



# GENERVISION CAPE



## 2021 – INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



The United Nations General Assembly has set as the year of The International Year of Fruits and Vegetables.

Do you know that up to 50% of fruits and vegetables produced in developing countries are lost in the supply chain between harvest and consumption?

One of the main reasons is the fruits and vegetables don't look physically or aesthetically perfect.

Digital innovation helps tracking fresh produce from production to consumption.

For example, Plantix is a mobile app that uses AI to help farmers increase their productivity by

using image recognition to detect plant diseases, pests and soil deficiencies.

The main objectives of the year include:

1. Raising awareness of and directing policy attention to the nutrition and health benefits of fruits and vegetables consumption
2. Promoting diversified, balanced and healthy diets
3. Reduce losses and waste in fruits and vegetables food systems
4. Sharing international best practices (e.g. enhance the adoption of innovative approaches and technology in fighting against loss and waste of fruits and vegetables)

### FEATURED ARTICLES

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- 3 Institute for Economics & Peace "Ecological Threat Register 2020"
- 4 White Paper on "China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era"



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## Beijing: The Blue Sky Initiative Gradually Takes Effect

When it comes to Beijing, in addition to the Great Wall and Tiananmen Square, it is known for the heavy smog that has plagued it for many years.

During the most severe years of smog in Beijing (2012-2016), the editor had been studying at a university in Beijing. During autumn and winter, the sky was often greyish and even earthy, and the smell of smoke and sulphur in the air can be smelled even indoors. On a severe smog day, the editor wiped her face with a wet tissue after going out, and the tissue was filled with black dust. It was the same in the nose. The most striking memory for the editor was that for many days in a row, the outside environment was covered in muddy yellow air, and she couldn't tell what time it was in the day. Her roommate ordered the food delivery and couldn't see where the delivery person was. Her classmate joked that going to university was not easy as students risking the health of their lungs by living in Beijing.

In 2013, for only 87 consecutive days, Beijing had no heavy PM2.5 pollution. Seven years since then, the editor returned to Beijing in the winter of 2020. During that week, Beijing had clear sky every day (see the pictures below), and the air quality was obviously much better. Over the past few years, the government has strictly restricted coal consumption and shut down heavily polluting factories, and the environmental monitoring technologies were applied in different areas of the city, along with the analysis of PM2.5 sources and other measures. Finally, Beijing

seen more "blue sky" than before. In 2020, for 322 consecutive days, Beijing had no heavy PM2.5 pollution. In addition, Beijing had 36 more "good weather" throughout the year than in 2019.

These experiences are obviously worthy of reference for some cities in other developing countries. However, according to Liu Baoxian, director of the Beijing Municipal Ecological Environment Monitoring Center, "The pollution level in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region is the highest in the country, and the coal emission per unit area is four times that of the country. Pollutant emissions in all aspects have been reduced, but in general, the urban area has dropped much, and the rural area has dropped less; February is the heating season, and there is a large demand for heating; industries with light pollution were halted more than industries with heavy pollution, and heavy industries such as steel, glass and coke have not been shut down." He mentioned in an exclusive interview with China News Agency.

Air pollution is a very complex systemic and social issue. The staged progress is worthy of noting, but there is still a long road ahead. In many aspects, such as how to coordinate the inconsistent environmental protection motives between cities and rural areas, successfully spread the awareness of environmental protection to all people, and encourage enterprises to take concrete actions, the government still has a lot to lead. Hopefully Beijing can gradually get rid of its hat of a smog city, just like how London did before.







## Data and Experiments: Better Policies for International Development

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a well-known Non-Profit Organization specializing in poverty alleviation projects in the United States. By collecting data locally, providing incentives and conducting randomized controlled trials, the research findings of this institution have successfully tackled poverty issues around the world. Annie Duflo, the Executive Director of IPA, believes that many Non-Profit Organizations lack the resources and funds to conduct scientific research locally, and this is the key to determining the success or failure of policies. This situation has also caused many governments and donors having wasted funds on ineffective programs.

Some breakthrough research findings from the IPA:

- Placing free chlorine dispensers near the water source can solve deaths caused by diarrhoea. In poor countries, providing easy solutions is more effective than training citizens. The results of this research have successfully made the water sources in Kenya, Uganda and Malawi cleaner.
- Micro-credit is not a panacea in poverty-ridden countries —it can ensure the ownership of small businesses, but it cannot ensure that citizens' income will increase and that inequality will be reduced. Health care services and extensive vocational training are also crucial.
- Providing incentive measures is a very effective mechanism to change the behavior of citizens. For example, by providing lentils in exchange for citizens to vaccinate, the vaccination rate in Udaipur, India has increased by six times.



Source: Innovations for Poverty Action's 2019-2020 Annual Report: Building a World with More Evidence and Less Poverty



## Institute for Economics & Peace "Ecological Threat Register 2020"

This report measures the major ecological threats that countries around the world currently facing and predicts the global ecological environment in 2050.

The core findings are as follows:

- There are 141 countries facing at least one ecological threat, and 19 countries facing four or more threats.
- There are 6.4 billion people living in countries facing moderate to high ecological threats.
- By 2050, 34% of the 157 countries covered in the report may face catastrophic water shortages, and 22% may face food insecurity.
- 60% of the countries covered in the report are often affected by floods, followed by water shortages. By 2040, water scarcity will affect 43% of the countries.
- The Middle East and North Africa will face huge risks. Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa are the regions facing the most ecological threats; combined with the Global Peace Index, 10 of the 19 countries most affected by ecological threats are currently in a state of turbulence.
- Due to the low population growth rate, most countries in Europe and South America will face relatively low ecological threats.

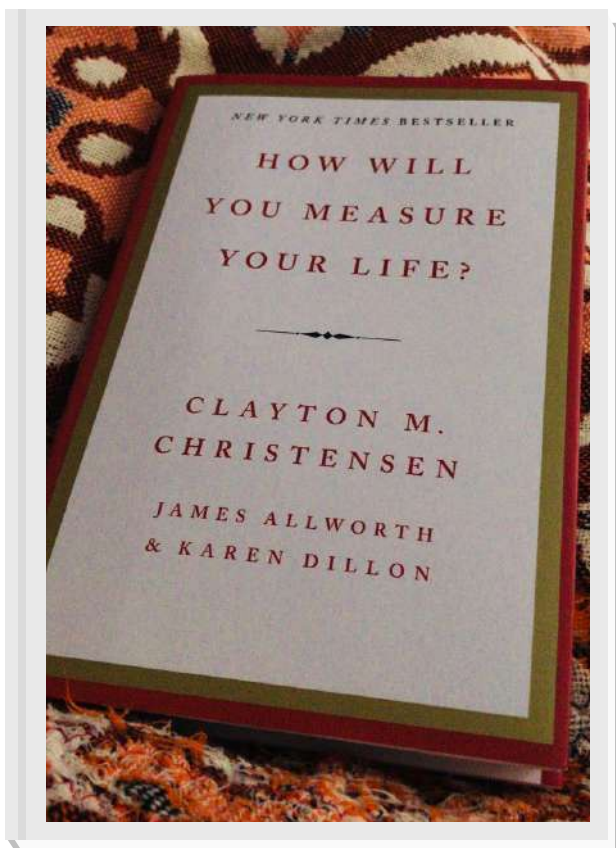
## White Paper on "China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era"

The State Council Information Office released the white paper "China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era" on January 10. The publication of this white paper marks a major change in China's foreign aid strategy.

The white paper consists of eight parts: International Development Cooperation in the New Era and a Global Community of Shared Future, Achieving New Progress in International Development Cooperation, Boosting International Cooperation on the Belt and Road, Contributing to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Responding to Global Humanitarian Challenges Together, Supporting the Endogenous Growth of Developing Countries, Strengthening International Exchanges and Tripartite Cooperation and Future Prospects for China's International Development Cooperation.







## Editor's Pick

### Do you have new year resolution for 2021?

Do you want to read more books to nourish the inner world? The editor has compiled this mini booklist and hope these books can bring you strength in 2021.

1. "Factfulness", by Hans Rosling, Anna Rosling Rönnlund and Ola Rosling. It is a book that can reshape your view on the current world. Do you want a world view based on facts? Just read this book.
2. "How will you measure your life" by Clayton Christensen. Do you often feel lost and sometimes confused about life in general? This book is not the typical pep talk book, but a guide for young people. The author has taught at Harvard for decades and has witnessed the lives of many Harvard students. Some of the truths he summarized are not hard to understand, and are worthy of lifelong practice.
3. "The Moon and Six Pence" by Maugham. If you like to think about human nature and have your own ideals, then this book is worth reading over and over again. Many readers admire Maugham's depiction of human nature. As a classic book, it is worth collecting.

4. "The Moment of Lift" by Melinda Gates. People who are engaged in development assistance cause or have lived in extremely poor areas may not feel surprised about the descriptions in the book. The content is not too deep, but it reflects women's identity, self-awareness, and the great power generated from empowerment. It is a must-read book to understand gender equality.

5. "Poor economics" by Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo. What does poverty mean? How do the poor make decisions? What measures can greatly improve the economic situation of the poor? Two MIT professors had explored the true root of poverty through years of research. These findings have given important guidance to development aid workers and those who wish to escape poverty.

