

**Richard Seifert Room (LG06)
Central House
14 Upper Woburn Place
London, WC1H 0NN**

**21 April 2016 (Thu)
13:00 – 14:00**

Refreshments Served



Bargaining for Nature: Treating the Environment in China's Urban Planning Practice

China Planning Research Group Event

Speaker: Dr. Jiang XU

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Chinese urban planning is often portrayed as a failure to deal with environmental issues. It is said that there is a lack of correct planning instruments to manage urban environment and that planning is often used as a political tool in capital accumulation to destruct urban space. These ever-developing discourses suggest a negative role of planning in guiding spatial ordering, and planners representing local governments using technical knowledge to legitimize and “engineer” an urban space that privileges economic value at the expense of livability. Such analyses are provocative and unravel political intricacies of urban sustainable rhetoric, but they may neglect one discernible trend – there are genuine efforts of Chinese governments to pursue ecological goals, driven by either the fear of imminent ecological catastrophe or the desire for a better living environment. This creates room for urban planners to play a positive role in developing a more sustainable urban form. This talk will draw on some empirical examinations of Chinese cities and argue that Chinese planners, though still under tremendous pressure from landed interests, can become active players to influence urban transformation towards more environmental care.

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