

Preface

Environmental decline and deteriorating conditions of environmental resources are endangering water and food security globally. Deforestation can cause soil erosion while agricultural intensification can lead to water pollution and shortage. While nations across the globe are affected by these problems, the extent of the problem faced by decision-makers in China is particularly severe. China has implemented the world's largest afforestation and land restoration programme in decades. Yet the consequences of these programmes have raised greater doubts about the sustainability of the environmental restoration projects. This has sparked an intense debate among scholars of environmental management about the apparent contradiction between investing in environmental restoration and the outcomes in terms of water and food security.

We explore this fundamental question in this book based on the outcomes of a Sino-German funded project. Additionally, we make efforts to seek out options to overcome this problem. By bringing the current research and knowledge on managing forests, grasslands and agricultural ecosystems, this book suggests an alternative approach to harmonise sustainable nature and social development. With this contribution, the editors hope to encourage a dialogue on knowledge gaps and the way forward involving harmonised decision-making based on cooperation between officials, scientists, practitioners and stakeholders.

The editors are grateful to all authors and reviewers for their remarkable contributions to this book and for sharing their knowledge and experiences with us. Special thanks go to the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the copy editors of this book, without whose support, this book would not have come to fruition. Thus, this book is dedicated to everyone who has contributed to it in one way or another.

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Nexus of Environmental Resources

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