



Chinese-German Cooperation Virtual Workshop on Ecosystem-based Approaches for Climate and Biodiversity

On July 14th and 15th 2022, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES) and the United Nations Environment Programme – International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) jointly organized a Chinese-German cooperation workshop on Ecosystem-based Approaches (EbA) for climate and biodiversity. The workshop aimed to specifically connect young researchers, working on EbA across continents. It was attended by over 80 researchers from China and Germany as well as partners from other Asian and European and African countries.

Thomas Graner, Vice President of BfN and Xuefang Wu, Deputy Chief Engineer of CRAES, opened the workshop, highlighting the ambitious and high-level commitments from the German and Chinese governments on addressing the global climate and biodiversity crises. The speakers underlined the long and successful cooperation of the Chinese-German cooperation on environmental topics. The focus on specifically connecting young researchers and promoting interdisciplinary research was regarded as an attempt to direct future cooperation towards establishing long-term research links to jointly address global environmental problems in a holistic manner. The attempt proved to be a success and the organizing institutions of the workshop are committed to follow it up. Dr Linxiu Zhang from UNEP-IEMP gave the first impulse on the nexus of climate, ecosystems and livelihoods, showcasing projects from the Global South on EbA practices and emerging opportunities for promoting EbA application, including valuable resources like best practice databases and knowledge products.

The workshop further included 8 presentations from researchers, who shared their relevant research findings on EbA and gave their insights into remaining knowledge gaps. Interactive sessions to facilitate virtual exchange and networking between young researchers from different disciplines were tested and proved to be useful tools. As such, the workshop offered a platform for young researchers to share their work and to foster the understanding for the importance of a science-policy-practice interface to address climate and biodiversity jointly in applied research. In various breakout groups, participants jointly identified opportunities for strengthening interdisciplinary research and key research gaps around EbA. These were e.g. related to: a limited understanding of ecosystem response and adaptation to climate change, the lack of innovative policy instruments to mainstream EbA under different institutional frameworks, the understanding of how to effectively engage society and the private sector, lacking data on EbA application at the regional and landscape level, and the lacking collaboration among non-state actors and different disciplines in EbA implementation.

Groups also defined the role of interdisciplinary networks for EbA research, highlighted the importance of science for policy and explored the limitations and opportunities in funding EbA research.



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The workshop ended with an in-depth discussion on the way forward for EbA research and enhancing the potential of interdisciplinary networks, as well as strengthening the long-term scientific collaboration between China and Germany and other partner countries. As a key outcome, a briefing note/ policy brief will be developed based on the workshop discussions and submitted later to identified decision makers.