

## On the Green Track

*Taiwan is tackling climate change via strategies ranging from improving public transport systems to sparking the use of electric vehicles.*

BY OSCAR CHUNG

PHOTOS BY CHIN HUNG-HAO

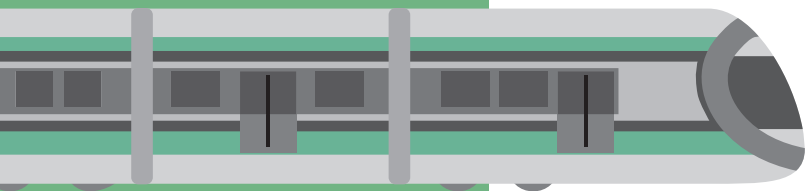
Life is becoming easier and greener for citizens of southern Taiwan's Chiayi City. Last year, all of its buses received electric vehicle upgrades, and the total length of routes is set to increase from 36 kilometers in 2019 to 88 km by the end of 2021. In addition, the timetable is more convenient, with services coming at intervals of 15 to 30 minutes, compared with one to two hours previously.

Chang Chiung-hsi (張瓊璽), chief of the Transportation Administration Section under the local government's Transportation Department, said city buses were once rarely seen in Chiayi. "But now they're part and parcel of daily life and proving popular with residents," she added, citing rising ridership from 80,000 in 2017 to 260,000 last year.

Chiayi is one of Taiwan's model municipal citizens when it comes to developing green transportation. Lin Chi-kuo (林繼國), director general of the Institute of Transportation at the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC), said optimizing existing systems and promoting electric vehicles are twin strategies for cutting carbon emissions. "It's essential to have viable public transportation so as to persuade the people to reduce reliance on cars and motorbikes."

### Main Offender

Such vehicles, according to Lin, are a major source of air pollution and greenhouse gases. A report released by the MOTC in 2018 revealed that road transportation accounts for 95.5 percent of emissions produced by the sector overall. This compares with 2.2 percent for rail, 1.5 percent for watercourses and 0.8 percent for aviation. A further breakdown



indicates that 63.8 percent of road emissions are from small passenger cars and motorbikes. In total, the transportation sector is responsible for 12.7 percent of emissions produced in Taiwan.

Lin believes the numbers indicate an underlying need for improvement, especially in the area of rail transportation. “Taiwan’s investment in transportation infrastructure tends to center on highways. But over the past decade, there’s been a rethink of sorts.”

One high-profile example is the expansion of Taiwan High Speed Rail (THSR). Since 2017, the government has made it a top priority to extend the 350-km THSR line

running along the heavily populated west of the country from Taipei City in the north to Kaohsiung City in the south. Upgrading the country’s metros and standard rail services are also high on the agenda. Four of Taiwan’s six special municipalities have at least one mass rapid transit line in operation, and these are complemented by light-rail systems in Kaohsiung and New Taipei City.

### Green Express

Taiwan Railways Administration (TRA), which operates the country’s 130-year-old network, is playing its

part in championing the green transportation cause. To woo passengers traveling short distances via motorways, the MOTC-overseen agency is constructing additional stations on busier routes, as well as scheduling more services to meet heightened demand. Since the early 2000s, nearly 40 such stations have been launched, with more in the pipeline.

TRA is also encouraging passengers to think green by making Taiwan’s beloved pastime cycling part of the daily commute. In 2009, the agency started offering dedicated spaces for bikes. The total number



Illustration by Lin Hsin-chieh



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01. The scenic line running along the East Rift Valley in eastern Taiwan is set to be cleaner and greener once double-tracking is completed by Taiwan Railways Administration in 2030.
02. TRA's Lilin Station in central Taiwan is one of many new stops recently constructed around the country.
03. Passengers enjoy the enhanced comfort of a well-lit TRA train boasting environmentally friendly air conditioning.
04. More space is available on TRA trains for bicycles to encourage green commuting.
05. An electric bus at a terminal station in New Taipei City's Tamsui District is plugged into the government's green mantra.
06. Road transport accounts for the vast majority of greenhouse gases produced by the transportation sector, with small passenger cars and motorbikes the main culprits.

01. Courtesy of Lin Chia-yen  
02 & 04. Courtesy of Taiwan Railways Administration



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of spots on TRA trains has steadily grown to 694 and is projected to reach 1,318 by 2023.

TRA chalked up a record ridership of 236 million in 2019. The agency forecasts even healthier figures going forward on the back of an NT\$99.7 billion (US\$3.56 billion), four-year investment in replacing half of its 2,595 carriages by 2024. Feng Hui-sheng (馮輝昇), deputy director-general of the TRA, said this unprecedented renewal of rolling stock is a boon for green transportation. “The new cars are energy efficient and will further enhance the credentials of the agency as an environmentally conscious service provider.”

As the majority of TRA lines are double track, the agency is burning the midnight oil in ensuring all remaining single-track sections are upgraded posthaste. Special attention is focused on the TRA lines winding along the East Rift Valley in the eastern Taiwan counties of Hualien and Taitung.

Often described as the country’s most scenic rail journey, the lines offer unparalleled views of rugged coastal mountain ranges, lush vegetation and rural hamlets. Tickets for the 160-km journey must be booked weeks in advance, forcing locals to take buses, cars or scooters to get from A to B. Double-tracking the electrified lines by 2030 will expand access, reduce road transportation and add 17,000 rides annually.

### Electric Dreams

Going electric is the trend for motor vehicles, too. The sector is powering ahead courtesy of MOTC subsidies for various electric vehicle (EV) purchases, in particular buses. Operators qualify for payments of up to NT\$10 million (US\$357,000)



per EV. Currently, 560 of Taiwan’s 11,000 city buses are electric, with the ambitious goal of a complete fleet replacement set for 2030.

The government’s green largesse is largely responsible for the surging popularity of electric scooters (e-scooters) in Taiwan, as is its commitment to supporting the development of an increasingly friendly charging environment. More than 3 percent of scooters zipping about Taiwan’s roads are powered by electricity, according to the MOTC.

E-scooters are not the only EVs targeted for promotion. The purchase and use of small cars is encouraged via various tax incentives. One example is the 30 percent commodity tax, which is waived for purchases under NT\$1.4 million (US\$50,000), with any sum in excess taxable at 15 percent. The initiative will end in December, but the plans are under consideration for an extension. This is expected to take the number of small cars running on electricity in Taiwan beyond the current 10,000 out of a total 7 million vehicles—a significant improvement from 1,213 in 2018.

### Complete Commitment

Taiwan’s public and private sectors are on the same page when it comes to green transportation. Recent

examples include Taoyuan City-based China Motor Corp. developing electric vans for use as mail delivery vehicles starting in 2018, as well as state-backed Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) cooperating with homegrown outfits in manufacturing buses using indigenously produced components under the auspices of the ITRI Electric Vehicle Promotion Office established last year.

The ITRI unit was one of the main movers and shakers behind the launch of the Taiwan Electric Vehicle Power Charging Technology Promotion Alliance in September 2020. Tasked with tackling one of the main roadblocks to the uptake of EVs, the alliance comprises government agencies such as the MOTC and the Cabinet-level Environmental Protection Administration, as well as industry associations, major auto companies and charging station operators.

With various EV manufacturers operating standalone charging facilities for respective customers, the ITRI-led alliance faces a stiff challenge in coordinating member efforts to construct standardized rapid-charging stations around Taiwan. Larry Chang (張念慈), business director of the ITRI unit, sees the move as crucial in boosting the

use of small car EVs. “Amid growing global concern over climate change, charging stations will replace gas stations at a rapid pace,” he said, adding that the latter could be a thing of the past in a few decades.

Another way of fast-tracking green transportation is the integration of smart technology. Director General Lin said significant amounts of energy can be saved, even when systems achieve a basic level of proficiency. He singled out for praise Taiwan’s first smart bus stops in Taipei. Constantly displaying waiting times between services, the innovative system has been upgraded to enable residents to track buses in real time using an app designed for mobile devices.





### Silky Smooth



Another part of the government’s green transportation promotion efforts is streamlined payment systems such as EasyCard. First employed on Taipei’s metro system and city buses in 2002, and later for the TRA network, the smart card is widely seen as playing a key role in convincing the public to swap congested roads and pollution for stress-free travel with handsome eco-friendly paydays.

Equally effective in the green influencing stakes is the MeN Go Card. Developed by the MOTC’s Institute of Transportation, the system has been utilized to great effect in Kaohsiung since 2018. It is used for bicycle-sharing, city bus, ferry, light-rail, metro and taxi services, and has proven popular with residents.

Over the past three years, the institute has harnessed the power of artificial intelligence (AI) for four projects improving traffic efficiency and safety. One, initiated two years ago in the central Taiwan city of Taichung, uses AI cameras to capture images of vehicle flows. The data serves as the basis for adjustments and enhancement to traffic light sequencing. Travel times on major roads in the assessed area are down by 10 percent during rush



hour on weekdays, significantly reducing emissions.

“Although there’s a long way to go, ongoing efforts helped the country realize the goal of cutting transportation sector greenhouse gas emissions by 2 percent at year-end 2020, compared with 2005 levels,” Lin said. The goal, achieved ahead of schedule, saw a sectorwide reduction of 2.61 percent by 2019. “That’s a good response to global warming, an issue a responsible member of the international community like Taiwan should address,” he added.  

01. All buses in southern Taiwan’s Chiayi City are running on electricity.
02. Models made by U.S.-headquartered Tesla Inc. comprise the bulk of more than 10,000 electric cars on the roads in Taiwan.
03. The Zen-like serenity of the Wenhu Line in Taipei City illustrates the success of the government’s multifaceted approach to green transportation.
04. Smart bus stops in Taipei display waiting times between services.
05. Traffic flows are more easily regulated using the latest artificial intelligence-powered camera system and analysis techniques.

01. Courtesy of Chiayi City Government

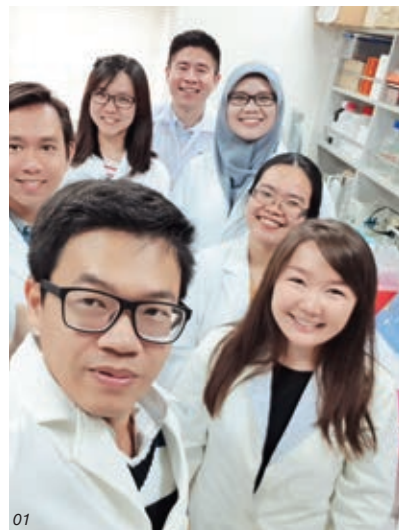
## Best of the Best

*A government-funded scholarship is attracting lecturers from South and Southeast Asia to pursue higher education in Taiwan.*

BY KELLY HER

PHOTOS BY CHEN MEI-LING

When 32-year-old Melysa Fitriana from Indonesia started her search for the perfect doctoral program to pursue her research, she was attracted by big name institutions in Australia, Japan and the U.K. But despite the fierce competition, it was ultimately Taipei Medical University (TMU) that won her approval thanks to its ideal mix of academic expertise and financial support. “I decided to study in Taiwan because of TMU’s excellent reputation for medical research and high international rankings,” she said. “Top that off with a scholarship opportunity—it was an easy choice to make in the end.”



Previously a lecturer in the Department of Otorhinolaryngology at Universitas Gadjah Mada as well as a practicing otolaryngologist at Dr. Sardjito General Hospital in Yogyakarta, Fitriana is a beneficiary of the Elite Scholarship Program (ESP) launched by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2017 to encourage instructors from South and Southeast Asia to pursue



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a master's or Ph.D. in Taiwan. Recipients get a monthly stipend of NT\$25,000 (US\$893) to cover tuition and living expenses over a period of two to three years.

The scholarship was established as part of the MOE's talent development initiatives under the New Southbound Policy (NSP). A key plank in the government's national development strategy, the NSP seeks to deepen Taiwan's agricultural, business, cultural, education, tourism and trade ties with the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand.

### Golden Opportunity

According to Fitriana, the experience of living and studying in Taiwan has exceeded her high expectations. "While the ESP was a big incentive for me, the fact Taiwan is such a safe, tolerant and welcoming country has made everything so much easier," she said. "As a Muslim, I've not faced any issues accessing halal-certified products and services, nor have I encountered any discrimination in everyday life."

Fitriana said she understands the importance of high-quality teaching given her work as a lecturer and medical professional. Specifically,

01. Elite Scholarship Program recipient Melysa Fitriana from Indonesia, wearing a gray headscarf, is all smiles alongside her classmates at Taipei Medical University.

02 – 04. Fitriana hones her skills in the lab, the simulation center and the classroom as part of her doctoral research.

01 & 04. Courtesy of Melysa Fitriana





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she is aware of the need for qualified scientists to ensure effective instruction in classrooms. “For the ESP to seek out people like me with a background in education shows Taiwan’s commitment to raising standards across the board not just at home but also abroad. Hopefully it can help build ties throughout the region,” she added.

Another ESP recipient is 27-year-old Nguyen Cai from Vietnam, who worked as a lecturer in the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at Hanoi Medical University and as a nurse at the university’s affiliated hospital before completing her



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master’s degree last July in TMU’s School of Nursing. She chose TMU because of its status as one of the world’s top 100 universities for nursing according to London-based Quacquarelli Symonds’s World University Rankings.

“Studying in a foreign country can be overwhelming and create financial stress,” Nguyen said. “So when I discovered I was eligible for the ESP, I filed an application as quickly as possible—luckily I was chosen!”

Tsai Pei-shan (蔡佩珊), dean of the Office of Global Engagement at TMU, said her institution seeks to recruit and cultivate high-end talent from around the world through its



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postgraduate programs. The ESP has played a crucial role in making the university a more attractive option for international students, she added, with 345 such individuals attending TMU including 251 from NSP target countries. Among them, 33 Ph.D. students are ESP recipients: 20 from Vietnam; nine, Indonesia; three, India; and one, Thailand.

Prior to the launch of the NSP in 2016, TMU had already established cooperation partnerships in medical research and training with counterparts in Indonesia and Vietnam. These existing links helped with recruiting efforts when plans were made to expand the university's international presence, Tsai said. "While competition for the best students from around the world continues to heat up, the ESP gives Taiwan-based institutions a trump card in attracting potential candidates."

From Tsai's observation, ESP recipients tend to have years of work experience before coming to

Taiwan, which means they are highly motivated and have clear research and career goals alongside English-language proficiency. Looking ahead, such skills make them well placed to become societal elites and serve as advocates for advancing bilateral ties, she said.

### Global System

Huang Po-tsang (黃博澹), vice dean of the Office of International and Cross-Strait Education at Chung Yuan Christian University (CYCU) in the northern metropolis of Taoyuan, argues internationalization of higher education is a long-term trend, one that Taiwan's institutions must quickly adapt to given the declining cohorts of domestic students entering the system each year. This entails devising new globally minded curriculums while attracting staffers and partners equipped to operate in the new environment.

Government grants have a crucial role to play in the internationalization

01. Dean of TMU's Office of Global Engagement Tsai Pei-shan, standing, shares a lighter moment with ESP student Nguyen Cai from Vietnam.
02. Nguyen is enrolled in a doctoral program at the university's School of Nursing.
03. Shuang Ho Hospital in New Taipei City is the location for Nguyen's practical courses.
04. TMU is known for having a diverse student body bolstered by its status as one of the world's top 100 universities for nursing according to London-based Quacquarelli Symonds's World University Rankings.
05. Filipino student Challoner Matero, left, is an ESP beneficiary currently pursuing a Ph.D. in accounting at Chung Yuan Christian University in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City.
06. Matero, left, and his classmates visit Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. in the northern city of Hsinchu to learn more about its business innovations.
07. A cycling tour for students from New Southbound Policy target countries gives Matero the perfect opportunity to make friends and learn more about Taiwan.

02 – 04. Courtesy of Nguyen Cai

05 – 07. Courtesy of Challoner Matero



process, Huang said, adding the ESP in particular has helped drive recruitment on postgraduate courses. “The program is a real attraction for students from Southeast Asia and is quickly becoming a calling card for local universities recruiting in the region.”

According to Huang, demand for highly skilled talent in Southeast Asia is at an all-time high as the region’s economies grow quickly due to industrialization and inflows of foreign investment. To tap into this burgeoning market, CYCU set up its Office of the New Southbound Project in 2017 to initiate various cooperation, exchange and student recruitment initiatives.

CYCU has since forged sisterhood ties with approximately 100

schools in Southeast Asia to promote student and teacher exchanges. There are 20 ESP recipients enrolled in the university’s doctoral programs including 13 from Indonesia, four from the Philippines and three from Vietnam.

Huang is impressed by ESP students’ engagement in the classroom, which is backed by their strong learning outcomes. “These individuals have professional experience and are well suited to carrying out research,” he said. “They’re also excellent members of the community keen to get involved in extracurricular activities.”

### Model Students

Challoner Matero from the Philippines, an ESP student currently pursuing a Ph.D. in accounting at CYCU, is a prime example. His outstanding performance at the university enabled him to gain membership of Beta Gamma Sigma, an international business honor society based in the U.S. The group recognizes high-performing students from around the world in business schools accredited by Florida-headquartered Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

For the past 20 years Matero served as a faculty member in the Department of Accountancy at University of San Carlos in Cebu. He came to study in CYCU’s College of Business in 2018 because the institution is accredited by AACSB, indicating its excellence in all areas of education.

International business requires a contextual understanding of the world’s various cultures, Matero said, adding that studying in Taiwan had given him a deeper knowledge of local society and people while





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- 01 & 02. International Dance Night and International Cultural Booth are among the many extracurricular activities organized by TMU to promote mutual understanding and friendship between foreign and domestic students.
- 03. CYCU's Office of the New Southbound Project is charged with handling various cooperation, exchange and student recruitment initiatives.
- 04. International students from CYCU visit a local vegetable farm to learn more about Taiwan's agricultural practices.



01 & 02. Courtesy of Taipei Medical University  
 03 & 04. Courtesy of Chung Yuan Christian University

helping him develop the competencies needed for career success.

Matero therefore considers CYCU's requirement for foreign students to take Mandarin language classes and examinations before graduation a good practice. "As Mandarin is increasingly used in the business world, especially in Asia, the ability to speak it definitely provides an edge on my CV," he said.

The Filipino is encouraged to learn about the importance Taiwan places on Southeast Asia through promotion of the NSP, and he is firm in the belief that there is more room for collaboration in the region. "With

my expertise, Mandarin skills and cultural sensitivity, I look forward to promoting Taiwan businesses in the Philippines and hope for future expansion of bilateral trade and investment," he added.

Determination from academics like Matero, Nguyen and Fitriana to stimulate further collaboration between Taiwan and Southeast Asia after completing their studies bodes well for the future, and is testament to the effectiveness of the ESP, according to CYCU's Huang. "Establishing this scholarship program has brought clear benefits to industry, students and universities—everyone's a winner."  

## Truth to Power

*Documentary filmmaker Ke Chin-yuan is committed to monitoring and recording environmental changes in Taiwan.*

BY KELLY HER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KE CHIN-YUAN



**K**e Chin-yuan (柯金源) bought his first camera in 1980 when he was 18 years old, marking the start of a lifelong love of photography. What began as a hobby transitioned into a position as a magazine photographer before Ke joined the news department of Taipei City-based Public Television Service (PTS) in 1998 and devoted himself full-time to film work. After joining PTS, his team launched the weekly program “Our Island,” a show aimed at addressing a variety of issues ranging from nature and wildlife conservation to coastal degradation and industrial pollution. As an avid environmentalist, Ke sees videography as the ideal method for documenting changes to Taiwan’s natural landscape.

“Though it’s a small country, Taiwan is rich in natural resources and full of wonders. Its tropical, subtropical and temperate climate zones each boast distinct flora and fauna,” Ke said. “Plus, even the high altitude

01. Documentary filmmaker Ke Chin-yuan at work in Yushan National Park in central Taiwan’s Nantou County
02. “Biographies of the Macaques” (2004) reveals how human destruction of habitats is threatening the monkeys’ survival.
03. The importance of using ocean resources sustainably is discussed in “Ocean” (2016).
04. “Corals in Memory” (2004) examines the impact of coastal development and fishing on coral reef ecosystems.





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areas are surprisingly accessible—it's possible to reach some regions above 3,000 meters in less than two hours!" Yet the filmmaker has also witnessed how prioritizing industrial and economic development has taken a toll over the years, citing in particular the large number of factories operating illegally on land zoned for agricultural use. Such industrial plants are a major contributor to local soil and water pollution, causing disadvantaged farmers to suffer significant crop damage.

According to Ke, PTS provides the perfect opportunity to do what he is most passionate about—documentary filmmaking. "Documentaries play a critical role in conservation movements while vividly representing Taiwan's diverse cultures and voices," he said. "I hope my work can influence government



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policies, encourage corporate social responsibility and raise awareness of issues concerning the environment and socially underprivileged.”

In the course of his career to date, Ke has produced four books, more than 200,000 photographs and about 30 documentaries, with the latter addressing everything from forests, oceans, water resources and environmental human rights

defenders in Taiwan to the impacts of global warming in Antarctica, the Arctic and Mount Everest. His efforts have earned him over 90 awards and nominations in film festivals at home and abroad including Taiwan International Documentary Festival, Green Film Festival in Seoul and International Wildlife Film Festival held in the U.S. state of Montana.



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- 01. Anti-nuclear demonstrations are among the major environmental movements in Taiwan over the past three decades featuring in “The Age of Awakening” (2018).
- 02. A scene from the devastating 921 Earthquake occurring on September 21, 1999, appears in “News from the Fault Line” (2000).
- 03. Formosa Plastics Group’s sixth naphtha cracking facility is in the western county of Yunlin. “Formosa vs. Formosa” (2010) highlights protests against the plant’s construction and the resultant pollution.
- 04 & 05. Ke’s films uncover the extent of damage to farms and fisheries caused by toxic waste.



Last year, Ke even received a National Award for Arts, becoming the first documentary filmmaker to win Taiwan's most prestigious honor in the artistic and cultural arenas. He captured the judges' attention with his independent spirit, effective storytelling techniques and tireless efforts to take his art to another level. "I was thrilled to accept the award, but I was also ecstatic to receive proof that documentaries are really taking off in Taiwan," Ke said. "This type of film can accomplish so much by helping build a sense of shared humanity, giving a voice to marginalized groups and holding those in power to account."

### Sparking Change

Though Ke firmly believes the end result is well worth the effort, he

admits that the documentary process can be arduous at times. He often must travel to the same remote locations and endure severe weather conditions. It is also not uncommon for him to experience intimidation while on the job, especially when he is working to expose public health hazards. On top of that, some projects can take up to 30 years to complete.

Among Ke's biggest undertakings are "Biographies of the Macaques" (2004), "Beyond Heaven & Earth" (2005), "Ocean" (2016) and "The Age of Awakening" (2018), all of which are based on intensive countrywide field surveys starting in the 1980s. Regarded as one of Ke's most significant works, "Awakening" highlights major environmental movements in Taiwan over the decades. The film extensively covers anti-nuclear

demonstrations as well as protests against U.S.-headquartered DuPont's titanium dioxide plant in the central county of Changhua and Taipei-based Formosa Plastics Group's sixth naphtha cracking facility in the western county of Yunlin.

"The rapid changes to Taiwan's environment call for public attention. I hope my films can aid research and promote environmental education in schools," Ke said. "My ultimate goal is to raise awareness of critical issues and actions we can take to address them." The filmmaker believes his work has helped propel government authorities to crack down on pollution, reject coastal development projects and demolish illegal structures on farmland. At the same time, conservation efforts by the public and private sectors are restoring



- 01. "Our Antarctic Dream" (2008) depicts a courageous attempt by Taiwan mountaineers to scale Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica, as well as the effects of global warming.
- 02. Mountain climbers from Taiwan test their skills during a quest to summit Denali, the highest mountain in North America, in "Peak of Dreams" (2009).
- 03. Ecological diversity of Taiping Island, also known as Itu Aba, in the South China Sea is portrayed in "Itu Aba Island" (2017).
- 04. "Sacred Forest" (2019) showcases the beauty and majesty of ancient trees while exploring the reciprocal relationship between humans and nature.



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habitats and facilitating the return of wildlife. "Positive outcomes like these keep me going," he said. "The ability of nature to heal itself fills me with awe."

### Industry Recognition

According to Wood Lin (林木材), director of the Documentary Department at Taipei-based Taiwan Film Institute, Ke is Taiwan's leading documentary filmmaker. "His critical approach, exceptional technique and emotionally charged imagery place him on a level of his own," Lin said.



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“He races against the clock to preserve memories of the natural world as it increasingly disappears, provoking audiences to deeply reflect upon the effects of industrialization on the environment.”

Ke’s accomplishments have also received recognition from fellow filmmakers like Kevin Lee (李惠仁). “Through hard work and perseverance, Ke is creating a systematic record of the country’s environmental transformations, allowing viewers to witness the extent of changes over time,” Lee said. “Ke’s films are celebrated for their thought-provoking content.” Though Lee focuses on history and politics rather than environmentalism, the two share keenness for investigative reporting, the daring to challenge authorities and belief in the ability of film to inspire change. “Documentaries are a powerful tool, bringing important topics to the screen in a captivating way that sparks conversation and sometimes even social movements,” he added.

Lee Ken-cheng (李根政), secretary-general of Kaohsiung City-headquartered Citizen of the Earth, Taiwan (CET) in southern Taiwan, calls Ke’s films the country’s most comprehensive environmental records in terms of depth and width. “Ke is dedicated to exploring environmental concerns that mainstream media outlets ignore,” he said. “By taking the road less traveled, he has made a big impact.”

Lee met Ke through chance encounters at the locations of ecological incidents, street demonstrations and press conferences. Their acquaintance bloomed into a partnership resulting in the CET-PTS joint production of “Sacred Forest” in 2013. The documentary depicts the diversity of Taiwan’s forest



ecosystems, which extend from the coastline to mountains reaching nearly 4,000 meters above sea level.

“The film showcases the majesty of ancient trees and takes an ecophilosophical approach to portraying the intrinsic value of nature and reciprocal relationship between humans and the environment,” the secretary-general said. With its aesthetic appeal and profound message, “Sacred Forest” garnered Ke his third Best Directing Award for

Non-Drama Program at the 2020 Golden Bell Awards, Taiwan’s equivalent to the Emmys.

According to Ke, his lifelong mission is to help create positive changes benefiting all living creatures. “Life is short, and I want to make it worthwhile by doing something useful,” the filmmaker said. “As an optimist, I’m confident that the environmental situation will improve as long as we keep directing our time and attention toward it.” 