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Comparative Study on Green Development between China and Thailand —— Based on the Perspective of Management

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Abstract

Objective This study aims to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of green development in China and Thailand from a management perspective, identifying key differences and commonalities in policies, industries, technologies, and public awareness to inform future cooperation and global sustainable practices. Methods Using a multi-method approach that integrates literature review, comparative analysis, and case studies, this study systematically compares China and Thailand across five dimensions: policy management, industrial development, technological innovation, green awareness cultivation, and representative case practices. The analytical framework focuses on policy governance structure, stakeholder participation, industrial specialization, and innovation mechanisms to enhance methodological clarity and rigor. Results The comparative analysis reveals that China adopts a centralized, top-down governance model, whereas Thailand emphasizes stakeholder collaboration and community participation. China demonstrates stronger performance in large-scale green sectors such as new energy, while Thailand shows comparative advantages in niche and flexible fields such as organic agriculture and ecotourism. In technological innovation, China leads in green R&D investment and overall innovation capacity, whereas Thailand performs better in selected application-oriented areas such as ecotourism technology. In terms of public awareness cultivation, China relies more on systematic education and media promotion, while Thailand draws more heavily on cultural traditions and grassroots engagement. These findings indicate strong complementarities between the two countries and highlight substantial potential for bilateral learning and joint innovation. Implications The study provides a blueprint for mutually beneficial cooperation in green development. Policymakers can use the findings to enhance institutional design and public engagement, while practitioners may apply insights to foster industry synergies and capacity-building. It also contributes to global sustainability by offering comparative, practical solutions tailored to different national contexts.

Keywords*: Green Development;cultural exchange;sustainable development;global sustainable practices*

1. Introduction

Globalization and industrialization , human society is facing unprecedented environmental challenges. With rapid economic growth, problems such as overconsumption of resources, increased environmental pollution, and ecosystem degradation are becoming increasingly prominent (Xiong et al., 2023). These issues not only threaten the quality of human life but also hinder sustainable economic development. Against this backdrop, the concept of green development has emerged. It emphasizes achieving efficient resource utilization and effective environmental protection while maintaining economic growth, pursuing coordinated progress in the economic, social, and environmental fields (Yang & Solangi, 2024). It has become the only way for countries around the world to achieve sustainable development (Adamowicz, 2022).

As influential economies in Asia, China and Thailand have both demonstrated a proactive spirit of exploration and practical action in the field of green development (Adamowicz, 2022). A comparative study of the current status of green development in these two countries from a management perspective is of multifaceted significance.

From a theoretical perspective, although existing research on green development has generated valuable insights, it mainly concentrates on single-country practical analyses or broad macro-level discussions. What remains insufficient is a governance-based and management-theory-driven comparative perspective that can systematically explain how different institutional arrangements, policy coordination mechanisms, stakeholder participation patterns, and innovation management approaches shape green development outcomes across countries. In particular, comparative studies grounded in the actual contexts of China and Thailand are still scarce. To address this theoretical and managerial gap, this study conducts an in-depth comparative analysis of green policy management, green industry development, green technological innovation, and green awareness cultivation in China and Thailand. By doing so, it seeks to reveal the underlying patterns and governance characteristics of green development in both countries, thereby providing new empirical evidence and management-oriented theoretical insights for enriching and refining the green development theory system.

From a practical perspective, China and Thailand have certain differences in economic structure, resource endowment, cultural traditions, and policies and institutions, leading to different choices in green development paths and models. Comparative research can clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of each country in its green development efforts, providing opportunities for mutual learning , exchange, and cooperation . For example, China has advantages in the scale of green industries and policy implementation (Chen et al., 2021), while Thailand possesses unique experience in cultivating distinctive green industries and fostering a culture-driven green consciousness (Napathorn, 2022). Through exchange and cooperation, the two countries can complement each other's strengths and jointly elevate their green development capabilities. Furthermore, the green development practices of China and Thailand offer valuable insights for other countries, providing diverse development strategies and practical examples for countries at different stages of development and with varying resource requirements (Zhuang et al., 2025).

In summary, this study aims to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth comparative analysis of green development in China and Thailand from a management perspective and using scientific research methods, identify similarities and differences between the two countries' green development, and provide theoretical support and decision-making basis for in-depth cooperation and exchanges between China and Thailand in the field of green development. It also contributes academic wisdom and practical experience to the global green development cause.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Research on Green Development Theory

The rise of the concept of green development is a profound reflection on the shortcomings of the traditional development model, and many scholars have conducted in-depth discussions on it from different perspectives. In its 2011 Green Economy Report, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasized the importance of green development in promoting the coordinated advancement of economic growth, environmental protection, and social welfare, and pointed out that green development is the core path to achieving sustainable development (Adamowicz, 2022). Domestic scholars Jiang et al. (2022) from the perspective of ecological economics, proposed that green development should decouple economic growth from environmental impacts and promote sustainable economic transformation through efficient resource utilization and environmentally friendly technological innovation. These theoretical studies have provided a solid theoretical foundation for subsequent green development practices in various countries, and also provided a macro-guidance framework for the formulation and implementation of green development policies in China and Thailand.

2.2 Research on China's Green Development

In recent years, China has made significant progress in the field of green development, and related research has emerged in an endless stream. In terms of policy management, Li (2020) and Du et al. (2021) pointed out in 2015 that China has established a relatively complete green development policy system by formulating a series of strict environmental policies and plans, such as the "Overall Plan for the Reform of the Ecological Civilization System", strengthened the supervision and punishment of environmental violations, and effectively promoted the green transformation of the industrial structure. At the level of industrial development, the scale of China's green industry continues to expand, and emerging industries such as new energy, energy conservation and environmental protection have become new drivers of economic growth. Fang (2023) found that China's investment in renewable energy and technological innovation have continued to increase, and the installed capacity of renewable energy such as solar energy and wind energy ranks among the top in the world, making important contributions to the optimization of energy structure and the reduction of carbon emissions. In addition, in terms of scientific and technological innovation, Xu et al. (2022) pointed out that China has increased its investment in green technology research and development, and has made breakthroughs in some key technologies, such as electric vehicle technology and sewage treatment technology, which have improved resource utilization efficiency and environmental governance.

2.3 Research on Thailand's Green Development

Thailand also has its own unique practices and explorations in green development. In the agricultural sector, Thailand has implemented an "organic agriculture" development strategy, encouraging farmers to adopt organic planting methods, reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and improve the quality and safety of agricultural products (Rattanawong et al., 2024). A study by scholars Baird (2024) showed that Thailand's organic agriculture not only protects the ecological environment, but also enhances the competitiveness of agricultural products in the international market. In the tourism industry, Thailand focuses on developing "ecotourism" by protecting natural landscapes and cultural heritage and developing distinctive ecotourism products, attracting a large number of domestic and foreign tourists (Hussain et al., 2024). Suchatvee Tseng et al. (2019) pointed out that the development of ecotourism has promoted the development of the local economy and enhanced the public's environmental awareness. In addition, Linh et al. (2023) pointed out that Thailand has also taken a series of measures in green buildings, water resources management, etc. to promote the green development of cities.

2.4 Comparative Study on Green Development between China and Thailand

At present, there are relatively few studies on the comparison of green development between China and Thailand, but some scholars have begun to pay attention to this area. Some scholars compared the environmental policies of China and Thailand and found that China's environmental policies focus more on macroeconomic regulation and mandatory constraints (Chai et al., 2021), while Thailand's environmental policies emphasize cooperation and participation among the government, enterprises and society (Chaiya, 2024). In terms of industrial development, a study pointed out that China's green industry has scale advantages and technological advantages (Song et al., 2022), while Thailand's green industry is more distinctive and flexible, such as Thailand's organic agriculture and ecotourism industries. However, most existing studies focus on specific sectors or isolated aspects of green development and therefore lack a comprehensive and systematic comparison between China and Thailand. Although some comparative research has provided useful descriptive insights, it often remains at the level of general policy review or narrative comparison, without adopting a clear management-theory-based analytical framework. In particular, there is still limited research that grounds the comparison in the actual national contexts of China and Thailand while systematically examining governance structures, stakeholder coordination, industrial pathways, and innovation mechanisms. This study advances beyond prior comparative research by employing a management-oriented and multidimensional analytical framework to compare the two countries across green policy management, industrial development, technological innovation, and public awareness cultivation. In doing so, it not only identifies similarities and differences, but also explains how distinct governance and management arrangements shape green development trajectories in the two national contexts.

Table 1 summarizes the key research findings in the literature

Dimension	China (Key Findings)	Thailand (Key Findings)	Synthesis/Interconnection
Policy	Top-down, centralized (Li, 2020)	Multi-stakeholder, community-based (Chaiya, 2024)	Complementary governance models
Industry	Large-scale, new energy (Fang, 2023)	Niche, organic agriculture (Baird, 2024)	Potential for industrial synergy
Technology	R&D intensive, EV leader (Xu et al., 2022)	Application-focused, ecotourism (Tseng et al., 2019)	Technology transfer opportunities
Awareness	Systemic education (Chen et al., 2024)	Cultural/Grassroots (Khunweechuay et al., 2022)	Diverse paths to green consciousness

In summary, although domestic and international scholars have achieved rich research results in the field of green development, the comparative study of green development between China and Thailand still needs to be further deepened. This study will start from the actual situation of China and Thailand, apply relevant management theories and methods, and conduct a comprehensive and systematic comparative analysis of policy management, industrial development, scientific and technological innovation, and awareness cultivation in China and Thailand's green development, in order to provide theoretical support and decision-making reference for the green development cooperation between China and Thailand.

3. Research Methods

This study uses literature research, comparative analysis and case analysis to conduct a comprehensive and systematic in-depth exploration of China-Thailand green development.

3.1 Documentary Research Method

This study collected, organized, and analyzed policy documents, academic publications, research reports, and statistical data on green development from both domestic and international sources. The selected materials were chosen according to three criteria: relevance to green development governance and management, direct connection to the national contexts of China and Thailand, and representativeness in terms of policy authority, academic influence, or data reliability. Policy documents, including the United Nations Environment Programme's *Green Economy Report* and China's *Overall Plan for the Reform of the Ecological Civilization System*, were examined to identify the macro-policy orientations and institutional priorities of green development. In addition, the study reviewed representative scholarly works by Zhu Dajian (2022), Wang Yi (2022), and Somsak Jitsuchon (2023) to assess the current state of research on green development theory and practice in China and Thailand, thereby establishing the theoretical foundation for the subsequent analysis.

3.2 Comparative Analysis

This paper conducts a multidimensional comparative analysis of green development in China and Thailand across four key dimensions: policy management, industrial development, technological innovation, and awareness-building. In the dimension of policy management, the comparison focuses on governance structure, policy coordination, regulatory intensity, and stakeholder participation. In terms of industrial development, the analysis examines industrial scale, sectoral specialization, market adaptability, and the degree of green transformation. For technological innovation, the study compares R&D investment, innovation capacity, technology application, and the diffusion of green technologies. In the dimension of awareness-building, the comparison considers environmental education, media communication, public participation, and the role of cultural values in shaping green behavior. Based on these dimensions and indicators, the paper contrasts China's stringent and centralized environmental governance with Thailand's greater emphasis on multilateral cooperation, compares China's scale and technological advantages in green industries with Thailand's flexibility and niche-oriented development, and summarizes the major experiences and lessons of green development in the two countries.

3.3 Case Analysis

This study selected and analyzed representative cases of green development in China and Thailand based on their national significance, policy relevance, industrial visibility, and capacity to reflect broader development patterns. In China, the new energy industry was chosen because it is a strategically important sector strongly supported by national policy, characterized by rapid technological upgrading, large-scale market expansion, and broad influence on the country's green transition. It therefore serves as a representative case for examining how policy support, innovation capacity, and market mechanisms interact in China's green development model. In Thailand, the organic agriculture and ecotourism industries were selected because they reflect the country's resource endowments, community-based development approach, and emphasis on sustainability-oriented niche sectors. These cases are analytically relevant for understanding how Thailand combines local participation, environmental protection, and flexible industrial strategies in promoting green development. By comparing these representative cases, the study provides concrete practical references for China–Thailand green development cooperation.

4. Research Content and Results

This study analyzes China and Thailand's green development from five perspectives: policy management, industrial development, technological innovation, awareness-raising, and case studies. The two countries have distinct policy management systems but share potential for cooperation; industrial development demonstrates complementary strengths; China leads in technological innovation, offering opportunities for collaboration between the two countries; awareness-raising, while taking action, faces challenges; and case studies offer models for mutual learning. Overall, China and Thailand have broad prospects for multi-faceted cooperation in green development, potentially achieving mutual benefit and win-win outcomes. The detailed analysis is as follows:

4.1 Policy Management Dimension

4.1.1 Differences in policy systems

A detailed review of policy documents from both countries reveals that China has established a rigorous and comprehensive environmental policy framework. This framework, centered around the "Overall Plan for Ecological Civilization System Reform," covers every level, from macro-planning to micro-implementation. This plan clearly defines the overall goals, key tasks, and reform measures for ecological civilization development, providing a comprehensive and systematic institutional framework for green development (Dong et al., 2025). Furthermore, a series of supporting policies, such as the "Action Plan for Air Pollution Prevention and Control" and the "Action Plan for Water Pollution Prevention and Control," address specific environmental issues with detailed measures and targets to ensure effective policy implementation (Feng et al., 2019; Qiang et al., 2024; Wu, 2023).

Thailand's environmental policy emphasizes multi-stakeholder collaboration. The Thai government encourages government departments, businesses, and all sectors of society to participate in green development (Napathorn, 2022). For example, it establishes public-private partnerships (PPPs) to attract corporate investment in environmental projects and promotes community participation in environmental management, raising public awareness and engagement in environmental issues. This policy model emphasizes collaborative efforts and leverages the strengths of all sectors of society.

4.1.2 Causes of Differences and Cooperation Potential

The differences in the two countries' policy systems stem from their different national conditions, political systems, and development stages. As a large country with a large population and vast territory, China requires a rigorous policy framework to ensure the comprehensive advancement of green development. Thailand's relatively smaller economy and social structure, on the other hand, allow for greater flexibility and adaptability in its multilateral cooperation mechanisms.

This difference also provides ample room for cooperation between the two sides. China can draw on Thailand's experience in multilateral cooperation to further improve mechanisms for social participation in policy implementation; Thailand can learn from China's comprehensive approach to policy system construction to enhance the systematicness and pertinence of its policies. Through policy exchange and cooperation, both sides hope to optimize their respective policy systems and improve their effectiveness and adaptability.

4.2 Industrial Development Dimension

4.2.1 Complementary Industrial Advantages

In terms of industrial development, China and Thailand demonstrate clear complementary advantages. China holds significant advantages in green industries such as new energy, energy conservation, and environmental protection. Taking the new energy sector as an example, China leads the world in technology research and development and industrial application in areas such as solar and wind energy (Pan et al., 2022). China boasts a complete new energy industry chain, from upstream raw material production to midstream equipment manufacturing and downstream power generation applications, with strong competitiveness in every link (Dong & Li, 2021). Furthermore, the Chinese

government has strongly supported the development of the new energy industry through policies and measures such as subsidies and tax incentives, driving rapid expansion of the industry (Jiang & Xu, 2023).

Thailand has unique advantages in distinctive green industries such as organic agriculture and ecotourism. Thailand's organic agriculture focuses on ecological balance and agricultural product quality and safety, combining traditional agricultural techniques with modern ecological concepts to produce high-quality organic produce (Rattanawong et al., 2024). Thailand's ecotourism industry leverages its abundant natural resources and unique cultural heritage to develop diverse ecotourism offerings, such as tropical rainforest adventures and coastal eco-resorts, attracting a large number of domestic and international tourists (Tseng et al., 2019).

4.2.2 Cooperation Model and Prospects

The two sides can achieve synergistic industrial development through various cooperation models. For example, in the field of new energy, China can export advanced technology and equipment to Thailand to help Thailand develop clean energy. In organic agriculture, Thailand can provide China with high-quality organic produce, while China can provide Thailand with agricultural technology and market access support. In the field of ecotourism, the two countries can strengthen the integration of tourism resources and market promotion, jointly creating a tourism brand with international influence. Through industrial cooperation, China and Thailand can achieve resource sharing, technological exchange, and market expansion, promoting the joint development of green industries.

4.3 Technological Innovation Dimension

4.3.1 Gap in scientific and technological research and development

China has invested heavily in the research and development and application of green technologies, achieving a series of internationally influential scientific research results. In the field of new energy vehicles, Chinese companies, through independent R&D and technological innovation, have mastered core electric vehicle technologies, such as batteries and motor control, making China the world's largest new energy vehicle production and consumption market (Yeung, 2019). Regarding renewable energy utilization, Chinese research institutions have conducted extensive research in solar, wind, and hydropower, improving energy efficiency and stability (Liu et al., 2020). In environmental monitoring and governance, China has developed a series of advanced monitoring equipment and governance technologies that enable real-time monitoring of environmental quality and effective pollution control (Ren et al., 2023).

In contrast, Thailand's green technology R&D capabilities are relatively weak. Although Thailand has achieved certain innovative results in some special fields, such as agricultural biotechnology and ecotourism technology, its overall R&D investment and scientific research level are far behind China.

4.3.2 Cooperation Opportunities and Strategies

The two sides can establish a scientific and technological cooperation platform to strengthen exchanges among researchers and collaborative projects, thereby complementing each other's strengths. China can help Thailand enhance its green technology R&D capabilities and introduce advanced green technologies to Thailand through technology transfer and joint R&D. Thailand can provide China with unique

research scenarios and application markets, promoting the transformation and application of scientific and technological achievements. For example, in the field of agricultural biotechnology, the two sides can collaborate on research on organic agricultural variety improvement and pest control technologies. In the field of ecotourism, the two sides can jointly develop intelligent tourism management systems and ecological environment monitoring technologies.

4.4 Awareness Cultivation Dimension

4.4.1 Current status of awareness cultivation

Both China and Thailand recognize the importance of cultivating awareness about green development and are conducting publicity and education campaigns through various channels. China is raising public awareness of environmental protection and green consumption through various means, including school education, media outreach, and community activities. In terms of school education, environmental protection knowledge is incorporated into primary and secondary school curricula to cultivate students' environmental awareness and behavioral habits (Chen et al., 2024). In terms of media outreach, green development concepts and environmental protection knowledge are widely promoted through television, newspapers, the internet, and other media platforms (Guo et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2022). In terms of community activities, environmental volunteer services and waste sorting awareness campaigns are organized to increase community participation in environmental protection (Yin et al., 2021).

Thailand emphasizes the role of communities and cultural traditions, fostering a positive atmosphere for all-society participation in green development through community engagement and cultural heritage. Community organizations in Thailand actively carry out environmental protection activities, such as waste sorting and tree planting, to enhance residents' awareness and sense of responsibility. Furthermore, Thailand's cultural traditions are rich in ecological conservation concepts, which are passed down and promoted through cultural activities and religious rituals (Khunweechuay et al., 2022).

4.4.2 Challenges and Cooperation Directions

However, both countries still face challenges in raising awareness. Public understanding of green development is insufficient in depth and breadth, and some individuals lack a precise understanding of the concept and significance of green development. The green consumer market is not yet fully mature, and consumers' awareness of and willingness to purchase green products needs to be improved.

The two sides can strengthen cooperation and jointly explore more effective models for awareness-raising. For example, they can conduct cross-border environmental awareness campaigns and share their experiences and practices in awareness-raising; strengthen educational exchanges and cooperation by sending students and teachers to study and exchange courses related to green development; and jointly organize cultural activities on the theme of green development to promote public understanding and recognition of the concept of green development in both countries.

4.5 Case Analysis Dimensions

4.5.1 Reference to Chinese Case Studies

The development of China's new energy industry offers a valuable model for Thailand. The Chinese government has driven the rapid growth of the new energy industry through industrial policies, increased R&D investment, and the development of industrial parks. For example, some of China's new energy industrial parks have fostered industrial clustering by bringing together upstream and downstream enterprises, enhancing industry competitiveness. Furthermore, through continuous innovation and technological upgrades, Chinese companies have reduced the cost of new energy products and improved their market competitiveness (Li et al., 2021; Piao et al., 2022).

4.5.2 Lessons from the Thai Case

The success of Thailand's organic agriculture and ecotourism industries also provides valuable insights for China's development of specialty agriculture and ecotourism. Thailand's organic agriculture industry, through the establishment of a rigorous certification system and quality control mechanism, ensures the quality and market credibility of organic agricultural products (Panyasing et al., 2022). Thailand's ecotourism industry emphasizes ecological and environmental protection and cultural heritage, enhancing the sustainable development of the tourism industry through the development of diverse tourism products and the provision of high-quality tourism services (Tseng et al., 2019).

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

A comparative study of China and Thailand in green policy management, green industrial development, green technological innovation, and green awareness cultivation reveals that both countries have made notable progress in green development, while also facing their own limitations. The comparison shows that the two countries share certain common goals but differ significantly in their governance structures, industrial pathways, innovation patterns, and approaches to public engagement. In green policy management, China prioritizes government leadership, whereas Thailand emphasizes cooperation and partnerships. In green industrial development, China demonstrates large scale and a relatively complete industrial system, while Thailand focuses more on cultivating specialized and adaptive industries. In green technological innovation, China possesses stronger scientific research and innovation capabilities, whereas Thailand has achieved meaningful results in selected specialized fields. In green awareness cultivation, China relies more on systematic education and publicity, while Thailand makes greater use of cultural traditions and community-based practices. Conceptually, this study contributes to the green development governance literature by showing that green development outcomes are shaped not only by policy objectives, but also by the interaction among governance structure, stakeholder participation, industrial organization, and innovation mechanisms, thereby providing a comparative management-based framework for understanding national green development pathways.

5.2 Recommendations

Strengthen Policy Exchange and Cooperation: China and Thailand should regularly hold green policy seminars to share experiences in policy formulation and implementation, and jointly research and resolve issues encountered in policy implementation. They should establish a policy communication and coordination mechanism and strengthen cooperation in areas such as international environmental governance. Furthermore, they should learn from each other's policy management models to optimize their own policy systems.

Promote Green Industry Cooperation: Carry out industrial matchmaking activities in areas such as new energy, energy conservation and environmental protection, and agriculture, encouraging mutual investment and joint factory construction. Establish green industry cooperation parks to share technology, talent, and market resources to enhance the international competitiveness of industries. Strengthen mutual recognition of industry standards and certifications to promote trade in green products and services.

Strengthen cooperation in green technology innovation: Establish a China-Thailand Joint Green Technology R&D Center to jointly conduct research on green technology projects. Exchange scientific research personnel for study and exchange to strengthen cooperation in talent development. Establish a Green Technology Cooperation Fund to support joint R&D between scientific research institutions and enterprises in both countries. Furthermore, strengthen the transformation and application of scientific and technological achievements to promote the industrialization of green technology.

Deepen cooperation in green awareness cultivation: Carry out exchanges and cooperation in environmental awareness education activities, jointly organize cultural events and academic seminars on environmental themes, exchange educational delegations to share green education experiences, and jointly develop environmental education curriculum and teaching materials. Leverage the cultural characteristics of both countries to innovate green awareness cultivation methods and enhance public awareness and participation in environmental protection.

In short, given the close geographical, cultural, political, and economic ties between China and Thailand, there is broad room for cooperation in green development. By strengthening cooperation and exchanges, the two countries can achieve their shared goal of green development and make positive contributions to global sustainable development.

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