

Integrating natural and social sciences in the study of environment and health in China

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This presentation discusses the evolution of my understanding of the role of the social sciences in understanding and addressing environment and health in China. It begins by explaining why an integrated approach that includes both natural and social sciences is essential for understanding environmental impacts on health and considering possible responses, using the example of heavy metal contamination of rice. The second part of the presentation discusses some challenges and tensions that natural and social scientists can face in working together. The last part of the presentation discusses the virtues of geography as a discipline that is particularly well suited to effectively integrating natural and social science perspectives through a focus on spatial differentiation in problems, in their drivers and in responsive capacity.