

Recommendations on Biodiversity Conservation in the Belt and Road Countries

November 5, 2018 Beijing, China

The Belt and Road runs through the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, connecting hot-spots for biodiversity conservation. The participants from Session 7: ANSO-Biodiversity and Conservation, November 4-5, 2018.

1. **Recognize** both the growing threat from human activities and climate change to Belt and Road Countries' biodiversity and the moral obligation of scientists from this region at the interface between scientific research and biodiversity conservation.
2. **Recognize** the importance of indigenous and local communities' knowledge and wisdom for biodiversity and sustainable utilization.
3. **Recognize** that the effective conservation of biodiversity in Belt and Road Countries can only be achieved by collective and collaborative efforts.
4. **Call for integration of** individual and collective capabilities to:
 - a. **Facilitate** long-term, multi-disciplinary inventories of biodiversity in Belt and Road Countries based on consistent protocols, such as continued large-scale field work conducted by international teams of scientists.
 - b. **Work** towards identification, designation and establishment of additional protected areas within Belt and Road Countries and enhancement of existing protected areas for the benefit of biodiversity and human stakeholders.
 - c. **Secure** the key ecosystems and ecosystem services, endangered species and their genetic diversity, by multiple methods, including *in situ* in protected natural habitats and *ex situ* in germplasm banks and botanical gardens.

- d. **Strongly encourage** the use of strategic environmental and social impact assessments of the highest international standards at the planning stage to identify problems before development goes ahead.
 - e. **Promote** the use of flagship species to support sustainable development and conservation.
 - f. **Enhance** capacity for undertaking biodiversity research and conservation, by providing funds for researchers, students and local communities, by increasing accessibility of biodiversity information, and by organizing international workshops and training courses.
 - g. **Engage** political, social and economic leaders in the development of policies and practices that address the benefits of biodiversity conservation for society and sustainable development of the economy.
 - h. **Propose** to set up a coordination body for botanical gardens, the ANSO Botanical Gardens Union (ANSO-BGU), in order to strengthen capacity building for botanical gardens along the Belt and Road. ANSO-BGU aims to encourage the establishment of new botanical gardens in key areas, reinvigorate existing botanical gardens, promote *ex situ* conservation and capacity building, as well as environmental education.
5. **Recommend** the further development of mechanisms for sharing existing data or specimens among different countries, and with other potential users, with clear criteria and standards to ensure quality, reliability, and transparency.
 6. **Support** the establishment of new programs for long-term biodiversity research and cooperation, or extensions of existing ones, in areas with high conservation priority.

7. **Enhance** communication and networking among partners able to contribute to biodiversity research, conservation and management within Belt and Road Countries, such as building and strengthening international, trans-boundary linkages and initiatives.
8. **Acknowledge** that many researchers are already making significant contributions in all these areas, but identify the urgent need to scale up existing activities and make full use of the opportunities presented by the establishment of ANSO.