

Facility Siting with Chinese Characteristics?

An Inquiry into the Relationship between International Investors and Local Environmental NGOs

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Abstract: As China modernizes, its waste management capacities are put to a test. Faced by significant pressures to find a solution for growing municipal solid waste, China's authorities have embraced waste incineration technology as a seemingly cost-efficient alternative to landfills. Against this push, significant societal opposition against the construction of waste incinerators has been mounting. Yet while some incinerators attract collective resistance, others do not. The Nangong Incinerator, planned for construction in Beijing's Daxing district, has remained relatively free from controversy. Simultaneously, it is markedly different from other incinerators in the capital due to the involvement of an international investor. Based on an intrinsic single case study, the present thesis investigates this puzzling phenomenon by examining the relationship between a group of local environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) and the German state-owned development bank *Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau*. In the course of the analysis, it is suggested that (1) the relation between international actors and local ENGOS is marked by initial optimism but deteriorates fast due to excessive expectations, (2) local ENGOS act as "policy entrepreneurs" in seeking to co-opt the international actor in the struggle for grander environmental concerns, (3) communication between the two parties represents a competition over narratives, and (4) while the relation between local ENGOS and international actors is complicated by limited action action, it has potential to be an axis of de-escalation in siting controversies.

Keywords: facility siting, environmental politics, Fragmented Authoritarianism, Nangong waste incinerator, China, NIMBY

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List of Abbreviations

BMCCAE	Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment
BMEDI	Beijing Municipal Engineering Design and Research Institute
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organization
EPB	Environmental Protection Bureau
FA	Fragmented Authoritarianism
FON	Friends of Nature
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTAI	Germany Trade and Invest
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
LULU	Locally Unwanted Land Uses
MSW	Municipal Solid Waste
NIMBY	Not In My BackYard
PX	Paraxylene
SGFCF	Sino-German Financial Cooperation Framework
WTE	Waste-to-Energy

1. Introduction

As China modernizes, its waste management capacities are put to a test. Having long overtaken the USA as the biggest producer of municipal solid waste resulting from the twin processes of industrialization and urbanization, China's leaders are faced with an ever-increasing amount of waste to be managed (Qian, 2009).

In the search for alternatives to currently dominating landfills, authorities have increasingly looked towards waste incineration as a cost-efficient, environment-friendly waste management strategy (Yu, 2011) .

Yet despite the potential advantages of incineration technology, their operation has come under significant scrutiny by environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) and concerned citizens. Fearing adverse health and environmental effects, strong societal opposition has emerged against poor operational management, lacking official supervision and weak enforcement of existing legal provisions (Johnson, 2013).

Nowhere is the clash between rising siting pressures and local opposition more visible than in Beijing, where the local government announced plans to construct several waste incinerators within the period of the 11th and 12th Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of Beijing. All projects caused significant controversies and attracted several independent anti-incineration campaigns, some of which have been successful in preventing the construction (Liulitun) while others have not (Gaoantun) (Ibid.).

One of Beijing's planned incinerators, designated for construction in Nangong, Daxing district, is markedly different from the other projects due to the involvement of an international actor in the financing and monitoring process. While the Nangong incinerator attracted the first Chinese anti-incineration campaign directly targeting a foreign investment bank between the announcement of the project in 2010 and the finalization of its planning process in 2013, societal opposition has remained weak.

This puzzling feature – international investment accompanied by the simultaneous absence of opposition – forms the research problem which will be investigated by

examining the interaction between international stakeholders and Chinese ENGOs amidst siting pressures for authorities on the one hand, and growing political space for civil society actors in China on the other.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The outlined research problem will be addressed by asking the following research question about the Nangong waste incinerator in Daxing, Beijing, China:

How do ENGOs and international actors interact in Chinese siting processes?

Furthermore, the thesis will be guided by the following sub-question:

Does international involvement represent a potential solution to siting controversies?

1.2 RESEARCH AIM

In answering these questions, this thesis attempts to add context-dependent knowledge to existing discussions about facility siting in China. Specifically, the thesis aims to contribute to siting discussions on structurally conducive or preventive factors in the development of conflict by examining the dynamics and practices of ENGO-investor relations. This will be achieved through an intrinsic single case study based on qualitative primary and secondary data. Due to the unexplored nature of the subject, this thesis draws heavily upon previous research on facility siting and environmental governance in China while grounding its analysis in Kenneth Lieberthal and Andrew Mertha's *Fragmented Authoritarianism*.

1.3 DELIMITATION

As of the publication of this thesis, the project had finalized planning. Hence, the analysis focuses on investigating the relationship between international actors and environmental NGOs as a potential solution to siting conflicts in the time period between announcement (2010) and planning finalization (2013).

As will be articulated in the body of this thesis, siting processes are inherently multidimensional and complex. Constrained by limited access to both state actors and local residents, this thesis neglects the decision-processes leading to the geographical allocation of the project, the relations between Chinese state actors and the international investor, and local community resistance.

1.4 DISPOSITION

Following the introduction into this research project, chapter 2 justifies the present thesis by identifying a knowledge gap in current research, and outlines aspired contributions to scholarly debates. Subsequently, chapter 3 deals with the methodological approach on how to this contribution will be achieved. Ensuing, chapter 4 consists of the development of three analytical propositions by discussing Fragmented Authoritarianism. These propositions form the anchor against which the collected data will be analyzed in chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses the implications of the findings, briefly explores rival explanations and suggests further research. This thesis concludes in chapter 7.

2. Literature Review

Siting issues have received considerable exposure in the literature. However, scholarly work has for a large part, albeit not exclusively, considered siting processes in industrialized democracies. Academic discussions of siting in emerging economies and non-liberal systems remain limited. This thesis attempts to address this knowledge gap through empirical work on Chinese siting processes.

2.1 SITING AS A POLICY ISSUE

Siting facilities is a policy problem faced by governments throughout the world. Confronted with the necessity to meet a population's demands for public and human services, bureaucrats have to make decisions on where to construct facilities which are beneficial for a common population, but impose real or perceived risks on local communities (Schively, 2007). In the absence of academic consensus, various theories on how these locally unwanted land uses (LULUs) are geographically allocated within a

nation's territory span technocratic/physical criteria, partisan discrimination (Ramseyer & Rosenbluth, 1993), environmental racism (Pastor, Sadd, & Hipp, 2001), economic blessing (Mohai & Bryant, 1992) and civil society concentration (Aldrich, 2008; Quah & Tan, 2002).

Regardless of a site's location, LULUs often attract opposition from local communities whose manifold concerns include, but are not limited to health risks, declining property value, quality of life impairment due to odors, noise, etc. and environmental hazards (Schively, 2007). Occurring under conditions of sufficient levels of political opportunity and resource availability (Flam, 1994), this type of opposition, aimed at keeping a proposed facility out of one's home community, has frequently been referred to as NIMBY (not in my backyard). The constantly negotiated, value-laden acronym¹ is often associated with selfish, irrational opposition to projects deemed necessary for the public good, potentially passing on harmful projects to poorer, less organized communities². In contrast, NIMBY-protests can also be valued as a rational response to actual or perceived risk, compelling decision-makers to incorporate public opinion into facility siting decisions (Takahashi & Dear, 1997), forcing changes "in how society as a whole chooses and manages certain technologies" (Piller, 1991, p. 170), and being "a triumph of Western democracy, as virtuous citizens band together in search of political and environmental justice and usher in an era of 'ecodemocracy'" (Rabe, 1994, p. 2).

States respond to these oppositions with a variety of regulatory, market-based and voluntary approaches in which concrete risk-mitigating instruments such as compensation, risk communication, consensus building, empowerment of impact bearers, and institutional mechanisms are employed (Lesbirel & Shaw, 2005, p. 4; Schively, 2007, p. 260 f.). Revolving around the "perceived value of projects to developers and community interests" (Lesbirel & Shaw, 2005, p. 2), these tools are used to reshuffle risks for developers (uncertainty over capital cost escalations due to inflation and interest repayment burdens), public authorities (wary of NIMBY gridlock, the state in which a

¹ For an excellent discussion of the persistence of NIMBY, see Wolsink (2006).

² For instance, the widely publicized protests against a paraxylene plant in Xiamen, China, ultimately forced the relocation of the project into the less wealthy and less organized Zhangzhou area.

project fails because on community accepts it), and communities (fearing adverse environmental, social and economic impacts) (Lesbirel and Shaw, 2005).

2.2 SITING IN THE LITERATURE

In investigating these complex issues, facility siting studies reflect the “effort of social scientists in producing knowledge by seeking to account for issues, processes and outcomes involved in the siting of a wide range of facilities” (Lesbirel, 2007, p. 4). Displaying widely differing ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives, the literature has evolved significantly since its infancy in the 1970s when discussions were almost exclusively confined to North America. From seeing siting as a policy issue which could be approached by using state-centered coercive and technological approaches³ (see Padgett, 1993; Schively, 2007) to acknowledging the complex political and social dimensions of the problem and witnessing “the end of American Technological Optimism” (Piller, 1991), the literature made a paradigmatic shift by including crucial variables such as risk (Kunreuther, Fitzgerald, & Aarts, 1993), trust (Kasperson, Golding & Tuler, 1992), perceptions (of impacts, participants and the siting process itself; see Schively, 2007, pp. 257-259), and legitimacy into the siting equation.

This contextual expansion has occurred parallel to a geographical expansion. Following intensifying NIMBY-occurrences within its borders, both Europe and Japan (see Kawashima, 2000, & Aldrich, 2008) were incorporated into the literature’s focus. Pursuant, NIMBY-controversies in rapidly developing Taiwan (see Hsu, 2006), South Korea and Hong Kong⁴ increased in number due to high population densities and rising siting pressures, and subsequently attracted considerable academic attention (Lesbirel &

³ Much of it can be summarized by the then-dominant DAD-approach to siting (decide, announce, defend).

⁴ See the proceedings of the “International Conference on The Siting of Locally Unwanted Facilities: Challenges and Issues”, organized by the Chinese University of Hong Kong here: http://ceprm.grm.cuhk.edu.hk/LULU/Publications/CUHK_Proceedings.pdf

Shaw, 2000). Recently, the literature has seen attempts of being transformed into a truly international level.⁵

Notwithstanding considerable progress, these scholarly debates remain particularly limited with regard to siting processes in emerging economies and authoritarian systems, as most of the knowledge production has been achieved through empirical and theoretical work on liberal, industrialized democracies. China, in this regard, is no different.

2.3 SITING IN CHINA

While casual empiricism suggests a growing power and frequency of local opposition to unwanted facilities in China which has led some analysts to assume “the rise of the Chinese NIMBY” (Zheng, 2011), reminders of the state’s capacity in preventing protests and backlashing once initial turmoil has calmed remain vivid and numerous. Among others, controversial projects such as the Xiamen, Dalian and Ningbo PX plants, the Nujiang dam cascade, the Panyu (Guangzhou) and Liulitun (Beijing) waste incinerators, the Shifang copper smelter, or the Qidong wastewater pipeline have caused significant local opposition and subsequently drew both media and academic attention, as well as strong state responses. Scholarly inquiries into Chinese siting issues focus on technological solutions (Deng, Yu, & Liu, 2011; Wang, Li, Qin & Chen, 2009), identify a rising environmental awareness in the Chinese population (Thibaut, 2011, p. 142), reveal a growing, yet largely ineffective set of protesting tools for individuals (Cai, 2008, p. 110; Lai, 2010, p. 829 ff.), sketch the fragmented and localized nature of these protests (Hess, 2011, p. 56), and emphasize the crucial role of intermediaries and protest leaders in environmental protests (van Rooij, 2010, p. 57).

Focusing on waste management issues, Johnson (2013) correspondingly concludes that “scholarly understandings of municipal solid waste management (MSWM) controversies are almost exclusively confined to cases from advanced industrialized democracies (p. 110). While the MSWM framework is rapidly improving, challenges remain particularly

⁵ Lesbirel and Shaw’s co-edited volume on “Managing Conflict in Facility Siting: An International Comparison” (2005), as well as Fung, Lesbirel & Lam’s edited volume on “Facility siting in the Asia-Pacific: perspectives on knowledge production and application” (2011) represent welcomed efforts to develop siting literature into a global one.

with regard to implementation processes (Chen, Geng & Fujita, 2010). The positive role of participatory communities vis-à-vis a lacking state willingness of accommodating civil society demands is emphasized (Li, Liu & Li, 2012), while the tactics, dynamics and natures of different anti-incineration campaigns in China have been signified as revealing the limitations of top-down policy (Lang & Xu, 2013; Johnson, 2013).

2.4 THESIS CONTRIBUTIONS

The production of knowledge in Western contexts does not render scholarly progress obsolete. In contrast, I see fertile ground for the inclusion of established variables and correlations into the study of siting processes in emerging and authoritarian systems. Nonetheless, certain accomplishments of siting discussions might not be applicable and warrant context-specific inquiries. As Lesbirel (2005) assumes, “in democratic countries, communities are generally powerful enough to delay or stop the development of projects that they perceive to be risky” (p. 4). Is the same claim, by extension, false for non-democratic systems? Against this background, Morell and Magorian’s conclusion that governments are able to “strip away at the legal power of communities, but they cannot strip away their political power” (as cited in Lesbirel & Shaw, 2005, p. 8-9) might not hold for non-liberal systems.

Current knowledge of siting processes in China is thoroughly incomplete, particularly with regard to MSWM challenges and the role of international actors. Consequently, there is a need to amend existing research on facility siting by supplementing it with contextual, empirical work into Chinese siting processes. I thus concur with Lesbirel’s (2007) conclusion that “while the siting literature can offer and has provided useful insights, the challenge will be to build on all these achievements by addressing several theoretical and empirical shortcomings in ways which seek to enhance its utility to practitioners” (p. 15) This thesis sees its contribution in addressing the latter challenge by conducting empirical work on the changing nature of environmental campaigns in the wake of international actor involvement, based on an analytical framework capturing the Chinese policy process, all the while relating it back to existent knowledge on facility siting.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the critical realist meta-theoretical foundation of this study, motivates a qualitative approach and single case study design, and discusses relevant evaluation criteria. Before concluding this chapter with an outline of ethical issues, a brief reflection of the research process will be offered.

3.1 CRITICAL REALISM

Ontological assumptions influence epistemological, theoretical and methodological approaches, necessitating transparent meta-theoretical statements (Moses & Knutsen, 2007). My research takes its ontological point of departure in critical realism, which criticizes Popperian predictive validity statements for being generated in experimental “closed systems” who escape the researcher’s availability in the social sciences (Bhaskar, 1978, p. 69 ff.). Critical realism further challenges other research philosophies for a perceived “epistemic fallacy”, defined as the reduction of ontology – the domain of being – to epistemology, the realm of knowing. By assuming the existence of some “subjective” domains of truth outside scholarly accessibility, empiricism and positivism are governed by an epistemic superiority which claims all things accessible as objective, while all things inaccessible remain subjective (Fopp, 2008). In contrast, critical realism advocates a shift from a perceived anthropocentric epistemology to a governing ontology. Assuming both a real physical and a real social world existing as independent phenomena which are impossibly reduced to human knowledge constructions, critical realism views the social world as existing in dependence on human action, while the physical world does so independently (Bhaskar, 1978; Bhaskar, 1998).

Critical realism parts from positivism in rejecting truth as being observable via the establishment of predictive patterns by problematizing research not distinguishing between causality and correlation. In contrast, it shares much common ground with social constructionist ideas, and diverges clearly only with radical, early Latourian denials of the existence of underlying structures and subsequent assumptions of structures as results of generative, hence constructive practices of researchers (Latour & Woolgar, 1989).

Correspondingly, critical realism assumes theories to represent an act of *formalization* of structures, whereas social constructionism postulates the *generation* of theories. Lastly, critical realism emphasizes empirical replication (Bhaskar, 1978, p. 14) which constructionism does not. However, both “weak constructionism” and critical realism assume a real world, which for the former is accessible via language, whereas the latter depends on science and scientific theories. As such, the most crucial difference lies in its epistemological assumptions.

Critical realism deconstructs reality into the “empirical” (the observable), the “actual” (things independently transpiring outside researcher’s ideas), and the “real” (mechanisms that produce surface phenomena). Scientific activities, which are a social construction⁶ in contrast to the mechanisms under study (Bhaskar, 1998, p. xii), assume a generalizing task and should be keen on identifying the “real” by exploring the relationship between what we experience, what actually happens, and how these events are produced (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, 39 ff.). According to critical realism, social research seeks abstraction, understood as penetration of surface phenomena to disclose the “real” by focusing on some things while others remain in the (momentarily) neglected background (Lawson, 1997, p. 227; Fairclough, 1995). To reach abstraction, critical realism advocates, among others, the use of pathological cases (Danermark, Ekstrom & Jacobsen, 2002), which this thesis adheres to.

3.1.1 Thesis Implications

Critical realism subsumes an affinity towards qualitative methods and an interest in synthesis and context, both of which will be addressed through the production of context-dependent knowledge and the communication of findings in this thesis.

According to critical realism, reality can be represented by scholarly work through a process of abstraction. To reach abstraction, critical realism advocates, among others, pathological case inquiries (Danermark et. al., 1997, p. 158 ff.). As will be outlined in subsequent sections, this research adopts a case study design through which a siting

⁶ In critical realism, social constructions (such as discourses and scientific work) are not “less real” than the natural world since they reflect an objective reality and have real consequences.

process which was conceptualized as a “model case” will be inquired. Additionally, the case features the involvement of an international stakeholder as financier, caused the first anti-incineration campaign directly targeting a foreign investment bank in contemporary China, and has not caused strong social resistance while three other incinerators in the same city have. Accordingly, I deem the case to be of pathological nature.

Critical realism implies ontological certainty with epistemological uncertainty. While the philosophy adheres to the notion of human-related things being socially constructed⁷, these constructions are no less real than mind-independent realities (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 26). Accordingly, preconceived notions and values of the researcher are recognized as crucial elements in the collection, formalization and communication process of this research. Nonetheless, they do not present confounding obstacles due to the transparent communication of research strategies and outcomes. While the outcomes of this research cannot lay conclusive claim to revealing the “real”, generated findings may nonetheless contribute to a “deeper understanding of contextual tendencies“ (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 41).

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

In this sub-section, a justification for the adoption of a qualitative approach and a single case study design will be offered.

3.2.1 Qualitative Approach

Attributable to different facilities involved, diverging participants and interests, as well as varying characterizations of NIMBY and LULU phenomena, siting processes are inherently complex (Schively, 2007, p. 256). Additionally, as argued in chapter 2, facility siting in China remains heavily under-researched. In order to gain entry into these contextualized and complex types of phenomena, Schroder, Drotner, Kline & Murray (2003) recommend the use of qualitative methods. This is largely due to qualitative data having several advantages over quantitative data, which Graebner, Martin & Roundy

⁷ For a compelling argument of scientific knowledge as discursively constructed, see Jørgensen and Phillips (2002, p.175).

(2012) frame as *open-ended, concrete and vivid, and rich and nuanced* (p. 278). Hence, the nature of qualitative data appears suitable to satisfy critical realism's interest in contextual relations.

3.2.2 Case Study

Yin (1994) deems case studies to be a manifestation of a qualitative approach, which is appropriate for inquiries into a “contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when (2) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and (3) in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (p. 13). Affording researchers the use of several data sources which supplement and cross-reference each other in a process of triangulation enables reaching a holistic understanding of a studied phenomenon. Ideally, the data yielded through various collection methods displays a significant breadth and rich resource for the analysis (Creswell, 2007; Silverman, 2010). In addition, case studies are judged an appropriate strategy when the research issue is extreme, unique, or can reveal something special (Rowley, 2002), similar to critical realism's suggestion to investigate pathological cases.

While cases studies and qualitative methods are frequently associated with an inductive approach in the “development of ‘more structured’ tools that are necessary in surveys and experiments” (Rowley, 2002, p. 16), inductive studies more often than not feature deductive elements such as the use of constructs, propositions and theoretical concepts deduced from existing literature (Denis, Lamothe & Langley, 2001). This thesis represents a work of induction while being based on the deductive element of a theoretically-informed analytical framework.

In Stake's terminology, the style of the study represents an *intrinsic* case study, which is signified by inquiring a unique situation (international actor involvement/absence of resistance) with limited transferability (seeking to generate context-dependent knowledge) (1995).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The present thesis design represents an inductive single case study. Since cases represent “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 25), researchers do well in “binding” their case by time and place (Creswell, 2003), time and activity (Stake, 1995), or definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This thesis adopts Miles & Huberman’s suggestion, examining the siting process of the Nangong incinerator from announcement (2010) to planning finalization (2013) with a particular focus on ENGO-investor relations, while neglecting state actors and local residents. This unique perspective of the siting process takes into account the evident lessons from various siting controversies in the past: frequently, a siting process is *not* complete with the decision for a project’s location due to societal opposition occasionally forcing the project to be relocated or entirely abandoned. The single case study method has been adopted due to time and access constraints, as well as Eysenck’s (1976) recommendation that “sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases—not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something” (p. 9).

3.3.1 Case Selection

Strategically selecting the “right” case for the study is imperative. Flyvbjerg urges researchers to choose atypical/extreme cases (as does critical realism) based on their respective richness in information, adding that these cases activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied (2006). Following Flyvbjerg’s suggestion of information-oriented selection, the Nangong case was identified due to both the international finance of the project, the subsequent campaign directly targeting the investor, and the puzzling absence of social resistance in Nangong compared to other waste incinerators in Beijing which all caused strong social opposition.

3.3.2 Propositions

Both Yin (1994) and Stake (1995) suggest that propositions⁸ are necessary elements in case study research in that both lead to the development of a conceptual framework that guides the research, limit the scope of inquiry, and suggests possible links between phenomena. Based on a speculative reading of existing literature, I correspondingly develop propositions grounded in Fragmented Authoritarianism in chapter 4.

3.3.3 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data was collected in a three-stage process. Firstly, I reviewed scholarly literature on facility siting and environmental politics in China to achieve a preliminary understanding of my research topic. Secondly, I carried out field research in Beijing, China from March 4th, 2013 until April 8th, 2013 during which I conducted two semi-structured interviews with two key leaders of the campaign against the Nangong incinerator in their respective offices as well as obtaining the partially unpublished correspondence between the campaign-leading NGO and the German state-owned development bank KfW. Interviewees were chosen via purposive sampling and according to English language capabilities. The semi-structured approach was employed to structure the conversation enough to stay on topic while allowing space for interviewees to voice own interpretations and ideas (Bryman, 2004, p. 321). Thirdly, I cross-referenced generated data with policy papers, newspaper articles and scholarly literature to contextualize relevant findings, and conducted a phone interview with the KfW's project manager.

3.3.4 Reporting the Analysis

In summarizing main findings, one may lose the “rich ambiguity” of a problem (Nietzsche as cited in Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 273). and the “very value of the case study, the contextual and interpenetrating nature of forces [...] when one tries to sum up in large and mutually exclusive concepts” (2001, p. 260). In circumventing fashion, the analysis

⁸ Stake (1995) refers to propositions as “issues”, though he essentially means the same construct.

will be structured as an analytical narrative around previously established propositions to convey both the “complexities and contradictions of real life” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 237).

3.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

A primary objective of the vast majority of academic endeavors is a high degree of validity, generalizability, and reliability – both in the natural and social sciences. Yet while research in the natural sciences can artificially create experimental conditions to achieve high-confidence cause-and-effect relationships, the social sciences have little options to control extraneous and confounding variables. This section details steps taken to ensure validity and reliability as prescribed by Yin (2003, p. 34).

3.4.1 Construct Validity

Construct validity reflects the suitability of both the instruments to study a certain object of academic inquiry, as well as the object itself to reveal the reality of the research focus (Yin, 2003, p. 35). An integral strategy to attain these goals is to remain flexible with regard to topic and method selection and use different data sources. Both triangulation of various data sources (interviews, documents, news sources) and several shifts in research focus have occurred during the research process. In this regard, a presentation of an earlier draft of this thesis at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies at Copenhagen University has led to significant changes. Hence, the interaction with fellow scholars, colleagues and interview subjects has been instrumental with regard to identifying both feasible and rewarding research areas.

3.4.2 External Validity

This thesis modestly aims to contribute context-dependent knowledge to siting discussions in China through a single case study, which, according to Flyvbjerg (2006), is “especially well-suited to produce this knowledge” (p. 229). Bryman (2008) and Creswell (2007) share Flyvbjerg’s notion in viewing the facilitation of a better understanding of complex interactions in specific settings as legitimate academic endeavors. Nonetheless, the thesis lays claim to its findings being of value for other

situations, and intends to reach confidence in its findings through high degrees of rigour, transparency and explicitness.

3.4.3 Reliability

Reliability approximates the possibility of repeating the study while obtaining the same results. Referring to an analogy of math exams being focused not only on results but on how a student arrived there, Holliday (2002) asserts that “the rigor in qualitative research is in the principled development of strategy to suit the scenario being studied” (p. 8). In seeking a maximum amount of transparency, explicitness and rigor, I hope to present readers with a solid opportunity to judge the dependability of the present thesis. It is nonetheless speculated that senior researchers with official affiliations and Chinese language proficiency could have nuanced the study’s outcome through the inclusion of government voices, but more importantly community perspectives.

3.5 REFLECTIONS

According to Yin, researchers should “continually discuss their research design and interpretations with colleagues in order to guard against error and bias” (as cited in Bailey, 1992, p. 52). Subsequently, this research has been discussed both with scholars from Peking University and Lund University, students at Lund University and Copenhagen University, and with scholars from the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies. Comments received have been imperative and change-inducing for the current study’s design.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Following Swedish research regulations, an informed consent form⁹ was presented to interviewees prior to conducting an interview. After encouraging respondents to carefully read the form, a signature was collected to demonstrate the respondents’ willingness to participate in the study. It was made clear that at any point during the interview, the recorder which was used to allow for accurate replication of written words could be

⁹ See Annex.

turned off. Anonymity was guaranteed at any time during the research process. Immediately after an interview, a transcription occurred (during the phone interview with the KfW's project manager, extensive notes were taken). Any information which could be used to identify respondents has been omitted on the recording, the transcript and the thesis.

4. Analytical Framework: Fragmented Authoritarianism

This chapter features the development of analytical propositions based on Fragmented Authoritarianism (FA). At its core, FA (Lieberthal, 1992; Mertha, 2008, 2009) subsumes the following assumptions: reflecting an increasing pluralization of the Chinese policy process, political spaces have emerged in China's polity as a result of institutional decentralization processes and the empowerment of sub-central administrative units. Primarily at the implementation level, these spaces are occupied by actors previously excluded from the policy process who engage in bargaining processes with bureaucratic units and influence politics from the bottom-up. As policy entrepreneurs, these actors frame and re-frame issues in order to advance own ideas and interests.

The motivation for adopting this model capturing the Chinese policy process is two-fold: firstly, "siting is a significant *policy issue*" (Lesbirel, 2007, p.3, own emphasis), necessitating a policy-inquiring approach. Secondly, pursuant to my argument of supplementing siting debates with contextual inquiries into local siting realities as voiced in chapter 2, the model is distinctly "Chinese" in describing the changing dynamics of political decision-making in contemporary China.

4.1 THE EMERGENCE OF OPPORTUNITIES

Fragmented Authoritarianism takes its point of departure in the initiation of economic reforms in China during the late 1970s. As a result of these wide-scale changes, administrative responsibilities and budgetary authorities were partially transferred from central to provincial and local levels. Entailing both rising opportunities and challenges for bureaucratic sub-units to develop and defend political capital in the form of budget-

generating capacities, this institutional decentralization allowed bureaucratic sub-units to use resources (e.g. industrial bases) and authorities as political capital in informal negotiations between different-level bureaucratic actors (Bachman, 1992, p. 1057). The resulting transformation of previously passive bureaucratic actors into active participants of the Chinese policy process, along with the accompanying phenomenon of authority overlaps between vertical (*tiao*) and horizontal (*kuai*) lines of bureaucratic authority (such as regional environmental protection bureaus vis-à-vis local governments) has been deemed a causal mechanism between structural conflict and political change (Tsai, 2006, p. 121). Henceforth, the formerly one-directional, top-down Chinese policy process shifted towards enabling bureaucratic actors to influence policies from the bottom-up.

This was particularly evident at the implementation level, as Balme (2011) argues in his study on China's response to climate change: causally relating China's increased institutional complexity and multi-directional policy process with having created an "implementation gap", the central leadership became increasingly constrained in their control over local political entities, thereby fostering acceptance of relatively critical media coverage of environmental problems (p. 51 f.). While these developments increased the complexity of the institutional system, they nonetheless represented an opportunity for cooperative policy results by aggregating diverging interests into a cohesive whole (Ibid.). Against this background, Rock (2002) argues that institutional gaps at the implementation level have enabled environmental considerations to be integrated into industrial policy proposals based on bottom-up initiatives (p. 1441). This perspective is shared by Lema & Ruby in their analysis of the Chinese wind industry (2007), in which the authors credit increasing political pluralization with having enabled the evolution of a healthy incentive environment, encompassing market regulations and effective policy coordination (p. 3884 ff.). As Mertha (2009) concludes, "outcomes are shaped by the incorporation of interests of the implementation agencies into the policy itself" (p.996).

Formerly a closed system, these changes in China's institutional structure in combination with growing civil liberties afforded previously excluded actors "a key resource

necessary to compete [...] within the policy process: the existence of the *spaces*” necessary for them to operate without being snuffed out by the coercive apparatus of the state” (Mertha, 2009, p. 996-997, own emphasis).

These spaces, a key concept of FA, could effectively be occupied by local bureaucratic actors. Using these spaces, however, was not limited to merely implementing established policies differently. Rather, local actors found themselves in a situation where policies could not just be changed or vetoed, but also initiated. Hammond’s (2011) study of social security systems in Shanghai, for instance, recognizes bureaucratic actors as responding to institutional spaces with the initiation of innovative policies (p. 82, 86 ff.).

Occupying these spaces gave rise not only to successful policy innovation, but also vetoing and – in the eyes of the central leadership – misinterpretation of implementation directives (Ibid., p. 71). Nonetheless, the relative gain in power for administrative sub-units vis-à-vis the central leadership remained limited as the latter continues to control key competencies such as the issuing of policy blueprints and having an information advantage, particularly with regard to infrastructural projects (Naughton as cited in Lieberthal, 1992, p. 12).

Notwithstanding these differences between central leadership and bureaucratic sub-units, the emergence of spaces as a result of fissures in China’s polity have enabled varying actors to compete for and against policies.

Competing for these policies, and in contrast to the late Mao-period when bureaucratic appeals and the articulation of regional interests were both problematic due to potential political scrutiny and insensible due to the Cultural Revolution’s disruption of available resources (Bachman, 1992, p. 1057), actors responding to emerging fissures in China’s polity have increasingly been shaped by bargaining as the dominant means of reaching decisions. While this is true for most political systems, it is particularly pronounced in the Chinese policy process: most visible when material resources are concerned (Lieberthal, 1992, p. 17 f.), as indicated by the comparatively little ratio of bargaining in non-economic sectors (Ibid.), informal bargaining processes increase in scope and magnitude

due to absent political opposition and on-going problems with the rule of law (Bachman, 1992, p. 1057 f.), and occur in the aforementioned spaces.

Furthermore, the paradigmatic shift away from communication and implementation mechanisms such as mass mobilizations, ideological campaigns and wide-spread repression has resulted in a loss of political instruments for the central leadership's bureaucratic governance, and by extension reinforced the necessity to engage in bargaining with sub-units (Ibid., p. 1058).

Conceptualizing China's jurisdiction as a multi-directional, multi-arena system, Tanner (1994) finds evidence of bargaining behavior in the form of content change, watering down, and redefinition not only at the local/provincial level, but also between party center, state council and national people congresses (p. 383 f.). Likewise, Lampton (1992) deems bargaining to be the dominant form of authority relationship in China, having remained "a key feature of the system" after 1989 and growing in importance (p. 34). Nonetheless, the system's growing institutionalization has been judged by some scholars as a main factor conducive to regime resiliency (Nathan, 2003).

4.1.1 Analytical Proposition I

Based on an increasingly decentralized institutional structure, new opportunities have emerged for members of China's bureaucracy. Through bargaining processes, interests are weighed against each other and have led to increasing bottom-up dynamics in the Chinese policy process.

With respect to my analysis, I transform these notions into the first analytical proposition which shall be called "The Emergence of Opportunities".

4.2 POLICY ENTREPRENEURS

While Lieberthal limited his analysis of bargaining actors to members of the bureaucracy *within* China's polity, Mertha responded to large-scale administrative reforms in 1998 and growing social activism and protests by extending the original theoretical model with the introduction of the concepts of *policy entrepreneurs* and *issue framing*.

With domestic and foreign policy processes being shaped by various actors, Mertha (2009) asserts that policy entrepreneurs occupy emergent spaces in China's policy process in order to promote own agendas in the hope for future returns (p. 997). Previously excluded, they range from actors within the polity (disgruntled officials using their political cover to advance institutional interests and discard notions of being obsolete in times of administrative downsizing), semi-state institutions (a media shaped by increasing budgetary freedom implying a dependence on higher advertisement revenues through increased circulation figures, and thus progressive reporting), to civil society organizations (NGOs often staffed by media-experienced personnel owing to the two sectors responding to the same fragmented authoritarian system (Yang, 2005), as well as individual citizens pursuing individual goals through mobilizing coalitions (Mertha, 2009, p. 997).

In a study on housing policy in Guizhou province, Zhu (2012) emphasizes the role of individuals in local policy innovation. Largely depending upon the generation of a coalition through framing the issue and mobilizing support, a single local official successfully influenced local policy innovation (p. 197). The study also highlighted a key aspect of policy entrepreneurs' motivations, i.e. the primary intention not being to simply resist and prevent policies, but to "contribute to a recasting [of the policy] that takes their considerations into account" (Mertha, 2008, p. 155).

4.2.1 Analytical Proposition II

Policy entrepreneurs are thus active members of the Chinese policy process, assume plethoric existences, and seek wide-spread changes to existing policy. The analytical proposition shall simply be called "Policy Entrepreneurs".

4.3 ISSUE FRAMING

Despite the intrusion of new actors into the political arena, policy entrepreneurs operate in an authoritarian environment from the inside, seldom with external support. Henceforth, they are constrained in their available means of action. While the state remains advantaged concerning access to information and communications infrastructure

(Stockmann & Gallagher, 2011, p. 441 f.), it has lost its monopoly on framing issues and the dispersion of narratives due to the advent of new communication technology, transforming formerly one-directional information flows into a multi-dimensional communication (Diamond, 2010, p. 69-72; Esary & Qiang, 2011, p. 300 ff.) and a media catering to various audiences (Nathan, 2003, p. 12).

Notwithstanding the state's adaptive capabilities in responding to these challenges (King, Pan & Roberts, 2012, p. 29), this has enabled policy entrepreneurs to adopt a strategy of *issue framing* through *articulation* and *amplification*. Constantly renegotiating red lines, they are active in articulating existing problems (and thus influencing the problem definition level of the policy process), re-framing existing narratives (e.g. through the use of homophones such as “strolls” for protest and “river crab” for harmonious”), and amplifying issues through the dissection of existing official narratives and creation of competing counter-narratives (Mertha, 2009, p. 998). Most significantly, the act of issue framing not only impacts agreed policies in the implementation process, but “expands the sphere of political conflict” into the policy-making domain (Schattschneider as cited in Mertha, 2009, p. 999).

4.3.1 Analytical Proposition III

Subsequently, I conclude that policy entrepreneurs use the practice of issue framing in their struggle for influence. The corresponding section in the analysis shall be called “Issue Framing”.

5. Analysis

This chapter sketches the current state of waste incineration in China, introduces the Nangong Incinerator project, and subsequently analyses the relations between local ENGOs and the KfW according to previously established propositions.

5.1 SETTING THE STAGE: WASTE INCINERATION IN BEIJING

Dealing with municipal solid waste (MSW) has loomed large on the horizon for Beijing's administration in recent years. Driven by rapid population growth as well as rising GDP and income levels, growing amounts of MSW are piling up and represent one of the most serious environmental, but also administrative issues for the capital (Johnson, 2013).

Seeking alternatives to existent waste management systems in order to avoid a “garbage crisis” (Qian, 2009), waste incineration has been embraced by a variety of governmental actors, including Beijing's municipal government. This is largely due to waste incineration possessing several advantages over other MSW management systems: incinerating waste requires heat, which can be used to generate energy (hence the term waste-to-energy, WTE); incinerators occupy far less space than landfills do (which is a major concern in densely populated mega-cities like Beijing), and odor control is easier. Other forms of waste treatment are not without disadvantages, either: landfills often release bad-smelling odors and can release methane, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen, hydrogen sulfide and ammonia (Xiao, Bai, Ouyang, Zheng & Xing, 2007, p. 24).

Nonetheless, opponents to waste incineration claim that releases of carcinogenic substances are just as well found in waste incinerators, that these substances do not halt at legally afforded safety zones (in some cases travelling as far as the United States, see Bradsher, 2009) and that it undermines other, more sustainable form of waste treatment such as reduction and recycling (Johnson, 2013, p. 109).

Despite inherent challenges in operating waste incinerators, China is pursuing a waste treatment strategy in which incineration occupies a prominent place – similar to industrialized nations in the 1970s (Johnson, 2013, p. 110). According to Zhang Yi, Director of the Shanghai Environmental Engineering Design Institute, China intends to have 300 incinerators in operation by 2015, effectively doubling the percentage of waste incinerated to almost 25% (of all treated waste) in just four years (Yu, 2011). In Beijing, this strategy has been particularly pronounced: after Chen Yong, head of the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment (BMCCAE) publicly

stated that Beijing was facing a “waste crisis”, the BMCCAE released plans of constructing 9 incinerators within the capital’s administrative boundaries by 2015 (Yong as cited in Johnson, 2013, p. 113).

Social resistance against this incineration push has been strong and particularly visible in larger cities. At least 10 instances of collective resistance against waste incinerators have been documented in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Jiangsu between 2007 and 2011 (Yu, 2011). Fear of adverse health effects, dissatisfaction with non-existent transparency or public participation opportunities in decisions pertaining the location and operation of incinerators, and environmental concerns are among the driving forces leading to anti-incineration collective action (Rootes, 2009).

In a culmination of these struggles, China saw its first-ever legal court case of a private individual against a company operating a waste incinerator in 2010. Xie Yongkang and his lawyer Liu Jinmei, suspecting the close proximity (190 meters) of a waste incinerator in Hai’an to be related to the former’s son’s disability, uncovered the absence of environmental inspections or a waste discharge permit for the incinerator. However, they ultimately failed to overcome the high legal obstacle of providing evidence of the causal relationship between dioxin and cerebral palsy (Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims, 2012).

While Xie’s lawsuit was not successful, it sent a strong message throughout the nation: not only were waste incinerators potentially dangerous, not only were they sometimes operated without proper licensing agreements, but that legal action was possible against the operating companies (Ibid.; Wang, 2011).

Well-functioning incinerators do exist in China; however they regularly impose significantly higher costs on operators. The Baoan incinerator in Shenzhen, for instance, reports almost no pollutants due to tight emission controls, but its operation costs are as much as ten times higher. At least as a partial result of high operating costs, a study by the Chinese Academy of Sciences revealed that out of 19 waste incinerators surveyed in 2009, 16% did not meet China’s safety standards, while almost 70% failed to meet EU standards (Xu & Zhang, 2012).

It was in this context of an incineration-embracing government, resisting population and ensuing clashes between authorities and local communities that the siting of the Nangong incinerator took place. Having emerged as part of a wider phenomenon of localized protests in China since 1978 (Perry & Selden, 2003), anti-incinerator campaigns have been partially successful in preventing top-down approaches to siting waste incinerators (Johnson, 2013). The following section will detail how the siting of the Nangong Incinerator relates to this context.

5.2 CASE STUDY: SITING THE NANGONG INCINERATOR

On May 6th, 2010, the Beijing General Municipal Engineering Design & Research Institute (BMEDI) published an announcement for the Beijing Nangong Municipal Solid Waste Incinerator (hereinafter referred to as Nangong Incinerator) on their institution's website.¹⁰ Operated by BMEDI, the Nangong Incinerator will be financed with EUR 55 Million out of a total investment of approximately EUR 99 Million by the German state-owned development bank *Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau* (Reconstruction Credit Institute, hereinafter KfW).

The Nangong Incinerator project falls into the long-standing Sino-German Financial Cooperation Framework (SGFCF) between the two countries, in which the KfW acts as the implementation agency. Scheduled for the start of operations in late 2014 (Poyry, 2010), the Nangong Incinerator is owned by the Beijing Municipal Commission on City Administration and Environment (BMCCAE), financed to a large degree by the KfW, operated by BMEDI, and monitored by the international consulting & engineering firm Poyry. As of the publication of this thesis, the planning process of the project has been concluded with the successful tendering of technical equipment for the construction (KfW Project Manager, personal communication, 17/05/13).

It was not until two years after the project's announcement that a group of 21 Chinese ENGOs and 16 citizens (hereinafter referred to as the "group of ENGOs") sent an open

¹⁰ See the announcement here (in Chinese): <http://www.bmedi.cn/qydt/qyyw/6973.shtml>

letter to KfW's head office in Frankfurt, Germany and its regional field office in Beijing, China. Sent and published on August 30th, 2012, the letter details concerns about waste incineration technology and its application in China, skepticism towards the incinerator's suitability at its designated position in Beijing's southern Daxing district, and highlighted existing problems in the operation of the Nangong composting plant which range from lack of supervision, odor discharge and low-quality, improperly sorted waste.

Comprising a list of Beijing-transcending, environmental institutional heavyweights including Friends of Nature (FON), Eco Canton, Yunnan Green Watershed, Green Anhui, etc. and prominent citizens such as Feng Yongfeng (founder of Green Beagle & Nature University), Zhao Zhangyuan (formerly with the State Environmental Protection Agency), Bo Li (executive director of FON), etc., the letter represents a serious, well-researched effort in engaging the KfW as a responsible stakeholder. The open letter marks the first time in China's history that ENGOs have started a campaign directly targeting an overseas investment bank (Xu & Nan, 2012).

Drawing upon previously established propositions, the following section details the interaction between the KfW and the group of ENGOs that unfolded in the siting of the Nangong Incinerator, which revolves around an initial open letter of the group of ENGOs from August 8th, 2012 ("ENGO letter 1")¹¹, a KfW response on August 27th, 2012 ("KfW response 1")¹², an open letter response from the group of ENGOs on September 11th ("ENGO letter 2")¹³, and an unpublished response from the KfW on November 26th, 2012 ("KfW response 2"). These correspondences represent the majority of interaction between the two parties, except for a meeting on September 4th, 2012, in KfW's Beijing office.

The analysis of the interaction between the two parties will be structured according to established propositions, though in reverse order to allow for better readability and a more stringent argument. Commencing with a discussion of the group of ENGOs as

¹¹ ENGO letter 1 has been removed from its original destination at <http://www.lingfeiqi.cn/plus/view.php?aid=871>, but can still be accessed here: <http://news.newclear.server279.com/?p=5205>

¹² KfW response 1 can be found here: <http://www.fon.org.cn/uploads/attachment/81621346310354.pdf>

¹³ ENGO letter 2 can be found here: <http://www.lingfeiqi.cn/plus/view.php?aid=882>

policy entrepreneurs, the ensuing section reviews how practices of issue framing have signified the relations between the group of ENGOs and the KfW. Subsequently, the context in which the interaction between the two parties took place will be discussed, which is conceptualized as an environment of emerging opportunities pursuant to the analytical framework.

5.2.1 Proposition I: Policy Entrepreneurs

Let us remind ourselves: policy entrepreneurs are “advocates for proposals or for the prominence of an idea [who are characterized by] their willingness to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money – in the hope of a future return ... [including] in the form of policies of which they approve” (Kingdon, as cited in Mertha, 2009, p. 996).

In contrast to other anti-incineration campaigns in Beijing such as Liulitun, Asuwei and Gaoantun, a campaign leader in the Nangong campaign expressed that “our primary goal for the campaign is to have the bank [KfW] and Beijing Municipal Government to monitor the process” – and thus, not the termination of the project. Instead, the group of ENGOs called for the existing monitoring system to be reviewed, deeming it “quite risky to build an incinerator” otherwise (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

This was partially due to the incinerator’s location: asked about the suitability of Nangong hosting an incinerator, one respondent pragmatically deemed it “not very bad, but not ideal” either. While criticizing the state strategy of constructing controversial facilities within areas of potentially weak resistance, and remarking upon a closer location to residential areas having possibly reduced shipment costs (and thus pollutants incurred during travel), one campaign leader nonetheless praised the relatively high distance of the Nangong incinerator from densely populated residential areas (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

As policy entrepreneurs, the group of ENGOs does not merely seek the abandonment of the incinerator project. Rather, the aim was to recast existing operating practices and policies by posing four interrelated demands: (1) meaningful participation opportunities

for the public, (2) improvement of operation practices, (3) information disclosure according to Chinese laws, and (4) a critical reassessment of China's push for waste incineration.

Participation not only features prominently in siting debates, but also in discussions about Chinese governance. According to one observer, participation is crucial at the intersection of written legislature and practical enforcement: “public participation in these issues is very insufficient...since there is no monitoring from the public, government and investors don't care about the legal procedure” (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13). In the same notion, the respondent projects a significant role on citizens in uncovering official wrongdoing: “When there are serious citizens emerging, and they look carefully at construction procedures, they can usually find many mistakes” (Ibid.).

Another respondent elaborated upon the NGO's perception of the problem: while participation during the planning stage is either non-existent or faked for the EIA, it is even more absent after construction: “During the operation, there's no participation, no monitoring, no information disclosure, leading to poor governance and operation practices” (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13).

In the same notion, one respondent reflected upon the dimension of trust, a key variable in the NIMBY equation: “If you guarantee public participation and you follow all regulations, the public can trust the local government – but now, in China, this is not the case” (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13).

One reason mentioned for the absence of trust was the lack of clear announcement procedures: “we found that almost every incinerator building is either not announced or portrayed as something different, like a power plant” (Ibid.).

Concerning the issue of a functioning system of **supervision**, one respondent assumed that it is simply a matter of costs (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13). Due to outsourcing ownership and, by extension, supervision duties, local governments often circumvent the issue of high costs by conferring the responsibility of operation and supervision to private entities (Campaign Leader 2, personal

communication, 13/03/13). These duties are then neglected owing to absent external state control. The Nangong Incinerator thus represents a rather special case as it is “very rare that the government directly owns the project and will plan to manage it directly” (Ibid.). Against this background, one respondent mentioned the ineffectiveness of advanced incineration technology vis-à-vis collection and sorting mechanisms: “there’s no use for the machines” due to the mixed nature of the waste (Ibid.). Qualifying these remarks, one respondent remarked that “it’s not only the technology which counts, but the operation” (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 13/03/13). While the KfW asserted that it will ensure a smooth operation of the project, it was nonetheless stressed that this could only be done to a certain extent given the KfW’s role as a financing development bank, and not as the operating company (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13).

With regard to **information disclosure**, most ENGO efforts have been channeled into obtaining the project’s EIA report – unsuccessfully, as of the publication of this thesis. Conducting an EIA is a mandatory exercise for waste incinerators, and according to Chinese environmental legislation, the EIA must be made available to the public. However, even though an EIA of the Nangong Incinerator has been conducted, “the public does not have access to the statement until now” (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13) and continues to wait for the document. Applications to Beijing’s Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB) for the disclosure of the EIA had been turned down (Ibid.). Likewise, calls aimed at the KfW to release the Nangong Incinerator EIA were turned down by the bank appealing to the ENGOS “understanding that we are not in a position to supply you with the project’s EIA” (KfW response 1). Ironically, by referring the NGOs to the “BMCCAE and other relevant institutions” (KfW response 2), the KfW seemingly internalized a frequently used approach of official Chinese state agencies of denying rights to information disclosure by discarding responsibility of the disclosure through referring to other, responsible institutions (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

Asked about **China's push for waste incineration**, one respondent assumed a holistic perspective by directing attention to a much larger problem of ineffective waste management policies in China: "government and scholars know very clearly that the best waste management system is prevention of waste first, and then re-use, separate waste, and recycle. But prevention of waste requires government to establish a policy calling upon the responsibility of producers – that will affect economic growth because it means less consumption, and the contemporary government feels very negative about this." (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

In order to provide a counter-narrative to the economic necessity of incinerators, the ENGO group thus intended to "reveal the true cost of incineration, the economic cost, the environmental cost" as a major objective of the campaign (Ibid.). In contrast, the KfW emphasized waste incineration as a necessity in densely populated cities with little available space. Referring to existing difficulties in obtaining licenses for landfills, as well as obvious problems of size and odors, incineration remained the only economic alternative according to the KfW (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13). A solitary focus on recycling, as demanded by ENGOs, was deemed impossible to be implemented in rapidly growing cities. Inevitably, waste treatment would make someone lose out – the goal was to minimize risks and affected individuals (Ibid.).

Nonetheless, China's push for incineration was criticized by the ENGO group because of a perceived policy prioritization of increased waste vs. recycling, asking in disbelief: "where is the incentive to do waste separation in the future when there are so many incinerators being built, designed for mixed waste?" (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13).

These four interrelated demands paint a clear picture: Chinese ENGOs have long bid adieu to a limited, project-focused role. Through active engagement and confident demands for public participation opportunities, greater and rules-based information disclosure, improved operation practices and a rethinking of not just Beijing's, but entire China's waste incineration strategy, the ENGOs perform as policy entrepreneurs in using

the Nangong incinerator project as a vehicle for grander claims about China's environmental future. A distinct practice of *how* they engage with stakeholders – both Chinese and international – as exposed during the Nangong incinerator siting lies in *issue framing*, which the subsequent section deals with.

5.2.2 Proposition II: Issue Framing

The group of Chinese ENGOs was not content with merely preventing the Nangong incinerator from being constructed. Rather, the goal comprised attaining sustainable, long-term solutions for existing problems in the operation of incineration technology in China. In order to achieve these aims, the group of ENGOs framed their issue in two distinct ways: first, by telling the cautionary tale, they recounted the troublesome story of the existing Nangong composting plant in great detail and drew parallel projections about the planned incinerator. In a second step, they told the moral tale of providing insight into possible solutions, offered themselves as knowledgeable stakeholders, and detailed clear, cooperative suggestions on how this could be achieved.

Communicated to the KfW via the first open letter, all projects in Beijing which the KfW had previously invested in were found “worthy of re-examination” (ENGO letter 1). Special attention was afforded to the site of the Nangong composting plant due to the close proximity to the planned incinerator (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13). Opened in 1998 as Beijing's first composting plant, the project was criticized by the group of ENGOs for being poorly supervised, operating under worker-hostile conditions as indicated by employees “separating waste without protecting gears” (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13), receiving highly mixed waste resulting in low-quality composting products (which is of particular concern as the Nangong incinerator is designated to receive waste from Majialou, the same transfer station), and discharging heavy odors (ENGO letter 1).

Echoing the ENGOs, local residents have expressed frustration about heavy odors in the past, and subsequently exhibited a growing sensitivity to waste issues. Ultimately, this has led to several, yet localized and isolated instances of collective action in which residents have “blocked the shipment road of the garbage several times [...] and then they

got compensation” (ENGO letter 1; Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

Confronted with these allegations, the KfW remarked that it took the concerns seriously by forwarding the criticism to BMCCAE and organizing an on-site visit with personnel from both the KfW and BMCCAE, finding that operational problems “have existed some time ago, but were solved in the meanwhile” (KfW response 2).

While the KfW insisted on not being legally responsible for the operation of the plant, the bank nevertheless offered their cooperation as a measure of good will. Nonetheless, a KfW project manager mentioned that the project (including monitoring, which generally lasts three years upon the start of operations) had been finally evaluated in 2001, which marked the end of all legal obligations for the KfW. According to KfW’s project manager, the responsibility to ensure the smooth operation had been transferred to the Chinese side of the contract long ago (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13).

Despite the reassurances of the smooth operation of the plant by the KfW, the Nangong composter was identified as worthy of reconstruction and expansion. Issues at stake include the poor state of technical subsystems and neighborhood complaints about odors in the area. The upgrade is part of the 12th Five-Year Plan for the National and Economic and Social Development of Beijing, which stresses that “traditional disposal methods and depositing raw refuse into landfills shall be discouraged; waste incineration and biochemical treatments will be transformed, achieving a ratio of 4:3:3 for waste incineration, biochemical treatment and landfills”.¹⁴

Secondly, the group of ENGOs framed the issue at hand as being resolvable by a close cooperation between the KfW and Chinese civil society organizations. Appealing to the KfW that the successful operation of the Nangong incinerator will “affect the reputation of German government and enterprises’ economic and environmental protection cooperation in China” (ENGO letter 1), the group of ENGOs offered several suggestions for a meaningful cooperation between the KfW and civil society organizations, as well as

¹⁴ The plan can be found in English here:
http://www.bjpc.gov.cn/fzgh_1/guihua/12_5/Picture_12_F_Y_P/201208/P020120809377417514420.pdf

individual citizens. While the KfW did respond to the letter with an invitation to a meeting which did occur on September 4th, 2012, the group of ENGO's expressed disappointment with regard to the KfW's lacking willingness both to release information and to enter into a long-term dialogue (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

The KfW portrayed its own interpretation of the issue. Conversely to the group of ENGOs claims' of poor operating principles, the bank framed the problem as context-, i.e. country-independent, insisting that there is "proven technology available to reduce to [sic] environmental impacts to an acceptable minimum" (KfW response 1), and that waste incineration is controllable and effective if high technological standards are employed during construction. Insisting that waste incinerators are commonly used in densely populated areas in Germany without causing great controversies, and that "close to our headquarters in the city Frankfurt, such a plant is located" (KfW response 1), the KfW framed the issue as a question of technological progress. This was echoed by KfW's project manager, mentioning that planning for the Nangong incinerator started more than 10 years ago and was envisaged as a pilot project with a role model function based on European norms and standards (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13).

Accordingly, ENGOs engaged in "issue framing" through creating a narrative of unavoidable poor operation practices, projecting conclusions from the existing Nangong composting plant onto the incinerator, and offering themselves as competent partners for the KfW. In the same notion, the written exchanges between the two stakeholders reveal the KfW as providing counter-narratives to the group of ENGOs' frames of reference by insisting on the proven, applicable and context-independent power of waste incineration technology. While the KfW provided counter-narratives seeking to defuse tension and highlight capabilities (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13), ENGOs performed the role of policy entrepreneurs using issue framing to advance their institutional interests in a constrained political system, which nonetheless offers an

increasing amount of opportunities for political action. These opportunities form the subject of the next section.

5.2.3 Proposition III: The Emergence of Opportunities

As argued in chapter 4.1, China's political system has become particularly malleable at the implementation level, enabling policy entrepreneurs to actively participate in the Chinese policy process. Nonetheless, these actors operate in a semi-authoritarian system which prescribes certain, explicit rules upon to participants.

Against this background, the KfW is in a situation where it remains an actor tied to the Chinese policy process only by contractual obligations. Nonetheless, the KfW is judged by international standards on the one hand while being required to adhere to Chinese laws and customs on the other. The KfW thus serves a delicate, but crucial function at the intersection of strategy and implementation which is particularly pronounced given the long and extensive project focus of the Sino-German Financial Cooperation Framework (SGFCF) in which the KfW assumes a critical implementation role. In addition to several projects outside Beijing, the KfW was the leading agency during the construction of the Southern Beijing Disposal System between 1994 and 1998. Specifically, financially backed waste management solutions include a composting plant in Nangong, two transfer stations in Majialou and Xiaowuji, as well as two landfills in Anding and Beishenshu (Yu, 2008; ENGO letter 1). The Nangong waste incinerator represents a further effort by the KfW to implement projects under the SGFCF (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13). Subsequently, the KfW assumes a limited, yet somewhat consistent role in the Chinese policy process, and is a potential focal point of entry through performing an intermediary function between state authorities and ENGOs.

These ENGOs, in contrast, are permanent members of China's political system. Having mushroomed since the early 1990s, they responded to an increasingly fragmented political system which allowed them the spaces necessary to form and navigate, to mounting environmental challenges in the course of rapid industrialization, and to what Ho (2001) terms the "greening" of the state, i.e. the realization that non-bureaucratic actors are necessary in dealing with the country's imminent environmental problems. As

a result, ENGOs have emerged as representing “one of the most active areas of civil society in China” (Ho, 2007b), and have been lauded with being “at the vanguard of non-governmental activity” (Economy, 2004, p.131). Nonetheless, they operate under the manifold constraints of an authoritarian system which tolerates an active green movement only if it remains localized, fragmented, non-confrontational and does not evolve into a boundary-transcending, organized political force (Ho, 2007a).

In this environment, ENGOs rely on an increasingly diverse set of depoliticized instruments to advance their goals of meaningful participation rights and the enforcement of existing environmental legislation through the use of informal networks, coalitions with the media and new communication technologies (Xie, 2011; Yang, 2005; Sima, 2011). In exemplifying fashion, international, cross-border networking played a significant role for the group of ENGOs during the Nangong incinerator campaign. Not only did responsible NGO staff contact academics for translating service and various assistance (environmental politics scholar from City University of Hong Kong, personal communication, 22/03/13), contact was also initiated with a German NGO in order to cross-check KfW statements and inquire about the situation of incineration in Germany (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

Meanwhile, ENGOs operate under tight capacity constraints related to budget, time and availability of staff. Confronted with a tender notice on the German Trade and Investment website (GTAI) related to the Nangong incinerator’s technical equipment, one respondent cited a “lack of personnel to follow the issue” and being “distracted to other cases” as reasons for not knowing about the latest developments. Likewise, the crucial role of experts – both as citizens, but more so as NGO workers – was acknowledged. Referring to the KfW’s self-imposed social obligations, one respondent asserted that: “we need people that are familiar with the social responsibility of banks”, and “we need professionals who know Equator principles¹⁵ well, so we can compare the KfW’s behavior with the principles” (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

¹⁵ Equator principles are “a credit risk management framework for determining, assessing and managing environmental and social risk in Project Finance transactions”. The KfW is a signatory of these principles. See: <http://www.equator-principles.com/index.php/about-ep/about-ep>

Seeking remedy for these constraints, ENGOs are actively looking for cooperative partners to build temporary coalitions. Despite the occasional tension and opposition between the group of ENGO's and the KfW, the latter represents one such potential partner with a limited, yet demonstrated amount of resources and access to the policy process. As such, the group of ENGOs projected high hopes into a possible cooperation, assuming the KfW to be an "important interested party" which can "exert influence over this project" (ENGO letter 1). The KfW was thus perceived as being able to enter into bargaining processes with local authorities, using political spaces at the polity's implementation gap.

In the same notion, the involvement of an international actor as a financier was expressed as making "this case special" (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13) and offering further potential benefits for the group of ENGO's goals. Noting that the involvement of an international actor represented an "opportunity for us [the group of ENGOs] to intervene because it will attract more attention", the possibility of implementing improved and more accountable governance systems in incremental steps was described as a possible result leading to a "good demonstration to other cases" (Ibid.). Against this background, the public perception of Germany as being a front-runner in "waste management, social justice and sustainable development" was mentioned as another reason why the case would attract more attention if a contradiction between the KfW's actions and values was assessed by the group of ENGOs (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

Likewise, the KfW's origins were expected to facilitate a more rules-bound behavior in comparison to Chinese bureaucratic actors. Asked about the projection of high hopes in the bank, one respondent expected that "foreign companies must have more rules in place compared to China's state-owned or private companies" (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13). Similarly, the KfW itself promoted this assumption by writing that the KfW "request[s] the right to confirm all significant steps before and during implementing of such a project [with the BMCCAEE]", thereby elevating the KfW's status onto potentially policy-changing levels (KfW response 1).

Despite these assumptions, the bank's limited role in shaping waste management politics in China was acknowledged. "Our ultimate target is the local government because the bank cannot play the role of monitoring the process" concluded one respondent, all the same referring to possibly beneficial governance changes and increased local government responses through the "positive role" of the international actor (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

However, these hopes did not materialize into actual benefits as envisaged by the group of ENGOs. Initially with increased expectations, trust in the KfW's "otherness" dissolved as the communication between the two parties progressed. Depicting this sentiment, one campaign leader expressed that "in the beginning, I was hopeful – a big bank and a foreign investor, I thought it will be smoother for us to move something forward. But actually, it turned out to be false", leading the respondent to pass the final judgment of the KfW as displaying "no better performance" and being a "disappointment" due to specific questions being dealt with in a bureaucratic way (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13).

Another respondent rejected the notion of an increase in legitimacy due to international involvement: "I think there's no big difference. Operation is more important. I think there's no big difference whether the company is domestic or foreign, but the one difference is in the hope that the foreign company can disclose more information" (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

One of the reasons why the KfW failed to meet the expectations of the group of ENGOs was related to the former's approach to dealing with the latter's inquiries. Perceived as diverting responsibility away from the bank to Chinese authorities, one campaigner expressed frustration with the lack of cooperation on the KfW's part, terming all responses as "bureaucratic" and lacking "a substantial release of information" both in general, and with regard to "their monitoring of the project" (Campaign Leader 1, personal communication, 19/03/13).

A meeting between the group of ENGOs and representative KfW officers, initiated by the latter, reinforced these concerns rather than alleviate them. Given notorious levels of

distrust of civil society actors into local governments in China, one campaign leader surprisingly contrasted the lack of cooperation on KfW's part with the efforts of the local Beijing Municipal Government, the latter which provided both more information and brought a representative of Poyry, the company in charge of the project's consulting, to a dialogue meeting between all relevant stakeholders. While several aspects of this meeting were evaluated as positive and potentially nourishing for the future, the ENGOs two basic aims for the meeting – accomplishing EIA disclosure, and establishing a mechanism for citizens being able to go into existing incinerators to inform themselves about operation standards – were not reached due to the local government's passiveness (Campaign Leader 2, personal communication, 13/03/13).

Importantly, the large amount and quality of the ENGOs' expectations were perceived as excessively optimistic by the KfW's project manager (personal communication, 17/05/13). Asserting that its contractual obligations with the BMCCAIE put the KfW in a field of tension between NGO requests and limited navigation space, the bank asked the BMCCAIE to take charge of communication efforts with the ENGOs (Ibid.). With regard to the frustration of the group of ENGOs about lacking information disclosure, the KfW reaffirmed that its contractual obligations forbade the bank to disclose the EIA, and that the ENGOs imposed excessively high expectations on the bank's capacity in influencing project partners (KfW project manager, personal communication, 17/05/13).

In formulating an open letter, engaging the media, and entering into dialogue with the KfW, the group of ENGOs has used political spaces which were previously inaccessible, and in which they were free from "being snuffed out by the coercive apparatus of the state" (Mertha, 2009, p. 997). Nonetheless, they lack the formal bargaining tools which other institutions – including, to a certain degree, the KfW – hold at their disposal. In circumventing fashion, ENGOs resort to different means such as raising awareness, appealing to the KfW's self-imposed social guidelines, and projecting a high degree of expectations upon the bank in order to create leverage. Hence, they seek to co-opt the KfW as a partner in their struggle for improved governance due to the bank's long history in constructing environmentally significant and financial weight. While the KfW did

respond to these attempts, they remain limited in their navigational freedom in China's policy process.

6. Discussion

Incidents of NIMBY-protests in China are mounting, particularly in larger cities. This suggests an ample need to gain a better understanding of the determinants which lead to the escalation of siting conflicts. Despite the geographical proximity of the Nangong incinerator to other controversial waste incinerators in Beijing and the established knowledge of the interrelation between siting conflicts, there has been a puzzling absence of organized societal resistance against the Nangong incinerator as of May 2013. This makes it the only one of four incinerators in Beijing where such collective action has not appeared¹⁶. While this research cannot establish a correlation between international actor involvement and the absence of organized protests, the interactions between ENGOs and international stakeholders nonetheless offer several context-dependent lessons for facility siting processes in China.

From honeymoon to reality

Particularly in its infancy, the relationship between ENGOs and international actors has potential for extensive cooperation. However, this initial optimism deteriorates as a result of limited spheres of action for the international actor which are confronted with high expectations by ENGOs. Initially, the Nangong incinerator project gained legitimacy based purely on the presence of a renowned, international development bank among members of the group of ENGOs. As signified by the cooperative, space-transcending first open letter, as well as the meticulously researched content contained within, the group of ENGOs regarded the involvement of the international actor as a chance to not prevent the project, but to influence policy-making and operational procedures in a long-term, non-localized way. Despite non-existent legal obligations to do so, the KfW responded to ENGO concerns in visiting the existing Nangong composting plant and

¹⁶ It deserves mention that the siting of the Asuwei incinerator was eventually perceived to be a cooperative, successful aggregation of community interests and state strategies. See Johnson (2013).

facilitated a meeting to discuss key issues. However, this honeymoon period of cooperation was rather short-natured. In performing their role of policy entrepreneurs, the group of ENGOs projected a substantial amount of expectations on the KfW, which the bank did not fulfill. Citing legal requirements to its contractual partners, the KfW refrained from disclosing substantial amounts of information to the ENGOs. Further constrained in their limited sphere of political action opportunities and the failure to act as intermediaries between the government and ENGOs, the KfW was effectively overwhelmed by the demands of the ENGOs, ultimately leading to the ENGOs' perception of the KfW as being just another actor not adhering to existing legislative provisions.

ENGOs seek to co-opt international actors

ENGOs pursue a strategy of cooption to form an alliance with international actors. Lacking the capacity to enter into bargaining processes within the policy process themselves, the group of ENGOs pursued a strategy of seeking to coopt the international investor by creating narratives relating to existing operational issues of waste incinerators, and to the cooperative nature of the ENGO's efforts. In their struggle for greater policy influence, the group of ENGOs hence performed the role of policy entrepreneurs in seeking to use the Nangong incinerator as a vehicle to effect policy change at the implementation level. While the KfW initially acted as intermediary between the government and the ENGOs and thus gave rise to further hopes by the latter for long-term cooperation and a "otherness" of the KfW, it were precisely these expectations which ultimately spelled the end of the cooperative relation between the two parties.

ENGOs and international actors compete over narratives

Using grand narratives, ENGOs compete with international actors over the sovereignty of interpretation. While the group of ENGOs framed their issue in telling the cautionary tale of existing problems in China's operational governance of waste incinerators and outlined potential contributions of the group of ENGOs, the KfW responded by providing a counter-narrative in the form of insisting on the proven, applicable and context-

independent power of waste incineration technology. This competition represents an obstacle for cooperation, but also provides a platform for the exchange of interests between the two stakeholders.

A potential axis of de-escalation?

As this thesis represents a qualitative, empirical work situated in the social sciences, experimental conditions which would allow for the control of confounding variables are absent from this study. While international involvement appears to be at least partially conducive to preventively de-escalating potential conflict, other factors are likely to have had an impact on the prevention of conflict in the siting of the Nangong incinerator. The proposed location, as mentioned by two campaign leaders, was not as controversial as it was in other cases in Beijing (such as Haidian). Likewise, the construction of the incinerator had not begun as of the publication of this thesis, and is likely to have at least an initial impact on resident's perceptions of the incinerator.

Nonetheless, opportunities for an international actor-ENGO axis remain. The image of a development bank being committed to offering sustainable solutions to pressing needs in waste management, regardless of how factually accurate, can be a powerful determinant in influencing the perceptions of stakeholders. Likewise, the shared interest in sustainable development solutions reflects a potential platform on which to discuss ideas. Additionally, international actors can reinstall one of the most important elements in the siting equation: trust in the siting process. If international actors assume the role of supervising and monitoring agency, low amounts of trust in established authorities which are associated with previous, coercive siting processes can possibly be compensated with. Tentatively, I thus suggest that there is potential, however small, for an ENGO-international actor alliance.

7. Conclusion

This thesis set out with the aim to investigate the relationship between international actors and ENGOs in local siting processes in China. Based on semi-structured interviews and a documentary analysis, an intrinsic single case study inquiring the siting

of the Nangong incinerator with a particular focus on international actor-NGO relations was conducted. Conducting this research was justified by an evident knowledge gap in existing research on facility siting in China which reflects a symptom of scholarly discussions being constrained by a narrow focus on industrialized economies. Through a qualitative inquiry into the relations of two actors during a siting process in China, this thesis pursued the aim of empirically contributing context-dependent insights to existing discussions on facility siting. Using fragmented authoritarianism as its anchor for data interpretation, the analysis suggests that (1) the relation between international actors and local NGOs is marked by initial optimism but deteriorates fast due to excessive expectations of the latter, (2) local NGOs act as “policy entrepreneurs” in seeking to co-opt the international actor in the struggle for grander environmental concerns in siting processes, (3) communication between the two parties represents a struggle over competing narratives, and (4) while the relation between local NGOs and international actors is complicated by limited spheres of action, it has potential to be an axis of de-escalation in siting controversies. In conclusion, the implications of generated findings result in the suggestion of further comparative research into facility siting processes in emerging economies and non-liberal political systems, and recommend a watchful eye on international investor-NGO relations.

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9. Annex

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Researcher's contact details included in original documents' header)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, which will take place from March 4th, 2013 to June 1st, 2013. This form details the purpose of this study, a description of the involvement required and your rights as a participant.

The purpose of this study is:

- to gain insight into the Nangong incinerator, the international dimension of the project, the implications for project siting in Beijing/China

You are encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns at any time about the nature of the study or the methods I am using. Please contact me at any time at the e-mail address or telephone number listed above.

With your permission, I will tape record the interviews so I don't have to take notes. You will not be asked to state your name on the recording. The tapes will only be heard by me for the purpose of this study. If you feel uncomfortable with the recorder, you may ask that it be turned off at any time.

Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. At no time will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a random numerical code. I will be the only person transcribing the interview. The recording will be destroyed as soon as my master's thesis has been graded (presumably June 2013).

You also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. In the event you choose to withdraw from the study all information you provide (including tapes) will be destroyed and omitted from the final paper.

Insights gathered by you and other participants will be used in writing a master's thesis, which will be read by my professor and presented and defended at Lund University, Sweden. Though direct quotes from you may be used in the paper, your name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous at all times.

By signing this consent form I certify that I agree to the terms of this agreement.

Interviewee: _____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

Researcher: _____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Do you consider yourself an expert leader of this campaign?

- Since when have you worked on this campaign, the Nangong Incinerator?
- Have you personally worked on other campaigns against waste incinerators?
- What is your perception of the bank? Were they willing to disclose information to you, were they willing to share the information they had?
- Waste incinerators as such aren't necessarily bad. Throughout the world, they are used and they have certain advantages over other forms of waste management. Why do you think waste incineration is the right or wrong way forward for China?
- In your open letter, you mentioned low-level mistakes that happened in planning, investment and operation. Why do they happen? Why do you think they happen so often?
- Do you think Nangong is a suitable location for the incinerator?
- How do you feel has your campaign changed because you had to deal with a bank from Germany?
- Do you feel that the incinerator project has gained legitimacy because a German bank finances it? Do you think this has an effect on how local residents perceive it, or do you think it doesn't really matter whether it's a German company or a Chinese company?
- Did you ever take part of a campaign where you had to deal with international stakeholders before?
- Compared to other waste incinerators campaigns that you have participated in, do you feel this one is more difficult? Is it easier?
- The announcement of the Nangong incinerator came in May 2010 via the Beijing General Municipal Engineering Design and Research Institute. Do you think that this was the right way to announce it?
- Which state agencies did you engage in your campaign? How did you do it?
- How much do local residents actually know about the Nangong incinerator?
- Do you feel that international involvement in this campaign is a chance? Or is it an obstacle?