



Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

China Environment Forum

For twelve years, the Woodrow Wilson Center's China Environment Forum (CEF) has implemented projects, workshops, and exchanges that bring together U.S., Chinese, and other Asian environmental policy experts to explore the most imperative environmental and sustainable development issues in China and to examine opportunities for business, governmental, and nongovernmental communities to collaboratively address these issues.

The networks built and knowledge gathered through meetings, publications, and research activities have established CEF as one of the most reliable sources for China-environment information and given CEF the capacity to undertake long-term and specialized projects on topics such as environmental health, food safety, water management, nongovernmental organization (NGO) development, and municipal financing for environmental infrastructure.

A GLOBAL NETWORK

CEF has successfully identified and joined forces with the main environmental “movers and shakers” in China and, consequently, is routinely approached by government agencies, businesses, journalists, and NGOs seeking information and contacts to jumpstart their research or project work. Some high-profile participants in CEF research exchanges include:

- Yu Xiaogang—founder of the NGO Green Watershed and winner of the 2006 Goldman Environmental Prize for Asia;
- Ma Jun—one of *Time* magazine's 100 most important people in the world in 2006 for work to create China's first online water pollution database; and,
- Du Ping—former director of the Institute of Spatial Planning & Regional Economy under NDRC's Academy of Macroeconomic Research who now leads China's “Go West” campaign.

A MAJOR INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

CEF connects environmental experts, activists and policymakers in person, in print, and online.

Events

In its Washington, DC office, CEF holds approximately 18 meetings a year focusing on a broad range of topics pertaining to energy and the environment in China, including pollution and natural resource trends, the effectiveness of government policies and initiatives, bilateral and multilateral aid programs, and international and domestic NGO projects. CEF has continually increased the participation of Chinese policymakers, NGO activists, researchers, and journalists as speakers and participants in the forum's frequent meetings. Most meetings are webcast and archived online.

Under the new Wilson Center on the Hill program CEF has been able to hold more meetings for members of Congress and their senior staff on China's environmental and energy trends and projects in the field. In 2008-09, CEF's well-attended Hill meetings included one introducing the McKinsey Institute's carbon cost curve for China and another on China's climate and energy policy imperatives.

Print Publications

CEF publishes the *China Environment Series*, a 200+ page journal featuring policy analysis on China's environmental and energy challenges that is distributed to nearly 2,600 businesses, academic institutions, NGOs, governments, and research representatives in the U.S., Asia, and Europe. With support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, *China Environment Series* issue 10 focused on environmental pollution and health challenges and the upcoming issue 11 emphasizes trends and projects focused on climate change and toxic pollution in China.

Over the years CEF has published short policy briefs, often in both English and Chinese, covering topics such as U.S.-China climate cooperation, water challenges in China, and food safety.

Online

CEF's website—www.wilsoncenter.org/cef—compiles the forum's vast quantity of information into one easily searchable location. CEF's site receives an average of 3,000 unique visitors each month and is regularly ranked the third most popular website among the Wilson Center's 20 programs.

- *Research Briefs*: In the fall of 2006, as part of its partnership in the China Environmental Health Project (CEHP) with Western Kentucky University, CEF staff began generating online research briefs about current environmental challenges in China that threaten human health both domestically and abroad. The 42 and counting research briefs are expert reviewed and have become a major draw to our website. They are used by a large number of experts in the CEF network ranging from journalists, scientists, NGO activists, and policy analysts. For instance, David Barboza from the *NYT* used CEF's Aquaculture brief as background for his own reporting on fish farms in China.
- *News*: There are two news pages on our website: one highlighting CEF-related news and one compiling articles about environmental and energy trends and policies in China from both English and Chinese language media sources.
- *Publications*: In addition to mailing publications to 2,600 CEF members, full PDF versions of all publications are posted to the CEF website.
- *Events*: Extensive summaries, videos, and photos of CEF events are available on the website.
- *Outreach*: CEF offers RSS feeds for subscribers to receive updates on CEF news, publications, and meetings. Since 2008, CEF has had a Facebook page.

EXPANDING CEF ACTIVITIES

Initially, CEF workshop and publication activities were predominantly based in Washington, DC. However, since the year 2000, CEF has conducted nine projects aimed at both building the capacity of environmental practitioners in China and highlighting opportunities for international cooperation with China on a broad range of energy and environmental issues.

Ongoing Initiatives

- *Lake Tai*. In the summer of 2009, CEF, Institute of Developing Economies, and the Center for Environmental Management and Policy at Nanjing University received a grant from the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership to undertake workshop and exchange activities that aim to build a network of U.S., Japanese, and Chinese businesses, NGOs, researchers, and government representatives who will jointly explore market, public-private partnership, and multi-stakeholder strategies to stem pollution problems in Taihu, China's third largest lake.
- *Multi-media Water Stories—Karst and Desertification*. In the summer of 2009, with support from USAID, CEF and Western Kentucky University began working with the U.S.-based NGO Circle of Blue to

create a multimedia story on the freshwater challenges communities face in karst areas of Yunnan Province. The multimedia site will be launched in the fall of 2009. Prior to this, CEF designed and coproduced Circle of Blue's first China water story in 2007, which notably had a strong health angle and focused on desertification and water scarcity in Inner Mongolia. This first story can be found at www.circleofblue.org/reign.

- *Environmental Health*. In the fall of 2006, CEF began a partnership with the Hoffman Environmental Institute at Western Kentucky University (WKU) to carry out the China Environmental Health Project (CEHP). CEF is assisting WKU and Chinese scientists in exploring environmental health issues linked with karst water geography and coal emissions, and is generating various publications focusing on environmental health issues in China. CEF also has incorporated environmental health themes into meeting, publication, and research activities under this project. CEHP activities are supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

- *Asia's Future: Critical Thinking for a Changing Environment*. Starting in October 2008, CEF and the Wilson Center's Environmental Change and Security Project were charged by the U.S. Agency for International Development with investigating Asia's most serious environmental challenges. CEF and ECSP held 9 roundtables with experts and conducted interviews and research that helped create a report focused mainly on Southeast Asia that identifies global trends impacting environment and highlights opportunities for USAID and other donors to improve environmental protection. The report and supporting website will be launched in August 2009 and aim to help USAID's Asia Bureau understand broader challenges impacting their work as they design new programs.

Past Research and Training Exchange Initiatives

- *Food Safety*. In the fall of 2007, CEF conducted a series of workshops and research exchanges with food safety practitioners from China and the United States. The goals of this initiative were to: (1) better inform business, policy, and NGO representatives in the United States and China of the challenges that both countries face with food safety; (2) highlight progressive policy and technical solutions to food safety problems; and (3) identify and potentially catalyze cooperative partnerships between the United States and China on food safety issues. A bilingual food safety report was published in August 2008. These activities were supported by the Waters Corporation.

- *River Basin Governance*. In partnership with the Japan-based Institute of Developing Economies, CEF created a tri-national working group in 2004 comprised of water experts from Japan, the United States, and China, tasked with developing proposals for joint U.S.-Japan efforts to enhance river basin governance systems in China. Two publications on water in China created by this group are available on the CEF webpage. This project, concluded in 2006, was supported by the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership.

- *Water Conflict Resolution in the United States and China*. Between 2002 and 2005, CEF brought together eight U.S. and Chinese environmental policy experts, water resource researchers, NGO activists, and natural resource law experts to discuss how to develop institutions to prevent and resolve domestic water conflicts. The group participated in three study tour meetings—in Tucson, Arizona; Beijing, China; and Washington, DC—where they met with local environmental experts and worked in pairs to write research papers that were published in the *China Environment Series*, Issue 8 (2006). This project was supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

- *Municipal Bonds*. This exchange in 2003 consisted of a series of training seminars in China and the United States for Chinese government officials to learn how U.S. cities use municipal bonds to fund environmental infrastructure. This project was supported by the U.S. EPA.

- *Environmental Activism and Journalism in Greater China*. The first major CEF exchange, which took place in Hong Kong in 2000, was the first (and still only) workshop to bring together Taiwanese,

Chinese, and Hong Kong environmental NGO activists and journalists to discuss the challenges of their work and to explore possible partnerships. The project produced a bilingual publication on green civil society and journalism in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan; and most importantly established CEF as a trusted partner and connection for China's green activists.

The Woodrow Wilson Center was established by Congress in 1968 as the official living memorial to President Woodrow Wilson. The Wilson Center is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan institute for advanced research and free debate on issues of foreign policy. Under the direction of the center's President, former Congressman Lee H. Hamilton, it is one of this nation's premier institutions of applied policy research and scholarship.

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