

Greening China

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

W I N T E R 2 0 0 8

ADVANCING THE RULE OF LAW TO PROTECT CHINA'S ENVIRONMENT



From the Director

This is our first quarterly newsletter, but it has already been a year and a half since we launched the Partnership for Environmental Law in China with Sun Yat-sen University. In that time we sponsored three major academic conferences on environmental and energy law issues in both China and Vermont; seven training workshops for government officials, judges, lawyers, and scholars; and a number of environmental and energy law-related seminars for law students and scholars. At Sun Yat-sen University, the partnership prompted the establishment of a new environmental and energy law research institute as well as an environmental law curriculum. For faculty and students at both institutions, it has created unique opportunities to contribute to the development of China's environmental law system as well as opportunities for new experiences and learning.

The environmental and energy challenges for China are great. But every journey is made up of individual steps.

—Tseming Yang

Professor of Law and Director
Partnership for Environmental Law
in China

Legal Developments Conference at Sun Yat-sen University Law School

Sun Yat-sen University (SYSU) in Guangzhou held a conference on Legal Developments at its law school in December 2007. Scholars from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and other parts of mainland China participated. The conference focused on intellectual property law, international trade law, and environmental law. Shuyi Wang, dean of Wuhan University Law School, gave the keynote address on the latest developments in environmental legislation in China. Jingjing Liu, the associate director of Vermont Law School's China program, gave a presentation on environmental alternative dispute resolution.



Legal Developments Conference attendees at Sun Yat-sen University

Study Group from China Attends Energy Workshop at Vermont Law School

Vermont Law School (VLS) hosted a seminar in December 2007 for a delegation of 17 officials from China's National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Finance, State Electric Regulatory Commission, the regional grid companies, and provincial economic and trade commissions. The delegation was participating in a study tour on energy demand side management issues. The workshop focused on energy efficiency, carbon trading, and U.S. climate change legislation. VLS faculty members Michael Dworkin, director of the Institute for Energy and the Environment; Mark Latham, associate professor; and Marc Mihaly, director of the Environmental Law Center, led the workshop. Jingjing Liu provided interpretation.



Xin Xia of China's National Development and Reform Commission and Professor Marc Mihaly discuss energy issues at Vermont Law School

Vermont Law School Dean Leads Seminar in Guangzhou

A group from Vermont Law School traveled to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong in December, 2007. President and Dean Jeff Shields, along with Director Tseming Yang, and Associate Director Jingjing Liu, delivered a series of presentations on U.S. environmental issues and met with representatives from a range of government agencies, universities, foundations, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses.

In Guangzhou, Shields led a seminar on "The Importance of Nonprofit Organizations to U.S. Environmental Efforts" for faculty and students at Sun Yat-sen University. Yang moderated a panel on the "Role of Civil



Vermont Law School's Dean Jeff Shields and Genie Shields with students and faculty from SYSU and VLS

(cont'd on page 2)



Professors Bo Jiao and Dejin Gu at the Vermont State Capital in Montpelier

Visiting Scholars: Dejin Gu and Bo Jiao

Two professors from Sun Yat-sen University School of Law spent academic residencies at VLS this year. Bo Jiao specializes in Western philosophy of law. She received her doctor of laws in jurisprudence from Renmin University of China and a master of laws in law theory from Jilin University. “The past five months at VLS were wonderful and very helpful,” Jiao said. “The diversity of courses offers an expansive and intensive study of environmental issues.”

Dejin Gu specializes in environmental law. He received his doctor of laws in international environmental law and a master of laws in environmental law from Wuhan University. Gu commented, “This semester contributed to strengthening and building upon the important partnership between VLS and SYSU, both of whose faculty are passionately devoted to supporting a green and sustainable future around the world.”

Program Director Tseming Yang noted, “Through the visiting scholar program, the VLS community is not only able to share American approaches and thinking about environmental regulation but is also enriched by the scholars’ knowledge and perspectives about the challenges of protecting the environment and public health in a developing nation.”

VLS Dean in Guangzhou (cont’d from page 1)

Society in Environmental Compliance and Enforcement” at the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network Conference in Beijing. Liu gave a presentation on environmental alternative dispute resolution at the Legal Developments Conference at SYSU.

“Vermont Law School is again on the cutting edge of global environmental issues, this time through an extraordinary program in China,” said Shields. “We are making a difference through our direct involvement with the Chinese Environmental Protection Administration and our education of hundreds of Chinese officials and lawyers.”

In Beijing, the VLS group met with U.S. Ambassador to China Clark T. Randt, as well as Pan Yue, the vice minister of China’s State Environmental Protection Administration, and representatives from the Asia Foundation, the Energy Foundation, the China Environmental Protection Foundation, the United Nations Development Program, the China University of Political Science and Law, Tsinghua University



Dean Jeff Shields with U.S. Ambassador to China Clark T. Randt

School of Law, the law firm of King & Wood, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

While in Guangzhou, the group met with SYSU administrators and with Bob Goldberg, U.S. Consul General in Guangzhou, and representatives from the American Chamber of Commerce in South China and South China Agricultural University School of Law. In Hong Kong, Shields met with representatives from Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP; Baker & McKenzie; ADM Capital Foundation; and Chinese University of Hong Kong School of Law.

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—Jeff Shields, VLS President and Dean

VLS and SYSU Faculty Make Presentation at Environmental Law Institute

In January, program director and Professor of Law Tseming Yang of VLS, along with SYSU Professors Bo Jiao and Dejin Gu, delivered a seminar in Washington, DC, at the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), an internationally recognized, nonpartisan, environmental law research and education center. They discussed issues related to improving environmental enforcement and regulatory effectiveness in China. Yang provided an overview of the challenges to making China’s environmental regulatory system more effective. Jiao discussed the Three Gorges Dam project in the context of China’s legal culture and Gu discussed options for improving the enforcement of China’s environmental laws. A link to the seminar can be found at www2.eli.org/seminars/event.cfm?eventid=395.

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