

One thing we have learnt this week – pollution affects economic growth

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This week there has been a first, a government admits pollution affects

economic growth. The Chinese government has stated that economic growth is going to be lower (only about 6%- although in reality its probably much lower than this). One reason they gave was the pollution crisis in China caused (mainly) by traffic and coal fired power generation. The admission that pollution affects economic growth is a first by a government that I can think of and must mean the situation in parts of China really are serious. Hardly a day goes by without new science on the particulate issue. Over the last week or so the news has covered the facts that particulates and NOX can give heart disease, can affect the foetuses in the womb, can penetrate the testes and possibly has affect on brain development (this is probably not all the news). We also learnt that [omega-3 fatty acids](#) might prevent the damage caused by this type of pollution. On the lunch time news they covered a scheme in London where monitors are fitted to prams to plot low pollution routes through neighbourhoods. Therefore the Chinese governments stance is to be welcomed and supported. It is slightly depressing that it takes a non-democratic government to admit that pollution affects economic growth, this really rather obvious. This particulate problem is becoming as bigger one as the hole in the ozone layer or climate change. The solutions are not politically easy even in China but we need to grasp the metal and get on with it. Neil

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