

China Mobilizes Its Energy Sector For Great Power Competition and Global Disorder

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What Does “Energy Security” Mean in China’s Political System?

- Energy security has traditionally incorporated three core concepts: (1) adequacy and diversity of supply, (2) stability of price, and (3) maintaining a relatively low price
- Chinese decisionmakers are historically more likely to consider oil disruptions national security problems (国家安全问题) and electricity supply issues as social/economic problems (社会经济问题)
- “Globalists” have favored greater reliance on the market and accelerated energy transition efforts to reduce oil dependence while “nationalists” favor a more forward-leaning mercantilist posture to protect China’s energy security.
- Ongoing “securitization” efforts harvest ideas from both camps but lean nationalist and also treat energy-related data itself as a strategic commodity. This is a new and complex development with several roots.



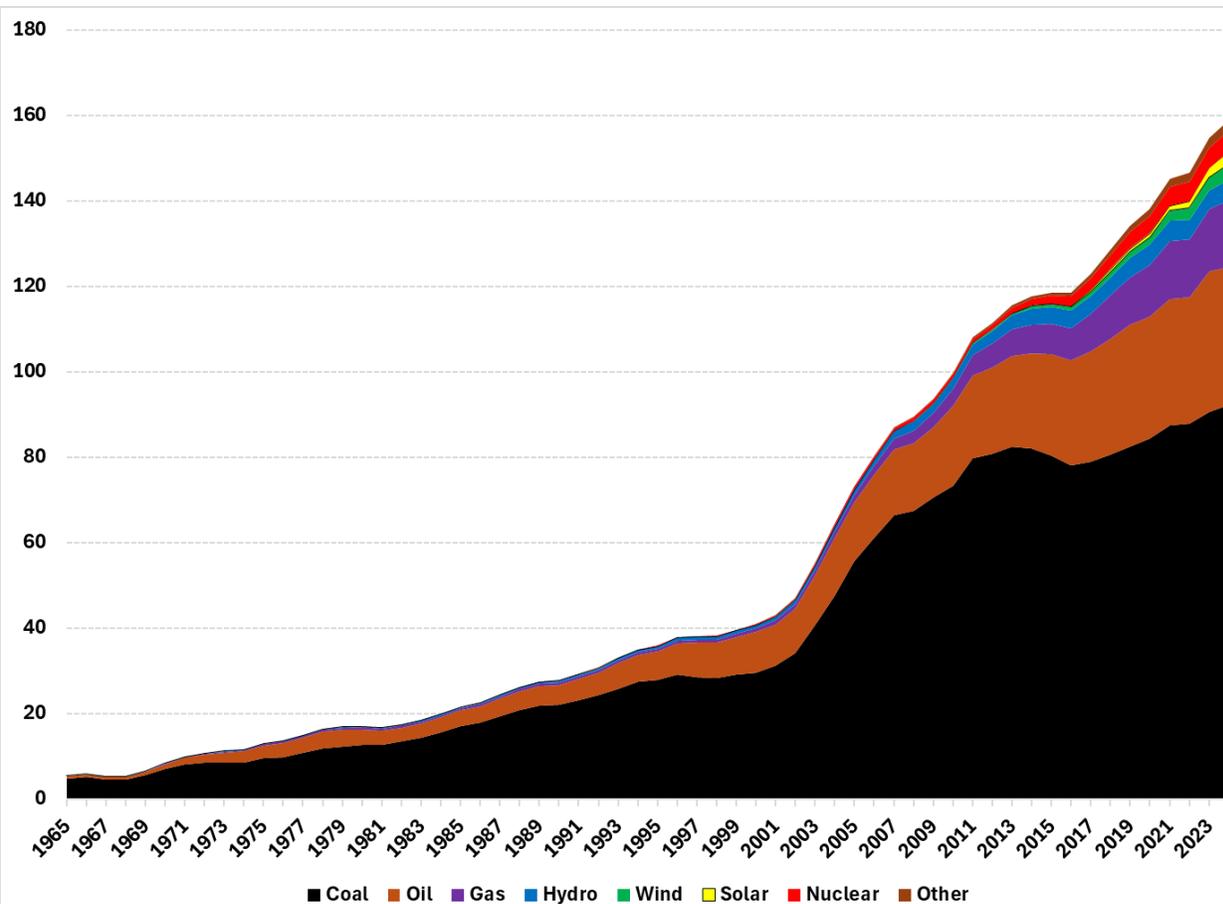
General Secretary Xi's Energy Framework for 18th FYP + Concrete Actions

- “四个革命、一个合作”能源安全新战略:

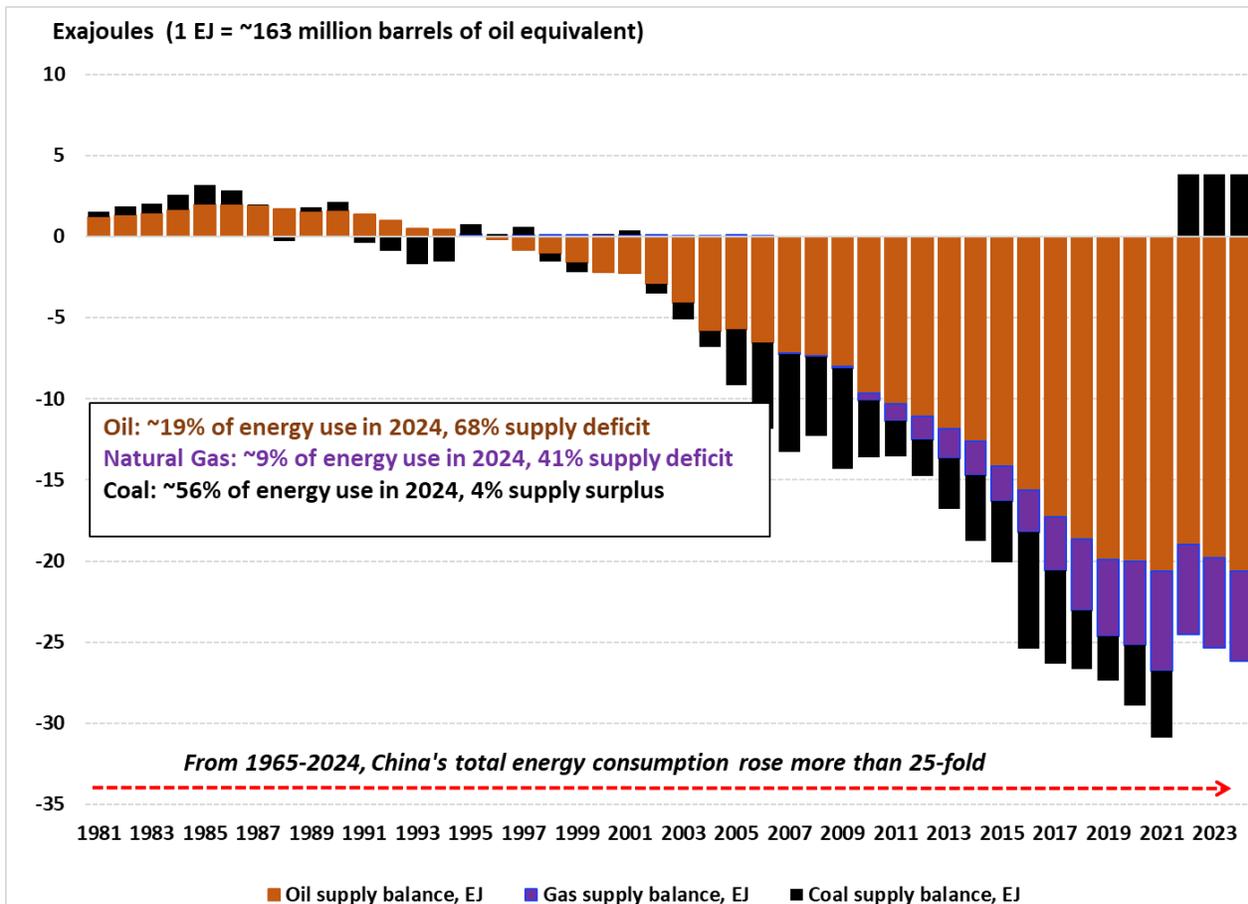
- (1) 能源消费革命, (2) 能源供给革命, (3) 能源技术革命, (4) 能源体制革命

Source: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-12/31/content_5575657.htm

China Primary Energy Use, EJ (1 EJ=~163 million bbl of oil)



China Key Energy Resource Supply Balances



Officials' Statements Suggest Increasingly Explicit "Securitization" of PRC Energy Policies

Post-COVID Acceleration of Securitized Energy Policy

2021

- China must "ensure that its energy livelihood remains in its own hands." —General Secretary Xi Jinping, 21 October 2021 Speech at Shengli Oilfield (习近平总书记考察调研胜利油田时强调：“石油能源建设对我们国家意义重大，中国作为制造业大国，要发展实体经济，能源的饭碗必须端在自己手里。”)

2023

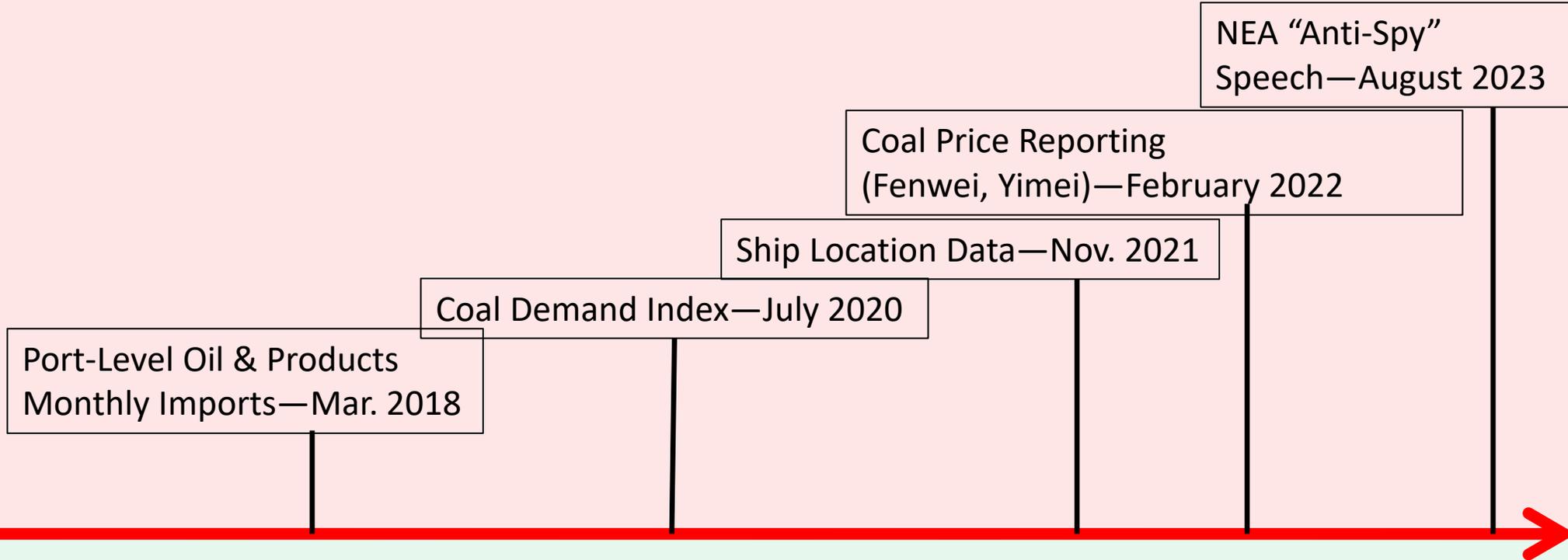


The screenshot shows the official website of the National Energy Administration (NEA) of China. The header includes the NEA logo and name in Chinese (国家能源局) and English (National Energy Administration). A search bar is present with the placeholder text "请输入关键字". Navigation links include "首页" (Home), "信息公开" (Information Disclosure), "领导活动" (Leadership Activities), "新闻中心" (News Center), "能源要闻" (Energy News), and "在线办事" (Online Services). The breadcrumb trail indicates the current page is "您当前位置: 首页 > 正文". The main headline, highlighted with a red box, is "保障国家能源安全 筑牢保密工作防线". Below the headline, the publication date is "发布时间: 2023-08-16", the source is "来源: 国家能源局", and there are "大 中 小" (Large Medium Small) text size options. The article content begins with the title "保障国家能源安全 筑牢保密工作防线" and the author "国家能源局党组书记、局长 章建华". The text discusses the importance of energy security and confidentiality, citing Xi Jinping's 2021 speech at the Shengli Oilfield and his 2023 report to the 20th National Congress of the CPC.

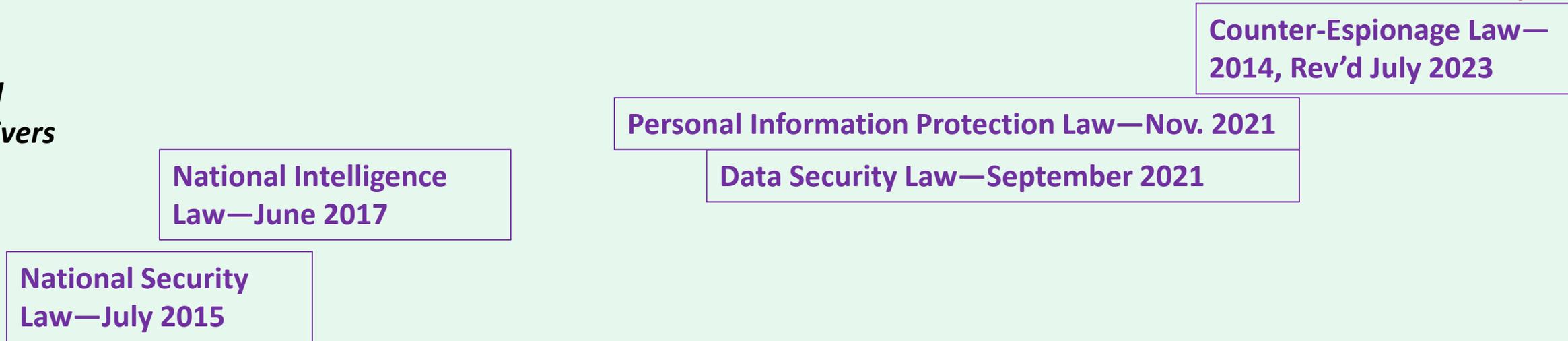
Bamboo Data Curtain Now Descending on PRC Energy Sector

Selected Restrictions

Gen. Sec. Xi assumes power in 2012



Potential Legal Drivers



Belarus Ukraine Border
51.5136 Lat | 29.850 Long
02/24/22 07:57:38 PM UTC

Controlling Energy Data in an Era of Increasingly Ubiquitous Surveillance—How Feasible?



What's Next?

- Muddled Investment & Trade Flow Signals
- Price Volatility
- Impacts on global commodity and shipping supply chains—will the CCP use data to privilege PRC firms? Consider worries around LOGINK...
- Growing Importance of Remote Sensing
- Implications for Conflict Warning
- ***Bottom Line From My Narrow Commodity & Security Nerd Perspective:***
 - *I wish PRC would just be transparent, but likely not gonna happen.*
 - *Beijing's decisions are, however, creating a fascinating new research area: developing observational and predictive models of PRC energy & commodity activities.*
 - *We'll be busy over the next few years! Planet Labs, ICEye, NVIDIA, Google Earth Engine, etc. will all facilitate. Important analytical adventures await!*

Additional China Energy & Security Reading: Part 1

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13. Gabriel B. Collins and Andrew S. Erickson, “Hold The Line through 2035: A Strategy to Offset China’s Revisionist Actions and Sustain a Rules-Based Order in the Asia-Pacific,” Houston, TX: Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, 12 November 2020, <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/media/files/files/1e07d836/ces-pub-asiapacific-111120.pdf>

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