

## Citizen Participation in Environmental Group Events

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In recent years, Group events triggered by environmental crisis continue to occur, and there is a rising trend. Such as the PX project event in Xiamen, It has caused great hidden dangers to the safety of citizens' lives. The occurrence of these environmental group events is closely related to the degree of citizen participation. The importance of citizen participation is reflected in the solution of the mass incidents. Through these environmental group events, we can see a significant increase in awareness of citizens' participation in our country, in the meanwhile, the beginning of their own interests and aspirations. But there are some problems in the citizen participation in environmental group practice. Therefore, this paper aims to prevent and reduce the occurrence of environmental group events through the study of citizen participation in environmental group events.

*Key Words:* PX project event; environmental group events; citizen participation

### Environmental Group Events and Citizen Participation

Environmental group events are triggered by environmental conflicts, part of the public participation in the government and enterprises to try to cause with the petitions, party and government organs, containment and containment factory blocking traffic and other legal or illegal means, in order to achieve the maintenance of their own legitimate rights and interests of the group for. (Yu Shi, 2011). The characteristics of environmental group events including regional, predictability, repeatability, long duration. Because of these characteristics, the harm of environmental group events is increased. Such as group events triggered by the PX project in Xiamen, the event lasted two years, in the run-up to the PX project, has 105 members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences of the joint proposal, it is recommended the PX project relocated. Has foreseen the risk, in order to economic interests, the government still carried out the project. Due to the enhancement of citizens' participation consciousness, the mass incidents. Due to the lack of effective early warning mechanisms and effective communication, the solution time of the event has been delayed for 2 years.. But what we can see is that in the event of a successful solution, citizens participate in a variety of forms, and play a crucial role, including the "walk", net investment, the public forum.


Thus it can be seen that the citizen's political participation is a common citizen's participation in the political life of the country through a certain way and channel. It is the people to manage state affairs, and

important way to achieve the necessary means for the political rights and the people are the masters of the country and reflect ordinary citizens in social and political life in the status and role (Ying Zhao, 2008). The breadth and depth of political participation is an important symbol to measure the level of political development and political democracy. At the same time, it also shows the importance of citizen participation in the process of environmental group event settlement. However, Group events also show that citizens lack of real interest in political activities, The Democratic channels to express their own interests are too narrow or missing, and the citizens can not effectively communicate with government and express their own requirements. Public policy must be based on public opinion as a starting point. There is a game between public opinion and government decision. This is not a bad thing, but a good thing. Because the government and the people are the interests of the "unity", its value orientation is identity. This game, no losers, only "win-win", such as the Xiamen PX chemical project installation and relocation.

### The problems of citizen participation in environmental group events

*Citizen's consciousness of environmental protection and the awakening of consciousness of safeguarding rights, but weak legal awareness.* The most harm-

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ful environmental group event is the damage caused by environmental pollution and damage to the body. Group events triggered by the PX project in Xiamen, Citizens have recognized the two dangers, his shows that the public awareness of environmental protection, rights awareness have improved. But in their rights in the process of using the form of "walking", This shows that their legal consciousness is weak.

***The interests of the channels are not smooth.*** In the majority of environmental groups event have occurred, the local government and polluting enterprises to damage the people's reasonable demands have not been timely response, the public demands through institutionalized channels can not be resolved, If things go on like this, accumulated a lot of resentment.

***The degree of participation of citizens in advance is not enough.*** Prior to the development of the PX project in Xiamen, the government did not allow citizens to participate in. For example, T A case of Thomas's "citizen participation in public decision making": in 1976, in order to determine the locations of Port Townsend ferry terminal, the government by Citizens Advisory Committee and the citizens participation to make decisions, but due to the limitations of the method involved, decisions do not have access to public acceptance, and was forced to choose which the port of destination, when the problem was eventually solved, the government paid.

The cost is more than doubled. In this case, we can see that, in spite of the enormous cost, the government has always put the participation of citizens and the public in a very important position. Yinghua Zhou, 2006). Due to the lack of prior participation of citizens, resulting in a reduction of the degree of acceptance of the project to the project.

***The lack of relevant social organizations.*** The outbreak of environmental group events is largely due to the lack of public interest demands, the government and the public communication is not smooth. The social organization is the bond between citizens and governments, and acts as a messenger in the environmental group events ". But in the PX project in Xiamen, there is no corresponding social organization involved. Causes the government and the citizen to form the state of hostility, the lack of timely, correct, the corresponding communication.

### **Path of citizen participation in environmental group event**

***Open the public interest expression mechanism.*** In fact, before the outbreak of environmental group events, the public has been to the government to reflect the type of event. But the government did not pay attention to it, therefore, conflicts continue to accumulate and outbreak. To establish a reasonable

mechanism for the expression of the interests of the masses can reduce the occurrence of such conflicts. In our country, there are similar mechanisms, such as the system of letters and visits, the mass line, the mayor's mailbox and so on. However, the execution of this system needs to be improved. The government should further improve the corresponding mechanism for the interests of the masses, the implementation of the "from the masses, to the masses," the principle, pay attention to the expression of public opinion. Make full use of the communication function of the network, set up the network platform for the expression of the interests of the masses. Through this expression mechanism, Through this mechanism, the hearts of the masses of discontent to vent out, to convey to the government, you can avoid the occurrence of similar groups of rabbits.

***The introduction of social organizations and social work.*** The outbreak of environmental group events is largely due to the lack of public interest demands, the government and the public communication is not smooth. The introduction of third party organizations, the use of social organizations to build a bridge between the public and the government, to promote the rationalization of communication is also conducive to the settlement of mass incidents. The involvement of social work is mainly reflected in the use of professional social workers in the service model, such as groups, cases, etc., on the environmental groups in the event of emotional excitement, too radical members to conduct counseling.

***To strengthen the participation of citizens in advance.*** Thomas's "citizen participation in public decision-making" in a book on the citizens involved in a clear explanation. Such as the PX project in Xiamen, the premise of the citizen participation, must be in advance to allow citizens to participate in, so that citizens to participate in the appropriate form of decision-making, to strengthen the degree of acceptance of the decision of citizens, to reduce the difficulty of the implementation of the decision. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the participation of citizens in advance.

***To carry out a variety of forms of citizen participation.*** The form of citizen participation includes: the key public contact, citizen initiated contact, citizen investigation, citizen meeting, advisory committee, mediation regulation, appeal Commissioner and action center, CO production, and so on. Each citizen participates in the form corresponding to the situation. In choosing a form of citizen participation, to determine the purpose of participation in order to obtain information or to increase the degree of acceptance of citizens.

## Note

PX project event: is refers to the protests in 2007, Fujian Province, Xiamen Haicang Peninsula plans to build the p-xylene (PX) project. The project invested by the Taiwan funded enterprises Tenglong aromatic hydrocarbons (Xiamen) Co., Ltd., will be built in Haicang District Planning an annual output of 8 00000 tons of paraxylene (PX) of chemical plant. Expected annual production value of up to 8 billion yuan. PX production needs to be a joint device, the need for a large number of water. As a result, most of the PX projects are built on water, which are rich in resources and densely populated areas. Although the PX project can produce huge economic benefits, but also contains a huge risk.

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