

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme
Topic: Securing Water
Country: People's Republic of China

General Statement

The security of water has been one of the major concerns for countries and regions all over the world. Water security can be defined by the quality and quantity of available water that the people can rely on for their consumption due to health, livelihoods and production and other purposes. This also addresses the protection and management of the physical environment.

Even though water is not in short supply across the world in absolute terms, but the United Nations water organization states that the total usable freshwater supply for ecosystems and human has been less than 1% of all the freshwater resources. With this, it is predicted that there will be increased water withdrawals by 50% and 18% in developing and developed countries respectively by 2025, in which it will result in 800 million people living under stress conditions regarding the water availability.

China attaches great importance when it comes to conserving and managing its water resources. In order to tackle the increased situations of water scarcity faced, there has been proactive measures and policies implemented. These are policies such as environment protection, energy production and concept of virtual-water. Since China is a key player in the international arena, therefore, these policies may have an effect globally, and have the greatest international impact in relation to international trade.

Particulars

China introduces these policies specifically in order to deal with the water issues to continue feeding its population and develop their economic development. The actions taken by on short-term basis may result undesirable internationally. However, Projects such as the SNWDP (South-to-North Water Diversion Project) are aimed solely at treating China's water shortages. Therefore, the SNWDP is seen as the logical permanent solution to solving the traditional water imbalance between the north and south.

China's water policies will have a potential two-fold impact internationally; being highly destabilising to the region and increasing international tensions; but at the same time, potentially preventing China's economy from stalling, which could be destabilising to the entire international system.

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Topic: Precaution and Response to Oil Spills

General Statement

Offshore oil spill prevention and response can be explained by the reduction of the number of offshore incidents that spill oil or hazardous substances into the physical environment, and limiting the amount released during those incidents.

This can have its serious effects on the physical environment and the people living in the place.

In the 12th Five-Year Plan, China announced that it would spend over \$450 billion USD on maritime environmental protection and oil spill response. China has 29 bases near major coastal cities and along the Yangtze and Yellow rivers. In 2008, the Ministry of Transport established to oversee the regulation and development of road, water and air transport. These facilities will cover all its major oil spills within 20 nautical miles of the coast. These will be four large bases in different provinces and the HKSAR. The facilities will clean up about 1000 tons of spilled oil. Adding another six mid-sized bases will be used to clean up the spill of 500 tons.

The Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) is the agency responsible for enforcing the regulations for supervising and administering prevention and control of marine pollution by ship operations. China ordered its offshore oilfield, in which the China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC) Limited owned 51 percent stake, to shut down after about 700 barrels of crude oil were discharged.

Particulars

As recent oil leaks resulted in inefficient spill response system, China urgently needs to address the development of the response system to reduce the harm resulting from oil spills. The chain of spill equipment bases is a good move, but there should also be additional adequate precautions taken to prevent further spills.

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