



BIODIVERSITY: LIVE AND LET LIVE

- ◆ Live and let live
- ◆ Amity's Practice
- ◆ Biodiversity Then and Now
- ◆ Biodiversity conservation in the eyes of project managers
- ◆ Rebuild connection to the environment



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ON THE COVER:

A group of avocet is flying over a coastal wetland in Jiangsu Province





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Embrace Internet platforms

Today, the development of social organizations is tied to the pace of scientific and technological innovation. The Amity Foundation was one of the first Chinese social organizations to embark on the Internet and digital transformation.

As early as in 2006, Amity opened an online charity store on Taobao, one of the biggest online shopping platforms in China, offering charity souvenirs, such as products from our project areas. It was among the first online charity stores in China. Since the value of the Internet to social organizations at that time lay more in information release and public advocacy, the initial intention of Amity in establishing this online store was to promote Amity's projects through selling products, bringing them into

the eyes of consumers and the general public. Since then, the cooperation between Amity and Alibaba Charity, whether through Taobao or Alipay, has been very close.

In the past two years, Amity started to promote Amity projects through live streaming. This is evidence of Amity's innovation and creativity.

With more cooperation with Internet platforms, we managed to dig wider and deeper. Amity Bakery was very popular and well welcomed by online platforms like Alibaba Charity. Besides information release and fundraising, designers from Alibaba Charity also designed packaging for the cookies made by Amity Bakery.

However, even if the influence of social organizations grows, they

will not be able to compare with Internet companies in terms of size and technical capabilities. In this regard, we need help and cooperation from such Internet platforms. In recent years, Amity has been experimenting with live streaming over the Internet, to see how this would work with charity projects. Results have been promising so far. In addition to live streaming, online meeting and online training, we are also trying online project visits and online project support to explore possibilities of co-development.

In our experience, cooperation with Internet platforms has brought changes to Amity.

First, it has changed our personnel. Since our cooperation with Internet platforms, Amity has expanded to recruiting professionals specialized in

Ling Chunxiang

General Secretary
The Amity Foundation



online operations. Now Amity has a strong team working with a number of Internet platforms. Their close cooperation and interaction has brought new ideas and possibilities to social organizations. In addition, for social organizations, the Internet is not only a technology, but also a way towards connectivity.

Secondly, many technologies available on the Internet platform bring us a lot of convenience in our work. Take blockchain technology as an example. Alibaba Charity's blockchain technology has greatly improved the efficiency of our projects. Donors clearly see where their funds have gone, and the credibility of the organizations and projects has also been improved. The more transparent the project, the more people see it and hence more impact. At present, Amity's

flagship projects such as Amity Sprouts on Earth, Amity Rural Medical Care and Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen, as well as disaster relief projects, have all been "blockchained".

In addition, the Internet brings a lot to social organizations in terms of fundraising and makes it convenient for the public to participate in projects. Through Internet platforms, the public can easily learn about project information, make donations, receive donation certificates and electronic invoice, get project feedbacks and read assessments. Moreover, technologies such as telemedicine, APP research and development, and training greatly support our projects.

Of course, challenges did occur in the process of Amity's digital transformation and upgrading. For example, it is

difficult to make a unified digital management process due to the variety of our projects, and it is also difficult for technology companies with little knowledge of charity projects to meet the digital needs of social organizations. Another example is that the application of blockchain technology requires us to split and granulate the project as much as possible, so that every detail is reflected on the blockchain. However, in practice, it is impossible to split the project in a very detailed way. These problems will be discussed and solved together with the platforms.

Despite such technical difficulties, cooperation between social organizations and Internet platforms is not only necessary, but also win-win. We look forward to more synergy and complementarity in the future.

Focus - Biodiversity

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► Project area of Protecting Asian Water Conservation Area Project

Live and let live



May 22 is the International Day for Biological Diversity. “Building a shared future for all life” is the theme for the day in 2022, which highlights that biodiversity is the answer to several sustainable development challenges and is the foundation for a better future. “Live and let live” is our shared concept in this regard.

Biodiversity is the diversity of life in a given area and a general indicator of overall ecological health. Biodiversity includes genetic, species, community and ecosystem diversity. From the pandas in the natural reserves to the intestinal bacterial colonies in the human body, there are no exceptions. Different habitats, growth and reproduction of the same organisms in different environments also constitute different aspects of biodiversity.

Biodiversity is the basis for life on Earth. It is vital to human well-being, and fundamental to

the survival and development of human civilization. According to the United Nations website, fish provides 20% of animal protein for nearly 3 billion people, and more than 80% of human diets come from plants. In rural areas of developing countries, up to 80% of the population relies on traditional herbal medicines made from plants for basic health services.

The loss of biodiversity due to human activities and overexploitation threatens all living creatures. It also leads to animal-borne diseases, that is, diseases that spread from animals to humans, and even contributes to climate change on a global scale.

While biodiversity is increasingly recognized as a global asset of great value to present and future generations, human activities have already caused declines in many species. The rate of extinction is increasing globally. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem

degradation pose risks to human development. Only by respecting nature and protecting biodiversity, can human beings truly achieve a harmony with nature. All of this depends on public education and awareness.

China is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world because of its vast territory, complex landforms and diverse climate cultivating rich and unique ecosystem, species and genetic diversity. As one of the first parties to sign and ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity, China has highlighted and promoted biodiversity protection. With remarkable achievements, China is journeying on a way of biodiversity protection with our own characteristics. The report "Biodiversity Conservation in China" released in October 2021 showcases to the world China's ideas, measures and achievements in biodiversity protection.

China's Policies on Biodiversity

In recent years, the Chinese government has been advocating an environmental protection policy and governance system closely

related to biodiversity at the national level. Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the government has given priority to ecology and pursued green development. The legal system for ecological and environmental protection has been improved, the regulatory mechanism has been strengthened, and a new pattern of biodiversity governance has taken shape. We can say that biodiversity protection has entered a new era in China.

In the report to the 18th CPC National Congress, ecological progress was included for the first time in the overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics, and for the first time included in the CPC Constitution as part of the action program of the ruling party.

While proposing rural revitalization strategy, the report to the 19th CPC National Congress in 2017 stated that "green mountains and clear water are equal to mountains of gold and silver" and launched the goal of building a beautiful China and the initiative of building a clean and beautiful world. It proposed that China should "modernize with harmony between man and nature".





► This is the "Sacred Tree" of Gongbo Village in Cangyuan County of Yunnan Province – a huge banyan tree. With symbiotic species such as mosses, orchids and ferns, the banyan tree serves not only as a shelter for a variety of species but also as a spiritual home for Gongbo villagers.



► Avocet flying over a coastal wetland in Jiangsu Province

President Xi pointed out at the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity on September 30, 2020 that we need to take up our lofty responsibility for the entire human civilization, find a way for man and nature to live in harmony and work together to build a prosperous, clean and beautiful world.

The UN Biodiversity Conference COP15 held in Kunming in October 2021 was the first global conference convened by the United Nations on ecological civilization. With "Ecological Civilization – Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth" as the theme of the conference, President Xi made a four-point proposal for building a community of living beings on Earth, announced new actions including the establishment of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, the construction of a system of protected natural areas with national parks, and the establishment of a peak carbon dioxide emissions and carbon neutral "1+N" policy system. He pointed out that China will continue to promote ecological civilization progress and bearing in mind the new vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development.

In addition, the idea of biodiversity and environmental protection has been further included into China's rural revitalization strategy. At the National Rural Construction Work Conference held in June 2021, Vice Premier Hu Chunhua stressed that, "we should focus on building ecological and livable villages, improving the infrastructure and environment of villages, and making beautiful village images with

rural characteristics. Moreover, we should speed up the enhancement of public services in rural areas, improve the public service system for the integrated development of counties and villages, and building public service capacity at the village level, to strengthen and improve rural governance."

The series of policies is a great encouragement to social organizations engaged

in biodiversity conservation. The Amity Foundation is no exception. We work with a number of professional partners to protect flagship animals and their ecosystems. Through innovative thinking and initiatives, Amity strives to reduce threats to biodiversity and seek a balance between conservation and sustainable economic development.



► Picture taken at Dachan Bay, Shenzhen, in June 2022. As the tide was out, project volunteers found an abandoned bike with barnacles and other marine lives.



► Project area of Yushu Green Community Development Project. (April 2021)

Amity's Practice

Most of Amity's sustainable development projects related to biodiversity or environmental protection were covered within the work of integrated community development, such as forestation, biogas development, solar energy and other new energy development. Amity aims to include conservation in the framework of development.

In 1994, Amity launched our integrated rural community development project in Puding County, Guizhou Province. People-oriented and sustainable, the project raised awareness of villagers on environmental protection in a participatory way, while promoting gender equality, local traditional culture respect and development at the same time. Through Amity's efforts on resource channeling, the project aimed at



a harmonious development among people and between people and the environment. As a highlight, Amity sought balance between green agricultural development and sustainable livelihood of villagers, trying our best to reduce local environmental pressure brought by economic development.

In 1995, Amity launched our ecological poverty alleviation project in Guangxi Autonomous

Region, promoting the planting of *zenia insignis* in karst mountainous areas to conserve water. By the year 2005, 380,000 mu (approximately 25,500 hectare) of afforestation had been completed in areas affected by desertification across eight counties in Guangxi Autonomous Region. In 2001, the CPPCC of Guangxi Autonomous Region adopted Amity's project as Proposal No. 1 to be promoted in the whole province, which helped start

a huge afforestation action in similar areas of western China.

In terms of biodiversity, the Amity Foundation has been working with local partners to carry out environmental protection projects aimed at restoring and protecting biodiversity under the themes of "Walking with Nature", "Living with Nature" and "Citizen Scientist".



- The Yangtze finless porpoise, a species once widely distributed in China, has now become a national first-class protected wild animal for a population of 1,000 only. The Save the Yangtze River Finless Porpoise Program launched in 2018 is dedicated to the restoration of fish resources in the habitat of finless porpoise.



- Awareness raising campaign under Save the Yangtze Finless Porpoise Program.

Walking Together with Nature – The program focuses on biodiversity monitoring. By identifying key protected areas and key actions, the program carries out targeted regional ecological restoration and integrated ecological system protection to facilitate China's dual carbon goals.

Living with Nature – Taking sustainable development as its goal, the program include ecological protection in daily community development. We support local communities to practice environmental protection while also benefiting from their own actions. Meanwhile, the program seeks to build community-based protected area network, provides capacity building for front-line protection forces, and carry out visits, cooperation and exchanges.

Citizen Scientist – This program includes general biodiversity education for the public, inviting volunteers with professional science knowledge in front-line conservation, to promote biodiversity conservation to mainstream audiences.

Amity Snow Leopard Homeland Protection Project was launched in 2019, establishing three snow leopard community protection areas with a total area of 3,000 square kilometers in Qinghai and Tibet. The protection enables population stability and health of snow leopard in the region while benefiting the local herdsman, aiming to promote peaceful coexistence between humans and snow leopards. In the three-river headwaters region in Yushu, Qinghai Province, through the Asian Water Conservation Area Project, Amity supported collective action from herdsman groups to manage and protect local natural resources. The project explored a water source protection model with the local community as the driving force.

In Nanjing, the Save the Yangtze River Finless Porpoise Program launched in 2018 aimed to protect the Yangtze River environment by creating a livable habitat with biodiversity, through restoration of fish resources, patrol management, public conservation campaigns and raising public awareness.

In Menglian County of Yunnan Province, on the China-Myanmar border, Amity launched the Heishan Protected Area Plan, under which Amity conducted biodiversity surveys, improved the information of local flora and fauna, and developed scientific and effective protection measures. By way of community monitoring, the plan protected tropical forests and endangered animals.

Amity Partners



山水自然保护中心
Shan Shui Conservation Center

Shan Shui Conservation Center

Founded in 2007, Shan Shui Conservation Center is a Chinese NGO dedicated to species and ecosystem conservation and promoting human and nature coexistence. The Center focuses its work on the endangered species like the snow leopard, giant panda and snub-nosed monkey in western China, as well as urban ecosystems. Through community-based conservation practices and citizen science research projects, the Center seeks to develop innovative solutions to conservation, to achieve an ecologically-equal world.



Snowland Great Rivers Environmental Protection Association

Founded in 2008, the Snowland Great Rivers Environmental Protection Association is an NGO formed mainly of Tibetan members. It is committed to the protection and publicity of the ecological environment and traditional ecological culture of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and focuses on the sustainable development of the Plateau. The Association carries out a number of programs including natural forest investigation, climate change, legal aid, endangered species protection and green consumption, mountain and lake protection, and green community networks. It aims at raising the awareness of the community residents on the importance of environment for life, and the role sustainable development of the environment and the communities on protecting local culture.



Gangri Neichog Research and Conservation Center

The Gangri Neichog Research and Conservation Center is a non-government nature conservation organization founded in Qinghai in 2014. It is committed to carrying out research and protection of natural sanctuaries in the mountainous areas of western China. It also promotes harmony between people living in the snowy mountain ecosystem and the nature by supporting local people to carry out ecological protection and sustainable development. The center aims to establish a folk database of mountain species in Tibetan, Chinese and English languages to promote the development of local education in Tibetan areas. Meanwhile, through the study of "human-animal relationship", the Center seeks the solution for the "human-animal conflict" in the region.



Nanjing Yangtze Finless Porpoise Conservation Association

Nanjing Yangtze Finless Porpoise Conservation Association is a professional but non-profit social organization voluntarily formed by people engaged in the protection of Yangtze finless porpoise and aquatic life. Work of the Association includes the protection and rescue of aquatic life in the Yangtze River, scientific research and monitoring, ecological restoration, science education, lectures and field observation of finless porpoise conservation, large-scale conservation campaign, and related advocacy and education.



"Just like the relationship between ecology and disasters, disaster relief and sustainable development are so closely linked. It is selfish and unfair to talk about protection without considering human development. It is unrealistic, after all, the local people also need to survive and develop."

*-- Tan Hua,
Head of Amity Community
Development and Disaster
Management Team*

Biodiversity Then and Now

Ecological protection through community development

Most of Amity's sustainable development projects related to biodiversity or environmental protection are covered within the work of integrated community development, such as forestation, biogas development, solar energy and other new energy projects. Amity aims to include conservation in the framework of development.

Since 1989, Amity would respond to one to three major natural disasters each year. Amity's disaster management provides emergency relief and post-disaster reconstruction and development services with the participation of those affected

by the disasters. Amity's focus is to enhance the resilience of disaster-affected communities and to seek integrated and sustainable development of environmental protection.

By the end of 2021, Amity had responded to more than 60 natural disasters including floods, earthquake, fire, landslides and snow storms with over RMB 350 million relief donation. Amity's disaster relief and reconstruction covers 30 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, including Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Hunan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi, and Sichuan.

Amity's disaster relief work depends on resources and local conditions. Resources are usually uncertain and there are often geographical constraints, which makes planning difficult. However, fundraising for emergency relief can be adjusted according to the actual needs. Therefore, the balance of the disaster relief funds after some major natural disasters could be used for the post-disaster reconstruction to be channeled to community development. In terms of reconstruction, local needs will decide Amity's work, usually including disaster mitigation, management of small landslides

or other smaller risk factors. The most fundamental starting point for post-disaster reconstruction is community development, including environmentally friendly measures such as the use of ecological fertilizers and organic fertilizers and ecological agriculture.

Tan Hua, head of Amity Community Development and Disaster Management Team, has deep understanding on ecological community development projects. "Amity's community development projects in the Midwest of China focuses on those ecologically fragile areas. If the ecology



► White-lipped deer trapped in the snow field during the Yushu snowstorm in February 2019.

there is destroyed or the climate changes, many people could become homeless and go back into poverty." For example, Dashi mountainous area of Guangxi Autonomous Region is a place with harsh environment. There is not even a suitable field for farming. In case of a flood, water and soil are easily lost, restricting local development. Disasters caused by climate and other factors will aggravate this fragility and imbalance.

Tan Hua believes that, like the relationship between ecology and disaster, disaster relief and sustainable development are also closely related. "It is

selfish and unfair to talk about protection without considering human development. After all, local people need to survive and develop too. There is no single cause for poverty in some western communities. That's why community development needs to take into account environmental protection." Usually, in the project Amity combines protection with development. By ecological improvement and soil fertility improvement, Amity helps solve the problem of food and clothing and get the support of villagers.

"As a social organization, we need to be conscious of our

capabilities. We make every effort to bring more benefits to our villagers. From developing and beautifying our countryside to rural revitalization, we consider the distribution of benefits an integral aspect. If everything is about the market, the benefits will be controlled by the market, which means the villagers will get very little. We hope the villagers, after capacity building, will unite and get more bargaining power." Said Tan Hua.

Tan Hua's team promotes "self-organization" in community development projects. From cooperating with villagers to





► Project area of the Black Mountain Protected Area in Menglian County, Yunnan Province

setting up community funds, to electing representatives for management committee to maintain fund operation, Tan Hua's team aims to develop a platform for villagers to discuss village issues. "We introduce knowledge through training and capacity building in the early stage, so that the villagers later will establish rules and mechanisms to discuss village issues for themselves. Gradually, they will expand to the outside world, connect with the market.

In Tan Hua's opinion, community development projects, including village beautification and rural revitalization, can be classified as ecological issues because most of them involve the environment. Often, the project cycle would be longer, because the projects need self-organization of villagers, during which they will look for market and expand their own resources. However, this kind of long-term and in-depth development project faces challenges too, especially in fund raising, as

donors who want see results in a short period of time usually don't prefer projects like this.

Today, under the guidance of the national policy to promote ecological civilization, biodiversity protection and other related issues have also come into the focus of social organizations. Amity's biodiversity projects focus on some flagship species. Since the existence of these species represents a good surrounding ecology, the

protection of flagship species as a benchmark can drive the overall ecological protection of a region. At present, Amity supports 3 main project types: 1. ecological protection, flagship species monitoring and scientific research, including scientific investigation, collecting data with infrared camera; 2. community participation and establishment of patrol teams for regional protection; 3. community development.

Although Amity focuses on project management rather than implementing biodiversity projects itself, there are colleagues who are very interested in this field. By cooperating with professional organizations, Amity improves its professional level during work.

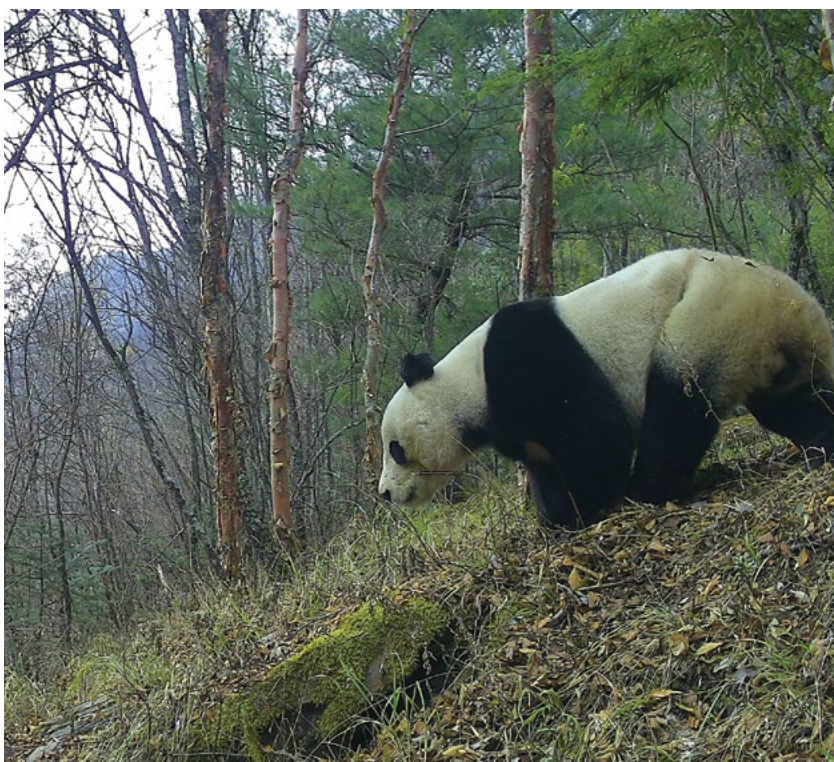
"Usually, we partner with local government departments or related social organizations in biodiversity projects," said Tan Hua. "Amity serves as a facilitator. We provide support on project concept and approach."

She explained that biodiversity projects supported by Amity were small-sized and focused on conservation and development as in the past. "However, there is

a difference. Before, community development projects had an environmental component; now it is environmental projects that have a community development component."

Take the Giant Panda Corridor Project in Sichuan Province as an example. It began as a disaster relief project. During post-disaster reconstruction, Amity conducted a basic biodiversity ontology survey and sorted out community resources. Then the Giant Panda Corridor Project was established to protect local ecology. From past experience,

Amity knew conservation should also take into account the needs of villagers, who have traditionally relied on resources from the mountains. After the project was carried out, the villagers could not rely on the mountains in the same way as they did in the past. Therefore, Amity started promoting local industrial development, which involves not only villagers' community participation, but also alternative livelihoods, such as sightseeing, in-depth tourism, native fish breeding and making eco-friendly products such as honey.



► A panda walking in the Giant Panda National Park located at Heping Village, Muzuo Tibetan Town, Pingwu County, Mianyang City, Sichuan Province. (Nov 11, 2021)

Amity mobilizes villagers to take part in patrols, carries out monitoring of giant panda and companion animals, helps play the function of cooperatives, and realizes the value transformation of ecological products in a diversified way. The project seeks to balance ecological protection and community development to ensure the sustainable conservation of biodiversity.

There is also dilemma in running the project. Amity helps villagers to develop green organic products that meet ecological requirements, facilitates community mobilization and organizes trainings. However, as the homogeneity of agricultural products is strong, it is difficult to expand the market.

In Tan Hua's opinion, market presence is not the strength of social organizations. At present, practitioners always talk about products in terms of ecological community development projects, which seems that "the market and products are the king". But Tan Hua has her own ideas.

"I don't think we have the resources or ability to focus on marketing. Different from commodities, agricultural products belong to fresh food, which involves processing, storage, logistics and many other factors. The market has its work, and we have our work. I'm a firm believer in this, although I'm sometimes questioned. I believe this should not be done by us. What we should do is more about getting the front end right."

She hopes the team's biodiversity conservation projects will not be separated from the larger framework of conservation and development. "That's the principle of Amity that I believe."

Biodiversity conservation in the eyes of project managers

"I am a nature lover and have been birding for more than a decade. I enjoy my time in the wild. Of course it's hard to work in the wild, whether it's on an anoxic plateau or in the dense forests of Yunnan, but when you work with partners, see people in different communities, and have the opportunity to walk in different places and experience nature, it's a different experience. Having a job like this allows you to see a different world, which is a rare bonus. From the perspective of self-growth, we can see that the cities and villages of our country are different aspects of China. And it makes sense to be in different places with different people, whether it's villagers, partners of social organizations or government departments. Doing good things together means a lot."

*- Shu Junsong,
Biodiversity Conservation
Project manager of Amity*



► Shu Junsong in Amity's project area.

Do wonderful things together with partners

As a member of Amity Community Development and Disaster Management Team, Shu Junsong is mainly responsible for the management of biodiversity conservation projects with partners. His understanding of environmental protection, ecological protection and even biodiversity has been improved with the development of the projects over the years.

He told us that in the early 1990s, Amity planted trees to conserve water in the Shishan area of Guangxi Autonomous Region and carried out ecological poverty alleviation. "If you judge it today, it is more of an environmental protection project," said Junsong. "Environmental protection is a much larger category. Afforestation can be an environmental project, but it is probably not a biodiversity conservation project, because it may cause biodiversity loss. Why? Afforestation can be called as green, but is this uniform green quality green? When the same species of trees are planted on a scale, it may have a stronger occupation of the area. Moreover, the high density of artificial planting may not leave enough room for other shrubs. So, this uniform vegetation may cause other organisms to lose habitat."

"A natural community is diverse. When you go into a natural forest, it's layered, and there are different organisms in different layers. But within a single large-scale plantation, there may be only one top or one bottom layer. Biodiversity is not limited to a single species, but multiple ones, including animals, plants and even microbes. Together they form a community."

Shu Junsong's growing understanding of ecological conservation is also the result of changes in partners and in the structure of projects. "We used to work more with government departments on community projects. Now we work more with social organizations that focus on a particular area. By working with them, we better understand why biodiversity needs to be protected and its value to human beings."

With the UN Biodiversity Conference COP15 held in Kunming,

the topic of biodiversity has received increasing attention in recent years, which means that more resources can be mobilized for related projects. However, the move of COP15 to Canada in the second half of the conference led to the cancel of promotional and public relation activities related to biodiversity projects and the offline platform for developing countries and social organizations to share their experiences got lost. In Shu Junsong's opinion, this is a great loss to the biodiversity working groups of China, because this is an opportunity to bring more Chinese people to a more comprehensive understanding of biodiversity through the conference.

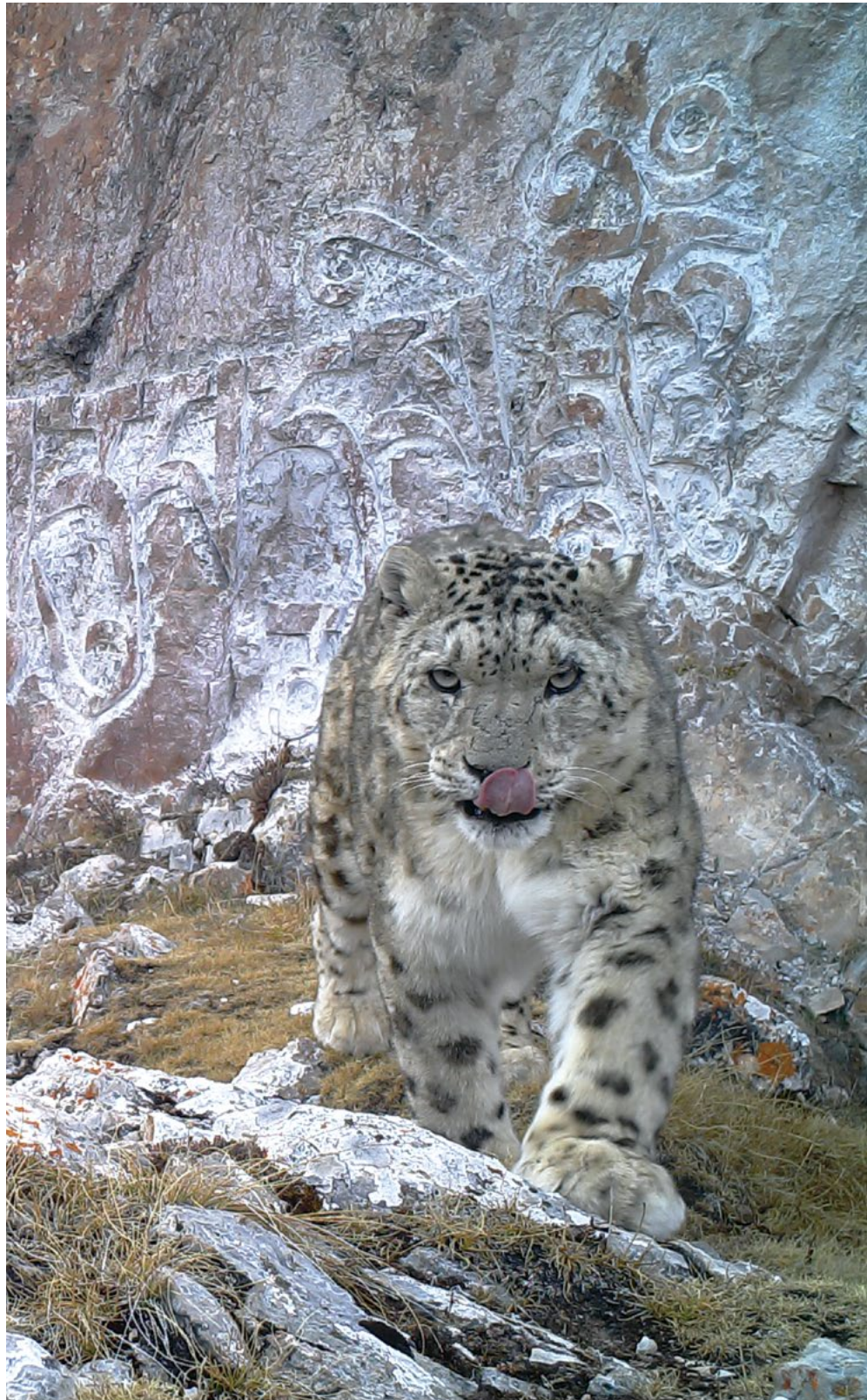
Bring together the advantages of your partners

Biodiversity conservation is an all-encompassing topic. As an integrated foundation, Amity carries out conservation projects focusing on the Yangtze River ecosystem represented by the finless porpoise in Nanjing and Wuhan, the mountain ecosystem represented by the snow leopard in the three-river headwaters region, the plateau

aquatic system represented by the otter, and the forest ecosystem of the Daheishan Mountain in Menglian, Yunnan Province.

Traditional species conservation work tends to focus on flagship species like giant panda. However, the effects of conservation for species like snow leopards, giant pandas, Amur tigers and otters are not limited to the species themselves, but also the protection of the entire ecosystem or landscape. It is necessary to study how the species survive in the ecosystem and the key factors affecting their survival in the wild. Such investigations indicate the factors affecting the habitat, which in turn guide further adjustments to our actions.

In Shu Junsong's view, this is a large-scale operation that requires many years of follow-up and study by professionals from different fields. This operation also affects humans and different species within ecological regions and even involves issues under climate change. Because of the food chain, when a top species is protected, the downstream species are also affected.



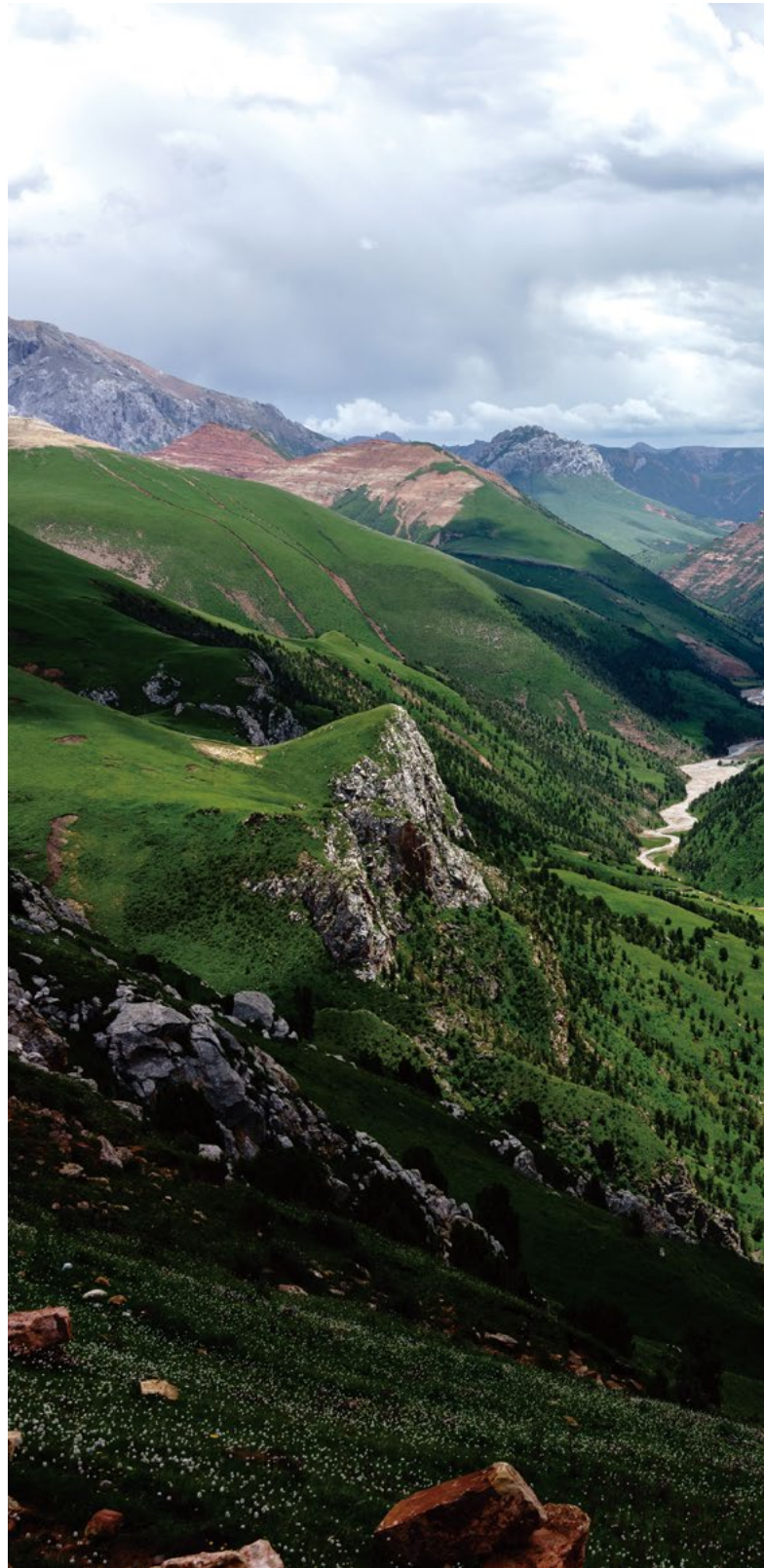
► Snow Leopard Homeland Protection Project

Amity's role in biodiversity work is more about resource mobilization, finding reliable partners, designing feasible projects together and do project management. The local implementation of projects also needs the division of work and cooperation of professionals.

Amity's Snow Leopard Homeland Protection Project in Qinghai and Tibet is a conservation project targeting at snow leopards. Amity's main partner in this project is Shan Shui Conservation Center, which focuses on species and ecosystem conservation and is strong in research and design. Through cooperation, Amity and Shan Shui aim to link up small projects at different spots and find out common problems, to make a complete design and monitoring procedure, so as to provide better protection plan for decision makers.

Let's take the snow leopard conservation project as an example. In terms of scientific research, the project sets up infrared cameras in gridding layout to monitor the number of snow leopards and companion species in the area. Based on the results, the project analyzes whether the species in the area are enough for predators to survive; if not, what measures could be taken to improve. Daily monitoring and maintenance is carried out by local herdsman. During the project design process, the "human-animal conflict" factor is taken into account to ensure that herdsman benefit from diversity conservation.

"Human-animal conflict" is a challenge that herdsman must face in their daily lives. Since snow leopards attack cattle from time to time, in order to reduce the losses of herdsman, the government will subsidize herdsman in buying commercial insurance for wildlife accidents, helping herdsman to obtain compensation



► Project area of Protecting Asian Water Conservation Area Project in the tree-river headwaters region in Yushu, Qinghai Province.



upon providing effective evidence. However, in practice, due to the limitations of geographical, transportation and communication conditions, it is difficult to complete the claim application in time.

"Therefore, the human-animal conflict fund provided by our project has become a kind of socialized guarantee mechanism to alleviate problems. It is used to compensate for the loss of yaks or sheep caused by wild animals that do not meet the standards of insurance companies. The compensation terms are discussed, developed and operated by local communities independently. But its sustainability depends on the availability of social resources."

In Shu Junsong's opinion, there is no absolute protection or development and it is blind to emphasize only the role of nature or humans. In designing the project, it is important to find a balance between conservation and development, making compromises where necessary.

In recent years, to reduce the pressure on grasslands, the government made settlement policies to encourage herdsmen to move to the downtown of county. But in Tibetan-speaking areas, most young people stay home rather than go out to big cities to work, which is different from other areas in China. Based on the situation, the Shan Shui Center provided a successful alternative for livelihood in Zadoi County, Qinghai Province in carrying out eco-tourism or nature education in the national park. Under the project, host families were trained and the community guides returned part of the income to the community to buy social insurance for the villagers, so as to benefit more people. Another part of the income was used as

a community fund to support herdsmen to collect garbage and protect the ecological environment.

According to Shu Junsong, large mammals such as wolves, Tibetan antelope and wild donkeys are often found in Suojia Town, Zhidui County, Qinghai Province, where the snow leopard project is located, and there are more small mammals such as marmots. In addition to snow leopard monitoring and protection, the project, based on Shanshui Center's past experience, is seeking cooperation with Three-river-source National Park, to carry out ecological tourism through snow leopard observation, in an effort to increase local people's income. However, due to restrictions of the Covid-19, only preliminary preparations are made till now.

The Power of Faith

In traditional Tibetan culture, every mountain has its life, and many snow-capped mountains with ecological values are worshipped as sacred mountains by Tibetans. The ecosystems of snow-capped mountains are rich in life forms, including

rare animals and plants such as snow leopard, snow chicken and snow lotus, and are often called the "sacred landscape of snow mountains".

When carrying out the protection of the ecosystems of the snow-capped mountains, there are issues in respect of the conflicts between human and bear and human and wolf. Amity sees it an effective way to seek the support of local monasteries and to promote the residents' understanding of the nature and animal protection of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau through scientific and technological research on local traditional views on ecological culture and scientific and technological research. Amity makes and distributes Tibetan-language pamphlets on how to better preserve food and how to improve housing, and help local residents to reinforce fences and windows.

The Water Source Conservation Project by Amity and the Snowland Great Rivers Environmental Protection Association was launched in 2018. The Association was initiated by local Tibetans, and is good at engaging herdsmen in

conservation work based on local traditional culture and religious beliefs. In terms of water source protection, the project involves religious activities, for example, in Tibetan areas with deep religious background, local religious leaders or prestigious monks lead people to enshrine a certain water source, so as to make people respectful of water sources and protect water sources.

"As a project manager, it is a great learning opportunity for me to follow a project for three or four years," says Shu Junsong. "I know the religious approach really works in local area. As a Han ethnic Chinese, it makes me think about how to understand the role and value of traditional culture and religious elements in biodiversity conservation."

In his view, the power of faith makes the locals revere the land where they live, their sacred mountains, lakes and protected areas. This is something that scientific methods, promotion booths, building fences or infrastructure that cost a lot cannot achieve, and the power of faith is even more lasting.

Another protected area project

of Amity located at Menglian county, Yunnan Province, on the China-Myanmar border was in cooperation with the Shan Shui Center. The protected area involves Daheishan, the "sacred mountain" of the local Lahu ethnic minority group. As a former hunter-gatherer ethnic group, the Lahu people are known as a "tiger hunter" group. The Lahu people have a tradition of protecting the mountain deity as a major part of their belief system.

Clouded leopards and

white-handed gibbons have traditionally been found along the China-Myanmar border, but they have not been seen inside China for decades. Shan Shui Center did preliminary researches to look for flagship species from the perspective of ecological protection. Currently, the project is mobilizing young forest rangers who are interested in conservation to monitor together the tropical forests and endangered animals in the protected area. Of course, for locals, subsidy for rangers is a realistic factor, but

they hope more that the project will bring development or tourism to increase income. The value of the project lies in the recognition and participation of the community.

Species have no borders. There have always been animal passages in the border area, which are the paths of animals themselves, so there is species exchange with obvious diversity. But due to the Covid-19 restrictions in the past two years, the local government has built a three-meter-high



► Awareness raising campaign launched by Amity and Hongshan Forest Zoo under Help It Back to Nature Program.

"quarantine barrier" of barbed wire stretching 500 kilometers along the border area, which is a challenge for animals and local biodiversity conservation. The project partners are working on a solution to carry out joint protection across the border of China and Myanmar.

Resource integrator

Several years ago, Amity worked with the local government on a livelihood project involving environmental protection in the communities surrounding the Nangunhe National Natural Reserve in Lincang of Yunnan Province. As the available land area legally owned by the communities around the reserve is limited, the project promotes high-yield cash crops instead of traditional agriculture through small-sized infrastructure improvements, so that the land generates more value and the villagers depend less on consumption of natural resources.

As a large-sized social organization, if Amity simply distributes pesticides, fertilizers, seeds or other similar materials to farmers, the difficulties may be alleviated but cannot be

solved as the livelihood solution is not sustainable. Amity and partners agree that only when integrated projects are designed from a development perspective can changes be seen in the project lifecycle.

"Resource integrator" is one of Amity's positioning for itself. Not only does Amity work with a number of long-standing partners in supporting their work, but also seeks integrating small and scattered projects into big development projects.

As a public fundraising foundation, Amity has compliance requirements for its projects, and grassroots partners also need support this. Therefore, Shu Junsong and his colleagues, during business trips to the project area, will check the progress of and problems emerged from the project, as well as discuss with the partners about practical and tedious details of financial management, e.g. how to do the financial accounts? How to write the project voucher description? Why is this money appearing in the item? How does it relate to project activities? Since institutional resources come from the society, foundations

have regulatory responsibilities over their partners and will try the best to help partners operate in a standardized and responsible manner. This is also a source of credibility for public fundraising foundations.

It is usually difficult to find large funding resources for biodiversity projects. But for project managers like Shu Junsong, a clear understanding



of the logic behind a project can help better present it to donor companies.

"We try to expand resources while managing the projects. To look for more platforms and companies for support, we provide project proposals and discuss with potential donors. As a link connecting the project, partners and the community, it

is our responsibility to interpret what we see and hear in the project area to fundraising platforms, donors and the public."

Most of Amity's biodiversity projects are located in the wilderness, far from cities. Hongshan Forest Zoo, in the downtown of Nanjing, is an exception. Early last year,

media reported the zoo, the first in China to cancel animal shows, was facing huge losses due to Covid-19. The public responded by large amount of donations. In order to ensure the compliance of charitable donations for Hongshan, Amity started to cooperate with the zoo by supporting it to raise funds on Amity's platforms.

In addition to the function



► Climate change and marine pollution are threatening our marine ecosystems and all living things, including humans.

of a zoo, Hongshan Forest Zoo serves also a wild animal shelter and rescue station. Through Amity's "Help It Back to Nature" project, Amity put the conservation work that rarely known by the public into the spotlight. With funds from companies, society and all kinds of online platforms, the project raised more than RMB 1 million within two years and transformed the rescue, treatment and release of wild animals into a public education activity.

Amity and Hongshan Forest Zoo did a lot of public relation work to promote the project, which made Hongshan a platform for public communication. Recently, the project team are considering looking for better release sites for wild boar, hedgehog, and weasel after rescue. This year, the team will choose better ecological environment for biodiversity investigation, such as learn about food sources, plants and similar animals through infrared monitoring and line transect method, in order to help these animals return to nature in an effective way.

"This is the value of a project

that extends from its initial work. From the purchase of food or medical equipment to improvement of rescue work, to raising public awareness, then to the accurate release of animals to a more suitable place. This development and change is the meaning of the project," said Shu Junsong.

In Shu Junsong's opinion, public fundraising is a kind of information platform cooperation. In the field of biodiversity, Amity works with partners to design fundraising plans and launch them on appropriate platforms. "Amity do not work on the front lines, but it has some experience to share while working with partners. Amity has the advantage that it understands the requirements of the platforms very well and knows project design, while the partner has a better understanding of the local environment from a professional perspective. Once the two sides agree on the values, they can work together to design the project, budget structure, and integrate resources according to the features of the platform."

Look for "quality" green

As a project manager, Shu Junsong follow up and see a lot of changes brought by Amity's biodiversity conservation projects by working with partners. "Changes represent development. That is the value of social organizations."

In recent years, there have been positive changes in public awareness of environmental protection and biodiversity, which can be seen in the increasing attention of the public, companies and online platforms during mobilization. It is also closely related to the transition of China's development from focusing on poverty alleviation and food and clothing to consideration of the value of human existence and our relationship with nature and the world.

"This is a developing trend, although there may be some back-and-forth, as there is frustration with COP15 being moved. But when we learn and work with more partners, and have more understanding of the work, we have hopes. The fact that a biodiversity project can

now be funded on the online platforms, which could hardly be imagined before, is a sign of change."

According to the "Report On China's Grant-Making for Biodiversity Conservation 2021", from 2016 to 2020, donations in China for biodiversity conservation, although is the largest proportion with the fastest growth among environmental funding, accounted for less than 1% of the total donations. The donations also account for a smaller proportion of total national public funds invested in biodiversity conservation in the past few years.

"For such a niche field as ecology and environmental protection, advocacy work may be more valuable," said Shu Junsong. "More and more people are talking about 'quality green', and when people in the sector show our voice with research results, it has the potential to drive policy."

"National park, protected area and project area are open environment. They are a big environment of people, species

and ecology. We show more to the public about human development, ecological environmental protection, as well as the species or nature, so as to create emotional links between people and the nature. It's better when all the forces are working in one direction."

Similarly, he believes that when policy makers, national park managers and social organizations discuss and argue from different angles on the same platform, it will be conducive to more rational public policies.

In Shu Junsong's view, Amity sticks to its values and sense of mission, and finds meaning and value in its projects. At present, in the field of biodiversity, on basis of the existing projects, he and his team will take three-river headwaters region of Qinghai Province and the southwest mountainous areas as the priority, find good partners to design projects, and make public education.

Rebuild connection to the environment

Conserve our life source

As the sun set, our SUV raced down the sandy road to Suojia Town. Suddenly, Yi Yan jammed on the brakes and shouted, "A wolf is coming!" Sure enough, a wolf appeared next to a road sign about twenty meters from the car! Having been cooped up in the car for most of the day, I was suddenly awake.

In spite of having the fear of wild animals, I got out of the car and raised my camera. The wolf walked slowly, and I tried to keep calm and hold my camera steady. It felt nice to be face to face with the creature while maintaining a respectful distance.

However, when I interviewed local herdsmen, conflict between man and beast was always an unavoidable issue. Sharing the same piece of land leads to inevitable conflicts. The seasonal migration of thousands of wild donkeys may result in an entire pasture being eaten up in a couple of days; wolves that break into the enclosure at night leave a trail of dead cattle and sheep. For those old herdsmen living on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, who already live a difficult life, this is absolutely a great loss. But they chose to forgive the animals for their Buddhist beliefs. Influenced by local religion and culture, local residents are willing to protect wild animals. Retaliatory hunting is rarely seen. In recent years, more government-subsidized cattle and sheep insurance and nongovernmental human-animal conflict compensation funds have been established. Various attempts at alternative livelihoods have shown the possibility of a balanced coexistence between people and the environment.



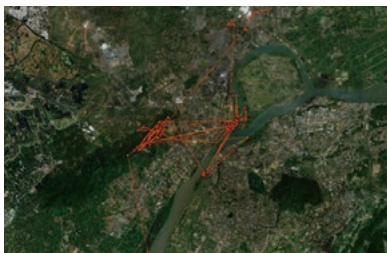
My work taught me that the Yangtze River and the Yellow River stem from a myriad of gurgling springs flowing through the grasslands, after the snow-capped mountains melt down in summer. Any discarded waste, no matter in the meandering streams in the upper reaches or in the vast waters in the lower reaches, affects the vast rivers that stretch for thousands of miles, which in turn affects the survival of countless people. Environmental protection needs everyone's efforts.

For those living in the city, the three-river headwaters region seems far away. Yet human beings yearn for wilderness, seeing otters swimming in the rivers and snow leopards crouching in the mountains as beauty in poetry, we always end up building connection with them in life.

Returning to Nature

A black kite leapt out of the blue rescue crate and headed straight for the sky, catching eyes of fans of the Hongshan Forest Zoo. Since that day, we have been concerned about the bird, how he is living in the wild, where he is feeding, and where he is resting. Through the tracking device we put on its back, we found that the Nanjing Lao Mountain provides it with shelter during the long nights, and the Yangtze River and Binjiang wetlands are its food providers. This black kite, upon being released, connects the mountains with the rivers.

Who are our wild companions in this rapidly urbanizing area, what are their lives like, and is there enough living space and food? We still have too many questions about the nature around us.



► Track of a released black kite in Nanjing

Make It To The Wild

For a person who loves nature, living in Nanjing is a fortunate thing. Sun Yat-sen mentioned in The General Plan of National Construction that Nanjing, as an ancient capital of China, is located in a beautiful region with high mountains, deep water and plain, which is rarely found among the major cities in the world. Today, this city is home to the Nanjing Hongshan Forest Zoo.

Through this window, everyone can truly observe the natural behavior of animals, learn about the home of animals in the wild, and plant a seed in the hearts of people to love nature and protect the environment.

We now call for more attention to the environment around us. Please let every rescued animal return to a suitable environment so that they may share the blue planet with us.

We are sheltered by the earth and nourished by nature. This world is wonderful because of all creatures great and small. So

many of you who love nature and care about the environment are working hard together with us. From the "Asian Water Conservation Area Project" and the "Snow Leopard Homeland Protection Project", to "Help It Back to Nature" and "Make It To The Wild", you are behind these projects. Every single yuan cumulates into infinite energy, which allows our partners to take firm and powerful steps in protecting nature.

Although small efforts might not make much difference, we will never lose hope. We believe that every part of these efforts could connect to every single nature lover. Our actions become more powerful when more people stand with us.

June 5th is World Environment Day. The theme of World Environment Day 2022, "Only One Earth", highlights the urgent need to drive changes through policies and choices to live cleaner and greener lives in harmony with nature. "Only One Earth" was the motto of the 1972 Stockholm Conference. Fifty years later, the motto still shines with truth - the earth is our only home and as human beings we must protect our limited resources.



Amity Then and Now: A Retrospective

Interview with Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, Board Chair of Amity Foundation (Part Two)

(See Part 1 in No. 38 Amity Outlook. Part 3 to be continued in the next issues.)

In part two of his interview, Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, the Board Chair of the Amity Foundation, outlines the key players of social work in China, the history of Amity Foundation and the general development trajectory of social organizations throughout the years.

The interview was slightly edited for better understanding.



► Qiu Zhonghui is visiting international development projects in Cambodia in 1997

The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is a unique political consultation mechanism in China. The CPPCC functions as a key platform for all sectors of society to offer views and raise proposals to the Communist Party of China and the government.

First of all, the CPPCC is a platform to understand the general policies of the Party and the government, to unite people from all walks of life, and to facilitate social cohesion. As an important part of society, social organizations should actively study and understand the guidelines and policies of the Party and the government, as well as investigate the challenges in social development. Such research plays an important role in maintaining the effectiveness of our work.

Secondly, it is a platform to exchange information and resources. The CPPCC holds annual conferences lasting for at least about one week. This event gives representatives from all sectors more opportunities to communicate and exchange, from which I have greatly benefited.

The CPPCC provides representatives of social organizations with insight into the Party and government policies, as well as with a macro view of social development. At the micro level, we can use this platform to voice the actual needs of grassroots communities, and communicate the views from various sectors of society to the government. In relation to our work, we can establish close contact with people from all walks of life, as well as the leaders of the Party and government departments. Through CPPCC meetings, we can interact and share our work with these parties. Finally, we can use this platform to

speak for the development of the sector.

To promote the healthy development of social organizations, I suggest that the CPPCC should gradually establish a special sector for social organizations. Although this may take time, I believe that with our commitment increasingly getting recognized by the Party and the government, this opportunity will come.

Our sector has not been fully developed, so we have to continue working diligently to meet the needs of society. Only through hard work can we be "seen", and hence are able to do more for the society. At the CPPCC, I submitted several proposals on issues such as social organization cultivation and services for the elderly. As a representative of this sector, I am obliged to speak for it. It is vital for the development of social organizations to participate in political consultation.

Philanthropic undertakings, especially foundations, are a product of China's reform and opening up, as well as its economic and social reform. In 1981, more than ten civil groups jointly launched the first foundation in China, which was a landmark event. In the early days of the reform and opening up, Deng Xiaoping was so impressed after visiting the United States and Japan that he later sent a large number of people abroad to study. Mr. Zhu Chuangyi was among the first to go overseas and submitted a report when he returned. They observed that that American foundations, not yet existent in China, were very different organizations. They were large in numbers and played an important role in social development. These findings led to the establishment of the first

Chinese foundation in 1981.

The Amity Foundation was established in 1985. However, according to the older generation in Amity, discussions about its establishment as a social organization actually started as early as 1979. Thanks to the implementation of the policy of reform and opening up, as well as freedom of religious belief, Amity Foundation came into being after a long period of preparation, with the support of the leaders at all levels at that time. The founders of Amity Foundation were not only Christians, but also some prominent members of the community, such as Mr. Kuang Yaming, Ms. Wu Yifang and Mr. Chen Yuguang, who served as honorary chairperson in the foundation, as well as Mr. Su Buqing, who is a famous mathematician and served as our director.

After their introduction as social organizations, foundations developed rapidly for a period of time. In order to regulate the management process, the "Regulations on the Management of Foundations" was signed by Premier Li Peng and issued in 1988. At that time, foundations were included in the financial system and administered by the People's Bank of China. This can be seen that our government's understanding of foundations is also changing.

One of the most important symbols of the development in social organizations was the 4th World Conference on Women held in 1995. For the first time, the concept of non-governmental organization (NGO) was introduced to the government and the public. For a long time around the conference, NGOs had been negatively equated with anti-government organizations. In

response, Mr. Jia Xijin from Tsinghua University wrote an article, explaining that NGOs were not the same as anti-government organizations and the misconception should be clarified.

In late 1990s, foundations began to consider promoting the formation of a federation or umbrella organization. Until the beginning of the 21st century, as the sector was only starting to develop, there were not many practitioners, and many issues needed to be discussed thoroughly, mostly centering on the topics of self-discipline and transparency of the sector. This was due to two reasons. One was that charity properties belonged to society, and foundations only functioned as trustees. They needed to be transparent and self-disciplined in order to gain trust and support from society. Another reason was that the foundations were new things. To reassure the government and society, we must do a good job in self-discipline and sector building.

Self-discipline and transparency are very important as the lifeline of the sector, that is why I almost always spare time to attend meetings on self-discipline and transparency in Beijing, even though Amity is located in Nanjing.

After the earthquake in Wenchuan, Sichuan Province in 2008, the government emphasized on social construction, and paid more attention to social management and innovation in governance. In the years following the earthquake, NPI (Shenzhen Non-profit Incubator) and Amity worked particularly in this area.

The Guo Meimei incident (a scandal that dealt a blow to the reputation of the Red Cross Society

of China. For details please refer to http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2011-07/15/content_12912148.htm) in 2011 prompted serious discussions and reflections internally exploring how to further strengthen self-discipline and transparency. Despite the fact that the incident had nothing to do with our organization, we developed the principles of accountability, professionalism and virtue, which become our guidelines.

In the early years of Amity's development, we focused on overseas publicity, as the majority of donations we received back then came from overseas. Consequently, many people at home did not know about what we did.

However, with more and more donations coming from home in recent years, we needed to gain the understanding, trust and support of all sectors of society and the public in China. Our employees did their utmost to demonstrate transparency and integrity, so that the people could better understand, trust and support us.

In short, whether it is the improvement of the philanthropic undertakings, or the development of social organizations and foundations, transparency and self-discipline should always be our guiding principles, because they are the lifeline of our work. Integrity has to be in our blood to ensure that our cause receives a steady stream of resources and support.

The development of a sector or an organization must first be analyzed from six aspects (i.e. PESTEL analysis): political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental and legal. Only with

this approach can we make correct assessments and find the best path for its development. And this path is not set in stone. It needs to be adjusted according to the changing environment.

For Amity Foundation, "Going Global" is not a new concept, although its definition has changed greatly over the years. At the beginning of the reform and opening up, there were many under-developed areas in China. When our friends from other countries visited those areas, they offered specialized resources to support local construction, sincerely with conditions attached. It was such support that led to the establishment of the Amity Foundation, which became a platform to receive these resources.

For Amity Foundation, the beginning of its establishment is accompanied by work both featuring "inviting in" and "going out". On the one hand, we invite our partners to come to China to understand the domestic situation. At the same time, we also go out to learn about the world. This way, we can cooperate and confer with our partners on the best ways to eliminate poverty. So up until the beginning of this century, English proficiency had been one of the primary considerations for hiring at Amity. It is an indispensable skill for Amity's projects, which frequently involve translation and coordination.

The main task of Amity Foundation is to act as a bridge or a conduit to bring in more resources to solve social problems, especially in China. The reason why I refer to Amity as a "special philanthropy zone" is that the government at that time, in order to develop the local economy, set aside land and established a number of "special

economic zones". In these areas, the government implemented preferential policies, allowing them to experiment. Amity Foundation was not a geographical concept, but an organization. We had a lot of overseas resources, as well as opportunities for overseas exchanges. These advantages at that time indeed helped us become a "special development zone".

By "going global", we learned from the experiences of developing and developed countries, and engaged in discussions on social issues. Thereby we gained deeper insight into their local situations and bolstering our interaction. My first trip was to the Philippines in the early 1990s. During that trip, I found that NGOs in the Philippines were very active in helping the poor at the bottom of society. I found this extremely meaningful.

In addition, what I saw in Kenya struck me the most. Down the street, you can see a slum on one side, and a fancy club on the other. It was hard for me to understand whether those rich people had any consideration for social justice when they played in the clubs, and whether they felt secure in terms of their personal interests. These observations have also helped me gain a deeper understanding about the world and become more calm when analyzing and thinking about social issues.

We Chinese know how to repay kindness. Amity started out as the recipient of aid from all over the world. Now we have to do our best to give back to the international community and fulfill our humanitarian responsibilities, which is also obligatory.

In the 1990s, Amity Foundation began to do some

foreign aid projects within its capacity, such as bringing Chinese medicine and the technique of Chinese acupuncture to the Philippines. At the beginning of this century they still came to us asking if we could send them more acupuncture needles.

In recent years, the Chinese government has paid more attention to "going global" as its national strategy, providing funds to support social organizations to work abroad and meet the needs of other countries through the "Belt and Road" initiative. This is of great significance to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Just as social organizations developed rapidly after the government started to purchase their social services. Since 2012, I believe that once the government starts to purchase services under the "going global" policy, Chinese social organizations will be greatly encouraged to work abroad. Over the years, we have been exploring foreign aid projects, hoping to further open the government's foreign aid resources and management methods with practical cases so that foreign aid projects and funds can be implemented well. In this way, we can improve the implementation of overseas projects. At the same time, social organizations in China can also grow, with some gradually turning into international organizations.

The year 2022 marks the 120th anniversary of the Lanzhou No. 1 High School. On the anniversary, the school recalled a number of impressive stories of the past, in which there are two girls from Germany catching the eyes of everyone.

The story of German volunteers in Lanzhou No. 1 Middle School

In August 2019, with the support and organization of the Amity Foundation, Jule and Anna from Germany came to study in our school. To help the two volunteers learn Chinese culture and get used to local life, Lanzhou No. 1 Middle School arranged lessons of Chinese language, calligraphy and tai chi. The two volunteers were earnest and active, practiced hard and made great progress. The two volunteers taught German language for our students. Their lessons were interesting and practical, allowing the Chinese students in their class to actively participate under a relaxed atmosphere. Their classes proved to be very popular.



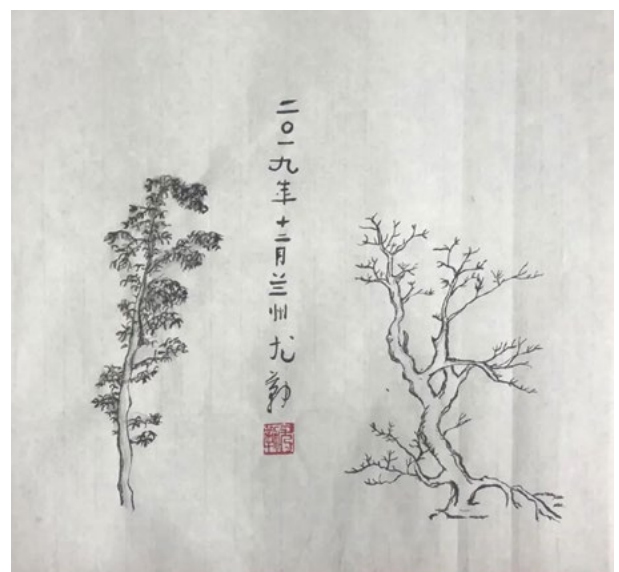
Jule and Anna learning Chinese calligraphy and painting



The first calligraphy work of the two volunteers



The two volunteers learn tai chi in the school gymnasium



Chinese paintings of the two volunteers



After study and practice, the two volunteers were able to complete calligraphy and Chinese painting independently



Jule and Anna demonstrating their calligraphy exercises



Jule and Anna learning Chinese with other foreign teachers at Lanzhou No. 1 Middle School



The two volunteers were popular with the students



Jule and Anna's classes



Other German volunteers under Amity Foundation's exchange program visited our school



Group photo with school leaders

During the exchange in Lanzhou No. 1 High School, the two volunteers established a deep friendship with the teachers and students of the school. After returning to Germany, Jule and Anna did not stop practicing Chinese calligraphy, and they continued to learn Chinese and spread Chinese culture in Germany. On the 120th anniversary of Lanzhou No. 1 High School, Jule and Anna sent a video to express their thoughts and wishes. We hope, in the near future, we will meet the volunteers again on campus in China.



Where One Chapter Ends,
Another Begins



► Online ceremony



On April 25, the closing ceremony for the Amity Torch Program, and the implementation ceremony for projects under Amity's Living Water Campaign was held at the Preythom Primary School in the Bavel district of Battambang, Cambodia.

The ceremony was attended by representatives from Amity's local partner Life with Dignity, local education and sports officials, and 440 students and teachers from Preythom Primary School. Representatives from Amity Foundation headquarters, Amity HK and more than 20 students and teachers from Bishop Hall Jubilee School and Fanling Kau Yan College in Hong Kong also attended the ceremony virtually via Zoom.

During the ceremony, project officers reflected on the history of Amity's work in Cambodia, the progress of implementing the new facilities and shared insights on the situation of the students who will benefit from them. The 435 students were presented with gifts of school uniforms, cups and notebooks.



► Students of Khleang Primary School washing hands with the facility built by Amity

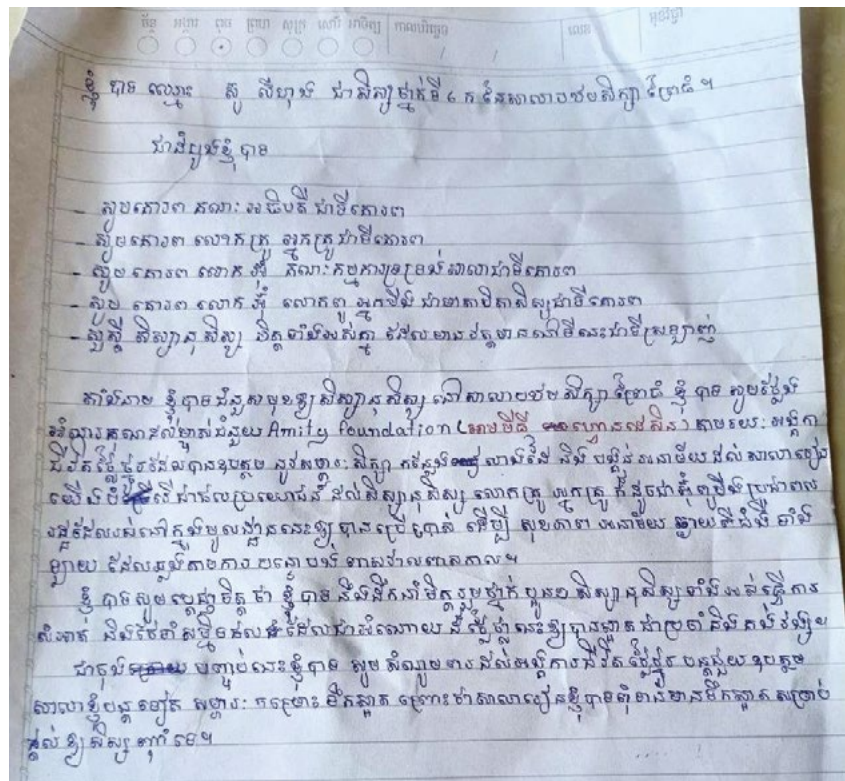


► Facility built by Amity for the students to wash hands.

Mr. Sopheap Suon, Executive Director of Life with Dignity, gave an overview of Amity's Torch Program and the various sanitation facilities constructed under the initiative. A total of 310 students from disadvantaged families received financial support from Amity, allowing them to continue their studies. Facilities such as clean water systems and toilets will benefit 509 students across 3 villages. Mr. Suon thanked the Alibaba Charity Platform, the Amity Foundation, and all the donors for their support in the development of Cambodia's education system. He added that the partnership of Amity and LWD has deepened the friendship between China and Cambodia.

In a heartfelt letter, student representative Sou Lihong also expressed his thanks to the kindness of Amity Foundation and the donors from all walks of life, noting how the new facilities help create a stable and healthy learning environment for himself and his peers.

Since 2019, Amity has partnered with Cambodian organisations on many projects on local education development,



► Thank you letter from Sou Lihong, a Cambodian primary school student

benefitting approximately 2100 students. Building projects under Amity's Living Water Campaign have installed water and sanitation facilities in 5 schools, improving access to clean drinking water. Other improvements to infrastructure included the paving of roads and installation of solar power systems. Volunteers from the Amity Overseas Volunteer Program have also been dispatched to village schools to teach specialty subjects such as Chinese language, photography and communication skills.

As part of Amity's "going global" initiative, the Amity Torch Program includes projects such as international educational development, and green campus projects. To date, the program has provided scholarship support, teaching support, community development, and solar power facilities to poverty-stricken countries in Asia and Africa including Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines, Thailand, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda.



Amity's RAT Kits project brings relief to needy Hong Kong families in the 5th Wave of COVID

Soon after the Chinese New Year, the 5th Wave of Covid-19 struck causing societal panic as case numbers spiked and asymptomatic cases among younger people fuelled the spread. "Young children are clearly one of the most vulnerable and sizeable demographics owing to their low vaccination rate," explained Anthony Tong, Executive Director of the Amity Foundation (HKAF), "The early detection of infection in young children and immediate families leading to prompt medical care and suitable quarantine arrangements is the best way to protect them and also reduce compounding infection rates." But RAT kits were expensive and not readily available. The imminent "School Holidays" added a further hurdle in getting these RATs into the hands of needy children.



► Society of Chinese Accountants and Auditors donating to SKH Kei Wing Primary School



► Deloitte Foundation's donation received with gratitude



► Deloitte Foundation's donation received with gratitude

After needs analyses through intense discussions with our school partners, volunteers and friends, the "RAT Kits for Needy Kids Project" was launched by AFHK in February 2022. "By partnering with local schools, which maintain accurate records on the financial needs, we were able to accurately identify and serve the neediest households." added Mr. Tong.

Amity's appeals via direct liaison and social media were met with enthusiastic support from individuals and institutions alike. From February to March 2022, Amity received a total of HK\$635,363 in donations via its official website and the Alipay platform, as well as donated supplies of RAT kits from manufacturers and partner organizations. Major donors included the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club Charities, Rotary District 3450, Society of Chinese Accountants and Auditors, Ten Pao Holdings Ltd, Trumptech Holdings Ltd and St. James's Church, while Deloitte Foundation donated RATs to meet the needs of 300 primary schoolchildren.

Our gratitude goes to Fosun Foundation, which made the



► Amity staff receiving RAT shipments from Fosun Foundation



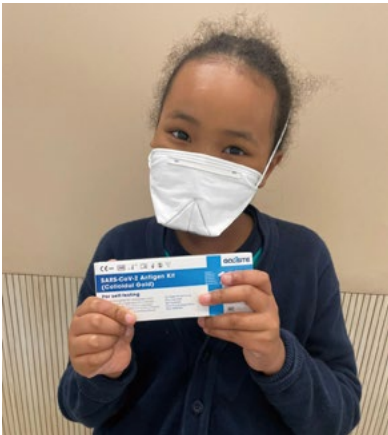
► Fosun Foundation kits arriving at a local school

most substantial donation by shipping to Hong Kong a total of 81,000 RAT kits and 3,300 KN95 masks to support our fight against the pandemic.

As the project unfolded, the urgent needs of the Sham Shui Po Schools became apparent. Thus a separate tranche was organized benefiting children



► Happy child receiving RATs donated by Fosun Foundation



► Her first RAT donated by the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club



► RATs procured by funds raised on AlipayHK

from kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools there. Looking for conduits to accurately locate and help poor families, we partnered with Principal Chan Free Tutorial World, which has an accurate database and distributed RAT kits in their Tutorial Centres at Tai Kok Tsui and Kwai Chung. The final tranche was sent to St. James' Settlement, which has the capacity to distribute these kits to the needy families using their wide services network.

Amity staff was particularly moved by the staunch support of our long-time friends and young folks from the Mainland. Notably, 114 graduates of Amity's U for Girls project, a university scholarship campaign for underprivileged female students in Guizhou, responded warmly to Amity's call to action with donations of RMB12,556. Separately, a group of HKCCCC school principals, all long-term supporters of the late "Mountain Dog" Mr Lo Kwong Fai in his Education Projects, also contributed to the project. Their pooled effort helped hundreds of school children and their families.

Working closely with the target schools and logistic companies,

Amity successfully distributed over 130,000 kits to 86 local schools and tutorial centers. The kits benefited over 29,000 households of young children receiving subsidies by the government through either Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or School Textbook Assistance (Half/Full Grant). Distribution of the kits via school partners or friendly organizations possessing accurate information has proved to be efficient and smooth despite stringent Pandemic restrictions.

The continued liaison with schools also flagged up the huge health risks to teachers and front-line staff who had to provide essential services in schools throughout the lockdown. Our appeal to protect such personnel attracted the attention of the Kingfa Sci. and Tech Co. Ltd. company in Guangdong. They promptly donated 100,000 KN 95 Masks, which we were able to distribute with the help of our active school partners to 115 kindergartens, 95 primary schools and 70 secondary/special schools.

We should also thank A & P Trading Co. Ltd., which has worked closely with us on the



► Part of KINGFA's 100,000 donated masks received by one sponsoring body to benefit 150 schools

mind-boggling logistics for free out of their sense of commitment to the young people of Hong Kong.

Worthy of mention too was the empathy shown by our Mainland compatriots for Hong Kong SAR in its dire hour. Offers to help came from many quarters but the overwhelming logistics thwarted many such kind individuals and organizations. Anecdotaly, AFHK played an intermediary role in securing donations from the Shandong Provincial CCC & TSPM that turned into tangible blessings in the form of 300 hot meals for families worst hit in the economic downturn.

Thanks to the generous and swift responses from all walks of life, Amity was able to meet the urgent demand of the needy people before the community has adequate responses to a societal health threat. In this 40-day trial before Easter, our many partners have risen to the challenge and shown what Love in Action looks like.



Important Notice to Readers

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