
**"The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity: Promoting a Sustainable
Agriculture and Food Sector" (China)**

Fifth Project Steering Committee Meeting Report

Date: 26 September 2023

Venue: Tencent Conference Room ID 691-978-037

Steering Committee Chair:

- Mr. LIU Ning, Deputy Director General, Department of Nature and Ecology Conservation, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China

Steering Committee Members

- Mr. WANG Quanhui, Lead Expert in Energy & Ecology, Rural Energy and Environment Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
- Mr. LI Junsheng, Professor, Natural Resources Survey Center, Ministry of Natural Resources of China
- Mr. ZHUANG Yan, Director of International Organization Programs, Bureau of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Ms. ZHANG Linxiu, Director of International Ecosystem Management Partnership, United Nations Environment Programme
- Mr. YANG Youzhi, Director of Bureau of Baoshan Ecological Environment (Apologies)
- Mr. ZHOU Yingkao, Director of Tengchong Branch of Baoshan Ecology and Environment Bureau

Other participants are from:

- Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences
- Department of Nature and Ecology Conservation, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China
- Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences



Meeting Group Photo

I. Meeting Background and Content

After four years of hard work, the TEEBAgriFood project is entering its final phase in the second half of 2023. The two pilot assessments in China, the Tengchong study and the Heilongjiang study, have achieved their respective milestones. The main objectives of this meeting include:

1. Review and provide guidance on the synthesis report of the TEEBAgriFood Tengchong study, particularly on the policy recommendation part.
2. Review and provide guidance on the preliminary results of the TEEBAgriFood Heilongjiang study.
3. Provide overall guidance on the project implementation.

II. Key points from the PSC

The PSC expressed satisfaction with the progress of the project implementation and considered the project results to be rich and comprehensive. Guidance and recommendations mainly include:

1. On the Tengchong study

The Tengchong synthesis report is much improved from the previous version and is generally good. However, it is important to be more than a research report and be storytelling.

The introduction of Tengchong could be more representative. For example, in addition to being one of the national “Green is Gold” practice innovation bases, Tengchong is an area rich in both biodiversity and cultural diversity, with a lot of endemic species.

The report needs to further summarize China’s experience and relevant policies and present the information within boxes. At the national level, it could include, for example, experiences in promoting ecological civilization and the “Green is Gold” ideology and ecological red lining. At the local level, how traditional knowledge is used for biodiversity conservation can be mentioned. It is interesting to show how the project has been interacting with local stakeholders and integrating their experience and models into the project implementation, and in turn, how the project helps support the local practice of the “Green is Gold” ideology. Relevant policies worth mentioning in the report include *Biodiversity Conservation in China* (2021) and *Opinions on Further Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation* (2021).

The connection between the project and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework could be enhanced. For example, how the project findings can be linked with “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECM), which is an important measure to coordinate conservation, development, and livelihoods outside the protected areas.

The policy recommendations on non-point source water pollution control, promoting jobs for women, and GHG emissions control are considered very relevant to local concerns and needs. The local government wishes to explore synergies between biodiversity conservation and climate change and apply funding support from the CCER trading market.

It is worth thinking about sustainability, i.e., how can the project make continuous contributions to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Capacity building is highlighted as a key next step for scaling up the use of the TEEBAgriFood evaluation framework in developing countries.

2. On the Heilongjiang study

The Heilongjiang study is well-conceived and analyzed. Is it possible to include a discussion on the international-level impact of the soybean expansion policy? For example, the implications on the major soybean exporting countries such as the US and Brazil, which are also biodiversity-rich areas.

Issues for consideration in future research include: 1) How to evaluate food security, especially staple grains vs. oil crops. 2) Analysis of the possibility of land conversion for expanding soybean plantation, i.e., can the expanded soybeans be converted from other land areas?

3. The project’s final event in China and the global symposium in Thailand

The PSC regarded the final national high-level event in Beijing, and the global symposium in

Bangkok are very good opportunities for the project publicity, and that should be taken full advantage of. The importance of being storytelling is emphasized.

III. Responses

The project implementation team accepts all the advice from the PSC, based on which the two reports will be revised.

Regarding the trade implications of the soybean expansion policy in the Heilongjiang study, the project team expressed uncertainty about the associated impacts and stressed it will need solid and comprehensive modeling before tapping into the topic.