

## Western Development Strategy (WDS)

For the WDS the following principles must be complied with to achieve control of land degradation and the promotion of regional development:

- unified planning and step-by-step implementation, advancing region by region and diversified guidance; priority to be given to the addressing land degradation in areas which are easy to control, spread rapidly and have greater economic influence;
- establishment and protection of forests and grasses as the main efforts and implementing integrated harnessing in combination with engineering measures;
- ecological benefits as the main purpose and also paying attention to socio-economic benefits, desertification control be combined with the promotion of local economic development;
- the principle of handling affairs in accordance with the rules of market economy.
- Government support and multiple source fund-raising. Sticking to *pro rata* input by central government, local governments and beneficiary enterprises, encouraging private investment and exploiting extensively investment channels;
- the principle of sustainable development. Adjusting rationally land use structure and agriculture production structure in accordance with the carrying capacity of soil and water resources, cultivating renewable resources and putting an end to predatory development;
- sectors should share the work and help one another, and develop in harmony; and
- emphasizing and continuing the principle of public participation.

Combating desertification in the WDS includes ecological protection, returning cultivated land to forests, and control. The area covers the western part of northeast, northern part of north PRC, and most areas of the northwest. These regions cover eight major deserts and four sandy lands in PRC's northern region, including 265 counties (banners) in 12 provinces/autonomous regions, namely Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, Shaanxi, Hebei, Shanxi, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Tibet. Desertified land and desert area in these region amounts to 1.69 million km<sup>2</sup>, of which the area that is possible to be controlled accounts for 530,000 km<sup>2</sup>. According to climate, natural and social economic conditions, the program scope is divided into three categories. Under these areas, various sub-projects are proposed in accordance with the different problems to be solved.

### (i) Protection of Biodiversity

- Strengthening basic research on PRC's biodiversity.
- Improving the network of State nature reserves and other nature reserves.
- Protecting wild species which have important significance to biodiversity.
- Protecting genetic resources of crops and domestic stocks.
- *In situ* protection outside of nature reserves.
- Establishing nationwide biodiversity information and monitoring network.
- Coordinating biodiversity protection and sustainable development.

### (ii) Protection of natural environment

### (iii) Soil and water conservation

In accordance with the distribution of the major water systems and the features of water environment in the western region, the area is divided into four regions, namely the upper and middle reaches of Yellow River, the upper and middle reaches of Yangtze River, inland river region of the western region, and the river valley region of Zhujiang River and southwest rivers.

Integrated demonstration areas of soil and water conservation and high effective utilization of water resources will be set up in 8-10 representative watershed areas choosing from the major river valleys in western region. Complete sets of technological options of water control and desertification combating in different areas will be formed through experiments, demonstration, and promotion. Advanced integrated technology will be applied to water conservancy, forestry and agriculture, including the technologies of wind-resistance, sand fixation, water preservation and moisture-keeping by forest trees, water-saving irrigation, timely monitoring and management of water and desertification, coupling of water and fertility in farmland, and improvement of crop varieties.

(iv) **Irrigation**

- Water-saving reforming project in the irrigation area of the upper and middle reaches of Yellow River.
- Project of small scale water preservation by rain collection in semi-arid area of the central and western regions.
- Project of soil and water conservation monitoring network and information system.
- Project of the improvement of gullies in sandy and coarse sand areas of loess plateau.
- Ecological project of sea-buckthorn planting in sandstone area.
- Project of integrated control of soil and water conservation in agro-animal husbandry ecotone area.
- Project of the protection of natural oases in the inland river area.
- Project of the establishment of water-saving vegetation in grassland.
- Project of the protection of important water source reservoir.

(v) **Water conservancy in pastureland**

(vi) **Agricultural economy**

- Project of organizing and implementing the protection of natural grassland.
- Strengthening the development of food bases.
- Developing productive bases of specialized farm produce.
- Developing energetically dry farming and water-saving agriculture.
- Promoting positively the development of ecological agriculture.
- Expediting the development of breeding industry in western region.
- Development positively processing industry of farm produce and township industry.
- Strengthening the development of service system for agricultural socialization.
- Promoting energetically agriculture scientific-technical progress in western region.
- Developing vocational training of grassroots agricultural technical staff and peasants.