

No strategy, however elegant in theory, can be expected to provide security. Unaddressed by the ODC are severe and growing shortfalls in military recruitment. Taiwan's military must attempt to recruit roughly ten per cent of 18-year-olds each year just to maintain its current staff size – and the country's birth rate continues to decline. Moreover, a politically popular but militarily unwise decision to end conscription and shorten enlistment terms, recently reversed but now being challenged by a contender in Taiwan's 2024 election, bodes ill for the future. Finally, Taiwan's stagnant defence budget is insufficient to support needed investment in both asymmetric littoral defence and conventional long-range strike capabilities.

This book is an important contribution to our understanding of the cross-Strait military situation and its authors make their case convincingly. That the book is available in Open Access and written in clear, straightforward prose should encourage a wide readership. Yet its appearance nearly two years after the conference and perforce based on sources that are even earlier will leave readers wondering how much progress has been made in the intervening period. It is to be hoped that the next volume can be brought from conference to publication much faster.

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Cooperating for the Climate: Learning from International Partnerships in China's Clean Energy Sector

Joanna I. Lewis. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2023. 270 pp. \$45.00 (pbk). ISBN 9780262544825

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As the world transitions towards a low-carbon energy future, China's rise as a clean energy power has rung alarm bells in Western capitals. China's cost advantages in solar and other renewable energies, its dominance of global production of lithium-ion batteries and its stranglehold over much of the global supply and processing of critical minerals have been depicted as both a security threat and a challenge for the development of other countries' own clean energy industries. Such reasoning is most visible in the US's Inflation Reduction Act, whose stress on the promotion of domestic green industry is seen by many as undermining the free circulation of goods and ideas required for global cooperation in tackling climate change.

Joanna I. Lewis's new book, *Cooperating for the Climate*, reminds us of a bygone era when relations with China were not seen in zero-sum terms. The book examines the record of China's bilateral cooperation in clean energy research, focusing on government-led partnerships involving research institutes and the private sector. The starting premise is that "the benefits to international science and technology cooperation may outweigh the risks" (p. 5). Moreover, on account of China's status as the largest greenhouse gas emitter, the size of its energy markets, and, increasingly, its technological leadership in clean energy, "the economies and innovation systems of most countries in the world depend on engaging with China" (p. 6).

The book draws on an original database of bilateral agreements between China and 42 other countries, interviews held in six countries, and the author's own participant observation in China's clean energy cooperation initiatives with the US and Denmark. The cross-country analysis



reveals that clean energy cooperation agreements with China have steadily increased since the 1990s, with a more pronounced pick-up in the late 2000s and early 2010s. The plateauing of agreements at close to 450 since 2017 suggests that these trends have tracked the state of relations between China and the geopolitical West, which is responsible for the bulk of cooperative agreements.

The empirical core of the book contains case studies of China's clean energy cooperation with the US, Denmark and Brazil. Covered in two chapters, US–China cooperation figures particularly prominently in the analysis, and justifiably so in account of its centrality for global climate politics. The picture that emerges is that of a scientific relationship gradually burgeoning throughout the Clinton, Bush and (particularly) Obama administrations, but which was cut short by the election of Donald Trump in 2016. Lewis claims that clean energy collaborations helped facilitate US–China dialogue on climate change in the run-up to the 2015 Paris Agreement, which would certainly count among the programme's successes. She also comments on the difficulties in clearly identifying the outcomes of clean energy partnerships, but is nonetheless sanguine on US–China collaboration, pointing to scientific outputs, the demonstration of American technologies in China and the launch of new products by participating companies. Yet Lewis also acknowledges that such collaborations are not free from risk. Intellectual property (IP) rights figure as an area of particular concern, and have in many cases deterred more comprehensive collaborations, though most conflicts appear to have been resolved amicably.

China's clean energy collaboration with Denmark has been a less high-stakes affair due to the Scandinavian country's lower diplomatic standing and to the partnership's focus on renewable energy policy, steering clear of activities that risked IP infringement. Denmark has capitalized on its technological prowess in renewable energy, particularly wind and biomass, to engage China in programmes aimed at improving its research and policy planning capacity. Lewis sees this case of cooperation as a clear success, as attested by the policy influence attained by the Danish-supported China National Renewable Energy Center, and by its ability to scale up and become financially self-sufficient. She credits Denmark's success to its whole-of-government approach and attentiveness to China's requirements.

The final case study deals with China's bilateral cooperation with Brazil. This is the only case in the book in which China held a technological edge over the partner country. It therefore holds particular interest in revealing the possible dynamics of a situation that is bound to become more common now that China is at the frontier of clean energy technology. Sino-Brazilian cooperation was mostly circumscribed to collaborative R&D and technological demonstration. In particular, Brazil's expertise and large market for biofuels offered a promising testing ground for Chinese biofuel technologies. Meanwhile, cooperation on other clean energy technologies have been less successful, and the China–Brazil Center's activities tapered off after 2014 due to funding cuts as Brazil entered an economic crisis. Despite the mixed results of Sino-Brazilian collaboration, the author treats the experience as one that could be replicated in other parts of the Global South.

Lewis's book provides a novel contribution to the study of China's global presence through the wealth of empirical data brought by her database and case studies. It is also a valuable wake-up call to the pitfalls of technological nationalism in a world of “decoupling” and “reshoring,” but where science and innovation are increasingly globalized. The empirical chapters are at their best when describing the institutional politics determining the outcomes of collaborations, which tended to be more successful when they could rely on key well-connected individuals than when at the whim of bureaucratic politics, particularly of the ever-shifting Chinese variety.

Still, one cannot help feeling that the book would have benefitted from a more solid theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the abundant empirical data. This would have allowed it to draw more general implications for the politics of such collaborations and to clearly identify their relations with other aspects of inter-state relations. Surprisingly for a book that purports to support “a view that deviates from many functionalist and realist perceptions of the ways in which states act, with implications for understanding both comparative politics and international relations”

(p. 7), there are barely any references to publications in the latter two disciplines. Neither are we told whether the behaviour of Chinese actors in clean energy cooperation bears any similarities to other arenas documented in the now-voluminous literature on “Global China.” Furthermore, unlike Lewis’s previous book, *Green Innovation in China: China’s Wind Power Industry and the Global Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy* (Columbia University Press, 2013), *Cooperating for the Climate* is not clear on what is unique about China’s model of international technological partnership.

The points left unaddressed by the book are only testament to its value in opening promising avenues for future scholarship. As a pioneering study of China’s bilateral technological collaborations, *Cooperating for the Climate* will be a major contribution to debates on how to balance competition and collaboration with China amid geopolitical rivalry. Understanding the specificities and potential of China’s clean energy partnerships will be particularly important for countries in the Global South, which, in the face of growing economic nationalism, risk falling further behind in the acquisition of the key technological capabilities needed for a low-carbon future.

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Australia’s China Odyssey: From Euphoria to Fear

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As the title suggests, this book provides an overview of the tortuous path of Australian thinking on China over time. It traces the historical evolution of Australian attitudes towards the People’s Republic of China (PRC) from the end of the Second World War to the present era, with particular focus on the period since 1972, when the two countries established diplomatic relations. Apart from press reports, the book draws on memoirs, declassified government documents and Wikileaks revelations to shed light on Australian thinking about China, especially among Canberra’s policy elite.

The author’s main line of argument is hard to ascertain, other than the banal truism that the present cannot be fully understood without reference to the past. But the banality is partly offset by the author’s artful way of presenting the truism. In Curran’s own words, “it is the central argument of this book that the shock of the recent deterioration in relations since 2017 can only be fully understood and appreciated against the hopes, dreams and aspirations that successive Australian governments held for ties with Beijing from the early 1970s, from the odyssey the relationship has traversed since that moment of diplomatic opening” (xx). Indeed, as a historian, Curran is focused on furnishing a historical account rather than mounting an argument or a critique. Unlike other book-length studies in the field that document historical events and policy behaviour, Curran is more interested in uncovering the thinking behind such events and behaviour. In doing so, he has been able to utilize a variety of sources that had not been available to earlier authors.

For instance, many key participants in Australia’s China relationship have published memoirs in recent years, including former prime ministers and former ambassadors, contributing their recollections and perspectives to the public debates. Former prime minister Kevin Rudd and former ambassadors Stephen FitzGerald and Geoff Raby, in particular, have written and spoken