



Poyang Lake Newsletter

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Piloting provincial-level wetland protected area system in Jiangxi Province

Project progress in brief

- August: The Wetland Management Gap Analysis consultant and the advisory team of wetland economic valuation carried out field research in nature reserves and consulted stakeholders. A gap analysis report was drafted later.
- September: Textbook on wetland & migratory bird protection for primary and middle school students was drafted.
- October: The Wetland Management Strategy consultant drafted the *Jiangxi Wetland Protected Area Management Strategy* and consulted related government departments and project experts.
- October: The management plans for 6 wetland nature reserves and the *Poyang Lake Wetland Ecosystem Protected Area (PWEPA) Management Framework* were submitted by responsible subcontractor.
- October to November: The Project Management Office (PMO) of the FAO-GEF Jiangxi project organized two training workshops on finless porpoise monitoring and wetland co-management.
- November: The 2019 Consultation Meeting for Reviewing *Jiangxi Provincial Wetland Protected Area Management Strategy and Wetland Management Standard and Guidelines*, and Multi-stakeholder Workshop for Reviewing *Management Plans for 6 Wetland Nature Reserves*, were held from November 5 to 6, 2019.
- August to November: the PMO was fully engaged in the preparation of 2019 Poyang Lake International Bird Watching Week to be held in Jiangxi in December 2019, which provided a great opportunity for publicizing the FAO-GEF Jiangxi project.



Major activities and progress

Education programme for students

How to raise public awareness on wetland protection? One of our actions is to promote wetland environment protection education in schools.

The FAO-GEF Jiangxi project designed an education programme for about 30 primary and middle schools in the Poyang Lake region. In order to raise students' awareness of wetlands and birds protection, an educational curriculum and a textbook have been developed based on a questionnaire survey did in Wucheng County Primary School in June 2019 and an in-depth discussion on the first draft conducted at the same school in September 2019.



Discussion on the draft of the textbook

Introducing GEF project's work on migratory bird protection to media

On 31 October, a media group consisting of international, national and provincial journalists visited Poyang Lake Nature Reserve to collect stories for the 2019 Poyang Lake International Bird Watching Week. Yu Dingkun, FAO-GEF PMO staff, introduced the progress of wetland rehabilitation in Changhu Pond of Poyang Lake to the journalists.

The journalists also visited the Education Centre for Wetland and Migratory Bird Conservation, which is supported by the FAO-GEF project. During the Bird Watching Week, officials from FAO, the International Crane

Foundation and Forestry Department of Jiangxi Province will participate in the opening ceremony of the centre.

The journalists had a better understanding of the FAO-GEF project through the visit, which will help them to better introduce the project to the public.



The FAO-GEF PMO staff accepted interview

Piloting wetland rehabilitation

As an important part of the FAO-GEF project, the wetland rehabilitation piloting project in Changhu Pond of Poyang Lake has started.



Air view of the experimental area

The sample plots in Changhu Pond cover an area of 100 hectares, of which 2400m² are planned for testing rehabilitation performance of Carex and submerged vegetation under different water levels. The water level regulation system is used to simulate various water levels, so as to monitor the growth and decomposition process of

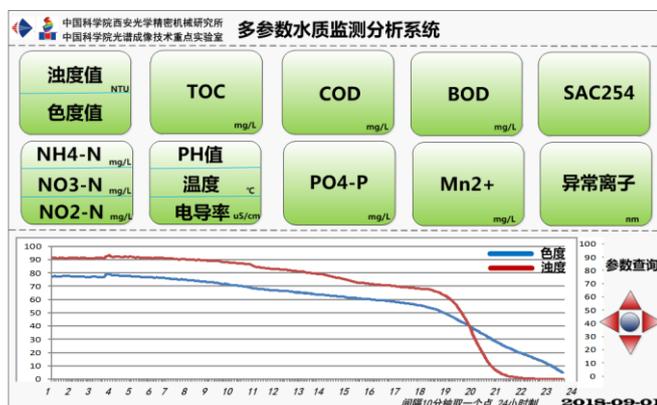
wetland vegetation in Poyang Lake, obtain key parameters of water level promoting the growth of typical vegetation, and guide the cultivation of submerged vegetation.



Field Survey on water body and vegetation by micro HS imager

The sample plot for Carex restoration is set up to investigate the distribution of vegetation and its impact factors through testing fertilization, species competition, clipping, etc. Therefore, the key indicators of artificial management to regulate the growth rhythm of vegetation can be acquired. On the basis of natural vegetation distribution, the wetland landscape with unique characteristics of Poyang Lake is formed through micro landform transformation.

So far, the water level regulation system has been established, land levelling and barricading have been carried out for the Carex sample plot.



Monitoring result of water quality

In cooperation with Xi'an Institute of Optics and Precision Mechanics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, water quality monitoring was carried out in the main lake along

the Ganjiang River, Changhu Pond, Dahu Pond as well as Meixi Lake in the demonstration area, by using the high-frequency and automatic water quality observation equipment developed by the Institute. Micro hyperspectral imager was used to scan water quality and submerged vegetation in Changhu Pond, region by region.

Training on finless porpoise monitoring and investigation

From October 30 to 31, a training on finless porpoise monitoring and investigation was held in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province.



Training workshop in finless porpoise monitoring and investigation

55 participants from Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve Administration, Jiangxi Institute of Aquatic Sciences, 1 municipal level and 8 county-level fishery administration bureaus, as well as FAO-GEF PMO in Jiangxi, participated in the two-day training.

Ms. Wang Weiping, GEF project consultant from the Jiangxi Institute of Aquatic Sciences, and Mr. Chen Mao, research assistant of the Institute of Aquatic Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences were invited as lecturers.

Ms. Wang Weiping's lecture topic was monitoring and investigation of finless porpoise. She gave a clear explanation on finless porpoise's classification, behavior characteristics, behavior types, population status and distribution. She also shared examples of finless porpoise monitoring and investigation in 2017 and 2018 and introduced the monitoring scheme.

Mr. Chen Mao explained the investigation plan and visual observation method of Yangtze River finless porpoise population. He shared his experience in field monitoring and investigation of finless porpoise, including how to observe and record finless porpoise, how to estimate quantity, how to make preliminary judgment on behavior, and the application and prospect of patrol data.

Through this training, trainees had a better understanding of the habits of finless porpoise and the methods for monitoring and investigating finless porpoise, which will help them to solve practical problems encountered in the field work and improve the accuracy of investigation.

The second consultation meeting of FAO-GEF Jiangxi Wetland Reserve Demonstration Project

On November 6, the second consultation meeting of the FAO-GEF Jiangxi Wetland Reserve Demonstration Project was held successfully in Nanchang. More than 50 participants took part in the meeting, including FAO officials, project consultants, staff of relevant nature reserves, and subcontractors.



Consultation meeting

The meeting discussed the content and the structure of two important outputs of the project, “*Jiangxi Provincial Wetland Protected Areas Management Strategy*” and “*Wetland Protected Area Standards & Guidelines*”, and put forward constructive suggestions. Participants introduced their work progress, discussed problems to be solved in the project, arranged the preparation for the upcoming mid-term evaluation of the FAO-GEF Jiangxi project.



Training on community co-management

Training on community co-management

From November 4 to 5, the FAO-GEF Jiangxi Wetland Reserve Demonstration Project held a training workshop on community co-management, with the theme of "capacity building and structure building of community co-management in county-level protected area" and "capacity building and progress of pilot community co-management project in the FAO-GEF protected area". During the training, Wang Li, the project expert in community co-management, introduced the theory, framework and methods of community co-management.

Through the training, participants gained a comprehensive understanding of the community co-management activities and became more familiar with how to develop a community co-management plan.

Seminar for reviewing the PWEPA management framework & reserve management plan

The seminar for reviewing management plans for 6 nature reserves and the Poyang Lake Wetland Ecosystem Protected Area (PWEPA) Management Framework was successfully held on November 7. Representatives from Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve Administration, Nanji Wetland National Nature Reserve Administration, Duchang Migratory Bird Provincial Nature Reserve Administration, and forestry bureaus of Yugan, Lushan and Wannian County participated in the seminar.

Five experts were invited to review 7 documents and give comments. The draft management plans and PWEPA management framework were well-organized and in compliance with the overall strategy and planning for wetland protected areas. The improved management framework will help in coordinating management activities and increasing efficiency. The improved management plans will help each nature reserve to clearly identify their objectives and optimize the allocation of resources.

Community co-management of the Nanji Nature Reserve



Seminar

On September 11, staff of Nanji Nature Reserve conducted a field visit to the neighboring communities and two farmhouse resorts in Nanshan Island and Jishan Island. Both of the two farmhouse resorts indicate good awareness on protecting migratory bird and wetland. The Reserve staff discussed with the resorts' managers about how to raise guests' awareness on the protection of migratory birds and wetland by characteristic posters and decoration, food hygiene, staff training, etc.



Training of the employed bird guards



Employed bird guards started patrolling after training

The Nanji Nature Reserve has employed 6 local villagers as part-time bird guards and provided them with necessary training including bird identification, nature reserve introduction, laws and regulations on wetland ecosystem and migratory bird protection, patrolling routes, bird rescuing, and technical regulations. After passing specific test, the 6 bird guards have started patrolling in Caopijiao Lake and Renshen Lake of Zhugang area of Nanji Nature Reserve.

Investigation and monitoring of finless porpoise in Poyang Lake region

On November 16, the FAO-GEF Jiangxi project carried out investigation and monitoring of finless porpoise in Poyang Lake region and the Jiangxi section of Yangtze River simultaneously for the first time.

Purpose

The aim is to further investigate the distribution, quantity and geographical characteristics of the Yangtze finless porpoise population in Poyang Lake region and the Jiangxi Section of Yangtze River in different seasons, and to understand the threat of human activities to Yangtze finless porpoise, so as to improve the protection and management of Yangtze finless porpoise in Jiangxi province.

Participants

More than 70 staff from Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve Administration, Jiangxi Fisheries Bureau and 9 local Fisheries Bureaus, Jiangxi Institute of Fishery Sciences, Yangtze River fisheries administration department and volunteers participated in the investigation. They were

divided into 12 teams, two of which focused on Ganjiang River, six for Poyang Lake, and four for Yangtze River.



Finless porpoise investigation boat

Investigation scope

The investigation was mainly carried out in Poyang Lake region and the Jiangxi Section of Yangtze River.



Investigating and monitoring

Key areas in Poyang Lake region:

(1) five river estuaries: Wucheng waters, Zhuhu waters, Sanjiangkou waters, Longkou waters, and Laoyemiao waters; (2) main lakes: Jiaotan Lake, Hanchi Lake, Dalianzi Lake, East Lake, Dacha Lake, Beng Lake, Xieshan Lake, etc.; (3) main waterways: Poyang Lake's northern waterway and southern waterway from Duchang Village to Longkou, Tangyin to Jiaotan Lake, Tangyin to Kangshan, and Tangyin to East Lake, etc.

Key areas in Jiangxi Section of the Yangtze River:

The upper and lower reaches where Poyang Lake enters into Yangtze River, including the section from Jiu River to Bali River.

Outcomes

Through the investigation, participants had a better understanding on Yangtze finless porpoise's habits, and had the field experience on how to carry out on-site monitoring and investigation, which laid a solid foundation for the future work.

About finless porpoise

The finless porpoise (*Neophocaena asiaorientalis*) is a small cetacean that can be found only in the middle and lower reaches of Yangtze River, Dongting Lake and Poyang Lake of China. As its name suggests, the main feature of finless porpoise is that it has no dorsal fin.

Previous investigation found that estimated 457 finless porpoises are in Poyang Lake. Its population is affected by factors such as navigation, sand mining and other fishing activities. At present, the FAO-GEF Jiangxi project is carrying out an investigation on the population of Yangtze finless porpoise and will develop a protection plan based on the investigation results.



Finless porpoise detected during the investigation



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