

Anti-poverty Study of Ecological Preservation Area (the case study of Poyang Lake)



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With the special functions such as the maintenance of ecological system integrity and the guarantee of human material support system sustainability, the ecological preservation areas of river sources belong to the prohibited or restricted development zones of national land, which are not suitable for the large-scale industrial, urban and rural constructions. The regional ecological function protection is the common choice for the current international social regional ecological protection, but these regions are often the relatively poor regions confronting with the pressure of population increase, economic development and environmental protection. The coordinated development between the environmental protection in the source regions and lake regions of Poyang Lake and the local economic society has typical significance in the country.

I. Environmental Protection and Anti-poverty Significance of the Ecological Preservation Area

The terrain of Poyang Lake basin slopes from the south to the north, and five rivers including Gan, Fu, Xin, Xiu and Rao flow into Poyang Lake and then feed into the Yangtze River. Poyang Lake is an important regulator of the Yangtze River with an annual average water feeding yield of 145 billion cubic meters,

accounting for 15.6% of the Yangtze River runoff. As the ecological enrichment region of Jiangxi, Poyang Lake is the largest freshwater lake in China, the only Chinese member of World Living Lake Network, and also the water ecology security area of the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, playing a very important role in China's and even the world's ecological patterns. The basin area accounts for 97% of Jiangxi's land area. Jiangxi Province is almost a complete Poyang Lake basin, and the area and scope of the whole basin are basically consistent with the administrative territory of Jiangxi Province. Therefore, the ecological system of Jiangxi is highly consistent with that of Poyang Lake. The impacts of the poverty and backwardness of the river source and lakeside regions on the regional environment are profound, which is easy to cause the environmental degradation and vicious cycle of poverty. Due to the special geographical characteristics and functional orientation, the national and provincial natural reserves are centralized in five river source reserves including 10 counties (cities) and lakeside regions including 13 counties (districts, cities) of Poyang Lake. Due to lack of people's knowledge in ecological resources for a long time, failure for local

residents to get proper compensations from their efforts in environmental protection, and also backwardness of economic development of the region which is dependent on agriculture and fishery, the residents in some regions are still in poverty. The GDPs of Poyang, Duchang and Yugan counties around the Poyang Lake rank last in the province, and the farmers' incomes of these three counties were 3800 Yuan, 3761 Yuan and 5494 Yuan separately in 2011, which are much lower than the average level of 6892 Yuan in the province; meanwhile, these three counties are populated regions with the population of 1.5 million, 0.7 million and 1 million people separately.

The difference between urban and rural areas causes the "unbalanced" development of the ecological economic zone, while the provincial capital and the central cities such as Nanchang, Jiujiang, Yingtan, and Xinyu are central areas of economic and social development in Jiangxi, especially the Yangtze River Delta located at the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, where the urban and rural residents earn much more money. Due to low development of the regional economy for many years, the desires of the cadres and the masses for being rich have kept for a long time, which are easy to change into the blind energy release under the background of the growing gap between their incomes and the incomes in the surrounding regions, the realization of the environmental protection and anti-poverty in five river source regions and Poyang Lake as well as lakeside regions is of great significance for the sustainable regional development.

II. Useful Practice of Environmental Protection and Anti-poverty

The river and lake development and improvement project of Jiangxi Province started from the early 1980s is an exploration and practice seeking for the coordinated development between the economy, society and the ecology, environment in Poyang Lake basin.

With the concept of ecological economy and sustainable development, Jiangxi people seize the internal law that the mountains, rivers and lakes are indivisible, accumulate the experience in mountain, river and lake development and improvement, and combine the mountain, river and lake improvement with the economic development and poverty-eradication, forming an ecological economic system project integrated with the mountain, water and poverty improvement. The tests and explorations are conducted to the development and improvement mode under different natural ecological environments, and 31 experimental demonstration bases of ten categories and more than 100 promotion places are established successively, constituting the experimental demonstration network system. The coordinated development between the environmental protection and the social economy improves people's living standards, the poverty population has been falling by 240,000 people each year, and more than 6 million people have been lifted out of poverty.

In Dec. 2009, the construction of Ecological Economic Zone of Poyang Lake became the national development strategy, which should be tested in the underdeveloped regions first to explore the new ways of coordinated development between ecology and economy, and of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, and organically combine the development with the protection. The Ecological Economic Zone of Poyang Lake can be divided into the core lake region, the lakeside control region and the efficient and intensive region in accordance with the regional function orientation. The main functions of providing the ecological products such as fresh air, clean water, and pleasant climate in the core lake protection region are determined as to enhance the preservation capacity of biodiversity, prohibit the land reclamation around the lake and the cultivation around the lake, reduce the impacts of human activities on the core

region, and scientifically divide the areas used for planting, farming and fishing within the region. The planting and cultivation projects shall meet the needs of lake water storage for flood mitigation, wetland ecological protection and wildlife protection. The construction and management of migratory bird reserves in Poyang Lake, and national aquatic germplasm resource reserves of white-flag dolphin, Chinese sturgeon, cowfish shall be strengthened, and the migratory birds, aquatic animals and natural environment they live on shall be protected; the lakeside control development region is mainly used to protect the natural ecology of the river feeding channel of Poyang Lake as to improve the flood discharge and water supply capacities and construct the ecological barriers of the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River. At the same time, the off-site transformation and expansion of the population relocation and the existing industrial enterprise relocation within the lakeside control development regions are encouraged through the policy support in the aspects of investment, credit, land use, energy supply and taxation. The eco-industry shall be developed in accordance with the local conditions to prevent the excessive development of ultra-environmental carrying capacity, and the eco-tourism, eco-agriculture, light eco-industry, and eco-service shall be developed in the fragile ecological areas along the lakeside.

From the water source, Jiangxi Province has designated the protection region of Poyang Lake basin with a total area of 9985.72 square kilometers and with the investment of 135 million Yuan to implement the water pollution improvement project of “Five Rivers and One Lake”. At the same time, the water resource protection project of the Yangtze River and Poyang Lake, the urban and rural wastewater treatment project, the industrial park wastewater treatment project, the rural cleaning project and other ecological projects shall be implemented.

The ecological protection encouragement policies of basin counties (cities, districts) and the migrant relocation project in fragile ecological region shall be implemented together with the water environment protection, pollution emission control, ecological security pattern construction, and virtuous cycle of ecological environment. The systemic protection and development of the Poyang Lake basin environment constitute a safeguard for the water ecology security in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, and lay the foundation for the sustainable development of the region.

III. Countermeasures of Environmental Protection and Anti-poverty

1. Poverty Reduction and Environmental Protection in Development

On the one hand, the poverty shall be reduced and eliminated from the river source region and the lake region; on the other hand, the environmental degradation shall be prevented; so it is necessary to reduce and eliminate poverty and pay attention to the environmental protection in development. Poyang Lake is rich in resources, but the traditional development mode has difficulty in crossing the ecological environment destruction. Therefore, the development modes shall be changed and the regional economy shall be developed in accordance with the local conditions. In the long term, there is no conflict between the poverty elimination and good environment maintenance, but they can be mutually promoted to reach the virtuous cycle. With the improvement of people’s living standard, people’s demands for the ecological products are continuously growing. Therefore, the provision of ecological products and the strengthening of production capacities of ecological products shall be taken as the important contents of ecological preservation area and the important task of national spatial development. With people’s growing demands for the ecological environment service,

the local residents are more positive on the environment improvement, and meanwhile more investments are made to maintain the good environment, forming a virtuous cycle.

2. Close Integration of Environmental Protection with Poverty Reduction and Elimination of Farmers

As an underdeveloped region facing a difficult development task, the economy cannot be rapidly developed and people's living standard cannot be continuously improved only through the ecological construction and protection, which may lead to the vicious cycle of "poverty – environment-sacrificed development – poverty". From the viewpoints of the farmers, they will take the environmental protection into consideration only after solving the clothing and hunger problems. The poor people often conduct the predatory exploitation to the natural resources for solving the survival problems, and become the ecological environment destroyers consciously or unconsciously.

From the viewpoints of the government, it is necessary to complete the following work: first, "enriching people" must be considered as an important aspect in the process of rural ecological environment protection and resource development. The poverty reduction and elimination as well as the sustainable development shall be realized through the local resource advantages and the ecological product service creation; second, the agricultural products with resource advantages and market demand shall be developed into the characterized regional pillar industry with positive support as to form a way combining the industrialization with the poverty development. The enterprises with market development capacities engaged in processing agricultural products shall be guided and encouraged to provide the series of services for raw material production bases in poor regions before production, during production and after production for the poor farmers, forming the

industrial management integrated with trade, industry and agriculture, as well as production, supply and marketing, and realizing the integration of regional ecological resource protection and economic development through "hemopoietic poverty alleviation".

3. Implementation of Policy Mechanism Closely Related to the Environmental Protection and Anti-poverty

The ecological pressure can be eased, and the poverty can be reduced and eliminated for farmers by making a close connection between the environmental protection and the poverty reduction and elimination and considering the farmers livelihood in the ecological environment protection and the ecological environment protection in the poverty alleviation.

The national and provincial ecological compensation mechanism for Poyang Lake basin shall be established, and the special funds of ecological compensation shall be set. The ecological compensation for the ecological public welfare forest shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations of national and provincial governments. The necessary living subsidies shall be given to the professional fishermen in the lake region who lead a difficult life in the closed fishing seasons. The subsidies shall be given to the wetland resource owners and users whose legal rights and interests are harmed due to the needs of the wetlands in the national natural wetland reserves and the wildlife protection within the ecological economic region of Poyang Lake.

At the same time, the green national economic accounting evaluation mechanism shall be gradually established, and the weight coefficient of ecological index evaluation shall be increased, to gradually form the good mechanism of policy guiding, enterprise operation, and ecological environment protection of public participation, and make the ecological protection participants obtain the deserved repayment and compensation.

4. Implementation of Comprehensive Ecological, Economic and Social Project

The realization of the coordinated development of ecology, economy and society is the process of structure optimization and function enhancement. In accordance to the natural characteristic protection and environmental evolution phase, we should explore the technical approaches to the promotion of ecological protection in protection regions and ecological development of economy, improve the coordination of urban and rural economic development, determine the regional ecological environment protection

and the industrial optimization structure by taking the optimization of industrial structure and the integrated design of ecological safety as the entry point, and conduct the ecological economic recovery and reconstruction by taking the comprehensive implementation of ecological, social and economic projects as the reconstruction approaches. In the face of the dual problems of the environmental degradation and the backward economic and social development, the “win-win” goal of ecological balance and productivity improvement can be achieved through the equalization of financial public services.