

## Zero Waste Europe

### Eco Canton

#### Report on 2017 EU-China NGO Twinning Program

Danuta Chodakowska, Zero Waste Europe, Katowice, Poland

LiYing Huang, Eco Canton, Guangzhou, China

The overall goal of the exchange was to strengthen network building and alliances between Zero Waste Europe and Eco Canton as well as provide more support in organization's future work on waste issue. Zero Waste Europe and Eco Canton both focus on the waste issue and use advocacy ways, policy advocacy or public advocacy, to work on waste issue. Through the exchange, the exchange fellow have increased knowledge and capacity about the reality of waste issues in EU and China, and then benefit for their work and organization.

#### **Danuta Chodakowska, Zero Waste Europe, Katowice, Poland**

16<sup>th</sup> of September - 27<sup>th</sup> of October

##### ***Introduction (Objectives, expectations)***

The main goal of the exchange for me was to gain knowledge about promoting zero waste and managing waste in other parts of the world. I was sure in China I can learn new, creative ways of working for environment. It was fascinating to read about Eco Canton various projects that I wanted to see in life. Also, the partner organization was experienced in composting, a topic that I wanted to learn about. Going as far as China was supposed to teach me how to work with people with different cultural background as well as let me develop my intercultural communication skills.



### **Activities**

While staying in China I have undertaken various activities discovering country's waste collection issues as well as cultural characteristics that are the background and the source to the issue. I had an opportunity to meet all organization's workers. It was interesting to see their work culture day by day in Guangzhou, China. The office is a story by itself as there are plants, composters, posters, books and all the items for actions stored. EcoCanton is also leading outdoor activities and my twinner partner at the time of the exchange has been in charge of waste selection activities on local events and so I was lucky enough to spend much time with her outdoors teaching local community how to do waste selection and what composting is. We have also visited a local organization Greenovation Hub. Except for Guangzhou I had an opportunity to travel to cities like Beijing, Linan and Shanghai, where I have met with the organizations Marie Stopes China and Green Woman, as well as be lucky enough to meet european partners visiting The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, Evergreen, Chongqing Renewable Energy Societ and China Youth Climate Action Network.



### ***Outcome and Impact***

Each part of the exchange was different and each has given different results. For our twinner the exchange was mostly informative, learning about European waste management, high level of zero waste policy and project management of world scale. As for the second part of my exchange in China, it was mainly a cultural exchange both with my twinning partner and other chinese friends of mine. It is a totally different country in each and every aspect: architecture, cultural heritage, philosophy, religion, ways of thinking, habits and beliefs. It was a great adventure to discover it all within my stay. It was also interesting and eye opening to see waste management in China as well as people's environmental awareness level in the country. There is so much to be done in both countries, but in each there are different paths to be taken.





#### ***Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership***

The project has straighten our organization's relationship and opened eyes for the other organization's needs. I am sure the personal exchange is needed for so different policies and cultural background organizations to be cooperating. We are thinking about cooperating in other actions like Plastic Bag Free Day. Hopefully our organizations are going to stay in touch for years to come.



## **Liying Huang, Guangzhou, China**

From June 9<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup>, in Brussels, Belgium

### ***Introduction (Objectives, expectations)***

My main objective to participate in this exchange program was to learn more about the zero waste method and the advocacy method. I wanted to expand my vision, increase the capacity and inspire me to have the new perspectives in the policy advocacy and public advocacy in the future.

### ***Activities***

(Which activities did the exchange fellow participate in?)

Stayed in the Zero Waste Europe Office in Brussels, Belgium

Zero Waste Europe is both a knowledge network with more than 20 groups in 15 countries across Europe, and an advocacy group, representing active communities in countries across the Europe. They have two offices, one in the Belgium and one in England. During my stay, I spent most of time in Belgium.

During my stay at Zero Waste Europe, I knew more about the Zero Waste Europe from communication.

- Support promotion of Plastic Bag Free Day in China

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Plastic Bag Free Day 2017 came on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July. This is a unique opportunity to spread the word that a plastic bag free world is possible, and that sound environmental alternatives to single use plastic bags are available. Under the introduction, I have the basic understanding on the International Plastic Bag Free Day. I also knew some cases what were the people do in different countries in the International Plastic Bag Free Day in the past years. For the Zero Waste Europe, the main thing in the International Plastic Bag Free Day is support other countries and public who are in Zero Waste Europe's network to participate in the Plastic Bag Free Day. Also collected their stories on that day or other efforts in other day, then posted it on the social media and attracted more people to join it in the future.

With the help of Macro, Zero Waste Europe's intern, I wrote the articles 'Watch the world | Get the bag out of your head!' to introduce the International Plastic Bag Free Day and the actions what the people do in different countries in the past years to advocate the people to do something on that day. I also translated the article and the toolkit about the International Plastic Bag Free Day 2017 and published it on Eco Canton's WeChat public platform. ([https://mp.weixin.qq.com/mp/profile\\_ext?action=home&\\_\\_biz=MzA3Njc4MzcwNg==&scene=124&#wechat\\_redirect](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/mp/profile_ext?action=home&__biz=MzA3Njc4MzcwNg==&scene=124&#wechat_redirect))

- Know more about the waste policies in Europe

As far as I am concerned, different countries have different attitudes toward the household waste management. In my staying, I read a lot of policy documents and case studies about the European waste management. I also translated some document and wrote the articles to make me have the better understanding on it. At the same time, I better learned the waste management in Europe through conversations with the project officer of the Zero Waste Europe.

- Do a presentation of the waste situation in China to the whole team

I did a presentation of the waste situation in China to the whole team of Zero Waste Europe to introduce the waste situation in China and the efforts from the Government, NGOs, companies and individuals in China to do the waste classification.

During my stayed, I spent most of my time settling down to understand what Zero Waste Europe was doing and how they do that. At the same time, during the discussion of policy advocacy, I also asked someone about the ways in which they advocated their policies. In the process of policy advocacy, they mainly lobbied, and I also found out that the project officers who are in charge of the policy advocacy project will spend many time to communicate with the stakeholders every week and lobby the stakeholders based on the actual situation what they have knew. This makes me feel that our current work have some gaps and need to be improved in the communication with the stakeholders.

### Visit the packaging-free shop

When I stayed in Europe, I am surprised to read some articles which was published on the social media to say Europe only have five packaging-free shop now. Through the communication, I learned that there are quite a few packaging-free shops in Europe, not just only five, and these shops have different characteristics to pass more zero waste concept to the people. And I also spent some time to visit them.



ROOTS STORE, the interesting store in Brussels, Belgium. From their introduction, this is Brussels' first and only organic, local 100% circular shop, straight from the producers. Here's vegetables and fruits are come from the local farmers. It is super nice that the Roots Store will recycle the residents' bio-waste. Then the cooperative farmers will take the bio-waste (about two days once time) to compost them, turn them into fertilizer for improving the growth of vegetables and fruits.



Stock, the packaging-free shop in Brussels which is seeks to offer as many products as possible in bulk to limit waste.





Belgomarkt, only offers the local products.

### ***Outcome and Impact***

(What were the concrete results and accomplishments of the exchange?)

China is developing fast, the amount of household waste has also increased continually. In these years, the waste issue has drawn more and more people's attention. China is taking various policies to make the public to do the waste classification to solve the waste problem. However, there are still something need to be improved in the practice. Everything is in progress.

This program gave me the opportunity to know the Zero Waste Europe, to know their work and the efforts what to do on the solution of the waste issues. At the meantime, it is also gave me the opportunity to know some zero waste cases in the Europe, gave me the opportunity to know the reality of the zero waste in Europe, it is an interesting experience for me.

At the meantime, I also realized deeply that waste issue was related to many other issues: public health, environmental justice, climate change, air pollution, plastic pollution, etc. The solution of the waste issue need the collaboration of many people. Combined public advocacy and the policy advocacy may better to solve the problem. Zero

Waste Europe is a knowledge network with more than 20 groups in 15 countries across Europe, this network is providing the strong synergy to solve the waste problem. Now, Eco Canton is also playing an important role of communication and coordination in China Zero Waste Alliance, including assisting to set up the zero waste partners communication platform in southern China.

***Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership***

(Please describe the joint follow-up project if one has been planned and reflect on the sustainability of the collaboration.)

Although we did not immediately confirm concrete plans for joint implementation in the future, this project gave both of us a chance to better understand each other's work and the reality of waste issues in Europe and China, with special emphasis in best practices.

In the future, we believe that to do the action together in the special day, such as in the International Plastic Bag Free Day, is possible. We will keep in touch with each other and look for a suitable opportunity to work together.

**For more information, please contact the Stiftung Asienhaus-China Program and request access to in-depth twinning reports.**