



2017/2274(INI)

2.5.2018

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the state of EU-China relations
(2017/2274(INI))

Rapporteur: Stefan Eck

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to the ‘Environmental Protection Tax Law’ promulgated by the National People’s Congress in December 2016, which came into effect on 1 January 2018,
 - having regard to the fact that the International Organisation for Migration has stated that environmental factors have an impact on national and international migration flows, as people leave places with harsh or deteriorating conditions resulting from accelerated climate change¹,
- A. whereas China is the fastest-growing market for EU food products;
- B. whereas it is clear that in some regions of China, the livelihoods of the rural population will deteriorate because of variations in temperature and precipitation and through other climate extremes; whereas relocation planning has become an effective adaptation policy option to reduce climate-induced vulnerability and poverty²;
1. Welcomes the reforms undertaken by China since the launch of its ‘ecological civilisation’ approach; considers the special status granted to environmental NGOs in courts, audits of the environmental impact of the work of officials and high investment in electro-mobility and clean energy as reforms in the right direction;
 2. Welcomes China’s 2016 action plan to tackle antimicrobial resistance; stresses the importance of cooperation between China, which accounts for half the world’s annual antimicrobial drug consumption, and the EU in tackling this global threat; insists that animal welfare provisions should be included in bilateral EU-China trade agreements;
 3. Welcomes the state guidelines encouraging Chinese citizens to reduce their meat consumption significantly by 2030; encourages the Union and China to join forces to move towards a more sustainable agro-food production and consumption system that will improve global food security, safety and traceability and promote healthy diets, animal health and animal welfare;
 4. Takes note of China’s decision to ban imports of solid waste, which highlights the importance of the process of designing, producing, repairing, reusing and recycling products, with a particular emphasis on the production and use of plastic; recalls China’s recent attempt to ban exports of rare earth elements and asks the Commission to take into consideration the interdependence of the global economies when prioritising EU policies;
 5. Believes that there would be scope, an interest in and a need for the EU and ASEAN to work together to develop a joint circular economy strategy; believes China could play a

¹ <https://www.iom.int/migration-and-climate-change>

² Y. Zhen, J. Pan, X. Zhang, ‘Relocation as a policy response to climate change vulnerability in Northern China’, ISSC and UNESCO 2013, *World Social Science Report 2013, Changing Global Environments*, pp. 234-241.

key role in taking this initiative forward in ASEAN;

6. Argues that China and the European Union will benefit from promoting sustainability in their economies and from developing a multi-sector sustainable and circular bioeconomy;
7. Welcomes the agreement to increase cooperation on research and innovation in flagship initiatives such as those on food, agriculture and biotechnologies, environment and sustainable urbanisation, surface transport, safer and greener aviation and biotechnologies for environment and human health that were agreed upon during the 3rd EU-China Innovation Cooperation Dialogue in June 2017 and the corresponding Roadmap for EU-China science and technology (S&T) cooperation from October 2017; calls on the EU and China to continue these efforts and to put the results of the research and development projects into practice;
8. Points out that the Union and China are heavily dependent on fossil fuels and together account for around a third of total global consumption, which places China at the top of the World Health Organisation (WHO) ranking for deadly outdoor air pollution; stresses that increased trade in bioeconomy products made from renewable materials can help reduce the fossil dependency of China's and the Union's economies; calls for the EU and China to deepen their relations in other areas of mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions such as electric mobility, renewable energies and energy efficiency, to continue and broaden the EU-China Roadmap on energy cooperation beyond 2020 and to intensify joint efforts on developing instruments for green finance, especially climate finance; calls for China and the EU to explore and engage in the advance planning and development of cross-border electricity transmission lines using high voltage direct current technology to make renewable energy sources more accessible;
9. Encourages the Union and China to continue their partnership on sustainable urbanisation, including in areas such as clean transport, air quality improvement, the circular economy and ecodesign; stresses the need for further environmental protection measures, bearing in mind that more than 90 % of cities do not comply with the national standard of PM 2.5 air pollution concentration and that, in China, more than one million people die each year from diseases linked to air pollution;
10. Underlines their mutual interest in promoting low-carbon development and addressing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in transparent, public and well-regulated energy markets; believes in the value of strategic EU-China partnerships as necessary for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and for the effective combating of climate change; calls on the EU and China to use their political weight to advance the implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and urges a cooperative approach at the Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC as well as at the High-level Political Forum of the UN; calls on both to adopt a joint statement on climate action to demonstrate their shared commitment to a strong implementation of the Paris Agreement and active participation in the 2018 Talanoa Dialogue as well as at COP24; encourages them to play a responsible role in international negotiations by contributing to the objective to limit global warming through their respective internal climate policies as well as by making financial contributions to reach the goal of providing USD

100 billion annually by 2020 for mitigation and adaptation;

11. Welcomes the launch of the nationwide emissions trading system in China in December 2017; takes note of the successful cooperation during the preparation phase between China and the EU enabling the launch; recognises the willingness of the Chinese leadership to reduce GHG emissions and looks forward to the results of the ongoing work on monitoring, reporting and verification, which is key to the good functioning of the system; stresses the importance of economy-wide action on climate change, and welcomes the intention to expand its coverage to include industrial sectors and improve the trading arrangements of the system; calls on the EU and China to continue their partnership within the cooperation project for the development of China's carbon market for it to become an effective instrument that creates meaningful incentives for emission reduction and further aligning it to the EU emissions trading system; calls on both sides to further promote carbon pricing mechanisms in other countries and regions by using their own experiences and expertise and by exchanging best practice as well as engaging in efforts to build up cooperation between existing carbon markets in order to work towards a global level playing field;
12. Hopes that China will uncouple economic growth from ecological degradation, by incorporating biodiversity protection into its ongoing global strategies, facilitating the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, and implementing the ivory trade ban effectively; acknowledges the work done by the EU-China Bilateral Coordination Mechanism (BCM) on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) to tackle illegal logging globally; urges China, however, to investigate the significant undocumented trade in timber between the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement signatory States and China;
13. Recommends the adoption of mandatory Chinese policy guidelines on responsible overseas forestry investments to be implemented jointly with the supplier countries, involving Chinese companies in tackling the illegal timber trade;
14. Welcomes the fact that China and the EU have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on water policy, with the aim of enhancing dialogue on the development and enforcement of legislation to protect water; strongly supports the September 2017 Turku Declaration signed by the EU and China, which stressed that good water governance should give priority to ecology and green development, to putting water conservation in a prominent position and to restoring water ecosystems; and underlines that the MOU on establishing an EU-China Water Policy Dialogue not only enriches the contents of China-EU strategic partnership, but also specifies the direction, scope, methodology and financial arrangements for cooperation;
15. Stresses the importance of ensuring a level playing field in EU-China trade; expresses concern over unfair competition as a result of state interference in the Chinese economy through massive subsidies and discrimination in favour of domestic suppliers, the fencing off of the Chinese market to EU investors and the takeover of European companies in key sustainability technologies by undertakings under government ownership, control or guidance, in particular but not limited to the market for solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles; calls on the Commission to make full use of all trade defence instruments at its disposal, in particular the EU's new anti-dumping and

anti-subsidy rules, and on the Council to rapidly establish, in codecision with Parliament, an effective framework for the screening of foreign direct investment;

16. Recognises the key role of the Commission-funded cooperation project between European and Chinese organisations, implemented in 2014-2017 under the auspices of the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC), in assessing the standards and arrangements for radiological and nuclear emergency management in China and in enhancing the capabilities of the Chinese Nuclear Power Technology Research Institute in the areas of severe accident management guidelines;
17. Encourages Chinese and European investors to adopt better global standards of social and environmental responsibility and to improve the safety standards of their extractive industries worldwide; reiterates that, with regard to negotiations on a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) with China, the European Union must lend support to sustainable development initiatives by encouraging responsible investment and promoting core environmental and labour standards; asks the Chinese and European authorities to put in place incentives to encourage Chinese and European mining companies to conduct their activities in developing countries in conformity with international human rights standards and to encourage investment in capacity-building for knowledge and technology transfer and local recruitment;
18. Welcomes the announcement by China in the context of the One Planet Summit in December 2017 to make the environmental impacts of companies in China and of Chinese investment abroad more transparent; is concerned that infrastructure projects such as the One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative by China might have a negative impact on the environment and climate and could lead to the increased use of fossil fuels in other countries involved or affected by the infrastructure development; calls for EU institutions and Member States to perform environmental impact assessments and to include sustainability clauses in any cooperation project within the OBOR framework; insists on the establishment of a joint committee, composed of representatives of involved countries and third parties, to supervise the impact on the environment and climate; welcomes the initiative of the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to draw up an EU-Asia connectivity strategy in the first half of 2018; insists that this strategy should include strong commitments towards sustainability, environmental protection, and climate action;
19. Welcomes China's progress in enhancing food safety standards, key features in protecting Chinese consumers and preventing food fraud; stresses the improvement of consumer empowerment as an important step in the rise of a consumer culture in China;
20. Encourages the Chinese and European police and law enforcement services to take common action to control the export of illegal drugs and to share intelligence on drug trafficking by exchanging information to identify individuals and criminal networks; notes that, according to the 'European Drug Report 2017: Trends and Developments' by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), much of the supply of new psychoactive substances to Europe originates in China, new substances are produced in bulk by chemical and pharmaceutical companies in China, from where they are shipped to Europe, where they are processed into products, packaged and sold;

21. Acknowledges that families and individuals have migrated in response to drought and other natural disasters, and that, in response, the Chinese authorities have planned several large-scale relocation projects; is concerned by reports from the Ningxia region pointing out numerous problems with the new towns, and reprisals for people who refused to move; expresses its concern about the fact that environmental defenders are being detained, prosecuted and sentenced and that registered domestic environmental NGOs are facing increasing scrutiny by the Chinese supervisory authorities;
22. Asks China to further expand its law enforcement efforts to stop illegal fishing, as Chinese fishing boats continue to poach in foreign waters, including Korea's Western Sea, the East China Sea, the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, and even South America;
23. Asks Chinese exporters and European importers to cut toxic residues in Chinese-made clothes by establishing proper chemical management regulations and by phasing out the use of lead, nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs), phthalates, perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs), formaldehyde and other toxic products found in textiles.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	25.4.2018
Result of final vote	+: 55 -: 0 0: 4
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Margrete Auken, Pilar Ayuso, Zoltán Balczó, Biljana Borzan, Lynn Boylan, Nessa Childers, Birgit Collin-Langen, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Benedek Jávor, Karin Kadenbach, Kateřina Konečná, Urszula Krupa, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Joëlle Mélin, Susanne Melior, Miroslav Mikolášik, Rory Palmer, Massimo Paolucci, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Pavel Poc, Julia Reid, Frédérique Ries, Michèle Rivasi, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Damiano Zoffoli
Substitutes present for the final vote	Cristian-Silviu Bușoi, Caterina Chinnici, Fredrick Federley, Anja Hazekamp, Norbert Lins, Rupert Matthews, Alojz Peterle, Stanislav Polčák, Carolina Punset, Christel Schaldemose
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Jude Kirton-Darling, Jeroen Lenaers

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

55	+
ALDE	Fredrick Federley, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Carolina Punset, Frédérique Ries
ECR	Urszula Krupa, Rupert Matthews, Boleslaw G. Piecha, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
EFDD	Piernicola Pedicini
GUE/NGL	Lynn Boylan, Stefan Eck, Anja Hazekamp, Kateřina Konečná, Estefanía Torres Martínez
NI	Zoltán Balczó
PPE	Pilar Ayuso, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Birgit Collin-Langen, Angélique Delahaye, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Giovanni La Via, Jeroen Lenaers, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Miroslav Mikolášik, Alojz Peterle, Stanislav Polčák, Renate Sommer, Adina-Ioana Vălean
S&D	Biljana Borzan, Nessa Childers, Caterina Chinnici, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Jytte Guteland, Karin Kadenbach, Jude Kirton-Darling, Susanne Melior, Rory Palmer, Massimo Paolucci, Pavel Poc, Christel Schaldemose, Damiano Zoffoli
VERTS/ALE	Marco Affronte, Margrete Auken, Bas Eickhout, Benedek Jávor, Michèle Rivasi, Davor Škrlec

0	-

4	0
EFDD	Julia Reid
ENF	Sylvie Goddyn, Joëlle Mélin
PPE	Elisabetta Gardini

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention