

# Energy Transition Dialouges

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### VIEWS YOU CAN USE



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### Dr. Xavier Chen

CEO, CN Innovation

President, Beijing Energy Club



#### Greening Energy: China Vows to Build Modern Systems by Improving Mechanisms

As part of the “1+N” policy framework to achieve the 2030/2060 duo carbon goals, and in junction with the 14th Five-Year planning, China has published a number of policy documents, each focusing on green and low carbon development of one particular sector, such as energy, industry, building, transport, urban and rural areas, and consumption, respectively.

Similar to most of the central government’s policy papers, the green energy transition blueprint remains highly indicative and directional. It expresses the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the National Energy Agency’s (NEA) desire to build a mandated new, green and low carbon energy system, through improved mechanisms, but lacks concreteness in the proposed mechanisms or policies. This will challenge the deployment and implementation at lower level of state hierarchy, nationwide.

As demonstrated, the NDRC/NEA strongly feel the inadequacy and “outdatedness” of existing energy governance for the highly expected green and low carbon transformation. But, given that they are “powerless” in changing the organizational setting, they can only aspire to reform the “mechanisms” that hold all the parts of the sector together -- the term “mechanism” is mentioned sixty-six times in the 9-page paper.

And yet, if the fundamental organizational setting of the energy sector, or institutions and governance, remains “untouched,” such as the state monopoly of the power grids, delivery is set to fall short of ambition. As “body and mechanism” always go hand in hand, one cannot help but wonder whether all the proposed improvements in mechanism would be sufficient to deliver the desired signposts and outcome of transition.

More closely, how the “good intentions” of the Opinion will be reflected in the 14th Five-year plan for energy development remains to be seen, since it is not published yet, even though we already stand in the second year of the 5-year planning cycle. ■

*\*Paraphrased Comments*

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