

- * China is world's biggest polluter, followed by U.S.
- * Public anger over pollution has led to government action
- * Chinese greens different from Western counterparts-study

By Anna Nicolaou

BRUSSELS, May 7 In China, the world's biggest polluter, about 64 percent of people identify themselves as environmentalists, more than double that of Europe and the United States, a report published on Wednesday showed.

The survey by Dutch research agency Motivaction said in China, where public anger has mounted over hazardous levels of pollution in towns and cities, environmentalists had a greater sense of urgency about action needed to tackle the problem than Western counterparts, where the financial crisis has knocked environmental policy down the political agenda.

Motivaction, which interviewed more than 48,000 consumers in 20 countries through online surveys, found Chinese greens tended to be socially conservative, devoted to family and traditional Asian values, and pro-business groups which believed strongly in the role of technology to solve problems.

In contrast, it said, the United States and Europe have developed a "cosmopolitan environmentalism", a movement supported frequently by liberal, highly-educated and politically active groups.

The report said multinational companies needed to understand Chinese environmentalists and how to harness their potential.

China, blamed for nearly a third of global carbon emissions, is the world's biggest investor in green technology, which the report said could give it a competitive advantage in future, and was pressing ahead with investment in the sector.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang promised to tackle pollution in March after an official Chinese report dubbed Beijing "barely suitable" for living due to hazardous smog. China pledged to spend \$1.65 billion to combat air pollution and \$330 billion on water shortages.

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However, when faced with public anger at home, the Chinese government has acted, including amending environmental protection laws last month to impose tougher penalties on polluters.

"When the Chinese government decides to do something, they do it. It's not the talking shop that we see in Europe," said Kathryn Sheridan, CEO of a Brussels-based sustainability communications consultancy.

(Editing by Barbara Lewis and Janet Lawrence)

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