



China Program

2019 EU-China NGO Twinning Program

**Partnerships between
European and Chinese NGOs**

**Social and Environmental Justice
Climate Change and Low Carbon Development**



Imprint

Title: 2019 EU-China Twinning: Partnerships between European and Chinese NGOs
Social and Environmental Justice and Climate Change

Published by China Program of Stiftung Asienhaus
Hohenzollernring 52
50672 Cologne, Germany

Edited by Joanna Klabisch and Christian Straube
In cooperation with Mathias Claeys Bouuaert, Wang Xiangyi, Li Xiajie and Majid Lenz

Supported by



STIFTUNG
MERCATOR

The authors are responsible for the content.
All rights reserved. © Cologne, Germany 2020

Coverphoto: Xiyu Yang
Concept and design: Chanika Ronczka and Xiyu Yang
Typesetting, lithography and printing: Xiyu Yang (www.xiyutomorrow.com)

Photo credits: Hartmut Seelfeld (08, 09), YANG Xiyu (10, 11), JIA Yuan (13, 15), Ilsadora Cardoso Vasconcelos (14), LUO Yi (17, 18), Joachim Walzer (19), Katarzyna Błasińska (21, 23), LÜ Xiaohong (22), Angelika Derfler (25, 27), LUO Lijun (26), CAI Lingping (29, 30), Daniel Cojocaru (28), Merle Groneweg (32), YANG Jing (33), Achim Hertzke (35, 36), DAI Huxuan (37), Julia Christian (40, 42), HE Yeyun (41), Michael Bender (44), HE Hong (45, 46), LU Zhiyao (48, 49, 50), Viktor Bjelić (52), XUE Yi (54, 55, 56)

Order at: Stiftung Asienhaus, Vertrieb, Hohenzollernring 52, 50672 Cologne, Germany
E-Mail: vertrieb@asienhaus.de | Phone: 0221-716121-13 | Fax: 0221-716121-10

© Stiftung Asienhaus, Cologne, Germany 2020

All rights reserved. Reprinting in any form or by any means only permitted when citing authors and publishers. This work is creative commons (CC) attribution – non-commercial sharing under same conditions as 4.0 International.

ISBN: 978-3-933341-85-3



Greetings

2019 has been an intense final year of the EU-China NGO-Twinning Program: One last time, 12 new twinings were taken in, joining the network of more than 150 twinners and their organizations from more than 20 European countries and China. This year's highlight was the workshop week in Berlin in October, which also marked the conclusion of seven successful years of the program. Including events that were open to the public, it provided opportunities to promote the achievements of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program and to facilitate future civil society partnerships.

Promoting civil society internationally has long been one of the key themes of the Robert Bosch Stiftung's area of support. We believe that active, engaged citizens committed to the creation of a more equitable world play a vital role for social cohesion and effective governance structures. We further believe that as most of today's challenges are global in nature, transnational knowledge-exchange and cooperation are indispensable. Therefore, we highly stress the importance of cross-border collaboration and dialogue amongst peers.

The overarching goal of Stiftung Mercator in its International Affairs programs is for people to understand one another, learn from one another and jointly overcome global challenges. In practice, this goal is primarily pursued through the "exchange of people and ideas". In our China program, we work with young people and educators, as well as with decision makers in politics and administration, (civil-) society, science and culture. Cooperation among NGOs and the

professionalization of the non-profit sector is a field which we support in the context of our partnership with the Ministry of Civil Affairs in Beijing, with which Stiftung Mercator has officially registered a Beijing Representative Office.

The Stiftung Asienhaus in Cologne once again had the lead in coordinating all partners involved. We congratulate the team at Stiftung Asienhaus on this last successful year. We would also like to thank the Climate Action Network (CAN-E) in Brussels and the China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) in Beijing for their hard work. But most of all we want to thank all participants for their time and passion in sharing knowledge, experience, and challenges – and the positive societal impact they create through their work every day.

Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to all twinners who have been involved in the last seven years. May the Twinning Alumni Network continue to play a vital role in creating and preserving connections between NGOs from China and Europe for many years to come!

Christian Hänel
Senior Vice President
Future Issues and Foundation Development
Robert Bosch Stiftung

Katharina Semmler
Director
Centre for International Programmes
Stiftung Mercator



Content

Greetings	3
<i>Christian Hänel and Katharina Semmler</i>	
Editors note	5
<i>Li Xiajie, Mathias Claeys Bouuaert, Joanna Klabisch, Christian Straube</i>	
Enabling spaces of global civil society cooperation in China	6
<i>Christian Straube, Joanna Klabisch</i>	
EU-China NGO Twinning Participants	12
Social and Environmental Justice Twinning Reports	13
Yunnan Green Environment Development Foundation (YGF) & GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice e.V.	13
Luohu Social Innovation Center (Laotu) & Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V.	17
Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work & Foundation Institute for Socio-Economic Balance (IRSE)	21
Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center & Südwind Österreich, Verein für Entwicklungspolitik und globale Gerechtigkeit	25
Beijing Chaoyang Kangzhong Health and Education Center (Health for All) & Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS)	29
China Electronics Standardization Association (CESA) & Powershift e.V.	32
Shanshui Conservation Center & Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen e.V. (BUND NRW)	35
Climate Change and Low Carbon Development	40
China Green Carbon Foundation (CGCF) & Fern	40
Coshare Environment & Grüne Liga	44
Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology (SEE) Foundation & Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G)	48
Laukai Conservation & Center for Environment (Czzc)	52
Greenovation Hub (Ghub) & Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G)	54
About the organizers	59



Editors Note

The final year of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program revealed the great variety of our dialogue program for Chinese and European civil society organizations – its challenges and creative outcomes but also its limitations. The multitude of different topics twinning program participants engaged in, proved once more that constructive cooperation between China and Europe is still possible in these times of heightened political polarization in the world. At the same time, we as organizers have to retain the fact that processes of registration, coordination, implementation and reporting have become more complex and time consuming. The 2017 law to manage activities of international NGOs in China lead to an increase of so-called 'temporary activities' as compared to new permanent 'representative offices'. The EU-China NGO Twinning Program was among these 'temporary activities', tapping the full potential of the space available for international NGO dialogue, exchange and cooperation.

We received around thirty single and joint applications from ten European countries and eight Chinese provinces. Organizations from Beijing, Guangzhou and Germany were most strongly represented among the participants. However, a rising interest was seen in countries from the European Southeast such as Romania and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Everyone was eager to set out for the twinning experience with European twinning partners generally arriving in China in August 2019. One of the final 24 participants stood out by taking the train all the way from Brussels to her twinning partner in Beijing, a trip that took many days but did reduce her carbon footprint. Two workshops in China's and Germany's capital provided the program participants with the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas, develop their skills and insights.

From a global perspective, international civil society organizations are encountering a greater presence of Chinese organizations in their project countries. Four China-related trends have been identified and were reflected in our participants: changes in Chinese investment and development finance under the Belt and Road Initiative; China's aspirations to become a global technology leader; the internationalization of Chinese civil society actors; and China's growing influence on global governance and the United Nations system.

The 2019 twinning program participants worked in the thematic fields of afforestation and low carbon development, environmental education and community service, water source protection, HIV/AIDS, green finance and supply chains. The Twinning Alumni Network (TAN) has grown to over 150 people from Chinese and European civil society organizations. Current twinning partners and alumni presented their cooperation projects at the Robert Bosch Foundation in Berlin. They were present at the COP25 in Madrid and in the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Globalization keeps on triggering different reactions from states and civil society actors, who attempt to tackle its local origins and consequences. The EU-China NGO Twinning Program remained a platform for organizations engaged in dialogue to build trust across political systems, identify common goals and find cooperative solutions. However, the program also revealed the larger challenges of organizational development, intercultural expertise and universal values.

Jointly edited by
Christian Straube
Li Xiajie
Mathias Claeys Bouuaert
Joanna Klabisch



Enabling spaces of civil society cooperation with China

The 2019 EU-China NGO Twinning Program was the final round of this unique dialogue program, which has brought together Chinese and European civil society actors over the past seven years. Once again, twelve twinning pairs entered the program's community and enriched civil society dialogue between China and Europe with their personalities, expertise and experiences. The final round started with the formal registration and application procedures up to April, the selection process in May, the exchange period to China from July to September and the exchange period to Europe in October and November.

As a recurring element of the program, the organizers Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, the China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) and Stiftung Asienhaus jointly coordinated two workshops. In Beijing, twinning program participants focused on organizational capacities for internationalization, the identification and framing of potential fields of cooperation and the regulatory structures of Chinese-European civil society dialogue. In Berlin, participants worked on their presentation skills, shared their twinning experiences and contributed their insights to a public event, which officially terminated the EU-China NGO Twinning Program.

Capacity Building Workshop in Beijing, China

The 2019 China workshop was carried out by the three program organizers CAN Europe, CANGO and Stiftung Asienhaus with the help of the Beijing Chaoyang Kangzhong Health and Education Center (Health for All), a 2019 participant twinning with the Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS), from August 6 to 8. The Beijing workshop started with the introduction and opening remarks by Wang Xiangyi, Deputy Executive Director of CANGO (Executive Director since January 2020), Rico Böhm, Project Manager of the Robert Bosch Foundation, Joanna Klabisch and Christian

Straube, China Program Managers of Stiftung Asienhaus, and Mathias Claeys Bouuaert, Network Outreach Coordinator of CAN Europe.

In a first key note, Zhang Qiang, Professor of Public Management and Associate Dean at the School of Social Development and Public Policy of Beijing Normal University, introduced the audience to developments in Chinese government-civil society cooperation in disaster risk reduction. Based on his extensive experience in public service and management as well as research on crisis management and UN agencies service in China, he presented insights into risk governance and cross-sectoral cooperation in times of crisis.

The next session was a world café for the twinning program participants. Separated into different groups based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) "Quality Education", "Gender Equality", "Clean Water and Sanitation", "Climate Action" and "Partnership for the Goals", participants positioned their respective fields of work, identified common goals and sought collaborative approaches to realize them. Groups discussed the SDGs' indicators and the differences in working with indicators in China and Europe.

In the afternoon, EU-China NGO Twinning Program 2018 alumna Sun Xuejiao, Fundraising and Communication Manager at Sichuan Green Foundation, and 2016 alumna Yao Zhilu, Project Manager at Guangzhou Center for Disease Control and Prevention, shared their experiences and insights from the twinning program.

The second workshop day opened with remarks from CANGO's Executive Director Zhao Daxing, Joanna Klabisch, Christian Straube and Mathias Claeys Bouuaert. The audience did not only include program



participants but also guests from various Chinese and international organizations. After showing two videos with impressions from the 2018 Hong Kong alumni meet-up and a joint production by Akim Walta (Berlin Massive), 2013 exchange fellow of Zhang Zhiqi (CHEE Production), Wang Xiangyi presented the history of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program and introduced its core goals to the audience. Participants were 'ambassadors' of civil society cooperation, she remarked. Liang Yuanling, President of the Board of the Beijing Sino-Europe Center of Cultural Exchange, concluded the session with a presentation on a recent Chinese initiative for international civil society cooperation.

In the second keynote of the Beijing workshop, Zhao Daxing spoke on the topic of Chinese social organizations' internationalization. He retraced the history of Chinese organizations as service providers in cooperation with the government and their success in poverty reduction. Chinese organizations were entering new work and regional areas as they entered South-South cooperation. Zhao hinted to their responsibilities that came with an internationalization of Chinese social organizations.

Horst Fabian, Civil Society Ambassador for Europe and China, shifted the focus in the third keynote to Sino-European civil society cooperation. He presented and interpreted the results of a study at the University of Nottingham analyzing European perspectives on the implementation of the Chinese Overseas NGO Law. Fabian retraced how cooperation between Chinese and European NGOs changed under the new law and the administration of the Ministry of Public Security. He concluded that it was necessary for both sides to keep a constructive space for engagement, exchange and cooperation open.

The first afternoon session on August 7 invited current climate change twinning program participants to present their experience. Under the moderation of Xu Jiayi, China Climate Program Research at the World Resource Institute (WRI), Dileimy Orozco Silva (E3G) and Xue Yi (Greenovation Hub), and Julia Christian (Fern) and He Yeyun (China Green Carbon Foundation) spoke about their twinning period and cooperative work.

A discussion on the topic of Gender with Chinese and European perspectives constituted the second afternoon session. Long Jiangwen, former Inspector of the International Department of the All China Women's Federation, invited Yang Hongping (CANGO), Isadora Cardoso (GenderCC), Cai Lingping (Health for All) and Hao Yang (Asia Foundation) to discuss gender work in China and Europe in light of the upcoming 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

On the final day of the workshop, CANGO organized a field trip to the Beijing-based NGO Friends of Nature. After being welcomed by Wang Yuan (2016 alumna) at its low carbon exhibition hall, twinning participants learned how Friends of Nature had started in the neighborhood, and about its campaigns and alternative approaches to urban architecture in Chinese cities. Eventually, the entire group engaged in maintenance work on parts inside and outside of the low carbon exhibition hall.

European program participants continued or started their exchange time in China after the workshop in Beijing. Everyone was looking forward to seeing each other again for the final workshop in Berlin in October.

Capacity Building and Reflection Week in Berlin, Germany

The week from 14 to 19 October 2019 marked the final workshop of the 2019 EU-China NGO Twinning Program. European and Chinese partner organizations as well as numerous alumni gathered one last time for a Capacity Building and Reflection Week in Berlin. Moreover, the week concluded the seven-year EU-China NGO Twinning Program funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung and Stiftung Mercator. Stiftung Asienhaus, CAN Europe and CANGO jointly organized five days of intense exchange and workshop participation.

Set during the exchange period of the Chinese program participants in Europe, the workshop week comprised various side events. It offered several opportunities to promote the EU-China NGO Twinning Program and to facilitate future civil society partnerships. More than ninety people from different Chinese and European organizations and institutions joined the open event at the Robert Bosch Stiftung's Representative Office, concluding a busy workshop week.

With the aim to share insights and ideas about the role of civil society organizations in all areas, the week kicked off with a discussion entitled "Monday on the Couch – Gender in Europe and China" at the International Alumni Center (IAC) of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. The Bosch Alumni Network (BAN) collaboratively hosted the event at the IAC's Community Space. Joanna Klabisch briefly introduced the role and progress of transnational feminist movements, particularly in the scope of climate change. Isadora Cardoso (GenderCC) discussed the latter in more detail following the introduction. Cai Lingping (Health for All Beijing) talked about the structural linkage between the efficiency of climate change policies and the inclusion of women in the formation of such policies on local and national levels.

Structural constraints, imposed by the state and society, were hereby at the center of the panel discussion and the audience's questions. The conversations were continued in a cozy atmosphere over the evening buffet. Generational as well as cultural aspects of gender equality processes played a significant role in the discussion. The Beijing Platform for Action, a milestone for women's rights is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2020.

During the following days, Moritz Meyer, a lecturer from the University of Hamburg, and Darren McVeigh, a private lawyer, conducted an exclusive presentation and interactive formats training for the EU-China NGO Twinning Program participants. They aimed at improving the skills and capacities of civil society organizations to communicate their goals on a local and global level. The trainers applied participatory teaching techniques, combined method training with practice and counselled twinning participants individually.

In the afternoon of October 17, the China Program of Stiftung Asienhaus had organized an exchange of the twinning program participants with Stefan Liebich, Member of the German Parliament for the Left Party,



at the Bundestag. Exchange topics included the history of Berlin, social perspectives on climate change, German climate change policies and Sino-German relations.

During a second field trip the following day, twinning program participants visited the Tempelhofer Feld. The field, an airport before 2008, has ever since become a sphere of civil society engagement. At the “Almende Kontor”, Susanne Jacobs, a landscape architect and urban gardener, introduced the group to one of the largest urban gardening projects in Berlin. Citizens worked hundreds of small garden plots at the Kontor. Susanne’s elaborations ultimately linked up with the previous fieldtrip to Friends of Nature in Beijing. She also touched upon the overarching question of how civil society engagement might improve sustainable urban development in both China and Europe.

Finally, EU-China NGO Twinning Program participants presented their exchange experiences and discussed their work in the context of European-Chinese civil society cooperation at an open event at the Robert Bosch Stiftung’s Berlin Representative Office on October 18. The introductions by Rico Böhm, Caspar

Welbergen, Project Manager at Stiftung Mercator, Joanna Klabisch and Christian Straube as well as by the international collaborators Zhao Daxing and Mathias Claeys Bouuaert emphasized once more the mutual gains of international civil society cooperation in the spectrum of climate change as well as sustainable development. Transnational approaches and collaborations can only succeed when NGOs have the space, resources and capacities to learn from each other’s expertise.

Three program participant presentations followed the welcome addresses. Participants focused on the experiences and challenges within the NGO exchange as well as the shared practices of climate change engagement in their respective local target communities. Viktor Bjelić, Vice President of the Center for Environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, shared his impressions about the public awareness campaigns of his Chinese twinning NGO Laukai Conservation. The Chinese NGO invites locals for fishing and filtering activities in the nearby riverbanks to show them the consequences of water pollution. Together with his exchange fellow Zhang Jiayi, Project Manager at Laukai Conservation, Bjelić elaborated on the possibility to transfer this citizen-oriented approach to his own community in Banja Luka. In contrast, Zhang Jiayi focused on the interpersonal and organizational aspects of the exchange program. She addressed the structural challenges of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program with regard to questions of personal socialization, work culture, intercultural communication and gender issues.

The following exchange fellows, Dai Huxuan, Primary Observer at the Shanshui Conversation Center, and Achim Hertzke, Board Member of the German BUND NRW, shared their key learning moments from the exchange program. While Dai noted the remarkably different focus of German NGO’s on bee and wildlife





Berlin Panel Discussion with Rebecca Freitag, LU Zhiyao, Sven Hansen and Julia Christian @ Xiyu Yang



Impressions from Berlin © Xiyu Yang

preservation, Hertzke emphasized the diverse infrastructural conditions and challenges of the Chinese civil society's working scope.

Finally, Wan Pak Kin, Officer at the Labour Education and Service Network (LESN), and Matthias Haberl, Education Consultant from the Austrian NGO Südwind, talked about their continued partnership and cooperation experiences since participating in the EU-China NGO Twinning Program in 2018. With a focus on labor rights and the strengthening of worker's self-organization, Kin and Haberl presented their mutual capacity building initiatives to maintain their sustainable, trans-border partnership.

The International Civil Society Centre's (ICSC) presentation on transnational civil society cooperation followed the exchange of EU-China NGO Twinning Program experiences. The Center's project focused on strategically developing ties between Chinese and globally active civil society organizations. Vicky Tongue, ICSC Program Manager, and Bertram Lang, Research Fellow at Goethe University, explored possible guidelines for Chinese-European NGO cooperation in the context of contemporary Chinese politics. Based on the outcomes from the "Scanning the Horizon" platform, Tongue and Lang presented their

recommendations for an efficient, global China strategy. It included a cross-sectoral approach, a stronger reference to UN commitments as well as new Chinese fundraising strategies despite legal restrictions in China. The aim is to enable and empower civil societies to deal with the impacts of the growing influence of China on global governance and the UN system.

Oliver Radtke, Senior Project Manager at the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Joanna Klabisch and Christian Straube opened the panel discussion on climate change and its implications for civil society. Sven Hansen, taz journalist and Asia Desk editor, moderated the discussion. Hansen welcomed and introduced Lu Zhiyao, Program Manager at the SEE Foundation, Rebecca Freitag, German UN Youth Delegate on Sustainable Development, and Julia Christian, Forest Policy Advisor at Fern. The panelists elaborated on various challenges of climate change activism such as the potential generational gap in the prioritization of the topic or the misuse of activist rhetoric by corporate enterprises for goals of reputation building.

The day ended with final words by Stiftung Asienhaus. Joanna Klabisch and Christian Straube looked back on seven years of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program. They recalled the program's challenges and



ZHAO Daxing, CANGO and Oliver Radtke, RBS © Xiyu Yang

contributions as well as the long-lasting, international partnerships it created. An evening buffet with more conversations and exchanges among the program participants, supporters and audience members concluded the evening.

An alumni workshop for previous participants of the EU-China NGO Twinning Program closed the workshop week in Berlin on October 19. Former twinning program participants discussed opportunities and challenges in developing an efficient network at the International Alumni Center (IAC) of the Robert

Bosch Stiftung. More than 150 people are part of the Twinning Alumni Network (TAN). Several have already started their own follow-up projects. They have contributed significantly to promoting mutual trust and an exchange of ideas between Chinese and European civil society organizations.

Although the EU-China NGO Twinning Program has ended with this seventh generation in 2019/2020, we remain faithful to enhanced civil society cooperation between China and Europe in the near future. It is needed more than ever.

EU-China NGO Twinning Participants

In 2019 the following organizations and topics were included in the Twinning Program:

“Social and Environmental Justice” Twinners		
Chinese Organization	European Organization	Focus Topic
Yunnan Green Environment Development Foundation <i>YUAN Jia</i>	GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice e.V. <i>Isadora Cardoso Vasconcelos</i>	Gender and urbanity, community development and climate change
Luohu Social Innovation Center <i>LUO Yi</i>	Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V. <i>Karin Stark & Joachim Walzer</i>	Environmental education for children, community development
Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work <i>LÜ Xiaohong</i>	Foundation Institute for Socio-Economic Balance <i>Katarzyna Błasińska</i>	Child and youth education, community work
Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center <i>LUO Lijun</i>	Südwind Österreich, Verein für Entwicklungspolitik und globale Gerechtigkeit <i>Angelika Derfler</i>	Environmental education
Beijing Chaoyang Kangzhong Health and Education Center <i>CAI Lingping</i>	Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS) <i>Daniel Stefan Cojocaru</i>	HIV/AIDS education amongst youth
China Electronics Standardization Association <i>YANG Jing</i>	Powershift e.V. <i>Merle Groneweg</i>	CSR, supply chain due diligence
Shanshui Conservation Center <i>DAI Huxuan</i>	BUND für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen e.V. <i>Achim Hertzke</i>	Climate change adaptation, environmental education

“Climate Change” Twinners		
Chinese Organization	European Organization	Focus Topic
China Green Carbon Foundation <i>HE Yeyun</i>	Fern <i>Julia Christian</i>	Forest restoration, forestry and climate change
Coshare Environment <i>HE Hong</i>	Grüne Liga <i>Michael Bender</i>	Water sustainability, environmental education
Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology <i>LU Zhiyao</i>	Third Generation Environmentalism <i>Jennifer Tollmann</i>	Low carbon development and climate change
Laukai Conservation <i>ZHANG Jiayi</i>	Center for Environment (Czzc) <i>Viktor Bjelić</i>	Water source protection
Greenovation Hub <i>XUE Yi</i>	Third Generation Environmentalism <i>Dileimy Orozco Silva</i>	Green finance and climate change

European participants resided in China from July to September 2019, while the Chinese participants resided in Europe from October to November 2019. What follows are the Twinning Program reports by the participating organizations and Twinning fellows.

Social and Environmental Justice Twinning Reports

Yunnan Green Environment Development Foundation (YGF), Kunming & GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice, Berlin

The exchange consisted of sharing information between the twinningers and their colleagues, with each participant completing a four-week stay in the other organization, where they experienced in detail the content and practice of managing a climate project. In Isadora's case, she was able to visit Tengchong, the site where one of YGF's community development projects is currently taking place, whereas Jia could experience the methodological background of GenderCC's flagship project, the Gender into Urban Climate Change Initiative, while also being able to take part in daily decision-making and management tasks, such as team meetings and GenderCC board elections. She learned more about how climate justice and gender issues are intertwined, and how GenderCC design and implement projects, as well as conduct their ideas based on the global network. After the exchange, YGF intends to broaden and open up work perspectives on gender and climate change.

YGF hosting Isadora Cardoso in Kunming

The exchange was an opportunity to explore points of contact and potential collaborations between GenderCC and YGF, design further approaches based on the organizations' fields of expertise, including climate and environmental protection, low-carbon urban development and community sustainable development. Planned collaborations include the promotion of the GAMMA methodology to strengthen gender-responsive urban and national climate policy in further cities/countries, networking and knowledge sharing on sustainable community development with a gender perspective and joint advocacy at the international level, especially at the UNFCCC conferences, social contexts including family structures, gender equality and equity, and finally each other's respective working approaches.



Jia and Isadora at the YGF office © YUAN Jia

Activities

Isadora participated in: team meetings with YGF staff; exchange presentations, where she presented GenderCC's work and main projects and YGF's staff presented theirs; proofreading YGF's English website; meeting other twinning participants; field visits to one of YGF's projects in Tengchong; lunches and dinners with YGF's staff and partners.

Outcome and Impact

The exchange was a great entry into the Chinese NGO landscape, especially in the environmental and climate field. For GenderCC, it was extremely important to establish a deep connection with YGF and learn the challenges, opportunities and modes of work of climate NGOs in the country, also considering that both YGF and GenderCC have about ten years of experience. GenderCC was also enthusiastic to share its knowledge and experience in gender and climate justice, topics which appeared to be new to most of YGF's staff, and which we hope will be incorporated into YGF's work.

GenderCC considers Jia's participation in the international sphere of climate negotiations a great result of this exchange. Jia is one of the first Chinese participants to join the UNFCCC Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) through GenderCC's delegation. Moreover, Jia's engagement in GenderCC's international network is also a great outcome of this project, as she is the first Chinese member the organization ever had. Members are informed about GenderCC's work and projects, current studies and opportunities in the field of gender and climate change, and provided with the chance to network among themselves, creating opportunities for elaborating joint projects and alliances.

GenderCC hosting YUAN Jia in Berlin

YGF is an environmental protection organization with ten years of experience. Starting from the forestry carbon sequestration project, it always pays attention to working methods and project designs that take into account the community, climate and biodiversity. YGF has significant and deep experience in forests and climate, and has many years of practice in species conservation. However, despite many years of practice, there is still a lack of a complete theoretical system to support and guide the work of YGF in the next years. Therefore, through the exchange, understanding the project design and ambitions of GenderCC, as well as their experience in implementing and developing projects in different countries was a considerable benefit to YGF, especially in expanding its international vision, local influence and popularity.



Feeling energized at the GenderCC office © Isadora Cardoso Vasconcelos

Personally, Jia hoped to learn and practice different concepts and methods of environmental protection and low carbon development, to design more diverse and long-lasting effects for the cities and people we serve through our projects.

Activities

Jia participated in: the study of theoretical knowledge and methodology used by GenderCC in its projects; the daily work of GenderCC; supporting the preparation of a webinar discussion for one of GenderCC's ongoing projects, "Not without us! Gender Justice and Climate Justice in International Climate Policies".

Topics learned include: Gender Equality and Climate Change interrelations; Women and the Environment; terms involved in the Gender into Urban Climate Change Initiative (GUCCI) project: Androcentrism, Carbon footprint, Care economy; concepts of Climate Justice; GenderCC's work incorporating transportation, gender and climate change.

Events attended: team meetings with GenderCC staff; COP25 preparatory webinar organized by the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC); GenderCC internal training on the metabolism of a city, addressing the basics of climate change in urban spaces; visiting the Futurium museum in Berlin, which focuses on sustainability, environmental and societal issues; goodbye dinner with GenderCC staff in Berlin.

Outcome and Impact

As the most important lesson of the exchange and the excellent twinner, YGF has learned about climate justice and women's participation in climate governance. These examples and theoretical methods are still very new to China. This is an opportunity to introduce climate justice concepts incorporating China's national conditions, thereby broadening NGO's methods in tackling climate change.

In the past, when implementing sustainable development projects in rural communities, YGF also paid attention to the fact that local women have unique ideas about the usage and protection of forest resources. However, due to the lack of theoretical support, this was not formalized.



Group photo at the China Pavilion at COP25 © YUAN Jia

Another important aspect is the interaction between climate justice and transportation. Only through developing a vision can YGF meet more opportunities and prepare for environmental challenges.

Thanks to the exchange program a bridge has been built between GenderCC and YGF, which not only spans Chinese and European approaches and practical experience in environmental protection and climate change, but also lays the foundation for a deep friendship and connection. As GenderCC's first Chinese member, Jia hopes to be more involved in their projects in the future and update YGF's methodologies.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The follow-up project focused on introducing a civil society representative from China to the Women and Gender Constituency of the UNFCCC through the guidance of GenderCC; as well as promoting knowledge and experience exchange between the project participants and WGC members.

With the follow-up project, the participation of Jia in COP25 was made possible. She attended the second week, 9 to 13 of December 2019. Before attending the Conference, Jia took part in a one-day training

on gender in the UNFCCC process, provided by the WGC. Jia learned the basics of the Convention and its negotiation sessions, the most important agenda issues at stake during COP25 as well as advocacy strategies used by the Constituency. On December 9, Jia participated in a side event on the theme of "Global Collaborations of Nature-based Solution: Demonstration and Knowledge Exchange for the Future", jointly organized by Chinese Civil Society Organizations. On December 10, Jia took part in the China Pavilion series side event on "Nature-Based Solutions: Best Practices and Cooperation to address Climate Change". In both side events, Jia learned about Nature Based Solutions and how to apply them.

On December 13, Isadora and Jia were invited to speak at a side event organized by CANGO at the China Pavilion on public participation in climate governance. In the panel discussion on "How civil society mobilizes public participation", where they showcased how civil society participation, including target groups of projects managed by them, is important to the success and sustainability of any climate project or action. With Isadora's guidance, Jia also participated in the daily caucus meetings of the Women and Gender Constituency and followed some of the negotiations, especially the Lima work program on gender and the gender action plan, which

was renewed and approved during COP25. This daily exchange and engagement with the WGC and its members was also interesting for the WGC to expand its demands and advocacy methods, so that they are more inclusive of different regional perspectives, participants and viewpoints.

It is expected that Jia's engagement in the international climate sessions is continued and that her engagement in that forum can contribute to furthering YGF's international prominence and mandate, as well as contributing to making the WGC and the UNFCCC a more inclusive space, in terms of region, gender and age. She believes that civil society can play the role of pioneer, providing practical experience for local governments when formulating protection plans, thereby moving more social forces to participate in actions on climate change.

The follow-up project and GenderCC gave YGF the opportunity to attend international conferences to present its environmental protection achievements, which plays a crucial role in recognizing YGF's work and boosting the organization's confidence, making them realize the importance of publicity and going global, which will play a positive role in its future. At the same time, this opportunity also provided valuable experience for YGF to actively participate in the CBD COP15 to be held in Kunming in 2020.

Last but not least, YGF is a local NGO, but its focus is also on the UN's sustainability goals. GenderCC's global work model and methodology can promote YGF's ability to go global, and it will also be an opportunity for GenderCC to explore Chinese projects. We all look forward to it.

INFOBOX

Yunnan Green Environment Development Foundation (YGF)

was established in 2008 and mainly engages in environmental protection, focusing on biodiversity, community sustainable development and forest protection. They act on a technical/advisory level as well as engaging in concrete restoration and protection activities. They became a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2018.

YUAN Jia

graduated from Yunnan University with a master's degree in Anthropology in 2017, focusing on youth culture and art. She had worked in a governmental position for three years beforehand. In 2018, she joined YGF and is now responsible for the project of low carbon ecological villages in nature reserves.

GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice e.V.

is a global network of organizations, experts and activists working for gender equality, women's rights and climate justice. GenderCC has evolved in the context of the international climate negotiations (UNFCCC). It includes women and gender experts working on policy, research and practical implementation at international, national and local levels from all world regions.

Isadora Cardoso Vasconcelos

earned a master's degree in globalization and development studies from Maastricht University and is currently working at the intersection of gender equality and climate justice as a project coordinator at GenderCC. Working on UN programs before she joined GenderCC, she has accumulated a wealth of experience on project and knowledge management, outreach and advocacy, qualitative research, fundraising and support to multi-stakeholder processes.

Luohu Social Innovation Center (Laotu), Shenzhen & Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V., Tübingen

Our exchange focused on the topic of forest education. The main goal of the exchange was to learn more about the specific conditions that are needed to implement forest education in the different contexts of China and Germany.

Laotu hosting Karin Stark & Joachim Walzer in China

We started our tour in Beijing. We gave a workshop about forest kindergarten education with Friends of Nature at Dan Xiang Jie – a bookstore, and we took part in a family farm day project. At these events, we met parents and teachers, who have a particular interest in connecting children more closely with nature.

Our next stop was Lichuan, Hubei. The local administrative government invited us to present our concept of forest education to several hundred preschool teachers. In collaboration with Laotu and the Lichuan administrative officials, we held a two-day forest education workshop with 50 “left behind” children in a rural community near Lichuan.



Group photo after a day of outdoor education © LUO Yi

From Lichuan we continued our trip to Chengdu. There we spent some days in the nearby mountains and joined a children's summer camp at an impressive regional forest education center. We took part in activities in the forest, saw how children made traditional bean curd (tofu) at a local farm and exchanged ideas about forest education practices with teachers.

After that came two workshops in the marvelous water protection park Huoshui in Chengdu, with children and parents. We had the opportunity to introduce and practice some of our ideas about outdoor education.

In a neighborhood center in Chengdu, we gave a short presentation on our way of forest education in Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen in collaboration with Laotu and Roots & Shoots.

Finally, we arrived at our last destination near Shenzhen, “China's Silicon Valley”. We went to a village neighborhood center and tried once again to introduce some of our forest education methods in a summer camp workshop for children during two days' time, with support from the local administration on the topics of arts and environmental protection.

Outcome and Impact

Putting into practice our forest education ideas in China was challenging. The main problem we faced was that the forest, in the areas we visited, was very different from the typical German forest. It was not possible to leave footpaths and go into the forest, because it was very muddy, overgrown by weeds and very steep. One of the reasons for this difference might be that most of the forests in these areas are younger than 35 years so that there was not enough time for the development of big trees, soft forest soil and lying deadwood.

Another problem was that the children were not used to coping with mosquitoes and did not wear long trousers and shirts to keep them away.

During the rare times when we actually managed to be in a natural environment with children, we saw that Chinese children could get in contact with nature (soil, plants and insects) just as easily as German children do, once they were allowed to explore it. We were very happy when we saw that some of the children made really unexpected experiences by catching and observing insects or walking barefoot in a small river.



Meeting Roots & Shoots in Chengdu © LUO Yi

Many of the parents and teachers we met at our presentations expressed interest in our educational approach, but also stated that it did not fit the Chinese education system, which apparently follows a much more intellectually oriented approach early on. Creative free play, which has an important place in German preschool education, is not very common or popular in China. As was explained to us occasionally, the natural environment is felt to be dangerous and people seem to fear that children may be harmed if they play in nature.

Nevertheless, there are approaches to implement forest education in China. In Beijing, there is a monthly forest education group and an educational farm project for parents and children. In Chengdu, there is a small forest kindergarten in an abandoned farming area and the summer camp in the mountains we visited.

Despite these difficulties, we learned a lot from our trip to China. When we got into confusing situations, our Chinese partners helped us in a really positive, pragmatic and pleasant way. Their flexible and cooperative way of thinking led us to better understand what is possible and realistic in a specific situation and helped us see potential and possibilities instead of obstacles to implementing forest education in China.

Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V. hosting LUO Yi

During my time in Europe:

Around Tübingen—

- 1) Visited Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V. Tübingen: Learned about free play and forest kindergarten pedagogy
- 2) Visited other local kindergartens in Herrenberg (with Karin)
- 3) Visited another Waldkindergarten in Tübingen: Waldschafe (with Karin)
- 4) Visited an animal shelter project called Lebenshof "tierLIEBE" (with Karin and Achim)
- 5) Visited educational farming project Lishof in Reutlingen (with Achim)
- 6) Visited one of the first youth farms in Germany Jugendfarm Möhringen close to Stuttgart
- 7) Met with Green Party official Ms. Susanne Bächer (with Karin)
- 8) Engaged in discussions about sexual abuse of children in Germany and China at Achim's office - Landkreis Reutlingen Beratungsstelle für Jugend und Erziehungsfragen (with Achim)
- 9) Visited the organic store Marktladen in Tübingen, a cooperation with regional farms
- 10) Visited Schönbuch nature center (with Achim)



Joachim engaging the children © Joachim Walzer

- 11) Visited a community theater group led by Helga Kröplin (with Achim)
- 12) Visited a special eco house (with Achim)
- 13) Met with Professor Achim Mittag, Professor of Chinese Language, Literature and Philosophy at the University of Tübingen

Around Berlin—

- 1) Met with Paula Nerlich, who designs bioplastic from food leftovers
- 2) Went to a school that hosts a support network for social innovation communities

Around Cologne/Bonn—

- 1) Visited Bund Heimat und Umwelt in Deutschland e.V. (BHU) and CIVILSCAPE
- 2) Visited Stiftung Asienhaus

Around Brussels—

- 1) Visited Fern
- 2) Visited CCAN
- 3) And many zero-waste cafes and organic markets in various locations

Outcome and Impact

My trip to Germany helped me understand some of the German/European approach to nature and how they deal with nature and forests in a special way. I also came to understand how forest kindergartens

and other ideas about nature education developed throughout history and how they function in German settings.

It is really inspiring to see education being a part of a green lifestyle in Germany, rather than just education in and of itself. This approach to education would be cutting-edge in the Chinese setting, although challenging to implement. It is also inspiring to see how forest education can be combined with psychological therapy and related topics.

Our twinning program also illustrates how nature in China can be different from that in Germany, as well as practices of natural education. This can be seen from the distinct natural landscape in China, official management by policies, and public understanding of nature due to China's specific social environment.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

During our exchange, it was not clear what our future cooperation could be. Now we have some ideas and are looking forward to working them out more specifically.

Based on our understanding of German and Chinese nature education and kindergarten education conditions, we would love to deepen the dialogue between educators as well as share practices, introducing more opportunities for Chinese children to engage with nature. We will organize a forum for such dialogue, design and customize innovative, in-depth courses and trips for parents, teachers, and children. We are piloting practices to adapt German ideas to Chinese settings, including natural therapy, free play and exercises to enhance practical skills for kids, and we design the practices to be in forests rather than indoors.

We also hope to use digital web courses to inspire and attract a larger Chinese audience along the way, and we may use policy advocacy to align with the government to support our ideas.

Luohu Social Innovation Center (Laotu)

is a social enterprise that was founded at the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Chicago and is now based in Shenzhen. Laotu promotes responsible consumption and new sustainable development schemes for China and the world. Based on storytelling, it provides a platform for ecologically produced agricultural products to reach urban customers, and helps to connect rural and urban residents via ecotourism and educational programs.

LUO Yi

grew up in China and lived in the US for five years while obtaining a Master of Arts in Social Sciences at the University of Chicago and Bachelor of Arts Dual Major in History and Environmental Analysis from Claremont McKenna College. She worked for the Worldwatch Institute, Sierra Club and Friends of Nature among others and has led various research projects on China's rural sustainable development, American and Chinese national parks and nature preserves. Since 2016, Luo Yi has been initiating the social enterprise Laotu in rural China.

Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen e.V.

was founded 23 years ago, the second of its kind in Germany. It was the first to offer afternoon service as well and also has a group for primary school children. The kindergarten is integrated and aims to provide an environment for the children to experience nature and develop their imagination. It also offers masters courses on forest education.

Karin Stark

has been involved in pre-school education since right after school. Whether as a pre-school or kindergarten teacher, she has decades of experience in Germany and abroad. After gaining her diploma in pedagogics from Tübingen University in 2007, she returned to Waldkindergarten Eichhörnchen.

Joachim Walzer

is a certified pedagogue with long experience in family therapy and counseling. Currently working in Reutlingen, he has a focus on patchwork families.

Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work, Hohhot & Foundation Institute for Socio-Economic Balance (IRSE), Gdańsk

The exchange focused on the field of children and youth, in which both institutions work, as well as on utilizing non-formal methods of education in the work of NGOs. This exchange program created an opportunity to increase both their experience in the field of non-formal education, learning methods and techniques applicable to the local education system and youth growth, and the possibility of including non-formal education in different institutional contexts. The exchange gave an insight on youth education and policy in Poland and China, stimulating better understanding between both countries.

Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work hosting Katarzyna Błaśńska in Hohhot

Cooperation with a Chinese organization helped create and develop educational tools, materials, and content incorporating the Chinese experience and perspective. During the exchange, I could share my knowledge about non-formal methods of education and intercultural communication, as well as management skills. I could help create new tools, organize local events or help develop the organization, especially in the field of international cooperation. I used my experience to train the hosting organization in possibilities of applying for international grants, international project management, and cooperation with partners. The knowledge gained during the exchange will be used in my work, during training, lectures and workshops about intercultural communication. The exchange developed my professional skills and created new perspectives for the future.

Activities

At the start of the exchange, I took part in a meeting with Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work workers board, trainers and co-workers, where I had a chance to introduce our Foundation IRSE and give a presentation about non-formal education. We discussed the possibility of using some non-formal methods of education in working with youths and stu-

dents. I had a meeting with the community president and visited a social center and workshops. I also facilitated four workshops:

1. Volunteering management: workshop for volunteer coordinators aimed at sharing the experience volunteering in Europe and worldwide, as well as developing practical skills helpful in managing the volunteers' work in NGOs. During the workshop participants learned in practical exercises and tasks based on their experience and knowledge. They had an opportunity to think about volunteering in their own organization based on volunteers' needs.
2. Project design: workshop for NGO representatives aimed at developing competence in project design. During the workshop participants learned how to define the problem, find the project's goals and its results in practice, as well as how to choose the most suitable activities. They also got to know Polish examples of doing social diagnosis and facts about NGOs in Poland.
3. Strengthening the leaders' competencies: workshop for local activists aimed at increasing their competencies in the field of group work. During the workshop, participants discovered the competencies of a good leader, trained their active listening and reflected on the situation of vulnerable groups.



The intercultural communication workshop © Katarzyna Błaśńska

4. Intercultural communication: workshop aimed at introducing the fundamental principles and issues of intercultural communication. It proposed to develop a perception of and appreciation for different cultural perspectives and values.

I also took part in the competition of social projects organized by Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work as a juror. The event was designed for social organizations from the Hohhot region, which could present their project ideas, based on the local needs. A set of academics and representatives of organizations from different cities evaluated the ideas and chose the best, which will be presented to the ministry.

Further, I had a chance to see the daily work of the organization, working meetings, negotiation about new projects and conceptual work on their new topic, which was Gender.

Outcome

The exchange was a very enriching experience in my professional and private life. Thanks to the five week stay in China, I had an opportunity to observe the daily work of a social organization, how they prepare a project, analyze the target group's needs, as well as understanding the general way these organizations

work in China. In the project competition, I understood that the needs and activities are already defined, so the organizations work in the given frames. I developed my trainer's skills in working with a translator and with a group from a very different background. The four workshops received good feedback and for many participants it was their first time encountering non-formal methods of education.

I came back a bit more aware of Chinese culture, behaviors and values, which I use in my work with immigrants from China. My motivation to get to know more about Chinese culture, work, and organization increased and I am looking for possibilities to continue the cooperation with China.

IRSE Foundation hosting LÜ Xiaohong in Gdańsk

This project helped me understand how foreign non-profit social organizations carry out projects and maintain institutional development. Hohhot is located in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, which is a relatively underdeveloped area. I hope that through this exchange, we can advance our experience, promote the development of local non-profit social organizations, and provide better social services for the Hohhot area.



The panel awaits a presentation © LÜ Xiaohong



Presenting non-formal education © Katarzyna Błasińska

This project reinforced my personal and work experience. Of course, this exchange is only the beginning. I hope that through this exchange, we can open up communication and cooperation between us and foreign non-profit organizations, learn from each other, and jointly promote the improvement of people's lives.

Activities

During the exchange, I had the possibility to participate in local and international activities implemented by IRSE Foundation.

The first one was an international training course in the project „SparkSEEDs: Empowering Youth Learning Communities“. It aims to develop a community based non-formal educational ecosystem with the aim of promoting and supporting the regular offer of extra-curricular activities, dedicated to and attended by youths, by capitalizing endogenous resources in a crossed approach between the youths' main interests & needs and the most pressing societal challenges. The five days training in Gdańsk was a space of learning, sharing experiences and discussing possibilities of using active methods of education at school and in youth centers. We reflected the importance of networking and cooperation with the local government, based on this experience. Looking for inspirations and good practices in the work with youths, participants visited Primary School no 28 in Gdańsk, Mrowisko - Centrum Reduta, Youth Point, Wymiennikownia and Teatr Gdynia Główna. The meetings were a space for discussion, getting to know each other and conversations about possibilities of involving youth in local activities.

During the next week, I took part in the Polish-Lithuanian Youth Exchange „Let's take care of our common future“, a project raising global education issues. For six days, young people from Poland and Lithuania studied and discussed challenges in the area of human rights, migration, ecology and sustainable development. We visited an organization dealing with the fight against discrimination, Stowarzyszenie WAGA, and a zero-waste café, cieKAWA kawiarnia Gdańsk, which employs people with disabilities. Young people also had the opportunity to get to know the city by playing a city game, thanks to DIY workshops in halo kultura, learn to sow gloves from recycled material and get to know each other's countries and culture during an intercultural evening.

I also participated in school workshops in Gdańsk. The topic of the workshops was migration and I gave a presentation about China and Hohhot.

I visited Gdańsk University, where I met academics working in Eastern Studies and held a lecture for students learning Chinese. I also visited the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk to talk about cooperation opportunities with the University of Inner Mongolia and to conduct workshops for students of pedagogy.

Outcome and Impact

The exchange gave me an opportunity to see how European organizations work. I got to know a lot of new people dealing with social issues and education and saw their way of engaging youth groups. I could meet kids of different ages in schools, universities and in the activities out of school. I saw their behaviors, attitude, and contact with peers and older people. I realized how much work non-formal education needs to prepare and implement all the methods, but I also saw that it made kids and youths interested in the topic and actively involved in the classes. I met academics from the Gdańsk University and from the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk and we spoke about the possibility of cooperating with Inner Mongolia University, where I work. I also gave a workshop for students and they were satisfied with it.

I struggled a lot because of the language, but I solved the problem with translators and Chinese living in Gdańsk.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

We would like to cooperate with Gdańsk University and Pomeranian Academy and sign a cooperation agreement. Maybe we can implement a student's exchange or we can invite academics for lectures. We

were talking with Katarzyna about setting up workshops at Inner Mongolia University, introducing the students to non-formal education. We like this way of work and would like to show it to our colleagues and students. But language barriers still present significant hurdles to implementing cooperation.

INFOBOX

Ruilian Kaizhou Development Centre of Social Work

was established in December 2014 and is a non-profit social service organization registered with the Hohhot Civil Affairs Bureau. The organization is committed to fairness, justice, participation and mutual assistance, and provides professional social services and policy support for Hohhot. The organization has undertaken 28 government projects and raised significant funds. Its focuses are social organization incubation, grade evaluation, life education and Satir workshops. The organization is currently operating the Hohhot Social Organization Innovation Service Base.

LÜ Xiaohong

obtained her master's degree at the University of Bremen. She has been teaching social work at Inner Mongolia University for over 20 years. In 2014, she registered the Hohhot Ruilian Kaizhou Development Center of Social Work to undertake social service projects. She brings practical experience into the classroom while developing the organization to enrich and update professional content and skills.

The Foundation Institute for Socio-Economic Balance (IRSE)

aims to create conditions conducive to the development of informal education and to disseminate the concept of life long learning. The Foundation realizes its goals through educational activities focused on the development of social and civic activity of all social groups and institutions operating in this space. IRSE Foundation has worked with kids and youths, using non-formal methods of education, for a very long time. It implements international youth exchanges, workshops at schools and after school activities, which create spaces for discussion, sharing experiences and learning by doing.

Katarzyna Błasińska

is a founding member of IRSE Foundation, serving on its Board since 2013 and becoming President of the Board in 2019. She graduated in international studies and history and has been working as a project coordinator, animator and trainer for over 10 years. She prepared and lead trainings and workshops in civil and intercultural education, inclusion, project management, group management and working with volunteers. At IRSE Foundation she is responsible for international projects and global education. She is an author of educational materials for students, leaders and teachers about intercultural communication, local development and inclusion.

Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center, Guangzhou & Südwind Österreich, Verein für Entwicklungspolitik und globale Gerechtigkeit, Vienna

Though our organizations seem to have quite different approaches, we found that we had the topic of environmental education in common. So our main aim was to learn from each other and get to know how the other organization works in their specific field.

Angelika Derfler's time in China

When I came to China, I was quite overwhelmed and needed some time to adjust to the rather hot and wet climate. Though my twinning partner had to work a lot and go on research trips, the people working and volunteering at Green City Center gave me a warm welcome. Luckily, I was able to spend some time with another twinning pair, which was located in Guangzhou as well, to learn more about their work.

The main focus of Green City's activities was their annual summer camp, which I also participated in. Together with the people from Green City Center and the participants, I spent one week in a rural village near the mountains. For the first time this camp focused on children and parents, instead of students. I could experience how they engaged with children to make them aware of nature and their environment. We went hiking to collect samples to examine and collected trash to learn about the waste classification system Green City Center is establishing in a different project.

Though it was not easy for me to participate due to the language barrier, I was very impressed by how

they developed a program for the whole week, really getting the children into the different topics connected with environmental protection. But not only that, the children living in the village were also included, so that there was a cultural exchange happening as well.

As I started as a volunteer and activist in my own organization and continue to work with volunteers, my main interest was how organizations deal with this topic in China. I had the chance to visit an organization, which focused on volunteer work. The event they were hosting that evening was to develop different ideas for the different age groups present – there were families with children, teenagers and adults, wanting to do something in their community. Volunteers can register with this organization and they will help them find something suitable, not only in the context of volunteering at an NGO, but also working closely with environmental organizations. I get the impression, that the main volunteer activity is taking place on a community level.

I encountered a completely different approach at an artist collective, which I fortunately was able to visit as well. It was more of an open space, where everybody had room for their art and activities. Apart from being a place to hang out, they also do workshops on clothing, sell the artists' art, cook together and organize and host events like discussions. In this sense, I found many similarities to the way we work on the volunteer/activist level in our association, which I really appreciate, though the self-definition is of course different.



Participants at the Summer Camp © Angelika Derfler

I am really impressed by how many people are doing volunteer work and donating their time, even though it is mandatory for pupils in school to volunteer for a certain amount of hours. The volunteer work I experienced in China is very structured, I have the feeling that volunteers in organizations in Austria are working more independently.

Although I was able to learn a lot about the work of a Chinese environmental organization and also got to learn more about my main focus, volunteering and activism, I think the most lasting impression of this experience is on a personal level. Of course, there are quite a few differences in daily life, but what first struck me were Chinese dimensions. Everything is big and there are always many people.

Most of my time in China, I spent in a city that has way more inhabitants than the whole country I grew up in. Cultural differences mean so much more than only the differences in language and food (though both can be big struggles when you are not used to them), but despite all of that, we are all working for a better world –everybody within their own means and with their own abilities. So we can only profit from exchange and learning what people on the other side of the world are thinking, what their main concerns are and realizing that despite huge cultural differences, we are also not so different at all.

LUO Lijun's time in Austria

In Austria, in addition to Südwind, I also visited Global 2000. Both Südwind and Global 2000 have their own volunteer teams, which have key figures and organize meetings regularly to discuss activity plans. This aspect is quite different from China, because there volunteers usually only take part in, but do not plan the organization's activities.

Many NGO employees in Austria are part-time, but they have signed medium and long-term labor contracts. This mode of employment suits NGOs, as it achieves the purpose of saving costs and also ensures a certain degree of professionalism and stability of employees. Chinese NGOs might learn from this.

NGO environmental education in Austria

Austrian people have a strong awareness of environmental protection, which is attributed to the



Group photo of a workshop organized by the twinnings © LUO Lijun

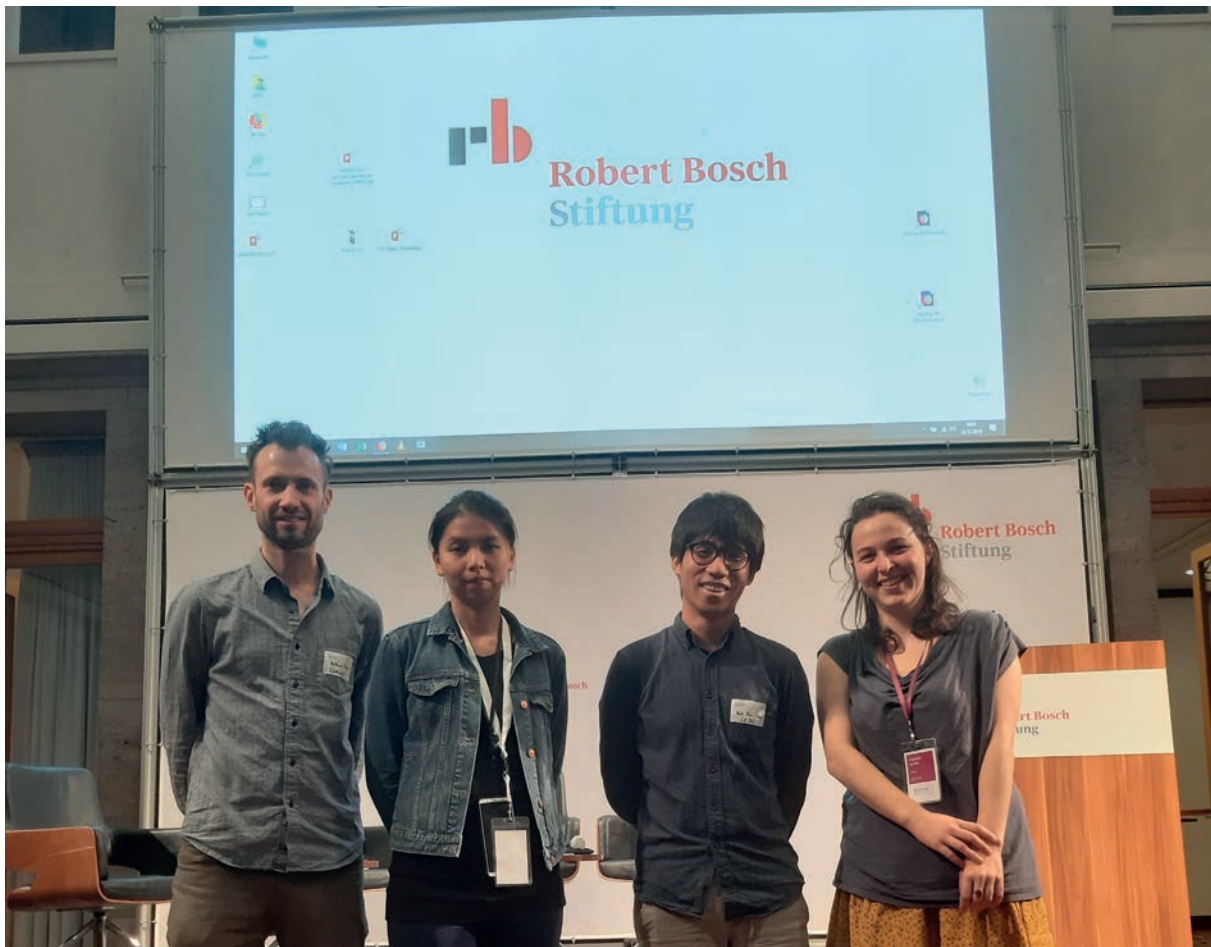
popularization of higher education, but also the environmental education work of NGOs in Austria. Both Südwind and Global 2000 have their own environmental education work focusing on climate change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Südwind is mainly focused on school education, including workshops for students and professional training for teachers. Global 2000 is more about cooperating with experts, holding workshops for local citizens, and having its own team of volunteers carrying out environmental education in schools. All these are systematic and planned. This is a direction for our future work, environmental education in China should be carried out on a larger scale, systematically and in a planned way.

Waste management in Vienna

MA48 is responsible for the entire chain of municipal waste management in Vienna: planning-collection-treatment-disposal. I have to thank MA48 for giving me the opportunity to visit one of their waste incineration plants and for a presentation on Vienna's waste management system. Because of the complexity of the waste management system, I would like to share with you some of the points that impressed me most.

Firstly, I admire the professional and meticulous work of MA48, a municipal department of Vienna. If the municipal departments in China were as professional as MA48, we NGOs who advocate waste management would change our profession.

Secondly, their concept. They advocate waste prevention and reuse, followed by recycling, energy recovery and finally disposal. Every year they have a waste prevention plan, as well as a waste manage-



Meeting alumni in Berlin © Angelika Derfler

ment plan. In China, most government departments are still mostly considering waste management and have no advocacy plan for waste prevention.

When I saw the incineration plant in the center of Vienna, I was shocked! This is unthinkable in China! How much trust is there in MA48? Their answer: „be honest and transparent!“ There are legal restrictions and regulations, and each incinerator publishes its emissions quota online. They are also state-owned, not for profit, using the best equipment and technology.

To ensure quality compost, MA48 only collects raw kitchen waste for composting, while cooked kitchen waste is classified as rest waste. The organic manure generated by the compost is returned to the public free of charge, at a recycling center in each district. For catering enterprises, kitchen waste and municipal green waste is used as bio-gas power generation. A waste fee is only charged on the rest waste, recyclable garbage and other types are collected free of charge.

Finally, I visited the 48-er Tandler: Vienna's municipal re-use shop, where citizens can donate used but usable items to MA48, who then sell them, which can not only improve the utilization rate of items, but also provide a low-price store to citizens in need. Second-hand-shops are quite popular now, so they can sustain themselves.

I believe that the waste management methods I learned in Vienna will inspire me a lot in the future implementation of our waste management project. I highly appreciate that I could participate in the EU-China NGO Twinning Program!

Conclusion

We both appreciate the time we could spend with each other's organizations and learned a lot about the work and struggles NGOs have to face in the different countries. We do not have plans for an immediate joint project, but will definitely keep in touch and keep a good network for future exchange of ideas and opinions.

Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center

was established in 2012 and became a member of IUCN in 2016. GreenCity works on water source conservation as well as better management of protected areas and seeks to engage young people in environmental protection and promote environmental culture. The areas they are working on are the southern part of China, mainly in Guangdong province, the source of Dongjiang River in Jiangxi province, and the Guangdong-Guangxi-Hunan transboundary watershed in Guizhou province.

LUO Lijun

is a project specialist focusing on the topic of waste management. She works to promote solutions for the waste disposal problem and achieve a balance between convenience for humans and the protection of nature. Since she used to work in international trade and finance, she is good at analyzing problems from a perspective of economic feasibility.

Südwind Österreich, Verein für Entwicklungspolitik und globale Gerechtigkeit

is an independent NGO, which collects and distributes information about development topics in order to shape politics and economic structures for a more just global system. Besides their bulletin "Südwind Magazin", they have two main departments, one about education focusing on global education and one about campaigning with partners in Europe and all over the globe. Südwind closely cooperates with international partners to share information in Austria and Europe with various stakeholders, students, teachers, politicians and the wider public.

Angelika Derfler

based on her interest in experiencing different cultures, finished her master's degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology. She has been involved with Südwind since 2013, first as an intern and then as an active volunteer followed by being responsible for coordination of the Südwind Volunteers and taking part in different actions and campaigns of the organization.

Beijing Chaoyang Kangzhong Health and Education Center (Health for All), Beijing & Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS), Bucharest

The purpose of this exchange was to understand how AIDS organizations in Romania and China are providing services and advocating the rights of people living with HIV, MSM (men who engage in sexual acts with men) and IDU (intravenous drug use). Daniel was mainly interested in drug rehabilitation and harm reduction; he visited hospitals that provide harm reduction and MMT (Methadone Maintenance Treatment) centers. Lingping was more concerned with AIDS prevention and education among adolescents, especially how social media affected adolescents. When she was in Bucharest, she met youth representatives and participated in youth leaders' workshop. She shared a high-risk behavior research report about youths in China and introduced the work strategy for Chinese teenagers through social media.

Health for All hosting Daniel Stefan Cojocaru in Beijing

I wanted to understand China's harm reduction programs, as well as the working strategies and conditions of China's AIDS community organizations.

Activities

During my time in China, I had the opportunity to visit many organizations and present the twinning initiative, as well as the work of ARAS to them.

- 1) Visit to BEIJING GAOXIN DETOXIFICATION HOSPITAL: We visited the hospital's facilities and services. The meeting finished with a discussion about Chinese approaches to addiction and voluntary and compulsory drug treatment programs.
- 2) NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS: I witnessed a Narcotics Anonymous meeting and participated in the discussion. We talked about the drug of choice in China, drug treatment programs and explored the patient's point of view. We also spoke about China through the eyes of a drug user and police harassment.
- 3) Visit to HUAYOU HEALTHCARE FACILITY IN BEIJING: We received a presentation of the facility and its



Intense after-work discussion © CAI Lingping

services and had a discussion about addictions and how to tackle them. From a personal point of view this was one of the best facilities I visited in China.

4) Visit to CANGO: We introduced our organizations and discussed the NGO situation in China, the problems encountered "on the way to China" (VISA issues) and finished with a European point of view about China's NGOs.

5) Visit to HEALTH FOR ALL: We discussed HIV awareness, education and approaches to sex education among youths, condom availability and its use. We also tackled the harm reduction services situation in China and Europe.

6) UNAIDS meeting with Zhou Kai (Policy and strategy adviser for UNAIDS CHINA): We debated the Chinese strategy of "Getting to zero", how to reach key populations and how to strengthen HIV prevention and treatment.

7) Visit to TIANJIN SHENLAN Public Health Counseling Service Center: After a high-speed train trip we arrived in Tianjin, where we talked about the services provided for MSM in both organizations, counseling and rapid testing procedures, how to improve a MSM approach, and finished on stigma and discrimination.

8) MSM Club testing facility visit: Over there we saw how the MSM testing facility works.

9) CHINA AIDS WALK MEETING: In this meeting, we talked mostly about PLHIV stigma, discrimination, how to improve fundraising and our goals for the future.

10) BEIJING YOU'AN HOSPITAL: Visit to the infectious disease ward. We exchanged information on the infectious diseases approach and therapy in China, similarities and difficulties between Romanian and Chinese health care services.

Outcome and Impact

Despite the long path, I think that the “China experience” is not only very productive for both societies, but also a very good challenge and skill/experience enhancer. The commitment of both sides combined is wonderful and the results from it are self-explanatory. I hope that the project will be continued in the future, as it's a great asset for both societies and has proven its importance already.

ARAS hosting CAI Lingping in Bucharest

I wanted to learn about the operation and policies of HIV organizations in Romania and the strategies of prevention among high risk populations, as well as the country's attitude towards NGOs and civil society because Romania is a previously socialist country. I'm also interested in the campaigns on Youth AIDS and sex education in Romania, including visiting related organizations and activities.

Activities

- 1) Meeting at Daniel's office, (CRR ARENA – National Institute of Infectious Diseases – Prof. Dr. Matei Balș).
- 2) Office work to establish a work plan and organize Daniel's trip to Beijing.
- 3) ARAS office meeting with colleagues from the team, discussing potential collaboration on social media and adolescents.
- 4) Office work and translation of the description of ARAS to Chinese, discussing the study done by CHAIN on social media and youths in China. Researching existing materials on youth sex and HIV education.
- 5) Visit to ARAS Health Center that provides rapid testing and counseling for high risk populations (most of them are IDUs and sex workers).



At the youth leaders workshop © Daniel Cojocaru

- 6) Met Geanina from UNOPA (Union of national associations of HIV positive people), learned about their project involving youth prevention. Night outreach session with an ARAS team that is providing needle exchange, rapid testing and condom distribution. Meeting a female photographer from Finland who was documenting a story about women infected with HIV.
- 7) Met with Alina Bocai, program director of ARAS. In the afternoon, another meeting with two youth volunteers from Youth for Youth association.
- 8) Participate in the „youth leader“ workshop of Youth for Youth (over 15 participants from high schools joined the workshop).
- 9) Meeting with a leader of an LGBT group and sharing the project on MSM rapid testing.

Outcome and Impact

The HIV response in Romania is mainly carried by NGOs because the government is not willing to take responsibility and provide funding, which mainly comes from international donors and EU grants. There are not many HIV organizations, but they are all very experienced. Differently from China, most health services are provided by NGOs; those NGOs being relatively more independent. Even though the attention of young people is not as high as in China, there are many interesting activities.

Although the Chinese government has provided funding for NGOs, they mainly refer people in need to relevant medical and health institutions. In addition, Chinese organizations have fewer and fewer opportunities to participate in international projects and international conferences. It is difficult to communicate with NGO colleagues from other countries and regions.

This opportunity of exchange is very valuable for me and I hope to establish contacts and communication with more European HIV organizations.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

As more young people use social media to communicate and seek sexual partners, it is important to understand the impact this has on the spread of STIs and how we should adjust our messaging on prevention. For this purpose we will prepare a questionnaire to be distributed on social media in China and Romania, evaluate the results and hold a workshop in Romania on its results which will be attended by Chinese youth leaders from CHAIN. The summary abstract will be submitted to the 2020 World AIDS Conference. In



Meeting young activists © CAI Lingping

this way, we hope to strengthen our abilities to disseminate information on prevention and strengthen cooperation among the affected youth groups in both countries.

INFOBOX

Beijing Chaoyang Kangzhong Health and Education Center (Health for All)

was founded in 2001 and registered under the Beijing Chaoyang bureau of public affairs in 2005. Their vision is a healthy life for everyone, including marginalized populations. They are committed to health prevention education and capacity building of civil society organizations, and promote the development of information and work networks for civil society organizations, especially for organizations in different development areas to jointly address public health issues, and to share the experience and results of disease prevention and control.

CAI Lingping

has over 15 years of experience in working with NGOs, especially in the field of gender and development issues with a strong focus on HIV/AIDS prevention and caring for affected persons. She has been a leading member in a variety of relevant institutions since 2006 and has been Health For All's executive director since 2009.

Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS), Bucharest

was founded in Bucharest in 1992. Their activities have focused on: preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted infections and, more recently, the prevention of tuberculosis; promoting the non-discrimination of persons living with HIV/Hepatitis and of those living at high-risk of infection; reducing the psychological, medical and social impact of STIs; increasing the capacity of institutions, professionals, and associations for HIV/AIDS affected persons; and supporting the civil society to adequately answer the specific issues of HIV infection and other STIs.

Daniel Stefan Cojocaru

has decades of experience as a nurse and a volunteer. He has been active in HIV/AIDS prevention and supporting at risk communities in Bucharest and elsewhere in that time. In 2011 he transitioned from a volunteer position to working for ARAS as a generalist nurse, where he cares for heroin users and works on STI prevention.

China Electronics Standardization Association (CESA), Beijing/Shanghai & PowerShift e.V., Berlin

CESA and PowerShift work on corporate social responsibility and due diligence in the supply chain from shared as well as different perspectives. During the exchange, CESA and PowerShift gained a deep understanding of each other's positions regarding these topics and exchanged views on how to introduce due diligence to ministries/politics, companies, and the public. CESA's focus on the electronic industry fits very well with PowerShift's focus of working on minerals in the supply chain, as minerals play a major role in this.

PowerShift hosting YANG Jing in Berlin

The exchange is perfect in order to foster a mutual understanding of each other's working methods. With both organizations working sustainably on the issues of CSR and due diligence, with Chinese and European companies and in situations playing very important roles on this topic internationally, future exchange on this topic is guaranteed and will be fruitful.

Challenges

At CESA, we want to create a model to allow Chinese companies along the supply chain to understand the modern concepts of CSR and Due Diligence. International companies in China and large companies local to China participate in this project to contribute ideas, but we want to expand our vision and scope through working with EU organizations on CSR to try and enhance our end product. As PowerShift focuses on researching policy, they do not have practical experience in the field of social responsibility and pay more attention to advocacy and raising awareness.

Activities

06. – 09.08.2019

Beijing Capacity building Workshop (Denis Liu)

25.09.2019

PowerShift office meeting, introducing CESA, toolbox and RCI (Reservoir Characterisation Instrument)

26.09.2019

Visiting the Autumn Event at an Organic Market

01.10.2019

Online seminar: BMW: Electro mobility and Supply Chain Sustainability, Challenges and Opportunities, giving a presentation

14.10.2019

Panel Discussion "Gender in China and Europe"

15.10. – 19.10.2019

Capacity-building workshop in Berlin, Germany.

Outcome and Impact

EU and China discussion on cobalt: We want to work on a publication which discusses activities and discourses by the Chinese government, Chinese industries and Chinese civil society on corporate social responsibility.

BMW: Electro mobility and Supply Chain Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities. Learned about the progress of the automotive industry's due diligence on the supply chain.



YANG Jing und Merle Groneweg at the PowerShift office © Merle Groneweg

CESA hosting Merle Groneweg in Beijing

As CESA works on a CSR Toolbox for SMEs (small and medium enterprises), which will be a workbook for SMEs in the manufacturing supply chain, PowerShift will comment on this process as well as share approaches and insights with organizations in Germany. In discussions in Germany and the EU on supply chain due diligence and corporate social responsibility, Chinese companies and the Chinese government



Meeting the CESA colleagues in Shenzhen © YANG Jing

are often mentioned because of their major role for global supply chains. PowerShift wants to develop an informed position on this that reflects the complexity of discussions on this topic in China.

Challenges

The two major challenges for the exchange were the short time and the language. Five weeks were really not enough to learn about this topic. With many meetings being in Chinese, this was also a major challenge, although Merle speaks some Chinese, it was unfortunately not enough to participate fully in work life.

Activities

05. – 08.08.2019

Participation in an EU-China NGO Workshop, Beijing

05. – 09.08.2019

Office stay: research on corporate social responsibility activities by companies and the government in China, getting to know the work of CESA

20. – 23.08.2019

Travel to Shenzhen to discuss CSR policies with companies, and discuss the use of responsible minerals with Yang Jing

27.08.2019

Presentation of the CESA CSR Toolkit, Beijing

28.08.2019

CESA CSR Annual Summit, Beijing

02. – 04.09.2019

Exchange with international institutions, civil society and industry associations (such as UNDP, ILO, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, CCCMC), Beijing

Outcome and Impact

PowerShift has learned a lot about CESA's work, but also more broadly on corporate social responsibility activities in China. PowerShift has understood positions on CSR by different stakeholders: industry associations, companies, consultancy firms, auditors, international institutions as well as by civil society organizations. The exchange has been very fruitful in gaining first-hand-knowledge on this topic. This can be explored further in the future, as the contacts have now been established. The research results form part of a small publication as well as an expert talk by PowerShift organizers.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The outlook for future cooperation is very good as both organizations commit themselves to working on these topics long-term and traveling to Europe and China frequently. PowerShift is highly motivated to further work with CESA and other stakeholders in China to gain more insight on Chinese perspectives on this topic.

At the moment, PowerShift is finishing a report on discussions and activities by the Chinese government, Chinese industry associations, and Chinese companies on corporate social responsibility and supply chain due diligence. This report will be published in January 2020. Moreover, in December 2019, PowerShift is organizing an expert talk on this topic.



CESA CSR 7th Annual Summit Meeting © YANG Jing

China Electronics Standardization Association (CESA)

is the only industrial association affiliated to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology that has a full time CSR Committee. CESA is dedicated to improving the well-being of Chinese Electronic Industry members and the CSR Committee has been dedicated to enhance member companies CSR performance. CESA has issued its Chinese version social compliance code of conduct, known as SJ-T 16000.

YANG Jing

graduated from Hubei Party School with a bachelor's in Law and has since become an expert in the field of corporate social responsibility. With years of experience in auditing and training factories from an international network of clients, she has also long worked with NGOs on labor and women's rights issues. She is currently a consultant for CESA.

PowerShift e.V.

is a German NGO dealing with questions related to energy, climate, natural resources, trade and economic policies. We want to contribute to a change in global energy policy and economic relations by means of education, public relations, scientific research and political activities. In order to be more successful in this broad field we network with others. We are working on putting alternative concepts on the agenda globally. The challenges ahead are tremendous and we cannot cover each and every topic, but we are able to launch initiatives and developments bringing us closer to an eco-fair and solidary society.

Merle Groneweg

joined PowerShift in 2017, after having finished her BA in Area Studies Africa/Asia with a focus on China-Africa relations, as an expert for raw materials/mining policies. There she specializes in environmental & social due diligence in the supply chain and interlinkage of trade & mining issues.

Shanshui Conservation Center, Beijing & Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen (BUND NRW), Gütersloh

Climate change is accepted as a basic fact in most areas, while the impact varies from region to region. People with different cultural settings and backgrounds hold different perspectives on the climate issue. The BUND is part of a large international network, but so far lacks a partner organization in China. Both, China and Germany, are countries with significant cultural histories, both are major industrial nations and both might be able to learn from one another with regards to fostering future-oriented action, and helping humans survive in places threatened by climate change. BUND NRW and Shanshui planned to compare the awareness and adaptation actions in Germany and China. Because of differences in natural and cultural settings and for practical reasons, this was not fully possible. So we focused on what is comparable and concrete, concentrating on exchanging information about climate action on both sides, raising public awareness on wild life and nature issues.

Shanshui Conservation Center hosting Achim Hertzke in Yunnan

Arrived in Kunming, Yunnan on 20th of July, and left from Beijing on 21st of August. During this time, I went to Dali, Kunming, Shaxi and Yunlong/Yunnan. I also visited Beijing and Shanghai.

Since I was a young man, I wanted to peek behind the Great Wall of China, which is so much taller than I am. The development of this country seems so unbelievably fast from a European view. Of course, nature is never frozen in one moment and there is a permanent process of change all over the world. This exchange program seems to me to be the key, to get real impressions and experiences instead of media information.

Personally, I have been involved in developing North Rhine-Westphalia's sustainability strategy for six years, but I feel that my perspective is limited by German discourse and contexts. Therefore, I hoped to gain insights from seeing how things are done in China. In a globalized world, problems like climate

change need a base of knowledge, enabling collaboration between all stakeholders, in our case the civil society organized in nonprofit organizations.

Activities

Arriving and living in Kunming, Yunnan

It was a hearty and warm welcome by the team. Everything was so large, so many busy people around, a language full of unknown sounds. My eyes were wide, expecting impressive urban lifestyle with high pollution, as seen on TV. But that's not what I found. What a wonderful area the green lake park in the center of town is, with a cultural interchange of people.

I cannot understand Chinese, but in the first days I could regard cultural life, learn how people spend free time and work. The colleagues helped me a lot. And step by step I learned to find my own way, practice communication with hands, paper and translation apps. WeChat was very helpful to get and stay in contact. Learning how to use the transportation system, with the help of people who cannot speak English was an impressive and wonderful experience.



Visiting the Yunlong afforestation project © Achim Hertzke

Visit in Dali, Yunlong and Shaxi

Dali is a deeply touristic site with huge development and many new inhabitants. We traveled by bus to a height of 7900 feet to visit an area where Shanshui runs an important afforestation project. This nature reserve is not open to the public, but rangers admit organizations, training or guided groups. We examined the locals' work since the last visit and checked on the condition of the new plants. Two facts were very impressive to me:

First, the social impact, as villagers get work and income by supporting the project. Second, they bring in their knowledge, even choosing the right plants. This seems to be very important for awareness and acceptance, and can build a stable base of sustainability after the team leaves. The government and Shanshui also plan to open it in a controlled way for sustainable, guided trips on an existing camp property. I learned how important the practice of eating together is in Chinese social and business life, seeming nearly without hierarchy.

We also stayed in Shaxi for two days and it was wonderful to learn about its history and ethnic roots.

Beijing

First, we met for a capacity-building workshop, learning to live and work as a group. I stayed a bit longer, exploring the city and meeting different organizations. Mobility is a main concern, just like in Germany. Bicycle rental is very developed, even near Tiananmen Square. Amazingly many e-scooters were on the streets. I saw wonderful individualized vehicles, which were treated as a sort of mobile home. I saw people sleeping, eating and sitting or even lying in the sun on these. They often drive without lights in the evening, only to save energy, of course. Beside this view of daily life, I had the opportunity to visit the headquarters of my partner organization, located on the campus of Beijing University. It was very impressive and seems to be a good base for scientific development and work, with connections to the leading professor and her post-docs.

Shanghai

From Beijing, I used the high-speed train to visit this colorful town, where I saw the campaign to separate garbage. It is one of China's pilot cities implementing



At Shanshui's Beijing headquarter © Achim Hertzke

the new system in highly compressed urban areas, with other cities to follow. This seems to be an important goal of ongoing urbanization in China. Germany started much earlier, but with the large amount of people in these cities and their potential impact, the world needs them to have quick access to the knowledge of these methods.

Outcome and Impact

During the exchange, we compared views and shared solutions and best practices in a deeply warm process, as colleagues and friends. This is very important in a globalized world.

For example, a Chinese colleague's advice to the German population was "two wheels are often enough to reach your destination — reduce the impact of mobility", while from a German perspective the advice to 1.4 billion people might be that E-mobility without renewable energy cannot solve the whole problem.

I found the Chinese to be friendly people. Living in big cities during the Anthropocene, I found our commonalities as humans far outweighed our cultural differences. The wall is no longer a barrier between people.

BUND NRW e.V. hosting DAI Huxuan in Gütersloh

Arrived at Bielefeld in Germany on September 5, and left on October 31. Traveled to Gütersloh, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Offenburg, Berlin and Austria to see different areas of nature protection work.

I was highly motivated to join the exchange, as I wished to get a deeper understanding of climate change effects and possible actions in different contexts. While

considering possibilities, seeing examples is helpful to open your mind and be more creative. I started noticing climate change since I started working on the topic of grassland degradation in western China. Local people used traditional knowledge to adjust, but the current situation is so complex that they have to form new knowledge. In Qinghai, we gathered information about nomads' perceptions, attitudes and adaptation measures, some of which are very effective. Since BUND NRW is also examining people's climate change perceptions and leads public activities, it may help me in analyzing our interviews, distinguishing outstanding measures and finding ways to promote them.

Since the two organizations both work on biodiversity conservation, it is interesting to get to know how climate change has influenced biodiversity in both countries and which solutions can be taken as a reference for broadcasting the issue in local knowledge systems and raising public awareness.

Activities

Electric transportation day in Bielefeld was the first big event I participated in. It was organized by the city's climate change manager; the purpose was to broadcast ideas of more energy efficient ways of traveling. NGOs presented brochures and cards showing carbon emissions of different lifestyles. Companies producing electric or hydrogen cars and solar panels

introduced their products. What impressed me most was a company providing free test drives to people who finished a paper comparing E-cars and oil cars. I was afraid to drive, but I saw people were excited about the experience and that cheered me up.

Learning about meadow conservation work in Cologne

I was lucky to spend ten days in Cologne with Gabi's team. We went to areas where meadows and native plants are protected, which means invasive species are kept out and the meadow is kept open for small animals, birds and insects. It was all done by hand and has to be done very frequently. It is quite hard, but less harmful to the land. I also experienced the sparrow-watching program inside the city, where we talked about the feasibility of citizen science. We visited a Jewish cemetery, which surprised me by keeping better biodiversity compared to many other areas.

Climate change demonstration

I helped prepare materials and contribute to my first climate change demonstration during the stay in Cologne. That was new to me, 70,000 people in the street, speaking out about their concerns for the planet and human future. People proposed less waste, no plastic, less coal, low carbon transportation and so on. I was touched by the slogans saying "To bee or not to bee" and "We stand for what we stand on".



Proudly presenting the results of the public dialogue © DAI Huxuan

Going through the Black Forest

It was great for me to be connected with the Black Forest National Park in Offenburg. I walked with Kim to experience her work as a ranger there. During her daily walk, I got to know the history of this national park, tourism management, her duties as a ranger, sustainable forest operation methods and threats from climate change. I did not see lynxes and wolves, which led me to consider the history of society developing and attitudes on human-nature connection.

Visiting alpine meadows in Austria

I accomplished my wish of seeing alpine meadows in Austria. I went to Innsbruck, which is a small town with very developed skiing tourism. I found that even though they are also alpine meadows, their situation is very different. I was also happy to finally see lynxes and bears in the alpine zoo there.

Dialogue on climate change between Germany and China

The last big event was a public dialogue on climate change actions between Germany and China. Achim worked hard to promote it and the climate change manager of Gütersloh helped to put it on the ground. We succeeded in organizing an evening with more than 30 people, where Achim introduced the EU-China NGO Twinning Program and his experience in China and I gave a presentation on China's efforts on climate change. There was also a small panel discussion, in which I shared my experience, views and thoughts about this exchange. It was interesting to hear what the audience thought of China and I felt happy to be able to explain some details.

Outcome and Impact

During my stay in Europe, I exchanged knowledge and ideas with Achim and other people of various institutions and backgrounds. I got to know about Germany's problems related to climate change and people's reactions. We talked about energy structure, organic food, forest regeneration, community gardens, meadows and native species, wolves and nomads or the system of protected areas. Because of differences in history and social development, the problems and measures are not the same, but ideas can still be taken away. The two most impressive things to me were the public awareness of climate change, allowing ordinary German people to talk about the issue and

its connection with their daily life and the concern for small insects like bees. A baseline survey and targeted monitoring are needed in China.

I hope I have contributed by presenting China's responses to climate change. In the dialogue event, people had interesting questions about China, which reminded me that there is not enough access to information; more details and general perspectives are needed. When I was presenting my organization's biodiversity conservation work, I got the chance to consider the connection between human beings and nature. For ecosystem completeness, I advise people to be more accepting of so-called dangerous animals. During daily work, unsurprisingly the part of organizational management also came up. Volunteer work, citizen science, public communication and fundraising are topics where we can learn from each other.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

1. Information exchange

Because of the information gap we felt during the exchange period, and the necessity to learn what is going on on the other side, we decided to continue sharing information by email. We will share materials and reports every six months, further tying us together as worldwide friends of the earth.

2. Baseline survey on bees on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau

The temperature on the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau is rising fast, which means possible but unknown threats to its insect population. There is currently no research on this topic in China. While protecting bees from climate change has become consensus in Germany, BUND NRW has done research on it and provided a scientific basis. We would like to try that, if BUND can provide some support on technical methods to help Shanshui conduct baseline surveys on the ground.

3. Exchange on biodiversity

We plan to cooperate in our ideas about acting against loss of biodiversity and ongoing climate change in October 2020 in Kunming, Yunnan, China.

Shanshui Conservation Center

was founded in 2007 and is dedicated to conservation practices. They focus on areas of abundant biodiversity, striving to fulfill ecological ideals through science and culture, empowering nature guardians through actions. In Sanjiangyuan, they mostly focus on biodiversity research and conservation practices in forestry, wetlands and grassland ecosystems. They cooperate with nomads to monitor and protect key species. They also account for the development and welfare of local communities, enabling public science to help raise earnings and public awareness in affected areas. Grasslands protection is also an important part of their work. They are engaged in international cooperation, attending and giving inputs at the UNFCCC.

DAI Huxuan

graduated from Northeast Forestry University with a master's degree in the science of nature reserves. She has worked on grassland conservation for Shanshui for two years, becoming deeply aware of climate change issues as a whole and the specific threat to the nomadic way of life in particular. This has ingrained her with a breadth of knowledge on these ecosystems and empathy for the unique local cultures.

Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND)

Friends of the Earth Germany is a non-profit, non-partisan grassroots organization with over 620,000 members and supporters. Its multilayered structure enables it to work in all regions and on all levels of civic involvement, from municipal actions on cycle lanes and local conservation projects to international lobbying efforts on behalf of ecological agriculture and renewable energies. It is structured democratically on each organizational layer, with elected volunteers as decentralized decision-making organs. It is also the German representative of the Friends of the Earth network.

Achim Hertzke

has been a member of BUND for quite some time and has been elected to leadership and advisory positions on the local, regional and national levels. His focus has been on climate change and sustainable development as well as international affairs. He has also been active on these issues in other regards, working in academic and administrative bodies to tackle these problems.

Climate Change and Low Carbon Development Reports

China Green Carbon Foundation (CGCF), Beijing & Fern, Brussels

China Green Carbon Foundation hosting Julia Christian in Beijing

The objectives and expectations I had from the exchange were to understand:

1. How forest restoration is carried out in China
 - Understand how China has managed to put in place such large-scale afforestation projects
 - Understand how biodiversity considerations are taken into account in restoration in China
 - What are the objectives of afforestation/restoration projects in China (e.g. to act as a carbon sink? Protection against desertification? Production of timber?)
 - What kind of practices are followed (e.g. around biodiversity, resilience to fires, local community involvement) in carrying out the restoration projects?
 - How are local communities involved in the afforestation/restoration work?
 - How restoration/afforestation is incentivized (i.e. what motivates people not to plant, and then to not cut down, the trees?);
 - What is the economic model (i.e. how are the projects financed, and do the trees generate revenue at some point?)
 - What is the role of the government in carrying out the reforestation/afforestation, and what is the role of organizations like China Green Carbon Foundation?
2. What are the opportunities offered by the upcoming 2020 biodiversity COP (hosted by China)
3. How China & Chinese NGOs are engaging in the debate about international supply chains that cause deforestation – timber & agricultural commodities

Challenges

There are not that many organizations in China that do the kind of political advocacy Fern does- i.e. trying to influence policy, or challenging current policies, because of China's political system. Chinese organi-

zations are more likely, like CGCF, to focus on implementing projects on the ground. So, sometimes it was difficult to find parallels between Fern's work and the work CGCF & other Chinese organizations I met were doing.

However, I learned that there are other ways Chinese people & organizations conduct advocacy & provide inputs to policy-making processes: via more informal channels, and government think tanks or stakeholder dialogues. A lot of Fern's work also tends to be along these kinds of constructive lines – i.e. developing good personal relationships with EU policy makers and then providing them with suggestions of what kinds of policies they should draft and, upon reflection, is maybe not so different from the work some Chinese people and organizations are doing.



View of an afforestation project © Julia Christian

Activities

- Field trip to Hebei and Henan provinces to visit afforestation project sites
- Field trip to Zhejiang province to visit project sites
- Presentation to people at the university in Zhejiang on Fern's work
- Interviewing many Chinese NGOs, government officials & academics working in this sector
- Reading government policies & academic articles on reforestation & forest policy in China
- Presentation and discussion with CGCF on Fern's work, and our organizational way of working
- Twinning workshop in August
- Participation in CANGO workshop on communication & climate change

Outcome and Impact

- Presentation at the university in Zhejiang on Fern's work
- Presentation and discussion with CGCF on Fern's work, and our organizational way of working
- New China strategy sections in the long-term strategies of all of Fern's campaigns
- Many new contacts with Chinese NGOs & individuals who we will be able to work with on our sustainable supply chains campaign.

Fern hosting HE Yeyun in Brussels

Objectives

Learn about differences in forest management & policy between China & Europe to implement creative, new approaches.

Learn how European NGOs work with their governments, as well as raise funds and awareness on their issues.

Challenges

Different cultural and social environments presented some hurdles:

- Language and surroundings. I sometimes got confused while speaking English and this was not helped by the regional accents. As living there was new to me, it took me about a week to adjust to the basic way of living, doing groceries and using public transport.
- Working rhythm. The week I spent in the office surprised me by the quiet and fast working rhythm. Everyone focused on their task without interrupting others, so I learned to save my questions for lunchtime.
- Making appointments by e-mail. If I wanted to meet someone, I needed to plan it as early as possible. I realized that e-mail is the main way to coordinate daily work and Julia helped me get used to this.

Activities

I spent six weeks in Brussels and one week in Berlin.

1. Visiting a local forest. Looking at Google Maps, I found a green area near my house, which interested me. It was a big forest near the city, managed like a big park. One part is very tidy with clean lawns, the

other is close to virgin forest. This is different from China. We have forests in or next to cities, but the large population makes these forests feel more like a park and less like nature.

2. Interviewing Fern staff. I learned that in the EU, NGOs raise fund mainly from public departments, they have their strategy and the government shares the funding message through their own path, with NGOs applying. Fern are acting like a bridge between Africa/Southeast Asia and the EU. They assist local NGOs in getting funds from the EU and then implement their strategy together. I realized that NGOs in Europe play an important role in policy lobbying. They lobby parliament members to support their research and apply for funds, organizing with NGO delegates from Africa and Asia. China has a different way of NGO development. The government invests to solve very obvious and urgent social issues. NGOs focus on potential issues. They raise funds through public welfare foundations and implement pilot projects. If a project is successful, they will get more funds to spread the model, if not, the plan is adjusted.



The international NGO delegates meeting at the EU © HE Yeyun

3. Took part in the Global Climate strike in Brussels. It was my first demonstration and 15.000 people took part in it. It was a really good way to call on more people to fight against climate change. I wrote posters and participated the whole afternoon. During the process, I made some friends. In China, we don't have climate strikes, because the government has been paying great attention to combating climate change. However, I think we still need additional ways to raise awareness of climate change in China and attract more people to participate in climate action.

4. A real car-free day was an amazing experience for me. I woke up late, because it was really quiet. As I wanted to pay for the bus downtown, I noticed that the buses and metro were free. Outside I could see many people riding their bikes. That shocked me. Life should be like that, with people having space to walk and slowly cycle. I was thinking that this might be a possible project to pilot in China, as it's a good way to raise public awareness and make people appreciate what it was like before cars became so common.

5. Participating in the Asian and African NGOs study tour organized by Fern. These NGOs are committed to eliminating illegal logging. We met with EU parliament officials, provided materials to them and asked them to set up rules to stop the import of illegally harvested timber. China will play a very important role in achieving this, because a large number of Chinese companies are involved in different business activities.

6. Participating in the EU technical seminar on "incentivizing carbon dioxide removal solutions". Experts and business representatives from different EU countries gathered in Brussels to share technological innovations in carbon storage and sinks. These mechanisms sound exciting. We concluded that we have tens of millions of ways and enough funds to combat climate change, it depends on whether we are determined enough.

7. Participating in the seminar on bio-economy and future development of biomass-based food and agriculture organized by the European Union Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Union (EFFAT). It focused on increasing jobs in climate action and how cooperation on technology with developing countries could reduce refugee inflows.

8. Attending Fern's three-year strategic discussion and board selection meeting. I recommended Doctor Li Nuyun from CGCF as a board member to facilitate their cooperation with China. What impressed me most was the salary allocation for everyone in the future budget, which seemed beneficial to information disclosure and business contacts.

9. Attending a public speaking workshop in Berlin.

10. Giving a concluding speech at Fern. I focused on CGCF's history and role, my experiences during the exchange and the need to further understanding between the cultures.

11. Visiting the Both ENDS Foundation in the Netherlands. Spoke on avenues for cooperation in our common pursuits, particularly on the climate conference.

Outcome and Impact

- Many new contacts with European NGOs & potential cooperation partners.
- Presenting Chinese approaches to Fern's members and partners.
- The experiences of visiting the EU and German parliament clarified the European environmental strategy.
- Further understanding the differences between China and the EU in fund raising, project selection and implementation. This will help set up cooperation with European NGOs.



The winners visiting a community garden © Julia Christian

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

We have not discussed any specific follow-up projects, but we have discussed that it would be interesting to collaborate on a forest restoration project outside of China, to share best practices and develop a common vision of how forest restoration should be done. If Fern or Fern's partners do go ahead with developing such a project, we will definitely be in touch with CGCF, who will gladly help to facilitate and provide a Chinese perspective. Yeyun also recommended LI Nuyun as a nominee for Fern's board.

China Green Carbon Foundation (CGCF)

is the first nation-wide non-profit public funding foundation dedicated to combating climate change by increasing carbon sequestration, especially through forest measures in China. The precursor of the Foundation is China Green Carbon Fund founded in 2007. CGCF raises funds from the whole society to support campaigns and projects for restoring nature ecology.

HE Yeyun

worked for the Global Environmental Institute from 2007 to 2009, serving as a project officer of rural sustainable development. He administered projects in Sri Lanka and 5 provinces in China. He joined CGCF in 2010, first working as the PR director, then transitioning to being a CGCF team leader.

Fern

is an NGO, founded in 1992, working to influence EU policy so that it works better for people and forests. Their work aims at promoting the protection and restoration of forests. Areas of work include forests & climate, where they work to influence EU bio-energy policy to ensure it is not damaging forests. Another area of work is forests & trade, where they campaign for the EU to include forest protection provisions in its trade agreements with tropical forest countries. Other campaigns focus on forests & consumption and the implementation of the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance & Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, in particular working with civil society in West Africa, the Congo Basin, and Southeast Asia.

Julia Christian

is a a US & UK-trained lawyer, working now as an environmental campaigner. She has been working on forest policy for nearly 10 years now, specializing in issues of restoration/ afforestation, as well as deforestation resulting from agriculture. She worked on forest policy in many parts of the world, spanning Europe, West Africa and Central America.

Coshare Environment, Taiyuan & Grüne Liga, Berlin

With a common goal to abate the pressure on river ecology efficiently and promote water sustainability, both organizations would like to contribute to this goal collaboratively and developed a program to facilitate future cooperation on it. During the exchange, the organizations focused on building an effective model or developing a program to promote river and water protection. We communicated on the “Fen River Partner Plan” and worked on introducing the European River Film Festival to Shanxi, China, both with a purpose to raise public awareness on river protection.

Michael Bender in Taiyuan, China

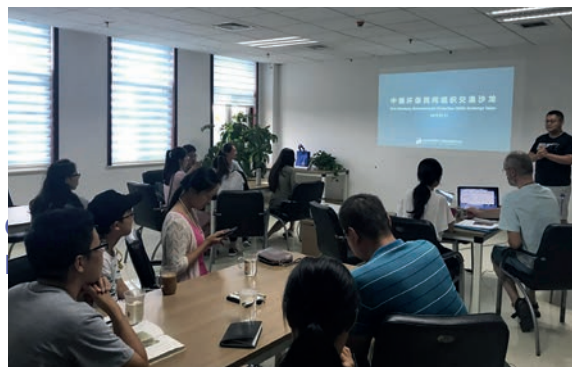
Michael arrived in the evening of July 18 in Taiyuan. On Friday, July 19, Hong gave a short presentation on the work of Coshare Environment. The draft working program was discussed and adopted.

On July 19, a Chinese environmental foundation named SEE visited Coshare Environment. They exchanged ideas on river protection and the River Film Events.

On Monday, July 22, Michael gave a presentation on Grüne Liga's good water management practice fact-sheets. On Tuesday followed another presentation including film clips to illustrate the idea of the Grüne Liga River Film Events. Coshare Environment shared its clip on Environmental Education on the Fen River – a joint project with a Japanese University.

On July 29, Michael Bender had the opportunity to visit a small environmental education base, which was provided by one of the companies participating in the Fen River Partner Program. They cooperated with Coshare Environment on the design. It will be freely accessible to the public after its establishment. An organic garden had already been started.

On Wednesday, July 31, Coshare Environment held a Sino-German Workshop on environmental education with 20 participants from different institutions based in Taiyuan. Hong introduced the concept and ideas of Coshare Environment. Michael gave a presentation on the environmental education work of Grüne Liga.



Attendees at the Sino-German workshop © Michael Bender

Further, the work on plastic pollution in Berlin and on a practical river restoration project in Hamburg were highlighted. Participants introduced their organizations and how they were engaged in environmental education. At the end, we came to an agreement to build a more effective network among NGOs and promote environment education together.

In order to prepare the River Film Festival, Coshare Environment wanted to film the Fen River to raise people's awareness about the urgent need to protect the river. Coshare Environment invited Michael to participate in the Fen River excursion and hoped he could bring some insights to the film-making.

The first excursion led to the source. Some photos and videos were taken to explore ideas for the documentary video clip. The second stop was the reservoir that serves as the drinking water supply for Taiyuan. The water level was quite low, though.

The second excursion led downstream to some wider floodplains. Despite the pollution, a variety of water birds could be spotted including stilt walkers and a heron. Some more photos were taken and exchanged for further reporting and work. Another reservoir was visited on a tributary, as well as some flood protection installations.

During the third week of the exchange a workshop was organized in Beijing, providing a lot of good exchange opportunities and discussions. Michael and Hong hosted a table on the SDG 6 discussion on access to water and sewage and on water efficiency and the protection of water resources.

In the last week, Coshare Environment hosted a Sino-German Salon on water policy where Michael provided insight on European water directives. This was followed by a presentation by Prof. Yuan, who talked about the latest water policy developments in China.

On Friday, August 16, Coshare Environment joined a youth camp of another local NGO and introduced activities based on the wild river tool of the European environmental youth action network. Michael Bender explored the river alongside the camp with the youths and contributed interesting knowledge about wild rivers.

HE Hong in Berlin, Germany

I think it will be hard for me to forget this trip to Germany.

On September 20, I joined the massive Climate Action Strike with Michael. The strike impressed me so much and made me realize that so many people care about this topic, from toddlers to old people. "Make the planet cool again", "There is no planet B", "Fighting for our future together", these climate change-related slogans made me excited and moved me. From raising awareness and capacity-building to taking action, we are on the way forward.



Feeling excited at the Climate Strike © HE Hong

On September 21, I participated in Berlin's World Clean Up day event with Michael. The climax of the day was a rap performance by children. Though I did not understand a word, I could not help but applaud their enthusiasm and courage. At the end, Michael and I got on stage to introduce the exchange program and our future cooperation on Fen River protection.

On September 23, we visited KNE, an NGO committed to promoting energy transformation. We gave an overview of our organizations and projects, seeking opportunities for further cooperation. In the evening, we participated in an event focused on drinking water. Since it was in German, I could hardly understand what they said, but their professional speech made me reflect on our future.

On September 25, I participated in the Water Working Group meeting of the German Forum on Environment and Development, the heated discussion lasting for four hours. Although most of the time they communicated in German, I could still see their enthusiasm and professionalism towards this topic from their demeanour. I also presented the Fen River Partner program and shared the videos we made. Spreading our message was one of my tasks during this visit, I need more practice and reflection.

On September 25, I joined the Autumn Event at an Organic Market, which Michael has always been proud of. In order to engage more people on the environment, the local NGOs made great efforts to design their environmental education in a participatory manner, such as a water footprint fishing game, making their own badges and cute animal face-paint. These activities required careful planning and the integration of scientific knowledge, I hope I can incorporate these experiences, letting more children experience the fun of participatory environmental education.

On September 30, we had a brief exchange with the German Association for Water and Energy. Discovering the real needs and future trends of the industry is our joint effort, I hope we can work together on projects in the future.



The twinnings introducing the program, despite having to follow a tough act © HE Hong

On October 2, we went to Wedel, a small town outside Hamburg, to observe the work of a local NGO on river restoration. The various projects often integrate restoration activities as part of environmental education.

On October 8, I went to 'Ökowerk am Teufelssee', an environmental education center in Berlin Grunewald with Michael. There are environmental education courses and tools for students of different grades, classrooms and laboratories, animal models and detailed descriptions, large and small ponds full of wildness. As an important part of the Fen River Partner program, the Environmental Education Base will heavily feature environmental education and Grunewald has given me a lot of inspiration.

On October 10, Michael and I watched a 'Jugendforschungsschiff' environmental education course on a ship named CORMORAN. Children used microscopes to observe microscopic creatures in the water, measured the depth, temperature and transparency of the water, and used binoculars to observe various waterfowl. Unlike in a classroom, outdoor environmental education pays more attention to the children's own observations, exploration and teamwork. I hope that more children can find their own interests in this course, finding the method of harmonious symbiosis.

On October 15-18, in a workshop in Berlin, we tackled making our presentations more interesting and attractive, and how to solve problems in the team. Two days later, we saw a qualitative improvement in the presentation of our exchange partners, and were encouraged to hear them bravely express their views and let European partners know about the efforts of China and NGOs in combating climate change.

Exchange follow-up plan

In the two-month exchange between Taiyuan and Berlin, we have furthered understanding of the institutions and projects. In the next step, we will make efforts to promote the river water environment and water ecological protection based on the Fen River Partnership program and the water environment protection technology/experience exchange.

There is the option of Michael giving a presentation on River Water Policy in Beijing and meeting Hong and other twinning alumni there. This might be continued with the option of his accompanying an official Chinese River protection delegation in Germany. He also wants to show the Coshare Fen River Partnership video at the evening film show on the German NGO Water Protection Conference on November 15 at the German Federal Environmental Agency in Dessau.

There are further plans to include documentary video clips on environmental education and forest protection from Coshare and other twinning partners in River Film Events in Europe. We also keep the idea in mind to have River Film Events in Taiyuan and possibly other Chinese locations. The Cooperation between Coshare and Grüne Liga will continue in the field of environmental education, as well.

Project summary

From Hong

This trip has clarified the importance of communication and raising awareness to me. Only by gradually eliminating information asymmetry can we further cooperate on the basis of seeking common ground

while putting aside differences. At the same time, the different working experience made me think about the future of our organization and personal growth in a totally different environment and situation.

From Michael

It was very valuable to get a real inside look at Coshare's work, enthusiasm and commitment towards environmental protection issues including environmental education and cooperation with companies, universities and administration. Besides providing a better understanding between Chinese and European partners, the program has also contributed to better cooperation and understanding between NGOs and institutions inside China and Europe.

INFOBOX

Coshare Environment

is a non-profit based in Taiyuan, launched by 20 professors and senior engineers dealing with environmental issues in 2017. It is dedicated to promoting the green development of enterprises, facilitating the development of the environmental protection industry, as well as improving the public's environmental behavior. Our team is made up of senior specialists in environmental engineering and management, as well as innovative young scholars, with a goal to establish a collaborative innovation platform for ecological environment protection.

HE Hong

the president of Coshare Environment, graduated from Renmin University of China with a major in sustainable development management. Since her graduation, she has been engaged in research in the fields of ecological and environmental policy, the development of the environmental protection industry and public environmental education. She is also the initiator of the "Fen River Partner Program".

Grüne Liga

was founded in pre-unified East Germany in 1990 as a platform for all environmental causes. It deals with subjects like climate change, traffic, mining, biofuels and East European cooperation. It also runs an organic food marketplace. The Grüne Liga is a leading NGO in the field of water policy in Germany. It is a member of the German League for Nature and the European Environmental Bureau in Brussels.

Michael Bender

is the GRÜNE LIGA Head of Water Policy. He conducted a number of projects that were funded by the German federal ministry for environment. He is responsible for networking, campaigning and lobby work on European Water Policy issues and the organization of about 60 water related conferences and workshops in Germany and neighboring countries, as well as for the publication of policy papers, newsletters and brochures in German and English and represents the GREEN LEAGUE in the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe River.

Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology (SEE) Foundation, Beijing & Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G), Berlin

Both E3G and SEE work on climate change, low carbon economy and business and environment sustainable development to accelerate positive transition on a global scale. As a local Chinese NGO, and a climate change think tank spanning the EU, the twinnings visited several local and international NGOs and think tanks, joined conferences, workshops and panel discussions to learn from each other, gaining an insight on their work from different perspectives.

SEE Foundation hosting Jennifer Tollmann in Beijing

My aim was to learn more about how Chinese and European organizations connected their local/national experience to the international level, creating opportunities for novel forms of international cooperation and diplomacy. In particular, the exchange was focused on engagement with key Chinese and European stakeholders to exchange best practices on sustainable supply chains and approaches to harmonizing the climate and biodiversity agenda at the subnational, national and international level.

Challenges

The biggest hurdle was language. Despite my exchange partner and team's excellent English, general exchange with SEE Foundation colleagues was tricky and participation in local NGO events required a Chinese colleague acting as constant interpreter. This meant that while I was able to get a feel for the breadth of the great work that SEE Foundation does, it was very difficult to participate in day-to-day work.

Additionally, the Beijing economy's move to online payment increased the day-to-day reliance on Chinese colleagues to help. It was surprising to see how this leapfrogging past debit card economies created a highly sophisticated but highly isolated digital economy.



Speaking at the Berlin Workshop Week panel discussion © LU Zhiyao

Activities

In the first weeks, I got to know the sustainable supply chains team within SEE Foundation as well as realizing the breadth of their work, a focus of our exchange being on waste management systems. This included testing educational tools, posters and games for training kids and parents on the new waste sorting system. Once I had gotten settled, Yao and colleagues were amazing in helping to set up meetings with partner organizations working on biodiversity in preparation for the 16th Conference of the Convention of Biodiversity, which is set to be held in Kunming in October 2020 – these included meetings with colleagues from Energy Foundation China, as well as the China offices of WRI, WWF, Greenpeace, Client Earth, C-Team and NRDC. These meetings really helped to give a good overview of the intra-NGO coordination that was happening in anticipation of China's first major environmental conference, also giving insight into the consultation process between civil society and the Chinese Ministry of Environment.

In addition to these meetings, we were able to set up informal discussions with the European delegation and the environment attachés of the UK, German and Swedish Embassies which gave a much greater picture of how European diplomacy and international cooperation on climate, clean economy and biodiversity was engaging with civil society and supporting bringing local experience to the international level.



Visiting E3G's London office © LU Zhiyao

A topic that came up in all of these meetings was how civil society and European diplomats were working with Chinese partners ahead of the September 2019 UN Secretary General Summit. To round off my time in China, I was able to come along to a business and civil society meeting exchange on best practices in greening supply chains.

Outcome and Impact

Most concretely, the knowledge gained through working with SEE Foundation gave me a much better sense of how the Chinese government and civil society are preparing for the 2020 Biodiversity Conference and where there are greater opportunities for EU-China cooperation. This has been central to my day-to-day work with international civil society, as well as with European climate diplomats and the UK Presidency of the 2020 Climate Conference (COP26).

Additionally, working with SEE Foundation gave me a much better understanding of the amount of work and effort that needs to be put into building local partners and businesses' capacity, before they can even consider signing up to large international declarations.

More broadly, I came away from the twinning with a much greater understanding of the richness and diversity of Chinese civil society. I was struck by the amount of Chinese civil society working at the intersection of national and international politics that I had had little interactions with at that point.

E3G hosting LU Zhiyao in Berlin

Aims

1. To get to know the projects and areas of work of E3G, clarifying the climate diplomacy, energy policy and green economy E3G have been working on. As E3G is a European organization with a global reach, I could gain referential experiences in the areas of green economy, climate and energy policy from European organizations, on the global scale;
2. To visit local and international NGOs and think tanks in Berlin, London and Brussels; to join in conferences, panel discussions, creating direct dialogue with other parties and talk on the topic of climate change, sustainable development and our responses on a global level from different perspectives and finally to build a strong and diverse network for future cooperation;
3. To introduce the work Chinese NGOs have done, elaborating SEE's projects and areas of work, especially to introduce the 'Green Supply Chain Action in Real Estate Industry in China' initiative, to tell the climate change story from the perspective of Chinese entrepreneurs, furthermore, to listen, get their feedback, gaining a broader picture, allowing us to reflect on the results, exploring possible new areas of work for SEE Foundation in the future.

Challenges

Mainly staying in Germany and Belgium, people's English was very good, but I could not follow the French discussions. Additionally, a lot of the local policies were written in French, which I could not fully understand.

Activities

03rd – 11th October, 2019

E3G Berlin Office, Berlin, Germany

14th – 18th October, 2019

Twinning Program workshop, Berlin, Germany

18th October, 2019

Robert Bosch Stiftung Open Day Panel Discussion, Berlin, Germany

24th – 29th October 2019

E3G London Office, London, UK

05th – 07th November, 2019

CAN Europe General Assembly, Brussels, Belgium

07th – 11th November, 2019

E3G Berlin Office, Berlin, Germany

Outcome and Impact

E3G London Office

To approach climate change from another perspective, learning about the cooling project from E3G London. To better address climate change, it is also important to fix the 'cooling problem', for instance, projects maximizing the efficiency of cooling and using waste heat and renewable cooling.

E3G Brussels Office

Talking about climate risk and how to address it from the perspective of business and industry, how they encounter risks in their business if they do not take action now. To introduce the climate policy and technique support to businesses and industries facing climate change.

CIFF Office

To introduce the 'Green Supply Chain Action in Real Estate' initiative, to learn more from them about Green Economy, Low carbon industry, to talk about the launch of the CIFF (Children's Investment Fund Foundation) China office and possible collaboration and projects.



At the CAN EU General Assembly © LU Zhiyao

CAN-EU

CAN-EU is Europe's leading NGO coalition fighting climate change, thus to learn how to build a climate action network, a climate platform for information exchange, to address the issue together, bringing a bigger positive impact.

CAN Europe General Assembly

To join the assembly to talk about the topics of Energy Transition and Community Building. On the topic of Energy Transition, we discussed ways to reach zero net emissions in Europe in 2040, building energy scenarios, which were applicable in the Chinese context. On the topic of community building, we talked about increasing our strength and connectivity as a network and becoming a member-driven network.

Panel Discussion

To represent China in the panel discussion, sharing what Chinese NGOs have been doing addressing climate change, China's governmental response, how private, business and industry sectors as well as Chinese youths are addressing climate change, the role of NGOs in bridging these approaches, objectively analyzing the 'One Belt One Road' policy in the context of climate change and to get feedback from the audience.

Visiting different E3G offices and other organizations, joining in panel discussion during the exchange period, building a good relationship, laying a good foundation for future collaboration.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

As E3G is set to work more closely on EU-China diplomacy, it is amazing to have a network of trusted friends and partners to draw upon as we venture into this new area of work. Additionally, E3G has set up a regular exchange with Energy Foundation China in anticipation of the 2020 EU-China Leipzig summit and I am in increased contact with colleagues in NRDC to work together on the intersection of biodiversity and climate to possibly co-host workshops or capacity building. I was also able to attend SEE Foundation events during New York Climate week.

As for SEE Foundation, we conduct our work mostly from an NGO perspective, initiating and funding projects that could bring direct positive change. However, E3G addresses their work slightly differently, entering a dialogue with government bodies, accelerating the

transition to a low carbon economy to bring positive changes in a less direct and visible way. Working at the E3G offices, I saw different perspectives on approaching climate change, advising climate diplomacy and energy policy and I hope that we will continue cooperation.

Last but not least, the workshops, visits to organizations, panel discussions and dialogues allowed me to step out of the Chinese perspective and stand at the global level to address climate change related issues. In building a bridge to European organizations I understood their perspective on climate issues as well as Chinese responses. This will have a lasting impact on me and my work, incorporating the feedback in future projects. I hope that soon there will be more cooperation between NGOs as well as governmental organizations jointly addressing climate change and realizing the Paris Agreement.

INFOBOX

Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology (SEE) Foundation

is the first environmental NGO in China with a membership comprised mainly of entrepreneurs who are dedicated to advancing enterprises' social responsibility. Their members strive to promote the green transformation of China's economy in pursuit of a better environment with business wisdom. The SEE Foundation was established with the mission of supporting and nurturing Chinese environmental civil society organizations and acting as a learning platform for entrepreneurs.

LU Zhiyao

has been a Program Manager at SEE Foundation for about three years. She is currently in charge of the Green Supply Chain and Climate Change program, managing international cooperation and conferences of SEE. She has worked on the pollution prevention project as well. LU Zhiyao studied at Yale University and Minzu University of China for a joint-doctoral program, receiving a PhD in Ethnoecology. She was a Columbia University and New York Botanical Garden visiting scholar, and received her BA in Marine Ecology from Ocean University of China. Her research focused on relationships between the environment and minority groups.

Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G)

is an independent climate change think tank operating to accelerate the global transition to a low carbon economy. Founded in 2004, E3G are independent experts on climate diplomacy and energy policy. They build the broad based coalitions necessary to deliver a safe climate, and hold policy makers to account on their promises. E3G works closely with like-minded partners in government, politics, civil society, science, the media, public interest foundations and elsewhere.

Jennifer Tollmann

is a Policy Advisor in E3G's Climate Diplomacy and Risk team based in Berlin. She has worked for E3G for two years and leads the work on the UNFCCC. Her focus is on European Climate Diplomacy, Risk and Resilience and the Foreign Policy of Just Transition. Jennifer has also worked on climate risk management and resilience with GIZ and on the local level. Jennifer has a Master of Environmental Science, Policy and Management jointly awarded by the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics at Lund University, the University of Manchester and Central European University.

Laukai Conservation, Guangzhou & Center for Environment (Czzc), Banja Luka

This exchange focused on water/river protection, community work and community education about the environmental impact of human activities on water supply systems in China and the hydropower plant construction and operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Field research and analyzing changes in ecosystems caused under the influence of human activities and hydropower projects and other heavily modified water body projects. Exchange of experiences on European Legislation and International Conventions in the Field of Environment as a foundation for civil society actions.

Laukai Conservation hosting Viktor in Guangzhou

Both Center for Environment and Laukai Conservation are concerned about river protection. Through this twinning program, Center for Environment and Laukai wanted to achieve the mutual understanding of European and Chinese water usage and protection as well as to learn different approaches to water protection campaigning.

Challenges

The biggest surprise for me, in addition to the high humidity of the air, was the rather relaxed approach to NGO work without the high level of stress and conflict situations among different stakeholders. The other



Preparing the route © Viktor Bjelić

surprise was the widespread use of modern technology by all generations and almost no cash trade.

Activities

I provided logistic support to lectures on the connection of environment pollution and cancer organized by Laukai Conservation in the local community center.

The hiking and cleaning action started with a preparatory route visit and mapping. On the day itself, with over 100 young people, my role was to guide and give a motivational speech, as well as giving instructions for hiking and cleaning to the participants.

The Streamwatch workshop was one of my favorite activities. It started with lectures on macroinvertebrates in the rivers as an indicator of the water quality. The next day, we did field work, collecting samples from the riverbed and looking for these vulnerable organisms.

The workshop on organic farming was in Chinese, so my role was to prepare organic food samples while trainers taught the group.

Experience Exchange – Environment Protection and Art was a workshop on connections between art and environmental activism. My role was to present the Bosnia and Herzegovina campaigns for river protection and different methods of awareness raising and advocacy work.



A relaxed approach to NGO work © Viktor Bjelić

Outcome and Impact

One cleaning action with almost 100 kg of waste collected (mostly plastics).

Four events/workshops, reports and short videos (published via WeChat) on environment pollution and health, organic farming, river quality protection and art-environment campaigning.

Organizer's note

Due to irreconcilable differences between the twinning partners, which led to an early ending of the exchange, the organizers refrained from insisting on a report by Zhang Jiayi.

INFOBOX

Laukai Conservation

was founded in 2015 and is located in a small farming village in the outskirts of Guangzhou. They focus on the Laukai river of Guangzhou and also on educational programs to raise awareness about the river's situation and sustainable livelihood among villagers and city dwellers from Guangzhou. They organize community activities, environmental education workshops for adults and children, workshops on sustainable farming and a community library. They also monitor the water quality for pollution and industrial waste leaks. Furthermore, they engage with other non-governmental and academic organizations around environmental and community work in the region and beyond and develop a network of alumni.

ZHANG Jiayi

found her passion of working for vulnerable populations while volunteering in Zhuhai during her undergraduate studies. This led her to majoring in social work in the Department of Law. She expanded her skills through exchanges and further volunteering during her studies. After graduation, she joined Laukai, where she has served as Project Director since 2015.

Center for Environment (Czzc)

was founded in 1999 by a group of student activists. Today, the Center for Environment is a non-profit and non-partisan organization that tries to influence the relevant public policies in a reasoned and active way, raising public awareness of environmental issues, and achieve constructive cooperation with other associations, networks, institutions and international organizations. Center for Environment is a member of the largest environmental network of civil society organizations: "Friends of the Earth International".

Viktor Bjelić

earned a Bsc. of Geography and Tourism at the Natural Science Faculty of Banja Luka. He is one of the founders of the Center for Environment, then known as Young Researchers of Banja Luka and has for many years worked on its projects, both professionally and through volunteer engagement. He is the initiator of the founding and coordinator of the Aarhus Center in Banja Luka and the network of Aarhus Centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Greenovation Hub (Ghub), Beijing & Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G), London

The exchange was focused on gaining a greater understanding of China's green financial policies, particularly those directed towards the financial sector, including development financial institutions.

Ghub hosting Dileimy Orozco Silva in Beijing

Challenges

It is difficult to say whether this is applicable to all Chinese institutions, but one thing I noticed is that there was a preference against open plan offices; instead each team had their own office. This made it a bit more challenging to participate across teams. However, this was overcome by the friendliness of the team at Ghub.

Another challenge is the sheer scale of Beijing; in many European cities it is possible to easily walk or take a short ride on public transport between meetings. In Beijing, it is important to carefully plan meetings to avoid spending too much time navigating the Beijing metro.

Activities

During my stay in Beijing, I had the opportunity to attend an event on the Green Investment Principles along the Belt Road Initiative, in which different commercial banks and development financial institutions presented their position regarding the challenges and opportunities they are facing in incorporating low-carbon and sustainable development in projects in Belt and Road countries.

I also attended several round-tables on the role of development finance institutions in achieving the Paris goals, and had the opportunity to interview a wide range of key stakeholders, focusing on shifting financial flows to a net zero economy.

Outcome and Impact

As a result of this exchange, I have broadened my understanding of the different local policies on green

finance, such as the potential role of financial regulators in driving changes in the financial sector. However, there is still much to do in order to achieve this goal. Interestingly however, the exchange also helped me to see the parallels between the challenges faced by China in its efforts to stimulate green finance and similar challenges which I have been studying in Europe.

By working closely with Greenovation Hub, I gained a better understanding of the role of national development institutions in supporting the economy and the potential role they could have in the green economy, as well as opportunities in the Belt Road Initiative. Through the exchange, I had the opportunity to participate in a webinar with my colleagues at Ghub on the role of development financial institution in the Paris Agreement.

E3G hosting XUE Yi in London

The Paris climate accord sends a clear signal of decarbonizing the world economy and shifting towards a climate and environment friendly development pathway. Meanwhile, the impact of extreme weather and climate change is becoming increasingly aggravated. The urgency, magnitude and challenge of this transition require informed and focused attention and engagement across society, including policy-makers, investors, civil society and the general public, with positive and effective participation and interaction.



Attending a conference on financial institutions in development © XUE Yi

Through the exchange program, Greenovation Hub seeks to better understand measures centering the fact of climate change in socio-economic discourse and shape momentum around key moments of climate change, making them capable of informing, enabling, and engaging the relevant stakeholders, including civil organizations, media, academia and policy makers.

Challenges

From my interviews, I found that in both domestic and European policy advocacy, there is insufficient communication personnel and support for capacity building, partly due to limited funds. The purpose of policy advocacy is to bring about change, and strategic communication will accelerate the implementation of this, which requires involving more professional communications people. Since the exchange lasts for only four weeks, there was not much opportunity to interview communication colleagues from other policy advocacy NGOs to discuss this issue.

Activities

GHub, E3G, Germanwatch and AIIB co-organized a webinar between the AIIB and the representatives of civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia on 12 September. We invited speakers from the climate, environmental and social sectors to share their insights on opportunities and challenges for MDBs in aligning present and future actions taken by the AIIB with climate targets. During the webinar, experts from the AIIB expressed the bank's openness and willingness to accommodate civil society organizations. Over 40 participants from government think tanks, academia, NGOs, and foundations reached common consensus on interest in having further and more in-depth dialogue, expanding engagement with the bank. During my stay in London, I conducted interviews with representatives from E3G, CDSB, and Greenpeace on climate communication. I also participated in the release of a report written by E3G and the translation of social media posts.

Outcome and Impact

Ghub collaborated with E3G to set up a communications platform for aligning international finance flows



Group photo with the E3G colleagues © XUE Yi

with the Paris Agreement via online activities from an NGO perspective, fostering dialogues across sectors to explore the challenges and opportunities of China's policies and actions on this issue on international and national levels; set up a channel for information sharing and communications between Chinese and European NGOs on climate communication and green finance for enabling further cooperation and collaboration on climate-friendly transition.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The exchange program has cemented the existing relationship between E3G and Ghub, and we hope to further seek opportunities for long-term collaboration. For example, in light of the "Belt Road Initiative" and the role of the development financial institutions in supporting the Paris goals, we are exploring opportunities to work together to promote shifting financial flows to support a net zero and resilient economy.

We want to explore effective ways of generating positive narratives related to climate, low carbon and sustainable development, in order to raise awareness of and generate discussions about climate change among policy-makers, investors, civil societies and the general public.

More broadly, the opportunity to live in Beijing and work with such a fantastic group of women was inspirational, and I have formed friendships both with XUE Yi and her colleagues at Ghub, which I hope and believe will prove enduring.

Greenovation Hub (Ghub)

wants to achieve a greener tomorrow where everyone can have access to clean water, fresh air and safe food. Their focus is on climate change and the promotion of sustainable financial policy, as well as on finding ways to solve China's water issues. They provide innovative tools to enable public participation in environmental protection and to foster the joint power of civil society, business and government to accelerate China's green transition.

XUE Yi

joined Ghub in October 2015 having previously worked for a local news media agency where she developed and implemented creative strategies of communication and marketing for clients. She has extensive experience in online marketing and media writing. Xue Yi earned an MA degree of Communications and News Media and a BA degree of English Communication at the University of Macau.

Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G)

is an independent climate change think tank operating to accelerate the global transition to a low carbon economy. Founded in 2004, E3G are independent experts on climate diplomacy and energy policy. They build the broad based coalitions necessary to deliver a safe climate, and hold policy makers to account on their promises. E3G works closely with like-minded partners in government, politics, civil society, science, the media, public interest foundations and elsewhere.

Dileimy Orozco Silva

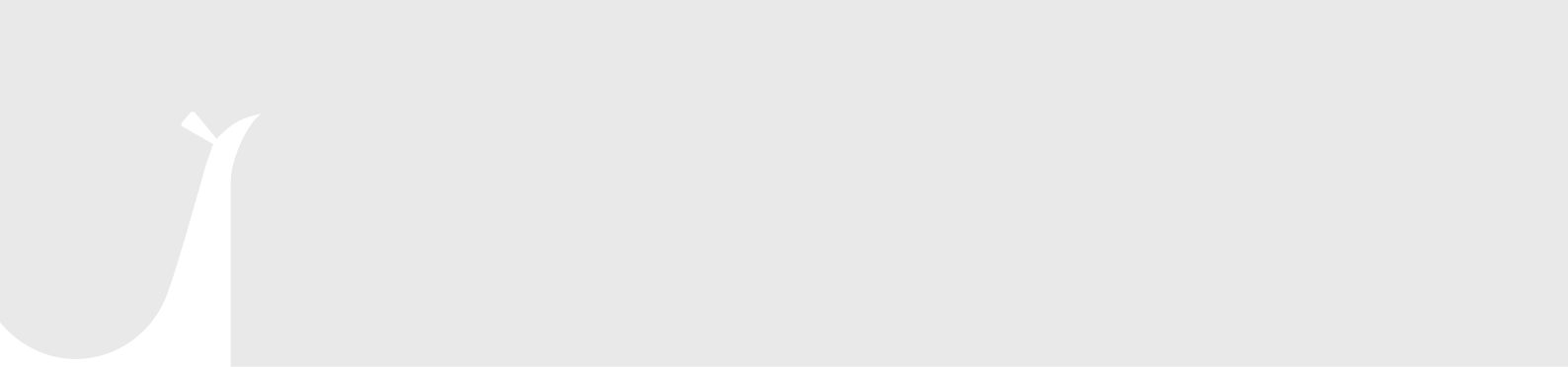
is a Policy Advisor working on E3G's Sustainable Finance program based in London. Her work is focused on systemic reforms of the financial system at both the private and public level; working on both greening financial institution and developing a framework for creating ambitious financial institutions to deliver the finance required to drive the low carbon economy. At present, Dileimy is leading on a project to draw on international best practices in the creation of Green Investment Banks.



Working in the E3G office © XUE Yi



Notes



Notes

About the Organizers

Climate Action Network Europe

Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe is Europe's largest coalition working on climate and energy issues. With over 130 member organizations in more than 30 European countries - representing over 44 million citizens - CAN Europe works to prevent dangerous climate change and promote sustainable climate and energy policy in Europe.



The China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)

The China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) is a non-profit membership organization operating nationwide. CANGO was founded on July 22nd, 1992, and registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs in 1993. By the end of December 2019, CANGO has 166 membership organizations. In 2007, CANGO gained NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. In 2016, CANGO was evaluated as 4A level in national non-profit organizations by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Till the end of 2019, CANGO had raised a total of RMB 978 million from 106 donor agencies for project implementation.



Stiftung Asienhaus

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 „Asienstiftung“. Its founder, Prof. Dr. Günter Freudenberg, and several other associations working on Asia joined in 1995 in Essen and founded the Asia House. In October 2012, the Asia House moved its headquarters to Cologne. The China Program of Stiftung Asienhaus sees itself as a platform of Chinese-European exchange and wants to contribute to a peaceful and sustainable development in both regions. Its aim is to provide informed knowledge on social, environmental and political developments.





The Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH is one of Europe's largest foundations associated with a private company. In its charitable work, it addresses social issues at an early stage and develops exemplary solutions. For this purpose, it plans and implements its own projects. Additionally, it supports third-party initiatives that have similar goals.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is active in the areas of health, science, education, active citizenship, as well as international understanding and cooperation. It is committed to upholding the values and example of its founder Robert Bosch and continuing his philanthropic work. With more than 50 years' experience, the Foundation has extensive knowledge, the qualifications for developing solutions, and a comprehensive network of partners, experts, and practitioners. Since it was established in 1964, the Robert Bosch Stiftung has invested around 1.8 billion euros in charitable work.

www.bosch-stiftung.de

www.weibo.com/robertboschstiftung

STIFTUNG MERCATOR

Stiftung Mercator is a private and independent foundation. Through its work, it strives for a society characterized by openness to the world, solidarity and equal opportunities. In this context, it concentrates on strengthening Europe; increasing the educational success of disadvantaged children and young people, especially those of migrant origin; driving forward climate change mitigation and promoting science and the humanities. Stiftung Mercator symbolizes the connection between academic expertise and practical project experience. Stiftung Mercator feels a strong sense of loyalty to the Ruhr region, the home of the founding family and the foundation's headquarters.

At Stiftung Mercator, China plays a key role. It is a country of significant global standing with which Germany can and must cooperate for the benefit of both countries and with a view to resolving global issues. Nonetheless, misperceptions and prejudices often play a major role, and Stiftung Mercator believes that deeper mutual understanding is the key to successful cooperation.

One central element of the China activities is "Mercator Exchange", which serves as the umbrella organization for all exchange programs. The idea behind this is that international relations can only be forged through personal encounters. The aim is to give young people in particular the opportunity to acquire international experience and thereby to enhance their intercultural skills.

Our guiding philosophy in this context is for people to understand one another, learn from one another and jointly overcome international challenges.

<https://www.stiftung-mercator.de>