



Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*China's Environmental
Diplomacy and Bilateral
Climate Cooperation with
United States and India
since the Kyoto Protocol*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker:
Shagufta Yasmin

30 April 2025

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Speaker: Dr. Shagufta Yasmin, Independent Researcher; Recipient ICS-HYI Multi Year Doctoral Fellowship (2017-2020).

Chair: Prof. Varaprasad S. Dolla, Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Date: 30 April 2025

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar focussed on China's evolving environmental diplomacy in international climate change negotiations, with a focus on two key bilateral partnerships: China–United States and China–India. Prof. Varaprasad S. Dolla noted the global shift from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasising the increasing centrality of environmental issues. He raised the question whether elements of "wolf warrior" diplomacy were apparent in China's environmental strategies and emphasised the need to examine China's bilateral climate cooperation with the US and India.
- Dr. Shagufta Yasmin described the evolution of China's environmental diplomacy, tracing its shift from resistance to strategic engagement in international climate negotiations. She examined the China-US bilateral climate cooperation as a strategic and competitive relationship with China leveraging bilateralism to assert control and expand its green technology market. Initiatives like 'Made in China 2025' and China's response to US climate policies reflect both collaboration and competition between the two powers. The shared vulnerabilities, opportunities and challenges within the ambit of China-India climate cooperation were also examined. Despite border tensions and limited trust, the two nations have cooperated in multilateral platforms and increasingly recognise the importance of joint climate action.
- Dr. Yasmin traced how China, once sceptical of Western-led climate initiatives, began embracing clean development mechanisms and setting voluntary climate targets. Under Xi Jinping's leadership, China has projected greater global ambition, positioning itself as a key player in climate governance. The presentation analysed

China–US climate cooperation, underscoring how Beijing uses bilateral ties to safeguard its economic and strategic interests.

- The speaker concluded that China’s climate diplomacy, though driven by national interests, has played a significant role in advancing global low-carbon goals. Bilateral efforts, particularly in areas like green technology and carbon capture, remain vital to addressing the climate crisis.

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