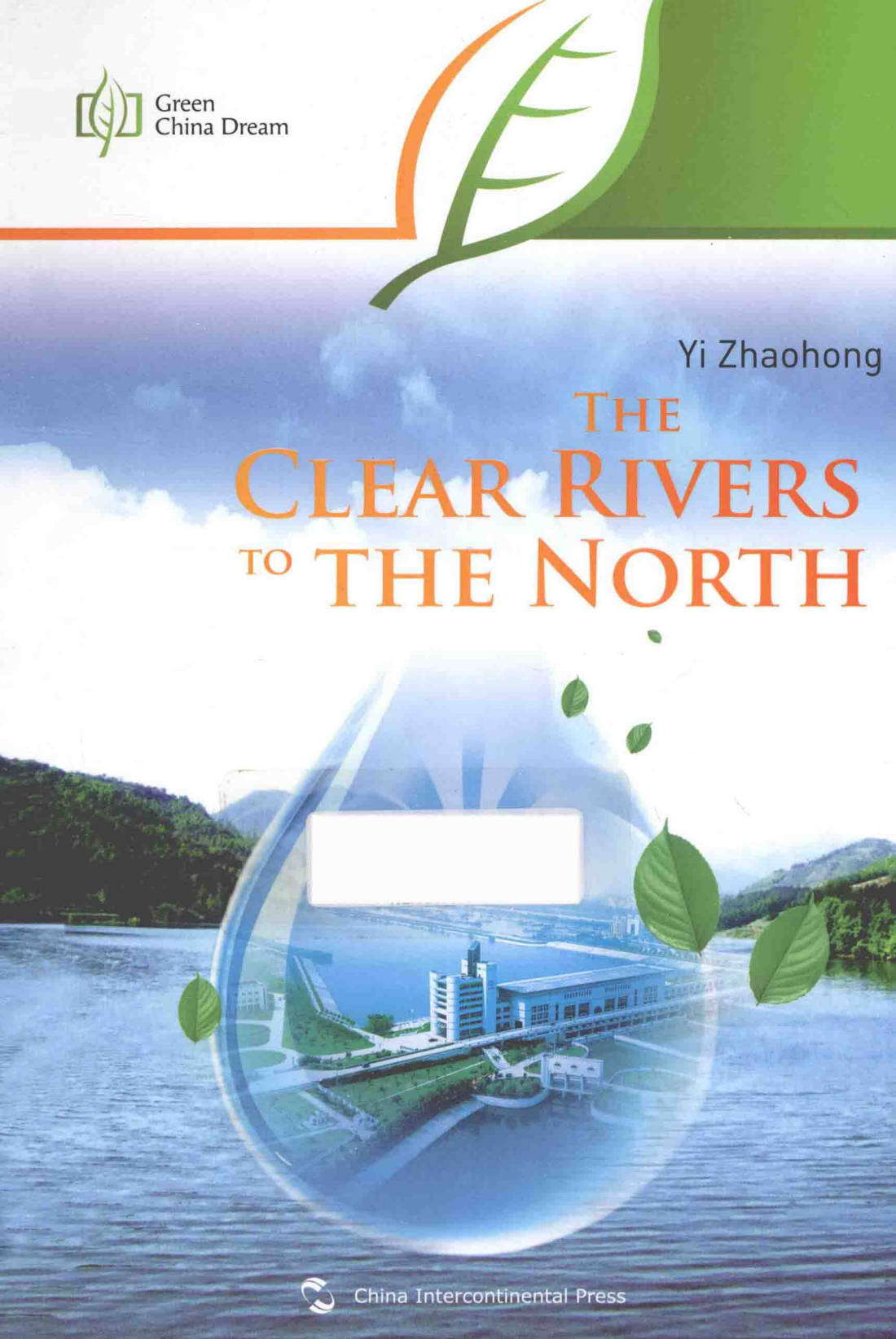
Green
China Dream

Yi Zhaohong

THE CLEAR RIVERS TO THE NORTH



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作　　者：裔兆宏
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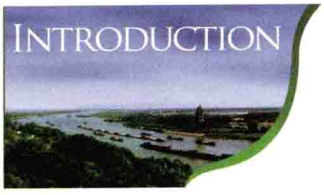

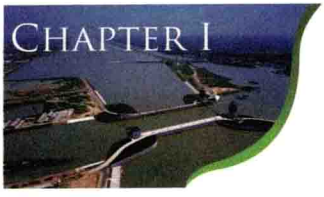

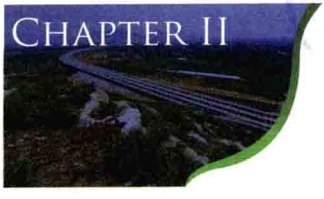

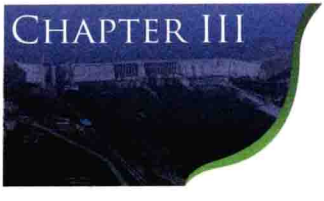

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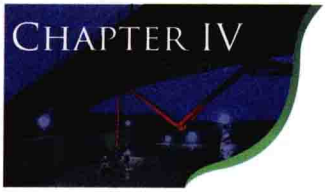
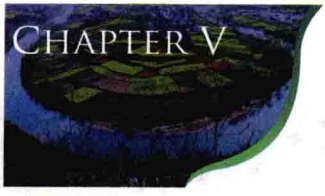
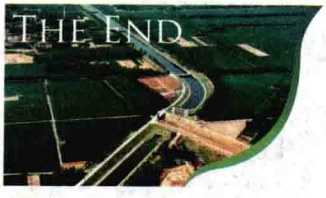
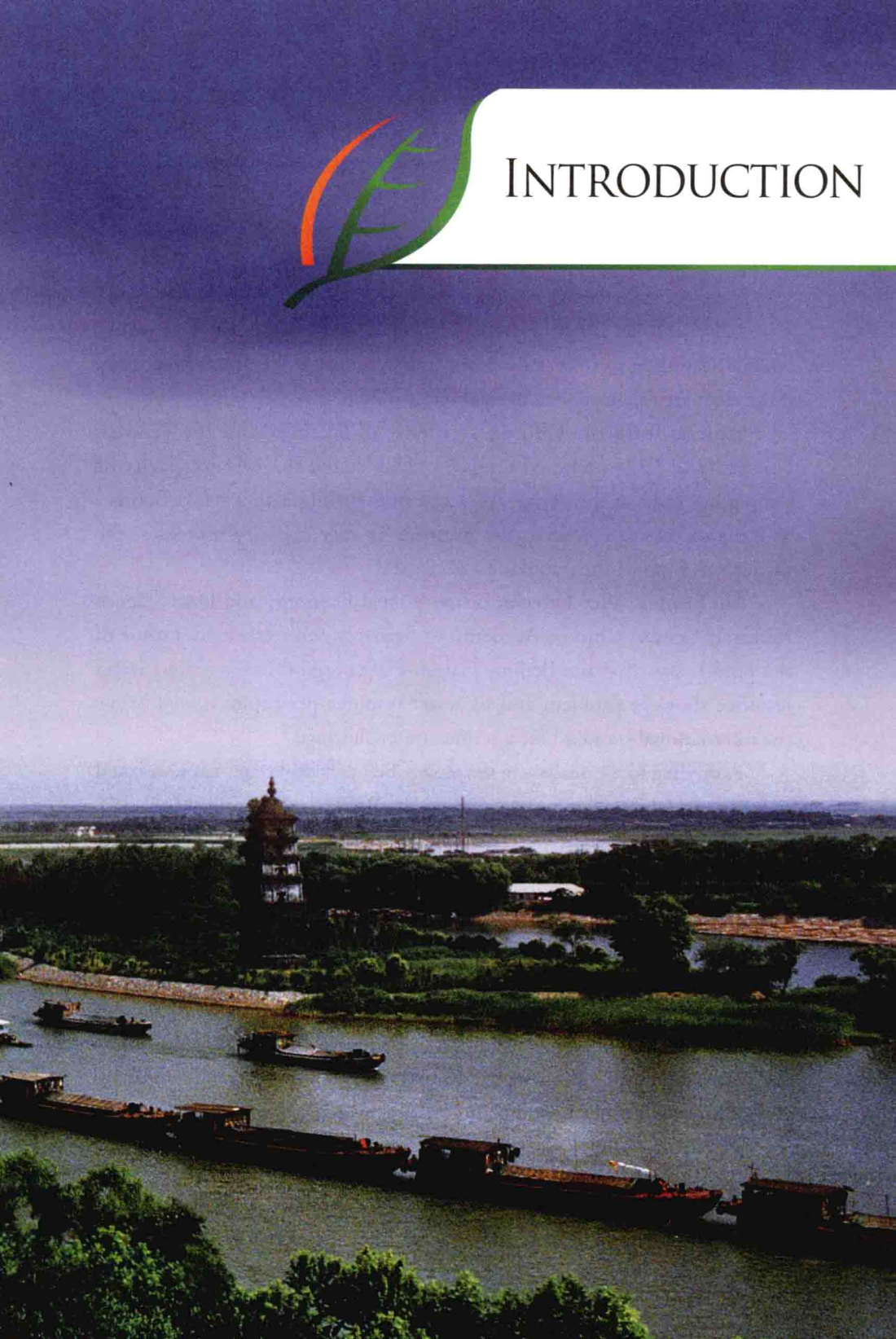






INTRODUCTION



I always believe that everything has its destiny and that nature would operate according to rules. All crimes against nature will be punished. Only if the rules are followed, can disasters be avoided.

Experts from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the People's University of China released a report which stated the urban capacity of Beijing has reached the danger level and thus Beijing is in a state of crisis.[1] The major reason is that as the pressure on city capacity increases, the capacity to support the population decreases.

Shi Minjun, Vice Director of the Virtual Economy and Data Science Research Center, Chinese Academy of Sciences, who was a co-author of the report, says that the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region has a serious water resource shortage problem and its water resource per capita is well below the international standard for a serious water shortage.

According to the analysis in the report, Beijing's local water resource could only support 6.67 million people, 40 percent of the current population.

This Spring, when we were worried about Beijing's water resource shortage, many people were devoting themselves in a dedicated way to the south-to-north water diversion project.

Let's take a look at the Eastern Line first. In spring, the water flows vigorously.

At 12:58 p.m. March 15, when the order to "turn on the dam and release the water" was given at Jiangsu Suining Second Station, a gap suddenly opened at the downstream cofferdam. The usually peaceful Xuhong River rushed through the pipeline, along the river and into the

1 The Development Report of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region—capacity measurement and policies

Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal

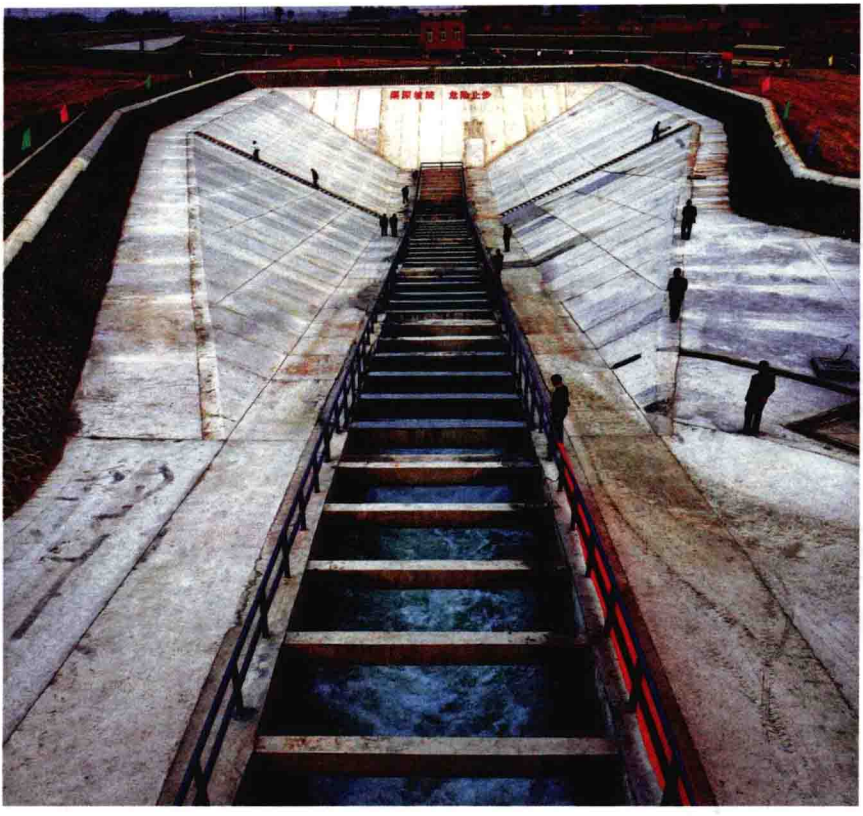
Suining Station. The wing walls on both sides were like open arms.

The Jiangsu section of the south-to-north water diversion project is coming to an end, and is awaiting final examination.

Meanwhile, on the border of Jiangsu Province and Shandong Province, the Nansi Lake which has been silent through winter finally came back to life after the spring equinox. 53 rivers from around the lake steadily pour in clear water.

According to Li Jikai, director of the Bureau of Environment Protection of Jining, "the city's overall water environmental quality has reached its highest level in 30 years", announced proudly during Jining's Work Conference on Environment Protection on March 22.

So far, all of the 119 projects listed by the city in the "*South-to-North Water Diversion Project Shandong Section Pollution Control Plan*" have been completed. All inflow rivers for lakes have reached the water quality



Clear water into drains

standard. The five monitoring points at Nansi Lake also reached the water quality target.

Now, let's look at the central line, where the spring breeze brings green back to the riversides.

When standing on the dam on Danjiang River and taking in the view, the mountains stood out from the clouds and I could see the river flow from deep in its origin at MountQin.

Since spring, the clearance of the banks of Danjiangkou reservoir for the South-to-North Water Diversion Project central line has been carried out at high pace.

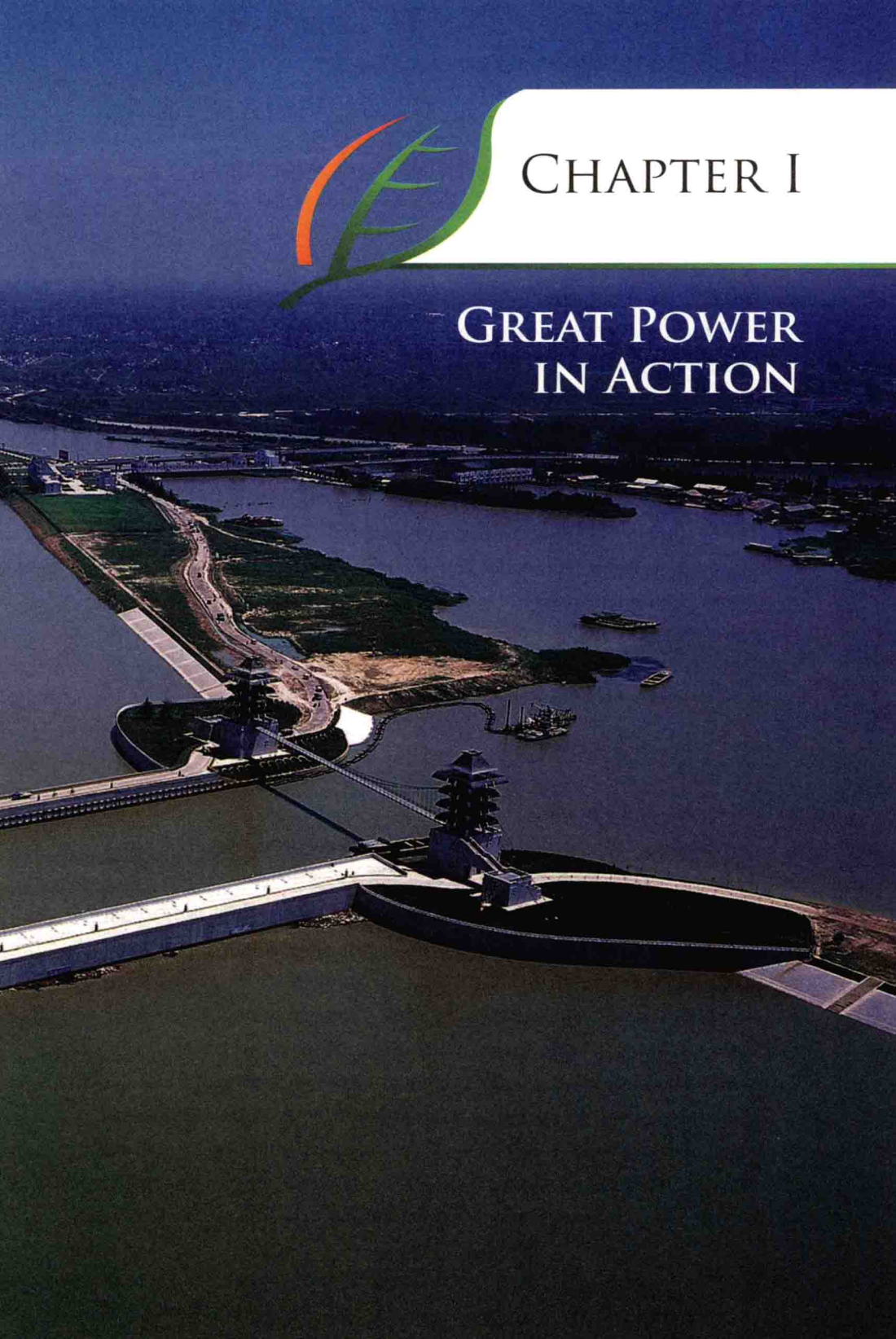
Significant human energy from both the city and the districts are fully devoted to the clearance of the different sections of the reservoir, and major targets are to ensure proper treatment of woods, solid waste, construction goods and floating debris.

On the morning of March 2nd, the banks of the Han River in Binjiang District of Shiyan were decorated with colorful flags. More than 3200 government officials, representatives from companies and public institutions, and students from middle school and primary school all made a great effort at tree planting.

As planned, Shiyan city is applying for the National Forest City and has a plan for 20 hectares of afforestation.

On the morning of March 10th, over 300 volunteers including citizens from Nanyang, netizens and tourists from Beijing came to Taocha Village to plant trees at the head of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project.

There are countless people devoting themselves to this glorious project, which is a great chapter in human history. Their efforts are a monument to the water diversion project and a story of dedication.



Chapter I

Great Power in Action

A rising great power needs a sense of mission and responsibility.

A rising great power needs a comprehensive strategy and actions to define and interpret its status as a great power.

A rising great power needs forward thinking from its leaders, a strategic vision and a sense of responsibility for the nation as a whole.

In general, a great power should have a long and comprehensive view into the far future, and should deliver to its people the hope to overcome crises through sincerity, confidence and determination.

From the blueprint to the construction, the South-to-North Water Diversion Project is adapted to the aspirations of the people, the demands of the times, and to help achieve the historical mission of the country's rise.

I. The North in Drought

As China is so broad, it may suffer from annual floods in some areas, while suffering drought in others.

Especially in the northern China, water shortages increasingly affect people as the water crisis becomes more serious.

If you take a train from Guangzhou or Xiamen heading north, you would find that the south is scattered with river networks and the water resource is rich; as you go further north, the number of rivers decreases, and is replaced by brush woods and forest. There now only exists wide riverbeds, reminding people of the beautiful scenery of earlier times.

The further north you go, the more serious the water shortage is.

According to the well-recognized international standard: nations with a water level of below 2000 cubic meters per capita are suffering from water shortage; nations with a water level of below 1000 cubic meters per capita are suffering from serious water shortage; nations with a water level at or

below 500 cubic meters per capita are facing a threat to their survival.

China faces not only the problem of aggregate water resource insufficiency, but also a serious distribution imbalance. The water resource is rich in the south, while heavily lacking in the north. The Yangtze river and the south of the country accounts for 84 percent of the water source in 7 major river basins, while the Yellow River and Huai River amount to only 9 percent. Therefore in the north, the water resource per capita is below 1000 cubic meters, only 1/3 that of their southern counterparts, amounting to only 15 percent of the national average level and 1/16 of the world average level.

The Yellow River and HuaiRiver area features the most serious conflict between water resources and economic and social development. The gross population and GDP both amount to 35 percent of the national total. It has high population density and a huge number of large and middle-sized cities' thus it is extremely important for the nation's economy. Meanwhile, its water resource amounts for only 7.2 percent of the national total, with 450 cubic meters per capita, accounting for 22 percent of the national level.

The drying-up rivers in northern China

The water resource of the HaiRiver is only 272 cubic meters per capita, 1/8 of the national level, and is the area with the most serious water shortage. Since the 1980s, the Huang-Huai-Hai River Plain has witnessed persistent drought and its water resource has rapidly dropped. The water shortage of the area has reached 3.13 billion cubic meters. The water resource shortage data is as below:

Yellow River basin: 9.4 billion cubic meters

HuaiRiver basin: 9.5 billion cubic meters

HaiRiver basin: 12.4 billion cubic meters

The area of over-exploited ground water reaches 190 thousand square kilometers, as large as Hebei Province.

Faced with the deterioration of ecosystems and the shortage of the water resource in the north, we cannot blame our ancestors for their ignorance. The reality is grim and brutal.

The most disturbing thing is that in the north, due to the serious water shortage, the system is operating beyond capacity. To meet the increasing demand for water, not only ground water is over-exploited, but also surface water is almost entirely exploited. The internationally-recognized standard for the exploitation of surface water is that the exploitation and usage should be no more than 40 percent, or else the ground water would suffer a continuous spiral due to insufficient renewal. So far:

The exploitation and usage of the Yellow River has reached 67 percent;

The HuaiRiver has reach 60 percent usage.

The HaiRiver where Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei are located has reached as high as 90 percent.

When considering China's water shortage, the north of China is particularly serious. The region of the Yellow River, Huai River and Hai River, the north's three major rivers, has a water resource level that is only 1/5 the national per capita average.

And considering the water shortage of northern China, the situation in the Beijing-Tianjin area is staggering. The water resource of the HaiRiver area is below 1/7 of the national per capita level, even less than Israel in the

Old river course of the Yellow River, Dongying, Shandong

Middle Eastern desert region.

Deteriorated ecosystems, exhausted water resource, mounting water consumption all demonstrate the tragedy that the once vigorous rivers of northern China have nothing left but trails of tears.

First of all, the Yellow River has been cut off.

The Yellow River has been considered the mother of Chinese civilization, but has been tortured by its generations of offspring over the years. During the 27 years from 1972 to 1998, the river did not reach the sea for 21 of those years, and 1050 days in total.

Especially during the 1990s, the Yellow River had suffered from being cut off every spring and it occurred earlier each year. In 1995, the river was cut off at Dongying at the river mouth 42 days earlier than 1994; and in 1996, the cutoff came 72 days earlier than 1995.

The duration of the cutoff also became much longer. In 1995, the duration of cutoff was 180 days, with the cutoff length at 622 kilometers. In 1996, the length of the river downstream from Luoyang suffered from

cutoff. The situation was most serious in 1997, when cutoffs occurred 13 times, and once extending over 700 kilometers! During that year, no water reached the sea for 330 days.

It is beyond imagination that such a boundless river could run out of water.

In May of 1996, there were long waiting lines in front of the city water taps in Binzhou and Dongying of Shandong Province. It suddenly occurred to people that the Yellow River is so vital to them! The muddy Yellow River water was in fact so adorable! At that time, the Yellow River bank was scattered with locals in need for water and they yelled from the bottom of their heart: "Dear Yellow River, don't run out of water, please."

Beijing, the capital city also suffers a serious water shortage.

Beijing is an ancient capital with a cosmopolitan population of over 20 million. According to statistics, it has a water resource level of less than 300 cubic meters per capita, only 1/8 of the national level and 1/30 of the world level.

As the Beijing economy and population has grown rapidly since the 1970s and 1980s, Beijing has suffered from heavy drought. In the summer of 1981, Beijing witnessed its first drought. Over 90 percent of the city started to supply water by lower pressure and the process lasted for almost 300 hours. The water shortage started to affect people's lives. Restrictions on water usage were imposed on over 350 enterprises leading over half of the factories into bankruptcy.

The lasting drought repeatedly led to water supply by lower pressure and water cutoff. Miyun and Guanting reservoirs in Beijing were jointly built by over 300 thousand people from Hebei, Beijing and Tianjin in 1950. Originally, they were used as the key supply of water to Beijing and Tianjin.

However, due to Beijing's continuing drought, from 1982 the State Council decided that they would not supply water to Hebei and Tianjin while in drought.

From the 1980s until now, the problem of drought has haunted Beijing. Of course, the summer of 2012 was an exception.

According to the "Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Development Report: