

# Initiative to Promote Friendly Development in Protected Areas and Their Surroundings

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The global ecological crisis has posed serious threats to survival and development of mankind, and protected areas (PAs) have been recognized as the most important means of responding to ecological degradation. Therefore, the Convention on Biological Diversity has set up goals of conserving and effectively managing 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of the coastal and marine areas in the world by 2020. Considering the urgent global needs for healthy ecological environment, the PA targets of 2030 and 2050 will continue to increase, and total area of PAs will be much more than that of arable land in the world. PAs provide a good deal of important ecosystem services for the whole society, especially for the health, safety and economy of people living in and around PAs. However, various problems caused by the development in and around PAs, such as habitat loss and degradation, poaching, and pollution, pose threats to PAs.

On December 6-7th, 2018, the Workshop on Friendly Development in Protected Areas and Their Surroundings was held in Guiyang, Guizhou, China. This workshop was attended by over 160 experts, scholars, frontline staff and public, from governments, universities, scientific research institutions, enterprises, civil organizations and community around PAs. After sharing the research results and their longtime practical experiences, participants agreed that there is urgent need of promoting the **Friendly Development in Protected Areas and Their Surroundings**, that is, "to actively promote modes of development that are friendly to PA conservation goals, in order to alleviate the impact on PAs from developments in and around PAs." At the same time, participants realized that to achieve and maintain the friendly development, it must be supported by governments at all levels, PA management agencies and all sectors of society.

Therefore, all the participants here jointly issued an initiative to recommend the following measures to promote friendly development in PAs and their surroundings:

- 1) Incorporate "**establishing friendly development belts of protected areas and surroundings**" into the national strategy of developing ecological civilization system and the reform of the system of national parks and protected areas", to properly handle the contradiction between protected areas and their surrounding social and economic development", and to formulate corresponding guarantee mechanisms in legislation, standards, funds, policies, etc.; **PA management agencies** shall be given the power to supervise whether the surrounding friendly development belts meet the friendly development standards; the duty of PA management agencies shall include guiding the use of ecological compensation funds around PAs and helping community conduct friendly development; and policies such as ecological compensation, payment for ecosystem services, green finance, and ecological poverty alleviation shall be used to support the friendly development of the economic belts around PAs.
- 2) It is recommended that **local governments and PA management agencies** scientifically delineate

the boundary of friendly development belt, and formulate friendly development plans for each PA focusing on the conservation management goals; coordinate various resources to help **local communities** establish civil organizations, cooperatives and enterprises to improve self-organization ability of the communities; provide relevant concepts, technologies, capacity building, market and financial support to friendly development of local communities, leverage the traditional culture and local knowledge of communities, and foster and motivate local community to actively explore and implement various friendly development modes suitable for local environment, culture and needs.

- 3) Through incentives from government and enterprises, such as purchase of services from **civil organizations and social enterprises**, civil organizations and social enterprises will become new forces of technical services for monitoring, education, ecological technology, and cultivating market docking capabilities in the friendly development belts. With social welfare in mind, **social enterprises** shall be supported to promote brand development, innovate eco-friendly products, and demonstrate market conversion and value addition of ecosystem service value.
- 4) Develop an exchange platform between friendly products and **enterprises**, advocate the friendly product concept, set up access mechanism for friendly development, promote enterprise participation, effectively transform, increase and realize the value of ecosystem services, and support friendly development;
- 5) Fully publicize the importance of PAs and the concept of friendly development in PAs and their surroundings, so that more and more **general public** (especially those who do not live close to PAs) can become a powerful society force to support and participate in conservation by purchasing and experiencing friendly products and services.

Comprehensively promoting and realizing the friendly development in PAs and their surroundings will not only facilitate the conservation goals of the PA System, but also marketize the result of conservation, *i.e.* the value of the ecosystem service—in this way, the people around PAs can benefit from the conservation achievements, and the general public who are far away from PAs can participate in conservation through enjoying and experiencing these products and services. In this way, we can establish a system where the whole society can support PA conservation.