

Green guideline to be boon for Bijie

Plan promotes the high-quality development of a 'model of China's poverty alleviation'

By YANG JUN in Guiyang and ZHAO YIMENG

The National Development and Reform Commission on Friday announced a plan promoting growth in Bijie, Guizhou province, following approval from the State Council late last month.

Under the plan, the city will develop into a demonstration area where residents can enjoy prosperity, beautiful scenery and a vibrant atmosphere, according to the official reply from the State Council, China's Cabinet.

The plan has set goals for boosting green development, tapping local talent and promoting new types of industrialization, urbanization, agricultural modernization and tourism in the city of 6.85 million.

Zhang Jiayu, deputy director of the Bijie's Development and Reform Commission, said the State Council's approval of the plan indicates that Bijie's development will play an important role in the overall national development strategy, and shows that the city is preparing to embark on a new golden era.

"The city should make decisive progress on rural vitalization and set up a modern industrial system based on low-carbon development," Zhang said.

Bijie will also fully make use of local talent and be even more motivated to pursue growth to keep up with nationwide efforts, he added. "The city will undergo socialist modernization at the same pace as the rest of the country."

Located in the mountains of Guizhou, Bijie was once one of China's most impoverished areas. Over the past decade, significant changes have taken place as a result of poverty alleviation projects and environmental improvements.

President Xi Jinping called Bijie "a model of China's poverty alleviation drive" to mark its success in lifting 1.67 million residents out of poverty, and removing 1,981 impoverished villages from the poverty list in 2020.

Last year, the city boasted a GDP of 218.15 billion yuan (\$32.3 billion), 2.5 times that of 2012, and an average annual growth rate of 9.6 percent. In the past decade, it has built a high-speed railway station and an airport, and all surrounding counties can now access expressways.

Meanwhile, the environment in this formerly barren land has been greatly improved. Since 2012, Bijie has worked to prevent soil erosion taking place on 5,462 square kilometers of land and to turn back 1,533 sq km of desertification.

Chen Yiqin, Party chief of Guizhou, said the historical changes in Bijie epitomize not only the achievements China has seen since reform and opening-up began in the late 1970s, but also the great strides made in socioeconomic development in the province since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

"Bijie city is embarking on a new journey while facing more challenging tasks. Upgrading from a pilot area to a demonstration zone, the



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

city will shift from developing through poverty alleviation, green construction and population control to green development, tapping human resources and innovation," she said at a meeting on Monday on promoting the city's high-quality development.

The city now plans to modernize agriculture in its mountain regions by setting up production centers suited to growing cold-weather vegetables, tea and potatoes, as well as forest-based goods and services such as edible mushrooms and beekeeping.

Yuan Xiaomei, who comes from Nayong county, started a beekeeping business in 2019 with savings she earned while working in Fujian province.

She invested nearly 400,000

yuan in setting up an apiary and hired experts to teach breeding techniques.

Yuan was able to set up 500 hives during the first two months. She now produces more than 1 metric ton of honey a year, bringing in over 400,000 yuan.

"Beekeeping is a low investment and with few risks, beekeepers are soon able to make profits," Yuan said. "As long as villagers are willing to participate, I am willing to teach them breeding techniques and how to promote beekeeping using our hometown's natural resources to create a green bank."

The more than 600 hives in the county now produce an annual output value of nearly 1 million yuan. The city's forest-based economy is also now worth 4.9 billion yuan, and

as a result, villagers' lives have significantly improved.

In recent years, modern technology has been used to boost rural vitalization. At a smart agriculture park in Zhijin county, irrigation and fertilization is carried out by intelligent equipment and in addition, more than 10,000 people have found employment at the park, according to authorities.

Farmers are able to precisely manage fruits and vegetables by monitoring data, and are taught new planting techniques and offered production support.

The plan envisages that per capita disposable incomes of urban and rural residents in Bijie will see an average annual growth of 9 percent and 10 percent respectively, by 2025. Furthermore, it envisages a rise in

the urbanization rate from 43.3 percent last year to over 50 percent in the same period.

Human resources will significantly improve by 2025, when the average stay in education among people of working age is projected to increase from 7.7 years in 2021 to 10.8 years. The city's working age population is also expected to reach 1.5 million by that time.

Zhang said the approval of the plan opens the door for Bijie to seek further policy support and to promote construction, creating essential opportunities for future development.

Wang Jin contributed to this story.

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Policy Digest

Authorities urged to tackle floods in north

The General Office of the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters and the Ministry of Emergency Management recently held a joint video conference asking flood and drought control authorities to do their best to tackle the flooding that tends to affect the northern region of the country every July and August.

Authorities must be prepared to combat any potential flooding, produce more frequent weather forecasts and focus on enabling the sharing of alerts between the upper and lower reaches of a river, as well as between different regions, they announced during the conference, according to an online statement.

Authorities must also strengthen precautions against the risk of flooding in small rivers and reservoirs, endeavor to avoid geological disasters and prevent urban waterlogging, and take measures to evacuate people from danger zones resulting from heavy rainfall.

Together with the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration, the body in charge of national food security — the general office and the ministry sent five high-flow drainage pumps to Shaanxi province, a major agricultural region, on Friday to help control floods.

The office has also dispatched two work units and one expert team to help Shanxi and Heilongjiang provinces guard against flooding.

Notice aims to better regulate online lending

The China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission has issued a notice on the better regulation of online lending by commercial banks.

The notice, released on the commission's website on Friday, asked commercial banks to improve the quality of online lending services and better fulfill their responsibilities as lenders.

These services must be improved to better help market entities tackle financial challenges and lower financing costs for companies, according to the statement.

Banks should also undergo careful digitization, develop more online lending products, respond more efficiently to loan applicants and optimize the lending process, the commission said.

They should also strengthen risk management, as well as investigative practices and identity verification, in addition to methods for approving credit.

The commission added that banks must strictly adhere to the requirements of financial authorities in fighting money laundering, and take effective measures to monitor the use of online loans to prevent embezzlement by business partners.

Gold and silver foil, dust cannot be added to food

Gold and silver foil and dust are not food additives and cannot be used as ingredients, according to a regulation issued by the State Administration for Market Regulation and three other departments.

Food producers are not allowed to purchase or use these items in their products, and food sellers must not purchase or sell food that contains such ingredients.

Furthermore, food and beverage service providers must not make or sell meals that contain gold or silver foil or dust. Importers are also prohibited from importing any products that contain such ingredients, nor are they allowed to import foil or dust intended as food additives.

Third-party online platforms are required to check on food products sold through their channels and ban the promotion or sale of any food containing gold or silver foil or dust. They are further required to report any such products found to market regulation authorities.

WANG QINGYUN

Forestry carbon tickets providing villagers a path to prosperity

By YANG JUN in Guiyang and ZHAO YIMENG

The environment in Bijie, Guizhou province, has improved in recent years as the city has continued to tackle air, water and solid waste pollution in both urban and rural areas.

In February, Guizhou's first forestry carbon ticket was issued to Biv Green Industry, an ecological development company.

CEO Peng Xiao said getting the ticket is a milestone for the company.

"The carbon sink volume for our 2,204 hectares of forest is 136,000 metric tons, which is equal to a carbon emission allowance worth about 3.05 million yuan (\$452,820)," Peng said.

The ticket is equivalent to an

identity card for trading the carbon sequestration capacity of a forest, the local government said.

In July last year, authorities measured the carbon storage and carbon sink capabilities of Bijie's forests, grassland and wetlands and are now promoting the listing and trading of forestry carbon tickets.

Financial institutions are encouraged to participate in the development of green financial products by means such as using forestry carbon sinks as mortgage assets, and issuing carbon bonds.

In the future, these tickets will transform forest resources into real assets for the city for the benefit of residents.

After 30 years of effort, Haique village in Hezhang county is now

garbed in green, with its forest coverage rate rising from 5 percent in 1987 to around 80 percent today.

Haique, which is located on what was a barren mountain, now has 913.3 hectares of forest. In April, the village received the province's second forestry carbon ticket, for its use of 489.7 hectares of woodland as a sink for 34,628 tons of carbon.

The Bijie Agricultural Investment Company is working with a bank to purchase and store the village's tickets.

"This carbon ticket is worth more than 1 million yuan, and the money is expected to be distributed to villagers within a month," Hong Lin, deputy manager of the company, told Bijie Daily.

Village Party chief Wen Junfu cal-

culated that the ticket should increase the average incomes of 227 households in Haique village by more than 4,400 yuan.

Chen Yu, a 70-year-old villager from Dafang county, earns 1,350 yuan a year for taking care of 450 trees in his woodland.

A tree with a diameter of about 5 centimeters at chest height can sequester about 10 kilograms of carbon a year.

These trees are sold to individuals, enterprises, institutions and social groups committed to low-carbon development. The carbon sink per tree is priced at 3 yuan, according to the county forestry bureau.

So far, the single tree carbon sink project has benefited 324 households, and more than 110,000 trees

have been registered, resulting in a collective annual income of 330,000 yuan for residents.

Bijie will implement major projects to protect and restore its ecosystem, improve the environment of rivers and lakes, scientifically control desertification and soil erosion, and intensify the fight against air pollution, according to a newly released plan on promoting development in the city.

Green development in Bijie should significantly improve by 2025, with the energy consumption per unit of regional GDP dropping by about 13.5 percent and the forest coverage rate stabilizing at just over 60 percent, the plan added.

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