

## Research note

# Vermögte Städte, laxe Umweltstandards und mutige Verkehrspolitik: Divergierende Perspektiven in der umweltbezogenen China-Berichterstattung in deutschen Medien

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## Summary

Over the past decade China has set out on a transformative journey to come to terms with its environmental crisis, tackling pollution, ecological degradation, and much more besides. Which of these efforts have German media reported on, and what kind of environmental image of China do they convey to the broader public? Starting out from the assumption that mass media critically affect opinions and attitudes toward foreign countries, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of 315 news reports in three major German media outlets between October 2015–October 2016 and October 2017–October 2018. We show that although newspapers touch upon a variety of environmental issues related to China, only few reports engage in any kind of in-depth discussion or analysis. While most reports take a critical/pessimistic stance, our topic analysis suggests a slight trend toward more neutral or positive/optimistic reporting overall — especially in the fields of renewable energies and electric mobility.

**Keywords:** Umwelt, Chinabild, Medien, Deutschland, Inhaltsanalyse

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