

April - June 2015

Volume 4
Issue 2

UNEP-IEMP Bulletin

MISSION

To provide science, technology, policy and capacity support to developing countries to integrate ecosystem management approach into their national policies and development plans to enhance the delivery of ecosystem services for human well-being.

MANDATE

To synthesize science findings for decision-making on ecosystem management and is supported by three inter-related initiatives:

1. Capacity Building and Technology Transfer
2. Making the Case through Assessment and Demonstration
3. Enhancing Science Policy Interface

UNEP-IEMP Bulletin will be issued on a quarterly basis to inform you of our achievements and lessons learned through activities and projects executed. Please feel free to share with us your feedback to further improve our work and the information shared with you. Please forward these directly to info@unep-iemp.org

The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting



Members of the UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee (front row): Left to Right: **Salif Diop**, Water Specialist, Member of the African Academy of Sciences; **Masataka Watanabe**, Chair, APAN; **Qinghua XU**, Deputy Secretary General, CCICED; **Zakri Abdul Hamid**, Founding Chair, IPBES; **Arthur Hanson**, Chief Advisor, CCICED; **Ibrahim Thiaw**, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP; **Tieniu Tan**, Deputy Secretary General of CAS; **Yiyu Chen**, Former President, NSFC; **Yi Liu**, Deputy Director General, IGSNRR; **Jieqing Zhang**, MEP (on behalf of Haisheng Li, MEP). © Huaping Long

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The UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee (SC) met this year at its 3rd annual meeting on 4 June, 2015 following the inaugural meeting of the UNEP-IEMP Science Advisory Group (SAG) meeting on 3 June.

Co-chaired by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Mr. Tieniu Tan, Deputy Secretary General of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the meeting set out to:

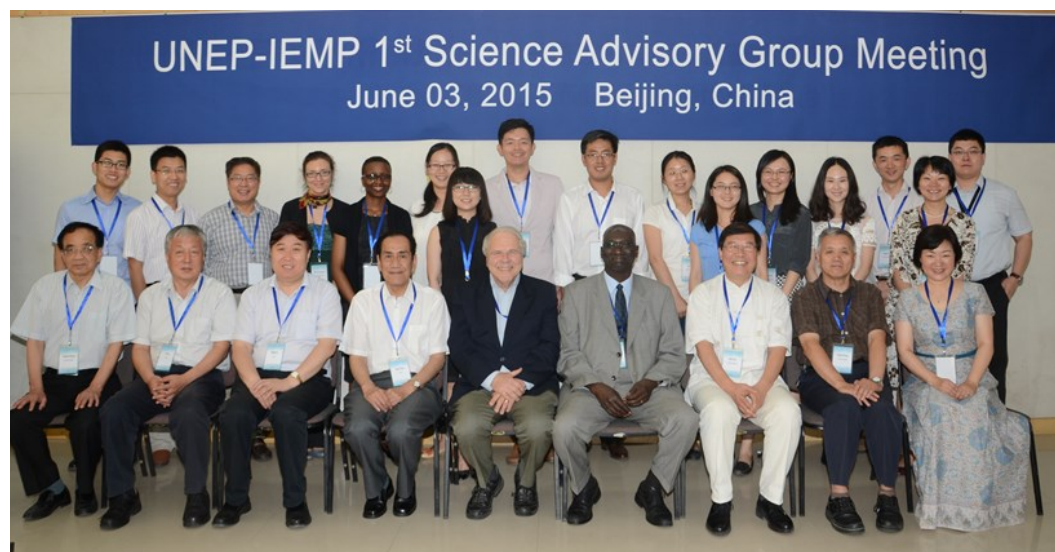
1. Review and evaluate the Annual Progress Report 2014;
2. Review and approve the Work Plan 2015 and
3. Review and approve the Conceptual Framework of the 10 year (2016-2025) Flagship Programme on Ecosystem, Climate and Livelihood.

MAIN DECISIONS

1. **Approved** the direction to develop a 10 year Flagship Programme on Ecosystem, Climate, and Livelihood (2016-2025);
2. **Endorsed** the Annual Work Plan for 2015;
3. **Established** a task team to discuss the vision of UNEP-IEMP and resource mobilization.

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Inaugural Meeting of the Science Advisory Group



Members of the UNEP-IEMP Science Advisory Group include: **Yi Liu**, Deputy Director General, IGSNRR; **Bojie Yu**, Professor of Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, CAS; **Yiyu Chen**, Former President, NSFC; **Arthur Hanson**, Chief Advisor, CCICED; **Salif Diop**, Water Specialist, Member of the African Academy of Sciences; Not pictured: **Qinghua Xu**; Deputy Secretary General, CCICED; **Gisele Alonso**, President of the Cuban Agency of Environment; **Kathy Mackinnon**, Vice-Chair of the CBD of IUCN/WCPA © Huaping Long

As part of the Agreement signed between UNEP and CAS recognizing UNEP-IEMP as a Collaborating Centre of UNEP and a global Centre on ecosystem management, a Science Advisory Group is to be formed with a mandate of providing technical and scientific advice on existing programmes and projects and directions of future UNEP-IEMP activities. To this end, UNEP-IEMP held its 1st Science Advisory Group (SAG) meeting on June 3, 2015. The Group is composed of distinguished experts who were selected for their scientific merits, capacity, and leadership in their respective fields related to ecosystem management. All members of the SAG are also members of the UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee.

Whilst reflecting on existing and emerging global and regional priority issues on ecosystem management, the SAG is also expected to:

1. Make recommendations on improving existing programmes and projects from a scientific perspective;
2. Review the scientific relevance, quality and impact of ongoing and planned projects; and
3. Facilitate partnerships with national, regional and international academic institutions that may benefit from or contribute to the work of UNEP-IEMP.

The SAG is co-chaired by Professor Yiyu Chen, Chairman of the Life Sciences Division of CAS and immediate past President of the National Natural Science Foundation of China; and Dr. Arthur Hanson, International Chief Advisor and Member, China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) and former President of IISD.

At their meeting, the SAG members firstly reviewed and commented on their Terms of Reference and mode of operation. They also reviewed and gave technical advice and recommendations on the Annual Report 2014 and Work Plan 2015, Flagship Programme on Ecosystem, Climate and Livelihood, and the Platform for Promoting South-South Cooperation on Climate Change and Biennial Work Plan 2016-2017. Some of the recommendations made were on the vision and niche of UNEP-IEMP, strengthening partnerships, financing and institutional development, and on the improvement of the proposed Flagship Programme.

Recommendations from the SAG meeting were presented at the meeting of the Steering Committee for final recommendations, considerations and approval.

20 Years on, UNEP's Award on Combating Desertification

"We need nature, nature does not need us. We need to restore nature in drylands. UNEP awarded projects from Xinjiang planted more than a tree 20years ago, they planted a new culture and instigated a new way of thinking that it is possible to recreate and restore nature even in the harsh est conditions."

Ibrahim Thiaw
Deputy Executive Director, UNEP

On June 2, The Urumqi Forum on Desertification 2015 was held to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of UNEP Award for "Saving the Drylands" and the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The occasion also witnessed the achievements of the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences (XIEG) on Outstanding Contribution in Combating Desertification and Controlling Land Degradation in Dryland Environments, since its two projects won the UNEP Award 1995.

Attended by over 150 participants, including Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Aierken Tuniyaki, Vice Chairman of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Prof. Cao Jinghua, Deputy Director General of Bureau of International Cooperation, CAS, and Prof. Chen Xi, Director General of XIEG, the Forum highlighted the major achievements and progress made in the last 20 years, specifically, *the 436km Great Green Wall protecting the Tarim Desert Highway, the high-level agricultural production, and increased income of the local communities in the Taklamakan Desert.*

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) is the largest province in land area in China accounting for 1/6 of the land territory. It is host to the second largest desert in the world - Taklamakan Desert - and has been designated the Core Area of the Silk Road Economic Zone. Desertification being a major environmental issue in the region, the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography has been working on counter measures since the 1960's which earned them two UNEP Awards for Saving the Drylands in 1995. In his opening remarks, Mr. Thiaw commended the work conducted by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in combating desertification despite the challenges of size, diversity of ecosystems, and the complexity of issues, and



Key participants at the Urumqi Forum on Desertification 2015 © Xinjiang Institute

transferring the knowledge, technology and good practices on desertification control to other developing countries. Vice Chairman, Mr. Tuniyaki stressed that Xinjiang will continue to spare no effort in combating desertification, improving people's livelihoods and advancing economic development in a sustainable way to generate harmony and stability in Xinjiang.

Sponsored by the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region XUAR, CAS and UNEP and organized by XIEG and UNEP-IEMP, the event contributed to the upcoming World Environment Day and World Desertification Day.

Prior to the Forum, Mr. Thiaw met with the Governor of XUAR, Mr. Shohrat Zakir and exchanged views on combating desertification and restoring degraded drylands, recognizing and appreciating the role of the Green Wall in desertification control.



Meeting between Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and Mr. Shohrat Zakir, Governor of XUAR.

EbA South Project Steering Committee Meeting



Participants at the meeting pose for a group photo.

The joint UNEP-NDRC global project, Enhancing Capacity, Knowledge and Technology Support to Build Climate Resilience of Vulnerable Developing Countries which was officially launched in 2013 has completed its 2nd year of implementation. To review the progress made in the last year, the 3rd Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting was held on June 17 in Chengdu, China. This PSC meeting primarily focused on summarizing the activities undertaken and progress achieved by the project in the last two years; and developing work plans and a strategy for implementation of priority

activities in Year 3. Specifically, the PSC:

1. Reviewed and evaluated the project progress of Year 2;
2. Reviewed and approved the work plan and budget for Year 3;
3. Reviewed and approved the 4yr work plan for the rest of the project;
4. Reviewed and approved the proposed revisions of the Project Results Framework (PRF), based on EBA protocol developments and recommendations of PSC participants.

Some key milestones in the project's 2nd year of implementation include but not limited to: organizations of an inter-regional training workshop on 'Accessing climate change adaptation finance and mainstreaming ecosystem-based approach to adaptation', in Malaysia which generated a discussion paper on EbA finance, as well as a policy brief; launch of the project web-based

knowledge-sharing platform ebasouth.org; and the development of a conceptual framework and analysis template for collecting EbA-related good practice case studies into an online database.

Following the PSC meeting, a 2nd Monitoring & Evaluation training workshop was held in Chengdu, China on June 18. The objectives were to better understand the project's M&E requirements, review the Project Result Framework (PRF) and link it with project activities, and jointly draft the project monitoring plan and agreement on next steps.

Participants also went on a field mission to the Yanting Agro-ecological Experimental Station of Purple Soil to see best practices on long term monitoring and research and demonstration on soil-water conservation; Dujiangyan city, a world heritage site to see Natural resources management practices with over 2000 years history; and 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake Eco-Restoration Sites and Maoxian Mountain Ecosystem Research Station to see China's post-earthquake eco-restoration experiences.



Yanting Agro-ecological Experimental Station of Purple Soil



2008 Wenchuan Earthquake Eco-Restoration Site



Dujiangyan city, a world heritage site

KEY DECISIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Following the recent earthquakes in Nepal, PSC decided to continue project activities in Nepal pending further guidance on the possibility of additional funding through the SCCF;
- ◆ Agreed on the necessity to conduct a post-earthquake assessment of the project in Nepal;
- ◆ Approved all proposed changes to the Project Results Framework (PRF);
- ◆ Approved the proposed budget revisions and work plans;
- ◆ Agreed that the abbreviated project name will be EbA South;
- ◆ Recommended the consideration of the continuation and upscaling of the project beyond its duration (second phase), with a focus on sustainability and climate resilience;
- ◆ Called for the development of a draft concept note for the planning tools;
- ◆ Next PSC meeting to be held in Nepal in June 2016.

Greater Mekong Sub-region Inception Workshop



Participants at the meeting pose for a group photo © Huaping Long

The project, South-South Capacity Building for Ecosystem Management in the Greater Mekong Sub-region held its inception workshop in Dongying City, China from June 25-26. Financed through the China Fund, the proposed project aims to kick off a basin-wide process on capacity building for integrating ecosystem management into national and regional development planning through identifying and prioritizing capacity needs and providing methods and tools and interactive consultation in the GMS. Despite the financial crises in 1997 and in 2008, countries within the GMS have experienced rapid economic growth over the past two decades. This economic growth has resulted in a transformation of land-use patterns and consequently environmental degradation including;

deforestation and loss of forest cover, damming of rivers, over-fishing, and construction of bridges for roads and railways. The livelihoods of local communities living in the GMS are threatened by unsustainable land use activities as they rely on ecosystem goods/services.

In response, the workshop kicked-off this capacity building process and addressed issues such as the lack of regional consensus on key capacity needs for ecosystem management in the GMS; lack of methods and tools for integration of ecosystem approach into national plans; lack of regional frameworks for capacity building; disconnect between the upper and lower reaches; and disconnect between science and policy.

The workshop participants included government representatives from the 6 GMS countries, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, regional and international organizations such as the Mekong River Commission, China-ASEAN Environment Cooperation Center (CAEC), UNEP, and research organizations such as The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and CAS.



Ongoing discussions during the Steering Committee meeting

Taking into consideration the recommendations and feedback concluded by the SAG from its first meeting, the SC commended highly the achievements of UNEP-IEMP in 2014 which as noted are exceeding expectations. Some of the milestones achieved include; playing a pivotal role in initiating the MOU signed by UNEP and China on enhancing South-South on Climate Change, organizing the South-South Cooperation on Climate Change Forum held in Lima during COP20, launching a new project on

sustainable management and conservation of protected areas in East Africa, successful completion of the 2nd year of implementation of the UNEP-NDRC project funded through GEF-SCCF on ecosystem-based adaptation with several concrete outputs, and its annual retreat which resulted in the conceptualization of the Centre's 10 year Flagship Programme. SC members urged the Centre to maintain this momentum and continue building its credibility in championing ecosystem management, South-South cooperation, and the science-policy interface.

In addition, the SC members also reviewed and approved the Work Plan for 2015 including its proposal on staff requirements. For the first time, UNEP-IEMP presented a proposal for its 10 year Flagship Programme on Ecosystem, Climate and Livelihood (2016-2025) which was reviewed and approved by the SC in principle. The Programme is a long-term cooperation between China and UNEP that aims to assist developing countries to restore and conserve their ecosystems, address the impacts of climate change, and improve livelihoods, through providing knowledge, capacity, technology, and policy support. The Programme is expected to be officially launched in 2016.

UNEP-IEMP and UNEP China Office Joint Annual Retreat 2015



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Following the successful conclusion of UNEP-IEMP's 1st Science Advisory Group and 3rd Steering Committee meetings on June 3 & 4, 2015 respectively, this year's annual retreat focused on how to improve the conceptual framework of the 10year Flagship Programme based on the recommendations from the SAG and SC meetings and develop a roadmap for 2015/2016 leading to the official launch of the programme in May 2016 at the margins of the 2nd meeting of the UN Environment Assembly. As UNEP-IEMP is in transformation from a project-oriented to a programme-

oriented organization, this Flagship Programme will serve to further define the Centre's niche as a global Centre in the South. Issues of partnership building, resource mobilization and human capacity were also addressed. The roadmap includes activities such as stocktaking exercises, consultative meetings with potential partners, and an outreach strategy for enhanced promotion. A revised version of the Conceptual Framework of the Flagship Programme will be developed afterwards.

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Part of the 436 km Green Wall of the Taklamakan Desert. Constructed over a period of 16 years , the Wall is planted with Calligonum, Haloxylon and Tamarix in rows with drip irrigation pipes of high density salty water along the Tarim Desert Highway.

A production of the UNEP - International Ecosystem Management Partnership

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