



Farmer-Led ABS for Ancient Staple Food Landraces

Supporting and Scaling the Aohan Community Seed Bank Model Cited in China's 7th National CBD Report in China and the Global South

Tuesday, 20 October 2026 • 11:30–13:00 (Yerevan, GMT+4)
Vayk – Side-event Room 3, Block 2, 2nd floor, Blue Zone • In person only



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Partners:

Yunnan Research Academy of Eco-Environmental Sciences
Henggouzi Village, Aohan
Stone Village, Yunnan
Yong'e Village Cultural Tourism Farmers' Cooperative, Ximeng
SEARICE, Philippines
Jichuan Communication

GEF Small Grants Programme (UNDP)
IFAD
ECOCERT China
Aohan Pengcheng Millet Industry Co., Ltd.
Border Coffee (Pu'er) Co., Ltd.
Mannongfeng Jino Restaurant

Refreshments: Kindly supported by Shan Shui Conservation Center

Hosts:

Farmers' Seed Network (FSN, China)
Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES)

Co-organizers:

UN Environment Programme-International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP)
Aohan Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
ANDES & Potato Park, Peru
College of Resources and Environmental Sciences, China Agricultural University
SEE Foundation
Shan Shui Conservation Center

Abstract

Traditional staple food landraces constitute the core foundation of global agrobiodiversity, food security, and community cultural heritage, yet they remain the most under-addressed domain of community-based Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) implementation worldwide. Most existing ABS cases focus on forest or medicinal genetic resources, while equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms for smallholder-managed grain landraces are severely lacking across the Global South.

This side event systematically presents China's grassroots, farmer-driven ABS practices, with a core focus on the Aohan community seed bank model officially documented and cited in China's 7th National CBD Report. Rooted in the 8,000-year-old millet Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) in Aohan Banner, this innovative community model features community collective ownership of landrace germplasm, standardized two-tier community Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedures, farmer-negotiated Mutually Agreed Terms (MATs), and conservation-oriented, transparent benefit-sharing arrangements linking communities, governments, academia, and local enterprises.

Beyond the flagship Aohan millet practice, the event further showcases China's replicable community seed system experiences, including highland rice and bean conservation models in Yunnan Stone Village and millet-bean landrace conservation practices in Wangjinzhuang, Hebei Province.

To enable South-South mutual learning, the session sets China's farmer-governed landrace seed banks alongside farmer-led seed systems in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, and IFAD-supported agroecology and evolutionary breeding work with Indigenous Peoples and local communities in Asia and Africa.

During the session, two short films will be screened: Aohan ABS Story and More Than a Scoop.

Overall, this side event responds directly to the global deficit of operational ABS models for staple food crops. It delivers low-cost, community-autonomous, context-adaptive governance tools suitable for dryland, mountainous, and smallholder-dominant regions, and supports inclusive, rights-based Nagoya Protocol compliance for farming and indigenous communities worldwide.

Meeting Agenda

11:30 OPENING • 10 MIN

Welcome	Moderator: Yanyan Zhang, FSN / UNEP-IEMP
Opening Remarks	Ministry of Ecology and Environment / CRAES
Remarks	Linxiu Zhang, UNEP-IEMP
Video: Aohan ABS Story	

11:40 KEYNOTE SPEECHES • 40 MIN

Moderator: Xin Song, FSN

Community Seed Conservation & ABS in China and the Global South
Communities' Roles in Bio-Culture and Ecosystems
Zhi Lü, Peking University Co-Chair, Second Global Assessment, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
Enhancing Farmer Seed Systems via Community Seed Banks in China: The Aohan CSB & ABS Model and Beyond
Yiching Song, FSN / UNEP-IEMP International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)
Farmer-Led Seed Systems and ABS Solutions in the Philippines & Southeast Asia
Nori Ignacio, SEARICE, Philippines
Supporting IPLC Agro-Ecology Programs and Partnerships on Evolutionary Breeding: Cases from Asia and Africa
Marie-Aude Even, IFAD
From Community Practice to National Policy
Wenhui Liu, CRAES
Video: More Than a Scoop

12:20 PANEL Q&A AND DISCUSSION • 35 MIN

Moderator: Qian Wang, FSN

DISCUSSION THEME: Making ABS Work for Small-Farmer-Led Community Seed Systems— From Farmer Seeds to Markets (Conservation, Production, and Marketing: Challenges and Opportunities)
Yuhui Qiao, China Agricultural University; Ruixiang Lu, Aohan, Inner Mongolia; Wenchuan Mu, Stone Village, Yunnan; Yunxia Geng, ECOCERT China; Qiu Bi, Documentary Photographer

12:55 DECLARATION LAUNCH • 5 MIN

Moderator: Xin Song, FSN

Yerevan Declaration
On Small-Scale Women Farmers for Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Use and Equitable ABS
IPLC representatives from the Global South: Wenchuan Mu, Ruixiang Lu, INMIP representatives