

Greening China

News from Vermont Law School's Partnership for Environmental Law in China

SUMMER 2008

ADVANCING THE RULE OF LAW TO PROTECT CHINA'S ENVIRONMENT



From the Director

One of the main goals of Vermont Law School's Partnership for Environmental Law in China is to strengthen the capacity of the Chinese educational, governmental, nonprofit, and business sectors to become effective environmental and energy problem solvers. We have been making great strides toward that goal this summer. Six of our faculty members traveled to China in June to deliver a series of lectures and workshops to diverse audiences of students, scholars, judges, government officials and practicing lawyers. Four law students from China are spending the summer at VLS studying environmental and energy law. Three top environmental law scholars from China are also here for the summer, studying and researching current environmental issues. In the fall, three additional scholars from China will come to VLS for a year's residency. Two of them will commence the LLM in Environmental Law program at VLS. I am proud of our efforts to help train China's current and future environmental leaders. I hope you will enjoy reading about them.

—Tseming Yang

Professor of Law and Director
Partnership for Environmental
Law in China

Vermont Law School Faculty Visit China

A group of Vermont Law School professors spent two exciting and productive weeks in China in June, giving lectures and leading workshops on environmental and energy law. Over the course of their trip, the professors trained an estimated 200 scholars, lawyers, judges, government officials, and students.

The trip began with a series of lectures for students in Sun Yat-sen University's (SYSU) Juris Master program. Michael Dworkin, Mark Latham, Jingjing Liu, Marc Mihaly, and Tseming Yang discussed environmental litigation, energy law, environmental alternative dispute resolution, and air pollution control.

VLS faculty led two research and teaching workshops on pedagogy, curriculum issues, and research methodology for environmental law scholars. The Guangzhou workshop was cosponsored by SYSU, while the event in Beijing was cosponsored by the China University of Political Science and Law (CUPL). Both programs prompted lively intellectual engagement about the differences in teaching and scholarly involvement in public policy-making between China and the U.S. VLS presenters included Latham, Mihaly, Yang, and Carl Yirka. Other speakers included Wang Xi of Shanghai Jiatong University; Ben Boer of the University of Ottawa, the codirector of IUCN's Academy of Environmental Law; and Robert Percival of the University of Maryland, a Distinguished Fulbright Lecturer at CUPL.

Together with the Tsinghua University Center for Environmental, Natural Resources and Energy Law in Beijing, VLS cosponsored a roundtable for scholars, government officials, businesses, NGOs, and students on curriculum issues related to energy law. The discussions focused on the March 2008 superministry reform's impact on energy governance. Professor Xiao Qiangang of Zhengzhou University, Frederic Weston of the Regulatory Assistance Project, Yu Yanshan of the State Electric Regulatory Commission, and Dr. Yang Fuqiang of the Energy Foundation spoke. Dworkin and Mihaly also

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Participants in the Environmental Law and Practice Workshop at SYSU in Guangzhou

Chinese Students Study Environmental Law in Vermont



Enjoying the Burlington waterfront are (front) Yingjun Wu, (rear) Peipei Wang, Yiming Wang, and Fang Lei

Four law students from China spent the summer studying environmental law at VLS. The students—Yingjun Wu, Peipei Wang, and Yiming Wang from SYSU—and Fang Lei from CUPL, took an introductory environmental law course, followed by advanced seminars on topics ranging from energy and climate change to trade and the environment. The classes, taught by professors as well as practitioners, gave the students a thorough understanding of the most current issues in environmental and energy law. “Professional teachers, hot topics in the field of environmental law, real American life, and the nice people in South Royalton: all of these made a great impression during my study at VLS,” said Yingjun Wu. “I learned more than just textbook knowledge; I also gained an active attitude toward protecting the environment.”



Visiting scholars Danni Liang and Jingyun Li

Visiting Scholars: Jingyun Li, Zhiping Li, and Danni Liang

Professor Jingyun Li of Jiangxi Normal University Law School and Professor Zhiping Li, the leader of the environmental law program at SYSU, are spending the summer studying and taking classes at VLS.

Professor Danni Liang of SYSU recently finished a 5-month academic residency and returned to China. At VLS, she audited several courses, met with members of the VLS faculty to discuss law pedagogy, and engaged in research on trade and environment issues. She also gave several conference and workshop presentations, including at the World Resources Institute in Washington, DC.

The 2008–09 visiting scholars will be Professor Xu Wei of South China Agricultural University, Professor Jiuru Hou of China University of Political Science and Law, and Professor Qingjun Wang of Central China Normal University. Professor Wang has funding from the China Scholarship Council to support his academic residency.

VLS Students to Visit China

Eight students from Professor Tseming Yang's class, Environmental Law and Regulation in China, will spend a week in China this summer. After studying the tremendous environmental challenges for China's 1.3 billion people and the efforts to address them through law and regulation, the students will experience first-hand the environmental conditions there and meet with leading environmental activists and scholars. In addition, they will visit the Guangdong Provincial Supreme Court, and will explore the Guangdong province countryside to observe the environmental effects of China's rapid economic development. The highlight of the trip will be a visit to the Three Gorges Dam, the world's largest hydroelectric project, which spans the Yangtze River in Hubei.

VLS Faculty Visit China (cont'd from page 1)

gave presentations on energy law and related curriculum issues.

While the group was in Beijing, Michael Dworkin led a workshop on energy and the environment for State Electric Regulatory Commission officials. They discussed environmental dispatch and how to improve the environmental responsiveness of energy regulation.

The group's final workshop in China was for lawyers in Guangzhou, focusing on environmental law practice and the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Mihaly and Latham gave presentations on their private practice experiences. Dr. Zhou Hong of the Hua Xia Certification Center in Beijing provided an overview of the CDM and its implementation in China, while attorney Zeng Xiangtian discussed public interest environmental litigation in China. Attorney Rachel Chen of the

Kai Tong law firm described current issues and practice opportunities in the CDM.

The grand tour concluded with a visit to the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a tour of Hong Kong. Reflecting on the trip, Michael Dworkin said, "We met smart, open-minded, hard-working people struggling with one of history's greatest challenges: bringing one fifth of humanity out of rural poverty, without destroying the world we live in."



Michael Dworkin, Mark Latham, Jingjing Liu, and Marc Mihaly in Shanghai



Speakers and scholars at the Environmental Law Research and Teaching Workshop in Beijing

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