Energy Science, Engineering and Technology

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RENEWABLE ENERGY IN CHINA

RENEWABLE ENERGY IN CHINA

JIAHAI YUAN GUOLIANG LUO

AND

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RENEWABLE ENERGY IN CHINA

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Chapter 1

RENEWABLE ENERGY IN CHINA: INTRODUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Renewable energy (RE) has grown rapidly in China ever since the publication of the *Renewable Energy Law* in 2006. As the introduction of the book, this chapter begins with an overview of economic growth, energy consumption and CO₂ emissions in China, with a purpose to justify the urgent requirement to develop RE in China's overall picture of social-economic growth. Then the resource endowment of various forms of renewable energy in China is briefly analyzed, and China's legislation and overall plan to develop RE is presented. Finally, with an institutional perspective, the social-political factors of energy system (with an emphasis on power system) development in China are briefly addressed. The chapter concludes with the scope and layout of the entire book.

Keywords: Renewable energy resource, legislation, planning, institutional analysis, China

1. ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND CARBON EMISSIONS IN CHINA

1.1. Historical Trend

Since implementing the reform-and-open-up policy in1978, China has successfully realized the economic take-off and sustained a growth miracle of successive GDP growth at nearly 10% for more than three decades (Figure 1-1). In 2010, China became the second largest economy with a total GDP of 5878.6 billion US\$ (in 2012-year exchange rate and hereafter in this chapter) [1].

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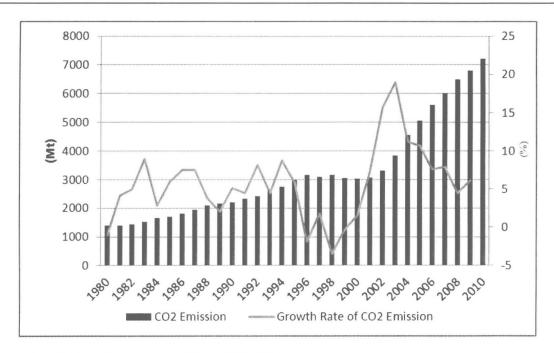


Figure 1-1. GDP and its growth in China, 1980-2011.

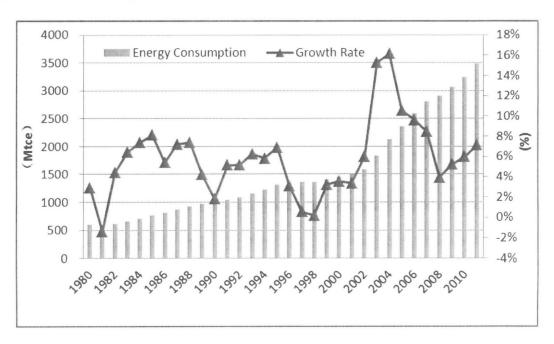


Figure 1-2. Energy consumption and growth rate in China, 1980-2011.

Economic growth is accompanied by rapid energy consumption. Various empirical studies have revealed strong evidences that Chinese economy is energy-dependent [2]. As is indicated in Figure 1-2, growth of energy consumption is almost synchronous with China's economic growth during 1980-2011. It is worth noticing that China has made huge progress in energy efficiency in the first two decades of reform-and-opening-up. From 1980 to 2000, China managed to fuel fourfold GDP growth with just double energy consumption growth. However, energy consumption experienced rapid growth in the early of 21^{st} century when