

COLLOQUIUM BY FENGSHI WU

POLITICAL REGIME AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE FROM CENTRAL ASIA

TIME: 4:30-5:30 PM, TUESDAY, 13 DEC 2016

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Political Regime and Environmental Governance: Comparative Evidence from Central Asia

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ABSTRACT:

Countering to common hopes, the processes of political transition from various forms of illiberal rule to democracy have produced mixed, if not disappointing, effects on the environment in the post-Cold War era. Deforestation, excessive land reclamation and natural resource extraction, wildlife loss, and pollution are prevalent problems accompanying the often turbulent, non-linear process of political regime change in most developing countries with very few exceptions. These trends cast further shadow on the general assumptions that democracies perform better in environmental governance than non-democracies. With fieldwork based evidence from Kazakhstan and Mongolia, this paper intends to specify the particular challenges for the states that go through democratic consolidation to build up environmental governance. In addition, it also explains why some non-democratic countries can achieve environmental goals in spite of political structural constraints. In Kazakhstan, for example, both periodical political commitments and a green civil society with legacy, capacity and international support have contributed to the relative effectiveness of environmental protection in the country.

BIO:

Fengshi Wu (BA from Beijing University, PhD from University of Maryland) is an Associate Professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Dr. Wu is specialized in Chinese politics, environmental politics, non-traditional security and global governance. Her recent publications have appeared in the *International Studies Quarterly*, *The China Journal*, *VOLUNTAS*, *Issues and Studies*, *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, *China Perspectives*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Journal of Chinese Political Science* and the *Saint-Petersburg University Vestnik*. Her edited book *China's Global Quest for Resource: Energy, Food and Water* is recently published by Routledge (London) in 2016. Since 2013, she has joined the Editorial Boards of *Global Environmental Politics*, *China Review* and *Voluntaristics Review*. Before joining RSIS, she was assistant and associate professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (2005-2013) and visiting fellow at the Harvard-Yenching Institute (2008-09). Dr. Wu was among the inaugural class of the Graduate Fellows of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences (2004).