

NBS Good Practices from Chinese government

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Ecological Preservation and Poverty Relief in Kezuo Houqi, Inner Mongolia

1. Background

Kezuo Houqi of Tongliao city is one of the counties which suffers from the most severe desertification in China. Desertification area covered 68% of the whole area, and forest coverage had even dropped less than 5.1%. Ecological system, people's livelihood, and socioeconomic development are severely challenged. Since 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced to fight a critical battle of poverty reduction. Acting upon the development philosophy of "lush mountains and lucid waters are invaluable assets", Kezuo Houqi starts to implement the dual mission of ecological restoration and poverty alleviation and achieved remarkable progress.

2. Influence and achievement

Focusing on increasing the greenness of the sand land and raising income for the people, efforts are made to fully release the ecological dividend, and promote the coordinated development of poverty reduction and ecological preservation.

3. Measure

Improving the eco-system for the benefit of the people. Multi-pronged measures have been taken to control desertification. 4.1 million mu (15 mu=1 hectare) deserted areas have been dealt with, forest land reaches 5.9 million mu, and forest coverage is over 21%, up by 10% compared with 2002. The danger of natural disasters such as drought, flood, sandstorm and salinity on agriculture has been mitigated. Along with ecological restoration and improvement, grain yield and the income of farmers and herdsmen has increased. Since 2014, farmers and herdsmen have started to work in projects related to desertification control, village forestation, street greening, water conservation. This have boosted revenue by RMB 51.36 million, among which the income of poor farmers and herdsmen has increased by RMB 4.45 million.

Fostering ecological industry to boost people's income. In order to restore the ecological environment of the grassland, grazing is strictly prohibited in some important areas, and in areas that has difficulty in naturally renewing themselves, pinus syvestris are planted. Relevant industries are developed, such as planting grass to raise livestock, tourism with ethnic features, forest and fruit planting industry, traditional Chinese medicine, and photovoltaic industry. Over 1.4 million visits have been made to this region since 2017, with revenue up by RMB 1.2 billion.

4. Best practice and implications

Ecological restoration lays the foundation for poverty alleviation. Farms and herdsmen living in poverty have been lifted out of poverty by increased grain output, and found jobs in the newly fostered industries.