

REPORT OF THE AFFILIATION TO US-ASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIP

To : The Asia Foundation

From : Park, Young-sook, Director
Korea Institute for Environmental and Social Policies

122-16 Yong Kang Dong, Mapo Ku,
Seoul 121-070, Korea
Tel : 02-703-4583
Fax : 02-703-4580

Date : September 1993

Fellowship Date : 29 July - 28 August 1993

Host Institution : National Recycling Coalition

1101 30th Street N.W.
Suite 305
Washington D.C. 20007
Tel : 202-625-6406

I. Introduction

When I was notified of the invitation to participate in the Environment Fellowship Program sponsored by the US-Asian Environmental Partnership, I immediately set several goals. I am determined to accomplish the following during my involvement in the Environment Fellowship Program :

1. To learn about the environmental policy-making process in the United States on local, state and federal levels, specially regarding how recycling and waste management come about in the United States.
2. To learn how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) affect environmental policy formation.
3. To understand the technology level in solving environmental problems or promotes sustainable economical development in the U.S., and how the policies regarding this technology have been developed.

4. To determine the technology/business activities of US industry directed towards environmentalism and how they differ from legislative activities.
5. To identify other countries involvement in solving environmental problems.

In the relatively short period of time so far, I have fulfilled my expectations. I think that the concept of the US-Asian Environment Partnership is especially powerful in that the environment and its protection is not just a local issue, but a global one.

I will elaborate further on what I have done during my tenure in this program. From July 29 through August 23, 1993, I spent time in Washington, D C. From August 24 through August 28, 1993, I officially spent time in San Francisco, California. I also spent an additional 12 days in California and New York to meet with a variety of contacts who could benefit my environmental efforts on a political level in Korea - regarding energy conservation, cleaner energy technology and land conservation.

II. Fulfilling the Environmental Fellowship Program Agenda

In the first week of my participation in the Environmental Fellowship Program, I spent the majority of my time at the National Recycling Coalition's library collecting ideas and materials about integrated solid waste management policies, especially recycling programs. Through the coalition, I learned how such programs have been developed in the US. This portion of the agenda was excellent. My placement to NRC was very advantageous to my fellowship program.

My gratitude goes to the National Recycling Centre for the time they spared to give me the appropriate instruction and assistance that I needed at a time when they were busy preparing for their 12th Annual Congress which is to be held on 11 - 14 October.

Although the length of the fellowship was relatively short, the entire program gave help to both me and my institution to equip us as experts to deal with the matter of recycling/solid waste management. Of special interest was the development of solid waste management and recycling in the US over the past 20 years. Through this study, I obtained a solid understanding of the current situation, problems, technological developments of such waste management regarding programs and their integration into legislation and NGOs in the US. I can take back good models of the integrated solid waste management and recycling program together with a knowledge of how to bring together all different groups to make the work a success. For me, the most valuable part

of this program was that I was able to collect information and materials and to make some new networks with various groups in the US.

Since Capitol Hill was on summer vacation, I was unable to see any legislative activities in progress, but I was able to learn the working processes of the lobbying system and the legislative priorities today.

During the rest of my stay, I visited a variety of institutions. I particularly wanted to concentrate on policy formation, government groups, consulting groups and facilities where I could observe the practical works done. At each site, I participated in discussion, observation or workshops on a variety of environmental issues. The organizations visited included:

- * The Institute for Local Self-Reliance
- * The National Geographic Society - Environment Project
- * League of Women Voters - National Resources Research and Citizen Education Division
- * Graham and James
- * RCRA Information Center (EPA)
- * Environmental Education Center (EPA)
- * Hazardous Waste Ombudsman Program (EPA)
- * Rule Making Dockets (EPA)
- * Montgomery County Materials Recovery Facilities
- * National Wildlife Federation - International Affairs
- * Solid Waste Information Clearinghouse (SWICH)
- * National Solid Waste Management Association
- * Applied Compost Consulting
- * Berkeley Composting Company
- * Berkeley Recycling Processing Center
- * Urban Ore Inc. (practical disposal service for reusable goods)
- * Ecology Center
- * San Francisco Recycling/Solid Waste Waste Management Program
- * Global Fund for Women
- * Pan Pacific Environmental Service Inc.
- * Resource Renewal Institute
- * Harnsberger Associates Inc.
- * Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison
- * Paxia International
- * EcoTeck Consortium

Additional items accomplished in the United States during this time included obtaining membership of several environmental organizations with whom I exchanged mailing lists and subscribing to several US publications on recycling/solid waste management such as **Waste Age**, **Resource Recycling**, **NRC Connection** etc. These Items will help me to accomplish the goals stated in Section I even after I leave this program.

III. Plans for Sharing Experience and Taking Action

When I leave the program, I will follow up on the action items listed below:

1. To share all information and materials obtained through my participation in the US-AEP with various interested groups. These would be the legislators at all different levels - Government officials, business experts and environmentalists in Korea. I have already sent out about 100 pounds to my Institute for them to sort and make lists of materials so that they are ready for use.
2. Public education through publications such as newsletters, magazine articles, seminars, workshops, general awareness programs using mass communication. I have already finished writing an article on 'The US integrated Solid Waste Management and Recycling Program' for the November issue of the quarterly journal of the Korea Institute for Environmental and Social Policies.
3. To organize workshops on Recycling/Solid Waste Management for government officials responsible in this field in mid-December 1993. It could be done by co-sponsorship with the Korea Recycling and Recovery Corporation.
4. To plan for a more aggressive and effective recycling in our community; to provide training programs for community leaders who take care of local recycling projects.
5. Legislative activities in which the Korean Congress is moved to introduce more stringent policies and regulations dealing with the environment. With the new insight gained through the US-AEP program, I would wish for instance to participate in taking policy-making responsibilities, to review our laws and regulations regarding solid waste management/recycling and to mobilize legislation and policies.
6. Make an attempt to establish a National Recycling Coalition in Korea, to unite large and small businesses, recycling and environmental groups, province and local governments and individuals in a connected effort to minimize solid waste and maximize recycling across the country.
7. Promote technology links between the US and Korea, focusing on recycling technology, waste treatment technology, renewable energy source technology, etc., e.g. make use of the occasions: Annual Waste Expo and Annual Congress and Exposition of NRC, etc.

8. Organize various US visiting groups to observe wide range of programs such as Composting, Waste Processing, Environmental Technology fields, etc.
9. Influence Korean governmental policies through participation in active campaigning on environmental issues.
10. Create an Environmental Industry in Korea through the co-operation of government/NGO and business sectors. As long as the policies make business and economic sense in the short term and especially in the long term, the environmental industry has a bright future. This new industry will protect and preserve the environment and could possibly create new jobs in production, engineering, R & D and services.

IV. Suggestions for Follow-Up

As illustrated in the US-AEP Project sheets, I insist that the US should take the initiative to lead an international movement to bring a sustainable environment world-wide - specially to Asian and Pacific Island regions. The US is in the appropriate position to establish leadership in this area because of its long years of experience in dealing with environmental issues, the development of US environmental technology, the government's administrative capabilities and the US public's education and awareness on environmental issues.

Of course there are real distinctions between global environmental issues and local environmental issues. Each country must make an effort on its own behalf to solve local problems. However, I am sure that the US could offer visionary direction, technology and practical economic assistance, even on a local level.

I would also encourage the Environmental Fellowship Program to include more Koreans from different sections, including the government, business, NGOs, education, etc. Education is instrumental in the success of any legislative or economic environmental program. By including a greater variety of Koreans in your program, you are directly influencing the ability of environmental programs to develop and thrive in Korea.

Some concrete suggestions:

1. Information exchange among countries and among Fellows to share solutions to similar environmental problems, especially between contiguous countries sharing common borders and common environmental offenders. This is the way to encourage greater international co-operation.

2. Regional Conferences, particularly establishing such conferences among the Asian Pacific countries, or among Fellow Alumni: to give practical and moral support to fellows to work more effectively in the future.
3. Create a way to help fellows obtain new information on environmental technology, development, marketing access, legislative changes, policy directions, etc.
4. To help fellows to sustain a continuous network with various environmental groups in the US and other countries.

Respectfully submitted,

Young-sook Park

Park, Young-sook
Director

Korea Institute for Environmental and Social Policies