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Features

### Pollution prevention incentives and responses in chinese firms

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### Abstract

Pollution prevention (P2), which the Chinese define to include process changes, energy and water conservation, as well as materials reuse and recycling, stands in sharp contrast to the traditional approach to pollution control: generate waste and then treat it. Based on our study of 26 electroplating enterprises in four Chinese cities, we divided factors motivating firms to adopt P2 measures into three groups: economic incentives, environmental policy incentives, and individual and social incentives. We then used four variables to categorize an electroplating factory's use of P2 as a response to these incentives: awareness of the P2 concept, leadership commitment to P2, presence of a P2 champion in the factory, and goals for P2. Firms we viewed as having a “proactive” environmental management strategy scored highest on all four variables and adopted the largest number of P2 measures. At the other extreme, firms using “resistive” strategies scored poorly on all four variables and never adopted P2 measures intentionally. Other firms (i.e. those with low scores on some but not all of

measures intentionally. Other firms (i.e., those with low scores on some but not all of the four variables) used "reactive" strategies: they deliberately adopted P2 measures, but usually in the narrow context of a particular workshop or environmental medium (e.g., air or water). Only proactive firms viewed pollution prevention as a factorywide management strategy for enhancing profits while abating pollution. Our analysis suggests actions that might increase the number of firms using proactive environmental management strategies.



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