

# Sanjiangyuan – Ecosystem Service-Based Economy Workshops

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Herders played a key role at the Seminar, explaining the reality of ecosystem services – 2015 GEI

For policy makers, an **eco-system services based economy** is a **win-win** as local economic development and ecological protection are achieved simultaneously. For local people, the economic model provides new, sustainable means of income and a way to learn about and protect their own environment.

In a meeting called “Sanjiangyuan Ecological Services and Sustainable Community Standards Seminar,” GEI experts brought over 40 government agencies, research institutions and universities together with local herders from Sanjiangyuan area villages to **candidly share their experiences and insights on ecological protection, community relations and sustainable community research.**

GEI hosted the seminar with the Qinghai Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve Authority and the International Alliance for Sustainable Standards (ISEAL).

## Q. WHAT IS AN ECO-SYSTEM SERVICE BASED ECONOMY?

**A. An economic model that essentially turns environmental protection and other environmentally-friendly activities, conducted by locals, into income.** Herders are paid to manage specific land or monitor water quality, this money then stimulates the region’s economic growth. Locals are also taught new skills, i.e. crafts, then given access to a workshop to produce and sell on a larger scale.

One of the highlights of the meeting was the **panel discussion of local herders, whom gave their perspective on environmental protection and environmental development.**

By hearing the experience of the herders, participants gained understanding the true situation of facing the impacted communities. Herders also discussed how to manage the expectations of the outside world.

The panel itself involved village leaders from Geri, Saiwu, Xiaying, Dayu and Longge village all attended the meeting. This was the first time for the village expert from Longge to attend the meeting.

Government agencies, NGOs, rural community representatives and traditional cultural institutions also discussed sustainability standards and outlined the specific requirements and conditions for carrying out the simulation exercises. The herders played a critical role in this discussion as well, as they presented new ideas that other delegates immediately integrated and deemed innovative.

In 2016, GEI expects Sanjiangyuan to present more cooperation opportunities for us to promote the ecological services-based economy, to improve the environment, to promote community development and overall protect the safety of China's water supply.