

Section VII Cross-Regional Civil Society Dialogue and Environmental Confidence Building

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² In addition to this environmental-secu-
rity, the U.S. State Department has also been

nate cross-strait dialogues and interaction. Aside from some nascent regional forums on environmental protection in Northeast Asia,⁵ at the governmental level Mainland China and Taiwan rarely cooperate on environmental issues. While there are some potential long-term environmental problems that will impact both (e.g., global climate change, fishery collapse, Mainland's acid rain problems impacting Taiwan), Taiwan and Mainland China are not facing any immediate pollution or natural resource conflict that could force them to negotiate an environmental agreement or undertake joint action. In short, there is not a strong catalyst for high-level cooperation on environmental issues in the Taiwan Straits.⁶

While there are no explosive ecological battles looming in the cross-strait region, the people in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong do face common environmental problems that stem from the rapid economic development in the region. Public opinion polls in each of the three areas cite environmental degradation, particularly air pollution, as one of the major threats to health and quality of life. Urban sprawl, groundwater



opportunity to examine how environmental NGOs and news reporting have emerged, operated, and mobilized in each society, what type of difficulties they are facing, and what kinds of advantages they each enjoy. Mutual understanding of their counterparts across the Straits lays a good foundation for future dialogues among these civil society organizations. While only a short amount of time has elapsed since the forum, the *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum* already has sparked some collaborative initiatives:

(1) *The Wild Bird Federation, Taiwan* began planning to help supply the *Black-necked Crane Association* at Zhaotong with telescopes to help with education activities among local farmers;

(2) The *Greenpeace-Hong Kong* office hosted a roundtable with the Taiwanese activists after the forum and explained the specifics on how to organize an on-line campaign against genetically modified (GM) food;

(3) The founder of the Taiwanese group *Society of Wilderness*, Hsu Jen-Shiu joined together with *GreenRiver*, a Sichuan-based NGO, to photograph the Jin Sha River in the summer of 2001. Those pictures

Green NGO and Journalist Forum Collage

