

Challenges and Chances of China's Border Environment: A Study on Heilongjiang River Basin Environmental Issues

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Abstract

China enjoys a fast economic growth during the 30 years of reform and opening-up, comprehensive national strength and people's living standards have gone up substantially. However, environmental problems, marked by resources consumption, high-energy consuming, heavy investment and pollution, become increasingly prominent. Some of them even caused collisions between the public and local governments and turned into mass events. Therefore how to balance between development and environment and to better protect environment has become important topic that China has to face in the process of economic transformation, upgrading, as well as sustainable and healthy development. Meanwhile, because of the introduction of advanced foreign environment concept and the awakening of public environmental awareness, the public demands for better environment quality more than ever. Thus environmental problems and the related treatment measures has become important issue of people's livelihood. Under the background of China's regional development transfer from the eastern coastal areas to inland and border areas, especially after the implementation of "One Belt and One Road" strategic concept, the environmental problems are likely to spread to other related countries from border areas and initiate trans-boundary environmental pollution, and also put international cooperation concerning environment problems on the agenda. Among bilateral and multilateral environmental cooperation, Heilongjiang River Basin environment cooperation among China, Russia and Mongolia has become an important part of Northeast Asian environment cooperation because of the shared borders. Against the backdrop of "ruling the country by law" and the neighboring diplomatic idea of "Affinity, Credibility, Reciprocity and Tolerance" with Chinese characteristics, it is imperative that we expand environmental legislation and deepen the international environmental cooperation on the basis of "Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China". Starting with China's present environmental situation, problems and treatment trends, this paper will then discuss the overall not-so-optimistic environmental quality, the worsened northeast pollution and the many measures of environmental governance. With emphasis on Heilongjiang River Basin environment problems and China-Russia environment cooperation, this paper will also discuss the grim reality of border environmental problems, point out the obstacles in the way of Northeast Asia environment cooperation, and finally put forward the corresponding suggestions from the perspectives of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.