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# 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. Science-Policy Interface

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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](mailto:info@unep-iemp.org)

## Dr Jian Liu appointed as the Chief Scientist of UN Environment

*He will be responsible for strengthening organization's scientific credibility and relevance*

United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) Executive Director Mr. Erik Sohlheim appointed Dr. Jian Liu, Founding Director, UN Environment's International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) as the Chief Scientist of the organization. In his new role, Dr. Liu will be responsible for strengthening UN Environment's credibility, legitimacy, relevance and integrity in the scientific arena. He will play an advisory role to the UN Environment leadership on scientific aspects of organization's strategic priorities and programme of work as set out in its Medium Term Strategy. Further, he will also lead the efforts in promoting science that can integrate the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainable development.

Dr Jian Liu said *"I express my deep gratitude to the leadership for appointing me. I will build upon the successes of my predecessors and will spare no efforts to 'advise, support, complement' the leadership to strengthen the scientific credibility of UN Environment."*

Commending his appointment, Prof Linxiu Zhang, Co-Director, UNEP-IEMP and Professor and Director, Centre for Chinese Agriculture Policy, Chinese Academy of Sciences said *"It is a matter of great pride for all of us. We owe our huge appreciation to Dr. Jian Liu. With his leadership, dedication and intellect, UNEP-IEMP has been able to make an impressive progress in the global South on issues related to ecosystem management. Personally, I greatly value his support and friendship that has always been generously provided to me."*

Under this leadership as the Founding Director of UNEP-IEMP since 2010, the Centre has been able to provide its technical services to 17 countries across Asia, Africa and West Asia. It has also been organizing high level fora of global significance such as the South-South Cooperation on Climate Change (SSCCC) forum since 2014 during the annual



*Dr. Jian Liu during the UNEP-IEMP Annual Retreat 2017 in Beijing. Photo: Guo Liuzuo*

United Nations Climate Change Conferences. Last year, UNEP-IEMP established its credibility in the realms of operations and ultimately transitioned into fully-operational phase. It also launched its flagship programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CEL) announced by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UN Environment at the Marrakech Climate Conference- COP 22. It will provide strategic vision and direction to the future international cooperation of UNEP-IEMP. Further, he has also provided mentorship to doctorate and post-doctorate students from China and other developing countries selected by Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), host institute of the UNEP-IEMP.

## EbA South Interregional Writing Workshop held in Cape Town

*Project core teams share ideas, gather knowledge and brainstorm on the way forward of the project*



*Participants of the EbA South Interregional Writing Workshop in Cape Town, South Africa. Photo: C4 EcoSolution*

The **GEF-funded project Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation (EbA South)** held an Interregional Writing Workshop from March 6- 11, 2017, with an aim to review global and regional strategies, funding opportunities and generate concept notes for the continuation and upscaling of EbA implementation started within EbA South. The workshop brought together the project core team: Project Management Unit (PMU) and other technical experts from UNEP-IEMP, Technical Advisor team, Task Manager and representatives of the country teams. It provided a comprehensive overview of funding opportunities for EbA through different funding programmes, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The workshop further provided an in-depth training on how to compile concept notes and funding proposals for GCF projects. Presentations, group exercises and several plenary discussions were also organised during the workshop.

Silvia Cazzetta, Programme Manager of UNEP-IEMP and EbA South Project Manager, summarised the experiences and lessons learnt from EbA South, and suggested that the continuation and upscaling of project interventions should build on these experiences, particularly in the context of South-South cooperation. Silvia also highlighted the possibility of integrating the second phase of EbA South with UNEP-IEMP's flagship programme on Climate, Ecosystems

### **UNEP-IEMP secures five CAS PIFI fellowships for developing countries researchers**

*The researchers will work to strengthen Centre's South-South Cooperation endeavor*

UNEP-IEMP has been granted five Chinese Academy of Sciences-President's International Fellowship Initiative (CAS PIFI) fellowships for researchers from developing countries. The Centre went through a stringent international recruitment process to select these 5 researchers. The most meritorious candidates were asked to prepare research proposals with CAS professors to apply for the PIFI application.

Recently, CAS PIFI review panel approved these applications based on global competition.

and Livelihoods (CEL). Dr Anthony Mills, CEO of C4EcoSolutions and EbA South Chief Technical Advisor, delivered a lecture on several concepts that are important for GCF proposals, such as bringing about a transformative change, overcoming barriers, stakeholder consultations and theory of change. Participants were divided into three groups and prepared 'idea notes' for developing new EbA projects in the three pilot countries, using the GCF concept note template.

The following activities are proposed in the idea notes: **Seychelles**- focussing on creating climate-resilient artificial reefs where natural reefs are degrading; **Nepal**- using EbA to restore degraded watersheds for safeguarding hydroelectricity production; **Mauritania**- establishing agro-forestry landscapes using multi drought-tolerant plant species, with the view to climate-proof livelihoods of local communities. The workshop also featured a Q&A session with Atifa Kassam, EbA South Task Manager, UN Environment. She provided an overview of GCF's role and highlighted the strengths of UN Environment as an Accredited Entity to channel GCF resources to projects and programmes.

She further gave detailed advice on the idea notes, in the context of implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement and the SDGs.

Five research fellows- two from Ethiopia and one each from Kenya, Malaysia and Nepal will be joining UNEP-IEMP team early 2017.

They will contribute to the decade-long flagship programme on Climate, Ecosystems, and Livelihoods (CEL) and further strengthen Centre's work on South-South cooperation. Since its inception, UNEP-IEMP has been granted **7 international fellowships** by CAS providing a unique opportunity to share best practices and forge partnerships with each other.

## UNEP-IEMP Delegation Visits Renmin University of China

*Both sides commit to building stronger ties and exchanged views on the 'Belt and Road' Initiative and other issues related to sustainable development*



*UNEP-IEMP and Renmin University of China's delegation during the meeting held in Beijing. Photo: Renmin University*

A five-member delegation from UNEP-IEMP led by Dr Jian Liu (Director) and Prof Linxiu Zhang (Co-Director) visited Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, **Renmin University of China** (RDCY). Prof Linxiu Zhang's presentation focused on the following:

1) **briefing** about the origins of Sustainable Development from an ecological dimension and challenges that exist in developing countries since climate change, ecosystem degradation and poverty have seriously threatened the living conditions of human beings.

2) **elaborating** UNEP-IEMP's activities and actions relating to Sustainable Development and South-South cooperation, especially the Centre's decade-long (2016-2025)

flagship programme on Climate, Ecosystem, and Livelihoods (CEL).

3) **exploring** opportunities to strengthen the '**Belt and Road**' Initiative. It provides an important window to advance South-South cooperation and further promote Sustainable Development.

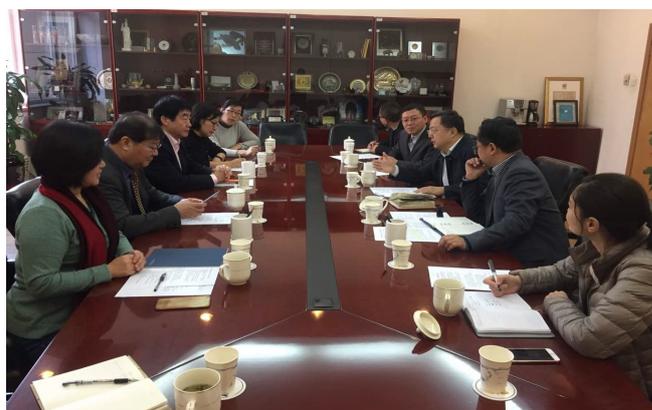
The RDCY delegation led by Wenhe Wang, Executive Dean of RDCY exchanged views with the UNEP-IEMP's delegation on the 'Belt and Road' initiative, green finance, China's urbanization and environmental governance in rural areas etc. Dr. Jian Liu highlighted the changing mechanism of foreign aids and the effective use of matching funds for global environmental governance. Both sides expressed keen interest to work closely in the future.

## UNEP-NSFC Bilateral Cooperation Meeting

*Partners appreciate bilateral cooperation; pledge to strengthen efforts in the future*

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)- National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) bilateral cooperation meeting was held recently. It was attended by delegates from both sides. Shigang Zhang, Coordinator of UN Environment's China Office and Feng Feng, Director General of Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC expressed deep recognition on the bilateral work done by both partners in recent years in the areas of climate change, ecosystem and chemicals. They expressed hope for more joint project applications in the future. Both partners stressed on the need to adjust the key cooperation areas from climate change, ecosystem and chemicals to climate change, ecosystem, resource efficiency and environmental governance.

They also showed willingness to hold a '**Workshop on Ecological Protection and Livelihood Under Climate Change in Africa**' this year, which is being proposed by UNEP-IEMP. It will highlight the achievements of the bilateral projects done so far. In terms of NSFC's work related to B&R, Shigang Zhang, Dr Jian Liu (Director of UNEP-IEMP) and Prof Zhang (Co-Director UNEP-IEMP) put forward their respective suggestions including making a good top-down design,

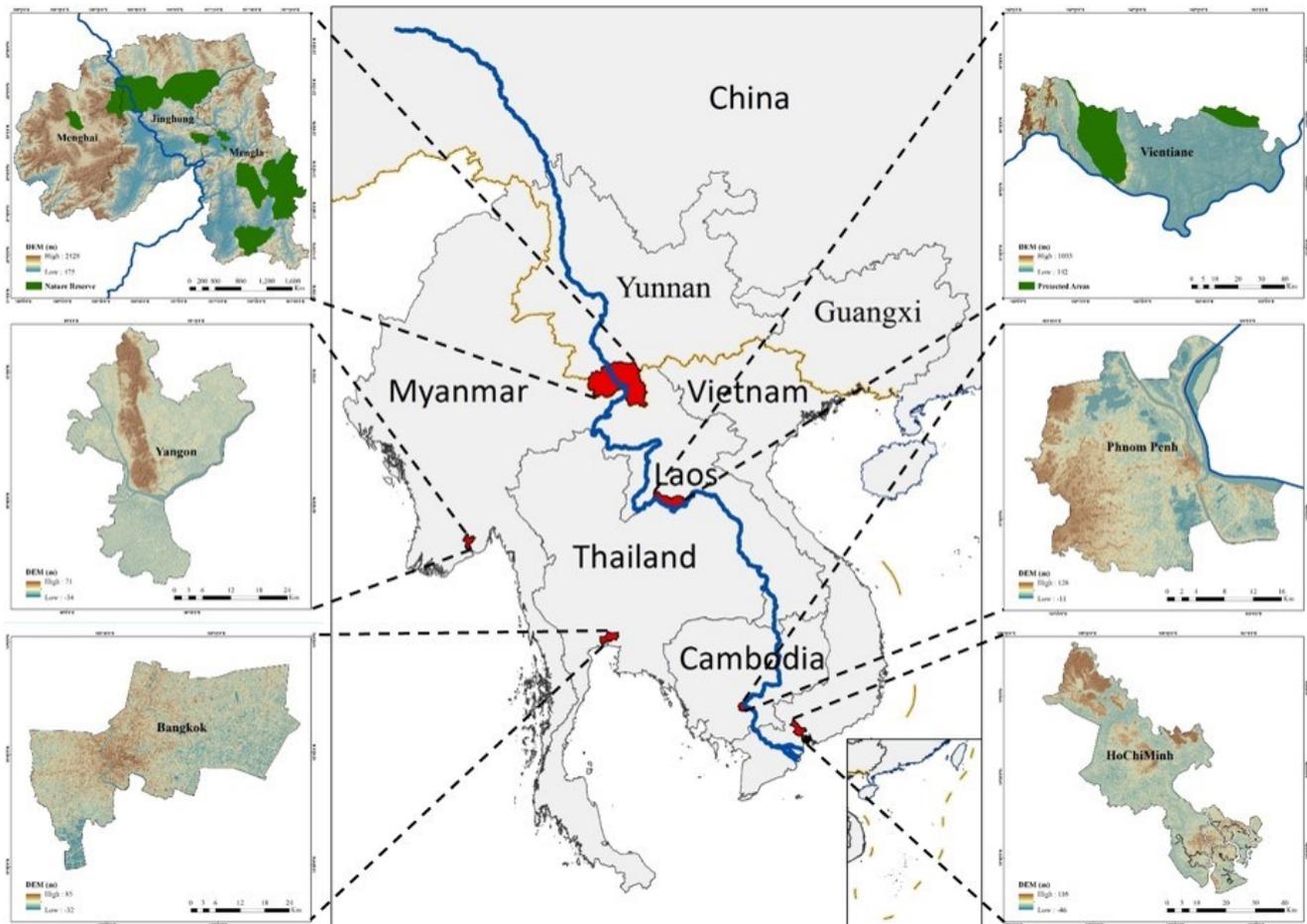


*UNEP-IEMP and NSFC Bilateral Cooperation Meeting held in Beijing. Photo: Yisong Guan*

making full use of international collaboration networks (including United Nations), communicating in commonly-used international languages, paying attention to the livelihoods in partner countries and winning people's support from these countries.

## Sharp urban expansion in typical cities of the Greater Mekong Subregion in the past few decades, says UNEP-IEMP study

First one-of-its-kind comprehensive analysis on 'land-use pattern change of typical cities' reveal interesting data and findings



Typical cities in the Greater Mekong Subregion. Photo: Cao Hui

UNEP-IEMP researcher Cao Hui recently conducted a research on 'land-use pattern change of typical cities in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)' analyzing six typical cities –Xishuangbanna, Yangon, Vientiane, Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Minh City.

Being the earliest and most effective regional cooperation mechanism of China, GMS holds a special significance in China's regional strategy. The research addresses various challenges faced in the development of the Subregion that need to be jointly addressed by the countries concerned.

The results of the research are as follows:

1) There is an obvious urban expansion in the typical cities in the past decades, but paddy shows a decreasing trend in the cities except Xishuangbanna.

2) Among the typical cities, Bangkok has the biggest built-up area and proportion, while Phnom Penh and Xishuangbanna has the smallest built-up area and proportion respectively. Outlying is always the dominant urban expansion type and urban sprawl is a common phenomenon in these cities.

3) Driving forces of urban expansion in the typical cities were also explored, especially policy factors, such as land laws, governments' attitudes towards foreign investment and environment laws.

4) Land fragmentation and the decreasing natural land-use types are a common phenomenon in typical cities of GMS. Urban expansion also leads to urban sprawl, environmental deterioration, traffic congestion and the increase in flood risks.

The study classified maps of the cities using satellite images; incorporated multiple tools to characterize urban expansion and land-use pattern change.

It is envisaged that the results of the land-use pattern change of typical cities would not only help policy makers in regional cooperation and urban planning, but also provide useful information for further exploration of ecological environment or natural resources under the '**Belt and Road**' Initiative and '**Lancang-Mekong Cooperation**' mechanism.

## Mission to Thar Coal Field, Pakistan

*Second phase of the study entitled 'Valuation of Ecosystem Services' in Thar successfully completed*

A detailed assessment was carried in the second phase of the research study entitled '**Valuation of Ecosystem Services in Thar Coal Field**' in the Thar Coal Field, Pakistan.

This phase was a follow up of preliminary scoping study conducted in June 2016 in which the most important ecosystem services were identified and prioritized to be assessed.

In the context of the impact of mining on provisioning ecosystem services in Thar, water scarcity is identified as a key factor hampering the development of the region. The changes in an ecosystem's structure and function caused by surface mining activities are likely to affect the flow and values of ecosystem services across the entire landscape. Also, removal of vegetation and top soil leads to loss of carbon sequestration, erosion control impacting the drinking water quality and life-time of downstream infrastructure, groundwater recharge, among others.

Based on the initial assessment done and outputs achieved thus far, this survey was conducted in 100 households of 9 villages. It served the purpose to assess the value of water services perceived by the households of local communities to enable enhanced flow and improved water services which can cater to the domestic needs of the local people as well as other services, such as crop production etc.

It is envisaged that the results of the second phase will help in assessing environmental values of water services in Thar. The prime goal of the research study is to create a decision support framework for sustainable land-use planning and help inform planners and policy-makers to consider the economic, social and environmental implications of energy projects in Pakistan under the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**. It will also help the people of Thar improve their standard of living through better access and reliable service provision of alternative sources of water.



*Locals being interviewed in Thar Coal Field during the survey. Photo: Hina Aslam*

## STAFF UPDATE OUTGOING

### Dr Jian Liu, Founding Director, UNEP-IEMP

Dr Jian Liu was the Founding Director of UNEP-IEMP. He has moved to Nairobi after his appointment as the Chief Scientist of UN Environment. UNEP-IEMP family expresses their sincere gratitude for his exemplary leadership and wishes him all the success in his future endeavours.



### Dr Min Jet Loo, Project Manager- China Trust Fund, UNEP-IEMP

Dr Min Jet Loo was the project manager of the China Trust Fund's GMS project. He has re-located to Malaysia. UNEP-IEMP family extends their warm wishes for his future career prospects.





*Monsoon tropical forest ecosystem in the Bolikhamxai province of Lao PDR. Photo: Liang Wu*

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