

## Taiwan and US Exchange Experiences in Environmental Law Enforcement

For a period of four and a half days starting 24 June 2013, the Taiwan and US EPAs jointly held a program that employed simulations to train environmental law enforcement officers from Taiwan and neighboring nations in the auditing of factories. The participants were senior environmental auditors and inspectors from central and local government departments who are being trained as seed instructors. The program acted as a forum for sharing environmental law enforcement experiences and techniques to enhance environmental law enforcement capabilities in the region.

The Taiwan and US EPAs also agreed to make the abiding by, and enforcement of, environmental regulations two of the main points of the bilateral environmental cooperation agreement. In March 2013, the two parties held a regional training program for national environmental law enforcement officers and seed instructors to which Southeast Asian nations such as Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Singapore sent personnel to participate.

The training program focused mainly on full factory auditing, thus the trainees were taken to a petrochemical plant to practice techniques for monitoring and inspecting pollution emissions. Bolstering environmental law enforcement capabilities is crucial for winning the fight against environmental crime and for controlling polluting activities. The Taiwan EPA has already formulated the *Enhancing Environmental Law Enforcement and the Levying of Penalties Plan* which aims to raise the overall inspection capabilities of environmental law enforcement personnel so that they can thoroughly root out illegal behavior. The establishment of a mechanism for calculating illegal gains and increasing fines accordingly also acts as a strong deterrent to breaking the law.

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