

Xinyan Lin

Summary

Environmental social scientist specializing in ocean governance and stakeholder engagement with 12+ years of experience developing implementation frameworks for multi-country programs. Proven expertise in developing training protocols and procedural manuals for complex international initiatives, facilitating cross-cultural collaboration, and synthesizing learnings from diverse governance contexts. Extensive experience with UNCLOS, BBNJ Agreement, and UN ocean governance processes through direct observation and analysis of key international negotiations.

Professional Experience

Stanford University Doerr School of Sustainability, Affiliate Researcher 2025-present

- **Global Ocean Equity Analysis:** Leading the development of a peer-reviewed publication on how social equity is enacted by different networks of relations and interventions in global ocean governance; Analyzing governance mechanisms and implementation frameworks relevant to international marine agreements

Collaborative Event Ethnography(CEE), Collaborator on Ocean Meetings 2020-2024

- **UN Convention of Biodiversity Conservation (CBD) Analysis:** Conducted collaborative ethnographic research on 10 CBD meetings and subsidiary bodies; observed virtual and in-person sessions including OEWG-3, OEWG-4, SBSTTA-24/SBI-3, COP15 in Geneva and Montreal
- **UN Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Analysis:** Conducted virtual observation and content analysis of the 5th Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on the BBNJ during 2022-2024
- **UN Ocean Conference Analysis:** Led a CEE team to study the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC) 2022, and organized the analysis of equity mobilization in different themes of marine conservation under SDG 14.

Duke University Marine Lab, Teaching Fellow 2022-2023

- **Marine Policy Course Development:** developed and delivered undergraduate-level marine policy curriculum integrating scientific research, policy analysis, and stakeholder engagement methodologies; created educational frameworks connecting theoretical governance concepts with practical policy implementation; designed experiential learning components including case study analysis of international marine agreements

Duke-FAO Collaboration on Small Scale Fisheries Research, Analyst 2019-2020

- **Training protocol development:** Co-developed comprehensive 40-page Country Case Study Protocol for FAO Illuminating Hidden Harvests Initiative; created systematic frameworks for data collection across diverse governance systems and institutional contexts; Developed standardized implementation tools, indicators across social, environmental, economic, and governance dimensions

Duke World Food Policy Center, Research Fellow 2018-2019

- **Funding Landscape Analysis:** Led funding landscape research on global funding flow for the fisheries sector, for a Duke-EDF collaboration research that calls for recognizing fish as food, not merely as a commodity, in international development. The research results were published in a peer-reviewed [article](#).

China Marine Funders Alliance, Founding Director 2017-2020

- **Network Building:** Established and managed the China Marine Funders Alliance for SEE Foundation and David and Lucile Packard Foundation to lead the network of funders investing in China's coastal and ocean conservation, with more than 30 Chinese and international grantmaking foundations, their annual investments tripled from 2017 to 2020.
- **Field Building Event Convening:** Co-organized the 2017 China Ocean NGO forum to enhance field building of China's coastal and marine conservation issues. More than 300 stakeholders attended the forum, three times more than the previous convening of the 2015 China Ocean NGO Forum.

WWF China, Consultant 2017-2018

- **Strategy and MEL Design:** Designed program strategy, monitoring and evaluation system for WWF China Ocean Program for capacity building in fisheries management and marine plastic pollution, and secured funding from international donors

Oak Foundation Marine Programme, Associate 2016-2017

- **Grant Management:** Managed the routine responsibilities of three grant portfolios (marine plastic pollution, IUU fishing, small-scale fisheries) totalling over 20 million USD under the supervision of three Programme Officers
- **Capacity Building:** Conducted strategic research for capacity building in marine plastic pollution for grantees in Asia.
- **Field Building Event Convening:** Organized the initial workshop for strategy development of IUU fishing portfolio with a dozen international NGOs in Taipei
- **MEL Development:** Supported the Marine team, and the Environment Programme Director in organizing the development of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) learning system of the marine sub-programme

Oak Foundation Climate Change Programme, Grants Management Trainee 2014-2015

- **Due Diligence:** Processed information from potential grantees and prepared application summaries
- **Grant Administration:** Drafted grant recommendations and supported the due diligence process
- **Project Monitoring:** Assisted with the monitoring of grants and wrote progress reports
- **Strategic Research:** Conducted strategic research for capacity building in climate change for grantees in China and India

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Consultant 2012-2013

- **Field Research:** Conducted field study in Beijing and Tokyo, interviewed numerous area experts
- **Policy Analysis:** Published a 90-page-long research report on China's air pollution policies and presented research in the S-7-3 International Expert Workshop on Transboundary Air Pollution in East Asia

United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), Research Intern 2012

- **Project Coordination:** Liaised with research partners for the publication of a UNU-Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) project: "Impact of Free and Open Source Software for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa"
- **Data Analysis and Management:** Updated and analyzed survey data and compiled summary reports

Education

Ph.D. in Marine Science and Conservation, Duke University 2018-2024

- Thesis: Mobilizing Ocean Equity: Global and Chinese Assemblages, Onto-Epistemological Possibilities, and Gongyi Agency

Master in International Affairs, Graduate Institute Geneva 2013-2015

- Thesis: Deconstructing Resource Curse in Western China, the Case of Coal Industry in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

Bachelor of Business Administration, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan 2008-2012

- Thesis: Forest Certification for China's Bamboo Industry: Pathway, Problem, and Prospect (Best Thesis Award)

Publications:

- **Lin, X.**, Campbell, LM, Basurto, XG, Cohen P., under review, How Committed are We to Ocean Equity? Equity Mobilization at UN Ocean Conference 2022. Journal of Earth System Governance
- **Lin, X.**, Basurto, XG, Campbell, LM. under review, The Role of Philanthropic Foundations in China's Marine Conservation Governance. Journal of Conservation Science and Practice
- **Lin, X.**, Basurto, XG, Cao L, Zou S, (2021) Past, Present, and Prospect of Small-Scale Fishery Commons in China. conference presentation to the International Association of the Study of the Commons (IASC) Fisheries and Aquaculture Virtual Conference.
- Bennett, A., Basurto, X., Virdin, J., **Lin, X.**, Betances, S., Smith, M., Allison, E., et al. (2021) [Recognize Fish as Food in Policy Discourse and Development Funding. Ambio.](#)
- **Lin, X.** (2019) China Marine Grantmaking Bluebook: An Overview of Support from Philanthropy to Marine Conservation in China – report presented at the 3rd China Ocean NGO Forum.
- **Lin, X.**, and Elder, M. (2014). [Major Developments in China's National Air Pollution Policy during the Early 12th Five-Year Plan Period.](#) IGES Policy/Research Report. Hayama, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies.

Language Proficiency

Chinese: Native • English: C2 • Japanese: C1 • French: C1