Discovery of natural resources often causes and aggravates conflicts between countries. At the same time, economic incentives to utilize such resources over the political impasse could lead to joint development between the disputing countries and serve as a confidence building measure toward resolution of the conflict. These calculations, however, get further complicated when joint development proposals involve a party outside the dispute. In East Asia, maritime disputes in the East China Sea and the South China Sea involve natural gas and oil deposits. Joint ventures in these areas offer both prospects of cooperation and conflicts.