



Beheading Dragons: Streamlining China's Environmental Governance



Thursday, July 12 2018

5th Floor



Recent Developments at China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment



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From the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) to the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE)

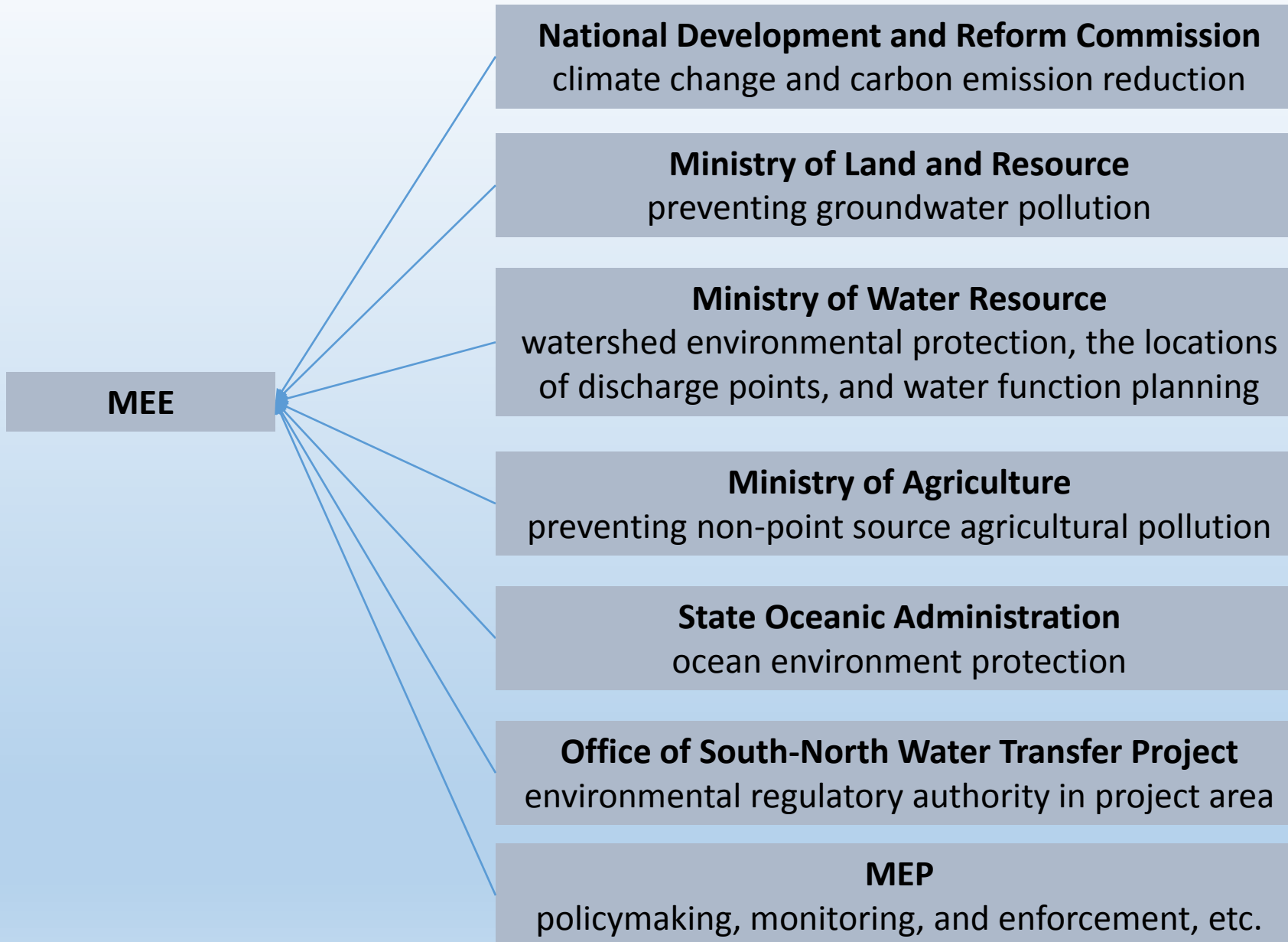
- Institutional Reform Plan for the State Council, March 17, 2018
 - To establish the MEE on the basis of MEP.
 - Integrating the environmental regulatory functions of 6 other agencies.



The Plan on Deepening the Institutional Reform of the Party and State, March 21, 2018

- To establish an integrated enforcement force for ecological and environmental protection, under the guidance of MEE.

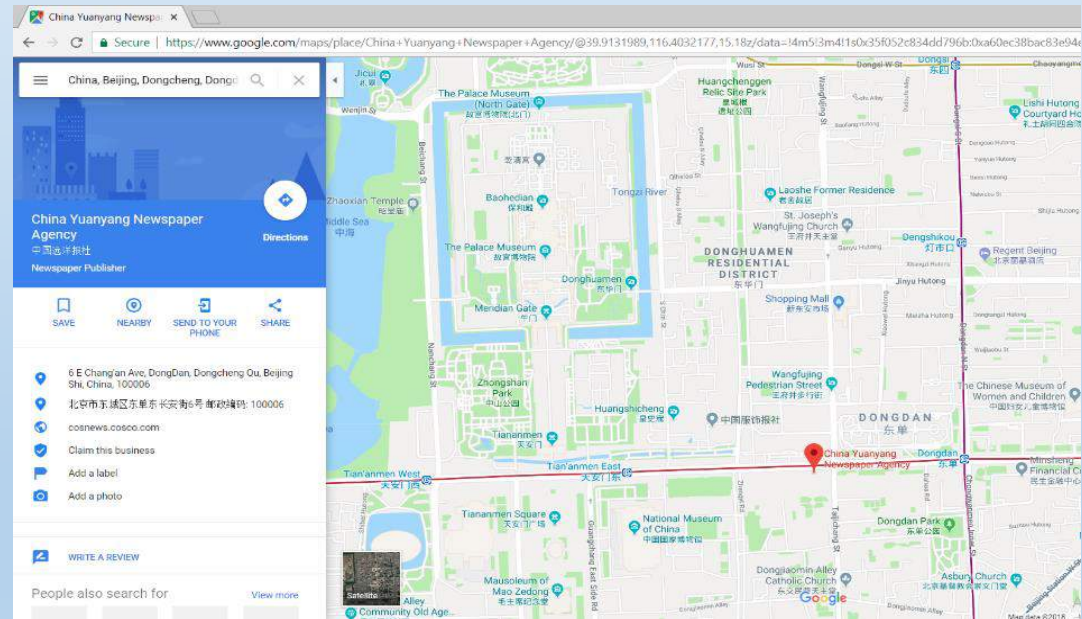




By May 7, 2018, the following have been incorporated into MEE

- NDRC's Department of Climate Change and National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC)
- SOA's Department of Ecological and Environmental Protection
- Office of South-North Water Transfer Project's Department of Environmental Protection
- Certain personnel from Ministry of Water Resource and Ministry of Land and Resource

- The office of MEE may be relocated to Wangfujing in the heart of Beijing.
- China Yuanyang Press's office, which occupied the spot until late May, has been demolished.



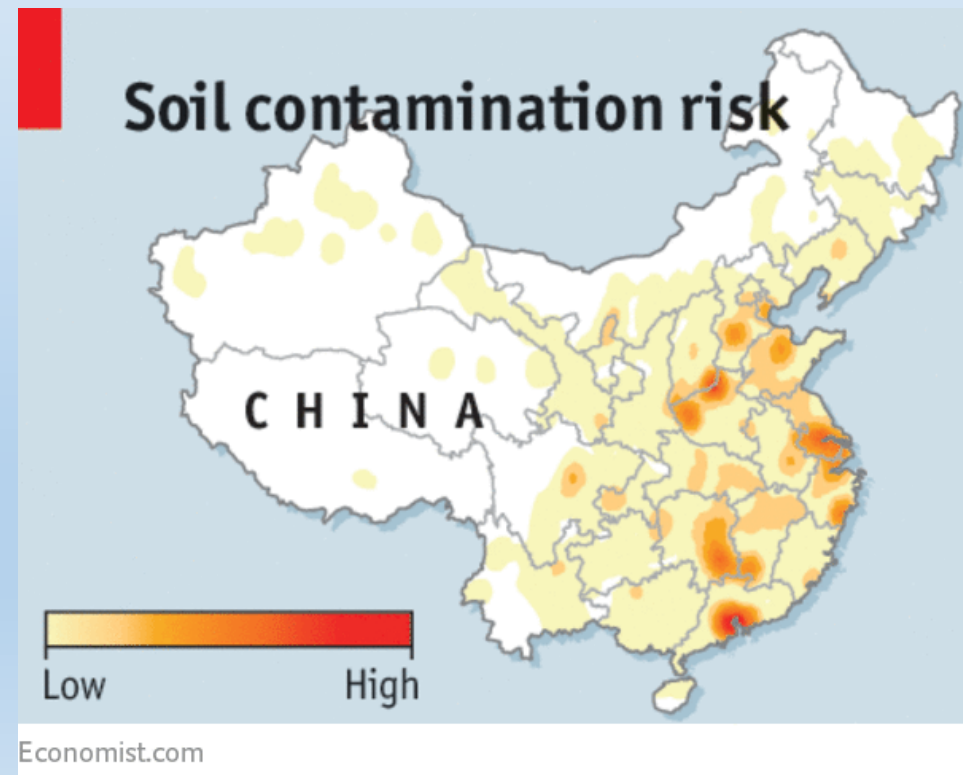
- MEE may thus become neighbors of the powerful Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Commerce on Chang'an Avenue, signifying its rising status among national agencies.



Monumental tasks came with the expanded power

- 7 major campaigns against pollution in the next 3 years.
 - Air pollution/blue sky,
 - Diesel vehicles,
 - Urban water pollution,
 - Bohai Sea ocean pollution,
 - Yangtze River recovery,
 - Source of rivers,
 - Agricultural and rural pollution
- The goal is to see significant results within 3 years.

- What's missing? Soil pollution.
- The Soil Pollution Prevention and Control Law is still being drafted.



Support from the national leadership

- Xi Jinping and another 5 members of the Standing Committee of Politburo attended the National Conference on Ecology and Environment on May 18 and 19.
- The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress passed a resolution on the war against pollution on July 10th, emphasizing the rule of law.

Support from the national leadership

- Newly-elected Vice Premier Han Zheng was named the chair of a task force on combating air pollution in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and the nearby provinces.



Challenges and Uncertainties

- Provincial and local branches of MEE are still understaffed and under-funded, hampering the ambitious efforts on integrated permitting systems and vigorous enforcement.
- It's uncertain how the regulatory authorities will integrate at provincial and local levels.
- Will the strong political will to protect the environment survive a slower economic growth?

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**Underground water
pollution regulation,
Ministry of National Land
and Resources**

**Original
Responsibilities of
MEP**

**Addressing Climate Change,
National Development and
Reform Commission (NDRC)**

**Watershed
environmental
protection,
Ministry of Water
Resources**



中华人民共和国生态环境部

Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China

**Agricultural
pollution control,
Ministry of
Agriculture**

**Marine conservation, State Oceanic
Administration**

**Environmental protection, South-to-
North Water Diversion Committee**



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