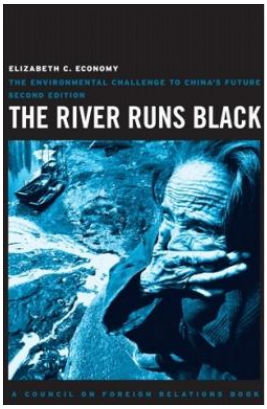
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# *The River Runs Black. The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*

Economy, Elizabeth C.




Elizabeth C. Economy. The River Runs Black. Cover

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Economy, Elizabeth C. *The River Runs Black. The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

China's spectacular economic growth over the past two decades has dramatically depleted the country's natural resources and produced skyrocketing rates of pollution. Environmental degradation in China has also contributed to significant public health problems, mass migration, economic loss, and social unrest. In *The River Runs Black*, Elizabeth C. Economy examines China's growing environmental crisis and its implications for the country's future development.

Drawing on historical research, case studies, and interviews with officials, scholars, and activists in China, Economy traces the economic and political roots of China's environmental challenge and the evolution of the leadership's response. She argues that China's current approach to environmental protection mirrors the one embraced for economic development: devolving authority to local officials, opening the door to private actors, and inviting participation from the international community, while retaining only weak central control.

The result has been a patchwork of environmental protection in which a few wealthy regions with strong leaders and international ties improve their local environments, while most of the country continues to deteriorate, sometimes suffering irrevocable damage. Economy compares China's response with the experience of other societies and sketches out several possible futures for the country.

This second edition of *The River Runs Black* is updated with information about events between 2005 and 2009,

covering China's tumultuous transformation of its economy and its landscape as it deals with the political implications of this behavior as viewed by an international community ever more concerned about climate change and dwindling energy resources.

Text adapted from Cornell University Press .

**Further readings:**

- Economy, Elizabeth C and Michael A. Levi. By All Means Necessary. How China's Resource Quest is Changing the World

**Related links:**

- Cornell University Press featuring this book
  http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/
- Elizabeth C. Economy at the Council on Foreign Relations
  http://www.cfr.org/experts/asia-china-environment-us-china-relations/elizabeth-c-economy/b21
- The New York Times: China and the Environment
  http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/china/environment/index.html
- *The River Runs Black* at Google Books (excerpt)
  http://books.google.de/books

**Websites linked in this text:**

- http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/?GCOI=80140100318480