

Pressemitteilung

GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies

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Green Power and Performance in Global Environmental Governance

GIGA Focus International 6/ 2013 from Babette Never From 10 to 11 June 2013, the Global Green Growth Summit will take place in Seoul. Policymakers, international organizations and experts from various fields will once again discuss how the transformation toward a green economy and more sustainable development paths can be managed.

Global environmental governance is characterized by a high number of international activities, but actual environmental outcomes vary. The ability to develop green political and economic power that leads to better environmental performance is not restricted to industrialized countries anymore. China, South Korea, Brazil and India are slowly catching up, while some small developing nations have also begun to generate power for a green change.

- The heterogeneous behavior of the emerging economies undermines their green power in central environmental regimes. This heterogeneity is reflected in their differing development of green power outside of the internationally negotiated treaties.
- “Green power” refers to the ability to successfully combine technological capabilities, environmental innovations, political and economic power. None of the central actors currently possess it in a way that positions them as leaders in smart global environmental governance.
- In the climate negotiations, China and the United States are in a balance of power that is negative for the environment. China has surpassed the United States in the use of clean technology. However, it still lags behind in achieving better environmental outcomes.
- Costa Rica, Norway and Ecuador have accumulated some green power in spite of their respective economic sizes, bolstering it with good environmental performance. Nonetheless, in the global distribution of power, this is hardly relevant.
- Neither Europe nor Germany currently uses its full green power potential. Both are restricted by hesitant behavior, a drop in new investments in clean technology and innovation as well as China’s structural power gain.

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