

China-Program

Nora Sausmikat and Inga Gebauer

Twinning: Partnerships between Chinese and European NGOs

Investment Monitoring · Sustainable Farming ·
Waste Management · Emission Trading ·
Social Innovation



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Editorial

In 2015, a new global agenda of development and sustainability goals will be adopted by the United Nations. With this comes the convergence of two storylines: the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of 2000, which ran through 2015, and the debate on global sustainable development. Although these goals are still being defined and discussed, people have already started acting both at a local-level and in trans-border cooperation through our EU-China NGO Twinning program.

All of these represent powerful initiatives towards a sustainable future and are located in both China and Europe as part of the EU-China NGO Twinning. Developments in these two of the *world's largest economies* will crucially determine the chance to create sustainable development worldwide.

Green finance, heavy metal pollution, eco-agriculture and smallholders' agriculture, zero-waste strategies, climate change and the strengthening of civil society were the topics of the seven Chinese-European pairs of civil society organizations who took part in the 2014 work-and-study exchange. In 2012 and 2013, the European and Chinese partner organizations jointly developed projects in the fields of climate change, water conservation, green credit policy, inclusive theatre (esp. with autistic children), urban youth culture and criminal justice projects (esp. on the avoidance of torture).¹

¹ Documentation can be downloaded here: <http://www.eu-china-twinning.org/2014/09/full-report-on-2013-first-round-of-eu-china-ngo-exchange-twinning-partnerships-between-chinese-and-european-ngos-green-financing-rights-to-clean-water-human-rights/>

Out of these three years of NGO Twinning, an alumni network has grown which assists in developing further joint projects. Plus: We have developed an additional tool to channel lessons learned in the respective field to policymakers: the EU-China NGO Twinning policy briefings.

All this shows that the NGO Twinning has become an effective means for connecting Europe and China at the civil society level. It also shows the growing need for action in both regions.

Citizens in both Europe and China apparently have quite a bit in common, viewing the same issues as important, taking similar actions, and are working toward the same changes. The aforementioned topics being addressed by our Twinners pretty much correspond to the new agenda for development and sustainability goals. Europe and China are both facing similar challenges, although on very different levels. Both regions need each other, are dependent on each other, and influence each other. Political, economic, and cultural relations between Europe and China have grown during recent years, as has the impact of European-Chinese relations on global social and ecological developments.

Nevertheless, in this complex process, civil society still plays only a minor role. These individuals work mainly in highly vulnerable surroundings and in a precarious setting. Nevertheless, they do necessary work, work which urgently needs the political support.

Although multi-faceted collaborations between European and Chinese institutions have advanced in recent years, cooperation and exchange between the two

major economic players is usually only financially supported when limited to the science, industry, and culture sectors. At the same time, the number of transnational influences and overlapping citizens' concerns are on the rise – not only climate change issues, but environmental protection in general; sustainable production, food safety, and social justice are similar important concerns, to name just a few.

Chinese-European relations are at the center of current debates about the new world order. With China becoming more self-assured, especially in setting its own agenda and standards, managing Chinese-European relations has become more complex than ever – for both sides. The future of our planet depends very much on how the relations between Europe and China

are carved out. Beyond that, we are rapidly approaching our planet's limits and a looming global crisis, with trends such as advancing climate change and the destruction of biological diversity is jeopardizing our natural life support systems.

We view it as essential to intensify the scope of a global cooperation among civil societies and to tackle the current and looming global crises in both an effective and legitimate manner. This brochure – like the 2013 brochure – again documents the fascinating outcome of short encounters which could build solid bridges for sustainable cooperation in the future.

Nora Sausmikat, Inga Gebauer
Cologne August 2015



Greetings

Recognizing NGOs as partners in shaping Chinese civil society

2014 has been a difficult year for the development of Chinese civil society. The pressure on non-governmental organizations has been steadily increasing ever since the new administration took office in late 2013. The main rationale behind new legal regulations: to increase control over organizations that behave unlawfully and to root out any illegal activities of international organizations that interfere with Chinese affairs.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung runs a German – Chinese judge exchange program in collaboration with the GIZ and the Supreme People’s Court in Beijing. We will begin a German – Chinese lawyer exchange later this year. Therefore, the Stiftung welcomes all state initiatives to strengthen the rule of law in China. We firmly believe in China’s efforts in this regard. We nevertheless also firmly believe that the development of a civil society requires more than top-down state initiatives. The state needs to allow non-governmental organizations to engage freely in strengthening its own society, to identify its problems and help dealing with them, if needed, in collaboration with trustworthy and respectful foreign organizations who work on similar topics. High-level exchange such as the EU – China people-to-people dialogues are important initiatives. However, we need more grassroots initiatives between civil societies. In this context the EU-China NGO Twinning Program, the first of its kind between China and Europe, is an excellent initiative.

The Stiftung Asienhaus in Cologne has proven again to be an outstanding partner for implementing the idea of matching European and Chinese non-governmental organizations. We would like to congratulate Nora Sausmikat and her team for a very successful year with applications from all over China and Europe. This shows a genuine need for this initiative and a real interest in an exchange of topics and joint projects. The latter’s impressive variety clearly reflects both China’s and Europe’s challenges in the years ahead, ranging from industrial pollution to small scale farming and social innovation.

2015 brought even more good news to the program: We are delighted that we have the Stiftung Mercator as a new partner on board. Their partnership will give our program an even bigger impact. Together with the Climate Action Network (CAN-E) and the Chinese Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (CANGO) Stiftung Mercator will bring in another 5 twinnings specifically dealing with climate change issues. We sincerely believe with our efforts in this program Chinese NGOs step by step are recognized as mature partners in shaping Chinese civil society in their own right.

Christian Hänel
Head of Department
International Relations America and Asia
Robert Bosch Stiftung

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1. Introduction

The importance of partnerships between Chinese and European NGOs

At the time this introduction was being written, NGOs in China, especially those with overseas funding and connections were nervously eyeing the introduction of a new law set to fundamentally alter the parameters for cooperation between European and Chinese NGOs. Although we remain optimistic in our hope for the emergence of Chinese civil society, recent developments inside China have dampened these hopes. While we are mere observers and cannot change laws or ideological developments, this EU-China NGO Twinning provides the soil for mutual understanding and we hope that this channel of understanding and exchange will stay open as it strengthens the urgently needed forces and mechanisms for building a sustainable and peaceful future.

Despite these developments, in Brussels the European Commission has been busy preparing events in the framework of the 3rd EU-China High Level People-to-

People Dialogue. The HPPD claims to be the “overarching mechanism which accommodates all EU-China joint initiatives in the field of people to people exchanges.” However, these events are restricted to the topics of “education & training, culture, multilingualism and youth”. Although the EU- China NGO twinning tried hard to vote for a more open concept of this people-to-people dialogue, NGOs and other social and environmental groups are not on the agenda of this dialogue. Nevertheless, in 2015, for the first time the twinning will be represented in this dialogue – although subsumed under the headline of “youth exchange” and NGO-local authority-cooperation.

The three years of NGO Twinning have started to change perceptions of civil societies in Europe and China, gradually reducing reservations and igniting a whole series of joint projects and frequent exchanges. An alumni network got established which assists in further developing the program, continuing to work on EU-China related topics and consulting newcomers in the program. Policy briefings help to channel les-

<p>EU-China-NGO-Twinning Policy Briefing Paper No. 1, 2015</p>  <p>Pollution Victims in China CSOs formulate requests to mitigate pollution and protect human health Jilka Straková (Arnika), Mao Da (Green Beauty, Nature University), Joe DiGangi (IPEN)</p> <p>In China one source of harm to human health and the environment is the continuous visible and invisible pollution by heavy metals, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other chemicals that result from weak laws, lax enforcement, and the strong voice of the chemical industry. An additional harm is the social marginalization of pollution victims (mainly economically and culturally) and the lack of attention paid to resolving their issues. Social marginalization leads to a situation where pollution victims have little power to improve their situation. This multiplies the negative effects of environmental pollution. Environmental organizations should effectively intervene by launching campaigns and submitting policy recommendations. This briefing paper illustrates two pollution cases, where Nature University, Green Beauty, IPEN and Arnika civil society organizations (CSOs) watch-dogged events on the ground and formulated policy recommendations in an effort to overcome barriers to establishing a pollution victim aid system in China.</p> <p>Thanks Prof Fabian Birkmann, Kunming</p>	<p>2 cases – 2 sets of requests for social and ecological justice</p> <p>Victims of chemical pollution have to bear both the burdens of being harmed by pollution and the inadequacies of regulatory and social systems that seemingly cannot help resolve their problems. In order to mitigate the negative effects of chemical pollution it is essential to address sources of pollution and at the same time the social marginalization aggravating the situation of pollution victims. In other words, supporting the development of civil society and promoting the inclusion of marginalized actors needs to be included to mount an effective strategy for mitigation of chemical pollution and protection of public health.</p> <p>In China, regulations and enforcement to protect environmental health remain weak. Although there are tools such as the Environmental Information Disclosure (EID) law, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) law, the Environmental Protection and Control of Emission Standards for Air Pollutants for Municipal Solid Waste, the whole approach can be considered fragmented and not sufficient to deal with the scale of the situation.</p> <p>Case 1: Metals pollution in Liuyang The Liuyang case study provides opportunities for improvements in several areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vigilance about fulfilling Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) planning: The company violated its EIA. - Enforcement of waste management laws: Rigorous enforcement of Chinese law would have identified this problem much sooner. - Information disclosure: Public right to know is a key principle of chemical safety but the community was blocked from knowing about the initial cleanup and high level pollution. - Effective remediation: In this case, contracts were provided to companies that did not actually perform adequate cleanup. The media had problem much worse. - Liability and compensation: There did not come close to the economic and human damage. <p>Case 2: Industrial dumping The Taidou case study provides opportunities for improvements in several areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector waste management practices: Manufacturers should take responsibility for the full lifecycle of their operations – and that includes wastes generated during industrial processes. - Enforcement of waste management laws: Rigorous enforcement of Chinese law would have identified and addressed this problem much sooner rather than letting journalist and Project activities reveal the details of the contamination. - Information disclosure: Community was never informed about the identity or possible danger of toxic solid waste openly dumped in vast open-air ponds. - Effective remediation: Companies should take financial support for contamination resulting from manufacturing activities at the Park including financing support for independent assessment of pollution. <p>Detailed background information</p> <p>Environmental organizations should intervene by informing politicians, promoting media communication, initiating legal cases, holding seminars, facilitating medical assistance and conducting analyses for pollutants, etc. However all these activities need to be based on grassroots principles, reflect specific needs and constraints of the groups affected or empowered by chemical pollution and ensure the active involvement of target groups.</p> <p>Case 1: Metals pollution in Liuyang, Hunan Province</p> <p>Hunan Province is a major metals producer and smelter operations have resulted in the contamination with high levels of cadmium. This case study focuses on metals pollution from a factory near Liuyang city in Hunan Province which links a small village to the global electronics industry.¹ The case study illustrates how violations of</p>	 <p>legal, tight operations, and a botched cleanup have resulted in a complicated pollution problem that caused harm to the community and will not easily be resolved. The case study also illustrates the broader issue of metals pollution in China. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, farming on land around the site of Beijing has been stopped due to metals contamination and approximately 12 million tonnes of grain are pollutely by metals every year in China.²</p> <p>The Liuyang case study provides opportunities for improvements in several areas:</p> <p>Vigilance about fulfilling Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) planning</p> <p>One of the key features of this case study is that the company violated its EIA almost from the beginning of its operation and started producing pollution with tragic consequences. In addition, the siting of the plant violated Chinese law from the beginning and any serious review of the EIA would have prohibited construction and operation of the plant due to this violation. These problems appear to be common in China.</p> <p>If there is no vigilance about a company fulfilling its EIA, then the assessment process and the manufacturing permit become meaningless exercises in paper work without relevance to actual practice that safeguards human health and the environment.</p> <p>Enforcement of waste management laws</p> <p>Rigorous enforcement of Chinese law would have identified this problem much sooner rather than letting it continue for nine years. One relevant law is the Solid Waste Law, which requires that hazardous waste must be shipped to qualified disposing facilities and strictly monitored by the Environmental Protection Bureau for the whole disposal process. Going forward, rigorous enforcement of dumping laws should lead to control production. In June 2013, the Supreme Court of China updated China's criminal code to include environmental crime involving illegally dumping two tons or more hazardous waste. Enforcement of this new law will be important to help provide justice for communities and a deterrent for cases like this one.</p> <p>Information disclosure</p> <p>Public right to know is a key principle of chemical safety but the community was blocked from knowing about the initial cleanup and no information was provided about high levels of toxic metals polluting both the land and water. Public access to plant information including reports should be required provided via an accessible, free, public release and/or regularly updated key aspects information disclosure is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report of the Xianghe facility. According to Chinese law, this report should be freely available to the public, but no one from the community has the report.</p> <p>Ma Da, Pollution Control Program Director, Nature University</p>
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sons learned in each respective field to policymakers. What has also changed among the 13 alumni European organizations is their perception of what can be called a Chinese civil society. It seems the time is ripe to channel these insights also into the High-level-People-to-People dialogue schemes.

When Stiftung Asienhaus first applied for funding to support an NGO internship exchange program in 2005, doubts were much greater. At that time, headlines in European newspapers were filled with biased China-bashing images, and there were doubts about an emerging “civil society” in China. Still, in 2006, the EU-China Summit decided to set up a *Civil Society Roundtable*. It was established in June 2007 in Beijing but renamed for unknown reasons into *EU-China Roundtable*.¹ The roundtable claimed to act as an advisory body to the EU Commission, the parliament, and the Council of Ministers.

In 2010, the general attitude towards civil society and NGOs changed substantially. With EuropeAid’s new call for proposals on the topic “EU-China Civil Society Dialogue” beginning in February 2010, Brussels suddenly embraced the term civil society and wanted to “support the consolidation of a structured ongoing dialogue between European and Chinese civil societies”.² The development of a healthy civil society was seen as an essential precondition for developing the fundamental element of a democratic culture, one reason the EU decided to spend money on civil society dialogue programs.³

The concepts of these dialogue programs were very much unidirectional with Europe as teacher and China the student. The Chinese side supported that idea during the initial process of opening up to NGOs: Short study trips to Europe or the invitations of individual Chinese activists had already been ongoing since the 1980s.⁴ The term civil society was accepted by the political elite after the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and has developed since then as a top-down controlled NGO civil society. Going forward, the Chinese government was eager to employ the term civil society, adding a specific Chinese connotation which highlights the role of an ally in fighting for the implementation of state regulations (for example, lobbying against local state actors and polluting fac-

tories). Ma Jun, head of the famous Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs (IPE), very clearly stated: “We are working very closely with the government. We republish their documents and help the government to find the locations of the polluters.” In his famous anthology *Democracy is a Good Thing*, Yu Keping high-

“It was great to get a firsthand understanding of how things work within EU circles. Also very interesting to see how much China is on everybody’s agenda in one way or another.”

*Christopher Dunn (Twiner 2014),
Global Environmental Institute, Beijing*

lights: “Although the CCP and the Chinese government have tried to increase the independence of CSOs [Civil Society Organizations] and have repeatedly issued documents stating that officials in party and government departments may not hold leading positions in civic organizations (...), government dominance of civic organizations remains a prominent feature of China’s civil society. (...) Compared with their counterparts in Western countries, China’s civic organizations (...) are nor entirely independent nor voluntary.”⁵

Despite fundamental differences in the development of self-organized interest groups and civil society in Europe and China, we can observe that during the last 25 years there have been very dynamic developments of all kinds of self-organized interest in China: from sustainable agriculture advocacy groups to environmental protection and labor rights associations.

Building EU-China NGO partnerships

Stiftung Asienhaus’ China program has been involved in EU-China civil society dialogues since 2008.⁶ In 2009, when we organized our first field trip to South China, both participants from Europe and China pointed out: “What we really need would be a kind of internship program for NGOs.”

Previous civil society projects have shown that the fundamental structures to building partnerships between European and Chinese NGOs have yet to be established.

First, there are still very few European NGOs with “China reference”, although awareness of how important China

“There’s an environmental movement in China?”

(<http://projects.thestar.com/chinas-generation-green/#foodScandals-anchor>)

is for NGOs in Europe is growing. Likewise there has been only very limited contact between Chinese and European NGOs, in part due to the language barrier.

Third, there are many stereotypes and great skepticism governing the NGO sector in China and Europe. On the European side, there is little to no knowledge on social change dynamics and NGO development in China. This lack of knowledge has created the image of a totally state-controlled Chinese civil society. All the activities and organizations which do not match this image remain hidden to most people. This has led many to have the feeling that China is “Pandora’s box”: “I can imagine that for many NGOs it feels like opening Pandora’s box: China is such a complex and big issue. It feels like you have to be such an expert and one needs really good basic knowledge to find one’s way. To put it simple: in smaller countries with fewer language barriers, like Cambodia, it is much easier.” Roman Herre, FIAN⁷

On the Chinese side, we can find very similar stereotypes and prejudices. In one of our dialogues, a Chinese NGO representative said: “My observation is that the European organizations’ work is often aimed

at influencing government policies while the Chinese organizations are more focused on point-to-point charitable support and guidance for public at the community level.”⁸ Their image of European NGOs was often dominated by the appearance of major European aid agencies, foundations, and international organizations that have a local branch in China.

Replacing these stereotypes and clichés with realistic understanding requires exchange and personal encounters. During the dialogue programs previously mentioned, it was confirmed that more important to Chinese NGOs and associations was skill development rather than financial advancement. These skills include not only project management skills but also information regarding the work of NGOs in other regions of the world.

All these facts show the enduring necessity of such an exchange program like that of NGO twinning.



Civil Society Dialogue on Labour Rights Bonn 2011 (Cooperation Stiftung Asienhaus/Sun Yatsen University Guangzhou)

Professional program design for good results

These six years of dialogue programs not only created rich experiences in the design, challenges and management of such programs but also offered the opportunity to build strong networks among our partners from China Development Brief and China Dialogue. The civil society dialogues helped to lay the groundwork for the start of NGO twinning. They helped to raise interest in China and Europe, identify potential topics for collaboration, and offered the opportunity to build a unique topically-structured database consisting of both European and Chinese organizations.

Drawing on these experiences, we designed a program that took into account the specific needs and conditions of NGOs in the respective regions.

Clear aims

With the launch of this first-of-its-kind exchange program, Stiftung Asienhaus and the Robert Bosch Stiftung aim to fill a gap in an important area of social development and build strong relationships and mutual understanding on both sides.

The NGO twinning project is embedded in a long-term program of exchange and partnerships between civil society organizations from Europe and China.

The explicit aims of twinning include building strong partnerships, surpassing the stereotypes mentioned

“Overall, the twinning program implemented by the Stiftung Asienhaus through the support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung is a wonderful opportunity for members of the civil society of the world’s two largest economies to interact with one another”.

Alex Luta (Twinning 2014),
Sandbag Climate Campaign

“Despite successful German-Chinese projects, organizing cooperation and exchanges always pose a challenge: language barriers, lack of knowledge of the structures and ways of working in the other country, logistical challenges, and finally the regulatory differences between the two different political systems presumably scare many away from initiating cooperation projects. However, the main obstacle for Sino-European cooperation remains the lack of opportunity to come into contact in the first place. (...) In this respect, the Twinning Program offered a unique opportunity.”

Akim Walta, Berlin Masive on his
Twinning exchange experience in 2013

before, and gaining further knowledge of the work of citizens’ organizations.

The clear aims of our NGO twinning program are therefore to:

Train ambassadors for a peaceful future

The participants will become multipliers, ambassadors of participation concepts and more effective ways of getting involved in social, ecological and political developments in both regions.

Chinese and European NGOs will get important insights into general concepts of civil society development and public participation. They will be provided with important information on environmental and social topics in each respective country.

Cross-regional EU-China civil society networks

The twinning program often establishes initial contacts between NGOs of both societies and strengthens network-building and alliances between Chinese and European organizations. With China’s growing international importance, a long list of global issues cannot be tackled without the involvement of the world’s most populous nation. From climate change, environmental protection, fair trade and production to sustainable tourism, European and Chinese civil society organizations have a lot of common work themes, but European NGOs often lack access to information on engagement

in Chinese civil society. The exchange fellows will be able to establish broad networks with people working on similar issues.

Capacity-building

Chinese and European NGOs will get important insights into each others' working methods – the different working styles, development of the organizations, project design, public relations, and best practices. They will be provided with important information on environmental and social topics in each respective country. The program includes six seminars for capacity building and knowledge transfer. Here, the participants will also have the opportunity to exchange opinions concerning questions of sustainability, questions of social and ecological justice, good governance, the participation of civil society groups, or global debates on a sustain-



Providing information on each region's civil society during workshops is a key aspect of the Twinning

able and just future. The exchange program supports professionalization and internationalization and enables organizations from both regions to develop joint visions for a better future.

Better mutual understanding

Through the exchange, mutual prejudices and stereotypes will gradually be substituted with a more balanced assessment of realities. European exchange participants will gain a better understanding of the opportunities and problems in China's civil society. Chinese exchange fellows will obtain a better understanding of civil society structures in Europe and of the role and functions of non-profit organizations in the region.

Participants from both regions may also develop new perspectives regarding their own country. The NGO exchange will enable the missing information on Chinese developments to channel directly into important multiplier organizations in Europe.

Create long-term partnerships

The exchange enables the organization to establish new partnerships or continue and deepen already-established partnerships. They gain first-hand experience about the partner organization, establish personal contacts with the staff in the partner organization and can thus establish sustainable long-term partnerships.

2014–2016 Twinning exchange – The program structure in a nutshell

The EU-China NGO Twinning program is an exchange program for the staff of European and Chinese NGOs. It aims at establishing sustainable partnerships and cooperation between non-governmental or non-profit organizations.

In the context of the EU-China NGO Twinning program, 14 European and Chinese NGOs working on similar thematic focuses were paired up as “twinning-partners.” In 2014, seven exchange fellows working for European NGOs and seven fellows from Chinese NGOs were given the opportunity to work and study for four to eight weeks in their partner organization in the other respective region.

The program moreover foresees that each twinning partnership designs a joint project for concrete collaboration.

Seminars and workshops

The exchange program provides for three workshops for each group of exchange fellows: A preparatory workshop for the stay in the respective foreign country, an on-site training/capacity building workshop on each region's civil society as well as a reflection seminar at the end of the exchange period.

The thematic workshop on Chinese civil society for the European participants took place in Beijing in September 2014. The capacity-building workshop on Chinese

civil society for the European participants was organized in Berlin in October 2014.

The workshops additionally functioned as an opportunity for all exchange fellows to get to know each other, share their experiences among themselves and with a broader audience, and position their working areas in a broader perspective.

Capacity-building workshop in Beijing, September 2014⁹

On September 25, the 2014 NGO exchange capacity-building side seminars started off with a seminar on advocacy in Chinese civil society in the Beijing NGO café “Swanport”. It was also the first occasion for most of the EU-China NGO exchange participants to meet as a group.

A broad audience of NGO representatives listened to presentations on different advocacy work approaches adopted by Chinese NGOs, a newly developed web-based approach on public participation in environmental impact assessment, and the work of Chinese NGOs on Climate Change.

Development of Chinese civil society advocacy work

Guo Ting from China Development Brief first gave an introduction on historical developments within Chinese civil society. According to CDB’s findings, within the past ten years, Chinese NGOs gradually widened their approach from focusing on awareness to actively



Listening to Guo Ting’s presentation on Chinese NGO’s advocacy work

lobbying for improvements in government policy. Advocacy methods have diversified, now also including networks, social media, impact litigation, performance art and petitions. Moreover, NGOs have undergone sectoral specialization, and they have also formed nationwide topical networks to coordinate their work. Despite the positive changes, civil society activities still take place in a political space that renders NGOs to choose their topic areas very carefully. Legally sanctioned issues (such as HIV and the sex industry or confronting state-owned enterprises) are considered high risk, as well as confrontational events that draw too much attention.

Public Participation Environmental Impact Assessment

Xiang Chun, managing director of the Chongqing Liangjiang Voluntary Service Center introduced his organization’s impressive web-based database platform and app which allows users to submit tips on polluters. As a web-based network for public participation in Environmental Impact Assessment, Liangjiang has launched an internet portal which allows users from all over the country to locate sources of industrial pollution. They can upload descriptions of the time, location and pollution sources, share photos, video clips and maps. Liangjiang’s group of environmental experts will then verify the materials and forward the cases to media and relevant official departments for further investigation. The website also informs users on the management status of the cases when they are uploaded. All information on polluting production plants is utilized and visualized on a map of China.

Chinese Civil Society on Climate Change and Energy

Li Ang, working for Friends of Nature in China, introduced the role of Chinese NGOs in the area of Climate Change in her presentation.

China overtook the US as the world’s number one carbon dioxide emitter, and Chinese Civil Society is invigorating their involvement and role in the mitigation of climate change impacts as well as in advocating emission reduction and climate change targets. Chinese NGOs have adopted a domestic approach in mitigation

“One exciting thing about joining the activities of the twinning program is getting to know the other 12 twidders. Among them, Let’s Do It, Estonia left the participant the deepest impression and some cooperation occurred later.”

Mao Da, Nature University

and adaptation to climate change impacts, but are also increasingly active on an international level. As part of NGOs’ domestic adaptation and mitigation work, she introduced several initiatives which target consumers and advocate the usage of energy saving devices, or object to the overusage of air conditioners.

Capacity-building workshop for Chinese NGOs in Berlin

On October 20, 2014, the Chinese NGO Twidders gathered at the German newspaper *die tageszeitung (taz)* to hear presentations on developments and challenges European NGOs are confronted with. Four European civil society experts and activists gave papers on an EU-wide agrarian advocacy campaign, on the interdependence of civil society and the freedom of press, on possibilities of lobbying at the EU-level via the European Environmental Bureau and on the clean-air campaign of one of the biggest German NGOs.

The role of press freedom and media for social movements

Sven Hansen, the taz’s Asia specialist opened the workshop with a paper on the role of press freedom and the media for social movements.

In China, the linkage to media is crucial for NGOs, especially as new media has helped citizens to gain a public platform for their concerns. Therefore journalist Sven Hansen’s elaborate presentation on the German media landscape’s development and establishment of the alternative newspaper “taz” was of great interest to the Chinese Twidders. Mr. Hansen explained that the newspaper was less a tool for civil society, but as a unique cooperative that is owned by its readers, it depends instead on civil society and a desire for independent reporting.

Successful advocacy campaign as role model for Chinese NGO activists

Jochen Fritz reported on the development of *meine-landwirtschaft.de* (a Europe-wide campaign in favor of farms and opposing an agroindustry) campaign and their difficulties and their successes thus far. Mr. Fritz was one of the organizers of the “Wir haben es satt” Congress in Berlin in early October 2014, where three Chinese Agrarian activists participated. Their advocacy campaign represents an alliance of different NPOs/NGOs who are fighting against industrialized agriculture.



Capacity Building workshop on European Civil Society in Berlin in the cooperative-owned newspaper “taz”



2014 Twinning participants, 2013 alumni and representatives of interest groups at reflection seminar in Berlin

Organizing Europe-wide

In her presentation, Alison Abrahams from the European Environmental Bureau introduced the advocacy and communications work of her organization. With 140 member organizations in 30 countries, the Brussels-based EEB functions as an umbrella organization for European environmental NGOs, lobbying for environmental justice, sustainable development and participatory democracy on the EU-level. Ms. Abrahams introduced the EEB's advocacy work. They utilize publications and high profile public events, but also try to lobby directly with stakeholders.

Fighting air pollution – a hot topic in Europe and China alike

The Deutsche Umwelthilfe (engl. "German Environmental Aid") is an independent non-profit association focusing on protecting nature, the environment and consumer rights. Ms. Grass introduced their Europe-wide campaign "Soot-free for the Climate," which they are aligning in cooperation with several other NGOs from all over Europe. She pointed out that air pollution in China is all over the media, but that actually 80% of European urban dwellers are exposed to air pollution levels that exceed the WHO standards, too. In order to clean

"[...] during the exchange we had a deeper understanding of EU NGOs, and various chances to communicate with new organizations. This way the exchange gave us a bigger platform for Chinese and European NGOs to exchange ideas and push environmental protection."

Zhu Bingcheng, CLAPV

air from pollutants, their campaign focuses on reducing diesel emission from traffic up to 100% by 2020.

Reflection Seminar – opportunity to network with Twinning alumni and actors on EU-Level

The workshop week in Berlin concluded with a reflection seminar titled, "Tackling common issues: Chinese and European NGOs working on bank monitoring, zero-waste, agriculture, chemical safety, climate change, and NGO-training", and took part in cooperation with Bread for the World in Berlin.

During this workshop, the Chinese and European participants of the third round of the NGO Twinning



Visit at the Robert Bosch Stiftung representative office in Berlin

exchange introduced their organizations and common working areas. They also presented the results of their cooperation and reflected on the impact of the exchanges.

In the introduction, Dr. Sausmikat gave a short overview on the development of civil societies in Europe and China over the last century, explaining the roots of the different civil societies as well as different functions.

In a closing panel, Michael Hansmann (Bread for the World, Germany), Kadi Kenk (Let's do it, Estonia), Pieter Jansen (BothENDS, Netherlands) and Michael Bender (Green League, Germany) discussed methods for NGOs lobbying on the EU- and international level.

In addition, four alumni of the 2013 round of Twinning exchange reflected on the sustainability of the program. Dave Carey (Chickenshed) gave a fascinating presentation on all the different activities which are still ongoing with their partner in Hunan. BothENDS and Green Watershed continue their cooperation and even got involved with the new Twinners working on bank monitoring.

The cultural program of the Berlin workshop week included a visit to the Robert Bosch Stiftung's Berlin office, as well as a tour of the German parliament.

Notes

1. The EU is represented by 15 members of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and China by 15 members of the China Economic and Social Council (CESC). The

EESC has 344 members divided into three groups: employers, trade unions and "various interests" drawn from farmers' organizations, small businesses, the craft sector, consumer and environmental organizations, the academic community, family-related associations, people with disabilities and other NGOs. Christa Wichterich, "Participation without influence," in Sausmikat, Fritsche (eds.), *Civil society in European-Chinese relations*, Essen 2010, p. 46.

2. EU-China Civil Society Dialogue, Guidelines for grant applicants, 2010, <https://www.devex.com/projects/tenders/eu-china-civil-society-dialogue/57673>

3. Annette Zimmer, *Civil societies compared: Germany and the Netherlands*, Nomos 2013, p. 8–9.

4. For a reflection on the last 30 years of environmental movement in China see Nora Sausmikat, "Chinese environmental movements: civil society discourse on climate change and environmental protection," in Carmen Meinert (ed.), *Nature, environment and culture in East Asia*, Brill 2013, pp. 197–231, Sam Geall (ed.), *China and the environment*, London: Zed Books, 2013.

5. Cf. Yu, Keping, *Democracy is a good thing. Essays on Politics, Society and Culture in Contemporary China* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), p. 73.

6. For the documentation of all dialogue programs please visit www.eu-china.net. In the first program called "EU-China Civil Society Forum" (2008–2010), Stiftung Asienhaus was one of the leading organizations; in the second, the "EU-China Civil Society Dialogue on Participatory Public Policy" (2010–2013), which was led by the University of Nottingham, the Stiftung Asienhaus was member of consortium. The latter program was aimed at strengthening the role of citizens in public policy making and implementation and consisted of eight dialogue forums.

7. Nora Sausmikat, *Partnerschaften zwischen NRW und China-Die Rolle der Zivilgesellschaft stärken (Partnerships between North Rhine-Westphalia and China-Strengthening the Role of Civil Society)*, Köln 2013, p. 42.

8. An Xin in Sausmikat (Hg.), *Global Concerns – Global Cooperation. How European and Chinese NGOs Can Learn from Each Other*, March 2010, p. 168.

9. All workshop papers and additional information can be found at: <http://www.eu-china-twinning.org/2014/11/chinese-ngos-advocacy-work-report-on-capacity-building-seminar-for-eu-twinners/>

2. Participants, Reports, Achievements

In 2014, the Twinning involved following partner organizations and topics:

Chinese Organization	European Organization	Focus Topic
Mr Chris Dunn/Global Environmental Institute (Beijing)	Ms Wawa Wang/CEE Bankwatch Network (Czech Republic)	Green Banking
Mr Mao Da/Nature University Fund (Beijing)	Ms Jitka Strakova/Arnika Association (Czech Republic)	Chemical Safety
Ms Yang Hongyan/Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center (Kunming)	Ms Luise Körner/Save-our-Seeds (Germany)	Eco-Agriculture and biosafety/GMO
Ms Yue Caixuan/Wuhu Ecology Center (Wuhu)	Anneli Ohvril/Let's Do it Foundation (Estonia)	Zero waste strategies
Ms Chang Tianle/Beijing Farmers Market (Beijing)	Ms Cornelia Kirchner/International Federation of Organic Agriculture (Germany)	Certification organic agriculture(PGS)
Ms Zhu Bingcheng/Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (Beijing)	Mr Alexandru Luta/Sandbag Climate Campaign (UK)	Carbon markets
Ms. Ye Ying/Beijing Huizeren (Beijing)	Antoine Colonna d'Istria/Pro Bono Lab (France)	Probono services, social innovation

The period of stay for the European exchange fellows in China was set for September and October 2014, the reverse exchange took place from October to December 2014.

What follows are the reports on the exchange by the participating organizations and exchange fellows.



CEE Bankwatch Network & Global Environmental Institute

CEE Bankwatch & the Global Environmental Institute focused on monitoring the environmental and social impacts of major Chinese banks' investment projects especially related to the energy sector in southeastern Europe during their exchange. The participants wished to explore different social and environmental risk assessment methodologies that are applied by European and Chinese investment and development banks. They also hoped to gain a better understanding of Chinese investment in European countries, especially in industries with a high environmental and social impact. Another objective was to compare and develop working knowledge on European and Chinese regulations or policies governing energy consumption, investment, environmental measures and the participation of CSOs.

Exchange Topic – Monitoring Chinese Investments in Europe

During the last several years, interest in infrastructure from Chinese investors has dramatically increased in central and Eastern Europe, with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao announcing a USD 10 billion credit line for the



Wawa Wang(CEE Bankwatch) and Chris Dunn (GEI)

CEE region, covering several sectors including energy and transport. Chinese companies and banks have shown keen interest in investing in coal thermal power plants that are proven environmentally damaging, followed by irreversible social impacts. In contrast to western Europe, central and eastern Europe governments are still wedded to old, environmentally damaging forms of energy production, and coal is a particular favorite in those countries which have a domestic supply – Poland, Ukraine, Romania, the Western Balkans and to some extent Turkey.

Through the exchange, Bankwatch aimed to introduce to their Chinese counterpart the coal cases with confirmed and potential Chinese investments and their environmental and social risks, as well as compliance issues with frameworks of legislations. At the same time, they wanted to understand the trends of Chinese outward direct investments and the governmental governance mechanism propelling this development through GEI's rich track record in the issue area.

The GEI aimed to develop a comparative understanding of major European investment banks' lending policies as well as EU regulations and policies governing climate and energy measures, and participation of CSOs in influencing the policies, and existing environmental and social guidelines.

GEI hosting Wawa Wang in Beijing

Wawa Wang visited the GEI for four weeks from September to October 2014.

Objectives

Among my core objectives for the exchange was establishing collaboration with China-based international

CSOs to jointly ensure an effective exchange of information concerning investments by Chinese companies and policy banks in coal projects in Europe. I also aimed to establish direct liaison with Chinese governmental institutions and research branches responsible for assessing Chinese banks' environmental and social safeguards for overseas projects. Moreover, it was planned that I assist in GEI's mapping of the Chinese governance mechanism and institution to advance ongoing campaign efforts.

Main activities and products of the exchange

At Global Environmental Institute's office

For the duration of time, I worked out of GEI's office, where I seized the opportunity to engage interested individuals in peer-to-peer discussion on the observations made on certain Chinese outward investment projects, the environmental and political impacts, how different governmental institutions differ in their roles and responsibility in the given decision-making process, and the behavior and culture of state-owned enterprises, as well as the positions of the Chinese policy banks.

Liaison with other CSOs

One of the objectives outlined in the program was to liaise with China-based CSOs whose advocacy scope includes benchmarking Chinese outward investments in the energy sector and their environmental and social impacts, and active dialogues with companies and respective governmental institutions about ex-ante evaluation and results measured evaluation. A common observation noted in these meetings is the fact these groups share similar frustration in the sense that companies and institutions in question have enjoyed relative invisibility and political mandate backing their investments, hence making the identification of potential threshold for the public or CSOs to access or participate in a constructive dialogue very hard. And once identification has been made, it requires both extensive labor and sweat in trust building before facts can speak for themselves.

Liaising with external stakeholders

Through my meetings with external stakeholders such as experts from industry groups, governmental institutions and financial institutions, I was able to engage in in-depth communication about case-specific risk analysis, and learned about internal evaluation processes required for assessing the feasibility of a project. And in addition, learned what would qualify (or not) as sufficient implementation of the green credit directive. Overall, the in-person meetings enabled me to consolidate all the bits and pieces of information in order to build up a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and stakeholders on the Chinese front. This in turn has given us the rare opportunity to establish channels of communication with them to further our advocacy objectives. Having said that, the experience also led to the acknowledgment that there are stark contrasts in the good intentions that are instilled in the conception and design of various Chinese guidelines that supposedly oversee the financing of Chinese outward investments, and the reality that there's next to zero information disclosure, hence limiting options for the civil society or affected communities to level the playing field.

Benefits, insights and effects of the exchange

Clearly one of my future objectives is to learn better the tone and tactics to take when working with Chinese stakeholders. Major takeaways include:

- nuanced application of tact while working with Chinese stakeholders, which requires more sophisticated narratives, and sometimes to some degree is close to 'beating around the bush';
- extensive research;
- advocacy is not demand-driven but rather "common ground seeking" in establishing liaison and collaboration;
- confrontational campaigning style is self-defeating;
- the political system is not susceptible to public participation or scrutiny, therefore attention from the public or the Third Sector can be perceived as threats rather than opportunities;

CEE Bankwatch Network (Prague, Czech Republic)

CEE Bankwatch Network (Bankwatch) was founded in May 1995 to work on the impact of international finance in the CEE region (Central and Eastern European region). Bankwatch's mission is to prevent the environmentally and socially harmful impacts of international development finance, and to promote alternative solutions and public participation. Bankwatch addresses EU decision-makers and is aimed at influencing their policy for sustainable and climate-friendly development, as well as a stricter monitoring of the energy sector development.

Profile Wawa Wang

Educated in International Relations, Wawa Wang has worked in policy and research in the public sector and non-governmental organizations since 2003. In Ms. Wang's capacity as sustainable finance advisor at CEE Bankwatch, her primary responsibility is to monitor Chinese investments involved in dirty energy projects hosted in Central and Eastern European countries, and devise strategic advocacy plans. Prior to joining CEE Bankwatch Network in November 2013, Wawa Wang worked as a political and policy advisor and lobbyist representing a sustainable agricultural consortium of over 100 European NGOs in front of EU institutions, responsible for legislative advocacy and negotiation. She has also worked as a consultant and researcher for members of the European Parliament, Climate Action Network and Greenpeace.

- 'err on the side of caution' is step one in the warming up exercise when working or being in contact with Chinese stakeholders'
- diverging views on the necessity of coal, hydro and nuclear as energy source: while the EU has its decarbonization target by 2050 and a 20% (and more for some member states) reduction in emissions by 2020, therefore demanding divestment from coal is justified and not a taboo, China has 70% of its energy produced from coal combustion, therefore the campaigning tactics and strategies on energy issues require more a more balanced approach.

CEE Bankwatch hosting Chris Dunn in Prague and Brussels

Chris Dunn visited CEE Bankwatch for four weeks from October to November 2014.

Objectives

My main objectives for the exchange were to increase my knowledge of Chinese investment projects in Europe and the policies/mechanisms European financial institutions use to assess environmental risks in their decision-making. In addition, I also hoped to improve my overall awareness of the actors involved in overseas investment projects in both Europe and China. Finally, to gain an understanding of how a European NGO such as the Bank Watch Network (BWN) operates and achieves success in meeting its goals and to identify any areas where my organization, the Global Environmental Institute (GEI), can learn from BWN and build our capacity.

Exchange Activities and Outcomes

Chinese investment projects in Europe

During the exchange I was able to learn about certain investment projects in Europe that BWN are monitoring and campaigning against (predominantly coal-fired power stations in Balkan countries), along with BWN's strategy and specific work relating to these projects.

This increased my knowledge of Chinese investment projects in Europe and the associated environmental/social impacts, relevant host country laws and development goals, and how other CSOs are working to address the environmental/social challenges. This was useful since my previous work relating to Chinese overseas investments at GEI had been focused on Southeast Asian countries.

"We're really thankful for this rare opportunity to work together both in China and Europe!"

Wawa Wang, CEE Bankwatch

I was also able to learn new techniques to identify investment projects and the stakeholders involved, which can be used in GEI's future research work.

Hearing about the way Chinese organizations operate in Europe and their successes/shortcomings added to my understanding of the way these institutions operate in conducting overseas investment projects.

European Investment Bank (EIB) & how CSOs have successfully shaped its investments and policies

During the exchange I had the opportunity to meet with the Counterbalance Network in Brussels and discussed environmental governance and transparency at the EIB and the role Counterbalance has played in shaping this.

Along with supplementary individual research, this increased my knowledge of related EIB policies/mechanisms and how CSOs in Europe are able to operate within the EU system to gain access to information and influence institutions such as the EIB. There are of course significant differences between how things work and what is possible in this regard in China, but it is useful to draw comparisons with the situation in Europe.

The role of Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) in overseas investment projects

During the exchange I was able to gain an introduction to ECAs and their role in financing overseas investment projects. My exchange partner shared her prior research (some of which was conducted during the exchange with GEI) on China's ECA – China EXIM Bank – and its role in financing overseas investment projects of interest, along with its considerations for environmental and social impacts.

I also took part in a call with ECA Watch to express interest in exploring how China's ECA operates com-

“It was great to get a first-hand understanding of how things work within EU circles. Also very interesting to see how much China is on everybody's agenda in one way or another.”

Chris Dunn, Global Environmental Institute

Infobox

Global Environmental Institute, Beijing

Established in 2004, the Global Environmental Institute's mission is to design and implement market-based models for solving environmental problems in order to achieve development that is economically, ecologically and socially sustainable.

GEI's work currently focuses on the five areas of energy and climate change, biodiversity conservation, trade, investment and the environment, and capacity-building. Although most of GEI's project work is in China, they are also implementing environmental projects overseas. Projects in Myanmar and the Lower Mekong Region focus on the environmental and social behaviors of Chinese companies investing in the region. In addition, GEI has offices in Laos and Sri Lanka working on rural energy and community development.

Profile Christopher Dunn

Christopher Dunn is a program and communications officer at GEI, where he has worked since September 2013. His role involves supporting the work of the Investment, Trade & Environment Program at GEI which focuses on improving the sustainability of China's outward foreign direct investment and overseas trade. Before joining GEI, he studied Mandarin Chinese intensively at Beijing Language and Culture University, and worked as a sustainability consultant in the UK before moving to China in 2012. He holds an MSc in Environmental Management from Cranfield University.

pared to OECD member ECAs, in particular any differences in environmental/social governance and safeguards and what the future direction of China might be in this regard. I also met with ECA Watch in Brussels to discuss issues surrounding the ECAs of China and OECD members in more detail.

These exchanges allowed me to gain an understanding of how ECAs function individually and in relation to each other, including China's ECA – China EXIM bank. I also grasped a sense of the issues between ECAs from OECD member and China's ECA, and how perceptions of China's EXIM bank have the potential to influence

standards of environmental governance worldwide (ECAs from OECD member countries and the Directorate General for Trade of the European Commission are concerned that if they introduce standards at the OECD level, China will become more aggressive in the market). This added another “piece to the jigsaw” of my understanding of how Chinese stakeholders operate and are perceived in relation to overseas investments.

How European CSOs use communications and the media to achieve their goals

During the exchange I held discussions with the media team leader at BWN and communications team leader at Counterbalance, to discuss their related work and how this supports their organization in achieving its goals.

This increased my understanding of how media and communications work can be used effectively to support campaign work in Europe. Some of this will be useful to improve GEI’s media work, though there are differences in how GEI and BWN/Counterbalance use the media to achieve their goals and circumstances in China and Europe. This also increased my understanding of how European institutions such as the EIB respond to the work of CSOs e. g., EIB has a designated

“The exchange was a fantastic and very valuable experience and I’d like to see it continue and become bigger and better each year!”

Chris Dunn, Global Environmental Institute

person to manage dialogue with CSOs, and provided a contrast with the situation in China.

I also learned about how BWN identifies and applies for funding. This increased my understanding of funding circumstances in Europe, in particular the timescales and processes associated with applying for EU funding (GEI has considered applying for EU funding previously but is not familiar with exactly what is involved).

Preparation for UNFCCC COP 20 in Lima

During the exchange, I benefited on numerous occasions from speaking with my exchange partner about her experiences attending COP 19 working for Climate Action Network. Since I attended COP 20 in Lima on behalf of GEI shortly after the exchange (this being the first time I have participated in the UN climate talks), this increased my capacity to plan and make the most of attending such a large meeting in terms of organizing logistics, networking and the negotiation/observer processes.

Arnika & Nature University Fund

Both exchanging organizations Arnika and Nature University have been cooperating on a joint project focused on strengthening the capacity of pollution victims and civil society organizations to increase chemical safety in China. The project was implemented under the umbrella of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN). Within the project, they aim to improve capacities and the abilities of impacted communities and environmental groups for involvement in policy-making; establish networks and collaborative advocacy actions that contribute to building long-term relationships among cross-cutting sectors of stakeholders; and to generate and distribute new data and information about pollution and pollution victims that contribute to the better formulation and implementation of local and national chemical safety policies.

Exchange Topic – Chemical Safety

China is considered one of countries to be facing the most serious problems with industrial pollution that mainly affects the lives of poor and vulnerable communities. As such, it is one of the main target countries for global activities aimed at reducing the sources of pollution that is now clearly a global problem.

The exchange gave Nature University a good opportunity to increase knowledge and gain practical experience with European tools for access to information on environmental pollution and their legislative consequences and to gain experiences with practices of NGOs in communication with authorities.

Arnika, which serves as a secretariat for IPEN's Heavy Metals Working Group and works closely with partners from China made good use of the exchange to improve



Jitka Strakova (Arnika) and Mao Da (Nature University Fund)

knowledge on local specifics that will later allow better anchoring of future projects in needs and priorities of target Chinese communities and local NGOs.

Nature University hosting Arnika in China

Jitka Strakova visited Nature University for 4 weeks in September 2014.

Objectives

I have been working with Mao Da and his organization Nature University over the last two years within the China Chemical Safety Project, including providing my expertise on approaches to monitor chemical safety, but unfortunately I have had only very limited opportunities to explore the specific situation in China. During my time in China I wanted to explore the implementation of, for example, pollution hotspot monitoring, sampling and result interpreting in the cultural environment of China. I also wanted to visit several pol-

Nature University Fund, Beijing

Established in 2012, Nature University Fund is an environmental protection project, organized in cooperation with the Beijing Water Source Conservation Foundation. Their goal is to increase public awareness in the fields of environmental damage, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. A major part of their activities is public education, with lectures, outdoor activities, fieldwork and investigation. Nature University has also developed portable monitoring devices for water quality, air quality and acoustic environment. In addition, they maintain cooperative relationships with laboratories in colleges and monitoring companies, monitoring environmental accidents all over the country, including water pollution, forests damage, steppe destruction, waste disposal, POPs elimination, air pollution, etc. Nature University offers their investigative findings to affected victims and experts as well as to the media.

Profile Mao Da

Mao Da is currently the Pollution Control Program Director at Nature University Foundation. Before joining Nature University he worked for different NGOs, where he initiated China's NGO network for chemical safety and environmental health and conducted research on municipal waste in Beijing. Mao Da holds a Ph.D. degree from Beijing Normal University and a Master's Degree of Environmental Studies from the University of Adelaide, Australia.

lution hotspots and learn more about the day-to-day working environment at Chinese NGOs.

Main activities and products of the exchange

Soil and egg sampling

The preparation for the monitoring and testing of polluted sites and interpretation of the results was the key part of my exchange. In China, when the public

applies to the government for the release of emission data, especially the emission of incineration of dioxin and heavy metals, they are usually refused. Not only the central government but also local governments do not disclose emission data. Independent monitoring then becomes significant. This is why we collected data that can be used for negotiations with companies and governments. We focused on the testing of the concentration of heavy metals in soil and dioxins in chicken eggs. This was a step for the pollution victims to find out about emission levels and their impacts on communities. Monitoring and testing was done in close cooperation with residents in several townships.



Jitka and Mao Da at heavy metal polluted site

A pitch about the Miyun case, where soil was sampled during my stay in China, was elaborated and released at China Dialogue.

Workshop on building a Pollution Victim Aid System in China, Kunming

Over the past several years, when environmental NGOs or activists have intervened in pollution cases in China, they have faced different barriers to protecting victims' rights, calls for polluters' responsibility and remediating pollution harm at the legal and policy level there. Those barriers to Pollution Victim Aid were identified and investigated in the workshop. For example, it was mentioned that in the field of the "right to know", environmental protection bureaus often postpone or reject citizens' request for information applications by requiring so-called proof of qualification. In the field of environmental impact assessment (EIA), the law does not indicate clearly which party (the EIA company or

Arnika Association, Czech Republic

Arnika was established in 2001. The main goal of their Toxins and Waste program is to protect people and the environment from toxic chemicals and promote the use of safer alternatives. In their campaigns, they have successfully promoted the civil right to access information on dangerous substances in the environment. Together with other European NGOs, Arnika has also promoted the adoption of several conventions and regulations on the safe use of chemicals. In addition, Arnika has been coordinating international studies and the monitoring of toxins in food, children's care products and toys.

Profile Jitka Strakova

Jitka Strakova has been working for Arnika since 2005 and is now the international project manager of Arnika's Toxins and Waste Program. In addition to her work in waste prevention and chemicals in products issues, she is also the Coordinator of the IPEN (International POPs Elimination Network's) Secretariat of Dioxin, PCBs and Waste Working Group. Furthermore, she is an Assistant, Lecturer and PhD candidate at the Department of Ecosystem Biology in the University of South Bohemia in Ceske Budejovice.

the project developer) can be held responsible for the errors in public participation surveys. When a victim files a suit, the court can reject the case while not issuing an order stating the rejection, which is illegal. Therefore, the more cases are paid attention to and intervened, the more legal and policy problems for aiding pollution victims are discovered. Although NGOs and activists usually tackle these problems during case intervention, it was helpful to summarize them in a two-day workshop in Kunming resulting in a good resource for future policy intervention campaign and case intervention application in China.

Pollution victims, individual activists, environmental NGOs, lawyers, foundation and MEP representatives as well as technical, medical and human aid experts participated in the workshop. The activity reached the desired stakeholder groups.

A press release about the output of the workshop was elaborated and shared with Chinese media.

Excursions

To better understand the Chinese waste management system, we visited municipal waste incineration plants and waste separation in villages. I learned that waste separation in Beijing is a decentralized system and source of income for the poorest part of population.

Building multi-stakeholder relationships

During my stay in China, we visited the EU delegation in Beijing and informed them about our project. We also visited the Basel and Stockholm regional centers and discussed with them the situation of non-combustion technologies for municipal and hazardous waste destruction. At the national workshop in Kunming, an official from the Ministry of Environment participated in the working group, thus the viewpoint of local authorities was also explored and addressed.

Sampling training

Partner organizations working together under the umbrella of IPEN together launched a project for the elimination of lead in paint in China. Training on the enamel paint sampling procedure and instructions for paint sampling were delivered to the staff of Nature University.

Toxic-free future skillshare

During my stay, IPEN organized international skillshare activities for IPEN participating organizations in Kunming, China. Chinese NGOs were invited to present and share their experiences on campaigns and efforts with regard to persistent organic pollutants elimination. Both Jitka Strakova and Mao Da delivered pres-

"I think that the Twinning program is offering us a very important stepping stone for further collaboration with the partner organization. It was needed to get the insight into Chinese civil organizations' daily lives."

Jitka Strakova, Arnika Association



Testing Lead in Paint

entations related to project activities (strengthening chemical safety in China, Czech, and world-wide) and participated in working groups defining IPEN strategic goals for the coming next three years. Arnika, as host organization of IPEN's Heavy metals and Dioxins Working Group, will coordinate future joint activities in this sense with Nature University.

Benefits and effects of the exchange

Through my exchange from Europe to China I was able to enhance my knowledge of local specifics and problems of Chinese communities affected by industrial pollution as well as gain experience with the practical and legal aspects of the work of NGOs in China.

The exchange contributed to an improved effectiveness of implementation of the China Chemical Safety project and prepared the groundwork for future projects.

Strengthening Arnika capacities

For Arnika, which serves as a secretariat for IPEN's Heavy Metals and Dioxin Working Group and works

closely with partners from China (as well as from other countries) on numerous projects or studies, this was THE opportunity to improve knowledge on local specifics that will later allow better anchoring of future projects in the needs and priorities of target Chinese communities and local NGOs.

Arnika hosting Mao Da in Prague

Mao Da visited Arnika Association in the Czech Republic for five weeks from September to November 2014.

Objectives

During our two-year cooperation with Arnika, I found they are a very organized and professional European environmental NGO, with special expertise in identifying pollution sources, consequent public monitoring and proposing solution plans. Their specialty is exactly what NU aims to achieve in China. I viewed the exchange as a good opportunity to work more closely with them in order to get to know their work. Another

reason for the cooperation was my professional emphasis on environmental impact assessment law and its implementation, as well as waste management, and Arnika also has good practices in these two areas.

Activities

The first week was all spent in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. During that time, my colleagues at Arnika gave me the biggest assistance including logistics and working conditions. During that week, besides getting familiar with the new environment and spending some time in Arnika's office, I also went to Jihlava, a small city in central Czech Republic for a press conference on a local incinerator proposal.

After the trip I continued my work in Arnika's office, with the main focus on our cooperation on a two-year EU project emphasizing assistance to pollution victims and NGO capacity building on chemical safety in China.

Visit to the only municipal solid waste incinerator (MSWI) in Prague

The plant is about 10km from the downtown Prague and located in an industrial area. Such siting means the transportation is relatively convenient and would have a reduced impact on residents. Standing in front of the entrance of the plant, visitors could see clearly the online monitoring data of some main pollutants emitted from the chimney, including dioxin. We were welcomed and guided by an engineer who gave a very detailed introduction of the history, technology, pollution control of the plant, brought us to almost every part of it and answered all questions.

My general impression of the MSWI was: (1) the plant is quite open and transparent, and this is also a result of many years of interaction between the government, NGOs and the general public; (2) the plant is old but has been upgraded many times and is able to meet basic EU emission standards; (3) the waste composition in Prague is very different from that in China, with more high calorific-value waste such as paper and plastics and less food waste; (4) the fly ash disposal may still be a problem, because it is now shipped to a radioactively contaminated site for open dumping; (5) the plant has high energy efficiency because it generates heat and electricity at the same time, which is very rare in China still.



Mao Da at waste incineration plant in Prague

The Aborted Press Conference in Jihlava

As mentioned above, the current relatively good operating condition of the MSWI of Prague is a result of long-term interaction between different social stakeholders. It was a polluter before, but thanks to NGOs like Arnika's involvement, it became better – although not having been shut down entirely as NGOs had requested. However, according to Arnika, incinerators, once established, would pose high environmental and health risks, and have become an obstacle to waste reduction and separation. That is why Arnika is still actively involved in opposing new proposals coming out from other places in Czech.

On October 2nd, three Arnika colleagues took me to the city of Jihlava. The purpose of the trip was to hold a press conference opposing a local incinerator proposal. I was also invited to present on China's grassroots anti-incineration movement.

Surprisingly, when the beginning of the conference was approaching, no journalists showed up. When searching for an explanation, we learned that the local left-wing party politicians had just taken a politi-

cal stance to oppose the incinerator proposal raised by the current government, and used that stance for their election campaign. Therefore, in such a sensitive moment, any independent media would avoid attending an activity that may contain strong party interest, in order to show their neutral attitude. Although this meant I missed a chance to learn how environmental NGOs run press conferences or media activities in Czech and introduce the Chinese situation, I instead had a chance to observe the deeper part regarding the relation between environmental campaigns, politics and media in Europe.

Petition for Waste Charge Reform

Arnika is aware that if there were no incentives for preventing waste generation and for waste separation, the anti-incineration campaign would not be successful. That is why its Toxics team has proposed a scheme to reform citizens' payment for waste management services. Basically the proposal is calling for a "generator pays" principle, which means that households generating more waste will pay more for the waste collection and disposal fees. Arnika's staff has been making great efforts to collect citizens' endorsements to this proposal petition.

On 18 October, I went with two Arnika colleagues to join an outdoor activity in a suburban community of Prague. That activity consisted of variety of games for children and their families to enjoy nature and take physical exercise. Arnika was invited to set up a booth there to conduct environmental education, such as plant recognition, waste separation and nature book selling. The two colleagues also showed their petition letter for waste charge reform to every interested adult visitor and invited her or him to sign and support. I had the impression that visitors who stopped and listen took the petition issue very seriously. Before signing

it, most of the visitors wanted to know more details of the letter and decide whether they should jump in or not. To a Chinese campaigner, this process might look a bit "slow", but who could deny that the slow process would make a difference in the end?

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Due to my own work in China, I have been paying attention to household hazardous waste (HHW) management in Europe in terms of its regulation and real situation. During my time in Europe, I noticed that in both Prague and Berlin there were convenient drop-off

"I think this is a wonderful project!!"

Mao Da, Nature University

facilities for mercury florescent lights and portable batteries in public spaces, which showed that the channel for these HHW exists.

Workshops, Networking and Synergies

One exciting thing about taking part of in Twinning program is getting to know the other 12 Twinners. Among them, Anneli Ohvril and her colleagues from Let's Do It, Estonia left me with the deepest impression and we even agreed on some cooperations that occurred later. From December 4–6, 2014, with the support of Bread for the World Foundation and Tetrapak, China Zero Waste Alliance (CZWA) organized a three-day annual conference in Shanghai, where Anneli introduced her organization's projects to about 40 CZWA members. Apart from continuing our partnership with Arnika, maybe, in the near future some similar waste clean-up activities and cooperation with Let's Do It will take place in China.

Save Our Seeds & Pesticide Eco Alternatives Center

The principle topics of this exchange were sustainable agriculture, food safety and agriculture policies. The participants not only wished to develop joint solutions for global issues through comparing and sharing different cases, they also aimed to build a communication mechanism for European and Chinese farmers for the purpose of experience sharing.

Exchange Topic – Small-scale farming

The overall goal of the exchange was for both organizations to obtain a better understanding of small-scale farming in both regions. One of the more concrete objectives was to introduce S-O-S's 2000 m² project in China. The educational project aims at showcasing 2000 m² of arable land and the farmers working on it in different countries. During her stay in Germany, Hongyan translated the 2000 m² website into Chinese. During her stay with PEAC in China, Luise Körner was introduced to a large number of rural communities in the countryside of Yunnan Province where she presented the project and its aim to establish an "experimental" field on Yunnan's country side to a broader audience.

Save Our Seeds hosting Yang Hongyan in Berlin

From September 29 to October 27, 2014, Yang Hongyan stayed with Save Our Seeds in Berlin.

Twining overview

During her four-week stay in Germany, Yang Hongyan stayed at SOS to go deeper into an agriculture project named "2000 m²," an educational project covering



Twinner Yang Hongyan (PEAC) and Luise Körner

issues related to food safety, biodiversity, agriculture policies, and more. In addition, she visited around 16 NGOs, research institutes and farms in total and got to learn about agriculture development, agriculture policies, and relevant movements by NGOs, institutes and farmers as well. The exchange not only provided the opportunities for PEAC and SOS to obtain a better understanding of small-scale farming in both regions, but also promoted communication and exchange among all participating organizations and provided the platform to get to know and link to other NGOs, people in the government sector and research institutions.

Visiting small-scale farmers in Germany

It was a great opportunity to visit farms and speak directly to farmers during the visits to learn more about their lives and agriculture development in Germany. I was initially impressed that farmers in Germany indeed do have quite big-scale farm land on hands. Secondly, I was surprised that farmers in Germany are satisfied with their life and proud to be a farmer. One farmer's daughter gave up her work as an engineer with a high

Save Our Seeds, Germany

Save Our Seeds (S-O-S) was created in 2002 by the Foundation on Future Farming (Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft, ZSL). Their first campaign was to ensure zero tolerance for the contamination of seeds with genetically modified organisms (GMOs) at the European (EU) level, thus protecting conventional and organic seeds from GMO contamination. From then on S-O-S started several other projects dealing with the issues of genetic engineering, sustainable agriculture and food production.

Profile Luise Körner

Luise Körner started to work at SOS and “Meine Landwirtschaft” in 2012 in various capacities as an organizer and project manager. Previously, she studied at Berlin’s Humboldt University and worked in the film and photo business. She is presently responsible for the 2000m² project, its website and social media, as well as the experimental field in Berlin, which was launched in March 2014. In addition, Ms. Körner is an editor of the ARC2020 website.

Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center (Kunming, China)

The Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center (PEAC) was established in 2002. The organization is dedicated to reducing the pollution and harm caused by chemical pesticides with the purpose of protecting human health and the environment, achieving sustainable development through pesticide risk education and through the collection, extension and advancement of eco-alternatives and policy recommendations. Their core program is to conduct community-based pesticide risk monitoring, pesticide risk education and policy advocacy.

Profile Yang Hongyan

Yang Hongyan currently holds the position of Executive Director at the Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center. She has been working with PEAC for over 5 years. Her work mainly focuses on pesticide campaigns and she has accumulated rich experiences related to pesticide risk monitoring, public education, policy advocacy and promoting the practice of ecological agriculture.



Hongyan with famous filmmaker Valentin Thurn and other activists at a gleaning action

salary and went back to the farm to work the land. It was totally different from my experiences in China where farmers don’t like that role. Agriculture in Germany seems to be mostly machine-based. But in China, especially in the Southwest, farm work more relies on manual labor. Farmers in the Southwest of China turn up the soil by the hoe, harvest by a sickle, or by hand.

Overall Impression and Future Plans for Cooperation

It was a busy, but indeed a quite fruitful and interesting exchange trip. We worked with small farmers directly, but we think farmers in both regions are scientists on the farm field. They have accumulated a rich farming culture and environmentally- friendly farming systems. It is of great importance to build a platform for communication and experience exchange between farmers in both regions as exchange would be the most powerful driving force for awareness-raising and action change. Promoting mutual learning between farmers in both regions would be helpful for the promotion of the sustainable development of agriculture in China and Germany.



Luise and the PEAC team

In short, the EU-China Twinning exchange program provided the opportunities for PEAC and SOS to obtain a better understanding of small-scale farming in both regions; promoted the establishment of trust-building

“The EU-China Twinning exchange program provided opportunities for PEAC and SOS to obtain a better understanding of small-scale farming in both regions; promoted the establishment of trust-building relations, alliances and cooperation between PEAC and SOS and promoted communication and network building between Chinese NGOs.”

Yang Hongyan, PEAC

relations, alliances and cooperation between PEAC and SOS and promoted communication and network building between Chinese NGOs. Furthermore, the communication and exchange between both sides enhanced the global perspectives on small scale farming and contributed to the organization’s capacity-building.

PEAC hosting Luise Körner in Kunming

Luise Körner visited PEAC in Kunming from October 29 to December 2, 2014

Twinning overview

Luise Körner coordinates the 2000 m² project at Save Our Seeds. One of the project’s aims is to show 2000 m² of arable land and the farmers working on it in different countries. During her stay with PEAC in China, Luise Körner was introduced to a large number of rural communities in the countryside of Yunnan Province through numerous field trips. With the help of PEAC’s staff she was able to find three female farmers who agreed to rent out part of their land to establish the 2000 m² project in Yunnan. PEAC provided translations for each field trip, which allowed her to have conversations with farmers and the people in the rural villages. These experiences and learnings were impressive and shared via the 2000 m² website. [*1] During her stay in Germany, Hongyan Yang had already translated the 2000 m² website into Chinese [*2]. Therefore, a tool was provided to present the project and its aim to establish an “experimental” field on Yunnan’s country side to a broader audience.

At PEAC’s office

What’s more Luise Körner had a chance to work together with staff at PEAC in their Kunming office. Through this, she achieved a true insight into the way an NGO in China operates. From bigger hurdles such as fundraising and dealing with only little governmental support, to the smaller ones such as regular power



Farmer Xingmei Long with the Save Our Seeds flag – PEAC and Save Our Seeds will tell the story of her life as a farmer in a joint project.

blackouts and water cuts. The brightest parts certainly were the farmers' market which is organized by PEAC in cooperation with other organizations and their project work with students and children. The latter led to an inspiration to cooperate with the "school and genetic engineering" project co-initiated by Save Our Seeds. The materials could be translated, complemented and used in both languages.

Food and Farming here and there – approaches to empower producers and consumers

Being part of the PEAC team, Luise Körner was not only allowed to experience PEAC's daily work, but also to make colleague friends rather than business contacts. For future collaborations this presumably will be highly valuable. What came up also through the experience of the Twinning program was the notable differences in the situations of Chinese and German farmers. Hongyan Yang and Luise Körner had longer discussions about what it means to be a farmer in their home countries and how to advocate for small-scale farming as an NGO. The plan is now to build awareness for the situation of small-scale farmers on the one hand. On the other hand, PEAC and Save Our Seeds want to empower citi-

zens in both countries to make their choices when it comes food and farming based on the knowledge provided. An ongoing exchange via the websites of PEAC and Save Our Seeds will help to promote this.

Future plans for cooperation

The 2000 m² experimental field is just being established. It gives both organizations a precise task and a platform to exchange stories, photos and knowledge on a regular basis. Hongyan Yang met with several bigger organizations and grassroot groups to make contact for future collaborations. If requested, Luise Körner will be happy to help set up contacts and cooperation partners for PEAC in Germany. Luise Körner is currently working on articles about the 2000 m² project cooperation in China for other formats such as the German Food Assembly. She also will speak at the Chinese-

"Through this I achieved a true insight into the way an NGO in China operates."

Luise Körner, Save-our-Seeds

German students meeting this March in Munster about the situation of Chinese NGOs and hold a workshop there on the possibilities and challenges of small scale farmers in China.

Notes

1. Articles about the exchange experience by Luise Körner: <http://www.2000m2.eu/de/unser-kleiner-2000-m%C2%B2-weltacker-china/>
<http://www.2000m2.eu/de/kleinbauerliche-landwirtschaft-china-jeder-quadratmeter-zahlt/>
<http://www.2000m2.eu/de/vielfalt-statt-monokulturen-wie-ein-kleinbauer-china-sein-dorf-uberzeugte/>
2. The Chinese version of the 2000 m² Website provided by Hongyan Yang, PEAC: <http://www.2000m2.eu/zh-hans/>

Let's Do It & Wuhu Ecology Center

With a common mission to resolve waste pollution, the two NGOs focused on community activities to promote Clean-Up Events, urban/countryside waste management, and activities around waste prevention, reuse and recycling. With the exchange they hoped to gain insight into each others' working environments, strategies and plans. The exchange also involved skill-sharing and training on event organization and waste management best practices.



Anneli Ohvril (Let's Do It) and Yue Caixuan (Wuhu Ecology Center)

Infobox

Let's Do It, Estonia

Let's Do It! was founded in 2008 in Estonia. It is a civic movement to create positive change, locally and globally, by engaging society in actions that bring both immediate and long-term results. Their activities include large clean-up events, anti waste campaigns and educational campaigns. By today, the movement unites teams in 111 countries. They aim to encourage the countries to engage the population in cleanup-activities in order to create a shift in society. One of their goals is to engage at least 350 million people in cleanup-activities by 2018. Let's Do It also works for the implementation of Zero Waste principles in the participating countries.

Profile Anneli Ohvril

Anneli Ohvril has worked for Lets Do It! Since its beginning, she is Head of Global Marketing department and member of the board. In May 2014, she started a new project "Zero Waste Estonia" aimed at making Estonia the first zero waste country in the world and creating a basis that can be a useful model for other countries. Besides LDI she has founded her own NGO which organizes ecological projects in Estonia. Ms Ohvril holds an MBA in Marketing from the University of Tartu.

Exchange Topic – Waste management issues

From littering to illegal disposal of oftentimes hazardous substances, waste management is a vital topic both in Europe and China. This exchange focused in particular on community activities to promote clean-up events, urban/countryside waste management, and activities around waste prevention, reuse, recycling and zero waste principles.

The Twinning was an interesting opportunity for both organizations to compare their strategies, share plans, support each other and get involved in each other's activities.

Let's Do It hosting Yue Caixuan in Tallinn

Yue Caixuan visited Let's Do It in their Estonian headquarters from October 5 to November 10, 2014.

Wuhu Ecology Center, Wuhu. Anhui Province

Wuhu Ecology Center (WEC) was founded in 2008 with one department focusing on waste and one on water issues. The organization focuses on waste management issues in China, waste incineration, water pollution as well as water and culture along rivers. They are also trying to mobilize and encourage the public to participate in different environmental protection activities. Their most recent projects include the China Zero Waste Alliance (short as CZWA) program, waste incineration supervision with Information Disclosure, the Qingyi River program and public environmental education. WEC also collaborates with the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)

Profile Yue Caixuan

Yue Caixuan has been working for environmental NGOs for more than three years. As head of the Waste Department of WEC and operations manager of the organization, her work is focused on waste issues, waste management, and waste incineration issues. In addition she has been working with the secretariat of China Zero Waste Alliance since May 2012, facilitating meetings of the secretariat, collecting work news and experiences from members and producing the CZWA newsletter. Yue Caixuan graduated from Anhui Polytechnic University with English as her major.

Objectives

My main objective to participate in this program was to learn how waste management systems are run in Europe, and how to mobilize people for waste sorting in communities. I also wanted to find out if there were waste management models that can be shared among the China Zero Waste Alliance (short as CZWA) or related laws that could also be promoted in China.

I wanted to obtain a better understanding of Let's Do It!'s "one day cleanup model", how to motivate so many people for joint action and how to change their understanding of civil activities.

Twinning overview

During my stay in Europe, I visited Tallinn and Tartu in Estonia, San Sebastian and Barcelona in Spain, as well as Berlin in Germany. I got insights into the LDI network, got a better understanding of their "one day cleanup model," and participated in the Organic Waste Workshop in Spain. I also had the chance to show our work in China to ZWAE members and the public in Estonia.

The most important knowledge I've got from the exchange to Europe is about their waste management systems. I visited many communities, plants, academics and officers and had interesting discussions with them. I got an overall understanding on Europe's waste management system, as well as a better understanding of the difference between Europe, Estonia and China's regulation on waste management.

At the Let's Do It! Office in Tallinn

LDI was developed from a nationwide clean-up event that took place in Estonia in 2008. They managed to gather 50,000 people and cleaned up nearly all the illegally dumped waste from forests in only five hours. After that great movement, LDI's video of the clean-up has spread to many other countries. People in other countries are planning to copy this movement and clean up their own country, so LDI started to set their goal to clean up the world with the help of other NGOs.

During my stay at LDI, I also participated in their preparation meeting for the annual gathering conference which took place in the Philippines in November 2014; their three-year strategy; a meeting with the LDI marketing manager, Head of HR, international coordinator, coordinator for China, one of their board members, and I also had the chance to participate in their office party with many employees of other NGOs.

Zero Waste Europe's Workshop in San Sebastian, Spain

From October 13 to 15, 2014, the Zero Waste Alliance Europe held an organic waste workshop, which had three parts: skills and knowledge sharing, a visit to zero waste sites and sharing among zero waste members from different countries. Knowledge sharing in the meeting focused on kitchen waste, the whys and hows of composting and case sharing from France and Italy. I also had a chance to share problems in China and

CZWA's work on solving these problems in the workshop.

Visiting zero waste sites was the greatest part for me. I had a chance to visit a local zero waste community, including their composting plant and second hand shop. The Hernani community started their zero waste project in 2010, originally to fight a local incinerator. The community initiated a door to door collection system. A collecting company will come and transport different kinds of waste separately to different plants. They also have two working systems on composting, one within the community, and one for transporting kitchen waste to a composting plant.

Visiting waste pickers in Barcelona, Spain

I was also invited by the organizers of the organic workshop and leaders of Waste Pickers Alliance South Africa to visit waste pickers in Barcelona. Waste pickers in Barcelona mostly come from Africa, they often feel discriminated by local governments. The group of waste pickers aims to unite and have a dialogue with local governments. Waste pickers in every country are mostly vulnerable groups, they are also the groups who deal with waste directly, they may also have great influence on zero waste if well educated.

Getting to know package recycling systems

During my stay in Tallinn, I had a chance to visit Tallinn's bottle recycling system with recycling machines, storehouses, and plants for turning recycled bottles into new products.

The recycling system was built because according to Estonian law all companies have the responsibility to recycle at least 60% of the packaging waste of their products. If they can't meet the standard, they will be fined a great amount of penalty money. With this law, companies in Estonia founded an organization to run recycle systems. The system includes recycling machines in big shopping centers, temporary storehouses, trucks for transportation, plants for dividing different bottles, as well as for the reuse and remaking of new products.

In every shopping center, there's recycling machines for plastic or glass bottles and cans. People can bring bottles to the machine, exchange a ticket for money to



Second Hand Shop at Hernani Zero Waste community

be used in shopping market or customers can press a donate button to support poor children. The machine will scan a recycle mark on the bottle and divide them into three kinds automatically. This system only accepts bottles with recycle mark on it, cans for alcohol are not accepted even if they are the same material. This part puzzled me, as China accepts every kind of plastic bottles and cans, if they are made of recyclable material, they can be recycled.

Estonia has a law on waste stating that every house should sort their waste into kitchen waste, residual, and paper or even more sorts. They will at least have three large garbage cans or recycling containers used for sorting. People have to pay high fees to the collection company based on a household's waste volume. That also means that if they are collecting bottles and bring them to the recycling system, they can get money back and save the waste collection fee. This clearly motivates people to recycle. But the system is still facing the challenge to get more people to participate. What's good is that 94% of bottles have been collected by the machines and they already have 850 recycling sites all over Estonia. Nearly all the companies meet the government's standard of 60% package waste being recycled. The government also plans to have stricter standards in the future.

China and Estonia have quite a different situation in terms of recycling. China has millions of informal buyers and huge plants for recyclable materials to deal



At the Let's Do It office

with all different kinds of waste. People don't have to pay high waste fees and they don't need to bring recyclable materials far away to recycle; recycling machines like those in Estonia would be useless. But the one thing we can and should learn from this system, is that the government should push companies' duty to recycle their own product waste, especially plastic package. In that situation, companies will be more concerned about the design of package for easier recycling.

Plant for Plastic package waste

I also visited a plant for plastic package waste. The plant buys mixed and even dirty plastic from Estonia, Sweden and Germany. Their technology is simple but valuable: after gathering all the mixed plastic and cutting it into small pieces, the pieces are then transferred into a big boiler, melting them into liquid. This way they can produce plastic boards that can be used as floor panels or even chairs and tables. The good part of this technology is that it doesn't need any washing of the plastic, and the plastic does not even need to be pure. This is very important as no washing means no liquid pollution will be produced during the process.

Learning about waste related policy

I was able to listen to the Estonian Environmental Minister's lecture on her view on different environmental issues and their future plans. She clearly showed the government's appreciation of the environment, and

their awareness of the importance of fewer cars for the climate change, or the waste problem of oil shale. I also asked several questions about monitoring plants and their plans for waste sorting. One parliament member in the environmental sector even showed me their plans for waste management.

Achievements

The Twinning program has shown me different sides of waste management in Europe, including the laws, policies, communities, recycling systems, organic composting plants, recycle plants, waste incinerators and so on. I also found that different administrative systems and social habits lead to a big difference in China's and Europe's NGO action. These differences, especially laws, policies, waste incinerator systems and difference of waste components, will be a good contrasting basis for making suggestions to the Chinese government to promote a better system. Waste management systems in Europe, especially recycling systems, will inspire CZWA with more thoughts on developing a sustainable waste management system.

Wuhu Ecology Center hosting Anneli Ohvril in Wuhu

Anneli Ohvril visited the Wuhu Ecology Center from November 10 to December 15, 2015.

Objectives

My objective in this program was to introduce the Let's Do It! network (113 countries) and the "one day cleanup model" as a tool for changing peoples' minds about trash and illegal littering in China, where I hoped to find a partner/s who starts the same movement there. I wanted to work together with Wuhu Ecology Center (WEC) to start a long-term partnership in order to share know-how and start with common projects. I was also interested in meeting people from China Zero Waste Alliance (CZWA) network, where WEC is a member and one of the leading organizations.

Another goal was to acquaint myself with how the waste handling system in China works, what the challenges, good practices are and what the level of waste sorting habits etc. are. Also, I wanted to find good zero waste practices to share with the world.

Activities

During my stay in China, I visited Beijing, Wuhu, Nanjing, Shanghai and different places in Anhui province (Xidi and Bishan villages, Qíng Yi riverside etc).

Most important during my stay was the networking. I had an opportunity to meet different NGOs, community leaders, opinion leaders and specialists who are working on the topic of waste. It gave me a good overview about the situation of waste handling in China, what the problems and challenges in waste handling and sorting are from the perspectives of the government, communities and the people.

I learned how WEC and CZWA work, and about their goals and strategies to achieving zero waste in China. I got especially good insight into incineration plants and problems that come along with it.

I participated in the Zero Waste conference in Shanghai where there were a lot of presentations about good zero waste practices from China and abroad. This conference was followed by the China Zero Waste annual meeting nearby of Shanghai where I brainstormed with members of CZWA about future plans and activities towards zero waste in China.

I also got the chance to introduce the Lets Do It! network and “one day – all together” cleanup model. I gave 5 official presentations during my stay in China: in Wuhu, in Shanghai, during the CZWA annual meeting, and in Beijing.

At the Wuhu Ecology Center's office

WEC, founded in 2008 has two main focus points: waste and local environmental issues. During my stay in Wuhu. I became familiar with their work on a daily basis, learning about their most important projects, and also about the problems and challenges in their work.

WEC is monitoring incineration plants in China with the aim of increasing peoples' awareness about incineration and its impact on the environment and people's health. The monitoring of incineration plants until now has been very weak in China. WEC administrates a homepage (www.waste-cwin.org) where all the data about the incineration plants in China can be found.

There were more than 300,000 visits on the page in the year 2015. WEC is also promoting the government to release a new emission standard for waste incineration. I learned that in the cities where local communities are against the incineration the readiness to start with waste sorting is much higher. The aversion to incineration plants is sometimes a good starting point for introducing a waste sorting system.

Another of WEC's interesting projects deals with Mooncakes, aiming at reducing the size and amount of packages.

WEC is also playing the leading role in the China Zero Waste Alliance (CZWA), finding common goals, organizing annual events, and communicating activities among members.

Action man walk/River walk by Qing Yi

I took part in a one-day action called “The Action Man/River Walk (the same word has a double meaning in Chinese).

Qing Yi river is a tributary of the Yangtze river. The Action Man/River Walk is a project aimed at increasing awareness about the importance of protecting this river from pollution, reconnecting people with nature and protecting the local culture. WEC organizes The Action Man/River Walks every month. These actions consist of day-long walks among river and additional group activities such as bird watching, introducing local plants and insects, visiting local villages and people and observing their everyday work.

On a daily basis WEC monitors the river and its condition with the help of local groups and cooperating with local media about polluters (more on their homepage <http://www.qingyijiang.org/>).

The goal of WEC is to build a homepage for this river covering culture, nature and pollution, for example the names of plants, birds and animals and where they can be found, people and their arts and crafts, places of pollution etc.

What I found is that there were many illegal dumpsites along the river, littered by local residents because there is no waste handling system in the countryside. So far, WEC hasn't picked up any trash during their



Illegally dumped waste along the Qing Yi river

walks because they believe it has to be done by local people. We were discussing the possibility of organizing clean-ups near the river together with local communities/villages and inviting urban dwellers to participate as well. These events help to reconnect urban people with nature and introduce a local culture that is on the wane. For village people, it is a possibility to clean up their environment and make them more proud about their homes, stop littering, and strengthen village community.

Presentation about LDI in Wuhu

I held the first presentation on the LDI network and the one day clean-up model in a local community café in Wuhu. In the end, I proposed the audience join the LDI network as clean-up organizer or regional coordinator. The presentation was followed by many questions and an active discussion about possibilities to organize this kind of event in China.

Visiting local communities in Nanjing

We spent two days in Nanjing where we visited local communities and participated in their waste-collecting activities. These communities are pilot project locations where they try to educate people to separate kitchen waste from recyclables and bring them to waste collectors. They collect and separate organic waste, paper, plastic, electronics, metal, and hazardous waste. Moreover, they have implemented a bonus program where people can earn points based on the weight of waste they brought. People can buy different products from the community shop and pay for prod-

ucts with these points. The government is supporting these activities by paying for trucks and the office of the company who is organizing these activities.

The positive side of these actions is fun (something happening in the community), education (you get answers to every question you have regarding sorting waste) and the bonus system (you get boni/money for bringing recyclables). The problem with this kind of action remains the limited time when people can bring their recyclable materials. For the working population, it is difficult to take part, as these actions are usually in the mornings of working days. Monitoring these actions I noticed that there are mainly older people taking part. But more important is to reach the young generation. So, it will be important to sync these actions with a permanent sorting system.

We also visited the office of the company who is handling the recyclables materials and discussed about how to expand sorting habits in China.



Anneli and Caixuan visiting waste collecting activities in Nanjing communities

Meeting with community leaders in Bishan and Xidi village

There is lot of waste lying in around in the rural areas I visited, the reason being that there is no waste handling system in place in villages. Local people are used to simply dumping their trash into the environment. We visited some local villages and met local leaders to find out about the possibilities for changing peoples' minds about the waste and if the LDI one-day cleanup model could be a solution to change the situation in rural areas. Apart from discussing the waste issue we got an overview about the work and projects of differ-

ent leaders and got inspired by their passion to contribute to local community life. One of them is now considering starting a clean-up project in his village.

Zero Waste and low carbon development forum in Shanghai

During my exchange period in China I was also able to attend the Zero Waste conference in Shanghai: two days full of inspiring key-notes and case studies from China and abroad. Participants and presenters included professors of the American college of St Lawrence, the president of the Zero Waste Alliance of Europe, staff of the San Fransisco climate change project and municipal government zero waste project, the director of Shanghai Waste Management Office and many many more.

China Zero Waste annual meeting

The CZWA annual meeting was held on December 6, 2014 on a farm near Shanghai. It was a very intense day full of different workshops about incineration, communication, lobbying and future plans of CZWA. I participated in brainstorming and also had a chance to give a lecture about LDI network, I was introducing a Estonian first clean-up case study and the LDI mission in the world.

Visiting waste sorting communities in Shanghai

We also visited Guangsheng Gongyu community and two other communities in Shanghai who are practicing waste sorting. I got an overview of the beginnings of the projects, what problems and challenges they faced, how it is working now and how it is financed.

I learned that so far every floor in high-rise buildings has had a trash bin, which causes a bad smell and dirty environment, and there was no sorting. Now the pilot communities are having separate buildings outside with different trash bins for kitchen waste, hazardous waste, recyclable waste and non-recyclable waste. There is one community member who is taking care of waste station and helps people to sort the waste. This person got paid based on number of trash bins sent to the recycling centers.

I found it a good idea to clarify on trash bins, where exactly the waste is going for recycling.

Meeting with leaders of Kunshan community in Beijing

While in Beijing, I also had the chance to meet an official from Kunshan community. Kunshan is seen as one of China's leading cities in waste handling and sorting. Kunshan is located in the Yangtze River Delta, which is the most economically developed area in China, and a satellite city in the greater Suzhou region. With a population of 1.647 million (by 2010), Kunshan is grow-

“The Twinning project gave very good overview about the waste situation in China, including waste sorting, littering, incineration and people's habit and insights about that.”

Anneli Ohvril, Let's Do It

ing very fast and there are evident problems between old permanent residents who care about the environment and new-comers who interested more in making money. Funnily, the waste sorting and handling has proven as one effective way to make old residents and new-comers communicate with each other. That practice was a very nice example as to how waste sorting is solving a social problem.

Achievements

The Twinning project facilitated a very good overview about the waste situation in China, including waste sorting, littering, incineration and peoples' habits and insights about that. LDI doesn't just organize clean-ups – a massive clean-up is a tool to change peoples' habit about waste and littering. The Let's Do It! World movement can be seen as a groundbreaker that prepares citizens and communities for zero waste. Therefore it was very important that we understand peoples' behavior and attitude concerning waste, and build a strategy on that.

The most important result of Twinning was a real cooperation between WEC and LDI in order to start a LDI movement in China, starting with organizing a regional or country-wide clean-ups followed by different actions towards zero waste society.

We are looking forward to deeper cooperation in the field of zero waste, to exchange know-how, contacts and organize common projects.

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements & Beijing Farmers' Market

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements and the Beijing Farmers' Market both engage in promoting Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) as an alternative way to certify organic products, one that is especially adapted to small-holder farmers and local markets and as a development tool for organic agriculture and rural communities. They used the exchange as an opportunity to analyze the chances and challenges of implementing PGS in China.

Exchange Topic – Implementation of Participatory Guarantee Systems

In China, many initiatives like BFM that are involved in local and safe food movements feel an increasing need to establish a more formalized system to verify the production methods of the related farms as well as to provide more support to the farmers to improve their practices. For both aspects, PGS has much potential and can provide useful tools. Third-party certification is not an option because it is too expensive and not affordable for the majority of the participating farmers. Even though the term PGS has been discussed before,



Twinners Cornelia Kirchner (IFOAM) and Chang Tianle (Beijing Farmers' Market)

to date there has been little activity to systematically develop PGS.

During the Twinning period, IFOAM and BFM created a fundement to work together and with other stakeholders on the development of PGS and on the promotion of organic agriculture in general (PGS is planned to be combined with other activities, e.g. improvement of organic techniques, seed saving and exchange activities).

Beijing Farmers' Market hosts Cornelia Kirchner in China

Cornelia Kirchner visited the Beijing Farmers' Market for 4 weeks in September 2014.

Objectives

I had several objectives for my time at the Beijing Farmers' Market. First of all, I wanted to get an insight and understanding about the Beijing Farmers' Market and the farmers they are working with. What kinds of farmers are involved in the market? How are they producing the food? How is the BMF selecting the farmers and what kind of relationship do they have? Secondly I wanted to find out through interaction with different stakeholders whether PGS is a feasible system for China and how it can fit in the local context.

Activities and networking opportunities

During the first two weeks, farm visits and meetings with different stakeholders were arranged for me to learn about and understand the local situation. In the BFM community store, which also functions as the BFM office and as a location to organize events and meetings, I had the opportunity to meet many people involved in the movement.



Backbone of PGS: Consumers, NGO activists and fellow farmers inspecting farm near Beijing

In week three, a four-day PGS workshop with representatives from farmers' markets and other short-chain marketing initiatives from all over China was organized. The workshop had the aim to develop a better understanding of PGS among the stakeholders and to discuss practices that are presently being implemented. Benefits and the potential of PGS as well as challenges to its introduction in China were intensively discussed. To me one of the outcomes of the discussion was that PGS has much potential in China, in particular as a development tool for organic agriculture.

I contributed to the PGS workshop by giving several presentations to different audiences explaining PGS. As a result, stakeholders in Beijing as well as potential partners and donors gained a better understanding and increased awareness of PGS.

Media Attention

BFM has received a lot of media attention and our activities attracted some interest. We had a German



Group picture workshop on PGS

Infobox

Beijing Farmers' Market, Beijing

Established in 2010, the Beijing Farmers' Market runs a weekend market, organizes seminars and farm trips and serves as an information hub for sustainable agriculture and food systems. The organization aims to engage consumers and producers in direct trade and ultimately mobilize both producers and consumers to form a sustainable and fair food community. Their mission is to improve the livelihood and health of farmers, contribute to rural development, reduce agricultural pollution, and educate consumers about sustainable and healthy food.

Profile Chang Tianle

Chang Tianle is co-founder of the Beijing Farmers' Market. She coordinates the market and is responsible for the strategic development and public relations of the organization. She advises small-scale farmers on sustainable, responsibility-driven farming.

TV crew (ARD) filming parts of our workshop on September 19, 2014 for the program "Weltspiegel" (to be broadcast October 5, 2014). The Xinhua CNC World English TV Station interviewed me at the market and a documentary filmmaker interviewed us and joined the farm tour (September 10–11) and the first day of the PGS workshop (September 17).

Outlook for continued cooperation:

The Twinning exchange is planned to be the start of a long-term cooperation. BFM, in cooperation with a farmers' market in Shanghai, started to work on the development of some basic PGS materials and procedures and intends to start a PGS trial in Beijing in 2015. Potential donors have been identified. Later on it is planned to support the development of PGS also in other regions in China, possibly as a national PGS network. IFOAM will support the process from afar and is looking into funding opportunities to provide more in-person support in the future. In any case, we are confident that more opportunities will come up in the future to meet again and continue cooperation in person, be it on joint projects or at other occasions.

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, Germany

Founded in 1972, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) is the worldwide umbrella organization for the organic movement. It represents close to 800 affiliates in 117 countries. IFOAM actively promotes the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically intact systems that are based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.

Profile Cornelia Kirchner

Cornelia Kirchner has been working for IFOAM since 2012 and currently holds a position as PGS coordinator and editor of the Global PGS newsletter, managing projects to promote organic agriculture mainly in Africa and Asia. She holds a Master's degree in Japanese Studies from the University of Vienna, and has volunteered on organic farms in Japan and Austria.

Personal impressions

The stay in Beijing with BFM exceeded my expectations. First of all, I was not exactly sure what to expect from BFM and the local farmers. I knew that organic agriculture in China faces many challenges and the situation is not ideal, but I was not sure how these chal-

“The stay in Beijing with Beijing Farmers’ Market exceeded my expectations!”

Cornelia Kirchner, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

lenges are reflected in local initiatives like BFM. When I arrived I found a vibrant, highly frequented market. With the community store BFM has succeeded in creating a meeting place and environment for people to come and exchange ideas. The people around BFM are aware of the problems and challenges they are facing and working actively to find solutions. The popularity of BFM allowed me to meet diverse stakeholders and build many new connections. The establishment of our work plan worked well in maximizing the knowledge I gained during a short period of a few weeks. It was



Media attention for Cornelia at the vibrant Beijing Farmers’ Market

an ideal set-up that allowed some time in the beginning to visit farms and meet different stakeholders. The four-day workshop with participants from all over China was discussion-intensive and allowed me to gain greater insight into the challenges and current issues they face. People were all very interested in the topic of PGS, including consumers and farmers at BFM, actively participating in the discussions. I am also impressed by BFM about their fund-raising capabilities and how well they are connected, including to potential funders and the media. This adds extra confidence that this will become a fruitful cooperation.

Additional information

Apart from BFM, I see good potential for future cooperation with the following stakeholders I met in Beijing:

- Shanghai Farmers Market. JIANG Yifan, co-founder of the market, spent 3 weeks in Beijing and played a key role in the facilitation of the PGS workshop (including translation of the PGS manual). He will be a core person in the management of the PGS development process after the end of the Twinning exchange period together with CHANG Tianle from BFM;
- Oxfam Hongkong as potential funder of activities;
- Partnerships for Community Development (PCD) as potential future partner for PGS and local organic agriculture development activities, in particular in the south of China;
- Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center, fellow Twinners who are working on similar issues, including PGS; and
- Organizers of Farmers’ Markets, consumer cooperatives etc. around China (participants of the PGS workshop).

Sandbag Climate Campaign & Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims

Sandbag and the Centre for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV) collaborated on a detailed analysis of how the trial carbon markets will work in China, looking at available trading data and bringing together media and analysis on the topic for which CLAPV's expertise on Chinese law and Sandbag's knowledge as a carbon market watchdog in the EU was an ideal synthesis. As a concrete outcome, they planned to plot out a structure for how NGOs across China can ensure that China's carbon markets truly help reduce emissions and protect the environment



Twinner Zhu Bingcheng (CLAPV) and Alexandru Luta (Sandbag)

Exchange Topic – Emission trading schemes and carbon markets

CLAPV and Sandbag collaborated on a detailed analysis of how the trial carbon market works in China. We used CLAPV's expertise on Chinese law and Sandbag's experiences as a carbon market watchdog in the EU. As air pollution in China is getting more and more serious, China's government began to establish ETS in some selected areas and cities. Based on this research, we exchanged our experiences regarding climate change and environmental protection policies.

CLAPV hosting Alexandru Luta

Alexandru Luta visited CLAPV in Beijing, China, for four weeks in November 2014.

Objectives

Having closely followed the strengths and weaknesses of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) for nearly six years, Sandbag wanted to use its expertise to help others not repeat the same mistakes it feels that have

Infobox

Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims, Beijing

The Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV) was established in 1998. CLAPV researches on environmental and natural resources and provides free legal consultancy service to pollution victims as well as free trainings for lawyers and judges on environmental law practice.

Profile Zhu Bingcheng

Bingcheng has worked at CLAPV for two years. Her main research areas include energy law and environmental law, currently focusing on oil and gas law. She has conducted five research projects about energy law and environmental protection, including the Research on Legislation on Climate Change and the Research on Legislation of Petroleum and Natural Gas in Background of Low Carbon Economy.

been made in Europe before. The Twinning program enabled Sandbag to connect with some of the stakeholders engaged in several pilot projects similar to the ETS of the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter – China. The exchange also helped Sandbag get a feeling for the scale and outreach of these pilot projects. Among European policy-makers, an often-heard argument for stopping ambitious climate policies is that such an implementation would cause Europe to lose its competitiveness on the global market as other countries do not have any climate targets at all. Witnessing the decisiveness with which some of these projects seem to have been pursued, Sandbag wants to demonstrate that this argument is but a superficial one.

Activities

Because of the technical nature of Sandbag's work, the entirety of the activities undertaken during the November visit to China consisted of study visits and policy-focused discussions with Chinese experts on emissions trading. Sandbag decided to focus on the issues that had proven most critical in the case of EU ETS, i.e. how the schemes gel with other climate and energy policies, how the schemes deal with market imbalances, and how cap-setting and allocation methodologies influence companies' incentives to cut their emissions.

Experts directly involved in the design and operation of ETS pilots

Of the seven pilot ETSs currently running in China, Sandbag was able to interact with experts working on three of them: Beijing, Tianjin and Hubei Province. Sandbag was able to travel to Wuhan in Hubei Province to interact directly with a professional working on designing China's largest ETS.

Consultancies with expertise in environmental economics

Much of the work related to the fine-tuning of any ETS or its interaction with other policy instruments is conducted by specialized consultancies. Sandbag was able to talk not only to ECOFYS, originally a European company that had expanded into China, but also to Chinese consultancies that had developed on their own, such as the Energy Foundation and Sinocarbon. These

Infobox

Sandbag Climate Campaign, United Kingdom

Although Sandbag advocates environmentally and economically effective climate policies with a focus on the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), it understands its mission of global importance and outreach. In-house research allows Sandbag to independently monitor the environmental robustness of the ETS, the distribution of allowances and how key sectors, installations and companies in the scheme are affected. Sandbag is especially keen on controlling the EU's compliance with its 2030 climate targets.

Profile Alexandru Luta

Alexandru Luta is a campaigner and policy analyst for Sandbag Climate Campaign. His work covers contacting members of the European Parliament in Brussels as well as conducting research on carbon markets outside Europe. In the past, he conducted research for the Finnish Institute of International Affairs where he covered the dynamics of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations and Japanese domestic climate and energy policy.

discussions were valuable because they provided the opportunity to ask questions about how well the ETS fits into the wider political economy of climate and energy in China.

Universities and research institutes

A different subset of experts carrying out more long-term and in-depth work on policy matters are academics and fellows working in research institutes. CLAPV, Sandbag's Twinning partner, is based at the China University of Political Science and Law, and has a large staff comprised of lawyers and legal academics. In Beijing, Sandbag was further able to meet with staff from the National Centre for Climate Change Strategy, the State Council's Development Research Centre, and the Central University of Finance and Economics – some of whom we met through the good offices of CLAPV. Finally, during the journey to Wuhan Sandbag we had the opportunity to interact with a legal scholar working at the Zhongnan University of Economics.

Thanks to their academic impartiality and their technocratic approach, this set of actors enjoys a great degree of trust within the central decision-making bodies of the Chinese state, e.g. the State Council, National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), etc. As a foreign NGO, if Sandbag wishes to disseminate its ideas within China, these will probably be the key actors to contact.

Environmental NGOs

As an NGO, Sandbag's natural peer constituency in China are fellow NGOs. Besides CLAPV, Sandbag was able to interact with a number of domestic NGOs, such as the Global Environmental Institute, the Rock Environment and Energy Institute and the Friends of Nature Foundation. These groups were instrumental in shaping Sandbag's understanding of the manner in which NGOs can convey their opinions to the decision-making process and the role that they can play in the wider Chinese society.

"[...] the Twinning program is a wonderful opportunity for members of the civil society of the world's two largest economies to interact with one another."

Alexandru Luta, Sandbag Climate Campaign

In addition to the Chinese NGOs, Sandbag was also able to meet with the National Resource Defence Council, which is originally a US-based NGO. Because of the much larger scale of this organization, it was possible to branch out in the discussion, moving from purely ETS-related matters to the novel policy direction of gradually diminishing the share of coal in China's energy mix.

Non-Chinese entities

Sandbag received invaluable support in reaching out to its first contacts in China from members of the expatriate community, such as the UK Embassy, the EU Delegation and the Global Legislators Organisation. Thanks to the insights received from these organizations Sandbag was able to place the developments in the Chinese policy in a global context, gaining a better sense of the political knock-on effects on the level of the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change.

Ideas for future collaboration and work

The Twinning program provided Sandbag with the first-time opportunity to access statistical data about China. Sandbag will use this data to paint a clearer, more accurate picture of contemporary China for European decision-makers.

After the exchange, we hold some of the mechanisms of China's pilot ETS projects as superior to those of the EU ETS.

Thanks to this exchange, we were able to connect with many highly professional contacts in China. Our network in China has snowballed! We expect close cooperation with many key actors in the future.

Sandbag has decided to launch a Weibo account addressed at Chinese ETS experts. This will provide us with a platform where we can introduce our research on the EU ETS to a broader audience. We are already thinking about inviting Chinese ETS specialists to Europe and bring them together with important European policy-makers.

Sandbag hosting Zhu Bingcheng

Zhu Bingcheng visited Sandbag Climate Campaign in London, United Kingdom, for four weeks from October to November 2014.

Objectives

I came to London with the hope of getting to know as many different NGOs as possible, talking to key actors and sharing with them what I feel are currently the main reasons why China does not yet have a large-scale established ETS. I was particularly curious to learn what they could tell me about the EU ETS – what they appreciated but also what they felt was done wrong or not satisfactory. I was interested in the day-to-day business of European NGOs and how this would differ from what I am already familiar with from my work in China.

Activities

While it was already fun to help preparing Sandbag's yearly report about EU ETS in Brussels, one of the highlights during my stay in the UK was the Skype ses-

sion with Jeff Swart, International Policy Director of the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) which we used for discussion of the current situation of China's ETS pilot projects. I was happy to be able to give a presentation on Chinese Energy Policy at the London Metropolitan University on October 29. The students were extremely interested in my experiences

“The Twinning program helped me understand how environmental NGOs in Europe work. It was great to see how huge their influence on society and politics was”

Zhu Bingcheng, Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims

and opinions, so we had vivid discussions following the presentation. During Sandbag's strategy meeting in Cambridge, I could give some advice on how to best

promote the establishment of ETS in China. The meeting with Clean Air Director Simon Berkett in London seemed to be the promising beginning of a fruitful partnership between our organizations which I hope we can establish next to an already close partnership with Sandbag.

Achievements

The exchange with Sandbag and various other leading European NGOs made me confident that it is possible to establish ETS in China. With CLAPV now having gained many new experiences with and information on the implementation of ETS, I think it is our organization which should push this process forward.

The Twinning program helped me understand how environmental NGOs in Europe work. It was great to see how huge their influence on society and politics was!

Pro Bono Lab & Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center

Pro Bono Lab and Huizeren share the mission of building NGO capacities through community involvement in so-called pro bono consulting missions. These missions help non-profit organizations to strengthen their management and practices in supporting functions such as HR, marketing, strategy, web design, etc. When Pro Bono Lab and Huizeren's leaders met for the first time in San Francisco in 2011 to gain inspiration from Taproot Foundation, the pro bono concept was not yet known in either France or China. Since then, they have continuously strengthened their collaboration and did not hesitate to seize the opportunity to further deepen their relationship through the EU-China NGO Twinning program of Stiftung Asienhaus.



Twinners Ye Ying (Beijing Huizeren) and Antoine Colonna d'Istria (Pro Bono Lab)

Exchange Topic – Social innovation and Pro Bono model

Pro Bono Lab and Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center did their exchange on social innovation models in the pro bono field. They focused on three main objectives: knowledge-sharing on organization-internal issues such as finance management and team development in order to be able to meet the requirements of beneficiary NGOs better; second, promoting public awareness for the concept of pro bono for NGO capacity-building in China; and finally, the establishment of a common international network and connections to NGOs and stakeholders. Each exchange partner was able to participate in summits and nationwide or even transnational meetings, feel and experience another organizational structure and working atmosphere at first-hand.

Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Developmental Center hosting Antoine Colonna d'Istria

Antoine Colonna d'Istria visited Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Developmental Center in Beijing from 9 September to 5 October 2014.

Objectives

My objectives for this exchange as agreed with Huizeren were the following: Sharing knowledge as we think cultural differences are a great source of wealth, communicating social innovation models in the pro bono field to raise public awareness for our work, build up an international network to be better able to spread our ideas and share knowledge globally. In particular, we wanted to work on the following questions: which social needs can we help to solve through pro bono work? How can we organize ourselves more efficiently in order to provide a better capacity builder to benefi-

Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center, Beijing

Established in 2003, the Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center focuses on supporting NGOs and their work in China. Huizeren's current programs range from delivering a comprehensive volunteer training program to managing an innovative Pro Bono program by establishing cross-sector cooperations between corporations and NGOs. In addition, Huizeren tries to create sustainable volunteering working structures in order to benefit local communities, disadvantaged populations and conducts advocacy work to promote a civil society in China.

Profile Ye Ying

Ye Ying started working with Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center in 2008 and is in charge of volunteer training. She has been working with over 1000 public service organizations and has trained over 10,000 volunteers from colleges, companies, government and public service organizations. Before stepping into this role, Ye Ying had begun her career in international travel and studied Human Resources Management at Beijing Normal University. Since 2008, she is Senior Partner of Beijing Wangfu International Travel Co.

ciary organizations? How can we sustainably fund our actions? How can we operate globally?

Main activities and outcomes of the exchange

An overview of Antoine Colonna d'Istria's time in China

The first week was dedicated to activities in the field. We went to Shandong Province to perform a Pro Bono Marathon for a social incubator based in Jinan. Later we went to Binzhou and attended the I-Leadership Summit where more than 100 non-profit leaders were brought together by Huizeren to share on practices and knowledge. The second and third week were dedicated to get a better insight into the internal structure of Huizeren and to

plan common actions such as the Pro Bono Week 2014 and staff exchange for the future. In the last week, my exchange fellows took me to major cultural sites in and around Beijing such as the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and other museums and gardens which I could use to talk with Beijingers about their opinions on volunteering in NGOs.

Realization of the objectives *knowledge-sharing, communication, network-building*

Knowledge-sharing

I participated in various internal meetings on a regular basis. This helped me understand how Huizeren organizes its communication, what kind of human resources Huizeren has access to and which projects it currently is involved in. I accompanied UN Development Program Officers on a field trip. I conducted interviews with several individuals from the Huizeren team, their network and others. This enabled me to introduce our work to a broad audience and get feedback as to how other people think about it. Ultimately, I think this gave me a better understanding of cultural differences and how these affect the day-to-day business of NGOs. Most of these interviews took place around a dinner. Huizeren mobilized a dozen non-profits leaders at the Chaoyang hub so that I had a lot of opportunities to share the pro bono mission and how to best apply it.

Communication

The social incubator in Jinan, the I-Leadership summit in Binzhou, the Chaoyang hub and our activities around Beijing gave me the opportunity to introduce pro bono



Group picture at strategic planning workshop in Jinan

and talk about non-profit management. I wrote blog articles on pro-bono.fr and published several posts on my trip in China which were followed by around 2500 people.

Network-building

We coordinated the Pro Bono Week campaign on probonoweek.org which included 35 pro bono events in 12 countries. We intensely communicated with other pro bono fellows and citizens throughout the world via e-mail and social networks. Twelve posts on Pro Bono Lab's Facebook page were viewed by 500 followers on average.

"I have learned a large number of things during the month spent in China, and I have been able to share a part of it with a lot of people."

Antoine Colonna d'Istria, Pro Bono Lab

We jointly designed two projects: first, we undertook steps to developing local pro bono alliances and marathons in France as well as in China. Furthermore, we laid the foundations for a global program which will be based on staff exchange.

For the Asian Pro Bono Summit, we recorded a video in which we shared ideas with Zhai Yan, the CEO of Huizeren, to prepare a gathering in Osaka with other Asian pro bono fellows.

Achievements

Antoine Colonna d'Istria says he sees the greatest impact achieved in knowledge-sharing and network building as he had a lot of opportunities to talk to interested people in person and, especially at summits or other meetings, reach many people at once. Also, the successful organization of the Pro Bono Week not only deepened the relationship between Pro Bono France and Huizeren, but also connected them with many other fellows all over the world. An annual exchange program of pro bono staff around the world which the exchange partners plan to launch in 2015 will further strengthen a global pro bono network – Huizeren and Pro Bono France meet up for skype sessions twice a month, jointly working on a pilot project they plan to introduce at the Pro Bono Summit in 2015.

Pro Bono Lab hosting Ye Ying

Ye Ying visited Pro Bono Lab in Clichy, France between October 16 and November 18, 2014.

Objectives

Pro bono is a new concept for Chinese NGOs, however, we think of it as a big opportunity to solve many social problems. It has grown massively in recent times and is increasing in popularity. Pro bono is an efficient way to help NGOs gain capacity. As China is undergoing social reforms, the number of NGOs is growing dramatically. However, most of them are grassroots NGOs and lack resources as well as professional skills. Cross-sector cooperation, the key behind pro bono, is a good way to help NGOs grow and increase their capabilities.

Infobox

Pro Bono Lab, France

Founded in 2011, Pro Bono Lab offers small- and medium-sized non-profit organizations capacity-building services by partnering and engaging volunteers in pro bono projects. Pro Bono Lab mobilizes employees, students and job seekers to share their professional skills with non-profits which express a need for support in professional skills that they cannot finance. They also engage companies that are willing to invest in sustainable programs of civic commitment.

Profile Antoine Colonna d'Istria

Antoine Colonna d'Istria is the Co-founder and Director of Strategy at Pro Bono Lab. He holds a Master's degree in Corporate & Public Management from the HEC & Sciences Po Paris and Bachelor degree in Philosophy from La Sorbonne. He has been working on pro bono issues for more than three and a half years, and has expanded Pro Bono Lab into an organization with twenty full-time staff. Besides a strong basis in philosophical theories, he also has a solid understanding and knowledge of the French public sector, as well as macroeconomic and political issues in Europe thanks to an internship with the French General Secretariat for European Affairs and his major in political sciences at Sciences-Po Paris.

During my stay in France, I wanted to learn more about the civil society development in Europe, the charity environment and policy. Moreover I wanted to study the pro bono business model and operational management, social innovation models, team development as well as the Grid Work Model. I also planned to connect to more French charity partners and do some research for Chinese NGO leaders' communication activities for the following year. During these five weeks I worked with Antoine and his workmates at Pro Bono Lab, I learned a lot from the people I worked with.

- important things to do this week
- current projects and challenges
- information regarding day-to-day business

I felt that these meetings created a very strong corporate feeling among colleagues which I liked. This will help me communicate effectively with my workmates in the future.

Next to the usual business, we organized a Pro Bono Marathon and several other events. I was able to give a presentation on Huizeren to my colleagues, and we compared the structure of our two organizations.

Visiting the branch office of Pro Bono Lab in Grenoble

On November 7, Antoine and I went to Pro Bono Lab's southern office in Grenoble. We came to visit a social enterprise which helps disabled young people to find work. This social enterprise is one of the service objects of Pro Bono Lab.

In the afternoon, we had a small workshop with the staff there talking about their work. After that I visited the local incubator center. There are more than 40 NGOs there. I was the first person from Chinese civil society to have visited this center.

Visiting Madrid, Spain

Between November 1 and 4, I went to Madrid and participated in a public welfare activity on breast cancer. I furthermore visited the Lynde Foundation and did some research for Chinese NGO leaders' communication activities.

Reflection Workshop in Berlin

The workshop organized by Stiftung Asienhaus was intense but very informative. It was a precious chance for me to get to know how civil society works in Germany in different fields and it was a great opportunity to share with other Chinese and European participants about our harvests and difficulties working in different environments and with different workmates. Also we visited the project sponsor-Robert Bosch Stiftung. This trip was a great chance for me to extend Huizeren's



At a social incubator in Grenoble

Activities – the Pro Bono Office

Most of the time, I worked at the Pro Bono Lab office with colleagues. I liked the friendly environment and working atmosphere there. Pro Bono Lab seems to me both institutionally organized and flexibly operated, with clear rules, procedures, tasks and responsibility sets for different positions on one hand, with freedom and space for staff's creative thinking on the other. This impressed me from the first day I joined and I think I can take many of these experiences back home to the Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Development Center.

Another impressive activity at Pro Bono Lab office is the two hour-long weekly staff meeting on Mondays. The agenda is as follows:

- roundtable for good news
- plan for next six months

contact and cooperation with European NGOs beyond Pro Bono Lab.

Achievements

One important method for learning about social conditions in France was through interviews. The following questions seemed essential to me: which values are important to you? Which values do you think are important to the French people? What, do you think, is the meaning of life?

This is a summary of the impression I got from France and the French:

- Economy: the French economy is not in a particularly good state at the moment and appears to be on the decline, which causes a lot of complaints.
- History and culture: the French attach great importance to education in art, history and culture. All museums are free for EU citizens under the age of 26 so all children have the chance to get in touch with art at an early age. I found interesting that many French are interested in classical Chinese philosophers and Chinese culture. Quite a few knew about Lao-Tzu, Taiji and Qigong.
- Public welfare: there are one million NGOs in France and the ratio of public participation is about 20%.

In contrast to France, only 500,000 NGOs are established in China, of which 50% to 60% are actually organized through the government. Only 6% of the population participate actively in NGOs.

- Concerning the meaning of life, everybody had a different answer. Some said "happiness", some "serving others", or "finding one's way"

"The more people participate the EU-China Twinning program, the more useful experiences and ideas this would bring to China. [...] Being part of the EU-China program is a milestone experience in my life, I learned a lot in Europe, but also I love the civil society sector more."

Ye Ying, Beijing Huizeren Volunteering Developmental Center

I also talked to Chinese living in France. They have a stable life in France but are not well integrated into local society. I found most of them to have narrow and lagging view of China Mainland. The majority of the students plan to go back to China after graduation.

Prospects

I am convinced that the partnership with Pro Bono Lab will be a sustainable and long-ranging one. There may be French volunteers coming to China to provide professional services in the next year. And exchange visits among professional volunteers will be common with Huizeren, providing a platform and service sites for cooperation.

3. Twinning Highlights 2014

Tangible results and Global Networks

The most astonishing result of the Twinning is the speed with which the bilateral partnerships developed into a catalyst for transnational or international information exchange and networking. With many of the issues, it became clear that the concerns of civil societies do not follow national boundaries.

Above all, the snowball effect created by linking the networks of the European Twinner with the network of the Chinese Twinner produced welcome byproducts (as listed below). Information sharing often led to insights which made more global perspectives necessary or useful.

Besides the effect of building sustainable partnerships, the exchange has also produced “real” tangible products and events. To document at least a few of these “highlights,” we’ve included them here.

One general positive side-effect was the collaboration with Bread for the World for our reflection workshop

in Berlin which gave our NGO participants the opportunity to get in contact with potential funders for their work.

Arnika/Nature University

Nature University learned that Arnika, which has been in existence for over 13 years, collects and publishes annual data on industrial pollution for air, soil and water. The specific practice was studied by Mao Da during his Twinning exchange and transferred to China.

While at Arnika, Mao Da had the chance to further strengthen networks with international IPEN toxic free future alliance members. He learned how impor-

“It was a crucial moment for me to meet all these other NGOs working on this topic”

Jitka Strakova, Arnika



Toxin-Free Future Skillshare, Kunming

tant and effective the membership in such alliances is when collecting information about local pollution cases and connecting them to a framework of global policies which need to be changed to conform to local policies in China.

He learned the big difference between the European and Chinese Environmental Impact Assessment law, esp. in cases of intervention against incineration plants (the release of toxic ashes the main problem). The cru-



IPEN work structure (Stiftung Asienhaus graphic)

cial point is the understanding of public participation. This information is extremely valuable for Nature University since protests against incineration plants is mushrooming in China at the moment. China signed the Stockholm Convention which defines the guidelines for EIA but applies these regulations differently.

Arnika took part in a Kunming training workshop consisting of 60 representatives from other NGOs, academics, and journalists organized by Nature University to introduce the Environmental Impact Assessment Law and its tools to the public. During this workshop Arnika could build strong networks for their further work in

“The exchange contributed to the improved effectiveness of implementation of the China Chemical Safety project and prepared ground for future projects.”

Jitka Strakova, Arnika

China.

Several Chinese NGOs expressed their interest to become participating organizations of IPEN and members of working groups that Arnika hosts. Pollution monitoring data from China will become part of IPEN’s global studies and will be used in the negotiation

“To involve the public is impossible without exchange and the building of networks.”

Mao Da, Nature University

of global policies, such as Stockholm Convention or Minamata Treaty.

CEE Bankwatch/GEI

During Wawa’s stay in Beijing, she met external stakeholders such as experts from industry groups, governmental institutions and financial institutions. This helped her to engage in in-depth conversations about case-specific risk analysis. It also enabled her to consolidate all the bits and pieces of information in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and stakeholders on the Chinese front. This gave

“[The exchange] increased my knowledge of Chinese investment projects in Europe and the associated environmental/social impacts, relevant host country laws and development goals, and how other CSOs are working to address the environmental/social challenges.”

Chris Dunn, Global Environmental Institute

both organizations the rare opportunity to establish channels of communication with them to further their advocacy objectives.

During his job-shadowing stage with Bankwatch, Chris Dunn was able to learn new techniques to identify investment projects and the stakeholders involved, which can be used in GEI’s future research work.

Meetings with other European activists and politicians increased GEI’s knowledge of bank monitoring related policies/mechanisms at the European Investment Bank, and how CSOs in Europe are able to operate within the EU system to gain access to information and influence institutions such as the EIB.



食品供应链中我们损失了什么

假设我们一生中每天都消耗3500卡路里的食物。一个瘦不拉几的成年人每天需要大约2000卡路里的食物。如果将包含这么多卡路里的食物放在一个盘子里，放于全球，那就要收4000卡路里的食物——比成年人每天所需要的两倍还多。

一方面，为了让都市里的食品永远新鲜和完美，并随时有货，很多食物都烂掉了；另一方面因为我们买的食物往往会比我们吃下的要多，因此造成了食物的浪费。不是所有浪费都能避免。例如，蔬菜皮，然而，的确很多浪费都是可以避免的。在欧洲以及其他工业地区，食物大多是加工、零售、烹饪和私人烹饪的时候被浪费的。在热带地区和欠发达地区，未经过加工的生产的食物浪费是最严重的。发霉的、变质的、被虫咬和虫嚼的，甚至还没有收获的，收获后的损失同样出现在欧洲。由于胡萝卜、土豆以及其他蔬菜经常不符合零售商的要求，数以吨计的蔬菜被削掉或者直接留在田里。

More Sources (23 More Words)

The 2000 m² project website was translated by Hongyan Yang during the exchange program

Sandbag Climate Campaign & Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims

Through the exchange, the CLAPV obtained new insights and material about EU Emission Trading Schemes, which made them realize they need to draw lessons from the EU-ETS to build a carbon market in China.

Zhu Bingcheng had the opportunity to join Sandbag's strategy meeting in Cambridge, where she could outline how to influence the establishment of China's ETS.

"Our network in China has snowballed!"

Alexandru Luta, Sandbag Climate Campaign

Meetings and discussions with Chinese domestic and international NGOs were instrumental in shaping Sandbag's understanding of the manner in which NGOs can convey their opinions to the decision-making process and the role that they can play in the wider Chinese society.

The Twinning program provided Sandbag with the unique initial opportunity to access statistical data about China. Sandbag will use this data to paint a more clear and accurate picture of contemporary China for European decision-makers.

Thanks to the exchange, Sandbag was able to connect with many professional contacts in China. They expect to closely cooperate with many key actors in the future.

Sandbag has decided to launch a Weibo account addressed at Chinese ETS experts as a platform where they can introduce their research on the EU ETS to a broader audience. They are already contemplating inviting Chinese ETS specialists to Europe to connect them with important European policy-makers.

Save Our Seeds & Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center

While in Germany, Yang Hongyang had the opportunity to visit 16 NGOs, research institutions and farms and got to learn about agriculture development, agriculture policies, and relevant movements by NGOs, institutions and farmers as well.

The communication and exchange between two organizations from both regions enhanced the global perspectives on small-holder farming and contributed to capacity building for both organizations.

"I felt great appreciation for your support and organization of the exchange. Both Luise and I learnt a lot from our own side considering our own capacity building. Additionally, the exchange built communication and promoted a potential cooperation between SOS and PEAC."

Yang Hongyan, PEAC

SOS's project, the 2000 m² experimental field, is now being established in China, too. It gives both organizations a precise means to exchange stories, photos and knowledge on a regular basis.

The 2000 m² project website and other educational material was translated into Chinese by Hongyan Yang during the exchange program. It lays a foundation for future cooperations between the two organizations.

Let's Do It! & Wuhu Ecology Center

LDI is now planning a movement in China, starting with organizing regional and country-wide clean-ups followed by different actions towards a zero waste society.

LDI participated in the China Zero Waste Alliance (CZWA) three-day annual conference in Shanghai. Anneli was given the opportunity to present their one-day-clean-up model to about 40 CZWA members and inspired everyone there.

Yue Caixuan from the Wuhu Ecology Center took part in a Zero Waste Europe's workshop in San Sebastian, Spain where she learned about organic waste and zero waste sites.



Announcement of Anneli's presentation on their one-day-clean-up campaign

WEC will utilize the new insight about differences in laws, policies, waste incinerator systems and difference of waste components as a contrasting basis for making suggestions to the Chinese government and promoting a better waste-handling system in China. She will publish articles on waste management in Europe. The aim is to find a model for clean-ups especially for China.



Pro bono Strategic Planning Workshop in Jinan

Pro Bono Lab & Beijing Huizeren

Antoine Colonna d'Istria was able to deliver a pro bono training session at the Chaoyang Hub, where Huizeren had mobilized a dozen non-profit leaders. He had the opportunity to share Pro Bono Lab's process to deliver pro bono missions and the best practices they use at each step.

"I have never doubted that participating in the Twinning program would be worth the cost. On a personal basis, it is certain. On an organizational basis, the short-term feedback is very positive, however it will take more time to know how much this program has impacted our organizations."

Antoine Colonne d'Istria, Pro Bono Lab

Pro Bono Lab was able to convey the concept of pro bono and share knowledge on non-profit management in public in Jinan at a social incubator, in Binzhou at the I-leadership summit.

Pro Bono Lab and Huizeren are now planning a "staff sharing program" by 2015, and to reproduce it annually. The exchange laid the foundations for this global program.

"[...] a precious chance to exchange ideas and experience!"

Ye Ying, Beijing Huizeren Volunteer Center



Workshop on Participatory Guarantee Systems (2)

IFOAM & Beijing Farmers' Market

Cornelia Kirchner had the opportunity to contribute to a 4-day PGS workshop with representatives from farmers' markets and other short-chain marketing initiatives from all over China.

IFOAM was able to support the Beijing Farmers' Market to identify financial supporters for establishing a PGS system in China, e.g. OXFAM.

IFOAM was able to considerably enlarge their network in China, including local farmers, activists and academics.

4. Sustainability – Future of Partnerships


We have taken the opportunity presented by the third round of EU-China NGO Twinning in 2014 to evaluate the actual sustainability of the links between organizations and activists from Europe and China that had been initiated or deepened through the exchange and are quite pleased with the results. Four out of five twinning pairs have continued their collaboration (see Alumni Follow-up projects).

Not only have previous participants kept us updated on their joint actions and projects, but the alumni have likewise participated in our 2014 seminars and enthusiastically shared their experiences. As of now, we also know of several collaboration initiatives undertaken by 2014 Twinners, and also of joint projects by the 2013 and 2014 participating organizations. They too have been invited to meet this year's exchange participants and help to establish a Sino-European civil society network.

To foster future joint cooperation, the Robert Bosch Foundation will kindly support specific follow-up projects to which alumni can apply. Another lasting effect of the exchange that we have noticed is the networking that has happened for the most part during the Twinning seminars, and which has frequently led to additional smaller collaborations or visits at organizations in the exchange region.


New EU-China NGO Twinning Policy Briefings

In order to enhance the accessibility of insight on NGO topics that concern societies in Europe and China alike for, we have launched the policy paper series "EU-China NGO Twinning Policy Briefings." Thus far, one paper on pollution victims and another on small-holder organic



EU-China-NGO-Twinning Policy Briefing Paper No. 2, 2015

Alternative organic certification
Opportunities for small-scale organic farming, local markets and rural development in China
Cornelia Kirchner (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements IFOAM)

 Sino-German China-Program

This briefing paper proposes a stronger promotion of small scale organic agriculture in China, and the introduction of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) as a promising tool to mainstream organic agriculture amongst the small and marginal farmers, and to develop emerging organic markets in China.

The majority of the emerging local organic and natural food initiatives in China are mainly working together with farmers that have too small of a production to afford certification. These initiatives therefore have to develop their own set of criteria in order to provide consumers with the necessary assurance.

In order to establish a more formalized procedure and consistent criteria, the PGS has proven as an effective tool. Within the PGS certification process, farmers, consumers, NGOs, scientists and other key actors in the organic sector jointly inspect food production sites and adapt certification procedures to local settings. PGS in China may function as an effective in supporting farmers to improve their systems, and at the same time provide important extension services for organic agriculture, organic research and organic seeds.

Greenhouse at Little Willow Farm in a village close to Beijing
© Cornelia Kirchner

NGO Twinning Policy Briefing on sustainable agriculture

farming have been published.¹ A third one will be on the monitoring of Chinese investments in Eastern Europe.

With our Twinning Policy Briefings we aim to provide information on the civil society views regarding Chinese developments as well as on European and Chinese collaborations. The briefings serve to inform readers about initiatives and issues on which Chinese and European NGOs have begun collaborating. Moreover, these briefings recommend the necessary steps toward political reforms which have to be undertaken in order to achieve the goal of a healthy, fair, and sustainable future. Therefore, the target groups are not only Ger-

man and EU parliamentarians and NGOs, but also institutions which finance and influence development prospects, such as local state and city governments in Germany, Asian Development Bank, the European Union.

What follows is an account on the joint actions of the 2014 Twinners as well as a planned cooperation between alumni organizations and new contacts that were made during the exchange.

Arnika Association and Nature University Fund

Both organizations have established new contacts at a national workshop on pollution aid and at an international skill-sharing workshop in Kunming, China. Several Chinese NGOs expressed their interest in becoming participating organizations as part of IPEN and as members of the working groups that Arnika hosts.

Pollution monitoring data from China will become part of IPEN's global studies and will be used in negotiations about global policies, such as the Stockholm Convention or the Minamata Treaty. Arnika, as the host organization to IPEN's Heavy Metals and Dioxins Working Group, will coordinate future joint activities in this area with Nature University.

CEE Bankwatch & Global Environmental Institute

Bankwatch and GEI have identified and discussed several potential areas for future collaboration, including how to engage with Chinese financial institutions to improve the sustainability of their investments.

In addition to collaboration through formal, joint project work, GEI and BWN have established a good working relationship which will facilitate cooperation via other means, such as sharing information and support-

“As a quick update on the lasting effects of my exchange, one of my colleagues at GEI is currently attending a conference on Chinese overseas investment that my exchange partner Wawa is also attending. I expect our two organizations will be working on similar topics for the foreseeable future so it's great we made the connection.”

Chris Dunn, GEI

ing each others' work. GEI can act as a guide to BWN's future work engaging Chinese stakeholders. Likewise, GEI will be interested in receiving updates from BWN about the findings of its research regarding Chinese financial institutions, which will guide GEI's work on improving the sustainability of China's overseas investment and trade.

In March 2015, staff from both GEI and BWN attended a conference on Chinese overseas investment. They expect the two organizations will continue working together on similar topics for the foreseeable future.

Let's Do It & Wuhu Ecology Center

The most important result of twinning was a real cooperation between WEC and LDI in order to start a LDI movement in China, starting with organizing regional or country-wide cleanups followed by different actions geared towards a zero waste society. Both organizations are looking forward to deeper cooperation in the field of zero waste and in the exchange of know-how and contacts and organizing common projects.

Let's Do It inspired China Zero Waste Alliance members to plan a joint clean-up action in 2015. WEC and LDI will have a lot of communication on how to prepare the action.

Furthermore, WEC will help LDI to find additional long-term cooperation partners in China.

Pro Bono Lab & Beijing Huizeren Volunteer Center

Long-term relationship between the two organizations was established through this learning exchange. French volunteers might come to China to provide professional services in the next year. Furthermore, exchange visits among professional volunteers will be common and Huizeren will provide a platform and service sites for the cooperation.

In February, common projects for 2015 were validated after other exchanges. Both organizations are discussing their further projects: “Pro Bono Chinese Alliance” and “Pro Bono Foundation for France.”

Sandbag Climate Campaign & Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims

The exchange has enabled CLAPV and Sandbag to cooperate closely on the topics of climate change and ETS. Moreover, both organizations have made contacts within other NGOs in the exchange region with whom they have agreed to cooperate in the future.

Besides CLAPV, Sandbag was able to interact with a number of domestic NGOs, such as the Global Environmental Institute, the Rock Environment and Energy Institute and the Friends of Nature Foundation. These groups were instrumental in shaping Sandbag’s understanding of the manner in which NGOs can convey their opinions regarding the decision-making process and the role that they can play in the broader Chinese society.

Sandbag has decided to launch a Weibo account addressed at Chinese ETS experts. This provides them with a platform to introduce research on the EU ETS to a broader audience. They are already considering inviting Chinese ETS specialists to Europe to connect them in person to important European policy-makers.

Save Our Seeds & Pesticide Eco-Alternatives Center

During Luise Körner’s stay with PEAC, the 2000 m² project at the Save Our Seeds experimental field was translated into Chinese and introduced to Chinese farmers.

Both organizations agreed to continue to exchange stories, photos and knowledge on a regular basis.

PEAC is now Save Our Seeds’ Chinese partner. In the future, Save Our Seeds and Pesticide Eco Alternatives Center are planning to make contacts and set up cooperation partners for future collaboration. Every month, they share some interesting stories from the village SOS visited. Topics of interest include diversified farm, intercropping, transplanting and labor-based farming culture and farmer stories.

PEAC published a long report in Chinese about the exchange on their website.

Both organizations are planning to develop an exchange between farmers from both regions. As both organizations stressed during the exchange, an exchange between farmers would ultimately bring about effective changes in agricultural practice.



Luise Körner with farmer Xingmei Long. PEAC and Save Our Seeds will tell her story of a farmer’s life in a joint project

Luise Körner from Save Our Seeds will speak in 2015 at the Chinese-German students meeting in Münster about the situation of Chinese NGOs and hold a workshop there on the possibilities and challenges of small-scale farming in China.

“The exchange is very powerful for promoting action among Chinese farmers”

Yang Hongyan, PEAC

Save OurSeeds in Berlin appreciated the information exchange especially as concerns the GMO debate. PEAC agreed to write an article on GMO in China, while SOS will organize another article on GMO in India. These papers shall be channeled into the Agricultural Rural Convention (ARC) at the European level with the help of the alliance network MeineLandwirtschaft.de. The Stiftung Asienhaus will help in organizing some more articles on GMO in China

Ifoam & Beijing Farmer’s Market

Ifoam and Beijing Farmers’ Market will help develop a toolkit for the PGS certification system. There are 500 international eco-friendly companies in China and

several “organic food” certifications. The time is ripe to foster the voices of small-holding organic farmers so that they may gain control over their products and certificates.

The twinning exchange is intended as the start of a long-term cooperation. BFM, in cooperation with a farmers’ market in Shanghai, started to work on the development of some basic PGS materials and procedures and is intending to start a PGS trial in Beijing in 2015. OXFAM has kindly agreed to fund the PGS initiative.

In future, plans are to support the development of PGS also in other regions in China, possibly as a national PGS network.

Ifoam will support the process from afar and is looking into funding opportunities to provide more in-person support in the future. They are confident that more opportunities to meet again and continue cooperation also in person, either as joint projects or at other occasions will arise.

As part of an ADB-Ifoam project on PGS in Southeast Asia, Ifoam organized a PGS workshop in Kunming, South China. Cornelia helped in sharing her experience that she gathered during her exchange.



Joint publication on Chinese Green Credit Policies

Alumni Follow-up Projects

To monitor the sustainability of the NGO twinning we consider it very important to regularly collect feedback from our Alumni. We are very happy to hear the news and information that they provided to us. Four out of five twinning pairs continued their collaboration which we consider a great success for the program.

Bank Monitoring/Green finances: BothENDS & Green Watershed

BothEnds has published a BothENDS – Asienhaus publication on spaces that Chinese green credit policies allow for the installment of grievance mechanisms. The publication is in line with the work BothEnds/ Green Watershed did during the Twinning exchange and will serve future fundraising well (<http://www.eu-china.net/materialien/neues-hintergrundpapier-zur-investitionspolitik-chinesischer-banken/>).

Moreover, they have made a comparison between the World Bank Safeguards and social and environmental standards in place for the new Chinese Asian infrastructure development bank. The comparison has resulted in a short policy note about the issue. With the help of the publication, they aim to make European society more aware of the existing Chinese banking regulations for both internal as overseas investments, and as well made the Chinese banking sector more responsive to demands coming from civil society in both China and Europe, the international community as a whole and the Chinese government itself.

Both ENDS and Green Watershed are also planning a seminar on banking with the participation of all partners involved in the EU China twinning exchange that show an interest in the banking issue.

Social Inclusion: Chickenshed UK & Hunan Aimer

In July 2014 Chickenshed's Dave Carey and Charlie Kemp visited Hunan Aimer again, staging a performance that resulted from the Chickenshed/Aimer partnership.

With the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation, Hunan Aimer's director Pan Yu had the opportunity to visit Chickenshed in London in January 2015. They welcomed her and provided a packed schedule. An all-encompassing understanding of each others' approach and process was greatly enhanced, which will make further developments easier and more satisfying. As well as observing and working closely with Chickenshed, they were able to organize several trips that helped increase her understanding of the current state of Social Inclusion in the UK. They visited a respite care center for disabled children which has led the way in creating services and experiences that address the needs of both the children and their families. Moreover, they visited the Tottenham Hotspurs Foundation to observe (and in Pan Yu's case, join in) an inclusive sports session held in a local school. Tottenham Hotspurs are not only a leading premier league football team

but also have the most advanced and well-funded outreach program of all UK football teams.

Pan Yu has begun plans for a "Chickenshed China," with discussions about how to go national in China using Aimer's work in Changsha as a base.

The project by Aimer and Chickenshed has won one of the eight gold awards among 897 projects in the first "China Youth Volunteering Project Competition". The award is used to give commendation to outstanding volunteering projects and social organizations.

In 2015, a Chickenshed delegation travelled to Hunan to co-organize a large conference and conduct another workshop.

Urban Youth Culture: CHEE Production and Berlin Massive

CHEE Production from Guangzhou and Berlin Massive extended their collaboration shortly after the twinning. In August 2014 they arranged a visit of a youth group from Wiesbaden to Guangzhou and signed a contract for a Four-Year-Exchange. In 2015, they arranged a tour for urban youth to German cities to learn more about urban youth culture.

Human Rights/Pre-Detention Law: The Rights Practice and PIDLI

The Rights Practice and PIDLI continued their cooperation project with PIDLI on the issue of duty lawyers in detention centers and has continued its work with Ding Peng. This project will continue into the next year.

Note

1. http://www.eu-china.net/uploads/tx_news/2015-04_policy_briefing_China_Jitka_MaoDa_WEB-1_01.pdf and http://www.eu-china-twinning.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-5_Paper-Twinning-No2_WEB.pdf

5. Synergies with partners and growing civil society networks



Screenshot Cornelia Kirchner's contribution for China Development Brief

The Stiftung Asienhaus China Program considers itself a broker for networks of European and Chinese civil societies. We advocate for knowledge-sharing between organizations from both regions as well as the greater visibility of civil society topics that NGOs in Europe and China are working on simultaneously. We analyze the interdependency of these topics and aim to convey civil society concerns to stakeholders and decision-makers in politics, the media and academia. As a result of our longtime engagement with civil society dialogue, we have established an ever-growing database of NGO contacts in Europe and China. The EU-China NGO twinning program is embedded in a strong network of partners of Stiftung Asienhaus. The participating organiza-

tions are offered the chance to use these networks to benefit from synergies. They are provided with the opportunity to connect to partners in Europe and Asia more effectively and make use of different facilities.

One example is the partnership with the bilingual platform China Dialogue (chinadialogue.net). China Dialogue has been accompanying the Twinning program through a special feature in their online news platform. In 2014, two of the Twinning participants contributed to the platform with articles on agriculture and chemical pollution.

Likewise, the translation project China Development Brief, reporting on the civil society sector in China, has been publishing articles and blog posts by and interviews with the Twinning participants. In 2014 Cornelia Kirchner from IFOAM took the chance to elaborate on the potential of Participatory Guarantee Systems as a development tool for local organic agriculture in China.¹ Chang Tianle was given the opportunity to introduce the Beijing Farmer's Market through an interview with the website.² The China Development Brief is also represented in the advisory board of the Twinning program. As a bilingual hub to provide professional observation, analysis, networking, and services for development and philanthropy organizations, they have provided valuable introductions into current developments in Chinese civil society during the Twinning workshops.

In universities people have also begun using the knowledge production generated from the NGO-twinning. One example comes from students at Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and The Berlin School of Economics and Law, who asked us for permission to publish detailed lessons learned from the twinning in their Yearbook on Nonprofit-Management. The Yearbook belongs to their course on "Management in the Nonprofit-Sector". The yearbook will be published in 2015.

2014 Twinner “Cross-fertilization” action

The 2014 exchange has clearly shown that the exchange is creating increasingly wide networks. During the seminars, contacts expanded beyond those Twinners’ originally partnered, and joint action was planned and organized during and even after the exchange period.

“It’s really good to create this type of cross fertilization relationships. In our normal activities ‘there would be no reason for Chickenshed and The Rights Practice to meet but through the twinning process we are able to see how we can support each others activities in ways we wouldn’t have thought of.”

Dave Carey, Chickenshed Inclusive Theater

Nature Universit and Let’s Do It

Mao Da from Nature University made contact with Anneli Ohvril from Let’s Do It and invited her to introduce the clean-up campaigns from Let’s Do It to more Chinese colleagues.

Finally, LDI has applied with Nature University as a new partner for the 2014 round of Twinning.

GEI and Sandbag

During the exchange, Chris Dunn (GEI) made connections with Alex Luta of Sandbag. Potential areas for future collaboration between GEI and Sandbag include GEI supporting Sandbag’s work relating to emissions trading schemes in China, and Sandbag utilizing the tools and methodologies GEI has developed for low-carbon planning in Eastern European countries.

Pro Bono Lab and IFOAM

Inspired by IFOAM’s concept of Participatory Guarantee Systems, Pro Bono Lab is now planning to develop their own PGS in order to evaluate the sustainability of their action.

Green Watershed (Twinning 2013) and Banktrack (Twinning 2014)

Both organizations knew each other but intensified their relationship as well as information sharing dur-

ing our capacity building seminars and through email exchanges both during and after the Twinning.

Alumni Cross-fertilization activities

Alumni organizations Chickenshed & The Rights Practice

Chickenshed and The Rights Practice, both European alumni of the Stiftung Aisenhaus twinning projects found a way to broaden the networks they created through this process. Late in October 2014, Chickenshed were delighted to host a visit of Chinese activists brought to the UK by The Rights Practice. They came from a number of anti-discrimination and public par-



Let’s Do It’s presentation at Nature University

ticipation NGOs to look at how NGOs and ordinary citizens in Britain engage with government and participate in policy-making, with a particular focus on the interests and rights of persons with disabilities.

At Chickenshed’s purpose-built London theater both the Chinese visitors and member of the Rights Practice staff enjoyed a performance of “Alice on the Underground”.

Notes

1. <http://chinadevelopmentbrief.cn/articles/pgs-china-development-tool-local-organic-agriculture/>
2. <http://chinadevelopmentbrief.cn/articles/beijing-organic-farmers-market/>

6. Conclusion

The functions of citizen's organizations change over time and are different in different political cultures. Nevertheless, one common feature is their contribution to good governance. In this respect, the EU-China NGO Twinning fostered the development of joint visions and broader knowledge on the challenges and benefits of each other societies.

This third round of EU-China NGO Twinning again was evaluated by the individual participating organizations as a very valuable experience. One of the greatest achievements of the Twinning program may lie in the amazingly wide-spun networks between participating organizations, the alumni organizations and various external actors.

This year the exchange has extended the network to participating NGOs from new countries: France, Estonia, and the Czech Republic. Whereas 2014 we had applications from 8 different European countries, 2015 saw 10 European countries represented in the applications. This not only means that organizations from more European countries got to know the different working environments, structures and methods of Chinese NGOs, but the Chinese participants' insights into European NGOs' management, governance, fundraising, and human resources, their strengths and limits also diversified. Plus, for us this means that we are approaching our goal of internationally experienced "Ambassadors of Civil Society".

We are likewise happy to see that "China" and "civil society" by many is not seen as a contradiction per se any more. Alumni organizations have channeled their exchange experience into their professional circles, thereby not only making the Twinning program better known, but actually raising interest in developments of civil society in China.

Moreover, in the previous years our biggest challenge had been to raise interest in an exchange with China among the European NGOs. But in the 2015 applica-

"This is such a visionary program."

Wawa Wang, CEE Bankwatch

tion period, it has proven surprisingly effortless to find European partner organizations for Chinese NGOs that previously were without contacts in the EU. This can be viewed as another proof for the efficacy and widened outreach of the program. Additionally, a growing curiosity about developments in China or topics that touch upon both the European and the Chinese civil society is not limited to NGO circles: We have had an increasing number of requests to connect with Chinese civil society actors from local politics, the media, universities and private people alike.

The Twinning program will continue in 2015, with another 14 Chinese and European NGOs participating. The selected participants for 2015 again continue to broaden the diversity of civil society topics dealt with in the European-Chinese exchange program. They will be exchanging on the topics of zero-waste, marine debris management, food banks, air pollution, sustainable water consumption and social inclusion.

2015 will also see another positive extension of the program. In the future the EU-China NGO Twinning Program will in addition to the Stiftung Asienhaus-led thematic area "Environmental and social justice" (which previously also included the climate change topic) comprise Stiftung Mercator's "China-EU NGO Exchange Program on Climate Change and Low Carbon Development". This means that another 10 organizations will be given the opportunity to exchange. Robert Bosch Stiftung and Stiftung Mercator have agreed to work closely together in future to support our idea to create a network of civil society organizations from Europe and China. By doing this they help our two societies to understand each other better and therefore lay the ground for a peaceful and sustainable future.

About the Authors

Nora Sausmikat

Dr Nora Sausmikat is the head of the China program at Stiftung Asienhaus, and is currently also responsible for the EU-China NGO twinning program. Sausmikat holds a post-PhD degree in sinology. She studied sinology, political sciences, anthropology, Tibetan language and drama at the Sichuan University in Chengdu/China and the Free University of Berlin. Her thesis analyzed the interplay between public discourse and individual memory of the Cultural Revolution (Peter Lang 2002). She works as university lecturer for contemporary China, author and consultant for civil society projects and China-related media reports or programs. In her research, she specialized on the topics of political reform and political memory as well as civil society developments in China. From 2004–06, she was the program director of the German-Chinese fellowship program “Beijing Case” (Beijing/Berlin) at the Federal Cultural Foundation of Germany and Goethe Institute Beijing. Her latest publications include “Habermas aus indigener Perspektive – Die Rezeption der Frankfurter Schule innerhalb der Diskussion um politische Reform (交往理性之中国探索, 本土化视角下的哈贝马斯——从中国政治改革论争看法兰克福学派的影响)”, In Iwo Amelung, Anett Dippner (Eds.), *Kritische Verhältnisse*, Frankfurt: Campus 2009, pp. 263–286 (German/Chinese) and “Chinese environmental movements: civil society discourses on climate change and environmental protection”, in Carmen Meinert (Ed.), *Nature, Environment, and Culture in East Asia: The Challenge of Climate Change*, Leiden: Brill 2013.

Inga Gebauer

Inga Gebauer is the Project Assistant of the Stiftung Asienhaus’ China Program. Her role involves supporting the implementation of the EU-China NGO Twinning as well as managing the project’s communications. Before joining the Stiftung Asienhaus in 2013 she has been employed by different media in Germany and China and continues to work as a freelance journalist. Inga holds a Master degree in Chinese Area Studies and Political Science from the University of Cologne, Germany and wrote her thesis on Chinese women’s political participation.

German-Chinese relations at the Robert Bosch Stiftung

In 2006 German-Chinese relations were established as a funding area at the Robert Bosch Stiftung. The foundation is focusing its funding on the fields of media, good governance/civil society, education, and culture. The exchange program for journalists “Media Ambassadors China – Germany”, for example, is organized in cooperation with the International Media Center Hamburg and Tsinghua University in Beijing. Every year, sixteen fellows spend three months abroad. With its “German-Chinese Judge Exchange Program” the foundation wants to aid China in its judicial reform process, to promote legal certainty and to foster the German-Chinese (legal) dialogue. With its Lectureship Program the foundation sends German university graduates to Chinese universities for one to two years. With “Grenzgänger China – Deutschland” the foundation is also offering literary research fellowships for German- and Chinese-speaking authors and film makers. Since January 1st 2012, the only official Chinese social media account of a German foundation is online at www.weibo.com/robertboschstiftung with about 8.000 followers.

<http://www.bosch-stiftung.de>

Stiftung Asienhaus China Program

The China program of Stiftung Asienhaus focuses on civil society initiatives in China and Europe as well as on analysis and background information on China. Our impressions of China are as conflicting and contradictory as the developments in China itself. The future of our world will depend on how the relations between Europe and China will develop. Therefore, proficient complex information, political dialogues and personal encounters can contribute to social and ecological justice.

Since 2008 the China Program engages in several exchange projects and dialogues. In 2010, the blog project “Voices from China” (SAC, www.stimmen-of-china.de) was launched. It translates Chinese online debates and blog posts for the German public. The latest projects are the “EU-China NGO Twinning Program” and the “EU-China Civil Society Portal”. The twinning project offers NGOs the opportunity of several weeks of job-shadowing in Europe and China. The Civil Society Portal (eu-china.net) provides expertise on China for European NGOs.

Furthermore, the China program organizes workshops, publications, study tours for Chinese and European NGOs and foundations, exhibitions, lectures, and open forums.

<http://www.asienhaus.de/china/>



eu-china.net – Ein Informationsportal für die Zivilgesellschaft

Dieses Onlineportal möchte eine differenzierte Auseinandersetzung mit China fördern. Es stellt Bildungsmaterial zu China für zivilgesellschaftliche Gruppen und kommunale Akteure zur Verfügung und stärkt damit deren china-spezifische Kompetenz.

Warum Informationen zu China für NGOs?

Landgrabbing, Lebensmittelsicherheit, Rohstoffpolitik, Arbeitsrechte, Freihandelsabkommen – Themen unserer Zivilgesellschaft. China spielt hier eine große Rolle.

Es gibt 1.000 gute Gründe...

NRW besitzt die größte Dichte entwicklungspolitischer NGOs. China exportiert Nahrungsmittel, Europa investiert in China, chinesische Arbeiter arbeiten in Zuliefererbetrieben, die Produkte für Deutschland herstellen.

... sich mehr mit China zu beschäftigen.

Chinesische und europäische NGOs arbeiten zunehmend an ähnlichen Themen – Klima- und Umweltschutz, Verbraucherschutz oder ländliche Entwicklung.

... und sich mehr mit chinesischen NGOs auszutauschen.

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STIFTUNG UMWELT
UND ENTWICKLUNG
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About Robert Bosch Stiftung

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is one of the major German foundations associated with a private company and has managed the philanthropic bequest of company founder Robert Bosch for 50 years. Indeed it was his entrepreneurial vision, political farsightedness, moral fortitude and charitable initiatives that set the standards for the work of the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

人本 Humane

公正 Socially just

环保 Environmentally sound



About the Stiftung Asienhaus

The Stiftung Asienhaus is committed to the implementation of human rights, the strengthening of social and political participation, as well as the protection of social justice and the environment.

The organization was founded in 1992 under the name “(German) Asia Foundation”. Its founder, Prof. Dr. Günter Freudenberg, and several other associations working on Asia joined together in 1995 in Essen and founded the Asia House. In October 2012, the Asia House moved its headquarters to Cologne and was renamed in Stiftung Asienhaus.