

Examining the land restoration in China in the past 30 years: policies, achievement and future development

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SUMMARY

Land degradation has been a great threat to China's land system sustainability, as it has the largest desert and karst areas among the countries in the world. China has experienced vast land degradation in the 20th century, and many severe environmental impacts such as dust storm in 1993 and great floods in 1998 have led Chinese government recognized the importance of environmental restoration. Many land restoration policies and strict environment policies have been initiated since the 1990s, with great impacts on the environment. China's forest coverage has increased significantly and become dominate the world forest restoration. From 2010s, under the ecological civilization, China has initiated more strict policies on environmental protection, such as the ecological redline. Here we will examine the land restoration in China with land use data from 1990s to 2020s based on remote sensing and GIS data and discuss its temporal spatial change with reference to environmental policies in China. China's policies and experiences will help other developing countries rethinking their environmental policies and achieving the land restoration target.

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