

# COLLOQUIUM BY KATHINKA FÜRST

*CIVIL SOCIETY AND RISK REGULATION: INSIGHTS FROM NGOS EFFORTS TO REDUCE INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION IN CHINA*

TIME: 5:00-6:00 PM, THURSDAY, 09 MARCH 2017

VENUE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1079

*Civil Society and Risk Regulation: Insights from NGOs Efforts to Reduce Industrial Pollution in China*

**Speaker:** Kathinka Fürst, Research Fellow, The Netherlands China Law Centre (NCLC), University of Amsterdam (UvA) Law School ; Visiting Scholar , China University of Political Science and Law, Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims



\* The event is also a faculty recruitment seminar for Environmental program.

**ABSTRACT:**

In the past decade the Chinese State has played a vital role in the development of a civil regulatory space for environmental NGOs, by, amongst others, introducing laws that grant citizens and social organisations the right to participate in public hearings, to obtain information related to environmental issues and to initiate

environmental public interest litigation. The Chinese State clearly envisions a role for civil society in their recently proclaimed 'war against pollution'. With a focus on civil non-state regulatory theories and based on insights from a study of twenty-seven environmental NGOs from fifteen different provinces in China, this presentation outlines the regulatory roles NGOs in China plays in regulation of industrial pollution, the Chinese characteristics of civil regulation and a number of theoretical implications derived from a study of civil regulation in an authoritarian state.

**BIO:**

Dr. Kathinka FÜRST has studied and worked in China for the last fifteen years. In October 2016 she defended her doctoral dissertation "*Regulating through Leverage: Civil Regulation in China*" at the Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam. The thesis focuses on the role of non-state actors in the regulation of industrial pollution risks in China. The thesis uses an inductive methodology and is based on data gathered through explorative fieldwork with representatives of twenty-seventeen environmental NGOs based in fifteen different provinces.

Dr. FÜRST's interdisciplinary MA thesis "*Access to Justice in Environmental Disputes: Opportunities and Obstacles for Chinese Pollution Victims*" sought to identify various structural, political, financial, technical, legal and cultural obstacles Chinese citizens face in the process of invoking their legal rights. It was based on empirical qualitative data derived from fieldwork in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. It reviewed relevant literature on Chinese law and development and then provided vital new grassroots data that offered insights on rights invocation in China.

Dr. FÜRST has more than ten years of experience as a China researcher. In addition to extensive field work that has put her in contact with a wide range of scholars, civil society actors and representatives of the international community in China.

Her collaboration with Professor Van Rooij has given her considerable experience in project design, implementation and monitoring. In 2011 she, together with Professor Van Rooij received a 700k Euro grant for an international research project from the Netherlands Organization of Science (NWO). Since then she have worked closely with Professor Van Rooij in leading this large international collaborative project and played a backbone organizing force in the project as a whole, which not only involved coordinating the work of the other scholars in China, but also working closely with the colleagues doing similar projects in Indonesia. Thus, she played a vital role in developing the overall conceptual framework for the whole project and organizing the initial 2011 international conference in Amsterdam with participants

from UNDP, the World Bank, Dutch Foreign Affairs and leading academics from across the globe. Later she organized several key events in China, including a workshop with practitioners that uniquely brought NGOs, governments and industry together in Beijing to discuss co-regulation. She also played a vital role in organizing a mid-term workshop that included collaboration with UC Berkeley and resulted in a special edition she co-edited about China's new regulators in Regulation & Governance. And of vital importance she organized an event with key Chinese practitioners based on her research findings to train and discuss the usage of evidence by NGOs in their pollution related work.

Dr. Füst's professional history includes positions such as senior consultant at the Norwegian Center for Human Rights, administrative coordinator for the Sino-Norwegian Center for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research and research fellow at the Social Science Research Council's China Environment and Health Initiative. Concurrently, during the past several years, she has worked as a research assistant and consultant on a number of academic projects in China, such as Creative Responses to Sustainability, the Human Rights and Extreme Poverty Project, and as an evaluator of various Rule of Law programs implemented by international organizations in China. She has also been guest researcher and visiting scholar at a number of Chinese academic institutes.

This event is open to all and entry is on a first come, first served basis. For any queries email [yg73@duke.edu](mailto:yg73@duke.edu) or call 3665 7149.

Hope to see you all~

Best Regards,  
Zhengrong Gu