



Session Summary

From Vision to Impact: Exploring the full cycle of the Shaanxi Qinling Biodiversity Project 3 September 2025, 12:15 – 12:30 pm

SESSION TAKE AWAY

The session provided the AEW participants with a practical understanding of how development projects progress from concept to impact highlighting the “One ADB” approach—where operations, evaluation, and knowledge come together to support sustainable and inclusive development.

TOPICAL AREA

Governance and Country Evaluation Systems

Niu Zhiming, Lead Project Officer (Environment), PRCM, ADB

- The Shaanxi Qinling Biodiversity Conservation and Demonstration Project successfully introduced a market-based approach that integrates biodiversity conservation with sustainable revenue generation and land management. This innovative model addressed both environmental and economic needs, providing alternative livelihoods for local communities and reducing conflicts between conservation and development.
- The project led to the restoration and rehabilitation of habitats, reduction of land degradation and soil erosion, and the mainstreaming of globally threatened species management into government programs. It also increased visitor numbers, boosted rural incomes, generated jobs, and enhanced ecosystem management and institutional capacity.
- Market-oriented interventions proved effective for biodiversity conservation. The project highlighted the necessity of strong government commitment, research-driven policy influence, and enhanced institutional capacity to ensure the sustainability and scalability of conservation investments.

Garrett Kilroy, Principal Evaluation Specialist, IED, ADB

- Significant Achievements in Biodiversity and Community Impact. The Shaanxi Qinling Biodiversity Conservation and Demonstration Project achieved positive results in conserving biodiversity within a global hotspot, promoted ecotourism, and created over 1,500 jobs annually. The project also strengthened local infrastructure and institutions, delivering satisfactory outcomes in biodiversity, land management, community engagement, sustainable financing, capacity-building, and outreach.
- Independent Validation Highlights Both Successes and Challenges. The project was rated as relevant, effective, and likely sustainable, with a satisfactory overall impact. However, efficiency was downgraded due to implementation delays and a lower-than-expected economic internal rate of return. Independent evaluation ensured credibility and transparency, identifying both achievements and areas for improvement.
- Key Lessons: At the sector level, market-based approaches to natural resource management and conservation can enhance financial sustainability. Operationally, it is crucial to establish clear institutional mandates and coordination mechanisms during project preparation to support smooth implementation.

SESSION COORDINATORS

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