

# The Youth Reference

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## Youth Action for Beautiful China



Newsletter from All-China Youth Federation

## NOTE -----

This e-magazine is a product of All-China Youth Federation, China Youth Daily and China International Youth Exchange Center to introduce the youth work and youth development in China on a regular basis. We hope that it can provide you with updated information about Chinese youth, youth policy and youth programs, and we sincerely look forward to feedbacks and suggestions from friends all over the world.

Contact us :

Email: [acyf4@acyfcn.cn](mailto:acyf4@acyfcn.cn) [wydf@wydf.org.cn](mailto:wydf@wydf.org.cn)

Website: <https://www.wydf.org.cn/>

# Youth Action for Beautiful China

The year 2025 marks the 20th anniversary of the concept that “lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets” (Literal translation as “green mountains are gold mountains”, hereinafter referred to as the Two Mountains concept). This concept, as the core of Xi Jinping’s ecological civilization thought, provides a profound understanding of the dialectical relationship between development and environment protection. It has not only transformed China but also paved new pathways for global sustainable development, contributing Chinese solutions toward building a clean, beautiful, and sustainable world. The All-China Youth Federation, partnered with



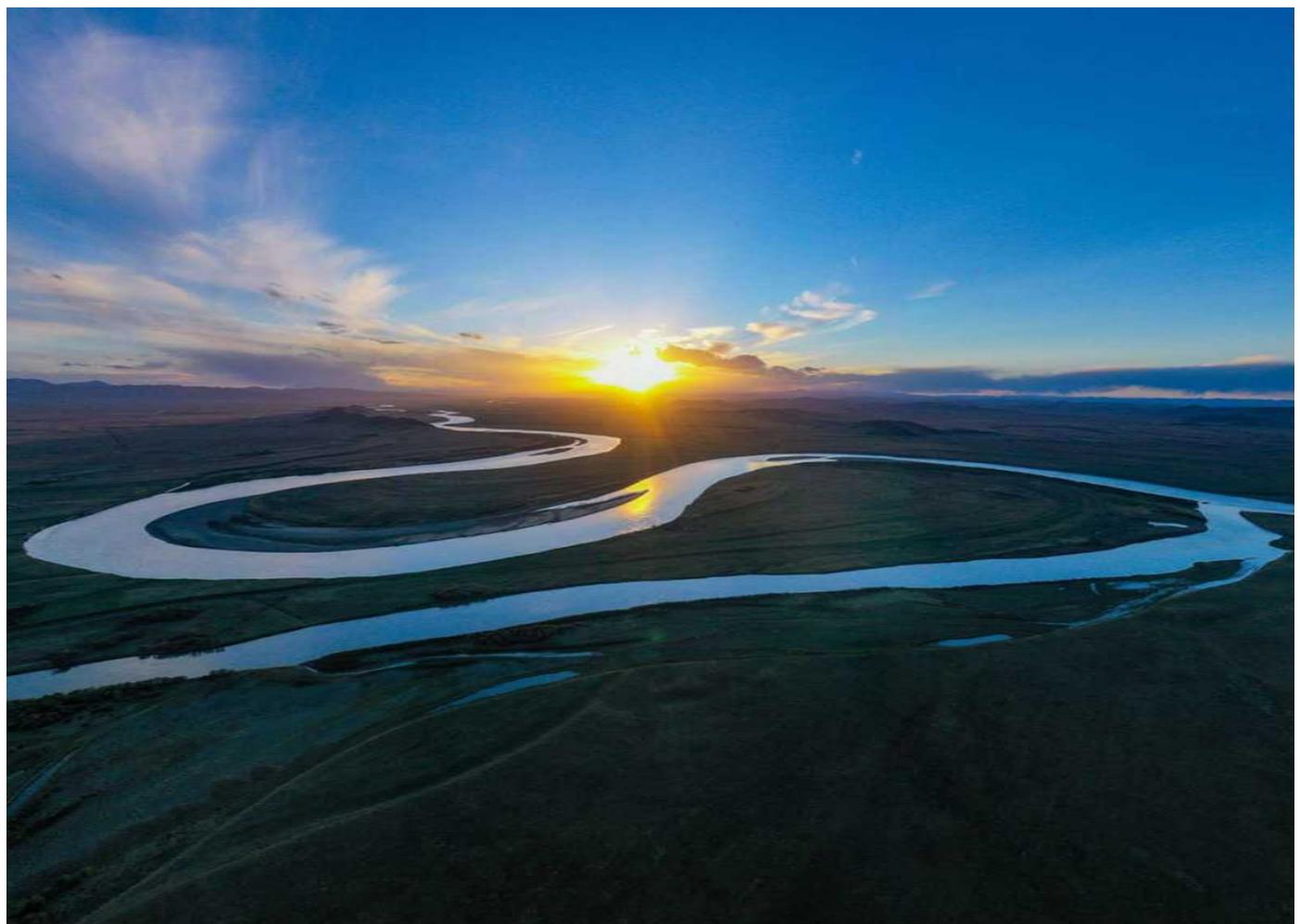
several ministries, has launched and implemented the Youth Action for Beautiful China, contributing the strength of the youth to China’s green development and green transformation.



From winning the Blue Sky Defense Battle to improving rural environments, from strengthening ecosystem protection to



large-scale afforestation, China's green transformation has advanced alongside rising public well-being. Over the past two decades, China has accounted for about 25% of global new vegetation cover, the highest share worldwide. More than 90% of surface water sections now meet high-quality standards, and public satisfaction with environmental quality has stayed above 90% for four years running. China now operates the world's largest, fastest-growing renewable energy system, providing over 80% of global photovoltaic modules and 70% of wind power equipment, which makes access to clean energy possible for particularly developing nations.





Young people serve as a main driver in promoting environment protection and sustainable development. Since 2019, under the guidance of the “Beautiful China · Youth Action” Plan , the All-China Youth Federation has led Chinese youth to participate in ecological civilization practices and carry out activities such as “Mother River Protection Operation”, “Three Reductions and One Conservation” Practice, and “Youth Power in Waste Sorting” Initiative.

## 1. “Mother River Protection Operation”

Launched in 1999 by the ACYF, the “Mother River Protection Operation” mobilizes youth to plant trees, restore ecosystems, and protect the environment, bringing green growth to the

nation. In 2005, the “Mother River Protection Operation” was honored with the UNEP Champion of the Earth Award. By 2025, it had engaged 640 million participants in various





activities, planting 3.5 million hectares Youth Forests. With the support of diverse media, the program produced over 50,000 original content pieces—such as social media posts, short videos, and trending topics—reaching more than 1 billion people and spreading green values through youth voices.

## 2. “Three Reductions and One Conservation” Practice

The practice focuses on areas such as smog reduction, plastic reduction, emission cuts, and resource conservation. It raises young people’s environmental awareness, fosters ecological ethics and responsible behaviors, and promotes simple, moderate, green, and low-carbon lifestyles, empowering them to become a vital force in environmental protection.

On each World Car-Free Day, September 22, the “No Driving Today for Blue Skies” campaign launches online, encouraging youth actions to help reduce emissions. Around Plastic Reduction Day on November 28, the “Less Plastic” campaign mobilizes youth for clean-up actions to raise awareness of plastic reduction. The “Young River Guardian” program organizes regular volunteer efforts—such as water monitoring, river clean-ups and pollution reporting—to protect local rivers and lakes. The “Clear Your Plate” campaign combines online activities like “24-Hour Hunger Experience”, “Clear Plate Posts”, and “Clear Plate Challenge”, paired with offline actions including taking leftovers home, and avoiding single-use tableware. These efforts for saving food have engaged 12 million youth with a total of 137



million participation records. As of October 2024, the “Three Reductions and One Conservation” Practice have cumulatively attracted nearly 50 million participants.

### 3. “Youth Power in Waste Sorting” Initiative



The program encourages young people to become advocates, practitioners, and volunteers for waste sorting. The ACYF organizes themed lectures to raise public awareness of resource and

environmental challenges, promote knowledge on waste reduction and classification, and deepen youth understanding. Online activities such as “Green Pick and Run”, waste sorting experiences, and online commitments help youth to foster daily sorting habits. In some cities, the ACYF partners with professional youth environmental groups to deliver waste sorting education and guidance in communities. 538,000 grassroots youth organizations were mobilized to carry out ecological civilization education and practical activities, guiding young people to contribute to green development.

