



EUROPEAN GUANXI YOUTH CONFERENCE 2024

The Green Side of EU-China Relations: Collaboration, Competition, and Autonomy for the Green Transition

European Guanxi is a network of young European professionals, scholars, and students focused on EU-China relations. It connects individuals in this field, offering a platform for them to share ideas and engage in meaningful discussions. The organization also fosters debate and analysis on EU-China dynamics, empowering the next generation to influence this important international relationship.

Following the success of European Guanxi's Youth Conference (EGYC) in 2023, EG will once again aim to bring together a select group of young professionals **in Brussels** to discuss a key topic in EU-China relations. EGYC 2024 will focus on climate change, and environmental policy as a whole, which represent both an area of potential competition and cooperation between the European Union (EU) and China due to their significant roles as global actors in addressing environmental challenges. With the title "**The Green Side of EU-China Relations: Collaboration, Competition, and Autonomy for the Green Transition**" the 2024 EGYC offers a platform for individuals to share their perspectives and insights on topics encompassing China, the EU, and environmental issues.

When? October 5th, 2024

Where? Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Brussels headquarters (Av. de l'Yser 11, 1040 Etterbeek, Belgium).

Catering will be provided, including a selection of juices, coffee, tea, water, and various dietary options such as vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free choices.



OUR SCHEDULE



- 8:45 – 9:00** **Arrival and registration**
- 9:00 – 9:15** **Welcome address**
- Blanca Marabini San Martín, President of European Guanxi
 - Dr. Olaf Wientzek, Director of the Multinational Development Policy Dialogue Brussels
- 9:15 – 10:00** **Keynote 1:** Matthias Hackler, Advisor to the Chair of the China Delegation of the European Parliament
- 10:00 – 11:30** **Panel 1: Climate and Environment in the Context of EU-China Relations**
- Moderator: Arturo Simone
- Unai Gómez-Hernández - *The role of climate change and environmental policy in the context of the systemic rivalry between the European Union and China.*
 - Marie Sophie Mayer - *Climate cooperation or challenge: European media perception of China in the context of climate change*
 - Andres Loberg - *The European packaging market and its competitiveness vis-a-vis China*
- 11:30 – 11:45** **Coffee break**
- 11:45 – 13:15** **Panel 2: domestic climate policy in China and the EU Member States**
- Moderator: Blanca Marabini San Martín
- Vanessa Hammouche - *Decentralized cooperation and sister cities: A way to preserve international relations in an uncertain future? A Practical approach of French-Chinese sister cities in the Occitane Region (South of France)*
 - Imke Blume-Vidal - *The Power of Green: The Dual Role of China's Eco-Civilization in Environmental and Political Strategies*
 - Thomas van Oeveren - *Multipolar Visions: A Comparative Analysis of China's and the European Union's Neighborhood Policies and their Implications on Interregional Dynamics*
 - Severine Bardon - *Climate action: crossed perceptions in France and China*
- 13:15 – 13:45** **Lunch**

OUR SCHEDULE



13:45 – 14:30 **Keynote speech 2:** Marcus Gustafsson, Policy Officer for Taiwan and China, DG Trade, European Commission

14:30 – 16:00 **Panel 3: Climate and Environment in International law and Policy**

Moderator: Nicole Linsenbold, Programme Manager Development and Climate Policy, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Brussels

- Douglas Anderson - *Effectiveness of experimental policymaking and governance in China and experimentalist governance in the European Union (EU) with respect to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*
- Agata Bidas - *Ecocide as a threat to global security: Exploring the recognition of ecocide as an international crime and its implications*
- Shristi More - *The Green Side of EU - China Relations: Cooperation, Competition, and Autonomy*

16:00 – 16:15 **Coffee break**

16:15 – 16:45 **Panel 4: road to EGYC 2024 Essay Competition and Winner Announcement (online panel)**

Moderator: Valeria Fappani, Secretary General of European Guanxi

- Aurelia Maria Pulafito - *The European Green Deal: Security risks behind a growing dependence on Beijing*
- Hanyi Zhang & Ruotong Shi - *Sustainable Development Amid Uncertainty: Trade Disputes from Environmental Subsidies and Green Competition in Sino-European Relations - An Electric Vehicle Export Case Study*
- Matteo Bartolini - *Environmental resilience: The EU-China relationship in an era of energy and resource shifts*

16:45 – 17:00 **Closing Remarks**

- Nicole Linsenbold, Programme Manager, Multinational Development Policy Dialogue Brussels
- Blanca Marabini San Martín, President of European Guanxi

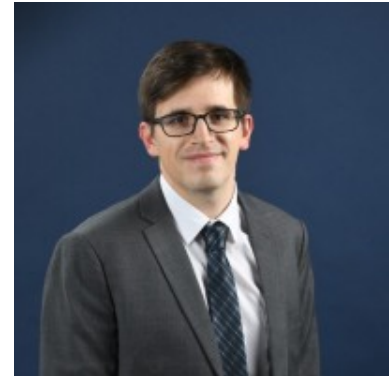
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



1

Matthias Hackler

Matthias Hackler is an Accredited Parliamentary Assistant to MEP Engin Eroglu (Renew Europe), a member of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and Chair of the Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China. Prior to his current position, Matthias worked in a similar capacity for Reinhard Bütikofer (Greens/EFA). In 2019, Matthias completed a PhD on political narratives in EU-China relations at Renmin University of China. He holds an MA in International Relations from Renmin University and a BA in Modern China Studies and Political Science from the University of Cologne. He worked briefly for the EU Delegation to China and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Beijing. His work focuses on Chinese debate on EU-China relations.



2

Marcus Gustafsson

Marcus Gustafsson works for the European Commission in the "Far East" unit of the Directorate-General for International Trade (DG TRADE), responsible for economic security and bilateral trade and investment relations with China and Taiwan. He previously worked for the Commission Legal Service and as an international trade lawyer in private practice. He holds an LLM from Georgetown University and regularly publishes and lectures on issues of trade and international economic law and policy.



PANEL 1: CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT IN EU-CHINA RELATIONS

Climate change is a crucial yet increasingly complex aspect of EU-China relations. Both are committed to combating global warming, with the EU pushing its Green Deal and China aiming for carbon neutrality by 2060. While they cooperate on clean energy and emissions reduction, growing tensions are evident in the green technology sector. The EU is concerned about China's dominance in electric vehicles, solar panels, and battery production, fueled by state subsidies. These tensions are compounded by differences in regulatory standards and environmental governance, making it challenging to balance competition with the need for collaboration on global climate goals.

Moderator:

ARTURO SIMONE

Arturo is a double-degree Master's student in European Governance, currently based in Utrecht, Netherlands. Previously, he resided in The Hague, where he completed a Bachelor's in International Studies with a specialization in European and American studies.



As a foreign policy enthusiast, he gained experience in broadcasting and communications while living in Brno, Czech Republic. He is passionate about inter-regional partnerships, and his current research interest focuses on the prospect for cooperation between the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Arturo currently heads European Guanxi's Podcast Team. In his current role, he aims to enhance his broadcasting skills and contribute to fostering informed discourse on EU-China relations.

PANEL 1 SPEAKERS



UNAI GÓMEZ-HERNÁNDEZ

Unai Gómez-Hernández is a joint PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh and KU Leuven. His work focuses on how European radical right populist parties influence the EU's external action vis-à-vis China. He is member of the EPRG and LINES research groups at Edinburgh and Leuven, respectively. His broader research interests deal with political parties, European external action, EU-China and the Liberal International Order. Before embarking upon the PhD journey, he worked in the private sector, for the Basque Environmental Cluster in Bilbao, and in the public sector, as an advisor to the Delegate of the Basque Country in Brussels. He holds a BSc in Political Science (University of the Basque Country), BSc in International Relations (London School of Economics and Political Science), and a MA in International Relations and Diplomacy of the EU (College of Europe, Bruges Campus).



The role of climate change and environmental policy in the context of the systemic rivalry between the European Union and China.

Abstract: Since the publication of the European Commission's famous EU-China Strategic Outlook in 2019, the EU's relationship with the Asian giant has been analysed in terms of cooperation partner, economic competition and systemic rivalry. However, environmental policy and climate change have been neglected from this analysis. Therefore, this research seeks to answer the following question: what is the role of the EU's environmental policy towards China, as well as its overall efforts to combat climate change, in the context of systemic rivalry?

In order to answer this question, the research will start by analysing the EU-China relationship at the macro level, considering their differences as a group of liberal democracies and an authoritarian state, respectively, and then move to the more specific, micro-policy level, considering initiatives such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the anti-dumping measures on Chinese solar panels, or the recent tariffs on electric vehicles (EVs). The two-level approach bridges the gap between the usual theoretical analysis of EU-China relations and the more applied policy studies, thus providing a coherent understanding of the EU-China relationship. The methods to be used will include qualitative analysis of strategic documents from both sides, as well as policy documents related to the above-mentioned policy processes and other international dynamics (such as each power's position at the Conference of the Parties - COPs). The conclusions of the research should be of interest to both academics and policy-makers interested in understanding what role initiatives like the Green Transition or environmental aspects of the so-called Strategic Autonomy play in the broader systemic confrontation between political models.

PANEL 1 SPEAKERS



MARIE SOPHIE MAYER

Marie Sophie is a recent graduate of the Research Master in European Studies at Maastricht University and holds a Bachelor in Political Science of LMU Munich. She gained valuable professional experience at the United Nations and the European Commission focusing on sustainable development, global governance, public policy and science for policy.



Marie Sophie is passionate about international and European politics, environmental governance, and climate security. She is looking forward to engaging with people from around the world and discussing these critical issues at the conference.

Climate cooperation or challenge: European media perception of China in the context of climate change

Abstract: The relationship between the European Union and China is increasingly characterized by economic competition and political challenges, leading the EU to frame China as a 'systemic rival'. Nevertheless, climate cooperation between the EU and China has become crucial. After the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, both parties saw the opportunity to step in and take a leading role in the international climate agenda. On the one hand, both countries recognize the need for cooperation concerning climate change. However, on the other hand, the increasing economic and political challenges create obstacles and a difficult climate for cooperation. In light of this puzzle, it is important to evaluate if the view towards China regarding climate change has become more negative and overshadowed by challenges or if climate change remains an issue where the perception of China is positive. Therefore, the paper aims to answer the following question: How does European media frame China in the context of climate change? To this end, this paper conducts a media analysis by looking at newspaper articles from Germany, Italy, and Poland. The aim is to identify the prevailing framing of China, ranging from a necessary partner in climate change to an economic or political threat. Developing an understanding of these perceptions is critical to examine the prospects of EU-China climate cooperation, whether it will be caught up in growing economic and political tensions or whether, despite the tense atmosphere, there are prospects for creating an effective cooperation and joint action on climate change between the two actors. By combining both fields, the findings of the paper will contribute to the study of EU-China relations on climate change, as well as European perceptions studies towards China.

PANEL 1 SPEAKERS



ANDRES LOBERG

Andres is leading packaging expert with particular focus on Chinese market, global Supply Chain, Material Management and sustainable packaging development. He is responsible for the development of international transport packaging of spare parts in one of the biggest automotive companies in Germany since 2022. He traveled all over China as an expert to supervise the company's Chinese supplier.



His interests also include Chinese business and economics; German, Chinese, and Russian international relations, and development of electric vehicles. Andres holds a B.Eng in Chinese-German course with specialization Packaging Engineering from the University of Stuttgart Media. In October 2024 He is starting his Master Degree in China Business and Economics at University Würzburg. In future He would like to reside in Asia and become intermediate between European and Asian region. He forward to engaging with people from around the world and discussing these critical issues at the conference.

The European packaging market and its competitiveness vis-a-vis China

Abstract: According to Eurostat, the European Union imports more goods from China as exports. China is one of the largest good manufacturing places for the European Union. To accomplish successful delivery to European customers, manufactured goods need to be packed in one way packaging material and delivered to destination damage free. As today's statistics shows, packaging material is accounted as one of the biggest sources of waste in Europe.

Such big companies as BMW, Zeiss, Bosch, Volkswagen Group and Daimler have their own inter packaging regulations, which are part of European requirements. Instead of that, new coming retailers such as Temu, Schein, Aliexpress do not establish requirements for the packaging material by the supplier.

In the meantime, the European Union is ordering new regulations for recycling and reusing of packaging material. Ton is the last destination of packaging waste and takes responsibility to deal with additional waste coming from China.

(continued on the next page)

PANEL 2: DOMESTIC POLICY IN CHINA & EU MEMBER STATES

This discussion will highlight the diverse climate policies and priorities across EU Member States. While the European Union sets overarching goals through initiatives like the Green Deal, individual member states vary significantly in their approaches to emissions reduction, renewable energy adoption, and climate resilience. Differences stem from varying national interests, economic capacities, and political contexts, reflecting a rich tapestry of strategies aimed at achieving common climate objectives within the EU framework.

EU member state policies will also be compared and contrasted with the variation in climate policies and priorities across China's provinces. Although China has a unified national goal of carbon neutrality by 2060, regional approaches differ widely. Provinces implement diverse strategies based on their economic structures, local resources, and environmental challenges. These variations reflect a balance between national targets and regional needs, showcasing how local governments adapt national policies to their unique circumstances while contributing to China's overall climate objectives.

Moderator:

BLANCA MARABINI SAN MARTÍN

Blanca Marabini San Martín is a PhD Candidate at the Center for East Asia Studies of the Madrid Autonomous University (CEAO – UAM), in Spain. Her research interests are centered around the environmental, climate, and green tech dimensions of Chinese foreign policy within the framework of EU-China relations. She previously worked at the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies of the Ministry of Defense of Spain), the Spanish Chinese Policy Observatory, and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, Leiden). She holds a Double BA in International Relations and Translation and Interpreting, with a focus on Foreign Policy and Security, from Comillas Pontifical University (Spain) and an MSc in Political Science from Leiden University (The Netherlands). She first joined European Guanxi as Editor in Chief in the Fall of 2020 and held the positions of Secretary General in the 2022-23 cycle and president in the 2023-24 cycle.



PANEL 2 SPEAKERS



VANESSA HAMMOUCHE

Passionate about foreign cultures, languages, civilisations, and societies around the world, Vanessa quickly directed my studies towards tourism. Her interest in several research fields of the humanities and social sciences encouraged her to pursue her academic interests with a doctorate in human and global geogra-



phy. Therefore, with a multidisciplinary approach to this discipline, her research work questions the place of decentralised cooperation and French-Chinese sister cities on a glocal scale (between local and global), where the analysis of both guanxi/ interpersonal relationships and a “bottom-up” governance is necessary. Thus, would rather prioritise a study case analysis, often inductive, and conduct research rooted in a knowledge-building process. The methodology she mostly prioritises in her research is “mixed” (qualitative and quantitative) in order to pursue the contributions of the scientific literature in both Western and Asian schools of thought.

Decentralized cooperation and sister cities: A way to preserve international relations in an uncertain future? A Practical approach of French-Chinese sister cities in the Occitane Region (South fo France)

Abstract: Since 1952, sister cities have represented joined political ambitions defined by a common purpose of sharing a cultural, an economic, and educational project. These agreements are based on a wide range of issues according to decentralised cooperation projects’ mostly handled by local authorities’ and managed by international local offices, especially in France. In an international context expressed through multiple crises where global warming, the economy, artificial intelligence, and geopolitics represents ways to express many ideologies, the question of sister cities seems to be an opportunity to approach the Chinese concept of Guanxi(关系). This term is mostly translated by “interpersonal relationships” as a long-term partnership. Although the competition between the West and the South led to an economic protectionism in many countries, an anti-china cooperation in discuss to “de-risk” the consequences of a Chinese hegemony while the world order changes appear questionable (Bartsch & Wessling 2023). This paper draws up a geographical perspective from both a global and micro point of view to demonstrate the evolution of French-Chinese sister’s cities at a local scale and in many fields. The link between global and local enables questioning a set of relationships by highlighting a plural-actor logic and multi-scale view. Here, the case studied is the relationship between one of the largest French regions and a close-up between the least populated province in China and the least populated department in France, as well as Duyun’s Green Expo Park in Guizhou province and the Causses et Cévennes area in the department of Lozère.

PANEL 2 SPEAKERS



IMKE BLUME-VIDAL

Imke Blume-Vidal holds a B.A. in China Studies and an M.A. in the same field from the UPC University (Université Paris Cité). Demonstrating a deep-rooted passion for language, culture, and environmental conservation, her academic journey began with a foundation in China Studies, culminating in research that compared the climate discourses of Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel.



With a professional background as a civil servant at the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including a four-year posting at the German Embassy in Beijing, Imke later ventured into journalism in New Delhi, therewith broadening her horizons across diverse cultures and working fields.

Currently pursuing a Ph.D. at Inalco in Paris, Imke's research centres on dissecting the Chinese environmental discourse during Xi Jinping's tenure. Her extensive academic and professional journey reflects a strong commitment to advancing our understanding of global environmental challenges.

The Power of Green: The Dual Role of China's Eco-Civilization in Environmental and Political Strategies

Abstract: This study investigates the Chinese concept of ecological civilization, analyzing its origins and role in Chinese politics. The aim is to trace the evolution of the concept from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping and to explore the definition of "ecological civilization" in Xi's seminal 2018 speech on eco-civilization-building. Finally, this research intends to show if the eco-civilization is used to legitimate the power of the Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Xi Jinping.

The first section provides a historical overview of the Chinese eco-civilization, tracing its evolution from the introduction of the term under Hu Jintao to its prominent inclusion in the Chinese constitution under Xi Jinping. It examines how Xi Jinping's speeches and policy initiatives have redefined and elevated the concept within the Party's broader vision, integrating it into the framework of the "Chinese Dream" and emphasizing its importance for China's green transition.

The second part addresses the research question of whether ecological civilization serves as a tool for power legitimization. This section elaborates on how poverty reduction was successfully used to legitimate the rule of the Communist Party in the past and compares it to the potential of environmental protection to serve the same purpose today. It argues that efforts in eco-civilization-building are strategically used to bolster the Party's credibility and consolidate its authority by aligning ecological progress with economic development goals, as well as linking it to societal benefits for the people. (Continues in the next page)



Overall, the study finds that while building an ecological civilization is a substantive approach to addressing environmental and developmental challenges, it also functions as a strategic tool for the Chinese Communist Party to reinforce its legitimacy. By renewing the promise to “serve the people” and intertwining ecological and prosperity objectives, the Party effectively strengthens its political position and aims for public support.

Such findings must be seen on the backdrop of the recently held Third Plenum of the 20th Central Committee and the newest Political Guidelines of the EU (2024-2029). They can contribute to a better understanding of Chinese approaches to environmental protection, enabling European decision-makers to foster fruitful cooperation with China despite political differences and systemic rivalry, by identifying common goals and challenges that can be more effectively addressed through collaboration rather than competition whilst simultaneously maintaining the autonomy of both sides.

PANEL 2 SPEAKERS



THOMAS VAN OEVEREN

Thomas van Oeveren is a recent graduate of Leiden University, holding degrees in Chinastudies (BA), Asian Studies (MA), and International Relations (MA), and currently located in Leiden. He has also studied Mandarin at the National Normal Taiwan University (NTNU) in Taipei and gained practical experience through internships at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) and the German-Southeast Asian Center of Excellence for Public Policy and Good Governance (CPG). His academic focus has been on China's political economy, particularly in the context of its global interactions.. Thomas's research explores how these strategies reflect each entity's broader global vision and whether they align or conflict within the emerging multipolar world order. His primary interests lie in EU-China relations, China's political economy, and the continued study of Mandarin.



Multipolar Visions: A Comparative Analysis of China's and the European Union's Neighborhood Policies and their Implications on Interregional Dynamics

Abstract: Thomas van Oeveren's master's thesis, "Multipolar Visions: A Comparative Analysis of China's and the European Union's Neighborhood Policies and their Implications on Interregional Dynamics," submitted to Leiden University in December 2023, utilizes a content analysis of policy documents to explore how the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the European Union (EU) articulate their global visions through their neighborhood policies amidst a shift towards a multipolar world order. The study investigates the underlying norms and strategies of the PRC and EU's approaches, focusing on five specific norms to determine whether their strategies reflect a convergence of global visions and values or a divergence, indicative of conflicting views on global governance. Through examining the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy and China's initiatives, Van Oeveren critically assesses how each actor's neighborhood policy not only impacts their regional engagements but also serves as a mirror reflecting their broader aspirations for global multipolarity. The comparative analysis, grounded in constructivist theory, seeks to understand the implications of these regional policies on the actors' global visions. By analyzing the compatibility or systemic differences between their approaches, the thesis contributes to the discourse on international relations dynamics, offering insights into potential areas for cooperation or sources of tension in a multipolar world, thereby enriching the understanding of interregional dynamics and the complexities of global governance strategies.

PANEL 2 SPEAKERS



SEVERINE BARDON

Following a training in international relations and political sciences, Séverine Bardon moved to Beijing in 1998. Fluent in mandarin, she worked in China as a free-lance journalist, writing for French and international media outlets on a wide range of topics, from politics and diplomacy to social issues and economic development.



After ten years of extensive field investigations in China she moved back to France where she set up a production company specialized in geopolitics and foreign affairs. She directs and produces TV reports and documentaries and keeps focusing on China through a more international lens. She's also sharing her expertise on China by teaching a seminar at Sciences Po Paris on China's foreign policy. She recently joined the France-China Climate Initiative to conduct a research on the way the media, in France and China, report on each other's climate actions.

Climate action: crossed perceptions in France and China

Abstract: The collective dynamics underpinning climate change mitigation can be compared to a prisoner's dilemma situation. Because action to mitigate climate change has a political and economic cost, the perception of what other countries do, in particular the US, Europe and China, is likely to impact how governments and populations dose their efforts. And this perception is highly influenced by the media.

Media inform and shape public opinion in their country. The subjects they focus on, the issues they tackle and, above all, the way they tackle them, influence their audience's reading of the world.

The France China Climate Initiative analysed the perception in France of China's climate mitigation actions and the perception in China of France and Europe's, as reflected in each nation's media coverage. Based on a selection of French and Chinese publications, this research compares perspectives, identifies information gaps and highlights potential underreported or misreported topics. It provides insights on how to improve the EU-China dialogue on climate change and aims at reinforcing the two partners' mutual understanding and collaboration.

The presentation will introduce the conclusions of this report that covered one year of climate-related publications in France and China.

PANEL 3: CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND POLICY

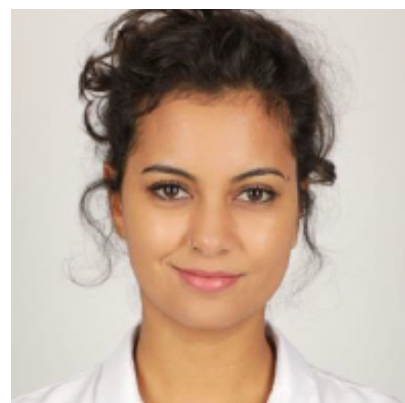
Climate and environmental issues are increasingly at the center of international law and policy, driven by the global demand for a sustainable and greener future. The transboundary nature of climate challenges, such as carbon emissions and biodiversity loss, necessitates a unified global framework. This has led to the development of international treaties and agreements aimed at fostering cooperation and coordinated action among nations.

However, the novelty of environmental law requires innovative solutions and new approaches to policymaking and enforcement. Traditional methods may not suffice, given the complexity of these challenges. Adaptive policies, inclusive decision-making, and mechanisms like carbon markets and climate finance are being developed to ensure effective global environmental governance.

Moderator:

NICOLE LINSENBOLD

Nicole currently serves as the programme manager for the Multinational Development Policy Dialogue (MDPD) of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Brussels. The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a Christian-democratic German foundation, promotes democracy, international cooperation, and European integration. The MDPD is dedicated to advancing cooperation between like-minded partners on a global scale and fostering policy dialogues, particularly on sustainability, human rights, security, and



climate policy, while shaping discussions between the European Union, NATO, and KAS partners worldwide. Nicole previously worked at the German Association for International Cooperation (GIZ).

PANEL 3 SPEAKERS



DOUGLAS ANDERSON

Douglas Brenton Anderson is a research intern at the Trustee Chair in Chinese Business and Economics (Center for Strategic and International Studies) and at the China Center (Hudson Institute) in Washington DC. He holds an MA in Public Policy Administration from Tsinghua University, Beijing, and an MSc in Innovation, Human Development, and Sustainability from the Uni-



versity of Geneva, Switzerland. He has previously worked in government at the local, regional, and national level, as well as in an international organization in the humanitarian sector, focusing on digital innovation. He enjoys travel, having been to 41 cities in China, and is proficient in Mandarin Chinese and French.

Effectiveness of experimental policymaking and governance in China and experimentalist governance in the European Union (EU) with respect to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Abstract: My research aims to explore the effectiveness of experimental policymaking and governance in China and experimentalist governance in the European Union (EU) with respect to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By analyzing the theoretical and historical foundations of these policy domains in both Europe and China and presenting an analytical framework for experimental policy analysis based on policy goals, stakeholder engagement, implementation mechanisms, risk, and transparency, I hope to provide a new perspective on the potential of experimentation-style multinational collaboration and governance for advancing the SDGs. Taking a retrospective governance approach to policy document analysis, I examine Chinese Ecological Civilization pilot zones, the River Chief System in China, the EU Water Framework Directive, the China Europe Water Platform, and the Montreal Protocol to the versatility and value of experimental approaches in addressing complex global challenges. The documents that will provide strength to the analysis of the policy case studies are the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the original texts of the Montreal Protocol and Water Framework Directive; the 14th Five-Year Plan; and the China Europe Water Platform Policy Guidance for Sponge Cities. I will shed light on how to better foster China-EU cooperation and propose pertinent policy recommendations based on example case studies.

Experimental governance in China and the EU differ significantly in stakeholder engagement, feedback mechanisms, democratic tendencies, and incentivization structures. In the EU, governance is democratic, consensus-driven, and participatory, with a focus on integration, coordination, environmental development, and regulation. Policies are multi-level and evidence-based, implemented incrementally, with high transparency and stakeholder engagement.

PANEL 3 SPEAKERS



Risk management is emphasized, and incentives are penalty-based. In contrast, China's governance is authoritarian, but combines both top-down and bottom-up initiatives aimed at ecological development, innovation, modernization, and economic reform. Policies are centralized but allow some local autonomy. Implementation is top-down, with limited public participation and transparency. Risk-taking is balanced with risk minimization, and incentives include career advancement and financial rewards.

Despite these differences, both systems embrace the experimentalist principles of embracing uncertainty, incorporating feedback mechanisms, and demonstrating flexibility and adaptive management in addressing the SDGs. Engaging in international treaties like the Montreal Protocol, both China and the EU show potential for collaborative frameworks, advancing SDG 17 by fostering international dialogue and sustainable development practices.

This study offers recommendations to strengthen these systems' efficacy in promoting sustainable development through enhancing public participation, stakeholder engagement and transparency, and learning from best practices. Ultimately, in an era of strategic competition, the SDGs remain an important focal point that demands international cooperation. By exploring the intersection of experimental policymaking and governance and the SDGs, this research contributes to the broader understanding of effective governance mechanisms for achieving sustainable development objectives at both the national and international levels.

PANEL 3 SPEAKERS



AGATA BIDAS

Agata Bidas is a law graduate from the University of Warsaw and a current master's student in Development Studies at the University of Vienna. Passionate about international law and international relations, her research interests focus on crucial issues such as international security, CFSP, climate policies as well as human rights and the rule of law.

Additionally, Agata is an active member of the International Community NGO based in Vienna, where she promotes youth education on international politics. She organizes numerous events such as Model United Nations focusing on critical topics, aiming to foster informed discussions and awareness among young individuals.



Ecocide as a threat to global security: Exploring the recognition of ecocide as an international crime and its implications

Abstract: In an era of escalating environmental degradation and geopolitical instability, the concept of ecocide is gaining traction as a pressing global issue requiring urgent regulation and possible recognition as an international crime. Ecocide, defined by the Independent Expert Panel as " means unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts", has been discussed primarily in terms of its environmental impact. However, its broader implications for global security and geopolitics need to be further explored.

This paper argues that ecocide poses a significant threat to global security and argues for its recognition as an international crime, alongside existing crimes such as genocide and crimes against humanity. Although some states recognise ecocide in their national legislation, there is still a lack of universal recognition and definition. Recognising ecocide as an international crime would mean adding it to the list of crimes that can be prosecuted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), thereby enabling legal accountability for those responsible for large-scale environmental destruction.

To support this argument, the paper draws on empirical research, case studies and theoretical frameworks from environmental studies, security studies and geopolitics. It examines the underlying drivers and consequences of ecocide as a security threat, (continued in the next page)

PANEL 3 SPEAKERS



analysing how environmental degradation intersects with geopolitical dynamics, resource competition, migration and displacement, and armed conflicts. It also explores the potential geopolitical implications of recognising ecocide as an international crime, comparing attitudes towards its recognition in different regions, such as the European Union and China. The analysis considers the implications of the recognition of ecocide for global power dynamics, diplomatic relations and cooperation on environmental issues. It acknowledges the rivalry between the EU and China while seeing the need for increased international cooperation to address environmental threats. It also argues that the recognition of ecocide can help to focus international attention on the humanitarian and security concerns arising from environmental degradation.

In summary, the paper aims to underscore the need to navigate geopolitical complexities and foster cooperation among nations to address the multiple challenges posed by ecocide and ensure a safer and more sustainable future. It also delivers arguments that recognising ecocide as a crime would promote environmental justice by ensuring access to justice and remedies for affected communities. It would promote international cooperation in addressing environmental challenges, protect human rights and be consistent with the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

PANEL 3 SPEAKERS



SHRISTI MORE

Shristi More is a Research Assistant and Co-Author with expertise in climate change, renewable energy, and geopolitical issues. She has co-authored a chapter on wildlife crime in a forthcoming book, contributing to policy advocacy and marine conservation in India. Shristi is also a freelance writer for Defence and Security Alert, where she produces content on environmental protection and security. She has extensive experience in policy research, data analysis, and strategic communication. As a podcasting officer for European Guanxi, she designed a successful podcast series on China's politics. Shristi holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Kent.



Navigating Energy Security in a Post-Invasion World: The Role of Green Technologies and International Cooperation

Abstract: This article explores the intersection of energy security, environmental sustainability, and geopolitics in the aftermath of the invasion of Ukraine. It focuses on the European Union's quest for alternative energy sources amidst energy shortages exacerbated by the conflict and the imperative to reduce dependence on Russian gas. Additionally, it examines China's dominant position in the rare earths market and its implications for global supply chains and security. The article employs a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from environmental studies, security studies, geopolitics, and economics. It utilizes a combination of qualitative analysis of existing literature, policy documents, and empirical data to analyze the complex dynamics at play.

The article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities in transitioning to alternative energy sources and diversifying supply chains. - It will highlight the importance of green technologies such as renewable energy and energy efficiency measures in enhancing energy security and mitigating environmental risks. - The article will offer policy recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders, emphasizing the need for international cooperation, innovation, and investment in sustainable energy solutions to address both energy security and climate change concerns. This article seeks to contribute original insights to the emerging field of greening security by examining the complex interplay between energy, environment, and security in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape. It underscores the urgency of transitioning towards sustainable energy systems and fostering cooperation among nations to ensure a secure and resilient future for all.

PANEL 4: ROAD TO EGYC 2024 ESSAY COMPETITION AND WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

In Spring 2024, European Guanxi held an essay competition, with the same title and theme as this year's youth conference. We received a variety of submissions, and five finalists were selected. Finalists were given the opportunity to present their essay at the Youth Conference, with the winning essay being included in the 2024 issue of the European Guanxi journal. The competition finalists are: **Mattheo Bartolini, Agatha Bidas, Shristi More, Aurelia Maria Pulafito and Hanyi Zhang.**

Alongside the in-person presentations of Agata Bidas and Shristi More, this online panel allows the rest of the finalists, who are unable to travel to Brussels, to present their work at the Conference. The winner will also be announced at the end of the panel.

Moderator:

VALERIA FAPPANI

Valeria is a doctoral candidate at the School of International Studies, University of Trento. She currently holds the project-specific grant, "The European Union: Integration Processes, Enlargement, and International Role" awarded by the Italian National Research Council. Valeria pursued her Master's degree in European and International Studies at the University of Trento after she



completed a Bachelor's degree in Foreign Languages (English and Chinese) from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart. She was also a visiting research student at Queen Mary University of London and attended a Post-graduate course on "Exports and Digitalisation" organised by the Italian Trade Agency. Her research interests lie at the intersection of trade, human rights, and sustainability, with a focus on micro-level analyses of the EU and Chinese laws and policies. She has also been actively involved in youth-led initiatives centred around the EU, China, and their bilateral relations.

PANEL 4 SPEAKERS



AURELIA MARIA PULAFITO

Aurelia is an international relations expert focused on global security and Africa-China relations. As a Research Trainee at CeSEM and Editor-in-Chief of the *Framing the World* project at Mondo Internazionale Post, she oversees international affairs analyses. Her articles appear in publications like *Diplomacy: Strategic Approach to Global Affairs*. Aurelia is pursuing a Master's in International Affairs at Università degli Studi di Messina, with expertise in OSINT and digital forensics from the Digital Forensic Research Lab. She also volunteers with the United Nations, contributing to human rights and SDG campaigns, bringing a multilingual, global perspective to her work.



The European Green Deal: Security risks behind a growing dependence on Beijing

Abstract: The European Green Deal aims to make Europe the first “zero-impact” country in the world. This would mean, reaching carbon neutrality before 2050. Thanks to a law proposed by the EU Commission in 2020 and later approved both by the Council and the Parliament, reducing CO2 emissions by the half of this century is legally binding for all the states that are part of the European Union. Starting from this, I will briefly overview the origins of this ambitious project and try to report both its lights and shadows. In order to better understand the latter, it will be useful to analyze the case of the electric vehicles industry that is, indeed, one of the most controversial: the key component of the motors of electric vehicles are the so called strategic minerals, such as lithium and cobalt. Unfortunately, western Europe lacks of working extractive mines of these minerals, which condemns the EU to depend on one of the most important and controversial providers: China.

Such an important role of China as a provider of an extremely delicate and high risk sector such as the energy one raises many concerns related to security. Despite the growing consciousness on the topic, the EU seems to have fallen into a vicious circle, that must be questioned and faced. Therefore, the research question is to find out as follows: To what extent does the role of China as a source provider damages EU and what alternative scenarios can be imagined?

This is a desktop based study which relies on the method of documentary analysis of documentary sources. I used the material from both primary and secondary sources.

PANEL 4 SPEAKERS



HANYI ZHANG

Hanyi Zhang is a PhD student at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. She holds degrees in Religion Studies, Economics and German Studies. Her research interests include Sino-German relations, religion and economic sustainable development.



Sustainable Development Amid Uncertainty: Trade Disputes from Environmental Subsidies and Green Competition in Sino-European Relations - An Electric Vehicle Export Case Study

Abstract: This paper examines potential trade disputes triggered by environmental subsidies and advantages in green competition. Amid current international uncertainties, this paper reexamines past trade friction instances between China and Europe, focusing on environmental disputes like the EU's anti-dumping probe on Chinese solar panels. It highlights trade friction's emergence as a pivotal issue in global trade. Within the theoretical framework of comparative advantage, this paper analyzes the impact of environmental subsidies and advantages in green competition on trade patterns and structures. While environmental subsidies may lead to unfair competition in international trade, advantages in green competition could alter the scenario of international industrial and value chains. Additionally, the paper illustrates how the rise of emerging green industries, exemplified by China's electric vehicle exports to Europe, can spark trade disputes. Finally, it offers recommendations for resolving trade disputes stemming from environmental subsidies and green competition, such as enhancing global cooperation, establishing equitable competition regulations, and advancing green technology transfer.

PANEL 4 SPEAKERS



MATTEO BARTOLINI

Matteo Bartolini is active in the field of research and training. He has conducted research on China's foreign energy policy and cultural heritage. As a Programme Officer, he has worked on the implementation of various training projects within the framework of European initiatives, as well as in cooperation with the United Nations, NGOs, and private companies. As a trainer, he has delivered sessions for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, the UN Civilian Pre-Deployment Training (CPT), and other training programs.



Essay
Competition
Finalist
2024

"Environmental resilience: The EU-China relationship in an era of energy and resource shifts

Abstract: In response to the evolving geopolitical landscape catalyzed by events such as the conflict in Ukraine, the imperative to ensure security amidst energy and resource shifts has emerged as a pressing concern. This essay delves into the concept of "Environmental Resilience" as a critical framework for safeguarding security in an era characterized by new energy and resource dynamics.

Against the backdrop of energy shortages and the need of the EU to diversify away from Russian gas, coupled with China's dominance in rare earths, the essay scrutinizes the intricate nexus between environmental sustainability and security imperatives. It examines how environmental considerations intersect with strategies aimed at mitigating the risks associated with energy dependency and resource scarcity, particularly in the context of geopolitical rivalries.

By analyzing existing literature, policies, and case studies, this essay seeks to offer original insights into the challenges and opportunities inherent in balancing environmental concerns with security imperatives. It explores the potential for leveraging renewable energy sources, enhancing resource efficiency, and fostering international cooperation as means to bolster environmental resilience and enhance security outcomes.

Furthermore, the essay underscores the role of environmental diplomacy in navigating the complexities of energy and resource geopolitics. It advocates for collaborative approaches that transcend traditional security paradigms, promoting dialogue and cooperation towards shared environmental and security goals.

PANEL 4 SPEAKERS



In conclusion, this essay argues that environmental resilience is indispensable for safeguarding security in an era of energy and resource shifts. By embracing sustainable practices and fostering cooperation, nations can mitigate vulnerabilities and build resilience against disruptions, thereby enhancing security in a rapidly changing global landscape.

The methodology employed in this essay involves a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, policies, and diplomatic interactions related to environmental resilience, energy security, and EU-China relations. Drawing on scholarly research, official documents, and expert insights, the essay aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in navigating environmental challenges amidst geopolitical dynamics. Additionally, case studies and empirical data will be utilized to illustrate key concepts and highlight practical implications for EU-China cooperation in the energy and resource sectors.

The outcome of this essay is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to shed light on the multifaceted nature of environmental resilience and security considerations in the context of EU-China relations, offering fresh perspectives on the intersection between environmental sustainability and geopolitical dynamics. By analyzing the implications of energy and resource shifts for both entities, the essay aims to elucidate the challenges and opportunities facing the EU-China relationship in this domain.

Secondly, the essay aims to provide actionable insights and policy recommendations for enhancing EU-China cooperation in addressing common environmental challenges and advancing shared security interests. By identifying areas of mutual benefit and potential areas for collaboration, the essay seeks to contribute to the development of strategic approaches that promote environmental sustainability, energy security, and geopolitical stability in the EU-China context.

In summary, this essay endeavors to advance scholarly understanding and policy discourse on the nexus between environmental resilience, security imperatives, and the EU-China relationship in an era characterized by energy and resource shifts. Through its interdisciplinary approach and empirical analysis, the essay aims to offer valuable insights and recommendations for fostering cooperation and resilience in the face of evolving environmental and geopolitical challenges.