

Life

Institute director gets top green accolade

AWARD SHOWS HOW TRANSPARENCY CAN TACKLE POLLUTION

By LI JING

Ma Jun, director of the Institute for Public and Environmental Affairs, has been awarded a top environmental award for his efforts in setting up an online database of polluters and in urging enterprises to clean up their practices.

Six people — one each from Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands and Island Nations, North America, and South and Central America — shared the 2012 Goldman Environmental Prize. Each winner of the award, established by the philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman in 1989 to honor grassroots environmentalists, receives \$150,000.

In May 2006, Ma and his colleagues at the IPE began to gather data to create the first-ever maps of air and water pollution in China. The database now includes more than 90,000 threads of records, detailing breaches of environmental regulations committed by both Chinese and multinational companies.

The public can now learn about the pollution levels and sources in their neighborhoods simply by clicking a mouse.

Ma's award highlights how improved environmental transparency can help China tackle the worsening pollution that often accompanies double-digit economic growth.

In 2007, the authorities issued Measures on Open Environmental Information, a regulation that forced environmental protection bureaus to disclose key information, such as regional environmental quality, lists that named polluters, responses to public complaints and other issues.

Businesses that failed to adhere to the environmental standards were also ordered to publish their pollution data in their local media, and to allow authorities to verify and register the data.

The regulation also gave the public the right to apply for disclosure of information by businesses and government at all levels.

Despite being lauded by environmentalists as a landmark for freedom of information in China, the regulation has never been fully implemented because of strong opposition from both businesses and government departments. Requests for informa-

tion about pollution levels are often refused.

Last year, the US oil giant ConocoPhillips and China National Offshore Oil Corp failed to release information about oil spills that contaminated around 5,500 square kilometers of China's Bohai Bay until a month after the event, a move that sparked public anger.

Ma says that rising public awareness of environmental issues has already resulted in a number of promising changes. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has revised the country's air quality standards by including the measurement of PM2.5, tiny airborne particles that can cause severe lung disorders, in response to widespread public concern about the accuracy of official data on air quality.

"It is easy to complain about lax government supervision, but the ultimate impetus for cleaning up pollution lies in the power of the people," says Ma, who adds that in some cases, local governments would rather protect the polluters than close them down because of the lucrative tax revenues.

"It's impossible to tackle these problems without widespread public participation," he says.

Ma says that against the backdrop of globalization, the public can exert sig-

nificant influence over erring companies by refusing to buy their products.

By demonstrating how the production of a trendy electronic gadget or a piece of smart clothing can lead to the contamination of rivers and endanger workers' health, the IPE and 40 other grassroots environmental organizations have declared war on big-brand polluters in the IT and textile industries.

In 2010, these NGOs published a report claiming that Apple Inc, along with a number of popular IT brands, had hired suppliers that violated China's environmental regulations and caused pollution. It took one and a half years for the NGOs to persuade Apple to sit down and discuss the issue, but now the US company has agreed to review the environmental performances of its suppliers in China.

"Apple finally broke its silence last year. I believe that the public pressure worked, especially after the media in China, the US and Europe undertook their own investigations," says Ma.

"Globalization has created a huge knowledge gap between consumers and producers. Most of the time, people don't realize that the products they buy can cause severe environmental damage. We need more information to bridge that gap," says Ma.



BIO

MA JUN

Director of the Institute for Public and Environmental Affairs

Ma Jun became well known in China during the 1990s, when, as an investigative journalist, he began focusing on environmental issues. In 1999, he published *China's Water Crisis*, a detailed account of the country's environmental woes. The book was compared with Rachel Carson's green classic, *Silent Spring*. In May 2006, Ma was named one of the world's 100 most influential people by Time magazine. He is currently director of the Institute for Public and Environmental Affairs.

exhibition special

China-made machinery shines at Paris expo

By JU CHUANJIANG and WANG QIAN

More than 100 of the latest products from a range of leading Chinese companies are grabbing attention at the ongoing INTERMAT, one of the world's three-largest exhibitions for the construction and materials industries, which opened in Paris on April 16.

More than 30 Chinese engineering and construction machinery makers are participating in the six-day event, along with firms from 43 other countries and regions.

Companies from China include Sany Heavy Industry Co Ltd, Xugong Construction Machinery Group, Shantui Construction Machinery Co Ltd and Zoomlion Heavy Industry Science and Technology Development Corp.

Sany

Sany Heavy Industry Co Ltd, China's largest listed machinery manufacturer, is planning greater overseas expansion and sees the expo as a good opportunity to showcase its latest products to the world.

"Going abroad is a strategic step for Sany," said Xiang Wenbo, company president. "By the year's end, Sany is expected to achieve 100 billion yuan (\$15.4 billion) in revenue. And the international share should account for no less than 30 percent of total sales."

Earlier this year, the company completed its acquisition of Germany's



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The exhibition booth of Sany at the ongoing INTERMAT.

Putzmeister Holding GmbH, the world's largest concrete pump producer. The deal will give Sany access to all of Putzmeister's patents and global sales networks to make it "a new global leader in the concrete-pumping machinery industry," Xiang said.

The company now has plants in the United States, India and Brazil. Its products are exported to more than 110 countries and regions.

In its bid to become a top global brand, Sany plans to build plants in Indonesia, Russia, North African countries and South Africa in the next two years, according to Xiang.

Xugong

As one of the world's top seven construction machinery makers, Xugong is highlighting six types of its products that are internationally competitive —

including crane trucks, loaders, excavators, road rollers and graders — at a 1,098-square-meter pavilion.

"The group is committed to becoming the world's top machinery manufacturers by using advanced technology and modern management," said Liu Jiansen, assistant president of the group.

Last year the group reported gross income of more than 87 billion yuan and 12 types of products that have the largest share of their respective markets in China.

With Jiangsu as its headquarters, the group has established some 15 overseas subsidiaries and manufacturing plants, exporting products to 147 countries and regions.

The exports generated \$1.09 billion last year, an increase of 125 percent over 2010, making the group China's largest source of export revenue in

the sector.

According to Liu, the group is projected to have annual income of 300 billion yuan and join the world's top three engineering machinery manufacturers by 2015.

Shantui

The competitive products exhibited by Shantui include most of its best sellers, ranging from bulldozers, road rollers to forklifts, which have attracted more than 300 potential clients in the past few days, said Zhang Xiuwen, president of the company.

According to Zhang, the company has long been regarded as the "King of the Hill" in China. Its bulldozer sales ranked first both in the domestic market and export share for three years running.

Besides bulldozers, it also offers a highly diversified line of construction and concrete machinery, making everything from wheel loaders, road rollers, truck cranes, motor graders, to forklifts and excavators.

It now has branches in South Africa, Russia, Brazil and the UAE, and exports products to 133 countries across the world. Its exports are expected to account for a half of its sales revenue in the next few years.

Zoomlion

"The expo reveals that China-made machinery is becoming more competitive in overseas markets, as increasing number of European clients are showing a preference for our prod-

ucts," said Yan Chunxin, president of the Changsha-based Zoomlion.

To further boost its global sales, the company is showcasing 15 of its latest concrete and hoisting machinery, including a brand-new flat-top tower crane.

According to Yan, the tower crane making its debut at the expo was designed and produced after the company purchased the complete state-of-the-art technologies from the Germany's Jost Cranes GmbH Pte Ltd last year.

The new product features a more integrated electric control room and a more spacious and comfortable cab — an example of the company's efforts to cooperate with world-leading machinery makers and access advanced markets in Europe and North America.

Four years ago, it acquired Italy's Compagnia Italiana Forme Acciaio SpA, known as CIFA, which has a 20 percent market share in Western Europe and ranks third in the global concrete machinery sector.

The deal boosted Zoomlion's global sales and technology, making it the top Chinese concrete machinery maker in worldwide sales.

Its products are now exported to more than 70 countries and regions. In the first month of this year alone it exported machinery valued at 800 million yuan.

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