

China's view on implementation and performance of agroecology

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Iran Room, FAO HQ

Excellences, Dear colleagues and friends,

Good afternoon.

First of all, I would like to convey you the greetings from our Ambassador Mr. NIU Dun, who is now in China attending G20 Agriculture Minister Meeting. It is my pleasure to share the view of China on Agroecology today.

I am going to briefly introduce how China see Agroecology, what we have achieved and our future plan.

[How we see]

Agroecology is not a new concept in China. From the very ancient time, our ancestors had the philosophy that human beings should live in harmony with nature. Our over 5,000-year agriculture tradition and practice have rich ecological intelligence. Like the Rice-Fish Eco-cycling System, and traditional courtyard cultivation model remain the vivid examples of agroecology.

Regarding the definition of agroecology, we are of the view that the agroecological development in the Chinese way could be summed up as

"traditional ecological wisdom + modern agricultural technology + strong policy support".

First, we see Agroecology as the key composition of China's construction of ecological civilization in whole society. Second, we see Agroecology is the one of the key solutions to break the bottleneck of agricultural development and accelerate our agriculture modernization.

As Chinese President Xi Jinping said, we need to protect our ecosystem with great care, just like to protect our eyes or protect our pandas. We had already released guidelines and working plans in this regard. We are of the view that to develop agroecology is to build our Green Great Wall for our national ecological security.

[What we have achieved.]

In recent years, China has made a great deal of achievements on agroecology.

First, from the policy side, we have already established the preliminary legal framework for agroecological development. National wide, several laws and regulations were released, to protect the land, water, grassland and forestry, including the ones on Circular Economy, clean production and the prevention and control of livestock pollution. Local governments also released relative regulations to fit their own local conditions.

Second, from the operational side, MOA already issued National Agriculture Sustainable Development Plan (2015-2030), Plan to counter the sever pollution issues in agro-environment (2014-2018), and guidelines to fight against agriculture non-point source pollution. Several local governments, like ZheJiang, Anhui and Jiangsu, had issued their own guidelines and plans with specific targets to promote agroecology in their provinces.

Third, from the implementation side, we have implemented several key national projects, to promote formula fertilization by soil testing, grassland ecological protection, soil and water conservation, reforestation, and anti-desertification. We have identified more than 600 designated agroecology demonstration counties, and more than 1000 agroecology villages. These demonstration centers provided vivid examples of success stories, and the experiences there have been widely shared and copied by other places.

Forth, we have also developed a series of effective science and technology models, to conserve and control water consumption, reduce the usage of chemical fertilizer and pesticide, as well as to efficient utilize and recycle animal waste, crop straws and mulching film. For example, The proportion of irrigation water in total water consumption decreased from 62% to 55% within 10 years, while effective utilization coefficient increased from 0.44 to 0.52 with an augment in grain yield by 20%. In Jiangsu province, they have successfully established a market-based Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) or multi-stockholder model, including government, enterprises, farmers, market, to collect and utilize crop straws.

[Our Next steps]

We already have our strategies, plans and guidelines in place, so the key messages of our next step is to fully implement.

The 13th Five-Year-Plan, sets a clear goal of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. It aims to address serious issues such as unbalanced, uncoordinated, and unsustainable development. It also stresses the need to promote innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development.

In the government work report, China Premier Li Keqiang said, in the year 2016, we will speed up structural adjustment in agriculture, promote green, high-yield, and cost efficient food crop production and achieve zero growth in the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Our Agriculture Minister Mr. Han Changfu also clearly said that after 12 consecutive years of crop yield increase, we will not pursue a 13th or 14th consecutive increase. We will implement a new food crop production strategy based on farmland management and application of technology in order to ensure the effective supply of agricultural products and grain security, or we call this strategy in the Chinese way, “藏粮于地，藏粮于技-----to build the capacity of crop producing in land and in technology, rather than to have all the food crop at hand and in the barn.”

Dear Friends,

Right now, in Xi'an City, on the agenda of the G20 Agriculture Minister meeting, G20 members and RBAs are working together on one of the items, to make sustainable agricultural development, including eco-friendly agriculture or agroecology.

For future, we would also like to work closely with FAO and other RBAs, through multiple platforms, including GIAHS and SSC, together with the friends of agroecology and other members, to promote agroecology development both in China and worldwide.

Thank you.