

China's new aid White Paper and its surprisingly small aid program

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This week China [released](#) their latest (and long-awaited) Foreign Aid White Paper, following on from their [first](#) Aid White Paper in 2011. Instead of being a White Paper in the conventional Australian sense, setting the strategic vision and future direction of the program, it is rather an account of Chinese aid from 2010 to 2012. The document provides statistics showing the geographic and sectoral distribution of their aid program as well as its total volume over the three year period. Philippa Brant provides some good analysis [here](#).

So how much aid does China give? The White Paper says US\$ 14.4 billion over three years. Dividing 14.4 by 3 gives \$4.8 billion. This would rank China 10th overall in the world of OECD donors in 2012, just after Australia. So China is clearly a large donor.

But the figures are surprisingly low. China's aid back in 2008 was estimated at \$4.5 billion (see [this](#) 2011 presentation by Sean Burges.) A People's Daily [article](#) from last year suggested that China's aid was \$6.4 billion. And recent [research](#) [pdf] from the JICA research institute, as reported by Philippa Brant [here](#), puts China's aid in 2013 at \$7.1 billion, which would push it up to 6th.

Has China put the brakes on its aid program? Or are different definitions to blame?