

Final report of the exchange

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To Peking University in China

The exchange to Peking University is a very interesting experience for me. There are several benefits of Peking University that is worth of addressing.

Research intelligence on environment issues:

College of Environment Science and Engineering and School of Marxism in Peking University are famous for their research in environment issues. Prof. Zhang Shiqiu and Prof. Huan Qingzhi offered very insightful advice on my research ideas. I have attended the colloquium of Prof. Zhang, and their research on environment economics is very fresh and interesting for me. I also talked to Prof. Huan during my research stay. He gave me very useful suggestions on the structure of the research.

Administrative support:

Department of International Cooperation helped me with administrative stuff. Mr. Huang Tao and Ms. Zhu Siying have provided with immediate and helpful administrative support.

Supportive Pekingers:

I also want to thank Jia Shenglan, Wang Qi, Ms. Sun Chongli and Yanwen, who are very helpful during my stay in Peking University. Library resources in Peking University, especially Chinese resources are abundant. National library in Peking has also lots of resources on my topic, but it's crowded at weekends. Nice food in Peking University canteens is unforgettable:)

I personally used a bicycle sharing system among Peking universities, OFO-bicycle, which is very user-friendly and cheap. Peking Nanguan Park and Olympic Park is also very nice place for visiting.

Peking is the political center of China, and is very troubled with air pollution, which have both cultivated public debate and political will on "combatting against pollution". As a metropolitan, Peking has very active research resources and discussion communities on environment issues. I would recommend BEER (Beijing Energy Network), Hongzhi Cafe, Yale Center in Peking, and UNEP Peking

for those who are interested in environment issues. They have regular open events for public. There are also many research institutes that are involved in environment, energy and climate research. Generally speaking, Peking is an ideal place for environment research, either as a case or a place for research.

My research for the short stay in Peking is about local communities and climate change at first. But I have broadened my research topic into “communities and environment protection”, because in local community level, practices on environment, energy and climate change are integrated as “environment issues”.

Before fieldwork, I find there is little literature on communities’ awareness or practice on climate mitigation or adaptation, except for the reports from NGOs that are involved in environment protection, such as Green Claw, Vantone foundation, ISC, etc. I would recommend starting with literature and then try to approach these communities by fieldwork.

Research on Chinese communities should also consider the differences between city community and rural community; rural communities have independent budget, while city communities are affiliated to sub-district office, city communities have to apply for budgets when implementing project.

During the research stay, I visited several communities in two cities, including two communities in Peking, a metropolitan, and two communities in Wuxi, a municipal in southeastern China.

Major findings:

- Environment initiatives in communities started with propaganda and education. It is since 2010s, there are real projects, such as LED, waste processor, and rain collection facilities in communities. There are two kinds of funding resources, NGOs and government budget.
- In city communities, the discourse of projects is about ecological, sustainable, modern, high-level, cutting-edge, harmonious, etc. Real estate is active on city community projects because nice environment helps increase real estate price and popularity.
- In rural communities, the rhetoric will connect with ecological tourism, ecological farming, healthy food, development etc.
- There are several NGOs that have started activities on city community environment issues; but most of them have low budget. NGOs are active in bringing new ideas, but public funding is necessary for delivering real results.
- In both city communities in Peking and Wuxi, there is common

ground that NGO initiate projects first, and the government and public funding will follow if NGO practice proves successful.

Fieldwork experience in Chinese communities:

- NGOs and academia is more willing to communicate and help, it would be very helpful if contacting the NGOs that have environment practice at community level at first.
- A proper self-introduction, well prepared questionnaire and the reference letter from Peking University is necessary (sometimes) and also helpful in getting contacts.
- Feel free to contact me (dongping.wang@fu-berlin.de) if you are also interested in community practice on sustainable development or Chinese cases.

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