

Finding Lost Words: How Non-Profit Organizations in China Effectively Participate in Policy Advocacy?

—Based on the Successful Experience of Friends of Nature

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Abstract

Non-profit organizations' policy advocacy is an important force in promoting the scientification and democratization of public policies in China. However, in the overall structure of a strong government and a weak society in China, many problems exist in the process of public policy advocacy by NPOs. There is an urgent need to select typical cases to tap valuable local experiences. By combing the development history and major policy advocacy activities of Friends of Nature since its founding in 1994, this paper analyzes the effective ways for non-profit organizations to participate in policy advocacy. At the level of government, policy making should be more open and acceptable. At the level of non-profit organizations, efforts should be made to improve the political legitimacy, administrative legitimacy and internal legitimacy of non-profit organizations while enhancing the level of specialization, efficiently integrating the resources of all parties and exploring diversified ways of advocating.

Keywords

Non-Profit Organizations, Public Policy, Policy Advocacy, Friends of Nature

1. Introduction

Since the reform and opening up in China, with the constant improvement of socialist democratic politics and the rule of law, public policy as an authoritative distribution of social values is being gradually transitioned from being monopolized by the elite of the minority parties and the organizations they represented to a process which is joint by multiple subjects such as the government public

sector, interest groups, mass media and social elites [1]. Following the reform of political system and the transformation of government functions, the non-profit organizations, which refer to the organizations outside the market and government that meet the needs of the public and do not aim for profit [2], have gradually become important forces that affect public policies. They strive to express their opinions through various means such as hearing, lobbying and negotiation, trying to input public will into the public policy system so as to ensure that policies are formulated in the interest of the people.

However, in the overall structure of a strong government and a weak society in China, there are many problems appearing when non-profit organizations carry out public policy advocacy. As Kang Xiaoguang put it, the third sector has played an important role in terms of promoting the economic development, providing public services and leading social innovation, which are beneficial to the government and enterprises. However, the third sector has played a very small role in terms of restricting market tyranny, participating in public decision-making, restraining government power and promoting political democratization, which are harmful to the government and enterprises' rights [3]. The status quo in China is that advocacy organizations can not be guaranteed. When there is a direct conflict between the interests of disadvantaged groups and the interests of enterprises and markets, the third sector organization has failed to resist market tyranny for the benefit of disadvantaged groups. Under this background, how to make non-profit organizations carry out policy advocacy more effectively becomes one of the most important issues to be solved in the process of scientification and democratization of public policy in China.

Although non-profit organizations in China are less involved in public policy advocacy and large-scale social movements due to their own organizational capabilities and resource constraints, reviewing past activities advocated by non-profit organizations in China's policy-making, it can be found that some non-profit organizations represented by Friends of Nature have provided valuable experience for non-profit organizations to effectively participate in policy advocacy. Friend of Nature is a typical non-governmental, non-profit and volunteer civil society organization. It is also the first non-governmental environmental protection group with mass membership in China. Its aim is to promote environmental awareness of the whole society, promote people's participation in various forms of environmental action, promote a green lifestyle and achieve sustainable social development. Since its establishment in 1994, Friends of Nature has not only been active in the fields of environmental education, family energy conservation, ecological community and law enforcement, but also committed to safeguarding the precious ecological environment through policy advocacy. In view of this, this study will refine valuable indigenous experiences by combing the 23-year history of Friends of Nature since its founding in 1994 and the main policy advocacy activities of Friends of Nature during this period, and finally provide useful inspiration for NPOs' policy advocacy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Non-Profit Organizations

Up to now, there is not a unified definition of NPOs. Many national institutions, international agencies and scholars define non-profit organizations from different perspectives as needed. The United Nations believes that an organization can be classified as a non-profit organization if it derives its income mainly from dues or outside donations [4]. The law of the United States examines whether the organization has the corresponding tax-exempt status to determine the non-profit organization, and stipulates that the mission and work of the non-profit organization must be limited to the scientific and educational, charity and public welfare stipulated in the tax law. The net income of the organization can not be attributed to the individual's profit, and also, the non-profit organization can't intervene in political activities [5]. Salamon proposed five characteristics of non-profit organizations, that is, organizational, private, non-profit, autonomy and voluntary, and considered the organizations which have the above five characteristics can be called non-profit organizations [6]. Many scholars in China also define non-profit organizations. XieSixin define the non-profit organizations as those organizations which regard social welfare as purpose, do not allocate personal surpluses, have a formal operating structure and legally have a tax exemption [7]. Zeng Kun argues that in China, non-profit organizations refer to the non-profit-oriented and non-governmental organizations that have a legal status and are founded on the principle of social welfare [8]. Although different national institutions and different scholars have different specific expressions about the connotation of non-profit organizations, it is not difficult to see the non-profit organizations have organizational, private, non-profit, autonomy and volunteer characteristics and aim to solve problems which are difficult for government and market.

2.2. Public Policy

Scholars have made many different definitions about public policy. However, most scholars hold the view that the government plays the main role during the public policy making process [9]. According to the various definitions of public policy that scholars have made, we can sum up the four essential elements of public policy: The organ of authority, party or government are the main body; To standardize organizational and individual behavior in order to achieve certain political, economic or cultural goals is the main purpose; Laws, regulations, plans and other normative documents are the main manifestations; To achieve a certain distribution of social values is the principle [10]. Correct policies combined with effective implementation will play a positive role in promoting the development of society. On the contrary, erroneous policies combined with feeble implementation will have serious adverse consequences for the development of society.

2.3. Public Policy Advocacy

The so-called advocacy, refers to a pursuit of influential output behavior, a planned expression of concern on certain issues and a process that exerts its influence for some purpose. Policy advocacy, on the other hand, is a series of efforts made by advocates such as elites of the society and ordinary citizens to influence public policies and the allocation of public resources within the political, economic and social systems so that public policies can give due consideration to the interests of all parties and promote the scientization and democratization of public policies [1] [11].

As for the modes of advocacy, The Status Quo of NGO Advocacy in China, which was released in 2006 by China Development Brief, classified them as follows: legal advocacy, human rights advocacy, policy research advocacy, advocacy based on one group of proponents, sports advocacy, social campaign advocacy, lobbying and direct exchange [12]. Some of them, such as social campaign advocacy, are mainly developed and carried out in public spaces. Law advocacy and policy research advocacy are more likely to be adopted by experts and professional organizations and carried out within institutional space. Advocacies under different strategies and issues have varying degrees of confrontation and tension. Extensive and orderly policy advocacy is an important part of developing socialist democratic politics and building a socialist political civilization. It is also an inevitable requirement for the realization of socialist modernization.

2.4. Non-Profit Organizations Participate in Policy Advocacy

The policy advocacy activities of NPOs refer to that the NPOs use various channels to convey public interests and demands to the government or make various policy opinions and suggestions to assist the government in improving public policies so as to ensure that policies are formulated in the best interests of the people and that the implementation of policies does not deviate from the intended track [13]. Salamon believes that NPOs are important force of policy advocacy because of that they can help to discover neglected issues, draw the public's attention to the protection of fundamental human rights, and help people speak freely about the interests and concerns of a wide range of social, political, environmental, ethnic and community interests [11].

Based on two rounds survey of 28 environmental organizations in China, Xueyong Zhan and Tang Shuiyan have analyzed the political and institutional factors that limit or promote these environmental non-profit policy advocacy activities. Results indicate that the change of political structure gives environmental organizations greater chances to advocate for policy. Different from similar organizations in western countries, environmental NGOs in China are less involved in public policy advocacy and large-scale social movements. Their organizational capabilities and their interest in advocating policies are very limited [14]. Zhang Zhibin's research shows that the intensity of policy advocacy activi-

ties of non-profit organizations in China is a little bit low, and the strength of policy advocacy varies with the type of the organization, the degree of specialization, and the degree of dependence on government funds [15]. Zhang Yu has explored the public opinion function of non-profit organizations in public policy activities and summarized the reasons why non-profit organizations in Chiancan not give full play to their public opinion functions. These include the lack of independence, the expropriation of political rights by economic purposes, the non-professional membership and so on [16]. Wu Wending has researched the ways and problems of non-profit organizations participating in public policy in China. The ways of nonprofit organizations participating in public policy are divided into structural participation and advocacy participation. The internal factors, such as the lack of independence and financial support, unclear positioning, low management level and shortage on human resources, and external factors, such as unclear legal status, the narrow participation channels, the lack of transparency, the limitations of the traditional government concepts and the inadequate social support, are the main problems that lead NPOs in China not to participate well in public policy [9].

On the whole, the policy advocacy of NPOs in China has some effects, but there still exists some problems such as lack of understanding of the meaning of policy advocacy, inadequate ways of advocacy and lack of advocacy strategy. Therefore, the policy advocacy of NPOs in China has a limited impact on public policy. The development of policy advocacy has a long way to go [1]. In addition, there have been many macro-level studies on China's NPO policy advocacy activities, but still lack a strong case study to support the relevant theory. Although the analysis at the macro level has the effect of finding a solution to the current situation, if there is a lack of basicity of cases support, it is also bound to detract from the validity of its conclusions. In view of this, this study hopes to make full use of the typical case of Friends of Nature to analyze how China's environmental non-profit organizations successfully carry out public policy advocacy, and then provide reference for non-profit organizations in the future to overcome their own or external conditions to give full play to public opinion functions .

3. Development of Friends of Nature and Its Major Policy Advocacy Activities

3.1. Delicate Garden Meeting and the Establishment of Friends of Nature

On June 5, 1993, Liang Congjie, the son of the famous architect Liang Sicheng, also the grandchild of Liang Qichao, with other enlightened intellectuals such as Yang Dongping, the professor of Beijing Institute of Technology, organized the first spontaneous informal environmental forum—Delicate Garden Conference, marking the formal establishment of Friends of Nature. Liang Congjie served as the president.

3.2. Protection of Natural Forest in Northwest Yunnan and *Rhinopithecus bieti*

In 1995, Friends of Nature started to pay attention to the issue of the survival of *Rhinopithecus bieti* caused by the deforestation in Deqin County, Yunnan Province. In addition to notifying the public of the facts through the media, Friends of Nature also wrote letters directly to relevant leaders of the Central Government and actually participated in the rescue activities of *Rhinopithecus bieti* and the protection of Northwest Yunnan. In 1998, when U.S. President Bill Clinton visited China, Liang Congjie met with him and presented a photograph of the mother and son of *Rhinopithecus bieti*. In the same year, Friends of Nature cooperated with the CCTV Focus Interviews and exposed that Deqin County was still illegally logging natural forests. The situation aroused the concern of the central leadership so that the issue could be further resolved.

3.3. Protection of Tibetan Antelopes

In 1995, Friends of Nature began to concern about the conservation of Tibetan antelopes in Hoh Xil, Qinghai Province. In addition to actively supporting Yang Xin's establishment of the SonamTatjie Nature Conservation Station, it was also concerned about the anti-poaching activities of the Western Working Committee (Wild Yak Team) in Zhiduo County. In the summer of 1998, Friends of Nature and Green Weekend jointly invited ZabatDorje to Beijing to brief Natural Friends, college students and the media about their anti-poaching activities, arousing strong repercussions. In the autumn of 1998, Liang wrote a letter to British Prime Minister Blair for the issue of Tibetan antelope fuzz trade and received a positive response. After the sudden death of ZabatDorje, Friends of Nature stepped up the actual support for Wild Yak Team. In February 1999, Liang Congjie's report on the protection of Tibetan antelopes to the State Forestry Administration led to the Hoh Xil 1 Operation in April. It can be considered that all the attention and understanding of the Tibetan antelopes and the wild yaks whether by the government, the media or the public are all related to the friends of nature.

3.4. Shougang's Relocation

In 1997, at the fifth meeting of the eighth CPPCC, Liang Congjie suggested that Shougang stop the 2160 Project and gradually move out of Beijing partially. On September 16, 2001, the letter of suggestions on solving the problem of air pollution and water table drop in Beijing, which was written by the vice chairman of the CPPCC Qian Weichang, was forwarded to the mayor of Beijing Liu Qi by Liang Congjie. In early 2004, as the environmental consultant for the Beijing Olympic Committee, Liang Congjie emphasized the relocation of Shougang again at the relevant meeting. In 2005, Shougang's relocation officially started and was basically completed in 2010.

3.5. Concerned about the Southwest Hydropower Development

In January 2004, Friends of Nature and the Environment Development Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and other three institutions jointly organized a seminar focusing on the economic, social and ecological impacts of hydropower projects. The meeting made three major recommendations. First, organize relevant departments and experts to conduct a large-scale inter-departmental and inter-regional investigation on how to plan comprehensively and coordinate effectively as soon as possible in line with the hydropower development in southwest China. Second, speed up the system construction, especially speed up the establishment of a social evaluation system for water conservancy and hydropower development projects, implement the environmental impact assessment of the project planning as soon as possible, and promote public participation in major project demonstration in various ways. Thirdly, stop the Nujiang cascade development plan immediately. Since then, Friends of Nature has organized a series of activities with a number of environmental groups around these three proposals.

In the early years of its establishment, Friends of Nature identified its mission as public environmental education and focused on environmental destruction. Since 2000, the Friends of Nature has focused mainly on environmental education. On some major issues, it has gradually lacked attitudes and voices and began to become less energetic. Compared with some newly established environmental non-governmental organizations, Friends of Nature was disadvantaged in terms of the degree of activity and ability to respond to social issues. In 2004, at the time when the Friends of Nature was established for 10 years and the 72-year-old Liang Congjie prepared to withdraw from Friends of Nature, the Friends of Nature came to an end to the era led by individual leaders, and started to recruit the director-general nationwide and devote themselves to being more active and professional.

In 2005, the Friends of Nature formed the Law and Policy Advocacy Department and began working on legal advocacy. Since its establishment in 2005, this department has been involved in promoting the legislation and revision of dozens of laws, regulations and rules on environmental protection. Through two sessions of various levels, it made dozens of proposals and deeply participated in major environmental decision-making games such as Xiao Nanhai in Chongqing and Anning Petrochemical in Yunnan Province. In the meantime, they promoted the establishment and practice of environmental public interest litigation system in mainland China for 10 years.

3.6. Yuanmingyuan Environmental Assessment Hearing

In early 2005, the event that Yuanmingyuan lay a large area impermeable membrane caused widespread concern in society. For the sake of maintenance, Yuanmingyuan Park Management Office put impermeable membrane in the lake, which was strongly opposed by environmentalists as it would cause serious

damage to Yuanmingyuan aquatic ecosystem. On April 1, Friends of Nature and several non-governmental organizations issued a statement calling for the Yuanmingyuan Management Office to entrust a qualified EIA department to conduct an environmental impact assessment on the issue as soon as possible and urged the environmental protection department to hold a hearing on the EIA report and also wish to participate related EIA hearing work. At the same time, Friends of Nature and Blog China jointly organized the seminar about summer palace ecological and heritage conservation. On April 6, the State Environmental Protection Administration announced that it would hold a hearing on the morning of April 13. Xue Ye, the director-general of the Friends of Nature at that time attended the hearing and made a speech. He showed a follow-up observation report and photos on the ecology of Yuanmingyuan Park since 2003 by Friends of Nature's birdwatchers group, which proved that the lakeside membrane had a devastating impact on ecology. On July 5, the State Environmental Protection Administration asked Yuanmingyuan conduct a comprehensive rectification to the seepage control project of its east lake.

3.7. Concerned about the Yunnan Qujing's Industrial Waste

In August 2011, Luliang Chemical Industry Co., Ltd. in Yunnan Qujing illegally dumped 5,000 tons of industrial waste of chromium slag, causing water pollution in the south bank of the Pearl River. The surrounding villages almost became 'dead villages'. After the incident was exposed, Friends of Nature acted swiftly. The Friends of Nature's law and policy advocacy department, Chongqing Green Volunteers Federation staff, and other volunteers and lawyers went to the incident site to make the investigation. In September 2011, these two non-governmental grass-roots organizations took Luliang Chemical Industry Co., Ltd. to court in the name of public interest litigation and claimed 10 million yuan environmental compensation fees. According to local regulations, the prosecution was accepted. This is the first case of environmental public interest litigation initiated by a grass-roots environmental protection organization in China. It was listed as one of the top ten influential litigations in China in 2012 by Southern Weekend. In this special lawsuit, the plaintiff is neither a villager who has lost his loved one because of cancer, nor a neighbor whose cow or sheep were poisoned by chrome slag, nor a resident who uses Nanpanjiang River or the Pearl River as their source of drinking water, but the Friends of Nature and Chongqing Green Volunteers Federation—two non-governmental organization who have no direct interest with this lawsuit. This has opened up a precedent that although the grass-roots environmental organizations do not have strong economic power, they can also bring public interest litigation through cooperation with lawyers, which has provided a demonstration for more NPOs to protect the environment through judicial channels.

3.8. Fujian Nanping's Deforestation Case

On January 1, 2015, on the first working day after the implementation of the

new environmental protection law, Friends of Nature and Fujian's Greenland, as the joint plaintiffs, started the first battle of the public interest litigation after the implementation of the new environmental protection law—the case of deforestation in Nanping, Fujian. During the field investigation, they found that the vegetation originally covered by lush forests had been completely removed at the quarry site on the top of the mountain. The exposed rocks were cut into pieces and the abandoned stones were piled open. The destruction of the top of the mountain not only completely lost its ecological function, but also affected the surrounding ecological function and integrity. They hoped to implement the first public interest litigation case with the new environmental protection law to promote more environmental disputes into the judicial channels. To this end, they openly shouted: “How effective are new environmental protection law? Friends of Nature and our friends are trying!” “We are always promoting the establishment and improvement of the system. We also regard promoting the effective implementation of the system as one of our major tasks. We look forward to using the case to highlight the implementation of the system. We also hope that the whole society will pay attention to the use of legal means to promote environmental protection and promote the progress of the environmental law's development.” Ge Feng, the member of the Friends of Nature said it.

3.9. The Amendments of Environmental Protection Law

In September 2012, the environmental protection law started the revision process after a lapse of 23 years. The revision process has changed the previous closed-door model and incorporated a number of stakeholders in a relatively open manner, especially the non-governmental organizations. Among the non-governmental organizations, Friends of Nature's legislative initiatives and gambits have played a crucial role. The time of the most important social participation in the revision process was when the second meeting of the 12th National People's Congress Standing Committee reviewed the second draft of the amendment bill (that is, around June 26, 2013) and when the second draft of the amendment bill solicited comments towards society during July 19 to August 18, 2013. In the second review draft, the main qualification of environmental public interest litigation was stipulated as follows: “The China Environmental Protection Federation and the environmental protection federation set up in provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government may institute legal proceedings in the people's courts.” In response to this situation, on June 26, 2013, Friends of Nature issued the Emergency Appeal for Environmental Public Interest Litigation Concerning the Amendment to Environmental Protection Law (Draft) Under Review, calling for the relaxation of the qualification for environmental public interest litigation.

“We issued an emergency letter of recommendation online and distributed the content to the media, which received a lot of response and high exposure. Some scholars organized a seminar on the second review, and we also attended the seminar and showed our attitude. At the same time, we also find people's

deputies, hoping they can help us to express our opinions. After the public review of the second review draft, we conducted different ways to promote the amendments such as the organization of Sina micro-interviews and discussions with people from all walks of life. Finally, an opinion on the second review was formed and submitted to the Legal Work Committee of the NPC Standing Committee.” After numerous games, the scope of eligibility for environmental public interest litigation stipulated in Article 58 of the new environmental protection law has been continuously expanded, and the protection of environmental organizations in public interest litigation has been further strengthened in the corresponding judicial interpretation.

4. Reasons for Friends of Nature’s Successful Policy Advocacy

Through combing the development history of Friends of Nature and its major policy advocacy activities, we can see why Friends of Nature can successfully advocate for policy making.

4.1. The External Reasons

The government is more open and accepting in the policy-making process. Successfully influencing the revision of the environmental law is a landmark event for the successful implementation of policy advocacy by Friends of Nature. For a long time, China’s environmental legislation adopts a legislative model dominated by government agencies, presenting a de facto closed character. However, the revision of the environmental protection law has changed the previous closed-door model and incorporated many stakeholders, especially non-governmental organizations, in a relatively open manner. After initiating the work of amending the provisions of the environmental protection law, the NPC Environmental and Resources Commission has repeatedly listened to the opinions of the relevant departments and relevant experts of the State Council such as the MEP. The internal process of the revision involves a number of stakeholders such as various levels of government departments at the central and local levels and the NPC system and a variety of legislative approaches such as consulting experts, conducting field research and soliciting opinions publicly. The openness and acceptance shown by the government during the process of policy making provides a space for action for non-profit organizations to effectively participate in policy advocacy.

4.2. The Internal Reasons

4.2.1. High Political Legitimacy

Political legitimacy refers to the general attitude and political requirements concerning the establishment or activity of civil society organizations of the national political norms, which determines the space for the derivation and survival of civil society organizations. In this regard, Friends of Nature has clear bottom line awareness and rule awareness. On the one hand, Friends of Nature has

self-control over the size of the organization. Since its establishment, the Friends of Nature has not had much membership breakthrough. The reason for this is to stop the suspicion caused by the government and lead to unnecessary trouble. On the other hand, Friends of Nature effectively restricts the areas and ways of organizing activities and avoid sensitive political issues such as human rights and workers' movements [17]. Zhang Hehe, deputy director general of Friends of Nature, has also shown how to make the voices of NPOs. The first is how to establish a good topic. The direction of the issue should be right. In conjunction with issues such as urban solid wastes, sustainable transport, low-carbon families and waste separation in Friends of Nature, Zhang Hehe admitted that environmental NPOs should work in concert with the government's rhythm to form a concerted effort, otherwise no matter how good the idea is, it will be aborted.

4.2.2. High Administrative Legitimacy

The basis of administrative legitimacy is the procedure and practice of the bureaucratic system. If the core leader of a civil society organization is an administrative leader with a certain administrative level, then such a civil society organization naturally enjoys administrative legitimacy. In fact, the success of Friends of Nature largely benefits from the social influence of Liang Congjie. Liang Congjie himself is a professor of history at Peking University, vice president of Chinese Culture Academy and a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He has a high reputation in the society. Looking at the ingenious process of Friends of Nature, we can easily find out that the individual social influence of Liang Congjie has made a great contribution to the organization's administrative examination and approval, establishment of foundations, resource mobilization, and personnel recruitment [17]. In response, Zhao Youmei once discussed: In the current environment of China, the function of non-institutional factors is particularly obvious. Whether or not a civil society organization is recognized and supported by the state depends to a large extent on the personal and social context of the organization's leaders and the organization's own social network.

4.2.3. High Internal Legitimacy

The internal legitimacy of civil society organizations is the recognition or acceptance of the community and the organizational culture by internal members and their willingness to contribute their time, energy and financial resources to the development of the organization. Friends of Nature has high internal legitimacy. It attracts or retains highly qualified personnel through three aspects: image motivation, interest motivation and identity motivation.

The main members of the organization, such as Liang Congjie, Yang Dongping and Wang Lixiong, have all received interviews with related media. Through the media coverage and publicity, some elites in the organization have become public figures and environmental spokesmen for the public. Friends of Nature makes full use of the role of public image to inspire employees' sense of honor, sense of belonging and sense of responsibility.

Most projects of Friends of Nature have been carried out and planned by a group of members who share the same interests, hobbies and expertise, such as the speech group, bird watching group, plant group, mountaineering group and so on. Such a group based on same innerests will, to a great extent, contribute to enhancing the emotional exchange among the members of the organization and thus increase the members' sense of belonging.

For Friends of Nature, the formation of its members' cohesion comes from their social identification of environmental protection values and the acceptance of this community. Such strong demand and intrinsic motivation have led them to persevere in their environmental protection work and to organize work conscientiously [17].

4.2.4. High Professionalism and Resource Integration Ability

In the course of 20 years of development, Friends of Nature has gradually realized the transformation from an organization advocated by charismatic leaders to a professional team. Since the retirement of Liang Congjie, Friends of Nature set up a law and policy advocacy team in 2005 and gradually became specialized after experiencing a difficult transition in 2008. After launching the first case of civil environmental public interest litigation in September 2011, with the promotion of this case, Friends of Nature began to accumulate experience based on judicial practice. The accumulation of team professionalism and judicial practical experience are prerequisites for Friends of Nature to play an influential role in advocacy. In addition, the social trust and resources networks(including sources of funding, media, experts, members, deputies, non-governmental organizations and other partners) established by Friends of Nature have formed effective support for its diverse advocacy approaches in the course of its 20 years of development.

5. Policy Suggestions

Drawing on the successful experience of Friends of Nature, in order to promote non-profit organizations in China to be able to effectively participate in policy advocacy and make the formulation of public policies more scientific and democratic. The government and non-profit organizations can work hard in the following ways.

First, at the government level, the government should be more open and accepting in the policy-making process to provide a space for action for non-profit organizations to effectively participate in policy advocacy.

Second, at the non-profit organization level, the non-profit organizations should: 1) Enhance the political legitimacy, strictly abide by the political bottom line, and act as an effective helper for the government rather than an openly screaming opponent or adversary. 2) Enhance the administrative legitimacy, broaden social networks, and learn how to use the power and channels within the system in the process of mobilizing resources outside the system. 3) Enhance the internal legitimacy, and improve members' sense of identity and belonging

through various effective incentive measures. 4) Strengthen the level of specialization, efficiently integrate all resources, and explore diversified advocacy approaches. Maybe the institutionalized channels of participation, both formal and informal, direct and indirect, are the effective path for the NPOs to achieve the goal of citizen empowerment [18].

6. Limitations and Future Research Directions

By sorting out Friends of Nature's development history and major policy advocacy activities, this article analyses the reasons why Friends of Nature can successfully advocate for policy making. The results have some implications for governments' policy formulation and non-profit organizations' policy advocacy. However, this study also has some limitations. First of all, this study selected only a single case of Friends of Nature for analysis. The conclusion may not be universal. In China, there are other non-profit organizations that also have successfully conducted policy advocacy. Future research can choose them as cases. Secondly, this study's combing of Friends of Nature's development process and its major policy advocacy activities is mainly based on the information disclosed on the website and in the literature. Future research can be conducted on interviews with relevant staff of Nature's Friends to obtain first-hand data and make the research more in-depth.

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