The book talks about new policies and reform measures in the green area taken by the government since 2007, arguing that some of them may be quite effective in the long run, as long as they alter institutional factors and the "growth-first" mindset that obstruct the green effort.

As the dazzling economic and social changes in China have imposed substantial impact upon the quality of environmental governance, it is time to review the problems and progress in the politics of China's environmental protection. This book analyzes the factors in China’s governance and political process that affect and restrain its capacity to handle the mounting environmental problems. It argues that solutions to China’s ecological woes to a larger extent lie in the political and institutional changes rather than in engineering, technological and investment input.

The book includes discussion of China’s climate change policy not only because global warming has come under the limelight of the international community in recent years, but also because it offers a unique dimension to analyze the country's environmental diplomacy and domestic bureaucratic structure on emissions cutting and related energy issues. China is currently at the crossroads of further political and economic reform, and the intensified public attention to environmental pollution may help the Chinese Communist Party to decisively push forward the long-sluggish political reforms.