



Sino-German Symposium Explaining Transition of Chinese Rural Areas: A System Perspective

From 12 to 16 September 2016 close to 50 researchers participated in Sino-German Symposium under the title “Explaining Transition of Chinese Rural Areas: A System Perspective” in Chengdu. The symposium has been organised by the Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy at Peking University (CCAP-PKU), the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) at Halle (Germany) and Sichuan Agricultural University (SAU) and supported by the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion (CDZ). The participants came from universities and research institutes in China, Germany, the Netherlands and the USA. Scientific presentations from the perspective of (agricultural) economics and management, geography, agri-environmental sciences as well as political sciences highlighted numerous aspects of the symposium’s title. In five plenary sessions and four pairs of parallel sessions the participants presented their research and discussed their views of the most striking developments and challenges with regard to achievements and remaining challenges of the Chinese agricultural sector and rural areas. Furthermore, scholars explored opportunities and research topics for future collaboration.

The plenary sessions were open to graduate students of Sichuan Agricultural University and, thus, held in lecture halls. Sichuan Agricultural University (College of Economics, Zentrum für Deutschlandforschung) provided excellent facilities and organisational support to make the symposium achieve its objectives.

The place of the conference in Chengdu, Sichuan, facilitated two excursions that inspired lively discussion of innovative approaches to agricultural development: the „Chengdu Rural Land Exchange“, opened 2012, eases market based exchange of land use rights among farmers and between the agricultural and non-agricultural sector. These institutional innovations corresponded to a major theme addressed during the symposium. The second excursion explored a 35,000 ha region in Pujiang district that explores collaborative schemes in tea and fruit production with adequate consideration of the complete value chain and components of rural tourism and regional planning that improve the attractiveness of rural living.