

China's Recent Ocean Policy Initiatives and Implications

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Since 2003, the Chinese Government developed and implemented "Scientific Development Concept" as its overarching framework for guiding the country's socioeconomic development. This provides opportunities for government policy reforms, including national coastal and ocean policies. By 2006, for the first time, the national 5-year economic and social development programme has included a section on "marine resource protection and development," which considers major ocean related aspects as a whole. In the same year, State Ocean Development Programme 2010-2020 has been launched. An important feature of this programme is the implementation of watershed/catchment management principle, requiring that the management of upstream activities on land should be based on their impacts on the downstream environmental carrying capacity in the adjacent seas. Other policy features include the development and implementation of "water rights based management", "market based management" and "ecosystem based management." The effectiveness of these new ocean policy initiatives has been shown in reducing multiple coastal use conflicts, but not so much in regulating the growing coastal reclamation activities. Integrated coastal management (ICM), while demonstrated its vitality in various local government practices, has yet to be adopted in national policies and programmes. Despite all the efforts made thus far, the country is still facing the challenge of developing a high level cross sector ocean policy and its implementation programme.



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