



China-Program

2017 EU–China Twinning: Partnerships between European and Chinese NGOs

Social and Environmental Justice and Climate Change

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Greetings

2017 has been a challenging year for the EU-China NGO Twinning Program: The new Chinese law on managing foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which came into effect in January 2017, required various administrative adjustments to the program. Due to the new legislative framework, we had to find a modified set-up for the program as a whole, which we were able to get going thanks to the steady efforts of all partners involved.

We are pleased to have finally received the programs' first registration as a temporary activity under the new NGO law. Nevertheless, we hope that the administrative efforts that were necessary to get us there will become less consuming the longer the new law will be in effect. This is necessary for us, so we can fully make use of our resources and reach the program's core goal: a knowledge and experience-oriented exchange between Chinese and European NGOs that are working on innovative solutions for social, environmental, and other challenges in their immediate surroundings.

Promoting "International Civil Society" is 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 ones, transnational knowledge-exchange and cooperation are indispensable. Therefore, we highly stress the importance of cross-border collaboration and dialogue amongst peers. Apart from the EU-China NGO Twinning Program, we do so by bringing together other important stakeholders of society, such as judges, lawyers, journalists and educators from Germany and China.

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 would like to congratulate Dr. Nora Sausmikat and her team for a challenging yet successful year with many varied applications from China and Europe. 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. We especially thank CANGO for their steady support with the registration process. But most of all we want to thank all participants' for their time and passion for the peer to peer sharing of knowledge, experience, and challenges – and the positive societal impact they create through their work every day.

We are looking forward to the continuing collaboration between our two foundations and all partners involved.

Christian Hänel
Senior Vice President
International Relations America and Asia
Robert Bosch Stiftung

Katharina Semmler
Director
Centre for International Programmes
Stiftung Mercator

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Editors note

The year 2017 can be described with the words motivational and challenging. This year showed us once again, that the EU-China Twinning program is emblematic for the perseverance of people in times of difficulties.

Despite the complications posed by new laws and shrinking spaces for civil society activities all over the world we received nearly 50 applications originating from 11 different European countries and 7 different Chinese provinces. We saw a highly motivated group of participants in the 2017 edition of the EU-China NGO exchange starting the European part of the exchange in June at an event that exemplifies all that our program stands for.

The C20, a civil society conference with an advisory role to the G20, turned out to be an excellent venue to showcase the values and virtues of our program. Coming together to fight for social and environmental justice, exchanging ideas and working methods between social organizations from all over the world; just like our twinnings the participants of the event share a common ideal on how to steer global developments in a just manner. Which is why our exchange fellows were given a platform to showcase their work and the reasons for their participation in this kind of exchange during one of the C20 side events.

Encouraging as this event was for those believing in global civil society cooperation, the new law implemented January 2017 on the regulation of international NGOs in China, proved to be a great challenge for the organizers of the Twinning program. The environment that it created resulted in a worrying sense of uncertainty about the continuation of the program. However, the pressure put on all the organizing partners and our funders led to closer coordination, and deeper

understanding of the worth and necessity of our work. By strengthening our internal bonds, we were able to overcome these challenges together and ensured that the EU China Twinning will continue to create partnerships between NGO staff from China and Europe in the foreseeable future.

In 2017, our twinnings worked in the fields of water, energy & urban development as well as education. New topics like a gendered approach to sustainable development and a rise in applications from social enterprises, as well as governmental think tanks diversified the portfolio of alumni this program created.

It therefore shouldn't surprise anyone to hear of the cross-generational projects, follow up activities and continued ties that have cropped up over the last 5 years of the program (more information on these can be found at www.eu-china-twinning.org). The network of twinnings now consists of over 130 environmentalists, social activists and educators. An abundant source of creative, cross-national, professional social organization work.

In times of isolationism, global environmental degradation, and shrinking spaces for civil society activities, we hope that the reports of these exceptional twinning fellows on the time they shared, will inspire you as much as they inspired us. This generation of twinnings, once again cemented our belief in the impact of transnational NGO cooperation and we are grateful to be able to contribute alongside our partners and funders to furthering global understanding and activism.

Dr. Nora Sausmikat, Joanna Klabisch
Cologne, July 2018

1. The importance of partnerships between Chinese and European NGOs

塞翁失马，焉知非福。

Who knows if it is bad luck to lose the horse?

We would once again like to begin our report with this insightful Chinese proverb because we still believe that no one can predict the advantages and disadvantages of fundamental changes.

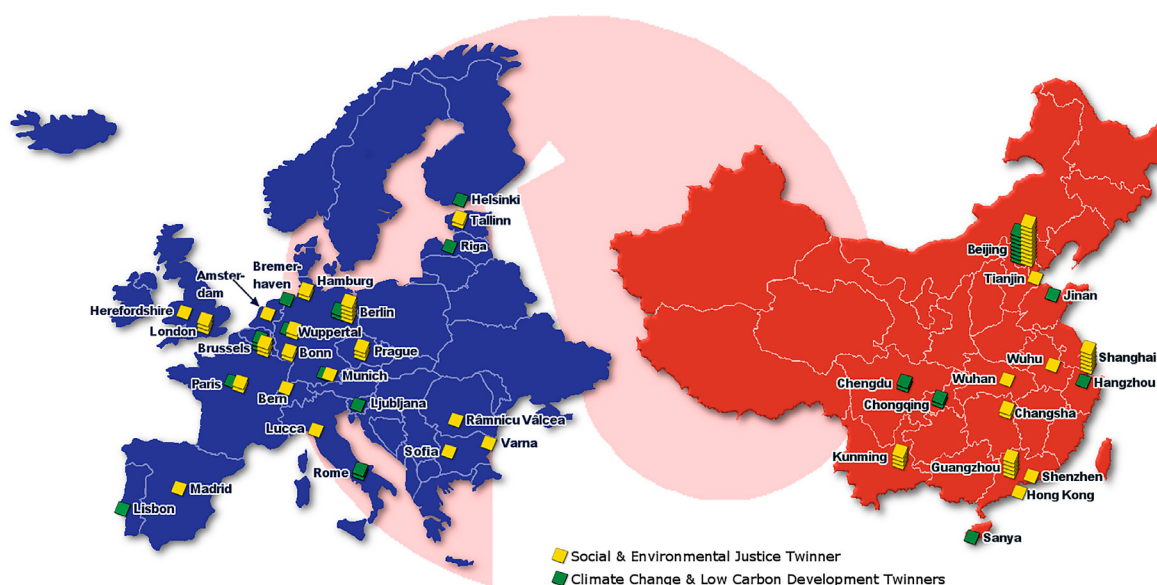
The EU-China NGO Twinning Program (Twinning Program) has experienced fundamental changes over the past year. However, it continues to reflect our conviction that we will only be able to overcome difficult problems by working together and learning from each other, and that seeing the world from a different perspective is always an enriching experience.

Today, the program already consists of 132 Alumni who come from 20 different European countries and China.

The Twinning Program has created its own social media presence and can rely on an international board and selection committee. It was even invited to the 40th anniversary of EU-China diplomatic relations and to the



EU-China High-Level People-to-People Dialogue, where it was introduced to an international audience on May 18th, 2015. The Twinning Program and the joint projects developed by the participants have been covered by a variety of media in various formats, from television



Map of all countries involved in the Twinning 2012–2018

reports to newspaper articles. These can be found on our **website** along with our new **image film**.

The program's greatest achievement, however, lies in the sustainability of the partnerships created between European and Chinese organizations. Of the organizations that have participated in the Twinning Program, 50 percent are still collaborating today. Twinning fellows and alumni have developed 10 different follow-up projects, which are listed on our website.¹ These range from joint publications on issues such as the chemical residues in eggs, the environmental impact of Brexit to initiatives like developing a low-carbon campus evaluation index and organizing zero waste festivals, beach clean-ups and certification workshops for organic agriculture. Networking between current Twinning fellows ("twinners") and Twinning alumni create new constellations, which in turn produce new projects and synergies.



Networking at the C20 in Hamburg

The best way for different cultures and communities to come together and get to know one another is by working together. Indeed, collaboration offers the most promising opportunity for moving forward in a world where globalization and increasing nationalism go hand in hand.

Five years ago, facilitating this type of collaboration was the key motivation behind the decision of the Robert Bosch Stiftung to fund this project, which is organized by Stiftung Asienhaus. In 2015, the Stiftung Mercator joined the program as a new partner. They support the Climate Action Network (CAN-Europe) and the Chinese Association of NGO Cooperation (CANGO) in organizing

another five Twinning pairs that focus specifically on climate change issues.

Collaboration between different cultures is not always easy. It starts with an open mind for engaging with people who have a background different from one's own. Wanting to learn from others and trying to understand where people come from is an essential element to being able to work together successfully.

The Twinning Program gives NGO practitioners with an interest in understanding other perspectives the opportunity to work together with activists from a different continent. It is essential that NGOs get this chance since their role in society is to catalyze and ensure collaboration at different policy levels. What's more, the exchange provides added value to NGOs because it can maximize their impact and reach. Participating in the Twinning Program gives people the chance to gain on-the-ground experience in collaborating with organizations from another part of the world. They can then bring this experience in building bridges and partnerships to use in their own organizations.

In 2017, these values materialized in the course of activities in which our participants came together to exchange and reflect on their experiences. These exchanges started in June 2017 with our workshop in Hamburg, which took place from the 17th–19th of that month.

2017 EU-China NGO Twinning at C20 – A Capacity-Building Workshop in Hamburg

What kind of world do we want to live in?

2017 was the year of the German G20 presidency. In a complex organizational feat, VENRO, the umbrella organization for German development NGOs, together with Stiftung Asienhaus and its partners, arranged for the European component of the 2017 Twinning Capacity Building Workshop to be integrated into the Civil Society 20 (C20) in Hamburg.

The C20 took place three weeks before the official G20 summit and brought together over 450 civil society representatives and NGOs from 60 countries. From June

¹ <http://www.eu-china-twinning.org/follow-up-projects/>

18th–19th, 2017, the representatives discussed the key social, political, and environmental challenges facing humanity today, as well as how to best integrate their proposed solutions to these challenges into the G20 process.

The workshops touched on seven topics, namely: “Agriculture and Food Security”, “Environment and Water”, “Global Health”, “Inequality – Gender and Social Protection”, “Reform of the International Financial System”, “Responsible Investment and the Role of the Private Sector”, and “Sustainability: Climate and Energy”. Together, the workshops created a platform for sharing the experience gained in tackling these problems, both individually, as civil society actors, and in cooperation with G20 governments. The German EU China Twinning team conducted the preparatory work needed to integrate the participants of the program into this high-level summit. Online consultations with representatives from 56 countries were organized by C20 participants to discuss the core topics for the year of the German G20 presidency (2016/2017) and to develop the seven workshop subjects.

Prior to the C20 summit, the Twinning partners underwent three intensive days of team building, project refinement, intercultural training, and capacity building. On Saturday, June 17th, a series of talks were given to provide the twinnings with additional input on the work of European NGOs. These covered topics ranging from ‘The Role of NGOs on a Global Level’ to ‘Lobbying in Brussels from an NGO Perspective’. Finally, European twinnings participated in an intercultural training workshop to prepare for their stay in China, while the Chinese participants enjoyed a field trip to visit



Capacity Building Workshop for Twinners

the organization Die Schlumper, which works on the social inclusion and artistic development of disabled people.

On the first day of the C20 summit, Stiftung Asienhaus organized a workshop on “Fostering Collaboration between European and Chinese NGOs Working on Climate Change, Environmental and Social Issues”, which attracted an audience of approximately 40 people. The workshop was launched by the director of the Twinning Program Dr. Nora Sausmikat, as well as by a warm welcome from Mr. Oliver Radtke, senior project manager in the “International Relations America and China” section of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, one of the donors of the Twinning Program.



Dr. Liu Kaiyang (CNIE) and Wang Xiangyi (CANGO) opened the workshop with a report on C20 in China

Subsequently, Dr. Liu Kaiyang, deputy executive secretary of the China NGO Network for International Exchange and Ms. Wang Xiangyi, chief of CANGO’s international department, discussed their experiences and lessons learned during the 2016 C20, held in Qingdao during China’s G20 presidency.

The workshop was divided into two parts. The first featured a panel on community participation and gendered access to energy in the rural areas of China and Eastern Europe, while the second focused on “clean” investments in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The proposals presented by the speakers regarding the realization of the Paris Agreement and some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasized the significance of strong people-to-people collaboration between Europe and China, as well as the need for NGO partnerships to facilitate this col-

laboration. Embedded in the C2O, the workshop aimed to introduce the Twinning Program as a platform for European-Chinese collaboration in specific areas of great urgency.

The panel discussing participatory (gendered) models for fighting environmental pollution consisted of three experts, namely, Ms. Chen Fan, director of the Guangzhou office of Greenovation Hub, Ms. Johanna Eichermüller from Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF e.V.), and her colleague Dr. Claudia Wendland, Coordinator Sanitation at WECF e.V. With Joanna Klambisch of Stiftung Asienhaus as moderator, they discussed how their organizations used community-based and gendered approaches to help those with disadvantages in accessing clean, affordable and safe water and energy. With the motto “do it yourself”, Greenovation Hub provides farmers with the expertise and tools needed to secure access to clean water for their households. Furthermore, their activities aim to provide a channel of communication between local government authorities and companies on the one hand, and those most affected by water pollution on the other.



Dr. Wendland (WECF) explaining the necessity of a gendered approach to water issues

Dr. Wendland explained the necessity of a gendered approach to water issues, providing a new point of view which greatly resonated with the audience and would, according to Chen Fan, be taken into account in Greenovation Hub’s future projects. Ms. Eichermüller then highlighted the gender variable in labor and decision-making inequality, something WECF is trying to fight with gender-responsive energy cooperatives in Georgia. She argued that it is crucial to acknowledge the asymmetry between the dependence of women on



One of the organizers of C2O, Heike Spielmans (VENRO), visited our workshop. Also, local TV filmed parts of the workshop.

water and energy supplies, since they take up traditional tasks in the household like cooking and washing, and the inadequate structures for women’s participation in energy access management.

The lively panel discussion resulted in interesting comments and questions from the audience on topics such as shrinking space and economical vs. ecological development. In the second part of the workshop, the question on participation and equal access to basic and affordable resources was asked in the context of planned BRI investments.

The joint presentation by Ms. Arianna Americo of Change Partnership and Dr. Ge Xingfang from the South-North Institute for Sustainable Development discussed how the Paris Agreement and the SDGs can be realized in the context of the BRI, something that resonated significantly in the C2O environment. Both twinners emphasized the necessity of fostering transparency, accountability and shared ownership in order to tackle the challenges of climate change. In their closing remarks, they put forward recommendations to the G20 nations.

Next, Ms. Xu Qing from the Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province gave a talk on fostering sustainable urban development in BRI countries, emphasizing the need for a holistic and global approach to city planning. The final inputs were given by Ms. Merve Güngör, from the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, and Mr. Ma Dingping, from the Chongqing Renewable Energy Research Society, on the topic of “Private Action in the Transition to 100 %



German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaking at the C20

Renewable Energy: Consumers and NGOs – Together We’re Unstoppable”. Their main emphasis was on the power of consumers, who share the responsibility of shaping an environmentally friendly future.

The concluding remarks were designed as recommendations for the C20 communique, which was handed to Chancellor Angela Merkel on the following day. The three recommendations are:

- To enable equal and affordable access to water and energy.
- To establish a joint specific investment agency for BRI and prioritize financing clean infrastructure and avoid fossil fuel stranded assets.
- To strengthen global city governance between China and Europe.

The summit as a whole ended on a positive note, with a lively panel discussion involving Angela Merkel and international civil society representatives. The integration of the Twinning Program into C20 was also an all-around success, providing twinnings with the opportunity to take part in a truly global event, while also

allowing them to make their own contribution to global discourse.

The full workshop schedule can be downloaded on the website.²

After evaluating the workshop, we concluded that while the schedule was challenging, the twinnings were delighted to take part in such a high-level event. Networking with NGOs from all over the world, watching the German chancellor address civil society representatives, listening in on workshop discussions covering a wide range of topics, and especially taking part in our very own EU-China Twinning Workshop were certainly worth the five days of constant hard work.

The final report on the 2017 C20 process under the German G20 presidency in Hamburg was published by VENRO³ on their website.

² <https://www.eu-china-twinning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ConferenceFolderHH2017.pdf>

³ <http://venro.org/publikationen/?pubID=362>

2017 EU-China NGO Twinning Capacity-Building Workshop in Sanya

The China component of the 2017 Twinning Capacity-Building Workshop was held in Sanya, Hainan Province from September 26th to 28th, 2017. The workshop was organized by CANGO together with the BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association.

During the three-day workshop, the participants discussed changes in the operating environment for Chinese and European NGOs, general policy developments, and the need for greater coordination in fighting climate change.

The meeting started on September 26th with a welcome speech by Ms. Dong Fengjuan, vice president of the BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association, in which she wished everyone a pleasant stay in Sanya and a successful workshop. After an ice breaking activity, the workshop started in a relaxed atmosphere with an introduction of Chinese NGO policy.

Mr. Zhao Daxing, executive director of CANGO, introduced CANGO as well as the opportunities and challenges of civil society development under the 2017 “Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Management of the Activities of Overseas NGOs in Mainland China” (Overseas NGO Law). This was followed by a European interpretation of the Overseas NGO Law, provided by Dr. Horst Fabian, a member of the Twinning Program board and an independent China researcher. Ms. Xue Tianfei from the Institute of Deep-Sea Science and Engineering, Chinese Academy of Science, and Mr. Wang Erdong from the Sanya Polytechnic College spoke on the impact of climate change on marine mammals and coral reefs.

In the morning of September 27th, the exchange partners took part in a capacity-building session, which included a World Café on low-carbon social transformation. Discussions covered three dimensions, namely, renewable energy, urbanization, and society.

Next, a number of 2017 Twinning fellows, including Mr. Yan Yang, Mr. Davide Sabbadin, Ms. Huang Shuling, Ms. Merve Gungor and Mr. Ma Dingping shared their experiences from the European part of the exchange.

During the meeting, Twinning pairs discussed their joint projects. The Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development and the Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province presented a vision of a low-carbon and zero-waste future. They explored the question of how technology can contribute to urban resilience against climate change, as well as other topics, such as holistic waste management and the monitoring of CO₂ emissions in the major cities of Europe and China. EKOenergy and the Chongqing Renewable Energy Society discussed green energy options for consumers, as well as the “ecolabelling” of electricity for carbon accounting, corporate social responsibility, and marketing purposes.

Legambiente and the Green Volunteer League of Chongqing focused on two specific issues, namely, watershed protection and green logistics in China and the EU. The FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development and the BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association chose environmental justice, environmental conflicts, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, the SDGs and sustainable coastal development as the topics for their exchange. The presentations were accompanied by enthusiastic discussion among the delegates.

Ms. Wang Yuan, project manager with Friends of Nature and 2016 climate change twinner also shared her experiences from the 2016 Twinning exchange. When asked about her tips, she made the comment that “understanding the customs of the partner country, as well as small gifts from China will be helpful in making the exchange fruitful.” All twinners at the workshop wholeheartedly agreed with this point.

Finally, the two sides discussed next steps for the Chinese part of the exchange with the European Twinning fellows, most of whom had arrived in China shortly before the workshop.

On September 28th, the participants were invited to visit the Coral Reef Herbarium of the Sanya Coral National Nature Reserve, as well as the coconut palms village of the Li and Miao ethnic groups.

At the same time, the smooth implementation of this exchange was also the result of active cooperation among Stiftung Mercator, CAN Europe and CANGO.

2. EU-China NGO Twinning Participants

In 2017, the following organizations and topics were included in the Twinning Program:

“Social and Environmental Justice” Twinners		
<i>Chinese Organization</i>	<i>European Organization</i>	<i>Focus Topic</i>
Evergreen Centre for Sustainable Development	Youth Included	Inclusion of migrants in environmental protection and education
Green Women Shanghai	Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) e. V.	Gendered environmental protection
Hong Kong Bird Watching Society	WWF Germany	Birdlife protection and education
Eco Canton	Zero Waste Europe	Waste reduction
South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (SNISD)	Change Partnership	Inclusion of migrant population in environmental education
Guangzhou Yuexiu District Nurturing Relationship Education Support Centre (NRC)	Center for Youth Activism (CYA KRIK)	Sexual education and Inclusion
Greenovation Hub	Eesti People to People	Water protection
“Climate Change” Twinners		
<i>Chinese Organization</i>	<i>European Organization</i>	<i>Focus Topic</i>
Chongqing Renewable Energy Research Society (CRES)	Finnish Association for Nature Conservation/EKOenergy	Renewable energy cooperation and engagement with big consumers
BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association (BROCA)	FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development	Energy issues and coastal development
Green Volunteer League of Chongqing (GVLC)	Legambiente	Water pollution, environmental education and energy efficiency
China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN)	BUNDjugend Berlin	Engaging young people in climate change related topics
Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province (ESSSP)	Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development (AFCDUD)	The role of cities in climate change

Chinese participants resided in Europe from June until the end of July 2017, while European exchange fellows stayed in China during September and October 2017.

What follows are the Twinning Program reports as submitted by the participating organizations and Twinning fellows.

2.a Social and Environmental Justice Twinning Reports

Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development, Beijing & Youth Included, Prague

During the 2017 Twinning Program, Youth Included and the Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development (Evergreen) initiated a knowledge exchange on the social inclusion of migrants and community-based approaches to integration.



Twinners XU Hangyu and Ekaterina Kukkalou

Exchange Topic – Social Inclusion, Migrant Integration, Volunteer Management

The main objective of this project was to enable the exchange of practices in the fields of social inclusion, migrant integration, community work, and volunteer management. The opportunity of being a part of each other's organizations for four weeks, getting involved in community activities and being able to share knowledge and assist in organizing staff training was great for the twinningers' personal and professional development.

Youth Included hosting Xu Hangyu in Prague

Our main aim was to find common ground on migrant issues in both of our cities, Beijing and Prague. We wanted more young people and families to get involved in our projects, either by supporting us financially or by volunteering their time to participating in and supporting our activities. Our overall goal is to help migrants better adapt to their new living situation and to facilitate their integration into the local community.

Activities

During my four weeks in Prague, I had the pleasure of participating in the following activities with Youth Included:

- Fundraising for the "Czech Friendly" Food Map project;
- Participating in Prague Museum Night and mini RefuFest 2017;
- Conducting research and interviews for the "Czech Friendly" Food Map project;
- Study visits to partner organizations working on migrant inclusion, ecological education and community development;
- Participation in the activities of the community center Inbaze, one of the partner organizations of Youth Included (activities for children, including an outdoor summer camp migrant children);
- Participation in the activities of the Center for the Integration of Foreigners, one of the partner organizations of Youth Included (volunteer activities);
- Participation in a workshop on community gardening for disabled people in Brno, Czech Republic;
- Study visit to the nature school Toulcuv Dvur;
- Workshop in Hamburg and participation in the C2o conference.



Community Centers in China

Moreover, during my stay in the Czech Republic, I had the opportunity to explore the country's unique culture and traditions, visiting national parks and cities.

Outcome and Impact

Our exchange covered different methods for working on migrant issues, helping me learn how to engage migrant children through many different activities. Our community center was able to learn from both the operational mode of the centers in Prague, as well as from the volunteer management methods applied by Youth Included.

In Beijing, our community center can hold activities for a maximum of 20–40 people at one time, with our activities on intangible cultural heritage skills being the most popular. Due to the language barrier, I didn't manage to practice our eco-education activities with migrant children in Prague. However, I learned about volunteer engagement and management. In the future, we're planning on cooperating with my partner Kate [Ekaterina Kokkalou] to improve our volunteer management and community center management systems. Eventually, we would also like to publish a guidebook on how to manage a community center.

Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development hosting Ekaterina Kokkalou in Beijing

Activities

Among the main activities I engaged in during my stay in China was getting to know the network of community centers run by my exchange organization, Evergreen.

During the first week, I had the chance to explore Beijing in the company of staff and volunteers. I saw life in rural China and people's living conditions in the suburbs of Beijing. The week was an amazing experience and helped prepared me for encounters with the Chinese mentality during my exchange. I got acquainted with the way Chinese people react to different situations, as well as what their work and everyday lives are like.

During the next three weeks, I was involved intensively in the daily work of Evergreen's community centers, which included:

- Study visits to community centers;
- A study visit to a community garden, in the suburbs;
- Volunteer management sessions with a volunteer team of middle school students in one of the community centers;
- Participation in eco-education activities for children and families;
- A study visit to a migrant school;

- A study visit to a low-income neighborhood and contact with local families;
- Preparation and implementation of a volunteer management session for the Ecology Network Volunteers Conference;
- Preparation and implementation of a volunteer management session for Evergreen staff (volunteer coordinators, community center managers);
- Preparation and implementation of a community center management training session for Evergreen staff (community center managers and project coordinators);
- Work on follow-up projects

Moreover, I was working on the concept of a follow-up project on eco-education together with Eesti People to People, another Twinning organization. The project will involve Youth Included, Evergreen, Eesti People to People, and Greenovation Hub and is planned take place at the end of August 2018.

Conclusion

Among the main outcomes was gaining the trust of our Chinese partner and enabling continuous cooperation on long-term projects in the fields of migrant inclusion and community work. For Youth Included, I brought back knowledge of eco-education activities, as well as good practices in establishing community centers in migrant neighborhoods. I was glad to share my own experiences in the field of community and volunteer management, and to be useful to my host organization.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

We have prepared several possible follow-up projects with Evergreen. This was facilitated by the fact that during our stay we found out that the Czech Republic has much more in common with China than with other countries we have visited.

1. Eco-education – Sharing of good practices for social inclusion

The idea is to unite youth and community organizations from Europe, Russia and China to share their good practices in eco-education and jointly expand



Working at the youth outreach program

their knowledge. The meeting is going to be financed by the Erasmus+ fund within the framework of youth worker mobility.

2. Study visit by a Chinese delegation to the RefuFest 2018

When applying for the exchange, our idea was to have our Chinese Twinning fellow participate in the preparation and celebration of the intercultural festival, RefuFest, which Youth Included has been involved in since 2014. However, due to the timing of the Twinning, this was not possible. We therefore decided to organize another festival featuring social inclusion as a direct Twinning follow-up project for our Chinese partners to participate in.

3. Study visit to the Czech Republic to explore the possibility of cooperation on the “nature school” concept

Evergreen has already been working with nature schools for some time. Children and their families can visit these to bond with nature. We would like to organize a Chinese delegation to visit some of these kinds of places in our region to share their experience in nature school management and experience the European version of this concept.

4. Participation in a conference on migrant integration in China

During the stay and after delivering the training, I was also invited to participate in the 2018 conference on migrant inclusion as an international guest speaker to introduce the work we do on this issue in Prague.

Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development

The Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development (Evergreen) is a Chinese NGO focusing on the healthy development of children. The main projects of Evergreen are “‘Little Cabin’ Eco-education”, “Young Citizens Growing Up” and “Arts After Class”. The organization was founded in 2012. With their projects they want to raise awareness of the meaning of environmental protection among children, help migrant children adapt to urban life and provide children with rich and creative leisure time.

Mr. XU Hangyu

Xu Hangyu is a project officer and eco-education teacher at Evergreen. He studied at the University of International Relations in Beijing, where he became interested in environmental pollution and migrant issues. He took a cycling trip from Chengdu to Lhasa and afterwards decided to join Evergreen because he wanted to contribute to the positive development of his hometown, Beijing. As a father, he wishes to leave a better living environment for all children.

Youth Included

Youth Included is a Czech NGO working with young people to create an open-space for young and active people, offering them tools for education and intercultural interactions. The aim is to raise their awareness of political and societal issues, such as xenophobia and discrimination. Thus, Youth Included promotes intercultural dialogue, facilitates understanding among people and establishes a harmonic co-existence between people through common activities.

Ms. Ekaterina Kokkalou

Ekaterina Kokkalou is student affairs manager at the Czech University of New York and an ambassador of the Via Foundation for community development in the Czech Republic. She studied at the Ural State Technical University in Yekaterinburg, Russia, and wrote her PhD thesis on the “Social Integration of Albanian Migrants in Thessaloniki”. Afterwards, she worked as a project coordinator for several projects dealing with migrants. She is also one of the co-founders of Youth Included.

Green Women Shanghai & Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) e.V., Munich

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) e.V. and Green Women Shanghai chose gendered approaches to environmental protection as their exchange topic.

Exchange Topic: Gendered environmental protection

The NGO Ecoclub and Green Women Shanghai both work on sustainable development and women's engagement. The purpose of the exchange was to understand what civil society activists in 'China and Europe are working on and which challenges they face, as well as to share best practices and success stories in environmental protection and energy saving.

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) e.V. hosting Wang Han in Munich

Goals for the Twinning exchange

1. Discuss our knowledge of the management and organization of environmental NGOs in the EU and China.
2. Explore and develop gender-sensitive business models for citizen's energy production and consumption, with the goal of achieving decentralized, renewable and safe energy. So-called "prosumers" are both producers of energy (photo voltaic, combined heat-power-plants, wind, etc.) and consumers.
3. Conduct awareness-raising and training sessions on reaching the Sustainable Energy Goals of the Agenda 2030 for stakeholders, municipalities, students, etc.
4. Organize a roundtable with politicians and experts on decentralized renewable energy and the SDGs. Produce press releases and maybe a film on the SDGs and citizen's energy.



Twiner Wang Han and Johanna Eichermüller making a short film on environmental protection

Activities

Work in Munich office/Support the following projects and topics:

- Discussing our knowledge of the management and organization of environmental NGOs in the EU and China.
- Conduct awareness raising and training sessions on reaching the Sustainable Energy Goals of the Agenda 2030 for stakeholders, municipalities, students, etc.
- Prepare event on implementing the SDGs as part of a series of activities on the SDGs by WECF
- Assist in compiling a comparative study on energy cooperatives in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkan countries, that also incorporates the perspective of public participation in China

Prepare cooperation between WECF and Green Women

- Organize a round table with politicians and experts on decentralized renewable energy and the SDGs. Produce press releases or a film on the SDGs and citizen's energy

- Explore and develop gender-sensitive business models for citizen's energy production and consumption with the goal of achieving decentralized, renewable, and safe energy.
- Adapt existing training tools for establishing gender-sensitive energy cooperatives to the Chinese context

Conferences

- Travel to the Twinning Workshop and C20 in Hamburg (June 14th–19th)
- Travel to the European Sustainable Energy Week (June 19th–25th), an event hosted by the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium; attend conferences, events and take part in networking activities; get an impression of the political situation regarding energy and climate issues in Europe
- Travel to two conferences in Berlin (June 27th–29th). The first one was on the topic of “New energy for Africa – cooperative, decentralized, renewable” and was organized by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in cooperation with the German Association for Cooperatives (DGRV)
- Travel to the conference ‘Work in Progress: Energy Transition’, organized by the Heinrich Boell Foundation in Berlin (June 29th); presenting preliminary results of the comparative study on energy cooperatives in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkan countries

Outcome and Impact

1. Gained mutual understanding of the activities, management and organizational structure of the partner NGO
2. Jointly compiled report on the activities, lessons learned, and experiences gained during the exchange
3. Prepared a press release on the exchange, available on the WECF and Green Women websites
4. Created communication plan for (digital) communication after the Twinning Program

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to join this program and get to know the activities, as well as the management and organizational structures of NGOs in

the EU. Both WECF and Ecoclub are excellent organizations with a long history and a rich portfolio of experience. We have many topics of interest in common. In order to build future synergies after the exchange period, we will use digital means of communication, like email and cloud sharing platforms for knowledge exchange.

Green Women Shanghai hosting Inna Muliavka in Shanghai



Twiner Wang Han and Inna Muliavka

Introduction

China is a fast-growing country. Many innovative technologies that are still futuristic in other countries have already been implemented here. For me, this exchange was a search for new, different approaches that can be adopted in Europe. A search for ideas and technologies that can be used in projects to protect the environment. I expected to learn how to attract green investment, communicate environmental topics more clearly to audiences, how to change small things in everyday life that can have a big environmental impact, and how to attract more people, especially women, to getting engaged in green activism.

Activities

Meeting with representatives of Shanghai Jiao Tong University Technology Park

During the meeting, we discussed innovative energy saving technologies and how startups can become agents for environmental preservation. I introduced the Twinning Program to the audience. Many were very interested in ideas for startups and innovative green solutions, so we exchanged our contact information

and agreed on making plans for future collaborations via online platforms.

Meeting with artists and politicians in Wei Dao Garden, Shanghai.

China implements several intercultural exchange programs with European countries. During the meeting we attended, officials, businessmen and artists discussed one of the programs that will be implemented in 2018. I gave a presentation on the Twinning Program, explaining its history and goals. Everyone agreed that such exchanges are very important for the sake of protecting the environment, as they help to the participants understand problems at the local and national level, as well as the influence of cultural factors.

Organic Soap Workshop

Green Women Shanghai volunteer in 32 residential areas in Shanghai. Each week they organize several workshops for community members. The first workshop I attended targeted elderly women. Most workshops focus on ecological issues – they teach residents how to make everyday life more environmentally friendly. Topics include how to sort garbage or how to make detergents and cosmetics from natural ingredients, like laundry detergent from vegetables or lip balm from wax and oils.

Shanghai NGO Awards Ceremony

Each year, the Shanghai authorities present awards to the best volunteer organizations in the city. In 2017, Green Women was one of them. During the ceremony, each of the organizations introduced themselves and their activities. We met with all the candidates, talked about the exchange program and exchanged contact details with those who work on similar issues, namely, energy conservation and green energy development at the community level.

Visiting the Shanghai History Museum

I came to Shanghai during the celebration of the Days of the Nation, so I had the opportunity to get to know one of the oldest and richest cultures in the world by visiting cultural institutions and sites.

Workshops on Repurposing Old Glass and Gardening

Shanghai is a very green city with well-groomed vegetation. I visited many workshops and realized that this is not only due to the merit of the authorities, but also to the inhabitants of the communities, who are very



Twinners Inna, Danuta and Merve visiting an urban garden project

fond of plants. My partner organization taught all those who wish to participate in gardening how to care for plants in the city.

Public Partnership Day

Ten initiatives that volunteer in the communities of Shanghai organized an exhibition in the park near Green Women's office. During the event, they introduced their activities to visitors and explained how people can join their activities and raise funds for charity.

Outcome and Impact

- Gained an understanding of the activities, management structures and organization of the partner NGO.
- Created list of best practice ideas that can be implemented in communities after completing the exchange.
- Collected ideas for workshops to raise the awareness of ecological issues and promote environmentally-friendly lifestyles in communities.
- Jointly drafted report on the activities, lessons learned and experience gained during the exchange.
- Compiled photo reports depicting the exchange activities.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

I am glad to have been a participant of the Twinning Program and to have had the opportunity to get acquainted with the work of Green Women. I was inspired by staying in their office, which is located in

one of the most famous low-carbon communities in Shanghai, and meeting with the volunteers of various organizations. In the future, I plan to keep in touch with my partners, report on Ecoclub's successes and stay up to date on Green Women activities through online platforms.

Infobox

Green Women Shanghai

Green Women Shanghai is a Chinese grassroots NGO. Founded in 2010, women's participation is the main topic of the organization, as well as establishing ecological communities through a series of low-carbon community programs. Their environmental protection volunteering activities take place all over China. Green China is committed to helping community residents become active and responsible green citizens.

Ms. WANG Han

Wang Han is a project assistant at Green Women. She obtained her master's degree in environmental sociology at the East China University of Science and Technology, where she started to engage in environmental protection issues and took part in several events. Since graduating, she has been involved in organizing environmental activities on low-carbon community development for Green Women.

Infobox

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) e.V.

WECF is an international network of over 150 women's and civil society organizations, advocating globally to shape a just and sustainable world. WECF was founded at the 1992 Earth Summit by an initiative of European women. WECF's policy work at national, European, UN and international levels brings women's perspectives to policymakers and into policy implementation at the national and local level.

Ms. Johanna Eichermüller

Johanna Eichermüller holds a bachelor's degree in the management of renewable energies and joined the WECF team in 2014, first as an intern and later as project assistant. Both in her professional and in her private life she is interested in environmental sustainability. Previously, she took part in an exchange program between Munich and Cape Town, focusing on climate mitigation and the sustainable development of cities.

Ms. Inna Muliavka

Inna Muliavka is an information officer at the Ukrainian NGO Ecoclub. She studied Ukrainian philology at the Ostroh Academy of the National University. Since graduating, she has been vocal about eco-activism and has volunteered to serve her local community. In addition to her engagement with Ecoclub, she also co-founded the "Garden of Stories" initiative, which intends to advise local authorities on urban vegetation.

Hong Kong Birdwatching Association & WWF Germany, Husum

This exchange explored possible ways of protecting coastal wetlands and the bird habitats they provide.



Twinners Vivian FU Wing Kan and Anja Szczesinski

Exchange Topic – Birdlife protection and education

The main objective of the exchange was to promote the protection of coastal wetlands by sharing ideas, approaches and practices on bird-related education and awareness activities. As major stopping sites along the East Atlantic and the East Asian Australasian Flyways, respectively, both the Wadden Sea and the Yellow Sea are of critical importance for millions of migratory birds. The exchange provided insights into each organization's work in a local, regional and international context, the opportunity of gaining first-hand experience in the field, and excellent networking opportunities. These created the basis for joint long-term efforts in the conservation of wetlands along the worldwide flyways of coastal birds.

WWF Germany hosting Vivian Fu Wing Kan in Husum

Given that we both focus on wetlands and wildlife conservation, especially the flyways of migratory birds, I found that our work has a very high degree of similarity. Both of us are concerned with coastal wetland

ecosystems and how to balance the conservation of wildlife with the economic development of coastal regions. The protection of the Wadden Sea has a history of over 50 years, while in the Asian Yellow Sea region – thousands of kilometers away – the awareness of the importance of coastal wetlands has only been a topic in the last decade. Therefore, it is a great opportunity to learn about the effective and sustainable conservation of coastal wetlands on an international scale. As my work and my organization operates more on a grassroots level, I was sure that with the expertise of my partner, I would get a lot of inspiration from my visit to the Wadden Sea region with regard to wildlife conservation work, environmental education, bird monitoring and habitat management. More importantly, this inspiration will generate more interaction between the two regions in the future.

Activities

I would like to divide the exchange into two parts, namely, gaining first-hand experience and networking. I gained a lot of hands-on experience of ecotourism and environmental education by visiting different Wadden Sea partners and visitor centers. On the other hand, meetings with different partners allowed me to build networks with relevant players and discuss topics such as the design of volunteer programs, as well as policy and advocacy, all of which are helpful for establishing a beneficial and efficient system of conservation for the intertidal wetlands of the Yellow Sea Region. The activities were not confined to Germany, but also covered Denmark and the Dutch part of the Wadden Sea region, providing me with a comprehensive introduction to this international partnership.

First-hand Experience

- Visiting a total of 13 Wadden Sea visitor centers in Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands.
- Participating in a "World Heritage Discovery Cruise", led by a national park ranger.
- Taking part in educational activities within the framework of the "Junior Ranger" program.



Working for biodiversity conservation

- Joining one of the popular Wadden Sea walks: a guided tour on the mudflats to Hallig Südfall.
- Conducting waterbird surveys at different locations in the German, Danish and Dutch Wadden Sea.

Networking and meetings

- Visiting the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat in Wilhelmshaven, with an introduction to the Trilateral Cooperation on the protection of the Wadden Sea, as well as the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage coordination and Flyway Initiative
- Taking part in a meeting between WWF and Schutzstation Wattenmeer
- Meeting with staff members and the director of the Wadden Sea National Park of Denmark, as well as with leading representatives of Wadden Sea conservation from the Netherlands.

Outcome and Impact

1) First-hand Experience

It was a very inspiring trip in terms of learning how environmental education is designed and implemented. I had the chance to explore and meet with people who designed materials, tools and programs for this purpose. In addition, the scope of audiences was not restricted to school children, but also included the general public. I visited at least 13 visitor centers at the Wadden Sea UNESCO site and joined activities for students and the

public, two of which were volunteer-led, while one was professionally guided. The 13 visitor centers I visited were all unique, from the beautiful Wadden Sea Centre in Denmark, to small local visitor centers along the German and Dutch coast, which are run by NGOs or national park administrations. At the same time, they are all connected in some way and synchronized in information delivery and by sharing common resources. The most impressive experience was a 7-hour mudflat walk to a Hallig Island, a very unique habitat in the Wadden Sea. This allowed me to learn from real-life experience and will prove useful when developing programs in the future.

2) Networking

The exchange program also provided opportunities for networking and sharing our experience in coastal wetland conservation with other organizations. My well-connected partner, Anja, organized meetings with her collaborators, who work on the sustainable development and conservation of the Wadden Sea. For example, the meeting with the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat provided considerable insight into how the Wadden Sea UNESCO World Heritage Site is managed in a trilateral context by the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark. This allowed me to understand how a cooperative system was developed and managed. We also paid visits to other partners working on Wadden Sea conservation, such as the Schutzstation Wattenmeer, Vogelbescherming Nederland, and the Wadden Sea National Park in Denmark.

Hong Kong Birdwatching Association hosting Anja Szczesinski in Hong Kong

Introduction

Although some 10,000 km apart, the European Wadden Sea and the Asian Yellow Sea region have a lot in common:

Both are trans-boundary nature areas with three countries sharing a common natural heritage. In the case of the Wadden Sea, these are Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. In the Yellow Sea region, these are China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Republic of Korea.

Both regions serve as vital stopping sites for migratory birds on the East Atlantic and the East Asian Australasian Flyway, respectively. In both regions, the flyway-partnership programs, namely, the Flyway Initiative in Europe and the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership in Asia engage in flyway-wide cooperation.

Also, both regions engage in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention: Since Denmark joined the former German-Dutch World Heritage Site in 2014, the entire Wadden Sea is a trans-boundary UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the Yellow Sea region, there are both Chinese and Korean initiatives to nominate the respective areas as World Heritage Sites, hitherto in national approaches, however.

When I first read about the Twinning Program, I immediately thought that this would be a great opportunity to cooperate with a Chinese NGO focusing on nature conservation around the Yellow Sea. I had already been involved in a Memorandum of Understanding between the European Wadden Sea and South Korea for some years. Therefore, I was aware of the importance of the Yellow Sea as a vital stopping place for migratory birds along the East Asian Australasian Flyway. Colleagues from the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership put me in touch with Vivian Fu from the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society and we quickly realized that our work for the conservation of wetlands along important flyways has much in common, and that we would be able to learn a lot from each other. I expected the exchange to be a vivid, inspiring and motivating experience with



Visiting UNESCO workshop in Korea

the chance to establish new networks and long-term relationships.

Activities

Networking with numerous organizations and conducting visits to various sites constituted the main activities during my stay in Hong Kong and China. From non-governmental awareness-raising initiatives, to state-run visitor centers and interpretation programs, to private approaches to sustainability education – a broad range of on-the-ground nature activities and educational offerings provided me with excellent insights, as well as interesting opportunities to share and learn.

In the context of the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society's trans-boundary engagement in conservation, the geographical scope of the activities ranged from Hong Kong to Southern China and the Yellow Sea region.

Excerpt of the detailed work plan in Hong Kong and China

Site visits to:

Mai Po & Long Valley: wetland conservation, environmental education & rural development projects of the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society and WWF Hong Kong

Hong Kong Wetland Park: state-run education, conservation and tourism site; participating in activities on education and visitor information

Kadoori Farm & Botanic Garden: private initiative for nature education, sustainable farming & holistic edu-

cation; insight into education, wildlife rescue and conservation activities

Hong Kong Ocean Park and Hong Kong Ocean Park Conservation Foundation: comprehensive look at conservation and education activities; presentation of Wadden Sea in sharing session for education practitioners

- Joining local activities of the Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology, as well as an NGO fair at Xiamen wetland park.
- Visiting Minjiang Wetland Centre; bird count in Minjiang estuary & sharing of experiences in education and eco-tourism with the Fuzhou Birdwatching Society.
- Meeting with the Guangzhou Nature Association & discussion of school-related environmental education activities.
- Meeting the NGO EcoAction, as well as academics involved in Yellow Sea conservation and the World Heritage nomination procedure, and sharing insights from the Wadden Sea region.

- Participating in a bird survey at a roosting site for spoon-billed sandpipers in Jiangsu Province
- Meeting with WWF China and visiting Chongming Dongtang Nature Reserve.

A joint visit to the Republic of Korea, which included participating in and contributing to a workshop on managing UNESCO sites, as well as meeting WWF Korea and the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership completed the activities during my stay in Asia.

Outcome and Impact

The site visits and sharing sessions provided profound insights into the situation at the local, regional and national levels, as well as existing transnational activities.

Altogether, the exchange program and the follow-up activities will certainly provide opportunities to raise the profile and quality of environmental education and wetland conservation on a global scale.

Anja Szczesinski

Infobox

WWF Germany

WWF is one of the biggest nature conservancy organizations worldwide. WWF Germany has been active in the protection of the Wadden Sea for more than 30 years and has significantly contributed to the region's high conservation status as a national park and World Heritage Site. Through different programs, WWF contributes to Wadden Sea education on a regional, national and international level.

Ms. Anja Szczesinski

Since 2011, Anja Szczesinski has been working for WWF Germany as a program officer in the area of Wadden Sea Protection, with a special focus on environmental education and sustainable tourism development. She started her professional career in 2003 as coordinator of the International Wadden Sea School with the German organization Naturschutzgesellschaft Schutzstation Wattenmeer e.V. In the past, she has already taken part in a Wadden Sea – Republic of Korea collaboration.

I have seen several remarkable nature conservation and awareness raising activities and was impressed by the professionalism of local NGOs, foundations and scientists. It was encouraging to see that in an environment of rapid growth and economic development, there is also concern about nature, biodiversity and sustainability.

The economic pressure and the political situation around the Yellow Sea are certainly huge challenges for implementing the kind of large-scale, trans-boundary protection that has been achieved in the Wadden Sea region over the last decades. But the many local and regional conservation initiatives for conservation, as well as the ambition of both the Chinese and South Korean governments to nominate parts of the Yellow Sea coast as a World Heritage Site certainly constitute a promising basis for raising awareness of and taking responsibility for the protection of this precious natural area.

Spotting the spoon-billed sandpiper on the coast of Rudong was definitely the most impressive experience of my trip. This critically endangered species



Watching birds in Minjiang estuary

not only symbolizes the beauty and value of biodiversity, but also the efforts needed to protect it, as do all the other species and their habitats along the entire flyway. Having had the chance to see these tiny birds foraging and resting is not only a huge privilege, but also a strong motivation to further engage in international cooperation on the worldwide protection of wetlands.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The contacts and experience made during the Twinning Program will certainly last far beyond the actual exchange. Keeping each other informed about new developments, sharing new resources, asking for advice or feedback, recommending one another as experts for symposia, or inviting each other to workshops are only a few of the synergies we hope to pursue.

The exchange provided valuable ideas for educational resources that can be jointly developed to tell interesting and inspiring stories about the flyways, thereby contributing to raising public awareness and support for international conservation efforts.

Designing a poster that features both of the flyways and developing a sticker book of the habitats and crea-

tures of the Wadden and Yellow Seas are two concrete ideas that will be further investigated. Also, the possibility of jointly arranging a study tour to the Wadden Sea with a focus on World Heritage education and interpretation for Chinese and Korean NGOs engaged in Yellow Sea conservation will be explored.

Infobox

Hong Kong Birdwatching Society

The Hong Kong Birdwatching Society was founded in 1957. The organization is concerned with the conservation and appreciation of birds as well as their habitats. Thus, for nearly 60 years, the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society has been promoting bird watching and carrying out educational activities, surveys, and research. Additionally, the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society manages Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas.

Ms. Vivian FU Wing Kan

Vivian Fu Wing Kan holds a master's degree in freshwater ecology from the University of Hong Kong. She joined the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society in 2010. Since then, she has developed innovative approaches in awareness-raising activities and is one of the core coordinators of the China Coastal Waterbird Census. In 2014, she initiated a conservation program against illegal mist-netting of shorebirds in South China.

Eco Canton, Guangzhou & Zero Waste Europe, Brussels

Both organizations strive to establish the Zero Waste movement in their respective countries to minimize consumerism and prolong product life-cycles.



Twinners HUANG Liying and Danuta Chodakowska

Exchange Topic – Zero Waste

The overall goal of the exchange was to build networks and strengthen the alliance between Zero Waste Europe and Eco Canton as a basis for future collaboration on waste issues. Zero Waste Europe and Eco Canton both engage in policy and public advocacy in their work on waste issues. This exchange allowed the exchange fellows to increase their knowledge of waste issues in Europe and China, which is beneficial to both organizations.

Zero Waste Europe hosting Huang Liying in Brussels

My main objective in participating in this exchange program was to learn more about zero waste methodology and advocacy. I wanted to expand my horizons, build my capacity, and get inspired by new perspectives in policy and public advocacy.

Activities

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

Supporting the Promotion of a “Plastic Bag Free Day” in China

The 8th Annual Plastic Bag Free Day 2017 took place on July 3rd. It was a unique opportunity to spread the word that a plastic bag free world is possible, and that sound environmental alternatives to single use plastic bags are available. Zero Waste Europe’s main role in the International Plastic Bag Free Day is to support other national organizations in promoting the event. On that day, the team in Brussels collects stories from all over the world and spreads them via social media, thereby inspiring more people to join the event in the future.

Article Publication

With the help of Zero Waste Europe’s team, I wrote the article ‘Watch the world | Get the bag out of your head!’ about International Plastic Bag Free Day and the actions done by people in different countries in past years as a way of inspiring people to do something on that day. I also translated the article and the toolkit about the International Plastic Bag Free Day 2017 and published it on Eco Canton’s public WeChat platform.

Researching Waste Policies in Europe

In my experience, different countries have different attitudes towards household waste management. During my stay, I read a lot of policy documents and case studies about European waste management systems. I also translated some documents and wrote articles about them. I presented China’s waste situation to the whole Zero Waste team, highlighting differences to the situation in Europe and showing the Chinese govern-

ment's efforts in this area, as well as those of NGOs, companies and individuals. I worked hard to understand what Zero Waste Europe is doing and how they do it. At the same time, during the discussion of policy advocacy, I found that the process of policy advocacy is based on lobbying. I discovered that the project officers who are in charge of policy advocacy will spend many hours communicating with stakeholders on a weekly basis to keep them up to date on current developments. This made me conclude that EcoCanton's current method has some gaps and needs to be improved with regard to stakeholder communication.

Visiting Packaging-Free Shops

During my stay in Europe, I was surprised to read an article on a social media platform proclaiming that Europe only has five packaging-free shops. Through my colleagues, I learned that there are quite a few more. Each of these shops has different characteristics, but they are all a great way to promote the zero-waste concept to the people. I was happy to visit such stores, as China did not have any yet during the time of my exchange.

Roots Store: A very interesting store in Brussels. I learned that this is Brussels' first and only organic, local, 100% circular shop, with products coming straight from local producers to be sold there. All vegetables and fruits are from local organic farmers. Roots Store also offers to recycle residents' bio-waste. The cooperative farmers will then collect the bio-waste every two days to compost it and turn it into fertilizer for their farms.

Stock: A packaging-free shop in Brussels which seeks to offer as many products as possible in bulk to limit waste.

Belgomarkt: A store that only offers local products, thereby limiting their carbon foot print and fighting climate change.

Outcome and Impact

Since China is developing fast, the amount of household waste is also increasing continually, drawing a lot of attention. China is taking various steps to entice the public to improve their waste classification. However, there is still much to be done.



Danuta, part of the Zero Waste outreach team

The Twinning Program gave me the opportunity to learn from and work with methods different to those I was used to. It also gave me the opportunity to actively experience zero waste activities in Europe. I realized that the waste issue is related to many other issues, namely, public health, environmental justice, climate change, air pollution, plastic pollution, etc. The solution of our waste problem needs collaboration among many people. Combining public and policy advocacy might help.

Zero Waste Europe provides the network needed to establish the strong synergies that can help solve the European waste problem. Eco Canton also plays an important role in communication and coordination in China. The Zero Waste Alliance we formed provides assistance in setting up zero waste partnerships and enables communication through platforms in southern China.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Although we did not immediately confirm concrete plans for joint projects in the future, the Twinning gave both of us a chance to better understand the work of the partner organization and the reality of waste issues in Europe and China, with a special emphasis on best practices. In the future, we believe that it is possible to coordinate our activities, such as International Plastic Bag Free Day. We will keep in touch and look for a suitable opportunity to work together again.

Eco Canton hosting Danuta Chodakowska in Guangzhou

For me, the main goal of the exchange was to gain knowledge about promoting zero waste and managing waste in other parts of the world. I was sure that in China I could learn new, creative ways of working to protect the environment. It was fascinating to read about Eco Canton's various projects and I couldn't wait to see them first-hand. My partner organization was also highly experienced in composting, a topic that I had always wanted to learn more about. Going to China was supposed to teach me how to work with individuals with different cultural backgrounds and enable me to develop my intercultural communication skills.

Activities

While staying in China I took part in various activities to learn about the country's waste collection issues, as well as the cultural characteristics that form the backdrop to these issues. I had the opportunity to meet all members of my host organization's staff. It was interesting to experience Chinese work culture on

a day-to-day basis in Guangzhou. The office itself is an exciting story, as it stores plants, composters, posters, books and all the items needed for actions. Eco Canton also leads outdoor activities. My Twinning partner was in charge of waste selection activities at local events during the time of our exchange. I was lucky enough to spend a lot of time with her outdoors, teaching local communities about waste selection and composting.

Hopefully our organizations are going to stay in touch for years to come.

Danuta Chodakowska

Traveling and Fostering Cooperation beyond Guangzhou

We also had the opportunity to visit another local organization, Greenovation Hub. In addition to Guangzhou, I had an opportunity to travel to cities like Beijing, Linan and Shanghai, where I met with the organizations Marie Stopes China and Green Women. I was also lucky enough to meet the other European Twinning partners when visiting the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, the Evergreen Chongqing Renewable Energy Society, and the China Youth Climate Action Network.

Infobox

Zero Waste Europe

Zero Waste Europe is an organization working towards the vision of eliminating waste in our society. It is a network with members in 15 countries across Europe as well as an advocacy group, representing active communities in different regions. The organization focuses on waste and zero waste cities, products and plastics, climate change, renewable energy and air pollution.

Ms. Danuta Chodakowska

Ms. Chodakowska works as a project officer with Zero Waste Europe. She holds a master's degree in philosophical consulting and coaching from the Department of Social Science at the University of Silesia. She is living a zero-waste lifestyle herself and promotes the idea both locally and on a national level. Ms. Chodakowska coordinates activities which help people to implement the principles of low and zero waste living in their daily life.

Infobox

Eco Canton

Eco Canton is an environmental organization that was registered in 2012 and is one of the founding institutions of the China Zero Waste Alliance. The organization focuses on household waste and waste management more broadly. In order to achieve its vision of "a future of zero waste", it cooperates with other NGOs and engages in government advocacy to promote the implementation of relevant waste policies, as well as public advocacy to raise awareness of this issue.

Ms. HUANG Liying

Ms. Huang is a project officer at Eco Canton where she first started as an intern in 2014. She holds a bachelor's degree in administration of public affairs from the Guangdong University of Technology. At university, she took part in extra-curricular activities as the team leader of the "Jingxi Have Vendors" college students' team and took part in the program "Disabled Persons" of the V-Bus organization.



Trying out upcycling products of Green Women Shanghai

Outcome and Impact

Each part of the exchange was different and each had different results. Our exchange was mostly informative, learning about European and Chinese waste management, international zero waste policies, and project management on a global scale, especially during Liying's stay in Europe. But there was also the second part of my exchange in China, which was mainly a cultural one, both with my Twinning partner and with my other Chinese friends. It is a very different country in each and every aspect: architecture, cultural heritage, philosophy, religion, ways of thinking, habits and beliefs. It was a great adventure to discover it all during my stay. It was also interesting and eye opening to

see waste management and the level of environmental awareness in China. There is so much to be done in both of our countries, but in each there are different paths to be taken.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The project has formalized our organizations' relationship and opened our eyes to the needs of the partner organization. I am sure that an exchange on a personal level is needed for the smooth cooperation of organizations with such different policies and cultural backgrounds. We are now thinking about cooperating in other areas, such as the Plastic Bag Free Day.

South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (SNISD), Beijing & Change Partnership, Brussels

Exchange Topic – Inclusion of migrant population in environmental education

The shared focus and expertise that Change Partnership and the South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (SNISD) have on clean energy, climate change and low-carbon technologies was put to use in analyzing the impacts, challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The two Twinning partners also shared insights on how lobbying and advocacy processes work in China and the EU.



Twinners Arianna Americo and Dr. GE Xingfang

Change Partnership hosting Ge Xingfang in Brussels

The objective of the exchange period in Europe was to share expertise on how the EU institutions and rel-

evant decision-making processes function and to conduct research on the EU-China relationship. During the Brussels phase of the exchange, we focused in particular on EU perceptions of the BRI, as well as on how to shape a shared vision of the BRI.

Activities

Location	Activities and Tasks	Dates
Brussels	Introduction to the work of Change Partnership Introduction to the EU Institutions Developing framing and lobbying skills	June 5th – 9th
	Office work on the structure and objectives of the policy paper Preparing a presentation for the C20 event Attending the workshop in Hamburg Attending the C20	June 12th – 19th
	Conducting research work for the policy paper Meeting with Maurizio Cellini (DG TRADE)	June 20th – July 30th

Outcome and Impact

- Increased understanding of the EU institutions and relevant decision-making processes.
- Public speaking at relevant international fora, like the C20.
- Interactions with high-level EU stakeholders.
- Cooperation with a Brussels-based think tank.



Attending the Green Finance and Credible Sustainable Standards conference

South-North Institute for Sustainable Development hosting Arianna Americo in Beijing

Introduction

The objective of the exchange period in China was to interview NGO staff, researchers and private sector representatives, as well as government specialists to get their insights on the challenges arising from the implementation of the BRI.

Outcome and Impact

As of December 2017: An article published by Stiftung Asienhaus and ChinaDialogue on the climate and energy challenges associated with the BRI.

In the near future: a research policy paper (30-40 pages) on the climate and energy challenges associated with the implementation of the BRI, as well as policy recommendations for the EU institutions on how to positively engage with China in building joint carbon leadership and in realizing the Paris Agreement.

Arianna networking in China

Activities

Location	Activities and Tasks	Dates
Beijing	Preparing for interviews	Sep. 4th – 8th
	Interviews with relevant stakeholders: China Carbon Forum: Peter Edwards and Huw Slater Greenpeace: Lauren Huleatt, Cheng Qian and Lauri Myllyvirta Shanghai Institute for International Studies: Cao Jiahua Dr. Zhou Lei, President of the Chinese Built Environment Experts Zhang Jianping, Director of the Department of International Economic Cooperation the at the Institute for International Economic Research of NDRC Conference: Green Finance and Credible Sustainable Standards (ISEAL)	Sep. 11th – 26th
	Discussing the interview findings	Sep. 27th – 29th

Change Partnership

Change Partnership is an organization focused on the politics of climate change. It delivers outputs by generating policy solutions and building diverse political coalitions to secure specific legislative outcomes. Founded in 2013, the organization works on topics such as the “just transition”, as well as on new low-carbon technologies. Change Partnership’s mission statement is to “re-engineer political conditions to address climate change”.

Ms. Arianna Americo

Arianna America is a researcher at Change Partnership. She holds a master’s degree in oriental languages and civilizations from the University of Rome. She studied abroad for two semesters at the Beijing Foreign Studies University in China. She returned in 2015 for the Executive Education Training Program at the Peking University School of Government.

South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (SNISD)

SNISD is a non-profit Chinese think tank seeking to promote environmental protection and sustainable development. Its focus is on clean energy, climate change, low-carbon and protected areas, as well as local community development. SNISD uses science-based and cross-sectoral approaches and cooperates with government ministries, businesses, research institutes and international organizations.

Dr. GE Xingfang

After Dr. Ge received her doctoral degree in wild-life conservation and utilization from Beijing Forestry University in 2014, she worked for nearly three years on environmental protection. During this time, she coordinated the projects “International Case Studies on National Park Systems and their Implications for China” and “Mine Ecological Restoration Research in the Inner Mongolia Grassland Area”.



Arianna networking in China

Guangzhou Yuexiu District Nurturing Relationship Education Support Centre (NRC) & Center for Youth Activism (CYA KRIK), Skopje

The overall purpose of this exchange was to understand the impact of different cultural taboos on conducting sexual education, looking especially at the case of people with disabilities.



Twinners SU Yanwen and Sanja Mihajlovska

Exchange Topic – Sexual education and Inclusion

The significance of this topic lies in the importance of providing direct support to young people and children with disabilities while continuing to conduct advocacy among decision makers and service providers. Our goal is to raise awareness of the fact that young people with disabilities have rights and needs in relation to gender and sexuality among the public and among stakeholders. We also seek to promote sexual and reproductive health and gender equality, and to work with mixed groups of young people both with and without disabilities, thereby fostering social inclusion. By examining the similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses of the EPIL systems in China and the EU, both organizations will have a clearer understanding of such systems.

CYA KRIK hosting Su Yanwen in Skopje

Activities

The first activity Su took part in was attending a conference in Sofia, Bulgaria, where I represented CYA KRIK. The event was built around the dissemination of results from the project ERASMUS4VIP, part of the Strategic Partnership Project between ERASMUS+ and KA2. Su had the opportunity to learn about the problems of visually impaired persons in the Balkans and what our organization does in this area. She was able experience writing on a Braille machine and was introduced to the different modules of the Erasmus+ program. In the office, Su and I worked on sharing our respective working methods. From my side, this involved sharing materials related to gender equality, while Su described how her organization works with the parents of children with disabilities on the topic of sexuality. Su also prepared a workshop on sexuality for a summer camp.

Su also attended the green action “Мрдни со прст/ Move with your fingers”, where the local community visits and cleans different areas to promote recycling.

Next, Su attended a summer camp for young people with and without disabilities from Macedonia, France and Belgium. The goal of the summer camp was to promote social inclusion and gender equality, as well as sexual and reproductive health. Su prepared a session on sexuality and participated in a workshop featuring inputs with perspectives from a variety of cultures, where she explained Chinese wedding customs.

Finally, in Skopje, Su visited partner organizations linked to the LGBT community, which work on sexual education, as well as youth centers for kids from low-income families.



Su at the youth camp in Macedonia

Guangzhou Yuexiu District Nurturing Relationship Education Support Centre hosting Sanja Mihajlovska in Guangzhou

Introduction

As part of the exchange, I spent approximately one month in Guangzhou, from September 25th to October 24th. The main objective of our project was to reflect on and experience the fact that while our organizations work in the same sector with people with disabilities, we do so in different countries. Thus, we wanted to compare our methods and also look at the role of gender in the field. The expectations I had for this program were to see and learn about a culture totally different from mine, to gain knowledge and connect with new partners, and to test my ability to adapt to a new society and work environment, as I consider both to be very different from the Balkans.



Working at the Guangzhou office

Activities

My activities can be separated into four categories:

- First, office work, where we discussed and shared the methodology we use in our work. Especially the new interns at the NRC were eager to learn how our organization functions in Macedonia.
- Second, visiting the partners of the NRC under the guidance of their co-founder, Mag. I visited organizations which work on gender issues, sexual education, and LGBT issues, as well as organizations that work with people with disabilities, or on preventing STIs and STDs. This part of my stay in China was very useful to me because of the many connections I made all over Guangzhou and the surrounding region. I learned a lot about the situation in the field and became acquainted with techniques that could also be used in the Balkans. In my mind, I already began making plans for future projects.
- The third part consisted of observing and working in the Children's Palace (a place where NRC conducts weekly sexuality workshops for autistic children). It was very surprising to see that every child had one volunteer next to him/her. It demonstrated the luxury of having many volunteers, something we don't have in Macedonia. After the workshops, we had meetings with the whole staff and I gained a lot of interesting insights into how working with autism in China compares to my own country. In addition, in Macedonia, our focus is more on the meaning of feelings. For instance, what it means to be in love with someone and what it means to be intimate with someone. Only at the end do we discuss how to properly use protection. In China, on the other hand, there seems to be a focus on protecting oneself from sexual assault.
- Twice, I was invited to visit a foundation which supports parents with autistic children, which was the highlight of my exchange. It was a real Chinese family experience, which I appreciated the most. We talked to each other about cultural values and Chinese cuisine, while I had the opportunity to spend two whole days with an autistic child.
- The last part of my experience was being a guest speaker. I first spoke at a university in a class on sexuality, where I introduced my program on gender and discussed the gender imbalance in Macedonia. After that, I was a guest speaker at a book

club for feminism. I talked about the situation for women in Macedonia, including abortion laws and similar issues.

Outcome and Impact

Just after I arrived in China, my exchange partner was unexpectedly no longer able to participate in the program, which was difficult for me to cope with. However, I was fortunate to have the support of my partner organization, the NRC, and their co-founder, Mag, who is a very capable and friendly person. The cultural differences I became aware of had a very big impact on me. To see and feel what people in China value in life had a huge influence on me. After I returned, I had the courage to quit my badly paid job and was able to find

a better paid one. I'm once again working with young people who have few opportunities, at a place where I think I'm making more of a difference in society. I also founded my own NGO with the goal of promoting human rights and the right to sexual education, as well as female rights and freedom through gender equality. All this is thanks to the Twinning Program.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Mag from the NRC and myself developed ideas for two possible follow-up projects. However, we decided not to proceed with them immediately. I'm hoping that with my own NGO we can continue our collaboration and have a long-term partnership.

Infobox

Guangzhou Yuexiu District Nurturing Relationship Education Support Center (NRC)

The NRC was founded in 2009 and registered as an NGO in 2015. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to the simple notion that all people are entitled to have the information and skills needed to be sexually healthy adults. They provide services such as curricula and publications, professional trainings, parent classes, student classes and consultations.

Ms. SU Yanwen

Ms. Su Yanwen co-founded the NRC in 2012. At the same time, she has also gained experience as deputy director of services at the DaDong Street Family Integrated Service Center. Since 2014, she has been program director of the NRC and supervises NGOs and other participants of the sexual education project. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work and business administration from the Guangdong University of Technology in 2010. She also successfully completed her Social Work Service Organizations Senior Management Training at Beijing Normal University and Hong Kong Baptist University United International College.

Infobox

Center for Youth Activism (CYA KRIK)

CYA KRIK is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which was established and is led by young people. CYA KRIK wants to give youth a voice that will be heard, one that will affect change and make contributions to society. They strive to encourage young people to become politically active and to participate on a local and national level. Their goal is to achieve the social inclusion and integration of disadvantaged young people.

Ms. Sanja Mihajlovska

Ms. Mihajlovska is the coordinator of youth programs at CYA KRIK, where she also works as sending officer and educator. Until 2015, she worked as a special needs teacher and primary school teacher. From 2010 to 2012, she was a youth worker for the Roma organization Sumnal. While Macedonian is her native tongue, she also speaks English fluently.

Greenovation Hub, Guangzhou & Eesti People to People, Tallinn

This exchange sought to explore public participation in the fair distribution of clean water, as well as water consumption. The focus was on arranging workshops and activities for raising awareness of water issues.



Twinners CHEN Fan and Pavel Smulski

Eesti People to People hosting Chen Fan in Tallinn

Activities

1. Workshops and Conferences

June 6th – I participated in the international Euro-Med conference on “The Challenge of Intercultural Education – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” in Tallinn and was able to establish contacts with the Euro-Med network, the Anna Lind Foundation and the North-South Center of the Council of Europe, which organizes the annual Global Education Week in Europe.

June 14th–20th – I took part in the Hamburg Capacity Building and Reflection Workshop of the Twinning Program and was a panelist at our C20 workshop, looking at environmental protection from a gendered perspective.

July 3rd–8th – We attended a workshop on the “Development and Promotion of Social Business within the

Youth Sector”, organized by the Social Innovation Center, Riga and Impact Youth, which focuses on developing DIY water filter projects.

2. Visits

On June 13th, we visited Tallinn University to meet with staff and discuss the EU’s non-formal education system. On June 14th, Eesti People to People organized a visit to Arengukoostöö Ümarlaud (the umbrella organization of the Round Table for Development Cooperation) and Mondo, an NGO which is active in development and global environmental education. On July 20th, I visited the Paljassaare wastewater treatment facility and discussed various issues with the technical engineers. On July 25th, we visited the water-safeguard boat, learning about the rapid response system for water accidents.

3. Exploring Resources for Water Education and Networking

During my stay in Tallinn, I attended the ceremony of the Estonian presidency of the Council of the European Union. We visited an open-air museum to study the water history of the country and, on July 14th, I participated in the kick-off event of the 2017 Tallinn Maritime Days in Pirita Harbour. I also took a trip to Stockholm, the so-called water city, to find out more about the Stockholm International Water Institute and World Water Week.

We also visited the HVR water purification company to discuss future cooperation projects in Southeast Asia,



Water Protection in Estonia

as well as the Impact Hub in Stockholm, to discuss how to build up an active community group and design a SDG-themed space.

During my trip to Helsinki, we visited the EKOenergy project of the Finland-China Development and Exchange Center with another Twinning Fellow, Dr. Ma Dingping.

In Pärnu city, we celebrated the water DAYS festival/exhibition and visited the coastal meadow nature protection zone.

Outcome and Impact

We managed to build a collaborative network among more than 10 NGOs, companies and research centers, and explored/upgraded more than two project ideas. We also drafted designs for workshops, seminars, and research on water education.

Greenovation Hub hosting Pavel Smulski in Guangzhou

The specific objective of this project was to promote international cooperation between NGOs involved in the topic of water consumption and, more generally, environmental protection. We shared best practices related to water consumption that can later be applied to various aspects of our work. I also learned about the important role played by NGOs in raising awareness of water consumption issues at the local level.

Activities

At the beginning of October, I made a study visit to the Evergreen Center for Sustainable Development in Beijing. We discussed a possible future collaboration to set up environmental education initiatives. Initially, this will involve several organizations from the EU, China and Russia. The main activity of this partnership will be a conference held near the city of Irkutsk, Russia, during the summer of 2018.

In addition to my work in the Greenovation Hub office preparing workshops, I participated in several activities. I took part in the third authors meeting of the sixth global environment outlook, organized by the United Nations Environmental Programme and the



Pavel speaking at UN event in China

Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection. I was involved in the stakeholders dialogue and gave a presentation on the environmental protection seminar that is planned to take place in Russia in 2018.

From November 9th–10th, I participated in a water education workshop organized by the TOTO Water Foundation. I introduced Greenovation Hub and environmental protection projects spanning the EU, China and Russia, sharing insights on opportunities for cooperation on an international level.

During my stay, we hosted several study visits at Greenovation Hub, including a visit by Green Home of Foshan city. I had the opportunity to share my knowledge of various projects implemented by the EU.

We also hosted Danko, another twinner, who visited Greenovation Hub to learn about their water testing procedures. We had a discussion about the differences in water quality in different EU countries and China. I also took part in the North River Water Guard Station unveiling ceremony.

Outcome and Impact

During my work in the office, as well as when preparing and participating in local workshops and master classes, I was able to make good progress on achieving my original objectives for the exchange. We shared best practice approaches to diverse issues in our organizations, especially with regard to water education, that can now be applied to other contexts. While working in the office, I gained skills in team-building and knowl-

edge about water education and environmental issues in China by participating in group work, brainstorming, simulation activities and presentations, as well as by communicating with locals during meetings, conferences, presentations and workshops. I learned how my Chinese partner organization involves participants and partners in the planning and delivery of water education workshops.

I also improved my competencies and skills in workshop planning and delivery. I acquired skills applicable to a variety of issues in NGO work. With my Chinese partner, we discussed how to define problem areas in our communities as well as which actions should be taken in the future to address these.

This project improved my intercultural communication and public speaking skills. I now have a more open attitude towards people of other countries and cultures. I have increased (just a bit) my abilities in the Chinese language and have become more sensitive towards cultural diversity in contemporary societies. I will use my newly acquired skills and the knowledge I have gained in my NGO work in Estonia and abroad.

On an organizational level, this project was able to foster international cooperation. After the Twinning, our

exchange of best practice approaches will continue to bear fruit. Further collaboration between the organizations is planned, with a joint project on environment protection to be implemented next summer. Furthermore, the potential long-term impacts and benefits derive from the fact that the Chinese partner and I were able to effectively raise awareness of water issues among a wide audience. The Twinning Program also contributed to fostering dialogue between the EU and China, and improving mutual understanding.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Project-based collaboration continues through the exchange of good practices, capacity building and networking activities. This project was a great opportunity for me to build a small network with a focus on water consumption and environmental issues. In February 2018, we plan to apply for funding under the Erasmus+ Program as well as the Social and Environmental Justice component of the Twinning Program to implement a seminar on ecological and environmental issues. This seminar will be held in Russia in 2018. We plan on involving 25–30 participants from the EU, China, and Russia.

Eesti People to People

Eesti People to People is a non-profit organization registered in 1997. It has been a part of People to People International since in 1993. Its purpose is to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities involving the exchange of ideas and experiences directly among people of different countries and diverse cultures. It is committed to enhancing cross-cultural communication within each community, and across communities and nations.

Mr. Pavel Smulski

Pavel Smulski has been working as project manager and trainer at Eesti People to People since 2010. Before that, he worked as a teacher of French and art history for young people with the NGO Spectaculo in Brasil. He holds a master's degree in art, communications and languages from the University of Nice.

Greenovation Hub

Greenovation Hub 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.

Ms. CHEN Fan

Ms. Chen received her Bachelor of Law at the Southwest University of Political Science and Law and attended Strasbourg University as an exchange student while acquiring her Master of Law. She is a member of the Center for the Study of Legal Sociology & Anthropology and of the Low-Carbon Development Committee of the Guangdong Society of Environmental Science. She has now been the director of the Guangzhou office for two years.

2.b Climate Change Twinning Reports

Chongqing Renewable Energy Society (CRES), Chongqing & Finnish Association for Nature Conservation/EKOenergy, Helsinki

The exchange between the Chongqing Renewable Energy Society (CRES) and EKOenergy focused on renewable energy cooperation and the sharing of best practice approaches to engaging big consumers in green energy options.

EKOenergy hosting Ma Dingping in Helsinki

My motivation in participating in the program was getting to know how international mechanisms and businesses work in practice, as well as learning more about European society and NGOs by participating in international communication and NGO partnerships. During my exchange, I had the opportunity to explore how NGOs promote energy efficiency, fundraise and develop ways to promote renewable energy.

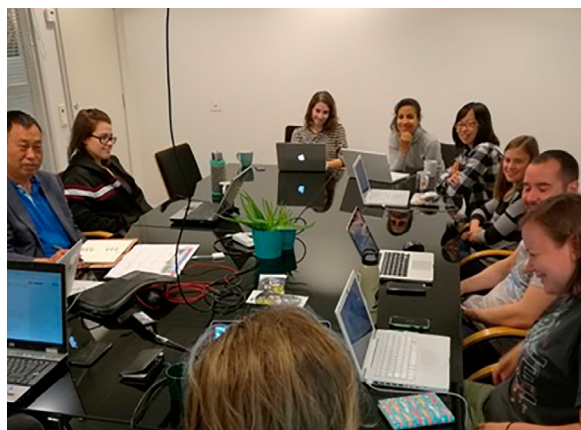
Activities

I had the opportunity to visit a number of civil society organizations in Finland that focus on issues similar to the ones we work on in China. I also had the chance to visit a water purification facility and a heat pump system.

In addition to NGOs, we visited a number of enterprises and venture capitalists to see the work they do on promoting renewable energy. These two different approaches gave me a good overview of how European actors are working on this topic.

In terms of international conferences, I participated in the World Circular Economy Conference where I had the opportunity to discuss circular economy and its relationship to renewable energy with people from around the world.

The C20, which we were able to participate in during the European capacity building workshop, was the



One of the weekly meetings with the rest of the EKOenergy team

ideal place to discuss different elements of the energy system with the other participants and international NGOs.

Challenges

The first problem I encountered was the different views on NGOs in China and abroad. Many people think NGOs organize public events for the purpose of propaganda, not to promote and popularize technology or technical mechanisms. I hope more NGOs will do this in China in the future and strengthen their work in this field.

The second problem was that many people think China has an advantage in terms of capital and products, but not in terms of developing new technologies and establishing a service sector. The work of Chinese NGOs, in particular, is insufficient in this regard. Now that I am back, I hope to build and strengthen such abilities in China to overcome this problem.

I have found that in terms of language and communication, China has many weak points. Those who have good language abilities are young people and non-

professionals, while in Europe, people from all ages and professions have good language skills. I hope that in the future, there will be more communication and language training activities targeting Chinese professionals.

Outcome and Impact

We established relations with more than 20 European and Finnish NGOs, entrepreneurs, researchers, and research organizations active in clean energy. I was also able to build a foundation for future cooperation with my contacts. For instance, we started a Wechat group to serve as a platform for more than 120 people dealing with Sino-Finnish technological cooperation. On this basis, the city of Chongqing will establish a Sino-Finnish Clean Energy Technology Transfer Center to promote technology-related communication and transformation.

Future Plans and Sustainability of Partnership

We will continue cooperating with EKOenergy to promote an ecolabel for green energy in China. We are also designing a plan with EKOenergy to develop NGO cooperation for clean energy in Africa. Finally, I hope this platform will allow more NGO exchanges and collaborations to happen, especially in the area of technology transfer.

Chongqing Renewable Energy Society hosting Merve Güngör in Chongqing

Activities

A lot has been happening in the Chinese renewable energy market in the past year and being there in-person has been a great opportunity for me to meet the market players face to face, study the current situation and engage in networking with NGOs and other organizations. EKOenergy has been getting questions from European companies and NGOs about the Chinese energy market. Thus, during my stay in China, I was able to direct those questions to people in leading organizations, such as the China Renewable Energy Certification Center and the China General Certification. My stay in Chongqing enabled me to meet local companies and



At TEDxJNJ Suzhou, with all the speakers

inform them about the international renewable energy market. To get a better overview of the local situation, I had meetings with representatives of the EU-China Chamber of Commerce and the US-China Green Energy Council, both in Chongqing. I also visited the offices of market players in several cities.

Challenges

Before arriving, I contacted organizations in different cities and wanted to make appointments to plan my itinerary in advance. However, when I emailed them to inform them that I will be in China, I either didn't get any replies, or got replies but no appointments. When I was already in China and mentioned it in my emails, organizations quickly linked me to other organizations. There were many last-minute contacts, something I found a bit challenging since it made it very hard to plan things in advance. Most Chinese contacts weren't willing to arrange appointments one or two months in advance.

Another challenge was discovering that many people see voluntary green energy certificates as something "foreign". However, five years ago, even in Europe, this market didn't exist. Therefore, we are convinced that in the coming years consumer information won't remain a "foreign" concept in China.

My nationality became a personal challenge, unfortunately, with many people in China making prejudiced remarks about me, Turkey or the Middle East. It's not my task to try to educate them about geography or world politics, so I usually ignored those remarks or gave short replies to change the topic. Nevertheless, I can't help thinking that I would be regarded very differ-

ently if I had told them I was from a more well-known country, such as the USA, Germany or France.

Outcome and Impact

I made lots of new contacts and it was nice to meet previously existing contacts face to face. Our China project is ongoing and I tried to make the best use of the limited time I had there.

Our initial activities included making leaflets on EKOenergy for a Chinese audience and writing articles about our Twinning exchange for the websites and Wechat accounts of bilingual English-Chinese media.

Future Plans and Sustainability of Partnership

- The EU Chamber of Commerce prepares position papers about different regions in China and is planning on including a large section on energy next year. Thus, we agreed to stay in touch and contribute our knowledge about renewable energy.
- We agreed to stay in close contact with the Finnish Business Council in Beijing regarding webinars and brochures about renewable energy procurement in China.
- My Twinning partner Mr. Ma Dingping and I agreed to staying in close contact regarding future opportunities for collaboration between Finland and China, and potentially Africa.

Infobox

EKOenergy

EKOenergy is a network of environmental NGOs and an international, non-profit ecolabel for renewable energy. It promotes the use of renewable energy by forming partnerships worldwide. EKOenergy also supports renewable electricity projects worldwide through its Climate Fund. The ecolabel currently exists in 35 countries. Renewable energy with the EKOenergy label fulfils additional sustainability requirements and with each MWh of EKOenergy sold, new renewable energy projects get funded. The EKOenergy label is the only renewable energy label which is the result of an international consultation process, which works internationally, and which is widely recognized.

Ms. Merve Güngör

Merve Güngör did her undergraduate studies in Turkey, Japan and the UK. She graduated from the Zhejiang University Chinese and Foreign Political Institutions master's program in 2014. Before joining EKOenergy, she was a research and advocacy volunteer for Transparency International Turkey. She started promoting EKOenergy as a volunteer through the European Voluntary Service program in the office of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation. Her current focus is the development of the renewable and ecolabeled electricity market in Turkey and Northeast Asia.

Infobox

Chongqing Renewable Energy Society (CRES)

Founded in 2016, CRES is a professional renewable energy research society managed by the Chongqing Science and Technology Association. CRES devotes itself to policy research, academic exchange and technology promotion. It also provides a consulting service and supports science popularization in the field of renewable energy. At the moment, there are 65 members, 12 of which are organizational members. Most of them are companies from the Chongqing electricity industry, new energy factories, colleges, research institutes and consulting firms focused on new energy and renewable energy, as well as major consumers of renewable energy.

Mr. MA Dingping

Ma Dingping has been secretary general of the Chongqing Renewable Energy Society since 2016 and of the Chongqing Renewable Energy Research Society since 2006. He has 10 years of professional experience and profound knowledge of energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as well-proven abilities in organizational management, government services, international collaboration and enterprise cooperation. He also has expertise in the development of energy projects, auditing and research. He has completed over 20 large scale energy efficiency and clean-energy projects and drafted three administrative regulations on energy efficiency standards.

BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association (BROCA), Sanya & FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development, Ljubljana

The exchange between the BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association (BROCA) and the FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development focused on energy issues and coastal development.

Exchange Topic – Energy and Coastal Development

The purpose of the exchange was to get to know the similarities and differences of how environmental NGOs operate in Europe and in China. One part of the exchange program focused on sustainable coastal development, as well as on water and waste issues and solutions. In addition, the aim was to meet other relevant NGOs, research institutions and organizations working in similar areas.



Group photo with the FOCUS staff

FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development hosting Zhang Jinghua in Ljubljana

Activities

I started my exchange to Europe full of expectations and curiosity. Being from a different cultural background, I wished to open my mind to learning about environmental protection and NGOs in Europe. During the exchange, I gave a presentation to FOCUS on the

Infobox

FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development

The FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit and apolitical association of individuals. Our vision is a society that lives a balanced life within environmental and social limits and does not undermine the existence of life on Earth. Our work focuses on the following areas: climate change, energy, sustainable mobility, global responsibility, ethical consumption, environmental justice, and degrowth.

Mr. Tomislav Tkalec

Tomislav Tkalec works as the head of the Energy Programme at the FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development. For six years he has been working for the FOCUS Association for Sustainable Development. He has a bachelor's degree in political science and is also a PhD candidate in environmental protection at the University of Ljubljana. His thesis is on the socio-political and environmental aspects of the decentralization of the production of energy. The scope of his work covers policy processes related to energy efficiency and renewable energy in Slovenia and the EU. He has been involved in several processes for developing EU and national legislation in the field of energy efficiency, in cooperation with European NGO networks, decision-makers, and experts in this field.

projects and activities of BROCA. I also wrote some articles about my experience in Europe, covering topics such as waste issues and volunteers relations.

I met many NGOs working on marine, water, and energy issues. I found it very useful to learn how to think and solve problems from a more open perspective. At the same time, the program had a positive influence in terms of spreading knowledge and cultural understanding.

Challenges

First, my stay in Slovenia was during the summer holidays, so I was rarely able to take part in activities or events. However, FOCUS was able to organize some interviews and meetings for me.

Second, Slovenia has its own language, so I could only join some activities in English and communicate with English-speaking people. However, since my English is not great, I still missed some useful information during professional discussions. At the same time, when my partner stayed in China, there were some technical questions that I couldn't translate, which became a bit of an obstacle.

Third, regarding culture, it was the first time I went abroad, so everything was different and new for me. Sometimes, I tried to find out why something was a certain way. However, I didn't think that was a big challenge. It was really interesting.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

During the Twinning Program, the Chinese fellows were able to strengthen ties amongst themselves, especially those working on similar topics. I was able to meet some NGOs working on waste, water and biodiversity issues. With their help, I was able to get in contact with some relevant organizations in China. Our aim is to stay in touch and help each other in the future. Outcome and Impact

BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association hosting Tomislav Tkalec in Sanya

My main objective during the exchange was to upgrade my knowledge of energy issues with insights and experience from other regions around the world. How are policies and practices developing in China and what are the key trends there? The Twinning Program was a way of gaining first-hand experience to improve my own skills, gain experience and expand my knowledge. This

Infobox

BlueRibbon Ocean Conservation Association (BROCA)

BROCA is a non-profit NGO dedicated to ocean education and awareness raising, marine debris clean-up, sustainable coastal development, coastal ecosystem conservation and promoting the development of a non-governmental ocean conservation network in China. The association's aim is to unite all stakeholders to protect the ocean.

Ms. ZHANG Jinghua

Zhang Jinghua is a volunteer department manager at the BROCA. She has two years of work experience and more than five years of volunteer experience in the field of ocean conservation. She has good knowledge of environmental project management and a deep interest in activities on education and social inclusion. Ms. Zhang holds a bachelor's degree in applied psychology.



Workshop on environmental problems in primary school

will be useful in the future work of my organization, both in practical terms and in conducting research. At the same time, the plan was to provide contributions based on my own knowledge and experience from working on the topics concerned and sharing them with my partner organization. In our work, it is important to know what is happening in other regions around the world, to communicate with each other and to help each other with certain topics. This can be done by providing best practice examples, and by discussing relevant policies and developments.

A workplan for the exchange period was prepared and it contained nine main activities. These included giving presentations on the projects and activities of both organizations, as well as on cases of environmental conflict in Europe and China's energy policy. We also planned networking events and meetings with representatives of Chinese environmental NGOs, etc.

Challenges

The main barrier was probably language, as I don't speak Chinese. For that reason, it was sometimes hard to get access to information and almost impossible to have a sound meeting with stakeholders. It should be added, that as a foreigner, I sometimes couldn't get all of the answers that I wanted, getting only the formal, official and simple ones.

Activities

During the exchange, I was able to introduce the work of FOCUS, including its projects and activities to BROCA. This led to a number of discussions, for instance, on how to work with volunteers. I was also able to learn more about their work through presentations and meetings, and by participating in activities with BROCA staff. During these discussions I was able to engage in knowledge transfer on how to organize and implement workshops.

I was also able to travel to other cities in China, where I had meetings with different actors. These included alumni of the Twinning Program, who were able to provide me with perspectives from different parts of China.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Currently, no concrete follow-up project has been planned because the organizations work on different topics. Both organizations, especially the two twinnings, will stay in touch in the future and find suitable ideas for a potential collaboration on energy topics.

Green Volunteer League of Chongqing (GVLC) & Legambiente, Padova

Green Volunteer League of Chongqing (GVLC) and Legambiente focused their exchange on renewable energy, energy efficiency and water pollution, as well as environmental education and volunteer management.

Legambiente hosting Yan Yang in Padova

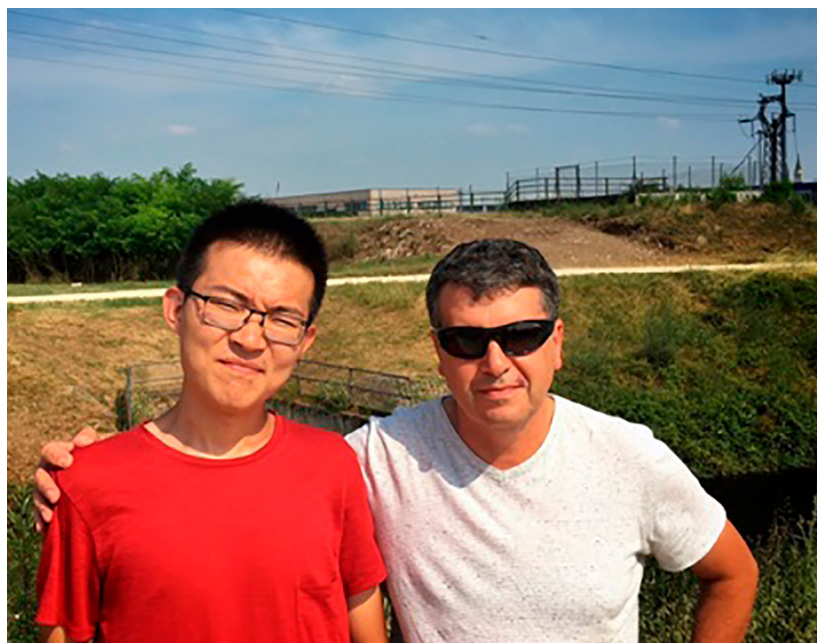
Over the years, Legambiente has played a very important role in promoting environmental education and developing a volunteer network. It has also worked with the government in finding ways to cope with environmental issues. This experience is worth learning from. In the name of “learning, sharing and collaborating”, I embarked on a 40-day exchange trip to Italy, home of ancient civilizations, in June 2017. During this exchange, Davide prepared various activities, allowing me to fully understand Legambiente’s operations and environmental protection work.

Activities

My activities in Italy ranged from preparing a presentation on green logistics for a national eco-tech fair, meeting volunteers and learning about how Legambiente operates, to visiting polluted areas where local Legambiente groups are active in organizing grassroots protests and awareness-raising campaigns. I also took part in two international volunteer camps on sustainable tourism, organized by Legambiente. I helped with the implementation of the camp and was able to exchange views with volunteers from all over the world.

Challenges

During my stay in Italy, the main challenge for me was not being fully fluent in English. Thus, when I attended important activities or meetings, I could not express my ideas comprehensively. Another problem for me was that I did not have enough experience doing international activities, so I could not make full use of the resources provided by this exchange. In the near



In Verona with a local volunteer fighting who is water-bed pollution

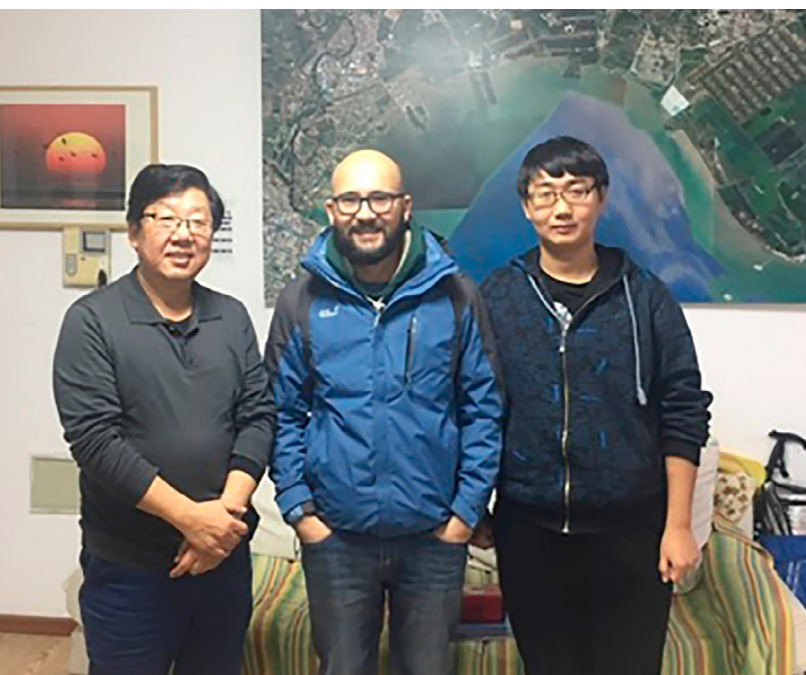
future, I hope to improve my spoken English, keep in touch with my Twinning partner and continue to cooperate with my twinner in all possible areas.

Green Volunteer League of Chongqing hosting Davide Sabbadine in Chongqing

My expectations for the exchange were high. On the one hand, I hoped to grasp, to some degree, the Chinese approach towards diplomacy as a way of helping me understand the environmental challenges and solutions that are present in China today. On the other hand, I had the hope of building bridges for future collaboration in the field of green economy. Lastly, I hoped I could improve my Chinese to the bare minimum necessary for survival.

Activities

Activities in China included meeting the heads of NGOs, sharing ideas on environmental policies in China and



Meeting with Mr Wang and a volunteer of CGVG

abroad, meeting professionals working in the country on fields such as renewable energy, and meeting NGO volunteers to see their work in the field. I was specifically interested in activities conducted to protect the marine coastal area near Tianjin. Here, environmentalists are working to protect one of the most important humid areas in the world for migrating birds.

Challenges

Ji'nan ElemeHaving failed to achieved the last goal, I was also somewhat unsuccessful with regard to the other two. Language was the biggest barrier and I had to rely on my Twinning partner for almost everything. This made it difficult for me to independently find cultural and other exchange opportunities. Nevertheless, Yang and I managed to establish a good basis for collaboration and started planning possible future pro-

jects. Also, on the positive side, I found China's NGO environment to be much more similar to the European one than I had expected.

Outcome and Impact

We organized a lecture on energy efficiency at the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications. After this, we also organized a webinar on the same topic, which can be found under <https://pan.baidu.com/share/init?surl=nvR2JEx> (the password is 2617).

At home, I spread the word about the exchange program through a series of articles for the online magazine "La Nuova Ecologia".

I spoke directly about environmental issues with roughly 50 people in China and reached an audience of thousands back in Italy with my efforts to spread information about the project on the radio and the internet. These figures do not include my personal blog, which has posts that have reached hundreds of viewers on Facebook.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

We have outlined two different fields for possible cooperation.

The first possible area of action is technology and best practice in the context of the BRI. We feel there is still much potential in this area, given the great work still to be done in fields such as water and waste management, water and soil purification, urban management, and sustainable transportation.

The second possible area of cooperation is organizing field trips to best practice projects and activities in Italy and/or China on the above-mentioned topics.

Legambiente

Legambiente is a non-profit association established in 1980. The aim of the association is to promote the development a new kind of environmental culture. Important values for the association are the improvement of environmental quality, the fight against all forms of pollution, a wise use of natural resources, and the construction of a more balanced relationship between human beings and nature.

Mr. Davide Sabbadine

Davide Sabbadine has been a member of Legambiente, Italy's largest environmental NGO, for more than 20 years. He has participated in numerous campaigns related to energy, waste and pollution management, and mobility, as campaigner and policy officer, among others. He works for Legambiente as an advocate for energy and resource efficiency, as well as for climate-friendly refrigerants at the national and international level.

Green Volunteer League of Chongqing (GVLC)

GVLC is a grassroots environmental protection organization authorized by the Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Civil Affairs. Since it was established in 1995, GVLC has worked to promote green culture, green civilization and sustainable development. The organization pays great attention to the social supervision of environmental protection, environmental legal services, social advocacy and efforts to safeguard social fairness and justice.

Mr. YAN Yang

Mr. Yan Yang graduated from the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications. His major was public affairs management. Even before joining the GVLC, his main research interest and area of work has been non-profit organization management and ecological environmental management. Furthermore, he is a PhD candidate. Due to his personal concern about the cooperative governance of Chinese watershed regions, especially environmental protection along the Yangtze River watershed, he focuses on the question of how to promote green logistics in China.

China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN), Beijing & BUNDjugend, Berlin

China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN) and BUNDjugend focused their exchange on the topic of how to involve young people in climate change issues.

BUNDjugend hosting Huang Shuling in Berlin

Activities

The Twinning Program provides participants with an opportunity for communication and study. It is useful for CYCAN to learn more about other international NGOs that organize youth activities.

During the exchange, I was able to get involved in one volunteer-based project. The love tram is a program in which participants reduce pollution and resource



Volunteers preparing cardboard signs and banners

consumption during large concerts. I took part in the brainstorming of advertisement slogans, as well as in material collection and the overall designing of the event.

In line with the theme of sustainable development, the local university invited relevant local NGOs to advertise in the school so that more students would become aware of ongoing activities on climate change.

With the help of BUNDjugend Berlin, I was able to visit four water-related organizations and discuss how to involve young people in water protection and education.

Challenges

- Combining participation in the exchange with keeping up with the work from one's own organization.
- Maintaining effective communication with exchange partners and following up on the needs of the partner requires quite a few resources from the host organization.
- Increasing connections to other exchange partners and increasing the possibility of continued cooperation with after the exchange ends.

Outcome and Impact

Through my interactions with German organizations, I gained an understanding of how the work and management methods of German NGOs compare with my own organization. I found several differences and will write an article on these for CYCAN.

China Youth Climate Action Network hosting Björn Obmann in Beijing

In applying to the Twinning Program, I had three objectives.

As a youth organization, BUNDjugend Berlin organizes international youth exchanges. With this Twinning Program, I wanted to get to know CYCAN and its volunteers

personally to see if there is a chance of organizing an exchange and to identify potential volunteers for an organizing team.

Furthermore, volunteer management is a big challenge all around the world. BUNDjugend uses very informal volunteer management methods that give volunteers a lot of freedom. I wanted to compare European and Chinese ways of motivating people to get active and involved with the organization, especially for longer periods of time. The decision-making processes, in particular, interested me.

My third objective was learning about Chinese politics, in general, and climate policy, in particular. Does civil society exist in China and how can they influence and support the decision-making process? Following the first part of the exchange in Germany and the workshops in Hamburg and Sanya, this objective focused more on the challenges faced by Chinese NGOs.

Activities

During the Twinning, I had the chance to get to know the different projects of CYCAN by attending team meetings and engaging in individual discussions with the project leaders. In one-on-one talks, I learned how CYCAN recruits volunteers, as well as the methods they use to keep them motivated. Furthermore, I got an insight into the structure of their administration, as well as their funding and future plans.

In the context of CYCAN's "Online Youth Exchange Program" (OYE2.0), I hosted a webinar with 40 students from China, the US and Africa on "Carrotmobs" as a low-threshold climate project. In the space of an hour, I presented this project, which originated in the US and which BUNDjugend adopted and has been doing annually for a number of years. Afterwards, we discussed Carrotmobs and how they can be organized by small teams of volunteers in China and elsewhere.

Another highlight was visiting a village outside of Beijing together with the Social Resource Institute and CYCAN. The Social Resource Institute focuses on issues related to the livelihoods of peasants and the development of rural communities. In this village, they do workshops for the local people to support them with the marketing of their produce, e. g., by setting up their own website and selling the produce directly. CYCAN



Green Painter Program of CYCAN during village field trip

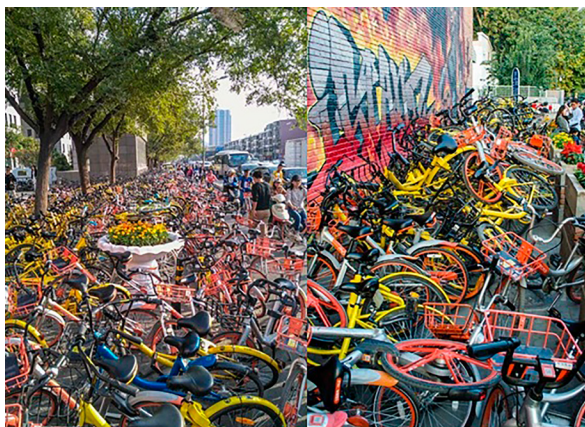
started their "Green Painter Program" in this village, painting the walls with different motives to raise awareness of environmental issues.

Since many NGOs are located in Beijing, I had the chance to meet with different organizations and learn about their work, including their challenges and achievements.

In a meeting with the Rock Environmental and Energy Institute, we discussed Chinese climate and environmental policy, as well as how NGOs can contribute their knowledge to the decision-making process.

Another organization, Bamboo Bikes Beijing, gave me a tour of their office and workshop, where they build bikes with interested people. Their goal is to promote the use of natural materials and to empower people to build and maintain their own bikes. Furthermore, they motivate people to choose climate-friendly mobility. By doing volunteer work in the organization, people with low income also have the opportunity to get their own bamboo bike.

I was also introduced to Friends of Nature, which is probably one of the oldest environmental NGOs in China, with a structure and range of activities very much comparable to organizations in Germany and Europe. They already cooperate effectively with German NGOs, which helped make my exchange with them more fruitful.



Bike sharing in Beijing

In the end, I also met with a representative from German Development Cooperation (GIZ), giving me the chance to discuss the Chinese NGO landscape from a European perspective and learn how German-Chinese relations function on a governmental level.

Challenges

The biggest challenge for me was communication. Faced with the language barrier, it was sometimes hard to dig deeper into subjects. But even leaving aside language issues, our ways of communicating and thinking seemed to differ very much. Since the (NGO) system is structured very differently, it took time to find common ground when communicating. For instance, it was only after several talks that I understood that a steering board in a Chinese NGO is something totally different than in Germany and that the recruiting of this board is also not comparable. Whereas in Germany the board is elected by a general assembly, in China they are assigned by former members of the board. The overall decision-making processes, which are very important in our organization, were also different. The communication challenge continued with terms like “volunteer” or “member”. I was surprised that Chinese NGOs are not allowed to have formal members but only donors and volunteers.

The most striking thing, however, were the political obstacles faced by Chinese NGOs. They have only limited space for their work and difficulty raising funds. These political differences made it hard for us to draw practical lessons from each other’s work because most methods used in Europe are not applicable in China and vice versa.

Outcome and Impact

I learned a lot and I gained a (modest) understanding of Chinese climate politics, which helped during COP23 discussions about China’s role in this area. Through this program, I feel much better prepared to join in discussions on China’s role in climate negotiations, where the hope is that they will become part of a solution to climate change, including in areas where their role is not yet clear (e.g. the BRI)

At the same time, I became more critical of the possibility of organizing a youth exchange with China because the obstacles seem to be too big.

As an NGO, it seems to be difficult to get visas for these types of exchanges. At least in my case, I had to wait for a very long time and was only successful because of the influence of CANGO and the chamber of commerce. For BUNDjugend, an emancipated partnership is very important, where both side share responsibilities and are able to shape the program together. One key issue for our youth exchanges are political discussions and developing solutions together. I’m not sure if this would be possible in these conditions.

Without the possibility of giving money to the Chinese partner, this emancipated partnership would be hard to achieve and any potential alternatives would also face many obstacles. Furthermore, the tight leash that Chinese NGOs are on, as well as the fact that Chinese youth are not used to these open discussions, make it hard to discuss political issues openly and work on possible solutions. Therefore, the program of a German-Chinese youth exchange would have to be structured very differently and is something that requires more thought.

From this perspective, the Twinning Program was very helpful and I will use these new insights to explore the possibility of making something like this happen.

CYCAN is planning a volunteer program for graduates. Since volunteer programs have a long history in Germany and Europe, and BUNDjugend is involved in some of these programs, I shared my experience in this area and we discussed what such a program could look like. I hope these insights into the German and European systems for volunteer services, including the European Voluntary Service, the Freies Ökologisches Jahr, and the Bundesfreiwilligendienst, will help them organize an

interesting and well-functioning program and raise the necessary funds.

Of course, I also built some precious personal contacts which will hopefully prove long-lasting and lead to future collaboration. Friends of Nature is planning a study trip to Germany and I will probably help them with their program in Berlin by setting up meetings between the Chinese delegation and BUND and BUNDjugend. I hope that some of the volunteers in the OYE-program will pick up the idea of the Carrotmob. I can then support them in the organization of the first Chinese Carrotmob.

The most concrete benefit of my exchange was probably gaining first-hand experience with the bike-sharing system in Beijing. Several Asian bike-sharing companies want to start doing business in Berlin, which has sparked hysterical discussions in the media and government. Since our BUNDjugend biking group is working on different issues around biking in Berlin, this fits perfectly in our agenda and I'm writing an article on this experience to put the discussion in Berlin into perspective.

Infobox

BUNDjugend Berlin

BUNDjugend Berlin (Young Friends of the Earth Berlin) is the youth branch of BUND Berlin (Friends of the Earth), which targets people under 27 years of age. Members independently plan campaigns, projects and actions, and decide which issues they want to focus on. The emphasis, however, is on climate change, mobility, city development and consumption. BUNDjugend Berlin believes in a peer-to-peer concept and grassroots structures in which young people take on responsibility, form their own opinions, inform other young people about environmental problems, and motivate them to act.

Mr. Björn Obmann

Björn Obmann is the youth coordinator and director of BUNDjugend Berlin. His work focuses on climate change, degrowth, and mobility, as well as on volunteer management and campaigning. He studied biology at the Christian Albrechts University of Kiel. After graduation, he started to work for a climate campaign with school children at BUNDjugend Schleswig-Holstein. He then worked for the national office of BUNDjugend as volunteer manager and coordinated different campaigns on climate change and FairTrade issues.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

It was the second time CYCAN and BUNDjugend Berlin took part in this exchange program, making it very important for us to deepen our cooperation. While plans for a youth exchange need more thinking and planning, the cooperation between CYCAN and BUNDjugend continued to grow. During COP23, there was an exchange between BUNDjugend and CYCAN activists in Bonn, which will hopefully continue and be strengthened on the road to COP24 in Poland 2018.

Also, CYCAN and BUNDjugend share many ideas and visions in a variety of areas, so I am confident that we will stay in touch on issues like voluntary services and volunteer management.

At least as important as my contacts to Chinese NGOs and twinning, was building a network with European Twinning fellows from a variety of NGOs, as well as with CAN Europe, Stiftung Asienhaus and the Robert Bosch Stiftung. These contacts will be helpful in making further plans for collaboration with China, but also in finding new opportunities for cooperation within Europe.

Infobox

China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN)

CYCAN was established in August 2007 by seven outstanding youth organizations with the aim of combining their resources and strengths. As the first Chinese non-profit organization focusing on youth development and climate change, CYCAN aims to inspire and support young people to combat climate change and promote energy innovation through concrete and enduring action.

Ms. HUANG Shuling

Ms. Huang holds a master's degree in bioengineering. She has considerable experience in field testing and data analysis. In addition to her involvement with several different projects, she was the research director of a field survey on biodiversity in Xinhui District. Ms. Huang was the director of a sub-forum at the 8th International Youth Summit of Energy and Climate Change in 2016. Furthermore, since 2015, she has had an important role in project management at MyH2O, successfully implementing four field-work activities.

Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province (ESSSP), Chengdu & Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development (AFCDUD), Paris

The Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development (AFCDUD) and the Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province (ESSSP) focused their exchange on the role of cities in climate change.

Exchange topic – The role of cities in climate change

Cities have an important role to play in tackling climate change. It is necessary to exchange techniques and understand how to transform cities to make them green and resilient. The focus of this exchange was on the promotion of waste management projects that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as on the monitoring of CO₂ emissions from Chinese cities.

The Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development hosting Xu Qing in Paris

The European part of the exchange focused on sharing respective experiences with low-carbon and sustainable development in cities, as well as on ways to strengthen the EU-China civil society dialogue on related issues.

From my experience of working on resilient cities by engaging with local communities and providing technical assistance, I examined the way that European cities are trying to transform themselves into resilient cities.

Activities

The main element of the European part of the exchange was participating in all of the preparations for the “Smart City, Green Life” Sino-Europe Forum that took place from September 25th–26th in Paris. This was already the 9th edition of this fascinating event.

Next to the preparations for the forum, I had the opportunity to participate in multiple international conferences, such as the World Reconstruction Forum, the European Development Day, and the Paris Climate Club.

Being located in Paris also gave me the opportunity to visit the International Energy Agency, where I was able to discuss the linkages between energy and sustainable cities.



With representatives from Japan, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka during the Europe Development days

Challenges

The most noticeable cultural difference was how decisions are made and executed. NGOs in Europe are less connected to the government than NGOs in China. As a result, my impression was that European NGOs are more open-minded, while Chinese NGOs are more effective in taking action after decisions are made.

Outcome and Impact

Below are the main results of the Twinning Program: Our presentation at the C20 2017: Fostering sustainable urban development in BRI countries

- The “Smart City, Green Life” Sino-Europe Forum, held in Paris from September 25th–26th, 2017
- Establishing an EU-China network centered on actions to build resilience to environmental challenges and climate change

- Developing a concrete, strategic plan for the cooperation between ESSSP and AFCDUD

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The future plans resulting from this Twinning are:

- Jointly working on the innovative popularization of environmental issues among the public and citizens (organizations involved: ESSSP and AFCDUD)
- Following up on the Sino-Europe Forum, for instance, by promoting the Green City Alliance (organizations involved: AFCDUD, ESSSP, and Tongji Venture Valley)

The Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province hosting Lin WU in Chengdu

The following activities were planned for Dr. Lin WU's visit to China:

1. Academic exchanges on green city theory and practice
2. Initiatives on the role of cities in climate finance, carbon trading and other areas, as well as relevant applications being developed by industry and start-ups
3. A potential joint project for the monitoring of the CO₂ emissions of Chinese cities such as Chengdu
4. Creating a link between ESSSP and AFCDUD for future exchanges and collaborations

Dr. Wu expected that the exchange would provide opportunities to apply the expertise he previously developed in France to problems in China, particularly with regard to the system for monitoring the carbon emissions of large cities. A research team led by Dr. Wu had published an article in Atmospheric Chemistry Physics that was the first to provide an estimation of carbon emissions for distinct sectors of activities in a megacity (Paris), such as domestic heating, road traffic, and combustion for energy production and industrial processes. As part of the environment department at AFCDUD, he also expected to share his experience from nearly ten years of work on air quality problems, as well as the expertise of other AFCDUD members, thereby contributing to solving the environmental problems that are currently a public concern in China.



Seminar in ESSSP given by Dr. Lin WU titled "Platform and applications for air pollution mitigations and low-carbon city development"

Activities

Dr. Wu's exchange was divided into three phases: a visit to Beijing prior to the Sanya meeting, the Sanya meeting, and the visit to Chengdu after the National Day holiday.

We divided our major activities into three categories. Academic exchanges took place with organizations such as the State Key Laboratory of Atmospheric Boundary Layer Physics and Atmospheric Chemistry (LAPC). The successful joint application with LAPC researchers on an information system project, INFO-CAS, for solving problems in high-performance computing, data exchanging, and analysis methods in air pollution problems was supported by the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

In terms of exchanges with NGOs, we had a meeting with the secretary of ESSSP, Mr. Hu Yingming, to have a comprehensive discussion on the needs and demands of both organizations, which led to agreements on future collaborations between AFCDUD and ESSSP. These include joint efforts to build a platform of researchers, professionals and entrepreneurs to share information and news to solve environmental problems in air and water pollution, joint projects on promoting green products and standards, joint efforts to find innovative ways to raise awareness of environmental issues, joint work on education and the popularization

of environmental knowledge, as well as joint efforts in fostering industrial exchanges.

Challenges

Dr. Wu was born and educated in China, but had always worked in France. The exchange was the first time he had the chance to work in China. Hence, this exchange also revealed some cultural differences to him.

Here is a short list of Sino-French cultural differences found in NGOs, public institutes, and industry from a functional and less personal viewpoint:

1. NGOs

In general, NGOs connect individuals, professionals and governments, with a different emphasis placed on each. French NGOs are more connected with individuals and professionals, whereas Chinese NGOs are more connected with professionals and governments. As a result, French NGOs are more open (e.g. to citizens), whereas Chinese NGOs are more executive (e.g.

promoting concepts and practices that protect the environment and putting forward standards for professionals)

2. Public institutes:

The way in which research activities are conducted is different between Chinese and French institutes. The extent to which the research heads are involved in direct research activities is greater among French institutes. The Chinese research heads seem to have more managerial tasks. The Chinese research associates, e.g., PhD students and junior researchers, seem to have fewer discussions with their directors than is the case in French institutes.

3. Industry:

In French companies and startups, it seems that activities are better organized, with more analysis before acting. Chinese companies and startups are more dynamic and, in general, move more quickly and can take on a heavier work load.

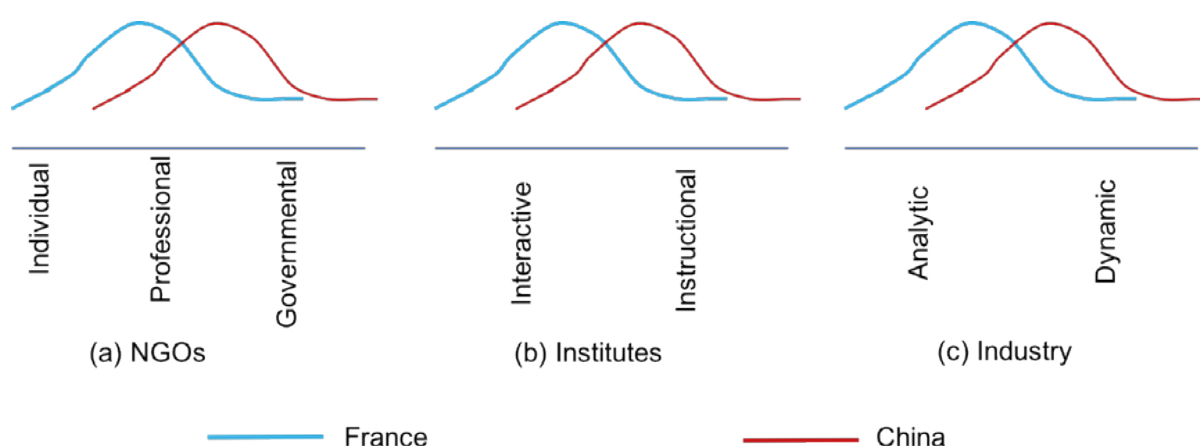


Figure 1 Cultural contrasts between France and China in NGOs, public institutes, and industry

The biggest hurdle, which is also a cultural contrast, is the way in which decisions are made and executed. This hurdle is likely to stay in place for a long time. However, as young generations go global, it might change eventually.

Outcome and Impact

During the Twinning Program, we established a Sino-French network that consists of researchers, entrepreneurs, venture capitals and NGOs, all engaged with

environmental issues and climate change, with a focus on low-carbon cities, air pollution, and exchange platforms.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Future plans resulting from this Twinning exchange:

- Joint project on monitoring urban CO₂ emissions (i.e. the National Key Project JINGJINJI, between

Franco-Chinese Association for Urban Sustainable Development (AFCDUD)

AFCDUD, established in 2008 in France, is a non-profit association supported by the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. AFCDUD aims to create and promote a platform for exchange and cooperation between France and China on issues of urban sustainable development. These include making cities more sustainable and more harmonious in the fields of transport, environment, energy, and exploring eco & smart cities. It has brought together more than 380 bicultural and professional members in these fields and has made contributions to Sino-French cooperation.

Dr. Lin WU

Dr. Wu obtained his Ph.D. in applied mathematics from the University of Joseph Fourier (UJF) in France. He has four years of experience in bio-informatics at UJF and at the French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control, as well as 11 years of experience in air quality and climate change at the Atmospheric Environment Teaching and Research Centre, at ENPC and with the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission. He developed the data assimilation system in air quality (Polyphemus) and the monitoring system of CO₂ emissions for large cities such as the metropolitan region of Paris.

Environmental Scientific Society of Sichuan Province (ESSSP)

ESSSP is a non-profit, voluntary organization of environmental professionals and noted public figures who care about environmental technologies, as well as relevant groups in Sichuan Province that are dedicated to developing environmental technology. Founded on April 29, 1981 with the approval of the Sichuan Association for Science and Technology, ESSSP is registered with the Department of Civil Affairs of Sichuan Province as the largest comprehensive technology organization in Sichuan's environmental sector. ESSSP has linked its well-informed professional members with a large pool of talented scientists for close collaboration. As a major force in the development of environmental technologies, it has been ranked among the top ten societies in Sichuan.

Ms. XU Qing (Suzie)

Suzie is the assistant secretary-general of ESSSP and focuses on resilient cities, environmental economy, policies and education, and international affairs. Suzie has been working for ESSSP since she got her master's degree in the United States in 2010. Suzie obtained a B.E. in environmental engineering from Tongji University, an M.S. in water resource planning and management from Colorado State University, and is a PhD candidate in the field of urban environment at Sichuan University.

AFCDUD and IAP) and air pollution (i.e. the infosystem project INFO-CAS, between AFCDUD and LAPC)

- Developing an information platform for clean, low-carbon cities supported by the established Sino-French network (organizations involved: AFCDUD, ESSSP, Yinguang, Tongji Venture Valley, and IAP, among others)

- Jointly working on the innovative popularization of environmental issues among the public and citizens (organizations involved: ESSSP and AFCDUD)
- Following up on the Sino-Europe Forum, for instance, by promoting the Green City Alliance (organizations involved: AFCDUD, ESSSP, and Tongji Venture Valley)

3. About the organizers

About 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 together in 1995 in Essen and founded the Asia House. In October 2012, the Asia House move its headquarters to Cologne

China Program

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

Since 2008 the China program engages in several exchange projects and dialogues. Since 10 years now, the “EU China Civil Society Portal” provides deep analysis, information, exhibitions and other material on current developments inside China, and about the EU-China relations. In 2010, the blog project “Voices from China” (SAC, stimmen-aus-china.de) was launched. It translates Chinese online debates and blog posts for the German public. The latest project is the “EU-China NGO Twinning” Program.

Furthermore, the China program organizes workshops, publications and study tours for Chinese and European NGOs and foundation.

Dr. Nora Sausmikat, Head of China Program
Joanna Klabisch, Program Coordinator

Further information: www.eu-china.net, www.eu-china-twinning.org

About China Association für NGO



China Association for
NGO Cooperation

The China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) is a non-profit membership organization operating nationwide. It was founded in 1992, and is registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs since 1993 (reg.no. 3340). By the end of 2016, CANGO had 139 member organizations. In 2007, CANGO gained Special Consultative Status as an NGO with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. In 2010, CANGO was honored with the title of National Advanced Social Organization by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Since its founding 25 years ago, CANGO has developed project cooperation with 181 foreign NGOs and bilateral and multilateral co-operations. Till the end of 2017, CANGO had raised a total of RMB 974 million from 100 donor agencies for project implementation.

Wang Xiangyi Deputy Executive Director

Li Xiajie Project Manager

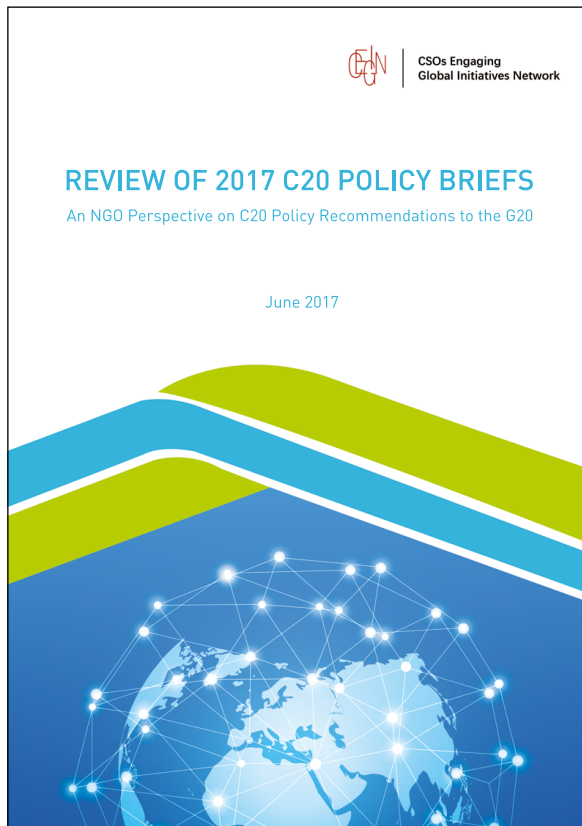


About Climate Action Network

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.

Mathias Claeys Bouuaert, Network Outreach Officer

Other Publications



In 2017, funded by Save the Children, Promote Chinese NGOs' Capacity in Going Global Project aims to promote Chinese NGOs participation in policy advocacy on international platforms such as the C20. The publication is an NGO perspective on C20 Policy Recommendations and was submitted to the C20 secretariat. Before the C20 in Hamburg, representatives from CSOs Engaging Global Initiatives Network attended the C20 preparation meeting organized by China NGO Network for International Exchanges.

The publication can be found at www.cango.org



Asia, and China in particular, plays a crucial role in the implementation of sustainability and development goals and climate change. This is certainly one of the reasons why today many scientists, politicians and NGOs are addressing China's new Silk Road Initiative. In its silk road project, the Asia House Foundation wants to examine the effects of the New Silk Road on the development perspectives of the participating countries. The focus is on the impact of the initiative on specific regions, their populations and the environment. Together with our co-publisher chinadialogue, we want to highlight the opportunities, challenges and impacts of the initiative on the environment, social stability and international relations.

The publication can be found at www.eu-china.net

5 Year Anniversary and Alumni Network Kick-off Meeting

8.–9. September 2018

The EU-China NGO Twinning Program has been enabling a continuous exchange of NGO staff from China and Europe for 5 years. Over 100 participants belong to its alumni network. 2018 we are celebrating an anniversary and bringing together our alumni to kick-off the Twinning Alumni Network (TAN) activities.

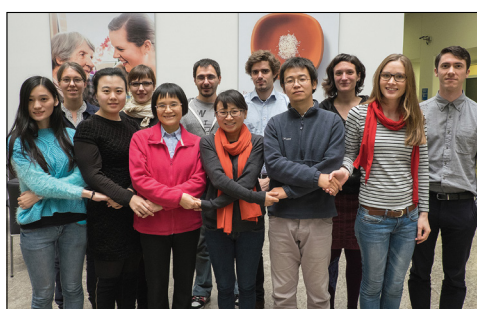


China-Program

Nora Sausmikat and Inga Gebauer

Twinning: Partnerships between Chinese and European NGOs

Green Financing · Right to Clean Water ·
Human Rights · Urban Youth Culture · Social Inclusion



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



China-Program

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Twinning: Partnerships between European and Chinese NGOs

Social & Environmental Justice ·
Climate Change & Low Carbon Development



China-Program

Nora Sausmikat and Joanna Klabisch

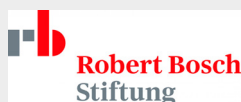
2016 EU-China Twinning: Partnerships between European and Chinese NGOs

Social and Environmental Justice and Climate Change



The Robert Bosch Stiftung 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. To this purpose, it develops and implements its own projects. Additionally, it supports third-party initiatives that have similar goals. Since it was established in 1964, the Robert Bosch Stiftung has invested more than 1.6 billion euros in charitable work.

Retail entrepreneur Karl Schmidt and his family from Duisburg established Stiftung Mercator in 1996, naming it after Gerhard Mercator, a cartographer and humanist. It is committed to equal rights and opportunities, to social cohesion, respect, tolerance and openness to the world, and to the protection of nature and the environment.



German-Chinese relations at the Robert Bosch Stiftung

Since 2006, the foundation is focusing its funding in China on the fields of media, governance, civil society, education, and culture. With our "Media Round Table China – Germany – USA" we are bringing together high-ranking media representatives from three countries to discuss global challenges and enhance cross-border cooperation. With its exchange programs for judges and lawyers, the foundation wants to aid China in its judicial reform process, to promote legal certainty and to foster the German-Chinese (legal) dialogue. With its Lectureship Program in Asia, the foundation sends German university graduates to Chinese universities for one to two years to not only teach German but to run educational projects that link academia and society. With "Grenzgänger Asien" the foundation is also offering literary research fellowships for German- and Chinese-speaking authors and filmmakers. Since January 1 2012, the only official Chinese social media account of a German foundation is online at www.weibo.com/robertboschstiftung with almost 11.000 followers.



China Program at Stiftung Mercator

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 programmes. 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>