



www.ecardc.org

11th European Conference on Agriculture and Rural Development in China (ECARDC XI)

“Rural China under New Leadership”

April 11 through 13, 2013
University of Würzburg, Germany

Call for Papers

Background:

Some ten years ago important leadership changes at the top of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and state paved the way for far-reaching shifts in policy priorities with regard to rural development. Gradually, significant individual policy initiatives coalesced into a major programme called “Building a New Socialist Countryside”. This policy shift has had enormous impact on diverse fields ranging from governance and public finance through all fields of economic activity to social policy. Under the decade-long administration led by Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao major progress has been achieved in a number of these areas leading to the transformation of rural China. Yet, the consequences of this modernization programme have not all been benign. For instance, rapid urbanization necessitated the conversion of huge swathes of arable land and led to other social and environmental concerns. Significantly, in early 2011 the National Statistical Bureau of China announced that for the first time the share of China’s urban population surpassed that of the rural. Thus, the next change in top political leadership, scheduled for late 2012 and early 2013, provides an excellent opportunity to take stock of these recent developments and analyse them in larger contexts. Looking ahead, conference papers may also address the challenges facing the incoming leadership and discuss their possible solutions. As the previous change in leadership amply demonstrated, this can be a crucial factor for policy innovation. So it is all the more important to correctly understand the choices facing this new generation of political leaders.

Questions to be pursued at the conference include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What route has rural development taken in the past decade? How have political goals been set, operationalized and received in society? What has been the impact of these policies and what have been their shortcomings? What might be potential solutions for current problems?
- How does the current approach to rural development mirror earlier attempts to spur rural development and how does it differ? What have been sources of rural change beyond the confines of state-set policies? What roles do social actors play in the process?
- How does rural China relate to broad economic trends such as the world food price crisis, world trade or globalization writ large? What is China’s role in the outsourcing of agricultural production?

- What are the challenges in China's countryside in terms of social change, economic development, technology, ecological degradation and political governance? How have efforts at establishing a rural welfare system or achieving rural—urban integration played out? What are the prospects for rural policies in the future?

Obviously, such broad questions can only be tackled from a multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary perspective. Therefore, ECARDC provides a platform for academic exchange beyond the usual confines of scholarly conferences and elicits proposals for panels and individual papers submitted from all disciplines, such as economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, agronomics, geography etc. In particular, ECARDC encourages the lively exchange between academics and practitioners in development as well as between European and other western participants and those from China and the global south. Young scholars are specifically encouraged to submit proposals based on their on-going researches.

Topics to be addressed may relate to one or more of the following subthemes:

1. **Economic trends and organizations:** urban—rural inequalities; integration in global trade and FDI (both incoming and outgoing); development of agribusiness; farmers' organizations; rural industrialization; migration and labour market development; agricultural R&D and extension etc.
2. **Rural policies and politics:** administrative and governance reforms; the role of local state and social actors in development; property rights and rural land; education, health and other social policies; welfare finance and provision of public goods
3. **Social change and modernization:** the roles of religious, lineage and other forms of rural social self-organization, social contention, migration and off-farm labour; urban—rural integration and reform of household registration; changes in social and political values, gender and generational relations or familial and kinship structures
4. **Environmental challenges:** pollution, degradation and mitigation; “cancer villages”, epidemics and other rural public health issues; green and “low-carbon technologies”; rural energy and sustainable development

Panel and/or paper proposals

It is possible to present an individual paper, or to propose a panel with several participants. We welcome any paper or panel proposal that touches on the theme of **ECARDC XI: Rural China under New Leadership** or one of the subthemes listed above.

Keynote Speakers

On top of panel presentations leading experts on China's rural development will present their views on major issues in the field.

- **Thomas Heberer**, Chair Professor of Politics of East Asia at the Political Science Department and the Institute of East Asian Studies (IN-EAST) at the University Duisburg-Essen
- **Scott Rozelle**, Helen F. Farnsworth Senior Fellow and co-director of the Rural Education Action Program in the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University
- **Ye Xingqing**, director-general of the Department for Rural Economy, Research Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China (to be confirmed)

Registration

Participants who wish to present a paper and/or organize a panel must submit a paper and/or panel abstract (max. 300 words) by **31 July 2012**. The early deadline is necessary in order to ensure successful funding applications. Participants will be notified of acceptance one month later, and must confirm participation to the conference coordinator (see the Organizing Committee below for contact details). Participants who want to take part in the conference, but do *not* wish to present a paper are also kindly asked to register by 1 January 2013. For registration, fill the form on the conference website (go.uni-wuerzburg.de/ecardc).

Full conference papers and presentations

The full papers must be submitted to the conference organizer by 1 March 2013 so they can be made available for the discussants and other participants in good time. Those who cannot meet this deadline are kindly asked to bring sufficient copies of their papers to distribute to the other participants at the conference. Each individual presentation of a paper will be allotted 30 minutes (20 minutes presentation+10 minutes discussion and debate).

Publication

ECARDC XI aims to publish a selection of high quality papers as an edited volume or a special issue of a quality refereed journal. Former conferences have resulted in several edited volumes or special journal issues of selected papers that are well-received in scholarly circles, in recent years including:

- Stig Thøgersen, Ane Bislev (eds.), *Organizing Rural China – Rural China Organizing* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012).
- Björn Alpermann (ed.), *Politics and Markets in Rural China* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).
- Heather Xiaoquan Zhang (guest editor), Special Issue “Transforming Rural China: Beyond the Urban Bias?”, *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (2009).

Registration and costs

The conference fee is set at 100 Euro per participant and 50 Euro student/concession rate. As funds for ECARDC are limited, the organizer will submit a funding application to relevant donors and foundations after completion of the paper selection process. We will provide relevant websites and information on accommodation and travel in due course.

About ECARDC

ECARDC was established in 1989 by concerned European scholars and development practitioners to create a forum for exchanging research findings on agriculture and rural development in China, which was by then rapidly changing on a scale unprecedented in history. With currently over 250 members from China, other Asian countries, the various European Union member states, the USA, Australia and other developed and developing countries, ECARDC can rightfully be termed an influential world scholarly event as well as a major academic community and network focusing on China's development in general, and agricultural and rural development in particular. The next and XIth ECARDC will be hosted by University of Würzburg in Germany. We hope to welcome and meet you all in Würzburg in April 2013!

Membership and mailing list

You can become a member of ECARDC by emailing to ecardc@mearc.eu with necessary information, e.g. your name, title, institutional affiliation, country and contact details. Your name will then be included in the mailing list, after which you will be automatically updated with the latest news on ECARDC activities, including its biannual conferences, job openings and PhD scholarships, etc.

Organising Committee

Core Contact: Eva Kuhnle, M.A., ECARDC XI Coordinator, Institute of East and South Asian Cultural Studies – Sinology, University of Würzburg, Germany, Email: eva.kuhnle@uni-wuerzburg.de; Tel: +49 931 318 2202.

NOTE: To facilitate organisation of the conference, prospective participants are expected to write to the core contact. In the subject area of any email correspondence please write ecardc11 followed by the specific nature of your email, e.g. ecardc11 - panel proposal, or ecardc11 - registration, etc.

Please do NOT email any correspondence about ECARDC XI to the ECARDC Secretariat based at the Modern East Asia Research Centre of Leiden University, The Netherlands (www.mearc.eu).

Prof. Dr. Björn Alpermann, Assistant Professor for Contemporary Chinese Studies, Institute of East and South Asian Cultural Studies – Sinology, University of Würzburg, Germany, Email: bjoern.alpermann@uni-wuerzburg.de

Support and funding

ECARDC XI will apply for financial support on the basis of the preliminary programme in summer 2012. Details will be published on the conference website as they become available.

Further details about the ECARDC network, including a registration form can be found on its website at www.ecardc.org