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A UNEP Collaborating Centre in the South and for the South

The UNEP-International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) is the first UNEP Collaborating Centre in the South and for the South mobilizing science to support policy setting for sustainable ecosystem management in all developing countries.

It has been mandated to supporting UNEP's Ecosystem Management and Climate Change Sub-programmes, promoting a green economy and enhancing South-South cooperation.

OUR VISION

Enhance the role of ecosystem management as a vital approach to working with nature for a world with a green economy.

OUR MISSION

To provide science, policy, and capacity support to developing countries to integrate ecosystem management approaches into national policies and development plans to enhance the delivery of ecosystem services for human well-being.

"UNEP-IEMP needs to be a true global centre in the South and for the South providing technical and policy support to developing countries and promoting ecological civilization."

Prof. Chunli Bai
President
Chinese Academy of Sciences

"UNEP-IEMP is a foundational pillar of UNEP's South-South Cooperation initiative that enables UNEP to deliver environmental capacity building and technology support to regions of the South."

Mr. Achim Steiner
Executive Director
United Nations Environment Programme

"The Ministry of Environmental Protection will support the host Chinese organization, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, for the establishment of UNEP-IEMP."

H.E. Shengxian Zhou
Minister
Ministry of Environmental Protection

UNEP-IEMP Milestones

2010: With China as one of the most important emerging economies in the world, possessing vast experiences, knowledge and technology on ecosystem management, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the leading agency in the United Nations system on environmental issues, principals of both UNEP and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) kicked off a process to strengthen their collaboration to enhance ecosystem management in developing countries.

2011: UNEP-International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) was officially launched as an international programme, co-sponsored by UNEP and CAS, with political support of the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) of China.

2012: After one year of operation, an agreement was signed by UNEP and CAS that transformed UNEP-IEMP from an international programme to the first UNEP collaborating centre "in the South and for the South".

2013: UNEP Governing Council recognized and blessed UNEP-IEMP. Entering its development phase (2013-2015) with its first Steering Committee meeting held, UNEP-IEMP launched its first full-sized GEF project Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation (EbA South), a joint initiative of UNEP and the National Development and Reform Commission of China (NDRC).

2014: UNEP-IEMP opened a new page in advancing the global agenda on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change (SSCCC), notably through facilitating the signing of a MoU between China and UNEP. The first SSCCC Forum was organized in the interval of COP20 of UNFCCC in Lima.

2015: UNEP-IEMP completed the development of its **Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL),** which was reviewed by its Science Advisory Group and approved by its Steering Committee. The CELL is the Centre's **10-year strategy (2016-2025),** aiming to improve livelihoods by building climate resilience and restoring and conserving key ecosystems in developing countries.

UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee (SC) and Science Advisory Group (SAG) members

Co-Chairs:

- **Mr. Tieniu Tan**, *Vice President, Chinese Academy of Sciences (Co-chair SC)*
- **Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw**, *Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (Co-chair SC)*
- **Mr. Yiyu Chen**, *Chairman Life Science Division of CAS and immediate past President of National Natural Science Foundation of China (Co-chair SAG)*
- **Dr. Arthur Hanson**, *International Chief Advisor and Member, China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) and former President of IISD, (Co-chair SAG)*

Members:

- Dr. Bojie Fu, *Professor of Research Centre for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Academician of Chinese Academic of Sciences and Fellow of the Academy of Sciences for Developing World (SAG member)*
- Dr. Gisela Alonso, *President of the Cuban Agency of Environment, and Honor Member of the Cuban Academy of Sciences (SAG member)*
- Mr. Haisheng Li, *Director General of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Environment Protection (MEP) of China*
- Dr. Kathy MacKinnon, *Vice-Chair of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) of IUCN/WCPA and Vice-Chair on Climate Change, Board Member of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Member of the Supervisory Council of Wetlands International (SAG member)*
- Mr. Masataka Watanabe, *Chair, Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN)*
- Dr. Qinghua Xu, *Deputy Secretary General, China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (SAG member)*
- Dr. Salif Diop, *Water Specialist, Member of the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) and Member of The World Academy of Sciences for the Advancement of Sciences in the Developing Countries (SAG member)*
- Mr. Wei Su, *Director General of Climate Change Department, National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China*
- Mr. Yi Liu, *Deputy Director General, Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research (IGSNRR), CAS*
- Ms. Yolanda Kakabadse Navarro, *WWF's International President and the former Minister of Environment of Ecuador*
- Mr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, *Chair, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*

A word from the Director

Jian Liu
Director

Looking back at the year 2015, under the guidance of its Steering Committee and Science Advisory Group, UNEP-IEMP has achieved important progress on many fronts.

One of the milestones is the accomplishment of developing the **Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL)**. **Approved by the UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee**, the programme lays the foundation for its 10 year strategy (2016-2025), promoting synergies of climate, ecosystem and livelihood streams, under the broader context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. This presents both opportunities and challenges, for which we will spare no efforts.

Another milestone is the work on **South-South Cooperation on Climate Change (SSCCC)**, marked by the successful organization of the **second SSCCC Forum** in the interval of COP21 in Paris. Attended by more than 100 delegates, including ministers, government representatives, principals of UN and other international organizations, the Forum promoted South-South cooperation as an integral part of the future climate architecture, reflected in relevant articles of the Paris Agreement. This has consolidated the foundation of the Forum for it to become a standing policy mechanism in the future.

Many other highlights are worth to mention. The joint UNEP-NDRC GEF project Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation (EbA South), completed its second year of operations and kicked off on-the-ground interventions in its three pilot countries – Mauritania, Nepal and Seychelles. Other projects and initiatives supported by NSFC, UNEP/China Fund, and more, are well on track, paving the way for the implementation of the CELL Flagship Programme.

On behalf of the entire UNEP-IEMP family, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to you for your generous support in the past year. Looking forward, I count on your continuous leadership, guidance, contribution and cooperation. With increasing commitment of the entire dedicated UNEP-IEMP team, I believe we can meet our even more ambitious targets in 2016.

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UNEP-IEMP 1st Science Advisory Group
June 03, 2015 Beijing, China

Inaugural meeting of the Science Advisory Group

As part of the Agreement signed between UNEP and CAS recognizing UNEP-IEMP as a collaborating centre of UNEP and a global centre on ecosystem management, a Science Advisory Group (SAG) is to be formed with a mandate of providing technical and scientific advice on existing programmes and projects and directions of future UNEP-IEMP activities. To this end, UNEP-IEMP held its first SAG meeting on June 3, 2015. The SAG is composed of distinguished experts who were selected for their scientific merits, capacity, and leadership in their respective fields related to ecosystem management. All members of the SAG are also members of the UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee.

Whilst reflecting on existing and emerging global and regional priority issues on ecosystem management, the SAG is also expected to:

1. Make recommendations on improving existing programmes and projects from a scientific perspective;
2. Review the scientific relevance, quality and impact of ongoing and planned projects; and
3. Facilitate partnerships with national, regional and international academic institutions that may benefit from or contribute to the work of UNEP-IEMP.

The SAG is co-chaired by Professor Yiyu Chen, Chairman of the Life Sciences Division of CAS and immediate past President of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and Dr. Arthur Hanson, International Chief Advisor and Member, China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) and former President of IISD.

In 2015, at its inaugural meeting, the SAG gave recommendations on the vision and niche of UNEP-IEMP, and provided technical advice on the Centre's various streams of activities, particularly on the development of the Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL).

UNEP-IEMP 3rd Steering Committee Mee
June 04, 2015 Beijing, China

Annual Steering Committee meeting

The UNEP-IEMP Steering Committee (SC) convened on June 4, 2015 for its third annual meeting, following the inaugural meeting of its SAG.

Co-chaired by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and Mr. Tieniu Tan, Vice President of CAS, the meeting set out to:

1. Review and evaluate the Annual Progress Report 2014;
2. Review and approve the Work Plan 2015; and
3. Review and approve the Conceptual Framework of the 10-year (2016-2025) Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL).

Taking into consideration the recommendations and feedback concluded by the SAG, the SC commended highly the achievements of UNEP-IEMP in 2014, which exceeded expectations.

SC members requested the Centre to keep up the momentum and continue building its credibility in championing ecosystem management, South-South cooperation, and the science-policy interface.

In addition, the SC members also reviewed and approved the Work Plan for 2015, including its proposal on staff requirements. For the first time, UNEP-IEMP presented a proposal for its 10-year Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods which was reviewed and approved by the SC in principle. The Programme is a long-term cooperation between China and UNEP that aims to assist developing countries to restore and conserve their ecosystems, address the impacts of climate change and improve livelihoods, through providing knowledge, capacity, technology, and policy support. The Programme is expected to be officially launched in 2016.

YEAR
in
review

MAR 06-07

First Global Adaptation Network Forum

UNEP-IEMP participated in the first Global Adaptation Network (GAN) Forum in Panama. Cooperation was strengthened with the GAN regional members in Asia-Pacific (APAN), Africa (AAKNet) and Latin America and the Caribbean (REGATTA).

APR 30

EbA South project

The EbA South project successfully completed its second year of operations. A devastating earthquake hit Nepal, one of the three project pilot countries, with serious impacts on the project implementation sites. In spite of these challenges, project activities continued. EbA South also assisted the country team in its post-disaster efforts.

JUN 02

Urumqi Forum on Desertification

Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, attended the Urumqi Forum 2015, celebrating the 20th Anniversary of UNEP Award for "Saving the Drylands" and the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Prior to this meeting, a field mission to the demo sites of Taklamakan was undertaken.

JUN 03

First Science Advisory Group Meeting

Members of the SAG of UNEP-IEMP convened for the first time with the aim of providing technical guidance on the Centre's work and strategic dictions. The SAG Terms of Reference and mode of operation were reviewed and approved.

JUN 04

Third Steering Committee Meeting

The SC met to review and evaluate UNEP-IEMP's Annual Progress Report 2014 and endorsed the Annual Work Plan for 2015. The direction to develop a 10-year Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (2016-2025) was approved.

JUN 25-26

GMS Project Inception Workshop

The project "Enhanced basin-wide institutional capacity for ecosystem management to integrate ecosystem approach into national plans and regional cooperation strategies through identifying and prioritizing capacity needs of key stakeholders of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)" held its kick off meting in Dongying, China.

JUL 27

Africa's Great Green Wall Initiative and visit to Mauritania

Dr. Jian Liu, UNEP-IEMP Director participated in the third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Pan African Agency on the Great Green Wall (PAGGW) in Nouakchott, Mauritania, and paid a visit to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development to discuss cooperation opportunities leveraged by the GEF project EbA South.

AUG 27

Strategic Dialogue on SSCCC

World renown scientists, senior officials and high-level representatives of international organizations met in Beijing to brainstorm the value proposition, functions and mechanisms of South-South cooperation in the climate change context.

SEP 12

New e-discussion programme on EbA

The EbA South project, in partnership with UNEP-REGATTA's initiative EbA community of Practice launched an e-discussion & webinar programme targeting EbA practitioners and stakeholders in the global South.

OCT 19-22

Visit to Democratic People's Republic of Korea

UNEP regional director for Asia-Pacific Mr. Kaveh Zahedi and UNEP-IEMP director Dr. Jian Liu visited DPRK to discuss the possibility to develop new projects in the fields of ecosystem management, climate change and livelihoods between DPRK and UNEP.

NOV 23-24

Workshop on NSFC-UNEP Joint Research Programme

A workshop was organized in Beijing in the frame of the joint research programme between UNEP and NSFC. Key findings of the workshop paved the way for the renewal of the cooperation between the two parties, agreed during NSFC's Vice President Congqiang Liu's official visit to UNEP in the following month.

DEC 06

Second SSCCC Forum at COP21 in Paris

UNEP-IEMP organized the second session of the SSCCC Forum at COP21 in Paris. Co-sponsored by NDRC and UNEP, the Forum promoted South-South cooperation as an integral part of the future climate architecture. Delegates called for the establishment of a platform for promoting SSCCC and for catalysing new resources in the South and for the South.

2015
Highlights

Proposal of the Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL)

The world is charting out a roadmap towards achieving the SDGs, as also limiting global warming following the conclusion of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21). Yet, most of the poor in developing countries are facing the self-reinforcing challenges of climate change vulnerability, degraded ecosystems, food insecurity and poverty. In society, the most poor also tend to be the most vulnerable to climate impacts and suffer most from hunger and degraded ecosystems. Solving these challenges in a holistic way can be an innovative and impactful approach for developing countries to pursue their sustainability.

Throughout 2015, the team of UNEP-IEMP drafted a conceptual framework and afterwards a proposal of the Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL). **The proposed programme was reviewed and approved by the UNEP-IEMP SC at its third annual meeting in June 2015. The CELL programme aims to improve livelihoods by building climate resilience and restoring and conserving key ecosystems in developing countries**. It will be the main pillar of UNEP-IEMP's 10-year strategy (2016-2025) to promote long-term cooperation between China and UNEP, with the endeavor to evolve into a South-South Cooperation initiative with global implications. The programme will be officially launched in 2016.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of CELL. The programme will focus its work on the primary priority area cutting across three thematic issues on climate change, ecosystems and livelihoods. Secondary priority areas are those paired and interacting thematic issues on climate-ecosystem, climate-livelihood and ecosystem-livelihood. The rest stand alone thematic areas are supporting priority areas of this programme. With such a framework, the programme takes an interdisciplinary approach that brings together physical science, economics and social science, which will contribute to the IPBES and IPCC assessments and the Future Earth initiative.

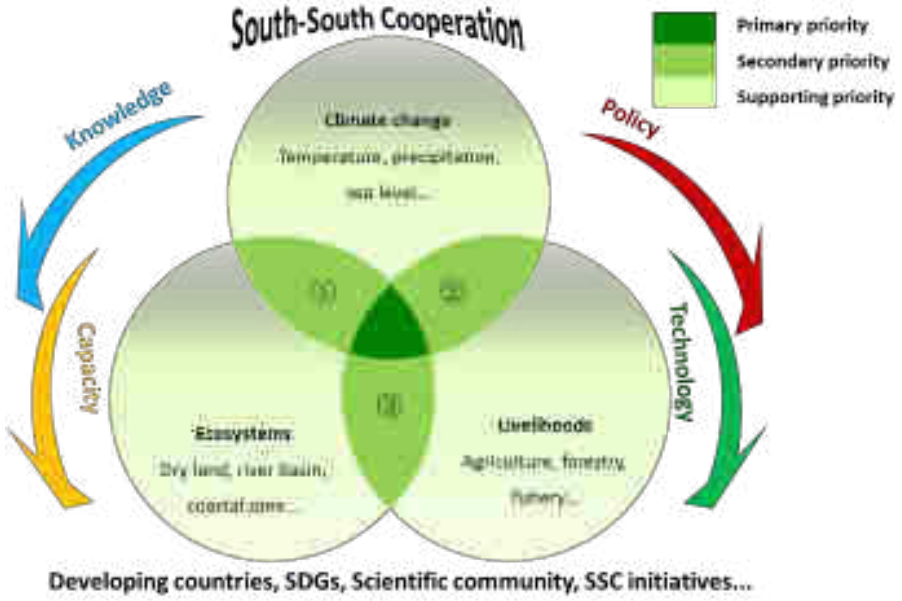


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the CELL Flagship Programme

Geographically, the programme will cover fragile ecosystems, including drylands, river basins and coastal zones, in Asia, West Asia and Africa. At a later stage, the programme may also be in a position to address issues of conservation and livelihoods in other biodiversity rich regions such as the Amazon River Basin. Additional to the initiation period (2014-2015), implementation of the 10 year programme will take a step-by-step approach, including three phases: Phase I, Assessment (2016-2018); Phase II, Development (2019-2021); and Phase III, Scaling up (2022-2025) (Figure 2).

Four types of services and products can be expected from the programme—monitoring and assessment, capacity building, technology demonstration, and science for policy. It will help assist countries to integrate ecosystem-based approaches into their national plans and regional development strategies, inform policy debates of the three Rio conventions—CBD, UNCCD, and UNFCCC, and support the implementation of post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

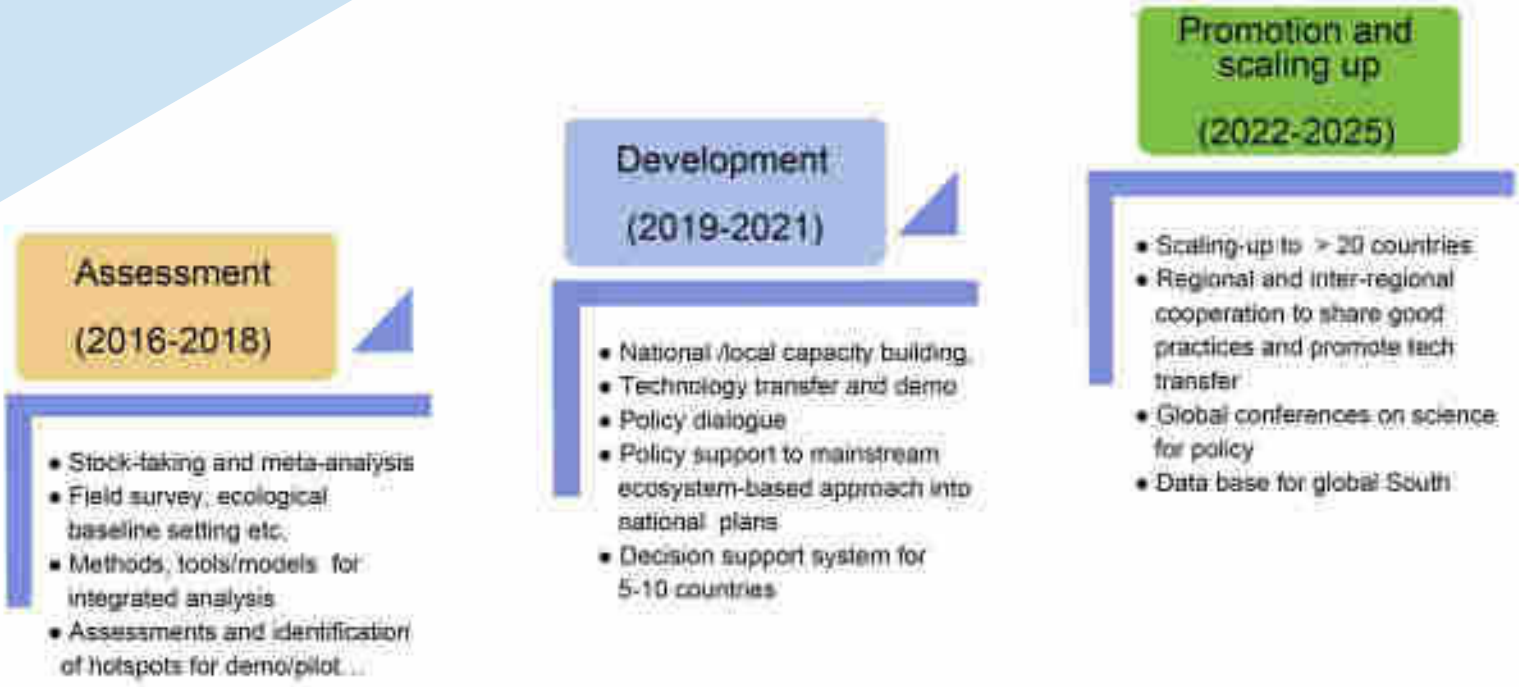


Figure 2 Roadmap for implementation of the CELL Flagship Programme

To kick off the programme, an integrated ecosystem survey and assessment will be conducted in Phase I, along the Silk Road land and sea routes (Figure 3). The survey will land the Programme on the ground through assessing the baselines of ecosystems, climate and livelihoods in the region. It will be focusing on three types of “hotspots” - fragile ecosystems, biodiversity rich areas and vulnerable communities to climate change and ecosystem degradation, or combinations thereof. Based on thorough stocktaking and meta-analysis, the survey will be for checking the ground truth and collecting data that could not be accessed by desk search.

North Route: from Northwest China to Central Asia, Iran, Turkey and Europe.

South Route: from Southwest China to Nepal, India, Pakistan, East Persian Gulf and East Africa.

Sea Route: from coastal ports in Southeast China to the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean and East Africa.

Figure 3 Indicative routes for Silk Road ecosystem survey and assessment (2016-2018)

Second South-South Cooperation on Climate Change Forum
Paris, 6 December 2015

The second session of the South-South Cooperation on Climate Change (SSCCC) Forum, with the theme 'from political commitment to action', was held in the China Pavilion at COP21 in Paris on 6 December 2015.

With more than 100 delegates, including ministers, government representatives, principals of UN and other international organizations, the Forum promoted **South-South cooperation as an integral part of the future climate architecture**. The synergistic benefits of SSCCC were emphasized and it was agreed that this Forum, first held in Lima in 2014 at the margins of COP20, serves as a milestone for promoting SSCCC and for catalyzing new resources in the South and for the South.

In his opening remarks, Minister Xie Zhenhua, China Special Representative for Climate Change Affairs, emphasized the important complementarities of South-South cooperation to North-South cooperation and called for the solidarity of the global South against climate change. He reiterated China's determination to make available $3.1 billion for setting up the 'China South-South Climate Cooperation Fund' to provide continuous support to other developing countries combating climate change.

Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, recognized South-South cooperation to be emerging as a key element of the global response to climate change. He praised the fact that "many emerging economies are moving to the frontline of international climate policy, taking a lead in defining and implementing low-carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable development pathways."

> "Many emerging economies are moving to the frontline of international climate policy, taking a lead in defining and implementing low-carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable development pathways."
>
> *Ibrahim Thiaw*
>
> *Deputy Executive Director of UNEP*

SSCCC Forum Opening Ceremony in the China Pavilion at COP21 in Paris.

The SSCCC Forum is co-sponsored by NDRC and UNEP, and supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), INTASAVE-CARIBSAVE Group, WWF, UNFCCC and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)

Ministerial Dialogue

Panel A - Priority of areas of action

Panel B - Enabling conditions and implementation mechanisms

Ministers and high-level governmental representatives from **Costa Rica, India, Mauritania, Mongolia, Nepal and Switzerland** shared their respective views and experiences on the role of SSCCC, and called for the inclusion of a South-South dimension in all current and future initiatives and funding mechanisms under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), bilateral and multilateral alike. They highlighted the importance of building on current South-South mechanisms such as this Forum, in order to create long-term effective arrangements for implementing the cooperation on the ground. While discussing the role and strategic directions of SSCCC, ministers underlined the specificities and strengths of countries in the South, and the multiple benefits of enhanced cooperation and exchanges across the global South.

The panelists at the high-level roundtables identified priority areas of intervention for SSCCC, such as validating and disseminating developing countries' wealth of traditional knowledge and practices, and **mainstreaming ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation and mitigation**. Consensus was reached on the major functions of SSCCC, including: building long-term institutional and human capacity in the South; enabling more effective engagement of Southern countries in international science and policy processes; and supporting the development and dissemination of South-based solutions and technologies.

The delegates called for the establishment of new mechanisms for action, such as a **Platform for Promoting South-South Cooperation on Climate Change**. They suggested that the SSCCC Forum could serve as a standing policy interface for this platform, by providing an opportunity for ongoing dialogue and engagement with policy-makers and policy processes from both South and North.

ROAD TO PARIS 2015

In a Scoping Meeting held in Beijing in August 2015, experts discuss the niche, strategic directions and functions of SSCCC

2014

The first edition of the SSCCC Forum is organized in Lima on 8 December 2014, in the interval of COP20

A High-level Roundtable on Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in the context of South-South Cooperation takes place at COP19 in Warsaw in December 2013

2015

Concrete opportunities and modalities to strengthen SSCCC are discussed in a Consultative Meeting in Beijing in November 2015. The fundamental role of SSCCC in the achievement of the SDGs is emphasized

The second edition of the SSCCC Forum, organized by UNEP-IEMP, is held at COP21 in December 2015.

The Forum promotes **South-South cooperation as an integral part of the future climate architecture**, reflected in relevant articles of the Paris Agreement. These achievements pave the way for the SSCCC Forum to become a future standing policy mechanism.

UNEP-IEMP signed Letter of Intent with FUNDECOR

As part of its efforts to build strategic partnerships at the global level, UNEP-IEMP signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with FUNDECOR, a leading environmental NGO from Costa Rica. The aim of this alliance is enhancing the sharing of information between the two organizations, particularly on South-South cooperation on sustainable ecosystem management. On the occasion of the 2nd SSCCC Forum in Paris, a small signatory ceremony was organized with UNEP-IEMP Director Jian Liu and FUNDECOR Executive Director Felipe Carazo in the China Pavilion. Vice-minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, Ms. Ivannia Quesada and Mr. Su Wei, Director General of Climate Change at NDRC participated as witnesses of honor.

Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation

Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation (EbA South), launched in 2013, **completed its second year** of operation.

EbA South is a full-sized GEF project implemented by UNEP and executed by NDRC, to which UNEP-IEMP provides project management services. The project aims to assist local communities in developing countries in Africa and Asia-Pacific to adapt to the impacts of climate change, by improving their capacity to plan, finance, implement, research and legislate in support of EbA.

The **third Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting** was held on 17 June 2015 in Chengdu, China. The PSC assessed the progress achieved, reviewed work plans and budgets, and provided recommendations on the project implementation strategy.

A Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) training workshop was also organized, with the aim to review the project results framework and compile monitoring plans for on-the-ground activities in the three project pilot countries – Mauritania, Nepal and Seychelles.

In conjunction with these meetings, a **field mission** to the Yanting Agro-ecological Experimental Station of Purple Soil was undertaken, where participants could learn from China's good practices on soil-water conservation. The project team also visited the 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake Eco-Restoration Sites and the Maoxian Mountain Ecosystem Research Station, to see the positive results of **post-earthquake eco-restoration** initiatives. This experience was particularly valuable, in light of the fact that one of the project sites, the Lamjung District in Nepal, was hit by a devastating earthquake two months before.

ebasouth.org

South-South Cooperation panel session at EBAFOSC2

The second Africa Ecosystem-based Adaptation for Food Security Conference (EBAFOSC2) took place on 30-31 July 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the theme: 'Re-imagining Africa food security through harnessing EbA now and into the future'. More than 1200 delegates from governments, research and policy institutions, civil society, the private sector and youth organizations attended the event.

EbA South, one of the EBAFOSC partners and donors, co-organized one of the interactive panel sessions, with the theme "South-South Cooperation on EbA".

EBAFOSC2 produced two main outcome documents:

- 'The Nairobi Action Agenda on Africa's Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security'; and
- Constitution establishing a new pan-African institution, the Ecosystem-based Adaptation for Food Security Assembly (EBAFOSA).

New e-discussion programme on EbA

In 2015, the EbA South project (ebasouth.org) partnered up with UNEP-REGATTA's initiative EbA Community of Practice (ebacommunity.com) to develop a new e-discussion & webinar programme targeting Ecosystem-based Adaptation practitioners and stakeholders.

The programme was kicked-off on 12 September 2015 in celebration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation, with the launch of new thematic modules. In the spirit of South-South cooperation, the EbA Community – previously active as a regional initiative in Latin America – is welcoming new participants, particularly from Asia Pacific and Africa.

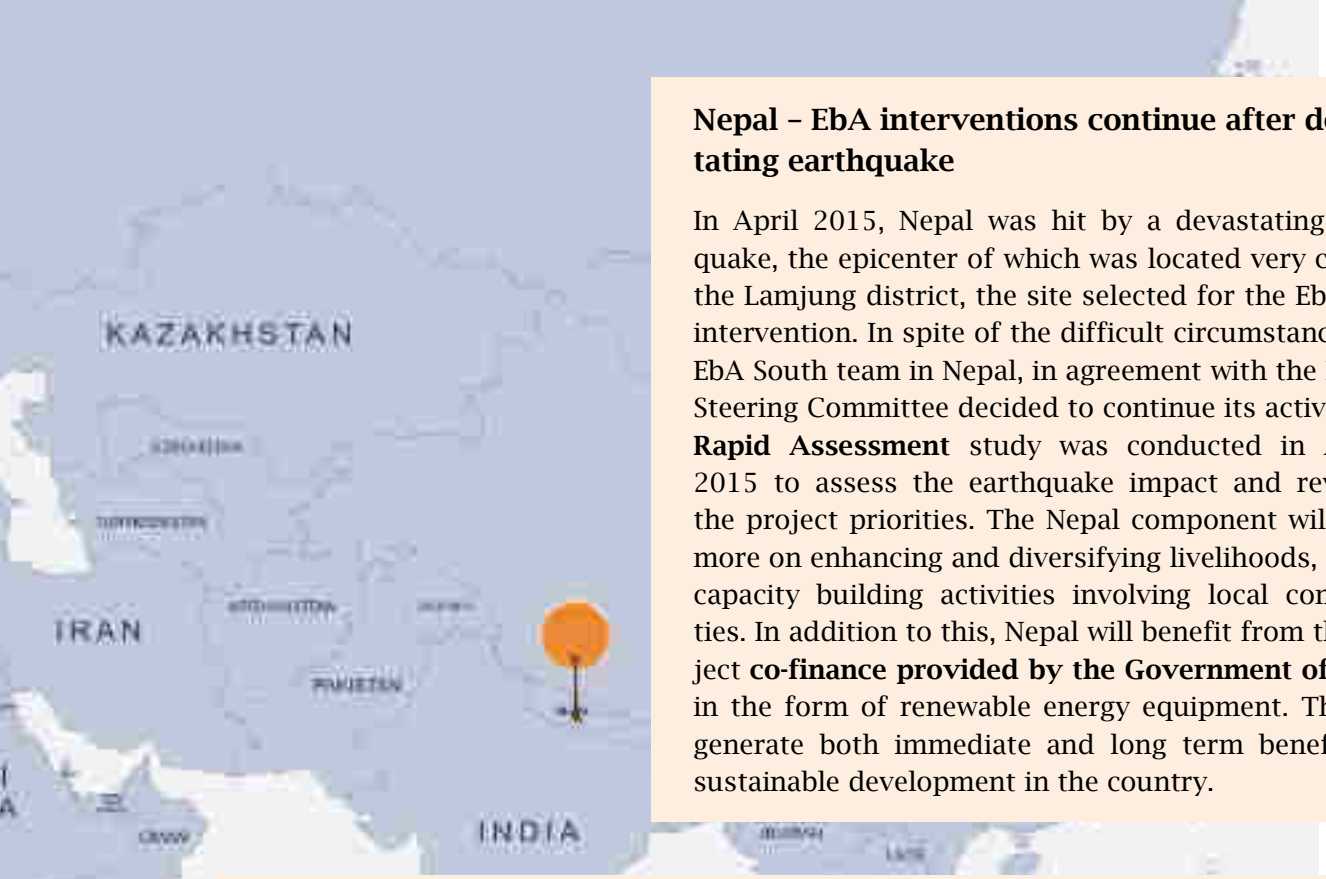
Mauritania – Climate-resilient species for multi-use greenbelts

In the first sites selected for the EbA interventions, Benichab (Inchiri Region) and Nayemat (Trarza Region), two nurseries were established between October and November 2015, with a total of more than 60,000 seedlings. Species selected for the nurseries focus on **indigenous, drought-resilient species** that will bring multiple benefits for local communities. Some species provide **diverse livelihood options** – for example, gum Arabic harvesting (*Acacia senegalensis*) and processing and selling seeds (*Balanites aegyptica*) for the production of oil for consumption and cosmetics.

EbA South enjoys high-level support in Mauritania, thanks to the active engagement of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The project also benefits from close cooperation and interaction with the Pan-African **Great Green Wall initiative**.

Native species nursery at Benichab, Mauritania

In 2015 **EbA South** kicked off its on-the-ground interventions it the three pilot countries, based on site-specific implementation protocols developed in consultation with international technical experts, and with support from the Chinese Academy of Sciences.



Nepal – EbA interventions continue after devastating earthquake

In April 2015, Nepal was hit by a devastating earthquake, the epicenter of which was located very close to the Lamjung district, the site selected for the EbA pilot intervention. In spite of the difficult circumstances, the EbA South team in Nepal, in agreement with the Project Steering Committee decided to continue its activities. A **Rapid Assessment** study was conducted in August 2015 to assess the earthquake impact and revaluate the project priorities. The Nepal component will focus more on enhancing and diversifying livelihoods, and on capacity building activities involving local communities. In addition to this, Nepal will benefit from the project **co-finance provided by the Government of China** in the form of renewable energy equipment. This will generate both immediate and long term benefits for sustainable development in the country.

Nursery at Jita project site (Lamjung District), Nepal

Seychelles – Long-term research on mangrove ecosystem restoration for climate change adaptation

The University of Seychelles (UniSey), in partnership with the and the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, developed a long-term research proposal. The aim of this programme is to provide the scientific basis to establish effective **mangrove ecosystem restoration as an ecosystem-based approach to climate change adaptation**. Research activities will be conducted hand in hand with EbA interventions carried out on Mahè, Praslin and Curieuse Islands.

To satisfy the principles of EbA, not only the biological, chemical and physical attributes of ecosystem dynamics, but also social components (i.e. the role of people in managing natural systems) will be assessed.

Local youth at project site, Seychelles

South-South Capacity Building for Ecosystem Management in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) under **ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT OF PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES**

This project was launched in 2015 and fully funded under China Trust Fund by Ministry of Environmental Protection of Chinese Government. GMS which consists of 6 countries namely Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR (lower Mekong) and China, Myanmar (Upper Mekong) is home to around 75 millions of people. Enhancing ecosystem management capacities is a prerequisite to break the vicious cycle of ecosystem degradation and poverty, which will help promote the integration of ecosystem approach into national development processes and regional cooperation. This project will kick off a basin-wide process on capacity building for ecosystem management in the GMS.

Ecosystem Management of Productive Landscapes seeks to provide tools and concepts for allocating and managing land and water resources to achieve multiple social, economic, and environmental objectives.

Specific Outputs of the Project:

- **Output 1 Stocktaking and Knowledge**— Strengthening the knowledge base and better internal coordination within UNEP to enhance support for countries.
- **Output 2 Tools development**— Developing methodologies and innovative, user-friendly tools and guidelines to support landscape level decision making at the national level and across sectors.
- **Output 3 Capacity development**— Capacity building and awareness raising, to support the integration of the landscape approach into decision-making and development planning at national and sub-national levels.
- **Output 4 Global Agenda and Outreach**— Develop and inform UNEP's Agenda and UNEA deliberations on the promotion of an ecosystem approach in productive landscapes.

Map of the Greater Mekong Sub-region countries © Chiangrai Times

April 2015

Representatives from various sectors of UNEP came together in Nairobi to discuss the formation and direction of landscape approaches. The meeting was characterized by UNEP representatives from eight distinct technical units and collaborating centers from three divisions and four regional offices.

September 2015

E-scoping conducted on the needs for ecosystem services assessment, capacity building and tools in ecosystem management in Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar.

Participants of the inception workshop, held in June 2015 in Dongying, China

June 2015

After a successful inception workshop, a basin-wide process on capacity building across six countries of the Greater Mekong subregion (GMS) by integrating ecosystem management into national and regional planning has officially begun, by identifying and prioritizing needs of key stakeholders in the region.

20 Years on, UNEP's Award on Combating Desertification

Key participants at the Urumqi Forum on Desertification 2015 © Xinjiang Institute

On June 2, the Urumqi Forum on Desertification 2015 was held to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of UNEP Award for "Saving the Drylands" and the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The occasion also witnessed the achievements of the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences (XIEG) on "Outstanding Contribution in Combating Desertification and Controlling Land Degradation in Dryland Environments", since its two projects won the UNEP Award 1995.

"We need nature, nature does not need us. We need to restore nature in drylands. UNEP awarded projects from Xinjiang planted more than a tree 20 years ago, they planted a new culture and instigated a new way of thinking that it is possible to recreate and restore nature even in the harshest conditions."

Ibrahim Thiaw
Deputy Executive Director, UNEP

The forum was sponsored by the Xinjiang Ugyur Autonomous Region XUAR, CAS and UNEP and organized by XIEG and UNEP-IEMP, the event contributed to the upcoming World Environment Day and World Desertification Day.

Prior to the Forum, Mr. Thiaw met with the Governor of XUAR, Mr. Shohrat Zakir and exchanged views on combating desertification and restoring degraded drylands, recognizing and appreciating the role of the Green Wall in desertification control.

Meeting between Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and Mr. Shohrat Zakir, Governor of XUAR.

"Great Green Shelterbelt in Qira County, Tarim Basin

A field visit to Qira County, Tarim Basin and the "Great Green Shelterbelt project of Taklimakan Desert" had provided a deep understanding of the best examples of Ecosystem based adaptation based on long-term research, demonstration and successful application and promotion of integration of economic barrier construction technologies to combat sand and dust storms in West Asia.

New UNEP-NSFC approved Projects

Following the announcement in 2013 from the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) to invest approximate US$ 8 million (RMB 50 million) in the next five years to which UNEP as the collaborating partner is eligible for up to 30% of the total, 3 project proposals have been approved in 2015:

- Study on the changes in water and land use and adaptive management of ecosystems in the Greater Mekong River drainage basin (2016—2020)
- Mechanics of soil and water loss and demonstration of rain-fed agriculture on the slope land in hilly and mountainous area in the Upper Nile (2016—2020)
- Soybean exports, food security and water vulnerability under climate change conditions in the Zambezi Basin

Institutional development

Working at UNEP-IEMP

Following the successful conclusion of UNEP-IEMP's first SAG and third SC meetings held in June 2015, the Centre's annual retreat took place in the city of Dongying, China. Activities focused on how to improve the conceptual framework of the 10-year Flagship Programme on Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CELL), based on the guidance received from the SAG and the SC. Issues of partnership building, resource mobilization and human capacity were also addressed.

UNEP-IEMP and UNEP China Joint Annual Retreat 2015

As UNEP-IEMP is in transformation **from a project-oriented to a programme-oriented organization**, the CELL Flagship Programme serves to further define the Centre's niche and future directions. The 2015/2016 roadmap, elaborated in the course of the retreat, includes activities such as stocktaking exercises, consultative meetings with potential partners, as well as the development of an outreach strategy for enhanced promotion.

The Team

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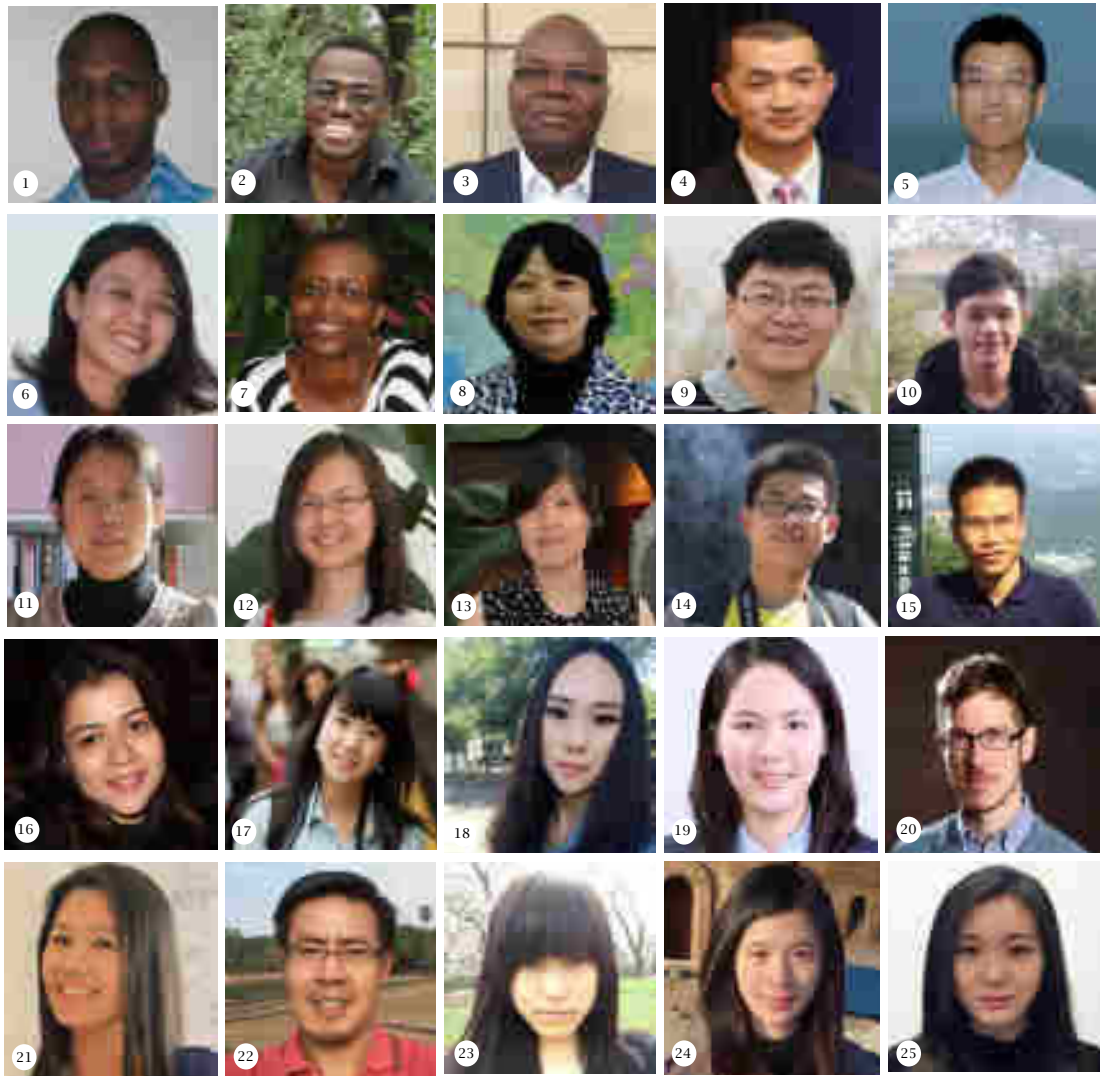

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2 Belarmain Fandohan - Visiting Scientist
3 Erustus Kanga - Visiting Scientist
4 Liang Wu - Research Fellow
5 Chao Fu - Research Fellow

6 Hongmei Yi - Research Fellow
7 Karen Mrema - Communications Officer *(till August 2015)*
8 Xigui Huang - Finance & Administrative Officer
9 Yu Ma - Special Assistant to Director
10 Minjet Loo - Post-Doctoral Research Fellow

11 Liu Ye - Post-Doctoral Research Fellow
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