

2012 BECC Conference: Poster Presenter Abstracts

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Low-Carbon Life with Chinese Characteristics

Low-Carbon Life with Chinese Characteristics: Connecting with Climate Change in an Urban Community in Hangzhou Hangzhou municipality in China has put forward a low-carbon strategy. One dimension of this strategy is low-carbon life – climate change mitigation at citizen level. In Dongpingxiang Community in central Hangzhou a low-carbon life competition was initiated in 2009. Participants scored points by adapting to a low-carbon standard and winners were designated "low-carbon model households". My project is an anthropological examination of this local Chinese attempt at stirring people to climate action. The main research question is: how have officials and residents in Dongpingxiang Community translated the idea of low-carbon life into local action? I carried out fieldwork in the community in the autumn of 2011. The problem of climate change is new and unfamiliar to most people in Dongpingxiang. Instead of addressing climate change as such, the campaign is focused on the concept of low-carbon life, embedding climate change in everyday life by connecting it with other issues of more immediate concern, such as health, economy and general quality of life. The campaign has been relatively successful largely due to a high level of sensitivity to local conditions. It is in alignment with the values and lifestyle of the residents who respond well to both the campaign content and the method of making it a competition.