

Swiss Re Supported Project in Process

Training Courses Organized in the Dabie Mountains

Supported by Swiss Re, the project titled Vetiver for Sustainable Watershed Management in the Dabie Mountains of China: Demonstration, Training, and Extension was launched in May 2004. The project was to introduce and extend vetiver technology for water and soil conservation and for economic tree production in the Dabie Mountains that has an area of about 100,000 m². In September 2004, a group of experts from China Vetiver Network (CVN) went to Huanggang, the site of the project. A series of the training courses were organized there.

1 The training materials

Before the training, technical training materials were produced by CVN and sent to the Dabie Mountains. These materials included:

- ✧ *Vetiver & Soil Conservation*: FACT Sheets (No. 1-5): printed on different color paper and introduced basic knowledge of soil conservation and vetiver grass.
- ✧ *Vetiver Grass: The Hedge Against Erosion*: A translation booklet from its English version which was produced by The Vetiver Network (International).
- ✧ *Chestnut tree Production*: A booklet introduced chestnut tree planting and cultivation and how to use vetiver grass to protect chestnut trees.
- ✧ *Tea Tree Production*: A booklet introducing basic technology of tea tree planting and management and the method of using vetiver to control soil erosion and improve tea production.
- ✧ *Vetiver Posters*: A printed color poster with numerous photos and vivid drawings introducing vetiver application in China and in the world. As large number of poor farmers in the project area has relatively low level of education, the poster were distributed to farmers to put on their family wall in order to strengthen their memory.
- ✧ *Vetiver Newsletter*: The newsletter introduced Swiss Re supported project and recent news on vetiver development in China and in the World. What are water and soil erosion and what causes erosion?

All of the printed materials were produced and sent to the project sites and distributed in the Dabie Mountain area for several times in September as soon as they were produced. Several experts from different provinces were invited to prepare these training materials.

2 The training and training courses

1.1 Training contents

The training contents included:

- ✧ What is water and soil erosion? What causes soil erosion? How to control soil erosion?
- ✧ Vegetative contour hedges for erosion control.
- ✧ Why vetiver grass is the ideal plant for the vegetative system of soil and moisture conservation, earth structure stabilization, and environmental rehabilitation?
- ✧ How to establish vetiver hedges and nursery and how to manage vetiver for soil conservation, soil moisture and fertility maintenance, and economic tree protection.
- ✧ The planting and management of chestnut tree and the application of vetiver for chestnut

production.

- ✧ The planting and management of tea tree and the application of vetiver for tea production.

1.2 The training courses

The training courses were organized mainly in two sites: the village office and the tea-processing hall. The trainers were mainly local technicians so that farmers were easy to understand regarding to local tongue. The trainees were local farmers in the project area. In addition to classroom training, some short training courses were held in the field so that farmers can get more knowledge vividly.

In order to get more farmers involving the project, the experts and technicians visited farmers' families, the village Forestry Farm, and the Elder People Yard distributing training materials and introducing training contents.

The training combined lectures with outside demonstration so that farmers can grasp practical knowledge.

Before the initiation of series training courses the Leading Group visited Farmer Technicians who are fond of cultivate economic trees. We exchanged ideas on economic tree management and collected their experiences and introduced to other farmers during the training courses. For example a farmer told the experts that it would be better to use fruit stem instead of productive stem for chestnut grafting so that the chestnut tree can bear fruit earlier. Then his experience was introduced to other farmers during lecture presentation.

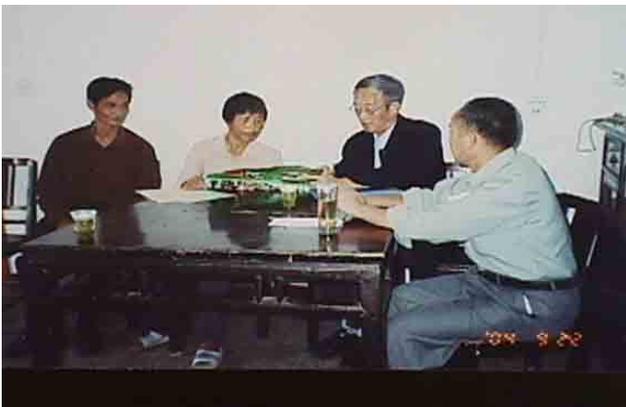
On the request of some farmers who wish to get more profit from vetiver grass, the experts introduced farmers with vetiver application experience for engineering protection in China and in the world. The farmers were encouraged to contact railway and highway sections in order to contract road protection projects using vetiver.

All of these activities started from 21 September and ended on 27 September 2004.

3 The follow up activities

On 23 September 2004, the project Leading Group discussed the follow up activities, i.e. the planting of vetiver and economic trees. It was decided that land preparation and manuring would be done from October to November. Tea seeding will be finished by Spring Festival (The end of January 2005). After the Spring Festival chestnut trees will be planted and in March vetiver grass will be planted. From now on seeds, seedlings and planting materials will be prepared.

Besides, further training will be continued in small groups and training materials will be distributed to more farmers.



Talking with the director of woman federation



Introducing vetiver to Forestry Farm workers



Visiting tea processing plant



Introducing infrastructure protection with vetiver



Discussing at the village hotel on further arrangement



Introducing vetiver reproduction



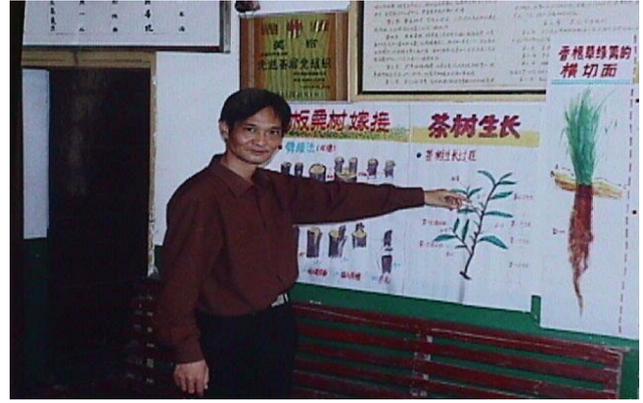
Lecture on economic tree management



Women are fond of vetiver technology



“Why vetiver can control soil erosion ”



Relation between vetiver and economic trees



Vetiver planting demonstration outside the classroom



Vetiver practice in the field



Distribution vetiver information to farmer technician



Farmers learning vetiver planting



Field practice



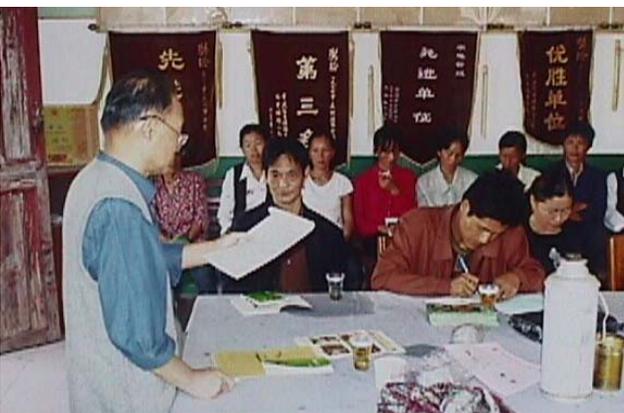
Training course at village office



Root characteristics of vetiver



What causes soil erosion



Lecture on water and soil erosion



Lecture presentation



Introducing vetiver development in China and in the world



Looking at vetiver FACT Sheets



Women participants accounting for over 60%



Visiting farmer's tea garden



Women are looking at vetiver poster