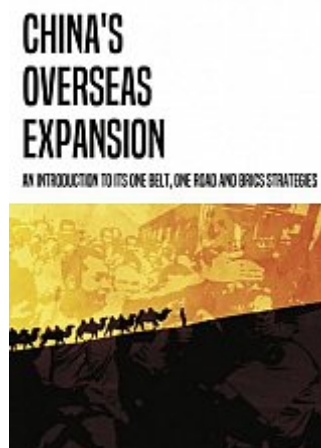


Globalisation 2.0 - China's Overseas Expansion: An Introduction to its One Belt, One Road and BRICS Strategies

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Since China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) development strategy was first proposed in late 2013, it has increasingly attracted world attention as more and more countries have signed various cooperation agreements with China related to the project [1]. Described as 'globalisation 2.0', the initiative which seeks to develop cooperation, trade and infrastructure networks between Asia, Africa and Europe through the creation of a Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road, has the potential to significantly impact on the global economy while further expanding China's political and economic interests internationally. While many governments and businesses have seemingly welcomed the policy for the opportunities that they see it as potentially affording them and have developed strategies for how to extract the greatest benefits for the interests of political elites and capital, from the perspective of impacts on ordinary people and the world in which we live the policy is worthy of scrutiny. One of the areas where significant concerns need to be raised relate to what globalization as promoted by China through OBOR might mean for the environment.

Official documents and statements relating to OBOR state the need to tackle climate change and protect the environment. Expressions of commitment are made to promoting green construction and taking into account the impact of investments on the environment in the implementation of OBOR. Some commentators have also suggested that through OBOR China might aid developing countries in their capacities to pursue more environmentally sustainable development. Despite this, however, clear policy guidance on exactly how to ensure that projects are pursued in an environmentally sustainable way are largely absent from official statements on OBOR.

In fact, a closer examination of what the implementation of the policy has meant so far and what it might continue to entail suggests that OBOR poses serious threats to the environment and is likely to result in increased environmental degradation and pollution, along with natural resource depletion that may adversely impact on local populations along OBOR routes.

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