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China's Ascent to World Leadership

By Roy Morrison
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President Trump's decision to leave Paris Climate Treaty on the same day that the EU and Chinese Premier Li reached agreement on steps to move rapidly globally on climate also marks the day that China ascended to world leadership replacing the United States symbolically and in actuality.

The U.S. is now a rapidly declining figure on the world stage politically and, in the future, economically as the United States remains fixated on polluting industries and protectionism while China is stepping into the breach politically and financially under the leadership of President Xi to exercise global leadership on climate and sustainable development.

China is crafting agreements with willing partners on climate and sustainable development around the globe ranging from the Belt and Road initiative and now with the EU and U.S. states like California. Governor Brown can find partners for sustainable development in Beijing, not Washington.

The 21st century is rapidly becoming China's century with the fate of global climate action now in China's hands. This is moment where China must demonstrate to the world not only that the East is Green, but that under Chinese leadership the World is Green.

The world is turning to China with an open hand as the United States has turned its back and is more interested in erecting walls and withdrawing from global trade partnerships and global climate treaties.

China has swiftly become the world's best hope for sustainable prosperity and building an ecological civilization through green investment and cooperation. China is already the world's leader in photovoltaics, solar water heating, and wind. China Grid, the world's largest utility, is planning to help wire the world with high voltage direct current power lines (HVDC) for global renewable electricity. China is global leader in reforestation for carbon dioxide capture. China is now also global leader in building gigafactories for electric vehicle batteries. China is now embraced on a crash program to "Make the skies blue again", replacing coal plants in major Eastern cities *this year* with natural gas. China is ahead of schedule in meeting its carbon dioxide reduction targets and ledges under Paris Climate agreement.

China needs to accelerate its phase out of coal, or quickly adopt mass carbon capture and storage as part of its global climate leadership if we are to decisively escape the threat of ecological calamity. China has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to perform stupendous feats of engineering and construction such as a national high speed rail network that seemed to spring into existence overnight. China needs to turn that energy toward capturing carbon dioxide from coal.

Today, it is with China's leadership not only can we avoid climate catastrophe, but make economic growth mean ecological improvement and build an ecological civilization the is official Chinese policy.

Exit stage right President Donald Trump. Curtain rises on President Xi stage center.

We anxiously await the next act, harboring hope for our common futures.