complemented by the method of process tracing. This helps to understand the causal relationships between different variables over time. The

analysis starts with the establishment of the EU-China Strategic Partnership in 2005 and follows the current negotiations on a Post-Kyoto Arrangement until a final agreement is decided on in Copenhagen 2009. To remain flexible, the period to be analysed might be expanded.

As the research project is in its early stages, this paper is meant to explore the theoretical dimension of this research agenda and give a first broad overview of the empirical part. I will focus on the concepts of new bilateralism and norm localization as a possible analytical framework for the outlined research project. I will then continue to outline existing cooperation between the EU and China on climate change policies, identify incentives for China to strengthen and deepen cooperation with the EU in this respect and to describe instruments that are or might be important in this cooperation. Possible actors that could act as norm promoters and norm takers will be worked out.

New Bilateralism – What Is The Concept About?

The concept of new bilateralism was introduced in the 1980s (e.g. Haggard/Cheng 1989) and has since been discussed under the terms of inter-regionalism (e.g. Rüländ 2001) or quasi-interregionalism (e.g. Hänggi 2006). Scholars became interested in the changing nature of international relations and the emergence of new forms of bilateral cooperation instead of relying merely on multilateral structures. This observation could specifically be made in the area of trade and finance. A well-known phenomenon is the boom of bilateral and inter- or cross-regional free trade agreements in the Asia-Pacific region since the end of the 1990s (e.g. Dent 2006). Ravenhill (2003) sees new bilateralism as a reaction to the failure of existing international and regional institutions and the positive effects that could be established through new forms of bilateralism. The main research question is why states actively pursue these new forms of bilateral cooperation despite the advantages of multilateralism that are widely accepted by policy makers. The related question refers to the short-term and long-term impacts of new bilateralism for the international system.

The main characteristics of new bilateralism can also be derived from the literature on new regionalism. Rüländ (2001) identifies four key features of new regionalism:

- more diffuse membership,
- growing agenda complexity,
- development of its own organizational infrastructure,
- emergence of new independent actors.

Kiatpongsan (2008) translates these features into new bilateralism by concentrating on new actors, agendas and instruments. On a government-to-government basis, new actors particularly come in on the level of track-two diplomacy. Here, corresponding officials, academics or experts become important players. Furthermore, business and civil society actors regularly participate in this kind of interaction (ibid.: 23). The traditional agendas of bilateral relations – economy, security, development – are conceptually modified. With regard to the economy, for instance, more sensitive issues such as the environment or agriculture are addressed in bilateral agreements (e.g. Fritz Carrapatoso 2007). The security agenda now follows a more comprehensive understanding of the security concept, thus integrating non-conventional security issues including topics such as, for example, the environment (ibid.: 27; see also Buzan/Weaver/de Wilde 1998; WBGU 2008; Diehl/Gleditsch 2001). The development agenda has shifted away from the traditional aid pattern and is now strongly based on issue-linkages. This means that development objectives are now linked to, for example, trade or security policies (ibid.: 32).

States or regions decide to establish bilateral relations in addition to multilateral efforts for many reasons. Smith and Tsatsas (2002:3-9) highlight the following factors determining bilateral relations:

- Geographical, historical, religious, cultural and trade factors influence the scope and depth of bilateral relations.
- Pragmatism is a key factor, i.e. choosing partners with compatible interests to achieve shared objectives.
- Existing personal ties and regular contact between political actors facilitate cooperation.
- Good personal relations are decisive for the effectiveness of bilateral relations.
- Coalition-building is influenced by the existence of traditional alliances and geographical proximity.

Bilateral relations have always been in the logic of EU policy-making. They have played a vital role in EU decision-making and are therefore important not only within the EU but also in its external relations. However, Smith and Tsatsas see “a danger in over-emphasizing bilateral initiatives. They may be vital for effective policy-making, but achieving desired policy outcomes remains the key aim” (ibid.: xiii). In addition to creating and implementing effective policies, bilateral cooperation frameworks bear the potential to promote norms, motivate social learning and thus can help to bring about a paradigm shift in a country’s policy making. Whether an organisation like the EU can act as a normative power depends on two factors: First, the development of a norm such as sustainable development needs a strong societal basis for two reasons. On the one hand, such a norm is considered a legitimate basis for policy-making when it is accepted by a wide range of societal and political actors. On the other hand, norms are promoted on both a political and societal level. To avoid contradictory policies and activities, a strong consensus on a norm is important. Second, the cooperating country must be willing to adopt such a norm. This is the basis for identifying common interests and effective policy-making. The acceptance and adoption of external norms does not only have to be by merely imitating but can also happen through the process of norm localization. This provides a norm like sustainable development with more legitimacy in the cooperating country and sets a long-term basis for future policy-making. The main characteristics of the concepts of normative power and norm localization will be discussed in the following section.

Normative Power Europe – How Norms are Spread and Localized

With his article “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, Ian Manners (2002) started a lively debate on the potential of the European Union to shape ideas and norms both within and outside Europe. In the tradition of Europe as a civilian power (Maull 1990), Europe’s power is not seen in the realm of military action. Rather, Europe is considered to have the ideational power “to shape conceptions of ‘normal’ in international relations” (Manners 2002: 239). The EU has a strong normative basis which guides EU policies and external relations. Manners identifies five core norms and four minor, although far more contested, norms. The first ones include peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and human rights. The minor norms refer to social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance (Manners 2002: 242). He continues in his argumentation by emphasizing the necessity not only to accept but to diffuse these norms in order to speak of a normative power. There are six factors shaping the process of norm diffusion: contagion, information, procedures, transference, overt diffusion and cultural filter (Manners 2002: 244-245). Contagion refers to unintentional diffusion, meaning that the EU acts as an example of

successful regional integration. The aspect of information centres upon strategic communications, while procedures mean the institutionalization of a relationship with a third party. Transference highlights the diffusion taking place when the EU practices its politics, e.g. through the exchange of goods. Overt diffusion emphasizes the role of the EU through its physical presence in a third country. Finally, norm diffusion is shaped by a cultural filter, which is based on the “interplay between the construction of knowledge and the creation of social and political identity” (Manners 2002: 245). The aspect of a cultural filter becomes crucial in the literature on norm localization rather than norm diffusion. While norm diffusion seen from a constructivist perspective of socialization is considered as a result of adaptive behaviour, i.e. that “local practices are made consistent with an external idea”, localization “describes a process in which external ideas are simultaneously adapted to meet local practices” (Acharya 2004: 251). Acharya argues in favour of “a dynamic explanation of norm diffusion that describes how local agents reconstruct foreign norms to ensure the norms fit with the agents’ cognitive priors and identities” (ibid.: 239). Norm localization emphasizes the role of domestic actors in determining the “reception of new global norms”, thus focusing on political, organizational and cultural variables in the specific country or region (ibid.: 243). Localization shows three characteristics: framing, grafting and congruence of ideas. Framing refers to the creation of issues, particularly through language. Grafting is understood as associating new norms with pre-existing norms. In a final step, through re-interpretation and re-representation of foreign norms, these norms are made congruent with prior local norms. Congruence-building is done by so-called “norm takers” (ibid.: 244). In sum, Acharya defines localization “as the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices” (ibid.: 245). Why foreign ideas are adjusted can be traced back to three factors: strengthening of existing institutions, rational exclusion of elements of new ideas to preserve the existing social order, enhance the profile and prestige of local actors and beliefs (ibid.: 246). The willingness or necessity to localize these foreign ideas can be found in the questioning of existing rules in context of a major crisis, systemic change, domestic political change in the norm taker or because of an international or regional demonstration effect (ibid.: 247). There are some conditions why localization is pursued and some advantages attributed to this process. First, the localization of foreign norms can improve legitimacy and authority of local actors without challenging existing social identities. Second, the strength of pre-existing local norms will become visible. Third, there must be local actors who are both credible and powerful in terms of shaping the discourse. Finally, the norm-takers have to have a strong sense of identity, i.e. they are aware of existing values and their uniqueness. (ibid.: 248-249)

The understanding for the process of norm localization becomes crucial when it comes to the question of how to promote European norms in third countries to facilitate cooperation. Past and current relations of the EU and member states to China show that Chinese self-perception and values are key to their commitment in the area of, for instance, climate change. In addition to taking the Chinese cultural and historical background into account, the normative role of the EU in climate change issues highly depends on its own developments in this respect (Scheipers/Sicurelli 2007:448). An ambitious climate change policy will not only enforce the EU’s leadership in climate protection but being the global best practice case will increase its credibility.

The EU’s identity-building with regard to climate change was influenced by the opposing position of the U.S. under the Bush Administration. The more the U.S. opposed the Kyoto Protocol the more unified the EU got and the more ambitious its policies were formulated. It further strengthened its self-perception as the leading power in climate issues. (Scheipers/Sicurelli 2007: 445-446). The EU thus became an attractive partner in the

worldwide promotion of technology transfer, the exchange of know-how and the enhancement of global and regional and national strategies for mitigation and adaptation measures. Leading by example can thus be considered as the strongest power of the EU to integrate other countries into multilateral efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This means the EU's major strengths lie in its contribution to norm-spreading and institution-building by using appropriate instruments such as multilateralism, diplomacy, precaution and the establishment of binding rules through international law-making (Scheipers/Sicurelli 2007: 451-452).

Constructing norms and promoting them does not take place in a vacuum and norms are not "a given". From a European perspective, the norms shaping EU policies come from civil society and political elites (Manners 2002: 251). These norms are then mostly delivered through transnational and supranational organizations. Business as well has become decisive in promoting norms through their activities and cooperation with businesses in other countries. It is therefore likely that the process of norm localization takes place on three levels: civil society, business and political elites. The question is not only to what extent these norms are promoted through transnational or bilateral co-operations but also through which actors and networks this is done. We should therefore ask who acts as a norm promoter from a European perspective and who are the norm-takers or norm-localizers in China. This means we have to, first, ask about the sources of norm creation on the European level and, second, to identify the counterparts for norm localization in China. Finally, we can ask about the relevance of these forms of cooperation in (a) promoting norms on sustainable development and climate change in China and (b) the contribution of this alternative ways to multilateralism in enhancing the global climate change regime.

In the following section, I will discuss the role of the EU as a norm promoter by outlining the key aspects of its climate change policy. By showing leadership in climate change policies and instruments, the EU has a best practice case as a solid basis for promoting the norm of sustainable development. This will be followed by a brief introduction into China's environmental problems as a trigger for an intensified cooperation with foreign partners. In a subsequent step, I will outline the major cooperation frameworks between China and the EU on the systemic level and continue with some examples of other institutional cooperation such as between China and the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Investment Bank (EIB). A first overview will be given on cooperation on the sub-systemic level. In the research project, cooperation between business actors and civil society actors will be analysed. In this paper, the focus will however be on civil society.

Showing Leadership: The EU Policy on Climate Change

In 2008, the European Parliament and Council agreed on a "Climate Action and Renewable Energy Package", which was drafted by the European Commission. In this package, the member states re-emphasized their commitment to the mitigation of and the adaptation to climate change. The following goals were set out (European Commission 2009, 2009a, 2009b):

- Cutting emissions to at least 20 per cent by 2020 compared to levels in 1990; member states agreed to reduce emissions to 30 per cent if other developed countries agreed on comparable reductions in a Post-Kyoto agreement. The instrument to be used is the Emission Trading System (ETS). This instrument, which is in effect since 2005, has to be strengthened. It is "the largest multi-country, multi-sector Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading System world-wide" (European Commission 2009c).

- Cutting emissions of sectors excluded from the ETS (transport, agriculture, waste and households) to 10 per cent compared to the level in 2005 by 2020. This has to be done through binding national targets. With regard to transport, the aviation sector will be integrated into the ETS from 2012 onwards. Furthermore, CO₂ emissions from new cars have to be reduced to an average of 130g per km.
- Increasing energy use of renewable energy to 20 per cent by 2020. Having a 10 per cent share for sustainably produced biofuels and other renewable fuels in transport.
- Cutting energy consumption to 20 per cent by 2020 through improving energy efficiency.
- Promoting the development and safe use of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology.
- Increasing research and development in environment, energy and transport to further enhance and promote clean technologies and to widen the understanding of climate change and its impacts.
- Reducing air pollution and health costs.
- Increasing employment through the support and development of eco-industries.

The EU is a strong promoter of the norm of sustainable development, which becomes visible in its efforts to tackle climate change. The EU has developed a leading position in the global climate change regime and acts as a best-practice example with regard to its emission trading system and the development of new technologies. The ambitious goals with regard to CO₂ emissions and the integration of further economic sectors into the ETS are promoted on an international level. Nevertheless, in order to remain competitive on the global market, the EU requires other developed countries to show similar efforts and wants developing countries like China to agree on binding rules with regard to emission reductions. To underline the EU's own commitment to global climate protection, it would further increase its own emission targets.

The EU has shown that climate protection can be economically beneficial through the development of new industries and the creation of new jobs in addition to the implementation of a successful emission trading scheme, which has not created significant economic downturns. Furthermore, the EU enlargement process has illustrated that economic development and environmental protection can be integrated. European environmental standards had to be adopted and implemented by the new member states. To meet future challenges in innovation, the EU opted for both push- and pull-strategies. The pull-strategies include the development of a market value for greenhouse gases and the phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies. Moreover, the development and implementation of market-based instruments should be facilitated. The push-strategies are composed of an increase in financial support for innovative research and the establishment of public-private-partnerships, especially to foster international cooperation (European Commission 2005).

Speaking in Manners' terms: the EU promotes its norms through contagion, which means that the EU acts as a successful example for the development of a sound climate change policy that integrates economic and environmental policies to fight global warming. The EU is however criticized for not fully using its potential through complex internal negotiations (Gupta/Ringius 2001). Nevertheless, many countries consider the EU as a best practice case. This picture is further promoted by the EU itself through international cooperation, which the example of the EU-China relations on climate change shows. To strengthen cooperation with a country like China, the EU seeks to give economic incentives, to improve information exchange and communication structures, but a successful cooperation also depends on China's willingness to seriously participate in this. Such willingness is further pushed through external factors like serious environmental degradation in China. This

reality has been accepted by the Chinese government, which facilitates international cooperation in this respect and also increases the likeliness of the Chinese government and society to adopt and localize the norm of sustainable development. The next section will briefly outline China's most urgent environmental problems, which are also all related to global warming.

Environmental Problems in China: A Catalyst for Cooperation?

Environmental problems in China are manifold and now bear the potential for social unrest on a national level and diplomatic conflicts on an international level. In addition to (unequal) economic growth and a huge population, the lack of political transparency and the inequalities in the enforcement of environmental policies put further stress on the Chinese environment (Edmonds 2008: 271, 295). The major environmental challenges that could be identified for China are deforestation, water scarcity, desertification, flooding, soil erosion, glacial retreat, population growth and pollution (Economy 2005: 204-205; Edmonds 2008: 271). All these problems are and will be intensified by climate change, which the IPCC report clearly illustrated with regard to China (IPCC 2007). In 2008, the Chinese government reacted to climate change issues and recently published its „White Paper: China's policies and actions on climate change“ (Chinese Central Government 2009), in which they point out the situation and impacts, develop strategies and objectives for addressing climate change and laid out policies and actions decelerate and adapt to climate change. The government also emphasizes the importance of enhancing public awareness and the necessity to cooperate internationally.

The urgency of China's environmental problems including those caused and intensified by climate change was underlined by a World Bank report in 2007. In this report, the World Bank states that even though economic development has positively impacted on the environment in terms of technology improvements, a changing industrial structure in terms of energy efficiency and pollution control and general pollution control policies, the environmental problems are pressing and cause a lot of costs. Increasing health problems, crop and material damage through air and water pollution, deterioration of the water problem would cost the Chinese government billions of dollars per year (World Bank 2007). China is therefore interested in cooperation with both international institutions and other countries to tackle its environmental problems. China has received strong assistance from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and Japan. They helped China in developing and implementing environmental protection work such as monitoring systems, developing a legal system and analyzing energy alternatives (Economy 2005: 209-210). Nevertheless, economic growth should not be compromised for the sake of environmental protection. The best case scenario would therefore be to combine continuing growth, democracy and environmental protection. The reality however shows a different picture. This has once again become clear in the ongoing negotiation process of the Post-Kyoto-Protocol. To assure China's participation in a global climate change regime, not only financial and economic incentives given by other countries and international institutions to help China develop a “greener” economic structure are essential. Moreover, a fundamental change in values is required (Economy 2005: 213). It is therefore necessary that the major industrialized and polluting countries lead by example and actively contribute to the design of “China's environmental future” (Economy 2005: 214).

Here, the cooperation with the EU can become crucial. First, the EU has a strong history in environmental protection and has developed expertise in instruments to combat climate change. Second, the EU can act as a norm promoter with regard to sustainable development and help to raise public awareness in China about environmental and climate issues. Third, the EU has various possibilities to promote these norms – either through its

official ways or through its member states. Finally, many actors including civil society and business are and can be involved in fostering environmental and climate protection. Through their work on the ground, it can be assumed that their assessment of potential cooperation frameworks is more realistic and based on practical experience.

‘New Bilateralism’ to Fight Global Warming? The EU-China Relations on Climate Change

Norm diffusion is facilitated through the establishment of strategic communications and the institutionalization of bilateral relations, which then further supports this diffusion process through concrete actions, i.e. transference. As I do not assume that the Chinese government and society simply imitates and adopts the norm of sustainable development as stated by the literature on norm diffusion, I argue that these are also the processes that trigger the process of norm localization as interaction is a prerequisite for this.

A starting point for the analysis of EU-China relations on climate change is the “EU and China Partnership on Climate Change”, which was established between the two parties in September 2005 (European Commission 2005a). In the “Joint Declaration on Climate Change between China and the European Union”, the EU and China set the agenda for future cooperation on climate issues. Both parties seek to strengthen cooperation on climate change policies through dialogue, practical co-operation in the fields of development, deployment and transfer of clean technologies and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Furthermore, more cooperation is sought on research and analysis on the consequences of climate change in addition to enhanced cooperation on capacity building and strengthening of institutions through, e.g. raising public awareness and environmental education and training. In parallel, the two parties agreed on “The China-EU Action Plan on Clean Coal” and “The China-EU Action Plan on Industrial Co-operation on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energies”. The EU-China Rolling Work Plan (RWP) on Climate Change, which the two parties agreed on in October 2006, serves as the major reference document in which they set the agenda for further cooperation. The following forms of cooperation have been decided on (European Commission 2006):

- EU-China summit: ensuring high-level political follow-up and where necessary provide further guidance.
- Bilateral Consultation Mechanism: ensuring contacts at working level, involving representatives from the Chinese Ministries concerned and the EU Troika (current and future EU Presidency and Commission) to provide broader political coordination and guidance for the implementation of the Partnership and strengthen their dialogue on climate change policies and exchange views on key issues in the climate change negotiations. This Mechanism shall meet at least once and where necessary twice every year.
- Direct cooperation between the EU environment counsellors group and relevant Chinese ministries: the EU environment counsellors group will ensure coordination between EU Member States and day to day follow-up of the Partnership.

In this document, the importance of bilateral sectoral cooperation under specifically framed bilateral mechanisms was highlighted. It could be assumed that a broader cooperation including the integration of not only political actors but also business and societal actors was aspired to gather experts in their fields in order to establish effective cooperation in specific areas. This was further emphasized through the recognition of priority areas (PA) in which practical cooperation becomes crucial (European Commission 2006):

- Energy efficiency and energy conservation;
- New and renewable energy;
- Clean coal technologies and carbon dioxide capture and storage for near-zero emissions power generation
- Methane recovery and use
- Hydrogen energy and fuel cells
- Power generation, transmission and distribution
- Clean Development Mechanism and other market-based instruments such as Emissions Trading Schemes
- Impacts of and adaptation to climate change
- Capacity building, strengthening institutions and raising public awareness.

Based on this work plan, the following joint projects are currently listed on the European Commission's website (European Commission 2009):

- EU-China CDM Facilitation Project to strengthen the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) as a central pillar of sustainable development in China. The establishment and improvement of China's policy and regulatory frameworks in addition to quality management of the CDM process will be the key areas of cooperation.
- Carbon Capture and Storage ("Zero-Emission" Demonstration Plant) to promote "practical cooperation on the development, deployment and transfer of clean fossil fuels technologies, to improve energy efficiency and to achieve a low carbon economy". There are currently two feasibility studies on CCS (Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage) in process. First, the Near Zero Emission Coal (NZEC) project and the COACH project (Cooperation Action with CCS China-EU)². These projects are supported by the STRACO2-project (Support to Regulatory Activities for Carbon Capture and Storage). The activities will be continued in a phase two and three, which will, first, specifically focus on site-specific design and feasibility studies, and, second, focus on the construction and operation of a demonstration plant with CCS technology.
- The EU-China Energy and Environment Programme (EEP) seeks to promote sustainable energy use and thus to improve the environmental and health conditions in China.
- There are regular meetings under the Bilateral Consultation Mechanisms, the EU-China NZEC Steering Committee, annual summits, official visits, study visits, joint workshops and expositions.

Under the umbrella of the European Environment Agency (EEA), several smaller projects have been pursued such as the China (Kunming) Environmental Protection and Renewable Energy Exposition, the China Europa 2009 or the China Carbon Trade Summit 2009³. This trade summit is an interesting institution as it seeks to serve as a networking arena for senior executives, tradesmen and environment and technique expert to discuss issues relevant for carbon industry. China has become an important player in the CDM market, now covering 51 per cent of the global CDM trading market. China is therefore an

² For further information on these programmes see NZEC, <http://www.nzec.info> and COACH, <http://www.co2-coach.com> (07.06.2009).

³ For further information on these events see China (Kunming) Environmental Protection and Renewable Energy Exposition, <http://technologies.ew.eea.europa.eu/Events/eve204704>; China Europa 2009, <http://www.eea.europa.eu/events/china-europa> or the China Carbon Trade Summit 2009, <http://ccts.cbichina.com/english.html> (07.06.2009).

attractive partner for foreign investment to reduce carbon emissions. This is a good example to illustrate business interest climate change policy.

At the 10th China-EU Summit in 2007, political leaders decided on the establishment of a China-EU Clean Energy Centre. The objective is to strengthen cooperation on energy efficiency and on exploring new clean technologies². The commitment to combat climate change through joint projects was reaffirmed at the 11th EU-China Summit in 2009. In context of the summit in 2007, the European Investment Bank (EIB) considered to offer China a EUR 500 million framework loan, the China Climate Change Framework Loan (CCCFL) to invest in projects combating climate change (Presidency of the European Union 2007). This loan now provides China with a total of EUR 220 million that will assist the Chinese government in investing in projects helping to mitigate climate change. The funding of projects includes forestation programmes, the construction of wind farms and energy efficiency and pollution reduction. These projects shall all be registered under the Clean Development Mechanism (European Union 2009d).

The general and by far not exhaustive illustration of EU-China cooperation on climate change shows that the emphasis is put on the transfer of technology and know-how through joint research projects, practical cooperation and investment programmes. The political framework is set and developed through regular dialogue and bilateral consultation mechanisms and high-level summits, which further emphasize both parties' commitment to this process. The projects also meet strong business interests such as in the carbon market, clean energy technology and renewable energies. The EU thus integrates China into the global combat of climate change through financial and economic incentives, which are in the end beneficial to both sides. The question remains whether this rather technical and economic cooperation also leads to a re-thinking about the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, i.e. following the path of sustainable development rather than treating the economic and ecological sphere separately. This leads us back to the initial question of the EU as normative power acting through various channels on the systemic and sub-systemic level. So far, I have briefly outlined cooperation that primarily takes place on the systemic level between the EU and China. The illustration of the EEA's activities emphasized the role of business in promoting climate protection measures. In addition to the political and business level of cooperation, there is also civil society cooperation on climate change issues. Under the framework of new bilateralism, the research agenda of this project is to analyze the diverse actors, agendas and instruments. In the following section, I will give a first overview of some civil society cooperation frameworks.

Civil Society: Actors, Agendas and Instruments

A first entrance point for the exploration of EU-China civil society relations is the EU-China Civil Society Forum. As stated on the forum's website, the main objective is „to foster the development of relations between the EU, its members and China and to ensure that their relations promote social justice, contribute to the protection of the environment and strengthen human rights“ (EU-China Civil Society Forum 2009). To achieve this goal, the forum wants to enable informed public debate, assist political institutions within the EU and its member states in building relations to China based on principals like social and ecological justice and human rights, ensure the maintenance of labour and environmental standards in business activities and to increase cooperation between and among civil society groups in the context of EU-China relations. This network is run by civil society organizations from Germany, Austria, France and Belgium. Cooperation partners in China differ depending on the topic. With regard to the environment, the following organizations are listed:

- Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge (Kunming, China)

- CANGO-China Association for NGO Cooperation (Beijing, China)
- Roots&Shoots (Beijing, China)
- Green Watershed (Kunming, China)
- Green Stone (Nanjing, China)
- Animal Asia Foundation (Hong Kong, China)
- The Green Volunteer League of Chongqing (Chongqing, China)
- Green Earth Volunteers (Beijing, China)
- Xinjiang Conservation Fund (Beijing, China)
- Moving Mountains (Beijing, China)

If we take a closer look at the Chinese organizations listed, the most interesting one with regard to the networking aspect is CANGO. The aim of CANGO is to provide a platform for the exchange of information and experience for Chinese NGOs working on poverty alleviation, environmental protection and social development. CANGO also seeks to “broaden corporative channels between CANGO and government, business, and research institutes” and also acts “as an intermediary agency and partners with foreign NGOs, bilateral and multilateral organizations and Chinese NGOs to enhance fundraising, provision of technical support and capacity building of grassroots NGOs in China” (CANGO 2009). In addition to various European-based organizations and institutes (and other international and foreign organizations and institutions), the European Commission is part of the partners and donors of CANGO, which means that there is a close affiliation from the EU to this network.

The agendas of these civil society organizations and networks are diverse. Their role is to promote a better understanding for environmental issues including environmental protection, conservation and climate change. They are diverse in their constitution and missions but they share similar goals, namely to protect the environment on a local, national and global level. As most of the NGO umbrella organizations, CANGO has the potential to support exchange of the various existing environmental NGOs in China and link them with foreign NGOs and transnational networks in addition to providing them access to government and business actors to strengthen their lobbying capacities. A crucial role of NGOs is also public information and education. A wider network can assist them in professionalizing in public relations and information management. NGOs and other civil society groups can therefore act as norm takers as they are rooted in their society and are accustomed with its values and ideas so that external norms can be localized. To what extent this can happen and what the EU can contribute in this respect has to be further analyzed on the basis of personal interviews.

Conclusion

EU-China relations can significantly contribute to a strengthening of the global climate change regime beyond international negotiations under the UNFCCC. As it is difficult to integrate a country like China into an international agreement with binding regulations on emission reductions, the EU as a best practice example for the integration of economic and environmental policies with regard to climate change can act as a normative power. This means, the EU can first show leadership in the field of climate change policy and illustrate how significant emission reductions are possible without challenging high economic performance. Second, the EU can assist China in developing and deploying new clean technologies and help to direct its economic growth in a sustainable way. And, third, by promoting its norm of sustainable development (and climate protection being part of it) through the its activities and the institutionalization of EU-Chinese relations, the EU can help in raising awareness for climate change issues and to show ways in dealing with this problem. The potential for a paradigm shift in Chinese policies and thinking increases the more

interaction there is between European and Chinese actors on a political, business and civil society level. It is however more probable that the Chinese government and society localize the norm of sustainable development than merely imitating and adopting European norms without embedding them into local traditions. If a norm is localized, it will be more accepted within politics and society. It is therefore not only more enduring but also more likely to bring about a cognitive shift. If this happens, China's participation in multilateral negotiations on climate change policy will positively alter, which will be beneficial for the promotion of a global climate change regime. That such bilateral cooperation has the potential to act in the way of norm diffusion or norm localization and to act as a catalyst for further commitment on the multilateral level could already have been observed during the pre-negotiations in Bali 2007, when China accepted to talk about quantitative reduction goals in upcoming negotiations. Copenhagen 2009 will show how strong this commitment finally is and which are the influential factors in getting a turning point in global climate change policy-making.

The role of "new bilateralism" for the strengthening of a global climate change regime in addition to the questions of how Europe can act as a normative power and to what extent the norm of sustainable development in the context of climate change is localized in China on the political, business and civil society level will be further analyzed in this research project.

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