

Preface

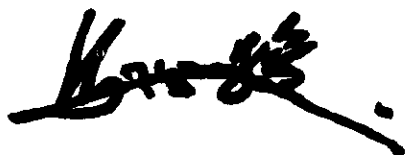
Our planet Earth is the carrier and source for human survival. Currently, human are undertaking the struggle for protecting the Earth for their own survival. In the middle of the twentieth century, people felt anxious about the breakout of nuclear war. Since 1980s, however, the attention of the whole world has been transferred to the abnormal climatic changes, which led to starvation, and to the major pollution accidents occurred continually. This status is just the consequence made by natural retaliation upon human being owing to human's excessively drawing from the nature. From this reality, human have clearly recognized the significance: protection of the Earth is equal to protecting human's own survival.

Protection of the Earth is a common task facing the whole people in the world and must be conducted through global collaboration. Only through the comparative study of different geographic environment and different countries under an unified planning could we acquire the cognition that reflects the objective rule, and probably find the counter-measures to reduce or control disasters. For this purpose, the Cornell University timely established the Global Environmental Program (GEP), chaired by Dr. Mark Harwell, in which China took part.

At the present stage, one of the key objectives of GEP is the impact of abnormal climate on agriculture and ecosystem. To carry out the program in China, the Botany Institute, the Zoology Institute and the Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, as well as the Institute of Agro-Meteorology affiliated with the Academy of Meteorological science made up a Specialized Workshop. The twelve papers published here are the interim reports from the workshop.

The program received a great deal of support from the National Natural Scientific Foundation of China and has been identified as a support subject by the Department of Life Science. In the progress of the program, the Cornell University gave generous help and provided computer, computer program and relevant information. We extend grateful thanks to all.

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Ma Shijun
Professor
Member of the Chinese Academy
of Sciences