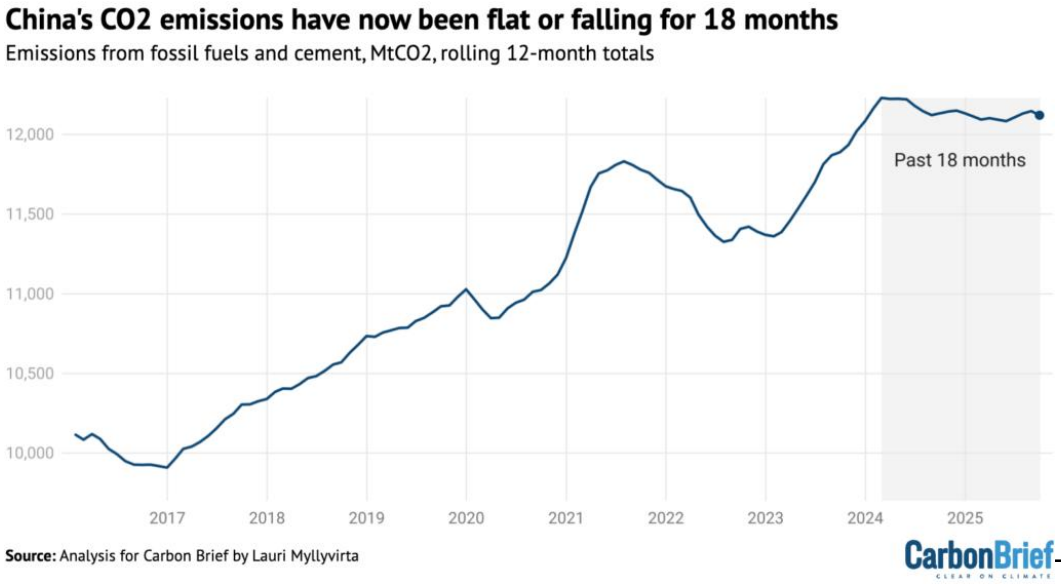


There is so much that is awful, [so let's see some good news for once]:

> China's carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions were unchanged from a year earlier in the third quarter of 2025, extending a flat or falling trend that started in March 2024.
>
> The rapid adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) saw CO2 emissions from transport fuel drop by 5% year-on-year, while there were also declines from cement and steel production.
>
> The new analysis for Carbon Brief shows that while emissions from the power sector were flat year-on-year, a big rise in the chemical industry's CO2 output offset reductions elsewhere.

It's really quite remarkable and perhaps the most significant positive development in the world today. China is a rapidly growing and industrializing economy, and it has been able to hold its emissions flat, and by the end of the year, it might well constitute a slight drop because emissions tend to peak during the summer as air-conditioners go full blast.

And it does not appear to be an artifact of weather or timing. Instead, it reflects China's massive adoption of renewable energy:

> In the power sector, China's dominant source of CO2, emissions remained flat in the third quarter even as electricity demand grew strongly.
>
> Electricity generation from solar and wind grew by 30%, with solar up 46% and wind power generation increasing 11%. With small increases from nuclear and hydropower, non-fossil power sources covered almost 90% of the increase in demand, even as demand growth accelerated to 6.1% in the third quarter, up from 3.7% in the first half of the year.

The two big questions are chemicals and cement. The gains from power generation were almost totally offset from plastics production, particularly high-performance materials. And a real estate dip in the Chinese economy means fewer emissions from cement production. (Steel is a problem but not as much).

And striving for a good mood, even the bad news – fossil fuel emissions reached a record high – is tempered by the fact that worldwide, those emissions are offset by "lower land use emissions" – a technical way of saying deforestation, forest degradation, loss of peatlands and harvesting trees for wood.

Even there, we might be turning a corner. In the past, China has been a meaningful contributor to land-use emissions, but in recent years its land-use emissions have turned net-negative as more trees have been planted than cut down. But we still have significant problems of land use emissions from countries like Brazil, Indonesia, and Congo.

What all this tells me is that even though the planet remains in significant peril, we *are* finding technological means of turning the corner if we are smart about it. The United States, of course, is aggressively trying to be as stupid as possible about it, and that increases the peril. But given all the other awfulness, on a comparative basis it is okay. Quasi-awesomeness? I'll take it.

What all this tells me is that even though the planet remains in significant peril, we *are* finding technological means of turning the corner if we are smart about it. The United States, of course, is aggressively trying to be as stupid as possible about it, and that increases the peril. China is selling more solar panels and wind turbines, lithium-ion batteries, while the United States is getting left behind, relying more and

more on oil and natural gas exports while destroying its competitiveness in emerging technologies. Donald Trump is rapidly turning America into an also-ran.

But if the only way to save the planet means leaving American behind, that is the price we must pay. Quasi-awesomeness? Not the best, but I will take it.