



澜沧江-湄公河环境合作中心
Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center

Newsletter

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Green Lancang-Mekong Initiative: Roundtable Dialogue on Green, Low-carbon and Sustainable Infrastructure

Session 2: Ecological Infrastructure Supports Community Sustainable Development in the Lancang-Mekong Region

Experts' Opinions

On April 21, 2022, the Green Lancang-Mekong Initiative: Roundtable Dialogue on Green, Low-carbon and Sustainable Infrastructure was held by Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center (LMEC)/ Foreign Environmental Cooperation center (FECO), Ministry of Ecology and Environment, under the guidance of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) in Beijing in the form of hybrid meeting. Nearly 300 representatives from MEE and provincial ecological and environmental departments, climate and environment departments of Mekong countries, UN agencies in China, relevant international organizations, research institutions, and the private sector attended the meeting.

The second symposium session focused on the Lancang-Mekong eco-infrastructure facilitating community development, sharing good practices on the sustainable management of ecosystems in the Lancang-Mekong region, and actively promoting knowledge sharing on community response to climate change and livelihood improvement. The views of relevant experts are summarized below.



Makiko Yashiro
Programme Officer/Regional Coordinator of
Ecosystem Management Sub-programme, UNEP-ROAP

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has developed and implemented the Integrated Sustainable Livelihood-based Ecosystem Management (ISLM) project under the framework of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation. Through conducting environment-friendly rubber plantation trials in Phnom Kulen National Park in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and in Jingtai Green Industry Rubber Plantation in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, China, the project compares and analyzes the costs and benefits of different renovation plans, and aims to strengthen the dissemination of experience in sustainable management of environment-friendly rubber forests, evaluate the effect on community livelihood improvement and biodiversity conservation, raise the Lancang-Mekong countries' awareness of ecosystems, and enhance their cross-regional and cross-sectoral capacity for sustainable ecosystem management.



Dr. Thanapon Piman
Senior Research Fellow of
Stockholm Environment Institute Asia

The "Beyond Water Boundaries Framework" is an equitable and sustainable water management approach based on the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) framework. Climate change, deforestation, overdevelopment of water resources, and overuse of land and ecosystem services have resulted in ineffective natural resource management in the region. Using advanced modeling tools and remote sensing techniques, SEI has developed an integrated water-ecology-society tool under the "Beyond Water Boundaries Framework", which incorporates three core concepts: first, sustainable water management should go beyond basin boundaries, with management processes based not only on specific geographical positions, but also on the extent to which different regions are affected; second, the impacts of ecosystems should be considered from an early stage in water management and planning; third, people who would be affected by the decision should get involved in water resource management, thus recognizing and solving problems of power imbalance of all scales.

Tatirose Vijitpan Focal Point of Greater Mekong Sub-region Portfolio, International Ecosystem Management Partnership, UNEP



The UNEP International Ecosystem Management Partnership focuses on South-South cooperation in the areas of climate change response and ecosystems and livelihood through ecosystem-based climate adaptation actions, ecosystem restoration, agrobiodiversity conservation, building food system resilience as well as gender and community development, to help communities better cope with climate change and thereby contribute to improving local people's livelihood. As one of the regions with the wealthiest and most important biodiversity in the world, the Lancang-Mekong region should implement the "UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration" initiative while strengthening the sustainability of local value chains and ecosystem connectivity through nature-based solutions.



CHEN Yinghao Associate Research Fellow of Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center / Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center

The project integrated ecosystem management projects based on sustainable livelihoods under the framework of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation aims to prioritize and explore ways to achieve higher production efficiency on limited land in agroforestry. By planting shrubs and herbaceous cash crops in rubber forests or raising poultry in the forest, the project improved the rubber monoculture and sustainable rubber industry development. The project also uses the integrated ecosystem management approach to improve the livelihood of local communities, resolving the conflict between solving ecological problems caused by rubber plantations and improving community livelihood .

ZHANG Yan Specialist of Bureau of Ecology and Environment, Xishuangbanna Prefecture, Yunnan Province



Yunnan Province has constructed of environment-friendly ecological rubber plantation demonstration areas in Longlin Village of Mengla County, Jingtai Environmental Rubber Plantation, and the Naban River Basin. By changing the plantation structure growing tea, cocoa, coffee, and medicinal plants, Yunnan hopes to develop the rubber agroforestry industry, increase its economic output, and gives full play to the ecological functions of rubber plantations to enhance overall economic benefits. Besides, a comprehensive study of rubber forest carbon sinks is being carried out, aiming to give full play to the rich carbon sink value of the Xishuangbanna rubber forest.

WU Wanzhou
Specialist of Climate Change and Regional Cooperation
Department of Ecology and Environment of
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region



Relying on its rich agricultural and forestry resources, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has transitioned towards sustainable development of industrial communities. Take the Jiangnan Manufacturing Comprehensive Development Zone in Guigang, Guangxi as an example; the biomass cogeneration project using agricultural and forestry waste as fuel has achieved full coverage of centralized heating in the zone. Replacing coal with agroforestry biomass energy reduces carbon emissions, realizes clean heating and improves the rural environment on the one hand, and increases green employment and wealth opportunities on the other, with enormous comprehensive social, economic, and environmental benefits.



ZHANG Haiya
Manager of Sustainable Management Service,
Pu'er Tianchen Coffee Co Ltd, ECOM

ECOM's sustainable management services aim to work with coffee farmers to improve the quality of their products and supply chains and increase their income and their environmental awareness simultaneously. ECOM has over 600,000 farmers directly involved in sustainable management services worldwide and has implemented over 300 sustainable development projects. ECOM studies the climate resilience and livelihood diversification of coffee-producing regions from multiple perspectives, from the coffee quality and environmental impacts to farmers' livelihood and industrial chain optimization. In Yunnan, the blended agroforestry coffee planting system has achieved a good sustainable coffee development model by developing shade tree selection tools and planting new varieties of coffee suitable for blended agriculture and forestry.



LI Nan Program Director of World Wide Fund for Nature Beijing Office

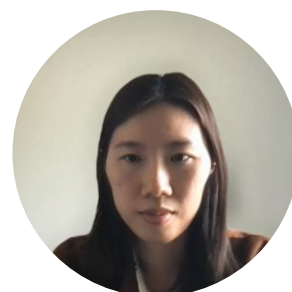
The cases shared by delegates at the symposium illustrate the concept of sustainable development and are the actual practice. They have three prominent characteristics: "integration", meaning gathering all stakeholders and continuously conducting measurement and analysis with scientific methods; "expanding" or "replicability", meaning replicating the results of outstanding pilot projects, effectively using the successful experience of "small but smart" projects to support community livelihood and protect and restore ecosystems; and "cooperation", meaning cooperation among countries, sectors, and industries in the Lancang-Mekong region, and investing limited resources in ecological improvement, thus jointly promoting the sustainable development of ecosystems.



Dimitri Nicholas de BOER Chief Representative of ClientEarth Beijing Representative Office

The topic of the eco-infrastructure supporting sustainable development of communities in the Lancang-Mekong region is of great importance. It is good to learn about the increasing public participation in relevant projects and information disclosure through the cases shared by representatives from the governments in the Lancang-Mekong region, UN agencies, international organizations, and private sectors. The awareness of communities of environmental protection and sustainable development is also growing. That is what Client Earth has always been pursuing. In the future, it is hoped that more people can participate in the Lancang-Mekong environmental cooperation and spread the results more broadly.

WU Weiling Freshwater Project Manager of Conservation International -China



Through rational utilization of green/green-grey infrastructure judiciously can bring both environmental and economic benefits to communities and promote the diversification of community livelihood options. In 2020, Conservation International piloted community-based water management successfully in key water sources in the Dongjiang River Basin, a tributary of the Pearl River in southern China. Improving local communities' sanitation and living environment enhance local livelihood diversification and create public green spaces. Through the "100 Villages Initiative", Conservation International is also working to promote the demonstration to more communities, expecting more positive environmental and social impacts through scaling up.

KANG Aili

Regional Program Strategy Director of Wildlife Conservation Society



The representatives have actively shared their experience on eco-infrastructure in the Lancang-Mekong region, from top-level design to community participation, including numerous cases and data, which are very informative. There are two impressive points: first, ecosystem-based design, as an increasingly important environmental issue, requires coordinated participation of multiple stakeholders; second, the integration of environmental protection and community livelihood, especially livelihood diversity enhancement, has provided more options for connecting regional and international value chains. In this regard, here are two suggestions for the next step: it is hoped that the cases can share the difficulties and challenges in practice to help more stakeholders summarize their experiences; it is also recommended to appropriately refine the ecological performance indicators of the project to better promote the sustainable development of the ecosystem.



SONG Yang

Senior Programme Officer of Oxfam Hong Kong Beijing Representative Office

Communities and ecosystems are closely linked. Communities are often distributed in complex ecosystems, providing the resources on which communities depend. Therefore ecosystem protection is inseparable from the participation of the surrounding communities. From the perspective of coping with climate change, Oxfam hopes to promote climate-friendly community projects to enrich community livelihood sources, strengthen public awareness of ecological conservation, and enhance the climate resilience of communities, especially that of women in rural communities.

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About LMEC: Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation(LMEC), established in 2017 in Beijing, China, aims to boost the capacity of environmental governance of each country and achieve regional sustainable development through the promotion of environmental cooperation among the Lancang-Mekong Countries.