China Eco-Farming Project  
Ethnic Minority Development Plan

A. Introduction

This Ethnic Minority Development Plan (EMDP) has been prepared for the China Eco-Farming Project in accordance with World Bank OP4.10, “Indigenous Peoples.” The Eco-Farming Project will assist farmers in integrating biogas into their production activities. The project will be implemented in five provinces during 2007-12. In three provinces - Guangxi, Hunan and Hubei - the project is intended to benefit several ethnic minority groups with characteristics meeting the definition of “indigenous peoples” as provided in the Bank’s policy. A social assessment has already been conducted, in which free, prior and informed consultations were undertaken. This consultation process resulted in expressions of broad community support for project objectives. The project is unlikely to cause any adverse social impacts. This EMDP has been formulated to ensure that project design affords culturally appreciate opportunities for these groups to participate in, and benefit from, the project.

B. Legal and Institutional Framework for Ethnic Minorities

The National Constitution guarantees that all nationalities in the People's Republic of China are equal, and makes ethnic discrimination illegal. It protects the lawful rights and interests of the ethnic minorities, and upholds ethnic equality, solidarity, and development as the assurance for national unification. In addition, the Law on Autonomy in Ethnic Minorities Regions provides for the establishment of minority nationalities autonomous areas on the basis of concentrated population of one or more ethnic minorities in a particular area. The Autonomy Law establishes the right of ethnic minorities in autonomous areas to “use special policies and flexible methods” adopted “in accordance with the actual situation in specific areas” to promote economic and cultural development. In addition to the Autonomy Law, the government at each administrative level (central, provincial, and local) establishes scores of laws and regulations specific to ethnic minorities. Guangxi, Hunan and Hubei have set forth various regulations for implementation of the Autonomy Law.

C. Ethnic Minorities in China

Approximately 8.2 percent of China's population, or 91 million people, are members of fifty-five officially designated Chinese “national minority peoples” or “ethnic minority groups” (shaoshu minzu). They inhabit every province and municipality of China, but are concentrated in the border regions in China's northern, northwestern, western, and southwestern sectors. About two-thirds of the members of minority nationalities inhabit “ethnic minority autonomous areas” (minzu zizhi quyu), including five province-level autonomous regions (Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, and Guangxi), thirty autonomous prefectures (zizhi zhou) in ten provinces and autonomous regions, and 113 autonomous counties (zizhi xian) in eighteen provinces and autonomous regions. The Eco-Farming Project is intended to benefit ethnic groups in Guangxi Zhuang Ethnic
Minority Autonomous Region and in autonomous prefectures in the western parts of Hunan and Hubei.

D. Ethnic Minority Groups in the Project Areas

According to the project social assessment (SA), there are six ethnic minority groups (Zhuang, Yao, Miao, Dong, Shui and Tujia) with a total population of more than 400,000 people among potential project beneficiaries, about 17% of the total. In the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, more than 83,150 minority people are expected to directly benefit from the project. In Enshi Tujia and Maio Autonomous Prefecture of western Hubei Provinces, 1,300 ethnic minority villages in eight counties are covered by the project, accounting for 40% of the prefecture’s total beneficiaries. Hunan Province has 18 project counties, in which three in the western area are populated with more than 50% ethnic minorities. Living in their own communities or intermixed with others (including the Han), most of these ethnic minority people reside in relatively remote areas, and their participation in the project becomes a focal concern in the project design.

E. Planning Measures to Benefit the Ethnic Minority Groups

In response to suggestions received in consultation undertaken as part of the SA process, several special features have been incorporated into project design to ensure the ethnic minority communities have an equitable opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, project activities. These include:

- **Project priority given to ethnic minority communities/households in Guangxi, and western Hubei and Hunan.** In selection of project communities and households, ethnic minority nationality is set as one of the priority conditions in the project design. This has been factored into selection of participating counties, resulting in statistical over-representation of minority communities among direct project beneficiaries.

- **Tailoring sub-project design to fit the ethnic minorities customs.** This project assists farmers to achieve integrated farming systems that make more efficient use of water and soil resources, biomass, and other resources. The core model includes livestock, biogas digester, and improved living environment (toilets, kitchen). The living fuel resources of the Zhuang, Yao, Miao and Tujia communities are mostly straw and firewood that are collected mainly by women. Consultation with these communities indicated that ethnic minority farm households welcome the biogas schemes and energy-saving stoves most, especially in combination with their traditional fire-basin for house heat and social gathering. Meanwhile, they also use the biogas residues (organic fertilizer) as input for agricultural production (e.g. vegetables, greenhouses, fruit trees, fishponds). All these have enriched the project activities more compatible to local cultures.
• **Targeting sub-project activities to the needs of ethnic minority communities.** Normally the project design is based on the model of “biogas scheme with three-component-improvement” (kitchen, toilet and pigpen), called “one pond plus three improvements). The ethnic minority communities living in mountainous and hilly areas specifically need water supply and access roads as well, besides sanitary toilets and pigsties associated with the biogas schemes. In response to these requests, some sub-projects have also adjusted their component design in conjunction with village infrastructure rehabilitation or orchard construction. As a result, in the ethnic minority areas (and wherever appropriate), the project design of “biogas scheme with four/five-component-improvement” (plus water and road) may be adopted on the basis of local consultation.

• **Training for the ethnic minorities’ biogas technicians/workers in particular and for their communities in general.** There are regular official trainings for rural biogas technicians who hence gain certificates for working locally. This technical training is also especially designed for ethnic minority community members in the manner and language acceptable to them. These trained rural biogas technicians from ethnic communities have the particular responsibility to train and guide their community members.

**F. Grievance Procedure**

The grievance procedure already established for the China Eco-Farming Project will apply to all these ethnic minority groups. Grievances raised by the ethnic minority communities will be recorded by their village heads and submitted monthly to township PMO. Wherever possible, grievances will be addressed by the village head with the assistance from PMO staff as required. If a resolution cannot be reached on village level, the grievance will be raised to county PMO and Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau and, failing resolution at the county level, to provincial PMO and the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau.

Written records of all grievances by ethnic minority communities will be collated every six months by the county PMO and submitted to the provincial PMO and Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau.

**G. Monitoring**

The EMDP has designed a set of process indicators for project M&E relating to ethnic minority participation as follows:

- Frequency of consultation with ethnic minority communities (with track records)
- Number of village working groups of project implementation among ethnic minority communities in the project areas
- Number of training activities under the project provided to and joined by ethnic minorities in a manner acceptable to them
- Number of ethnic minority households who have biogas facilities or participate in other project productive activities
- Number of the rural biogas technicians/workers from ethnic minority groups trained under the project
- Scheduled trainings of ethnic sensitivity for project/local staff to deliver communication and information campaign and services for ethnic minority communities’ participation
- Number of ethnic minority groups involved in project participatory M&E.

H. Disclosure

In addition to routine disclosure of this EMDP in all ethnic minority communities in the project areas, the EMDP will be disclosed at all participating county PMOs/libraries in the ethnic minority areas in Guangxi and western parts of Hunan and Hubei.