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CHINA’S WETLANDS CONSERVATION: ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE ELEVENTH 5-YEAR PLAN (2006-2010) AND CHALLENGES IN THE TWELFTH 5-YEAR PLAN (2011-2015)

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Abstract

China’s natural wetlands occupy 3.77% of the land and provide 54.9% of China’s ecosystem services. Healthy natural wetland ecosystems play an important role in the sustainable development of China, which was realized by the Chinese government in the early 1970s. In the past 5 years, China has made great efforts in wetlands conservation, which is signified by the funding of billions of dollars to restore degraded wetlands, the policy to return reclaimed croplands to wetlands, the specific regulation to strengthen wetlands management, the coordination mechanism to enhance management capacity, and the communication to strengthen international cooperation. This paper introduces the background of China’s wetlands, compares the status of wetlands conservation globally and in China, illustrates the achievements, policies and measures of China’s wetlands conservation during the Eleventh 5-Year Plan (2006-2010), analyzes the issues existing in current wetlands conservation, and discusses the challenges, efforts and measures in protecting natural wetlands in the Twelfth 5-Year Plan (2011-2015). The future of China’s wetlands looks promising since China has already realized that wetlands conservation is a national imperative to guarantee the sustainable development of economy and society.

Key words: challenges, Eleventh 5-Year Plan, restoration projects, Twelfth 5-Year Plan, wetlands conservation achievements

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