



# Poyang Lake Newsletter

July 2019 — Issue #2



©FAO/ Tang Chaoqun

## Piloting provincial-level wetland PA system in Jiangxi Province

### Project progress review (June 2018 - April 2019)

The GEF Project Management Office (PMO) has recruited eleven individual national consultants and four subcontractors since June 2018. The project was implemented in a comprehensive way and achieved progresses as below.

The outlines of Jiangxi Province Wetland Protected Areas Management Strategy (JPWPAMS) and the Wetland Protected Area (PA) Standards & Guidelines, two important documents for wetland management in Jiangxi Province, were formulated by the Strategy Consultant and the Standards & Guidelines Consultant respectively, and consulted with relevant governmental line agencies.

All of the consultants and subcontractors started their assignments ( field surveys, policy study and institutional capacity assessment), and submitted implementation proposals and technical reports.

Three demonstration nature reserves, namely the Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve (PLNNR), Nanji Nature

Reserve, and Duchang Nature Reserve, compiled work proposals on i) wetland rehabilitation; ii) biodiversity monitoring; iii) community co-management; and iv) public education and outreach. All of these proposals already received clearance from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and are now in preparation for contracting.

The project carried out public educational activities in various forms, such as folk opera performance on wetlands related issues in the Poyang Lake region.

Folk Drama Performance on Wetlands in Poyang Lake Area “bird-loving week” events, and dissemination of exercise books to primary and middle schoolmates in the Poyang Lake region.

The GEF PMO utilized diverse media (television, radio, printed materials and the Internet) to call for joint efforts from the public in conservation of wetland ecosystems and to publicize the GEF project, which earned a good social reputation.

By the end of April 2019, the project targets had been achieved by 25%.



## Major project activities

### Project workshops and meetings

As an important activity of output 1.1: Wetland Protected Areas Strategy for Jiangxi Province, the first expert meeting and Strategy/Standards & Guidelines workshop were held in Nanchang from 22 to 23 August 2018. All recruited national consultants, FAO program officers, officials from the Jiangxi Province Finance Department, International Crane Foundation (ICF) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and PMO staff have attended the meetings. During the workshop and the meeting, participants reviewed the project progress achieved in the past year, discussed and approved outlines of Jiangxi Provincial Wetland PA Management Strategy and Wetland Management Standards & Guidelines. The participants also agreed on follow-up actions and timeline of submitting deliverable. The meeting set up an important milestone for the implementation of the project.



Expert meeting and Strategy/Standards & Guidelines

The 2019 Project Steering Committee (I) Meeting was held in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province on 18 April, 2019. The representatives of FAO, members of the PSC, Jiangxi GEF PMO, representatives of demonstration & piloting nature reserves and Poyang Lake Wetland Management Coordination Committee participated in the meeting.

The PSC meeting reviewed the project progress achieved in 2018, and approved the 2019 project budget and annual work plan, the procurement plan, the amendment of the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), as well as the financial management regulations. A note of meeting for speeding up the implementation and strengthening

the communication between project partners was prepared and signed by both FAO and project implementing partners.

### Project activities for enhancing wetland PA management capacity

For output 1.2: expansion of geographic coverage of operationally effective wetland protected areas in Poyang Lake region, in September 2018, the PMO purchased patrolling vehicles and equipment for three piloting county-level wetland natural reserves, namely Liaohuachi Migrating Birds Natural Reserve, Kangshan Lake Natural Reserve and Huyun Tundra Swan Natural Reserve. The management equipment and materials provided have upgraded the hardware facilities for monitoring and patrolling activities in the three county-level natural reserves.

In November 2018, the subcontracting consultancy team for the formulation of Wetland Natural Reserve Management Plan conducted investigation and PA zoning surveys in three reserves and held a two-day training workshop on wetland management planning. Management and technical staff of three county-level NRs attended the training. Through these project activities, the overall capacity and capabilities of three county-level NRs have been improved and these NRs have enlarged the total area of effective management to about 5,662 hectares.



Donation ceremony of vehicles and equipment to three counties



For output 1.2: expansion of geographic coverage of operationally effective wetland protected areas in Poyang Lake region, output 2.2: PWEPA Management Framework, a three-day training session on the subject of “development, implementation and Monitoring&Evaluation of PA management plans” was organized from 26 to 28 November 2018 in Yongxiu County. The aim was to speed up the formulation of management plans for three demonstration reserves and three piloting county-level reserves to enhance effective PA management. The leaders and technicians from the PLNNR, Nanji NR, Duchang NR, Liaohuachi NR, Kangshan Lake NR, as well as Huyun Tundra Swan NR were brought together to brainstorm problems that need to be solved in tackling PA management issues. Dr. Fan Longqing, Prof. Deng Weijie from Sichuan Agriculture University, Dr. Shao Wen from Sichuan Agriculture University and Mr. Liu Fuwen acted as trainers for teaching and mentoring.

### Wetland protection policy studies

As activities to achieve output 1.4, from September to October 2018, the working group of wetland policy consultant designed a questionnaire to collect the general public's views and evaluation on the Jiangxi Wetland Protection Ordinances. In addition, in order to make reading more attractive and interesting to read, the advisory team designed 12 vivid cartoons to illustrate Article 30 of the Jiangxi Wetland Protection Regulations, which describes activities prohibited in important wetlands.

### Publicity and outreach education on wetland and migratory bird protection

The PMO Introduced wetland and bird protection into the traditional Caicha Opera. As an activity under output 3.3: public awareness and outreach on wetland conservation and sustainable use in local communities, the project supported the Caicha Opera, a traditional local opera that is mainly performed in Poyang Lake Region. The theme of wetland conservation and migratory bird protection was included in the performance. The Opera was mainly performed in Poyang County, Yongxiu County, Duchang County, and Yugan County.

Combining the theme of wetland and bird protection with folk opera performance is an innovative and effective method for community outreach education, which enhances the public awareness on wetland conservation and creates a good social atmosphere to protect the ecological environment of Poyang Lake.



Caicha opera performed folk in Yongxiu County

Thematic events in 2019 Bird Preservation Week. In cooperation with the ICF, the project organized a series of community education events with the theme “Conserving Birds Flying in the Blue Sky”. About 200 students from the Wucheng Township Primary School attended the event. In addition, the project also organized other public education activities, such as public bird-watching activity, incorporating wetland and bird protection education into the school classes, wetland and bird conservation into the community. About 200 sets of education leaflets, notebooks, caps and other small promotional souvenirs were distributed to students and community residents.



The 38th Bird-loving Week event

## Media engagement in the project

The project supported by the GEF and the FAO have always been the hot news of media coverage at all levels. Many influential media, including Xinhua News Agency, China News Agency, Jiangxi Government website, Jiangxi Daily, Jiangxi News, etc. have conducted both on-site and/or follow-up reports on the PSC meeting, the folk opera funded by the project, and the 38th "Bird-loving Week" event. The participation of these media and related reports have greatly enhanced the social reputation of the project.



Baseline survey of community co-management programme

Further more, the PMO initiated cooperation with Jiangxi TV station to launch public service advertisements for wetland protection, and facilitated new media to release project-related news, and create a favorable environment for the smooth implementation of the project.

## Baseline survey of "community co-management and alternative livelihoods"

For the output 2.3: strengthened capacity for participatory management of PWEPA wetland reserves, to develop alternative livelihood and community co-management, the PMO and the community co-management consultant conducted a field survey in 11 piloting communities within project three demonstration nature reserves, namely PLNNR, Nanji Nature Reserve and Duchang Nature Reserve, in September 2018. In

November, a community management workshop was held in Yongxiu County.

Experts from WWF and ICF shared their experiences in community co-management. At this meeting, the participants discussed the joint management activities in 11 piloting communities and identified the framework of co-management committee and related agreements. These activities have increased the enthusiasm of community residents for bird protection, established mutual trust between reserve managers and residents, and reached a win-win situation in terms of protection and livelihood development.

## Progresses on piloting wetland rehabilitation programme

The consultant team developed a pilot proposal for Wetland Restoration for Project Output 2.1: cost-effective wetland ecosystem management techniques tested and incorporated into PWEPA for replication.

On 14 January 2019, a group of wetland management experts, invited by Prof. Yu Xiubo, visited Dahuchi Lake, Changhuchi Lake in PLNNR and Zhanbeihu Lake and Fengweihu Lake in Nanji NNR for on-site designing and validating the restoration pilot activities.

On 15 January, an Expert Workshop was held in Nanchang for sharing the wetland restoration experiences and reviewing the designed wetland restoration pilot concepts and interventions. Officials from the Wetland Management Bureau of Jiangxi Forestry Department and experts in wetland management shared good practices in the restoration and management of wetlands in mainland China, the Hong Kong Special Administration and the United States. The experts reviewed the Wetland Restoration Pilot Proposal and proposed advice to the proposal. Since March 2019, the consultant team led by Prof. Yu Xiubo has started a field pilot project on vegetation rehabilitation.



Field investigation of piloting sites for wetland rehabilitation

## Good practices

Aiming at encouraging and empowering the whole society to support and participate in wetland protection, the Jiangxi GEF PMO cooperated with the Poyang Lake Wetland Coordination Committee to determine advanced units (lake area) for their significant contribution to overwintering birds and wetland protection work in Poyang Lake from 2017 to 2018. The results of the award were announced by the Jiangxi Provincial Government.

In order to coordinate the conflict between the fishery activities of local fisherman and the bird food chain and habitat, the Nanji NR established the Dongjiang Ecological Demonstration Base in Henghu Reclamation Farm. This is the first "migratory bird canteen" in Nanji Wetland Reserve, which provides enough food for migratory birds.

In response to the destruction of wetland and wildlife resources around the Poyang Lake area, the Jiangxi Provincial Forest Department launched a two-and-a-half-month campaign to combat these illegal activities and protect the wetland ecosystem.

## Relevant policies

- On 30 May 2018, the General Office of Jiangxi Provincial People's Government issues a *Three-year Action Plan for Comprehensive Improvement of Poyang Lake Ecological Environment (2018-2020)*. This measure is to further improve the ecological environment and water quality of Poyang Lake and accelerate the construction of national ecological civilization pilot zones. According to the plan, by 2020, the wetland protection rate in Jiangxi Province will reach 52%, and the geological environment restoration and greening rate of abandoned mines will reach more than 50%. At that time, the geological environment problems of key mines are expected to be basically solved, and the mining geological environment and ecological environment of Jiangxi Province will be significantly improved. The "most beautiful shoreline" of the Jiangxi section of the Yangtze River will be built.
- In order to implement the national and provincial policies and strategies of the protection and sustainable use of wetlands, to provide solutions to technical issues concerning wetland ecosystem, and to promote the sustainable wetland management, the advisory committee on the wetland protection in Jiangxi Province was established on 16 November 2018. Later, the Jiangxi Provincial Forestry Department issued working rules of the committee on 6 December.
- The Jiangxi Forestry Department formulated the management regulations on ecological compensation management for national important wetlands in Poyang Lake on 31 December 2018. The document was compiled in alignment with national policies and principles as well as the actual situation in Jiangxi Province. It was approved by the Jiangxi Provincial Financial Department.