

Submitted Abstract

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Abstract

In recent years, conservation on agricultural heritages gets more and more attention from landscape sustainability scientists and actors. Since 2002, the designation of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) has been funded by FAO aim to preserve the social-ecological values of the outstanding traditional agricultural landscapes. Local people practice their accustomed experienced life behaviors which include various traditional knowledge but without keeping a watchful eye on. In the context of land abandonment, out-migration and crop structural adjustment, the traditional knowledge banded with the local agricultural landscape and society is confronted with destruction. How to inherit the traditional knowledge is vital for conserving the agricultural heritage system and needs to take into a specific case to demonstrate. We investigated the indigenous knowledge system and launched participatory actions in Shexian Dryland Stone Terraced System in Taihang Mountain North China since 2015 when the local decided to apply GIAHS designation.

At the beginning stage, we collected and addressed the key elements of the system. Later we implemented a series of participatory actions to appeal local people to aware the traditional knowledge and how it could be in their routine life. Through the outside cases and storytelling to show particularity and values of their familiar but imperceptible local traditions. We used the interactive social learning method to cultivate the ability and to motivate the conservation passion of local people. Especially, the farming knowledge of the terraced system constructed a social solidarity symbol to promote endogenous power of the local community to their terraced system. This case of empowering the local gives us inspiration to do comparison analysis with the terraced landscape in Spain under the same context of the challenges. In the final, we discussed that conserve the local knowledge by the social intervention is more important and effective than simply conserving the landscape scenery and updating the technical equipment.