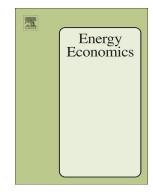
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Political Connections and Corporate Environmental Responsibility: Adopting or Escaping?



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Political Connections and Corporate Environmental

Responsibility: Adopting or Escaping?

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ABSTRACT

Corporate environmental responsibility (CER) is increasingly viewed as an important business

strategy by researchers, investors, and society as a whole. While prior research has emphasized the

role of social pressures, firm-specific factors, as well as CEO characteristics in CER, little

attention has been paid to the impacts of political connections. We propose a mechanism-based

framework to study how political connections affect firm's propensity to engage in CER. Using

comprehensive environmental information disclosure data on China's listed firms, augmented by

unique data on political connections, we find that political connections have a positive effect on

CER. This effect is more pronounced for state-owned firms and in cities with stringent

environmental regulations. With respect to the channels through which political connections

increase CER, we further find that political connections help firms to receive government grants,

subsidies and tax reduction related to the environment protection, and implement government

environmental policies.

Keywords: Corporate environmental responsibility, environmental information disclosure, political

connections, green strategies, energy management

JEL classifications: Q56, M14, P26

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