

Foreword

Jennifer L. Turner

Environmental activism in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong has been growing considerably over the past decade, but most green activists and environmental journalists in each area have not had opportunities to meet and exchange ideas on their professions. Through a generous grant from the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Woodrow Wilson Center Environmental Change and Security Project (ECSP) organized a forum in Hong Kong to provide opportunities for 65 environmentalists and journalists from the three areas of Greater China to discuss improving the capacity of environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the quality of environmental reporting in the region.

In preparation for the Hong Kong forum, ECSP's China Working Group brought seven environmental nongovernmental organization representatives and journalists from Greater China to Washington, DC in early December 2000. The seven (Shi Lihong, Ng Cho Nam, Chang Hung Lin, Wang Yongchen, Nailene Chou Weist, Hu Kanping, and Joyce Fu) took part in a study tour of environmental organizations located in Washington DC. They each gave talks at the Wilson Center that highlighted how social, economic, and political factors have shaped the development of green NGOs and environmental journalism in each area. The seven participants also helped me (the China Working Group coordinator) design the *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum*, held in Hong Kong, 9-10 April 2001. I am grateful to the seven (whom I affectionately dubbed the G-7 Greenies) who came to Washington, DC, for not only were they key in designing the forum and suggesting speakers, but they also helped us contact participants and acted as chairs for the various panels at the Hong Kong forum. Their work and enthusiasm were instrumental in the success of this unique gathering.

My coeditor Fengshi Wu and I have enjoyed putting this publication together, our only regret is that the printed page does not capture the enthusiastic discussions the participants had over meals and walks around the beautiful grounds of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Beas River Country Club Resort. In these proceedings we have tried to reveal the energy and synthesize the insightful discussions of this two-day forum. Therefore, in addition to presenting summaries of the presentations and discussions, we have added some commentaries that compare the development trends in the environmental movements in the three areas. In order

to better communicate the rich diversity of NGO green groups in Greater China, we also compiled feature boxes on the organizations that were not covered fully in presentations. This publication concludes with an editor essay reflecting on the potential of environmental dialogues in promoting confidence and linkages among peoples and regions.

I wish to extend my gratitude to the U.S. Institute of Peace for the generous grant to bring together environmentalists from both sides of the Taiwan Straits, and thanks are also due to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which made federal conference funds available for meetings in Washington, DC and this publication. I am extremely grateful to the forum cosponsors the Centre for Asian Studies and the Journalism and Media Studies Centre (JMSC) at Hong Kong University who issued the invitations and made the logistical arrangements in Hong Kong. I must acknowledge Ying Chan, the Director of the JMSC, who showed her strong support for the forum by graciously allowing me to monopolize Ray Cheung's time for much of the preparatory work. The challenges of coordinating a conference over a long distance can be strenuous. Despite some late night harried phone calls, working with Ray served to strengthen our friendship and increase my admiration of him.

In addition to all of the enthusiastic participants, I wish to express my gratitude to a number of people who helped the forum run so smoothly in Hong Kong. Yvonne Cheng and Alice Chow from the JMSC together with Clair Twigg (Wilson Center) kept the financial affairs and other crucial conference logistics in order. Other JMSC staff were invaluable: Nailene Chou Wiest as principle organizer of the journalist panels and the post-forum *jiaozi* feast; Li Cho as behind-the-scenes coordinator and troubleshooter extraordinaire; John Young as the ubiquitous photographer; and Holly Guo as a patient note taker. Smiles to Eric Zusman who took a break from dissertation fieldwork in Northern China to haul supplies, take notes, and be a cheerful gofer. Wu Fengshi not only helped at the Hong Kong forum, but she also has worked tirelessly with me compiling, editing, and translating the publication and never once laughing at my creative translations of the Chinese texts! Sun Liang and Qin Xin kept Fengshi and me sane with their editorial assistance, and an extra cheer for Richard Thomas, ECSP desktop publisher, who eagerly dove into laying out a publication in a "language that looks like hieroglyphs."

Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum Participants

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Clair Twigg, Project Assistant
Fengshi Wu, Research Assistant
Eric Zusman, Research Assistant

Centre of Asian Studies, Hong Kong University

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Melissa Curley, Researcher

Journalism and Media Studies Centre, Hong Kong University

Yuen Ying Chan, Director
Nailene Chou Wiest, Assistant Professor
Gene Mustain, Assistant Professor
Ray Cheung, Program Manager
Sai Chan, Honorary Professor
Yvonne Cheng, Assistant
Holly Guo, Volunteer
John Young, Volunteer
Li Cho, Volunteer

Mainland China

NGOs

CHEN Qing, South-North Institute for Sustainable Development
DING Jing, World Wide Fund for Nature - China
FANG Jing, Friends of Nature
HU Jia, Tibetan Antelope Information Center
JIN Jiaman, Green Earth Volunteers
LIANG Congjie, Friends of Nature
LU Hongyan, Environmental Volunteers Association, Sichuan University
SONG Qinghua, Global Village of Beijing
SUN Dehui, Black-Necked Crane Association
WANG Yongchen, Green Earth Volunteers
XI Zhinong, Green Plateau
YANG Jiongli, Friends of Earth, Guizhou
YANG Xin, GreenRiver

Journalists

FANG Sanwen, *Nanfang Weekend*
HU Kanping, *China Green Times*
SUN Xuan, *Yangcheng Evening News*
SUN Yanjun, Tianjin People Radio Station
ZHANG Kejia, *China Youth Daily*
ZHU Zhongjie, *Guangzhou Daily*

Taiwan

NGOs

CHEN Man-Li, Homemakers Union and Foundation
FU Chia Cheih, Green Formosa Front
HUANG Ming Hsuan, Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan
LI Ken Cheng, National Teacher Association
Simon Liao, Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan
LIN Mawnan, Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan
LIN Shen Tzung, Eco-Conservation Alliance
Wei Chieh LAE, Green Citizen Action Union
HSU Jen-Shiu, Society of Wilderness
CHANG Hunglin, Society of Wilderness
CHUNG Mingkuang, Meinung People Association

Journalists

Yu-Tzu CHIU, *Taipei Times*
LIAO Yunchang, *Taiwan Independent Times*
LIN Jusen, *United Daily News*
YU Liping, *Public Television Service Foundation*

Hong Kong

NGOs and Journalists

Anthony CHAN, Messengers of Green Consciousness
Sannie Chan Lit Fong, Green Peng Chau Association
HO Wai Chi, Greenpeace
Lisa Hopkinson, Civic Exchange
Kay KU, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
NG Cho Nan, Conservancy Association
Norris NG, Conservancy Association
WONG Kai Yi, Tai-O Culture and Environment Group
Vicky LAU, Produce Green Foundation
Plato K.T. YIP, Friends of the Earth (HK)

Journalists and Academics

William F. Barron, Centre of Urban Planning & Environmental Management, Hong Kong University
A. Roger Chan, Centre of Urban Planning & Environmental Management, Hong Kong University
Kai Yan Choi, Hong Kong Shu Yan College
Yok-shiu F. LEE, Department of Geography, Hong Kong University
WONG Koon Kwai, Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University
Olga Wong, *Ming Pao Daily*

International Participants

Barbara Finamore, Natural Resources Defense
Council
Kamilla H. Kolhus, Royal Norwegian Consulate
General

Randy Kritkauskay, ECOLOGIA
Andrea Quong, Independent Researcher
Peter Riggs, Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Humphrey Wou, Kenney Watershed Foundation
ZHANG Ji-qiang, W. Alton Jones Foundation

Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum

April 9-10, 2001

Hong Kong Jockey Club Beas River Country Club Resort

Sponsored by

*The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
The Centre for Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong
The Journalism and Media Studies Centre, University of Hong Kong*

Monday April 9, 2001**9:00 - 9:30 Welcoming Session**

Jennifer L. Turner, *Senior Project Associate at the Woodrow Wilson
Center*

S.L. Wong, *Director of the Centre for Asian Studies, Hong Kong
University*

Yuen Ying Chan, *Director of the Journalism and Media Studies
Centre, Hong Kong University*

**9:45 - 11:45 Environmental Movement and NGO Trends in
Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan**

Co-Chairs: Ng Cho Nam and Jennifer Turner

Yok-shiu F. Lee, *Department of Geography, Hong Kong University*

Ng Cho Nam, *Department of Geography, Hong Kong University*

Jin Jiaman, *Chinese Environmental Research Institute*

Lin Shen Tzung, *Eco-conservation Alliance*

1:45 - 3:30 Panels**Panel 1: NGO Networking and Partnering**

Chair: Joyce Fu, Green Formosa Front

Wei Chieh Lae, *Green Citizen Action Alliance*

Chen Qing, *South-North Institute for Sustainable Development*

Plato K. T. Yip, *Friends of Earth Hong Kong*

**Panel 2: Description of Environmental Journalism in China,
Taiwan, and Hong Kong**

Chair: Wang Yongchen, Green Earth Volunteers

Hu Kanping, *Green China Times*

Lin Ju Sen, *United Taiwan News*

Olga Wang, *Ming Pao*

3:45-5:15 Roundtables**Roundtable 1: NGO Environmental Education Methods**

Chair: Lu Hongyan, Environmental Volunteer Association

Liang Congjie, *Friends of Nature*

Chung Ming Kuang, *Meinung Conservation Association*

Sannie Chan Lit Fong, *Peng Chau Island Association*

**Roundtable 2: Effective Strategies and Techniques for
Reporting Environmental News**

Nailene Chou Wiest, *Journalism and Media Studies Centre, Hong
Kong University*

Tuesday April 10, 2001**9:30 - 12:30 Morning Workshops****Journalist Workshop on Air Quality Reporting**

Facilitator: Nailene Chou Wiest

Sai Chen, *Honorary Professor of the Journalism and Media Studies
Centre, HKU*

Green NGO Capacity Building Roundtable

Co-Chairs: Chang Hunglin (Society of Wilderness) and Lu

Hongyan (Environmental Volunteers Association)

Simon Liao, *Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan*

Wong Kai Yi, *Tai-O Culture Workshop*

2:00 - 3:00 NGO and Journalist Dialogue

Facilitators: Nailene Chou Wiest and Chang Hunglin

3:15 - 4:15 The Visual Image

Chair: Jennifer L. Turner

Hsu Jen-Shiu, *Society of Wilderness*

Xi Zhinong, *Green Plateau Institute*

Sun Dehui, *Black-necked Crane Association*

4:15 - 4:30 Closing Session

Co-Chairs: Jennifer L. Turner and Nailene Chou Wiest

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Section I

Environmental Movements and NGO Trends in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong

環保

Editor Commentary:

Development of Environmental NGOs in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong

Jennifer L. Turner and Fengshi Wu, Woodrow Wilson Center

The three talks presented below opened the two-day *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum* in Hong Kong. These talks presented an overview of green NGO development in Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Taiwan and painted pictures of three diverse environmental movements. Since these movements developed independently in different political and social environments it is not surprising that there are marked variations in the character and scope of environmental NGO activities in each area. Drawing from these three talks and our work researching and setting up this forum in Hong Kong, we present this mini-essay as an attempt to pull together and compare some of the diverse development trends of environmental movements in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

The Rise in Environmental NGOs

Within Greater China, Hong Kong environmental NGOs emerged earliest—the first group was formed in 1968. Similar to events in Taiwan, environmental activists initially demanded better government accountability on pollution (particularly air) issues. Like their Taiwanese counterparts, environmental groups in Hong Kong were viewed as radical by their government. Following the opening of political access to civil society groups in the mid-1980s, many of the Hong Kong environmental activists have softened their strategies vis-à-vis the government. Today, there are several dozen well-established environmental groups in Hong Kong, focusing on region-wide or community issues. Many of the region-wide NGOs work closely with the government in shaping environmental policies and regulations.

The early Taiwanese environmental activists were (and many remain) considerably more “fiery” and politicized than their Mainland or Hong Kong counterparts. In fact, the Taiwanese environmental movement, which began with pollution and land use protests in the mid-1980s, is

intimately intertwined with the democratic movement. Later in the 1980s, environmental groups began forming around conservation and anti-nuclear issues. Today, over 300 environmental NGOs operate throughout Taiwan active in a broad spectrum of issues—pollution prevention, environmental education, nature conservation, and organic farming. As discussed in Lae’s presentation, some Taiwanese environmental NGOs are very involved in grassroots protests and projects while others act as watchdogs or advisors for the Taiwanese government in the design and implementation of environmental policies.

Mainland China’s environmental NGOs are the relative newcomers in the region, with the first group formed in 1994 (15 years after the first quasi-nongovernmental environmental group was created). The Mainland Chinese environmental groups are homegrown and are generally non-confrontational organizations. Notably, Mainland green groups arose in a time when international environmental groups began to increase their presence in China. International environmental groups have partnered with various governmental agencies and research institutions, as well as Chinese NGOs. Partnerships between domestic and foreign green groups are much more common in Mainland China than either Hong Kong or Taiwan. Today there are approximately 40 domestic environmental groups registered with the government, but since the registration process often can take years, there are most likely many more NGOs operating while waiting in the wings for official legal status or simply implementing projects as nonprofit corporations. The number of individuals undertaking independent environmental activity at the local level is possibly quite high.

Cooperative Versus Contentious Strategies

Overall, Hong Kong and Taiwanese environmental NGOs have shifted their operation strategies from a contentious to a somewhat more cooperative relationship with

the government. As Drs. Lee and Ng pointed out in their talk, the core Hong Kong green groups have become members of government advisory councils and in effect have become apolitical organizations. Hong Kong groups meet regularly at government advisory meetings and do periodically unite for joint campaigns to pressure the government. During the most recent Long Valley campaign a coalition of environmental NGOs in Hong Kong was very successful in using the news media to help stop government plans to build a railroad through a fragile wetland area. In addition to building a sustainable working relationship with government agencies, many Hong Kong NGOs also are trying to reach a balanced and mutually

supportive relationship with the private sector.

Taiwanese green groups join together much more often than their Hong Kong counterparts to stage anti-government protests. The anti-nuclear (See Lae's talk in the networking section) and anti-incinerator protests illustrate the dynamism of joint NGO activities in Taiwan. Taiwanese NGOs, particularly those working with rural communities, also are very willing to protest against factories or development companies that endanger the land or health of local



Jin Jiaman (right, *Chinese Environmental Research Institute*) and Chen Man-Li (*Homemakers' Union and Foundation*) enjoy a laugh during an icebreaking activity between panels.

people. Some environmental NGO activists and the Taiwanese Environmental Protection Administration (TEPA) officials meet for periodic informal discussions, which can become contentious exchanges, but overall the TEPA officials and NGO activists try to remain friendly. Some NGOs in Taiwan compete successfully for government grants, which enable them to do projects that promote environmental protection. Many Taiwanese NGOs believe they play a key role in lobbying and suing government officials to implement and enforce environmental laws. Moreover, Taiwanese environmental NGOs are very media savvy in their campaigns.

Mainland Chinese groups do not stage protests against the government or factories. Instead, many Mainland Chinese environmental NGOs have built up cooperative relations with governmental agencies and institutes. These close linkages are not simply due to the requirement that

NGOs must have a government “mother-in-law” sponsor, but also because many of the individuals who created green NGOs in Mainland China wished to help increase the government's capacity to protect the environment. As Jin Jiaman noted in her talk, some groups work with local governments and citizens to create waste reduction and recycling programs. Jin also mentioned that there are a large number of unregistered groups that arise spontaneously to address a local issue in the community. Such groups of loose volunteers often operate quite independently from government, but generally do not aim to challenge government authority. Green student groups have increased from 1 in the mid-1980s to 120 today, which could help to cultivate a growing pool of environmental activists ready to create new civil society organizations over the next decades.

Future Development Trends

Drawing from discussions in the Hong Kong *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum* and from one-on-one conversations with these environmentalists, we discovered striking differences in the current development trends and priorities of NGOs in each of the three areas. Hong Kong environmental NGOs will most likely maintain their close consultative relationship with government and continue to work to improve the professionalization of their organizations. A number of Hong Kong green groups appear very willing to partner with or receive support from the local business community. Several Hong Kong groups expressed the desire to undertake more work in Mainland China and with the growth in environmental groups across the border they see greater opportunities to do so.

Because Taiwan lacks diplomatic recognition from a majority of the world's countries and therefore does not have full membership in many international organizations, Taiwanese environmental NGOs do not enjoy as much financial assistance and attention from outside institutions and foundations as their Mainland counterparts. One notable exception is the *Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan*, which was able to successfully join the *International Wild Bird Federation*. After the major democratic transition in Taiwan, many environmental activists opted to work on environmental issues within the government sector. Nevertheless, a large number of NGO activists still believe it is crucial to empower local communities to protect the environment and to monitor local policy implementation and environmental threats posed by industries and developers. Therefore it is not surprising that a greater percentage of Taiwanese environmental NGOs have strong linkages and accountability to local communities than do Hong Kong and Mainland green groups.

The lack of access to international forums and funding indicates that Taiwanese groups will continue to focus their energy on internal rather than regional or global environmental issues. Some Taiwanese groups expressed an interest in working with Mainland Chinese environmentalists, but previously had lacked the opportunity to meet their counterparts across the Straits. In fact, in the early stages of setting up this Hong Kong forum some Taiwanese environmentalists told the organizers that they were surprised and pleased to learn Mainland China had any green groups.

Mainland environmental NGOs are markedly different from their Hong Kong and Taiwanese counterparts in that they have developed in an environment of greater “transnational networks.” In other words, the Mainland NGOs have (and will probably increasingly) benefit from contact and assistance from international environmental

NGOs, foundations, and multilateral organizations. In short, the future of the Mainland environmental movement may be greatly shaped by the “transnationalization” of the environmental NGOs. How partial dependence on international support will shape development of Mainland NGOs in the future is a question that cannot be answered today. Despite some external funding support, the role of the Chinese government (at both the central and local levels) will remain significant for Mainland environmental NGOs over the next decade. As environmental NGOs continue to build their partnerships with government organizations and avoid direct confrontation, government agencies and institutes throughout China could act as facilitators for green civil society groups and continue to grant the NGOs greater space in which to operate.

The Emergence and Development of Environmental NGOs in Hong Kong

Yok-shiu F. Lee and Ng Cho Nam, Associate Professors, Department of Geography, Hong Kong University

In the 1970s, the Hong Kong government viewed the few existing environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as radical pressure groups, but today some of these same groups sit on government advisory councils. In their talk, which opened the *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum*, Dr. Yok-shiu F. Lee and Dr. Ng Cho Nam discussed why the majority of Hong Kong NGOs have adopted a non-confrontational, consensual approach to environmental protection activities. In their analysis of the historical development of the environmental NGO sector, Drs. Lee and Ng argued that environmental groups in Hong Kong have become less politicized, even apolitical organizations. The primary factors contributing to the “apoliticization” of green NGOs in Hong Kong have been: (1) the changing structure of political opportunities and constraints in Hong Kong; (2) the organizational weaknesses of the NGOs; and (3) the cultural and ideological shifts within the Hong Kong public.

Major Environmental NGOs in Hong Kong

There are two kinds of environmental NGOs in Hong Kong: those concentrating on territory-wide issues and those focusing on locality-specific concerns. Territory-wide NGOs include the *Conservancy Association*, *Friends of the Earth (Hong Kong)*, *World Wildlife Fund for Nature Hong Kong*, *Green Power*, *Hong Kong Bird Watching-Society*, and *Greenpeace Hong Kong*. These NGOs are distinguished

by a concern for issues that affect Hong Kong and the world. Locality-specific NGOs include the *Tsing Yi Concern Group*, *Green Peng Chau Association*, and *Green Lantau Association*. These NGOs are concerned about narrower, often community-based issues. The major territory-wide groups are outlined below.

Founded in 1968, the *Conservancy Association* is Hong Kong’s oldest environmental NGO. Its membership initially was comprised of young professionals who sought to apply pressure on the government to institute stricter pollution control and conservation laws. In the 1970s, the Hong Kong government officials perceived this group as radical because of its adversarial approach. This impression changed in the 1980s, however, as the *Conservancy Association* softened its critiques of the government and some of its members were invited to sit on the government’s Advisory Committee on Environmental Pollution.

Friends of the Earth, Hong Kong was established in 1983. Its membership base was initially made up of expatriates but currently consists of local community members. In the early years following its inception, *Friends of Earth, Hong Kong* engaged in mass mobilization activities, such as the anti-nuclear Daya Bay campaign. Recently it has focused more on environmental education activities, partnerships with corporations, and legal challenges against the Hong Kong government.

The *World Wildlife Fund for Nature Hong Kong* office

was set up in 1981. Expatriate businessmen and conservationists continue to make up the majority of its membership. The group has focused on managing the Mai Po wetlands and working on wildlife protection issues. Young, middle class professionals formed *Green Power* in 1988. In its early years of development the group actively promoted a green lifestyle. This focus has changed in the 1990s, from a more idealistic to a more realistic approach, as *Green Power* has become more engaged in social activism and policy criticism.

A relative newcomer to the environmental NGO sector in Hong Kong is *Greenpeace Hong Kong*, which was formed in 1997. The activities of *Greenpeace* in Hong Kong mirror the kinds of protests *Greenpeace* groups employ worldwide—adopting a confrontational approach to protest broad industrial pollution and hazardous waste issues. *Greenpeace Hong Kong* differs from all the above major green organizations, in that it often addresses the issues well beyond the borders of Hong Kong, such as toxic discharge in the Pearl River Delta (which ultimately flows into Hong Kong).

Modes of Green NGO Operation

Modes of green NGO operation in Hong Kong can be broken down into four categories: (1) environmental education, (2) legal challenges, (3) policy advocacy, and (4) criticism and protest. In recent years, the types of activities that NGOs have pursued most frequently in Hong Kong have been environmental education and legal challenges. Twenty years ago more contentious modes of protest, criticism, and lobbying were more common.

Evidence of environmental education activities can be found in the efforts of *Friends of Earth, Hong Kong* to launch waste recycling programs and tree planting activities. The group also has tried to bring eco-friendly messages to local schools. Similarly, *World Wildlife for Fund Nature (HK)* has tried to incorporate education efforts into its Mai Po wetlands conservation program. The Hong Kong government has provided the impetus for many of these educational projects by creating an environmental and conservation fund of \$50 million (USD). Corporate sponsorship has been another source of funding for these and other environmental educational projects.

Hong Kong environmental activists also have encountered success through the legal system via petitions, signature campaigns, and judicial review. Judicial review was used to halt progress on the Sha Lo Tung project, a property deal that would have meant building on parklands. In another case, a final court decision should be announced in 2001 on plans to construct the Long Valley railroad through wetlands in the New Territories. In this case, a coalition of Hong Kong NGOs banded together to use a statute in the Environ-

mental Impact Assessment Law that requires NGO consultation to bring the case under review before construction begins. This coalition of NGOs also mounted an extensive and lively media campaign against the Long Valley railroad.

The Shift from Contentious to Consensual Approaches

A consensual approach refers to a non-radical, non-confrontational activities promoting environmental protection. Dr. Lee and Dr. Ng cited three reasons to explain why green groups in Hong Kong increasingly have adopted a more consensual approach. The first, and perhaps most influential cause of this shift has been the changing structure of political opportunities and constraints. Other key factors are the continued organizational weaknesses of the NGOs and the cultural and ideological processes of the people in Hong Kong.

During the late 1970s to middle 1980s, liberalization and democratization altered the political climate of Hong Kong. In part due to this more open political mood, the Hong Kong government became more receptive to nongovernmental organizations. Consequently, some factions within the government began to build informal alliances with NGOs and their representatives. In the 1990s, these roles became institutionalized in the consultative machinery of the colonial government. Today, although NGOs have gained a secure place at the table, they also are inundated with duties and obligations that come with their institutionalized role. Notably, NGO members are handling many of the consultative details voluntarily without compensation. The NGO members' greater access and influence within the political machinery, combined with being bogged down with detailed consultative work, have contributed to this the non-confrontational approach of environmental NGOs today.

Hong Kong NGOs also must deal with organizational weaknesses that have led them to soften their confrontational approaches. The main weaknesses are small membership bases and dependence on corporate and government funding. First, most of the NGOs in Hong Kong have only a small number of members and must rely on a limited staff. Many of the members that join NGOs have a consumerist attitude. In short, members are not so much *donating* to NGOs to become involved in the organization as much as *purchasing* a part of the organization's success. When results are not immediately forthcoming they often loathe making membership payments again. The need to please their membership base has led some green groups to avoid risky radical protest approaches and focus on providing their members with activities, information, and evidence of successful efforts. The growing dependence of many Hong Kong NGOs on corporate

and governmental funding has also played a role in diluting confrontational methods.

Cultural and ideological processes are the final category of factors that have led Hong Kong NGOs to become more consensual vis-à-vis the government. Shaped in part by Chinese culture, colonial rule, and other historical factors, there is an underlying predisposition within the Hong Kong public to avoid confrontation. This predisposition is reinforced by the perception that environmental problems are not urgent and therefore should be treated gradually. Moreover, many in the public and the government tend to define environmental problems as caused by technical and not political shortcomings. Therefore, the misperception exists that environmental prob-

lems can be solved with the proper management techniques and the installation of clean technology equipment. Political involvement is thus not required.

The speakers concluded that over the past two decades Hong Kong has seen an exponential growth in green NGOs. In addition to the political and social factors that have softened the approach of green groups, the growth in the NGO sector has contributed to greater organizational professionalization and functional specification of these groups. All of these factors have contributed to the evolution of Hong Kong environmental groups, which are now less confrontational and more inclined to cooperate with the government. They describe this evolution as the apoliticization of the environmental moment in Hong Kong.

The Growing Importance of Public Participation in China's Environmental Movement

Jin Jiaman, Co-founder, Green Earth Volunteers and Researcher, China Environmental Science Research Institute

In the late 1990s, the Chinese public significantly increased its participation in environmental protection campaigns and activities sponsored by nongovernmental environmental organizations. This voluntary participation in green activities marks a turning point in the environmental movement in China. Instead of simply following government-sponsored mobilization campaigns, private citizens are joining forces with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to do green work. This new area of public activism in China has attracted interest within Chinese society and from overseas governments, foundations, and NGOs.

1. MODELS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

In Mainland China, the NGOs involved in the country's growing environmental movement can be divided into two categories: (1) institutionalized organizations; and (2) groups of individuals gathering together (sometimes spontaneously) to do environmental protection activities. In China, the former organizations must register with a governmental institution, while the latter, more spontaneous groups generally do not formally register their organizations. Both of these categories contain a broad diversity of organizations that differ in scope, methods, and targeted populations. While Chinese environmental NGOs do not share the same history as their Western counterparts, China's NGO community is at least as diverse and complex as those in more developed countries.

1.1 Types and Activities of Formal Environmental Organization

• *Governmental and Quasi-Governmental Environmental Social Organizations.* Before the reform period began in 1979, all environmental organizations were part of the Chinese government. Most of the staff in these organizations belonged to government agencies, and all funds were from the state. Beginning in the early 1980s, the central government devolved greater administrative and financial authority to lower-level governments. In this period of institutional reform, the Chinese government also opened political opportunities for NGOs to be created. In order to regulate this new and growing non-state sector, the Chinese government promulgated the "Temporary Social Organization Registration Management Regulations" in 1989 and revised these regulations in 1998.

Under these regulations, social organizations are required to formally register with a government agency in order to become an independent and legal social organization. Some of the first organizations to be certified independent NGOs were originally created by the Chinese government itself (e.g., government organized NGOs or GONGOs). For example, the *Chinese Environmental Science Institute* (founded in 1979) is China's earliest and largest nonprofit organization that carries out environmental activities.¹ This institute usually organizes nationwide activities and campaigns, in which high-level government officials participate. This high-level political support has meant that *Chinese Environmental Science Institute* activities generally receive considerable news media attention and have been effective in raising public aware-

ness of environmental issues. Today, this group is registered with the Cultural Affairs Bureau and its affiliated professional agencies are the Chinese Scientific Association and the State Environmental Protection Administration. The institute has become more autonomous: while it completely depended on government funding in its first decade, in the 1990s, its state support gradually decreased. In 1997, government support had dropped to 35 percent of the organization's budget.

- *Citizen Environmental Social Organizations.* This category encompasses groups established by individual citizens. Because these citizen groups are self-funded, they are free to set up their own kind of environmental protection organizations. The first example of such a group is the *Chinese Cultural Library—Green Cultural Branch*, better known under the name *Friends of Nature*. A history professor, Liang Congjie, created *Friends of Nature* in March 1994, and the Cultural Affairs Bureau approved its registration. This organization has become an umbrella group for many individual environmentalists throughout China who are engaged in environmental education and research. Nevertheless, the procedure for NGOs to obtain full legal status is much more difficult than for those GONGOs with strong government ties. Many of the NGOs falling into this category would rather register with lower-level governmental agencies to avoid difficulties.

- *Citizen Nonprofit Enterprises.* These consist mainly of organizations that an individual has succeeded in registering under an industrial management bureau. In practice, these organizations do not pursue profit in undertaking their environmental protection activities. The main reason some environmental activists choose this registration route is because it is often nearly impossible for them to find a sponsoring “mother-in-law” (*popo*) governmental agency. The first such green group registered as a nonprofit enterprise is *Beijing's Global Village Environmental Cultural Center*—better known as *Global Village Beijing* (GVB). Liao Xiaoyi (who had recently returned from studying in the United States) founded GVB in March of 1996 under the approval of the Industry and Commerce Department of the Beijing Municipal government. The primary focus of this group is to encourage and to educate the public to adopt a greener lifestyle. GVB uses television, radio, and print media as well as community activities to promote the idea that successful protection of the environment depends on the participation of all people. *Green Plateau*, an NGO in Yunnan Province, is another example of a nonprofit enterprise. After a year's effort, Shi Lihong and her colleagues failed to register *Green Plateau* as an NGO; but eventually they launched

their conservation work by registering their organization (See feature box section) as a corporation under the Beijing Municipal government.

- *University Social Organizations.* Students and faculty in universities and professional institutes usually establish these organizations. The university administration, rather than government bureaus, grants approval for student-run environmental social organizations. One example is Tsinghua University's *Green Association*, established in April 1995. Today this group has a membership of 500 students who come from a variety of degree programs. Similar to other such student groups in China, *Green Association* carries out most of its activities within the university. Student green group activities have included establishing student environmental photography contests, organizing environmental information lectures, and campaigning to abolish the use of Styrofoam and disposable chopsticks in university cafeterias. Such student associations depend on three types of funding sources: (1) the university, (2) membership fees, and (3) donations from public and local industries. University environmental groups are developing quickly and have grown in number from a handful in the mid-1980s to nearly 120 today. They also have spread from a few major cities to universities in most provinces. After student members graduate, they bring to society a greater environmental awareness. The impact these new graduates will have on the development of the environmental movement in China should not be underestimated. (*Editor's Note: See feature box on Environmental Volunteers Association for information on a major student group in Sichuan Province*)

1.2 Individuals and Volunteers

- *Informal Citizen Environmental Organizations.* Such groups generally consist of volunteers who periodically gather together to undertake some kind of environmental protection work. Notably, this kind of organization does not obtain formal registration. Such volunteer groups are not always stable or sustainable organizations. One relatively successful volunteer group is Beijing's *Green Earth Volunteers*. This volunteer group is dependent on enthusiastic volunteers who use their free time to participate in environmental activities such as tree planting and environmental awareness education work. The number of participants in their various activities has ranged from several dozen to one thousand. *Green Earth Volunteers* also has created a journalist salon, which consists of regular meetings to help educate journalists on how to improve their coverage of environmental issues. (*Editor's Note: For more information on this group contact the founder Wang Yongchen at: wangyc54@sina.com*) Another example of a

volunteer organization is the *Tibetan Antelope Information Center* (See feature box section).

- *Neighborhood Environmental Organizations.* Such groups consist of citizens living within the same districts or neighborhoods who voluntarily join together to monitor environmental quality in their area. For example, in Fuzhou Municipality (Fujian Province), 600 citizens from 27 streets and 18 townships have created their own environmental group, the *New Harbor Environmental Monitoring Team*.

- *Suing Pollution Violators.* As the legal system in China has grown stronger, some citizens who are victims of pollution have sued the responsible parties. Using the courts has become a new method for the public to participate in environmental protection. In one case, the Tsingdao municipal planning agency (in Shandong Province) in the year 2000 approved a proposal to build residential housing units a mere 10 meters from the ocean shore. Local citizens opposed this project because these buildings would not only damage the coastal ecosystem, but also would destroy the existing ocean view and access to the beaches. Over 300 people sued the Tsingdao municipal planning agency for violating their environmental rights. This kind of class action case plays a role in monitoring environmental protection work and enhances public participation. Moreover, this form of participation is greatly pushing forward environmental education. (For information on a relatively new nonprofit *Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims* in Beijing that helps individuals take environmental cases to court contact its founder Wang Canfa at clapv@public2.east.net.cn)

In China, public participation in registered environmental NGOs and informal groups of green volunteers is growing. These two types of groups are similar in that they are nonprofit and must raise all or most of their funds. The difference between the two is that the formal organizations generally possess independent legal standing and maintain a permanent staff, while volunteer groups are rarely registered, lack permanent staff, and often do not possess legal standing. Regardless of these differences, both types of environmental groups are creating a broad variety of activities to educate and engage the Chinese public. The following section outlines key types of public participation created by both registered and unregistered environmental NGOs in China.

2. MOBILIZING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1 Environmental Education Activities

- *Television and Radio Programs.* Some environmen-

tal NGOs are capable of independently producing educational TV program. For example, *Global Village Beijing* produces “Environmental Protection Hour,” a weekly 30-minute environmental education series on Chinese Central Television Channel 7 (CCTV-7) that has attracted considerable positive attention from both the government and the public. In addition, increasing demand for environmental information is pushing state-run TV and radio stations to create more such programming. For example, China’s Educational Television has a program titled “Green Culture and China,” and CCTV-7 airs a show called “Environmental Protection Hour.” Some NGOs that do not make their own programs act as consultants for TV and radio stations on particular environmental issues.

- *Newspapers and Magazines.* There are two nationwide newspapers specializing in environmental reporting: *China Environment News* and *China Green Times*. Some editors and journalists from these two newspapers are involved heavily in environmental NGO activities. (*Editor’s Note: See Hu Kanping’s article in the journalist section of these proceedings*) Some newspapers that cater to the general public also are beginning to adopt environmental columns as well. For example, *China Youth Daily* has a column titled “Global Village Citizen.” *China Women’s Daily* has a regular column titled “Environmental Protection Matters to Every Family.” Environmental activists and scholarly experts often are interviewed and introduced to the readers in these columns.

2.2 Research and Advocacy

- *Environmental Surveys.* *Friends of Nature* has been particularly successful in undertaking extensive environmental surveys in the past three years, such as: (1) a China newspaper environmental awareness survey, (2) a survey of citizen’s environmental awareness in Beijing, and (3) a survey of environmental groups at Chinese universities. Various environmental NGOs in China conduct different surveys based on their own expertise and capacity. Findings from these surveys provide valuable information for policy recommendations and advocacy.

- *Policy Research and Demonstration Projects.* The *Beijing Environmental and Development Institute* (BEDI) carries out special research on natural resource management and market-based policies for pollution control. BEDI is also undertaking demonstration projects for an SO₂ emissions trading program. The *South-North Institute for Sustainable Development* (SNISD, a Beijing-based environmental NGO) has been carrying out projects that combine research and community-level development

projects. An example of SNISD's work is a biogas generating system project to promote applied research on clean energy and efficient buildings for rural communities. This type of activity requires expertise in sophisticated technologies, but such work could have a great influence on local governmental environmental policymaking and implementation.

3. THE CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN CHINA

- *Policy and Resource Problems.* In the area of policy, the two new regulations that merit discussion are the 1998 "Social Organization Registration Management Rules" and the "The Temporary Regulations for the Registration and Management of Non-Industrial Enterprise Citizen-Run Work Units." On one hand, these regulations provide a true opportunity for nonprofit citizen groups to develop and give China's nongovernmental and nonprofit institutions a new starting point. On the other hand, these regulations stipulate that if there already exists a professional organization or a similar social organization dealing with a certain issue, one cannot establish a group focusing on that issue. For example, if there were already a quasi-governmental organization doing educational work on coastal waters, an NGO wishing to register to do similar work would not be able to get approval from a registration management organization (usually a government agency). This regulation limits the number of civil society environmental organizations and constitutes a major hindrance to the development of environmental organizations. One positive trend is that, following the increased devolution of authority to lower-level governments; some local governments are giving official and semi-official environmental organizations greater opportunities to develop.

- *Funding Challenges.* Solving funding problems is a major challenge for China's nongovernmental sector. In other countries, NGOs often apply to foundations for funding. This channel is not that common currently in China, for the country has few domestic foundations. Therefore, Chinese NGOs do not have a reliable source of local funding. However, some overseas foundations have

begun to support China's NGO sector, and this support has become a major catalyst for NGO development.

- *NGO Capacity Building.* The management of public and partially public environmental organizations is relatively good. Although these groups are independent from their government agencies, they already possess skills and systems for management, accounting, and fund generation. However, sometimes these groups possess inefficient and heavily bureaucratized management methods. Environmental NGOs that developed independent of the state sector often lack proper management skills and experience. Clearly, inefficient management and supervising systems hinder the development of green NGOs in China.

- *Need for Clear Goals.* Social environmental groups need to set and develop clear goals in order to strengthen their organization's capacity. NGOs should develop a good reputation through efficient work and not simply depend on propaganda. In short, if an NGO wishes to survive, it will need to professionalize. Some successful groups have been the *Beijing Environmental and Development Institute* and SNISD, both of which have their own professional staff. These kinds of organizations will give strength to the developing nonprofit green sector in China. Public participation is entering a new phase in China's environmental protection sector. Formal and informal NGOs and quasi-governmental environmental groups are not only motivating the public, but also are playing a role in monitoring the government's environmental protection work. This movement shows that environmental protection is not just an area for government agencies or experts, but also an area ready for contributions from a new and growing NGO sector.

Endnotes

¹ The Chinese Environmental Science Institute is the first GONGO created by the central government after its launching of the economic reform. However, activists and volunteers created the China Forestry Association, now a quasi-NGO under the Ministry of Forestry, in early 1900s; it is said to be the first environmental NGO in modern China.

The Evolution of Taiwan's Environmental Movement

By Lin Shen Tzung (Sam Lin), *Eco-Conservation Alliance*

The Environmental Movement During the Martial Law Period (1949-1987)

Taiwan's environmental movement began in the 1980s and evolved from scattered and spontaneous anti-pollution protests to the diverse collection of 300 environmental NGOs that exist today. Reflecting on the past twenty years of this environmental movement, the abolition of martial law in 1987 is often considered the turning point for green activism in Taiwan.

Before martial law was abolished, some anti-pollution campaigns sprang up in rural areas. The first such protest was in Lukang (central Taiwan) in a campaign opposing the construction of a Dupont chemical plant. Next were protests in response to repeated pollution spills at the Li Chang Rong Chemical Manufacturing factory in Hsinju (in north Taiwan). The former case was a grassroots protest to prevent pollution that could have directly impacted the rural community. In the face of the community's stiff resistance, Dupont abandoned their plan to build a factory at Lukang. The second example in Hsinju was an environmental protest against a highly polluting factory. In addition to the continued protests by people living around the factory, professors from the local universities (Tsinghua and Jiaotong) also supported and participated in the protests. In the end the factory was forced to close.

The rise in the concept of environmental rights internationally in the 1980s gave Taiwan's nascent environmental movement more legitimacy, which was particularly crucial for Taiwanese who still lived under martial law. In addition, Taiwanese news journalists contributed to the environmental movement through their investigative reporting and participation in campaigns. Intellectuals and scholars also voiced their opinions supporting environmental protection efforts. Even the leftist and socialist intellectuals in Taiwan put forward theoretical arguments for environmental rights. In Asian societies professors tend to be relatively well respected, therefore their participation in the environmental protests and campaigns helped to give the green movement in Taiwan even more legitimacy.

The Environmental Movement after Martial Law

After martial law was formally abolished in 1987, the number of environmental organizations in Taiwan increased considerably. Although initially these groups were limited in skills and experience, their leaders and members possessed a strong concern for Taiwan's environmen-

tal problems. Over the decade following the end of martial law, the commitment of these green activists helped to create a relatively solid environmental movement. The movement has been fueled by particularly strong community opposition to environmental pollution and rural protests in southern Taiwan. For example, in Kaohsiung's Houjin and Yilan districts community groups held protests against oil and chemical pollution from factories. In Kaohsiung County, the indigenous people in Meinung protested against the construction of a dam that they believed would destroy the local ecosystem and culture. Another sign of the growing strength of Taiwan's environmental movement has been the increasing number of campaigns, in which environmental NGOs have joined together. NGOs have united to oppose nuclear power plants, golf courses, incinerators, and to lobby for the protection of forests.

Taiwan's environmental movement was strengthened not only by fiery protests, but also by new laws passed by the government. The most notable law was the environmental impact assessment (EIA) law passed in 1994, which greatly empowered environmental activists. Before the EIA law was implemented, environmental protection groups could only utilize protesting as a strategy against polluters and could not take the polluters to court. After the EIA law, Taiwan's environmentalists were able to demand that EIAs be carried out correctly. The EIA law led environmental groups to turn increasingly to the courts to sue polluters and destructive development projects. The court cases have not merely stopped harmful projects, but sometimes have led pollution violators to lose their businesses. For example, environmental groups were able to halt destructive development projects in Hsinju Hsiang Mountain and in Kuanhsi District in the late 1990s. Most Taiwanese environmentalists agree that protesting and suing have become effective methods to stop violators of environmental and natural resource laws.

Under the one party rule of the Nationalist Party (KMT) in Taiwan, it is not surprising that the KMT controlled the supposedly fair and impartial justice system. Therefore, prior to the 1990s, if citizens tried to sue government officials the officials would never be charged and arrested. However today, citizens have been able to use the new environmental laws and regulations to successfully sue, as well as remove and punish government officials who violate pollution control laws.

Although Taiwan's environmental movement has come to increasingly depend on the courts, the move-

ment still has needed to tap the power of people at the grassroots level. In order to protect their fishing grounds, Taiwanese fishers were key protesters in stopping Tainan's Bingnan development and the continued construction of Number 4 nuclear power plant.

Besides protests and suing, environmental education is a rich, albeit indirect, strategy utilized by some of Taiwan's environmental groups. Such educational efforts include bird and wildlife watching, as well as eco-tourism organizations, which have flourished in recent years and have raised people's concerns about the environment.

Distribution of Natural Resources Fuels the Environmental Movement

In addition to the early pollution protests, Taiwan's environmental movement has been fueled by land use conflicts such as the placement of landfills, incinerators, dams, and development construction. Without exception these conflicts revolve around whether land resources are equitably used and distributed. Protests against golf courses are a prime example of such equity concerns.

Taiwan is a small, densely populated island with an increasingly affluent population. The number of golf courses has grown to accommodate the increased demands for recreational activities. However, only 100-200 people can use a golf course at one time. Moreover, golf courses create serious water resource problems and—in the eyes of environmentalists—inappropriately use land. Therefore, environmental groups have led anti-golf course campaigns to demand protection of water resources. Environmental activists also oppose the corruption that is involved in many golf course projects. Specifically, government officials often accept bribes (“black gold”) to pass zoning laws that favor golf course developments. A previous administrator Hao Bocun once stated that he wanted golf to become a sport for all citizens of Taiwan. Environmentalists retorted that in order to accommodate the entire population of Taiwan, all of Taiwan, Fujian, and Guangdong would have to be leveled and converted into golf courses!

The Aims of the Eco-Conservation Alliance

The *Eco-Conservation Alliance* (*Shengtai Baoyu Lianmeng*) is a loose organization made up of forty environmental groups in Taiwan. Initially, this alliance was formed in the mid-1990s to push for the passage of a wildlife protection law. After this law was successfully passed, environmentalists viewed this newly established organization as a new model for cooperation in Taiwan. Over the past eight years *Eco-Conservation Alliance* has continued to bring together many groups and individuals to successfully push through other green laws. The

alliance enables its member groups to mutually support each other, thereby strengthening their power, as well as improving and expanding the quality of research and discussion of Taiwan's environmental problems. Better research and debate could help introduce environmental concepts to the general public and popularize environmental awareness celebrations, such as the year of forest culture.

This alliance has increased its political power by gradually strengthening cooperative relationships with legislators, specifically to lobby for special environmental issues or laws. The alliance also has become concerned about better integrating environmental protection throughout the government's operating budget. The alliance is founded on the principle that environmental protection issues should take priority over political or partisan interests. In addition to monitoring the government, the *Eco-Conservation Alliance* members build relationships with the legislators that both promote cooperation and exert pressure. Members of the *Eco-Conservation Alliance* want to be on good terms with all politicians who are willing to cooperate with the alliance's activities. The alliance even goes as far as endorsing “green” candidates. Conversely, if a candidate's environmental positions are not appropriate—even for a candidate from the key KMT opposition party the Democratic Progressive Party who boasts “greenness”—the alliance will not grant its endorsement unless the candidate has substantively supported environmental issues. The *Eco-Conservation Alliance* stresses that green NGOs should be tolerant of each other's different goals and philosophies and not attack each other.

Environmental Movement and Politics in Taiwan: Supporting the “Crow Spirit”

In the past, some Taiwanese politicians used the environmental movement to mobilize the public and gain political support. But today environmental protection is a low priority for most politicians, because voting statistics show that supporting environmental policies does not bring politicians many votes. Although the Taiwanese government has passed many environmental protection laws, the environment is still a low priority of the government. Therefore, environmental NGOs need to act as monitors of the government in order to protect the earth.

Nature knows no political boundaries. Therefore, environmental problems in one country can spillover into other countries. In order to become more dynamic and effective, environmental NGOs should unify their efforts within and beyond borders. Those of us who are professional environmental activists can be optimistic and talk of ideals. Because what we do is not for ourselves but for everyone, especially the future generations. The environ-

mental movement should not be content with simply following and supporting current laws to protect the environment. Instead, NGOs should fight for more appropriate laws and regulations.

I wish that everyone in the world could support the spirit of the crow and together be concerned about environmental problems. (*Editor's Note: "spirit of the crow" refers to the spirit of advocacy for environmental awareness*

and protection even in the face of government pressure) I also hope that Taiwan's environmental groups can continue to progress and learn to capture the power of networking, alliance building, and tools such as the Internet. I hope that Taiwan's news media can progress and report environmental cases without bias and never again act as a propaganda machine for the authorities.

Ying Yuan Chan is director of the *Journalism and Media Studies Centre (JMSC)* of Hong Kong University. As a cosponsor of the *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum*, JMSC organized the informative journalist workshop on Air Quality Reporting during the second day of the forum.



S. L. Wong, director of the *Centre for Asian Studies* at Hong Kong University, was one of the cosponsors of the *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum*. He gave the opening welcome remarks at the forum.