

China: How one village can help transform a landscape

October 2008



Firewood collector, Huayuan Village - Photo credit : Mr. Li Feng, Beijing Forestry Society

A transformation is beginning to happen in a small village high above Beijing. Since IUCN's *Livelihoods and Landscapes* Initiative came to China in 2007, the local people of Huayuan village are learning how to better care for, and manage, their forests and to take the vital watershed values of the area into account in their management of resources.

China has a pressing need for better forest management, and the lack of it has affected people not only in Huayuan Village, the *Livelihoods and Landscapes* pilot landscape in China, but also in Beijing, one of the world's largest cities.

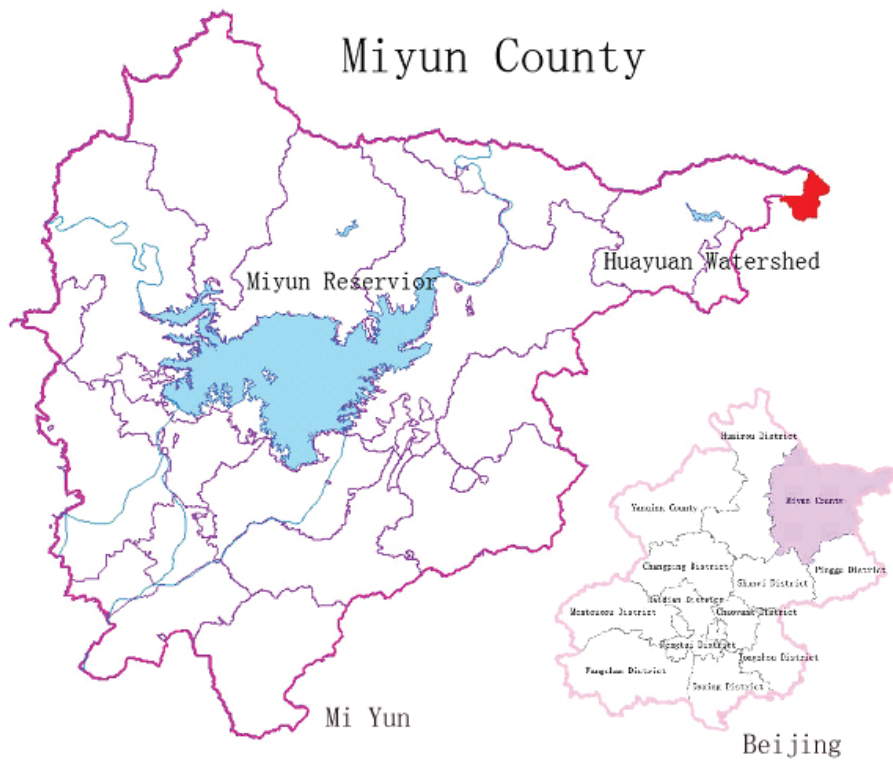
Located northeast of Beijing, Huayuan village is part of the bigger Miyun watershed, which is the main source of drinking water for Beijing's 17 million residents.

The entire Miyun watershed has significant forest cover after decades of tree planting, but the forest is unhealthy and poorly managed due to limited knowledge and access and social and economic pressure. The result is that not only does Beijing face a severe water crisis in terms of quantity and quality but the development of local livelihoods for the villagers in Huayuan village has also been curtailed.

FOREST CONSERVATION PROGRAMME



Beijing Forestry Society (BFS) was created in 1955 and consists of 2511 members. The membership brings together a rich variety of specialists working in diverse forest related fields with the common goal of promoting sustainable forestry and strong community forestry management. One of IUCN's key partners in China, BFS is in the process of applying for IUCN membership.



Working closely with the Beijing Forestry Society (BFS), *Livelihoods and Landscapes* has already facilitated multi-stakeholder technical training workshops to:

- Optimize the productivity of the forests surrounding Huayuan village
- Improve the watershed and tourism values of the forests
- Deliver direct and indirect livelihood benefits to the rural poor
- Conserve rare and endangered species

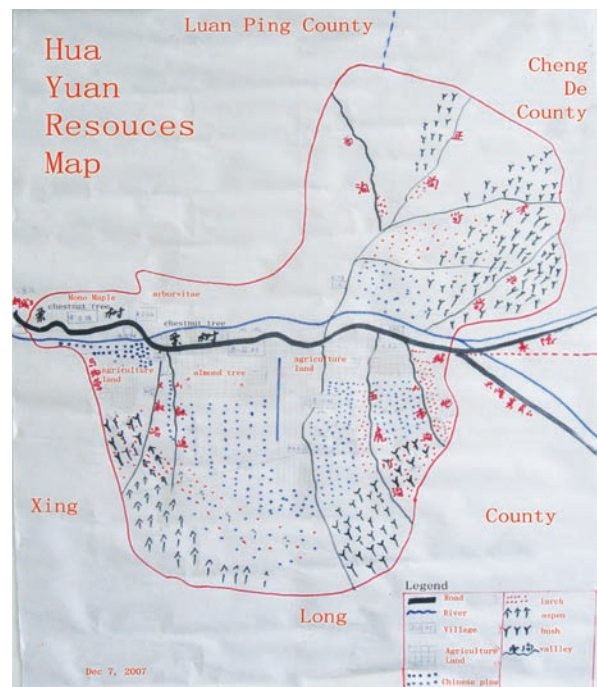
Locally, scaling up this project to include the entire Miyun watershed has always been the goal. Already, locals from other villages in the watershed, who also want to improve the health of their forests, are visiting Huayuan to learn from their experience.

“The forest is too dense. It should be thinned so that it can provide more timber and other benefits to the locals.”

Wei Jinhuai former village leader.

“Our mountains are full of treasures. As the forest becomes healthier, there will be more mushrooms, more medicinal plants and other forest products.”

Cheng Deqin mushroom collector, Huayuan village.



Participatory mapping such as this gives local people the opportunity to visualize their landscape

FOREST CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

For more information, please contact IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature):
Dong Ke, Senior Forest Programme Officer, IUCN China: dongke@iucn.org.cn

www.iucn.org/forest