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outcomes under their control.

Yang of Peking University pointed to the city of Jieyang, in South China's Guangdong province, which is a leading center for manufacturing stainless steel products. The city has around 4,000 stainless steel companies, with more than 200,000 workers.

Starting in 2013, the city's government and an association of the companies worked together to build a new wastewater treatment center and acid treatment center. Now, many of the smaller, undercapitalized companies have closed and the others have moved toward higher quality products that can command prices high enough to pay for the investment.

The city has now attracted investment from more than 30 high-tech environmental protection companies from Germany and other European countries. While some workers lost their jobs, many were hired by the upgraded factories and others received retraining assistance.

Another key challenge in raising environmental protection levels across the nation is getting provinces to cooperate with each other.

For example, much electricity generated by wind or solar power is wasted because provinces do not want to buy power from another province. China has made huge investments in wind and solar power, but about 17 percent of that capacity is curtailed. That is, it is not actually used, according to Greenpeace.

In 2016, Xu Jintao, professor of economics at the National School of Development at Peking University,



A hydroponic vegetable garden in Yongqing, in North China's Hebei province, is an example of green development.

LI XIAO GUO / XINHUA

carried out a high-priority project for the NDRC to get to the bottom of the problem. He found that the boundaries between provinces and other administrative regions were the root cause.

Similarly, the ADB found that reducing pollution in rivers is difficult because upstream provinces may not have the incentive to invest the money needed, since the problems mostly afflict downstream provinces.

Bhushan said the bank is now working on a framework called "equal compensation" under which

provinces would share the costs.

There is an ongoing debate about the role of State-owned versus private enterprises, and large versus small companies, in the new economy.

The fundamental restructuring of the economy is expected to be difficult, especially in North China, where many jobs and companies were built around the old economy.

He Lifeng, director of the NDRC, said the economic growth target set for 2017 is both necessary and attainable. "According to our experience, each percentage point of GDP

growth will help create about 1.7 million jobs," he said.

Li Ganjie, minister of environmental protection, said that the government is fully aware of the problems the country is facing. "Coal accounts for a high proportion of the overall energy mix," he said. "We have too many commodities transported by trucks. Some companies avoid emission control measures. Some local governments are not enforcing measures from the central government."

However, he added, environmental protection does not slow economic growth.



"Some companies avoid emission control measures. Some local governments are not enforcing measures from the central government."

LI GANJIE
Minister of environmental protection

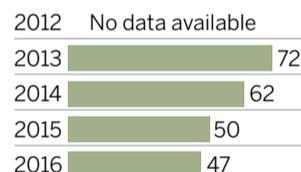
Pollution control: Five years of a cleaner China

Air quality

AVERAGE PM2.5 CONCENTRATIONS

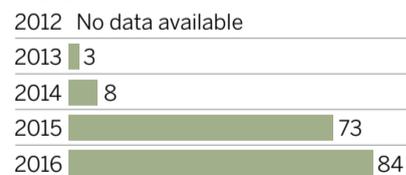
PM2.5 refers to fine particulate matter with a diameter of less than 2.5 microns that is hazardous to human health. The concentration of PM2.5 is one of the major indexes for air quality

(Unit: micrograms per cubic meter)



BETTER THAN THE STANDARD

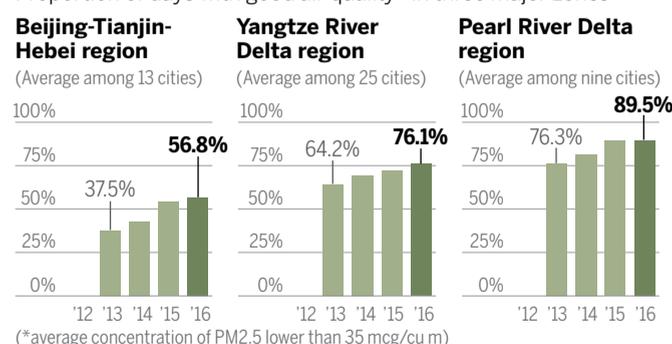
The number of cities with average annual PM2.5 concentrations lower than the national standard of 35 mcg/cu m



Note: 74 major cities were tested in 2013 and 2014, while 338 cities were tested in 2015 and 2016.

THREE MAJOR ZONES

Proportion of days with good air quality* in three major zones

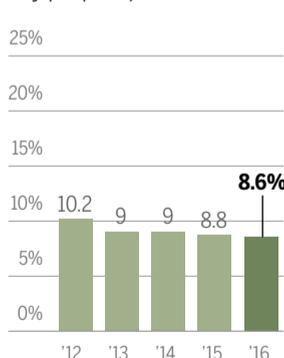


Sources: National Environment Status Bulletin and the National Urban-Rural Development Bulletin

Water quality

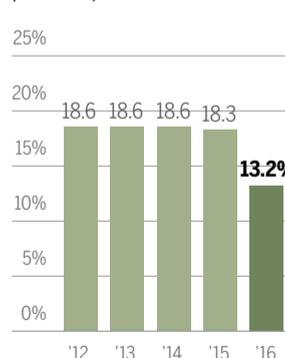
MAJOR RIVERS

Proportion of major rivers whose water quality is lower than Level V (unsuitable for any purpose)



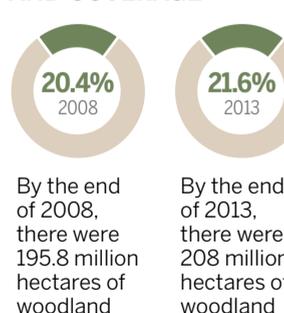
COASTAL SEAWATER

The proportion of coastal seawater quality lower than Level IV (severely polluted)



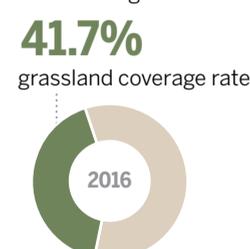
Green coverage

FORESTED AREAS AND COVERAGE



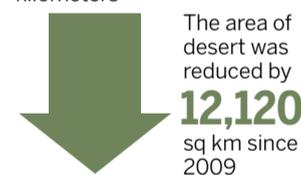
GRASSLAND AREAS AND COVERAGE

By the end of 2016, there were 400 million hectares of grassland

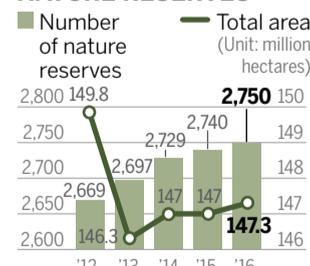


DESERT LAND

By the end of 2014, deserts covered 2.61 million square kilometers

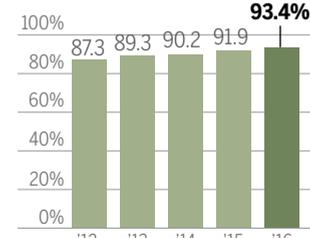


NATURE RESERVES



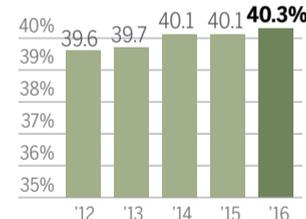
WASTE PROCESSING

Urban facilities to process waste



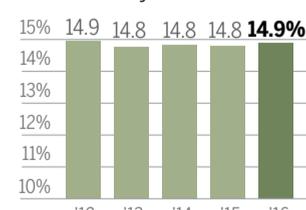
URBAN COVERAGE

Coverage rate of green areas in urban areas



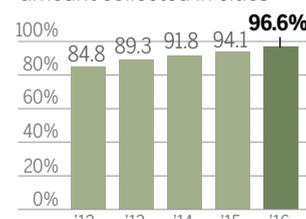
COVERAGE

Nature reserves in China's total territory



HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE

Proportion of processed household garbage in total amount collected in cities



CHINA DAILY