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## BRIEF ANALYSIS

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Post-globalization &  
Climate Policy

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*Editorial*



# Eurasia Center Brief Analysis

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## POST-GLOBALIZATION & CLIMATE POLICY

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### Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's war against Ukraine have put an end to globalization. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) faces an enormous challenge. In the post-globalization era, the trend towards regionalization and consortiumization of the global economy is accelerating. The implementation of the Paris Agreement is the most important task facing humanity. Humanity must end the war between man and nature, the economic war, the cultural war and the hot war. We must replace the soul of barbarism with the soul of civilization and build a global ecological civilization. Not only should human existence continue until the end of the Earth's ecological cycles, but the ultimate goal of its development is to survive the next Ice Age and avoid the mass extinction of biological life, including human beings.

**Keywords:** *Post-globalization, Climate policy, Covid-19, Russia's war against Ukraine, Climate action*

### Is Climate Policy at an End?

The U.S. website Foreign Policy recently published an article on the US "Foreign Policy" website. The gist of the article is that the [Russia's war will end climate policy](#) and that world has ended on February 24, 2022. The article states that the annual U.N. climate conference reinforced by the world media, have become a play on which the utopian plans of the global environmental movement are performed. The climate goal calls for limiting the global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and powering the world entirely with renewable energy. As with other UN initiatives, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the primary purpose was to exhort and motivate. Non-binding commitments are a utopia that cannot really be enforced.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Russian-Ukrainian War, there have been six rounds of EU sanctions against Russia. One of the consequences of the economic sanctions is that Europe is in an energy crisis. Germany, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, and other countries are increasing coal supplies and resuming coal-fired power generation as they search for alternatives. The EU has made it clear that it will take "urgent action" to address with the energy crisis. Until effective means are found to overcome the energy crisis, carbon dioxide emissions will inevitably rise. We need to take various measures to minimize the impact of the energy crisis on climate policy.

With European countries focusing their efforts on finding substitutes for energy imports, are global efforts to combat climate change really becoming an "ineffective game" in the face of "hot-spot conflicts"?

It is undeniable that global governance, with the United Nations as the main body, is faltering under the free will of international politics. Each country chooses the

most favorable policy to maximize its own interests. Within a regional union like the EU or within a country, different interest groups have different policy demands. It is very difficult to achieve a common goal for the development of all humanity. But it is better to have a goal than no goal, and joint action is better than no action. Fortunately, the EU has decided to increase the share of renewable energy in the overall EU energy mix to 40% by 2030, compared to the previous target of at least 32%<sup>2</sup>.

In recent years, the traditional security problems of mankind have become more and more acute. The development of industrial civilization has brought non-traditional security - ecological security - problems to humanity. It not only affects the existence of the present generation but will also affect future generations. We should not use a few "hot events" to deny the long-term policy of common development of mankind, formulated by generations of tireless efforts. If we deny that climate policy can be justified by individual events, we generally revert to the era of the law of the jungle.

## The Post-Globalization Era is Coming

The international horizontal division of industrial value chains are the basis of globalization. The industrial value chains built over the past 20 years are not capable of dealing with the risks of sudden global events. If one link in the industrial chain goes wrong, it will cause turbulence in the global economy. The Covid-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war have brought energy security to the forefront. Countries around the world have aligned their energy policies to meet the challenges ahead. Due to the accelerating trend of regionalization of the world economy and changes in the international division of labor, the breadth and depth of the international division of labor is shrinking. This has greatly affected the global energy landscape. If the China-U.S. trade war was a prelude to deglobalization, the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war herald the age of post-globalization.

According to the WTO, the cumulative number of regional trade agreements (RTAs) signed worldwide increased from 255 to 583<sup>3</sup> from the end of 2002 to January 2014. New regional trade agreements such as TPP, EPA, RCEP, USMCA are emerging. This confirms the trend of regionalization and pooling of the global economy from an economic perspective.

The opening of the post-globalization era will lead to the reconstruction of global strategic industrial chains and the strengthening of exclusive regional economic cooperation. New industrial chain clusters will be formed in some economic centers. The new industrial chains will have strong anti-risk capabilities. Post-globalization will have a negative impact on some countries. Post-globalization will severely affect the existing economic system and destroy the original, relatively complete industrial chains. Some companies have been closed because they could no longer get orders. As a result, unemployment has increased and the dividends accumulated in the past have gradually disappeared, and difficulties will also arise in other areas of development. In some countries, the imbalance between supply and demand due to trade barriers will lead to inflation, which in turn will affect the development of the economy and society. Globalization is a good development model, but ignoring the negative effect of globalization will hinder the further development of the world economy.

According to the *2022 Sustainable Development Report*, the data for the 17 SDGs have improved for some of the goals, but the numbers for most of the goals are increasing and moving further away from the targets set. Even the goal of improving data needs to accelerate progress to meet the 2030 target. On Goal 13: Climate Action, the report says global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are projected to rise again, increasing by 4.0% as demand for coal, oil and gas recovered in 2021. To limit global warming to 1.5°C, global emissions should be reduced by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030. Under current national commitments, global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will increase by nearly 14% in the remaining ten years. Failure by the international community to act together now could lead to a climate catastrophe.<sup>4</sup>

There is no doubt that the post-globalization will affect the global process of “low carbonization” to some extent. It is too early to draw a conclusion on whether post-globalization will have a fundamental impact on human development. It will be at least a few more years before any conclusions can be drawn. What is clear, however, is that human civilization is continuously advancing and that symbiosis and harmony with nature is the only proper way for human existence and development. Emergencies may affect current global developments and the policies of individual economies. In the long run, people must take the green path of promoting economic growth and improving human welfare through green transformation. Without global cooperation, it would be very difficult for humanity to sustainability.

## The Role of the World's Top Two Economies in Climate Action

The United States, the world's largest economy, lacks the responsibility of a great country in dealing with global climate change. The U.S. rejected the *Kyoto Protocol* in 1997. The U.S. withdrew from the *Paris Agreement* in 2019. U.S. behavior has hurt global climate action. After taking office, the new U.S. administration announced that it would rejoin the *Paris Agreement* showing that the U.S. cannot do without the cooperation of the international community on global governance issues.

At the COP 26 UN Climate Conference in November 2021, John Forbes Kerry, special envoy of the U.S. President for climate issues, and Xie Zhenhua, China's special envoy for climate change issued a joint statement. They pledged that the two countries will strengthen their cooperation on climate field to address climate crisis. At the World Economic Forum and Berlin Talks on China-U.S. Climate Cooperation in May 2022, and the China-U.S. Dialogue and Exchange on Climate Cooperation held in Stockholm in June, Kerry also repeatedly stated that we must avoid crises and not repeat the construction of energy-intensive and high-polluting energy infrastructure projects. He said that climate cooperation is a multilateral, global and universal issue, that climate cooperation between the United States and China is fruitful, and that he looks forward to maintaining dialogue and exchanges with China and strengthening bilateral cooperation. So the basic tenor of cooperation between the two major economies, China and the United States on climate change has not changed.

The stance of China, the world's second largest economy, is quite clear: in view of the common future of mankind, cooperation is the fundamental way out. In terms of climate action, China has promulgated the “1+N” policy goals and introduced peak carbon and carbon neutrality plans in various industries. Taking into account green transformation and low-carbon technology, China aims to achieve carbon

peaking by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060. In September 2021, China proposed not to build new coal-fired power projects overseas.

At the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA), Xie Zhenhua, China's special envoy for climate change, pointed out that all parties should adhere to multilateralism, maintain the main channel status of the UNFCCC, adopt a pragmatic action and solution orientation, and promote synergies between the UNFCCC process and other areas. The theme of COP27 should be implementation, with adaptation and finance as the highlights of the outcomes. Xie Zhenhua hoped that all parties will implement the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and institutional arrangements for nationally determined contributions, to translate the goals of nationally determined contributions into specific actions. Han Zheng, Chinese Vice Premier, attended the national event for 2022 World Environment Day and stressed that China should further promote the comprehensive green transformation of economic and social development. China will further promote the comprehensive green transformation of economic and social development, and achieve synergy between environmental protection and economic development, and steadily and properly promote peak carbon and carbon neutrality, and ensure energy security, industrial chain and supply chain security, and food security while reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

China and the U.S. can work together on global climate action. These two countries are responsible for 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The goals of the *Paris Agreement* cannot be achieved without the cooperation of the two countries. The hopes of the two countries to influence climate diplomacy were never discussed. The U.S. responsible for about 13% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. is the country with the greatest scientific and technological influence in the world. The U.S. should be a leader in the field of climate change, and cooperation between China and the U.S. is critical to addressing global climate change. The U.S. plans to invest USD 2 trillion in climate action at home, adopt a set of clean energy standards, and implement an energy transition plan to make the U.S. energy economy carbon neutral by 2035, and bring U.S. to net-zero emissions by 2050. This will boost the U.S. economy and while strengthening the global economy due to the radiative effects.

The IMF believes that climate change poses a fundamental risk to economic and financial stability, and the action to address it can boost global GDP growth. IMF statistics show that the total GDP of the U.S. is USD 23.02 trillion, accounting for about 24% of the world's total GDP, and the total GDP of China is USD 17.73 trillion, accounting for about 18% of the world's total GDP in 2021. The GDP of these two countries accounts for more than 40% of the world total.<sup>5</sup> Their cooperation and development are crucial to the global economy. In terms of promoting global green transformation, the two major economies must fulfil their responsibilities as large countries and lead global climate cooperation. On the one hand, they can effectively achieve the goals of emission reduction and temperature control, which will be helpful for other countries to reduce their emissions. On the other hand, they will have a positive impact on the green recovery of the global economy after Covid-19.

It is unfortunate that the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on climate change has taken the United States an important step in the wrong direction. The ruling limits the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate carbon

emissions from power plants. Not only will it significantly weaken the U.S. government's ability to move the climate process forward, it is "another devastating decision aimed at taking our country backwards" <sup>6</sup>. It has very bad implications for global climate action.

## Strictly Implementing the Paris Agreement

The right way is to put the Paris Agreement into action. However, developed economies keep setting new targets, and their promises have fallen behind. The pre-2020 target set by developed countries to reduce emissions by 25% ~ 42% of 1990 levels as a whole have not been met, promises of USD 100 billion a year to help the developing countries have not been kept, and promises to provide technical assistance to developing countries have not actually been implemented. This is contrary to the basic principles of the UNFCCC and the *Paris Agreement*.<sup>7</sup>

On global climate action, all countries and international organizations should unite and cooperate to take concerted actions to achieve climate goals. For developed economies to lead the world toward carbon neutrality, they must live up to their climate responsibilities, strictly adhere to their nationally determined contributions, abandon their own carbon intensive behavior, and provide technical and financial assistance to developing countries as required by the *Paris Agreement*. This is a commitment that developed countries must meet in terms of joint global climate action. For developing economies, climate action is a double-edged sword that holds both "carbon opportunities" and "carbon traps". Future development may depend mainly on the right decisions and actions by developing countries themselves. Developing countries should accelerate the pace of transition to a low-carbon economy with the support of the international community.

The greatest challenge currently the humanity is facing is its long-term temperature goal, that is to hold the increase of global average temperature to "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and continue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels". In essence, it is a battle between humans and their inner desires. We need to fully understand An Outlook on Ecological Civilization. The core values underlying this innovative concept form a constructive initiative and development perspective that goes far beyond the perspective of industrial civilization. Only by reducing carbon emissions, reducing pollution, developing green economy, pursuing reasonable growth in global climate action, and promoting climate action through scientific and technological innovation can we create an environment that provides "reasonable temperature, fresh air, green land, clear water, and harmony among people " for human existence.

## Summary

The view of conquering nature advocated by industrial civilization is still deeply rooted today. When this view is applied to the realm of economic society and even international relations, it is actually a broad concept of war. Wars are referred to as wars between man and nature, economic wars, cultural wars, and usually hot wars. There is a fundamental difference between this type of war and reasonable competition. Reasonable competition can save resources, increase efficiency, and improve prosperity. One of the serious consequences of war is environmental

pollution and ecological destruction, and the homeland on which people's survival depends is riddled with holes. One can speak of sustainable development only on the basis of sustainable existence. When existence is extremely difficult, people are not qualified to talk about development.

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<sup>1</sup> Ted Nordhaus. Russia's War Is the End of Climate Policy as We Know It. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/06/05/climate-policy-ukraine-russia-energy-security-emissions-cold-war-fossil-fuels/>.

<sup>2</sup> EU Energy Ministers meeting, Luxembourg, 27 June 2022.

<sup>3</sup> WTO. *World Trade Report 2014*.

<sup>4</sup> SDSN. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2022—From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond

<sup>5</sup> IMF, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Joe Biden terms US top court's ruling in climate case “devastating decision”.

<sup>7</sup> Paris Agreement, 2015.