

Focusing on her major business subject, at the same time, NSFC strived to promote international fundamental research cooperations, seriously implemented the new-era policies, and achieved great progress in exploring international cooperation channels, organizing international cooperative projects, attracting overseas talent resources, designing the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for international cooperation, establishing constitution and exploring political strategy etc. In 2005, NSFC granted 1593 cooperation projects with a total investment of 89.7716 million RMB.

Expand and extend bilateral and multilateral cooperation

In 2005, NSFC achieved cheerful progress in the exploration of cooperation channels, and gained benefit effect in planning and arranging high level exchange-visits, exploring agreement channels and intensifying and seriously selecting agreement items, organizing international evaluation system for bilateral and multilateral projects etc. Namely, NSFC intensified her cooperation channels and chains and expanded her cooperation areas. In 2005, NSFC organized 10 more delegations and received more than 40 delegations; signed 6 cooperation agreements, supported 465 projects and 128 bilateral forums under the agreements (the quantity and quality of these forums were higher than 2004).

NSFC signed MOUs with Science Foundation of Ireland (SFI), the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the UK Medical Research Council (MRC), the Belgium Research Foundation-Flanders (FWO), and Canadian Institutes of Health Research; and defined key cooperation areas under these MOUs to co-sponsor bilateral research projects. The effective period of MOU between Fonds de la Recherche en Santé du Québec (FRSQ) and NSFC was elongated another 5 years after 2005 by agreement through bilateral correspondence.

16 projects in "Fund for Scientist Cooperation Network between China and Britain" were approved in the same time with 2 co-organized scientific forums. After launching the MOU between NSFC and SFI in Jan., the 1st

China-Ireland Bilateral Workshop in Life Science was held in May. And several cooperation projects were formed in the workshop. Moreover, 37 joint projects were co-ratified by NSF and NSFC, 55 by NSFC and RFBR, 19 by "NSFC-DEST Special Fund", 11 by NSFC and ACR. In the previous year, the cooperation between NSFC and science foundations in Japan and Korea stepped into a new epoch. Beside the bilateral scientific conference and cooperative research projects supported by original agreements, A3 Foresight Program was launched by NSFC, KOSEF and JSPS in A-HORCs. 2 joint projects were scheduled in the program. And NSFC sponsored 4 million RMB within the joint fund. Based on the agreement between NSFC and JSPS, the bilateral cooperation would support research projects in the area of building friendly research climate and low-burden society. In 2005, 48 proposals were submitted in this area, and 4 of them were granted with a total funding of 4 million RMB.

DFG delegation visited NSFC 3 times. SG-JIRP agreement was signed in April to promote the long-term international cooperation, interdisciplinary cooperation and fostering young researchers. Furthermore, Neuroscience Research plan was launched by NSFC, the Academy of Finland, and CIHR to support bilateral research projects between China and Finland or trilateral research projects cooperated by China, Canada and Finland. 13 proposals schemed by Chinese scientists were reviewed by the international expert evaluation panel. 4 of them were approved. NSFC also actively promoted cooperations with international research organizations, for example, ICTP and IIASA all had close relationship with NSFC. In 2005, 38 young scholars sponsored by NSFC participated in ICTP activities, and 10 of them were short-term visiting scholars; another 6 young scholars sponsored by NSFC participated in IIASA Young Scientists Summer Program.

11 bilateral scientific forums were jointly organized and sponsored by NSFC, and her cooperation partners from Britain such as the Royal Society (RS), Medical Research Council (MRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) etc., as well as UK embassy. In order to summarize the cooperated research achievements

in these years' international exchanges, to promote earth science research cooperation between China and France, with the support from NSFC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, Ministry of National Education, Research and Technology of France, the Earth Science bilateral scientific forum, organized by Programme Sino-Francais de Recherches Avancées (PRA) and coordinators for Earth Science Exchange projects, was held in Beijing in Nov., 2005.

Scheme major international and regional cooperative projects and double-bases projects for overseas scholars

In 2005, 34 major international cooperative projects involved in multiple disciplines as Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Engineering and Materials Sciences, Information Sciences, Earth Sciences, Chemical Sciences, and Management Sciences etc., were ratified with a total funding of 32.03 million RMB. In the climate of increment of major international cooperative projects, both Chinese scholars and overseas scholars, who were working in China, displayed their strong interests and submitted their proposals as investigator or participant. For instance, proposals from Dr. Sarah Perrett (nationality: UK) from Institute of Biophysics of CAS, and Dr. David (nationality: UK) from Beijing University of Chemical Technology, were approved in the defense meeting, within which they used fluent Chinese language to defend their proposals.

In summary, major international and regional cooperative research projects in 2005 showed their characteristics as: 1) NSFC endeavored to set major international cooperative projects through agreement channels because of the increasing enthusiasm in them (the proposal quantity increased greatly, 78 in 2004, and 129 in 2005); 2) with the tied cooperations from NSFC's various departments, the evaluation sessions were systematically schemed and organized. This guaranteed project quality; 3) NSFC also formalized her operation procedures. Thus, the evaluation processes were centralized and intensified to promote the competition and selectivity of best projects; 4) medium and final term investigations were also intensified.

The policy of "talents leading society" was insisted in 2005. In order to effectively utilize talent resources and attract overseas talents to play their directive role in double-base projects, 32 of double-base projects were granted with a total investment of 8 million RMB. In practice, as one of the flexible methods to support overseas talents, the program of "Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Young Scholars" (including "double-base") attracted great amount of scientists with excellent research background to enter the studio for the design and construction of China's prospective future. The significance was not only located in the research exchange of one or two scientists, but also in the extensive influences on young students, scholars and their cooperated research teams.

Cooperation with Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan

Through the cooperations and exchanges towards Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions, and under the policy of "one country two systems", scientific development in these regions and the mainland were smoothly progressed. According to the scientific development characteristics in these regions and the policy of "mainland demand first", the central point of NSFC's working policy to these regions was put into multiple disciplinary areas such as modernization of traditional Chinese medicine, biotechnology, information engineering, innovative materials, advanced manufacturing, environmental protection etc. NSFC also sponsored a great amount of bilateral conferences as well as cooperative research projects related to these regions.

The total applications in NSFC / RGC Joint Research Scheme increased in 2005 (240 in 2004 and 254 in 2005). The quality of these applications was also improved. Through a two-turn review of the bilateral evaluation system, 15 of them were finally approved with a total funding of 5 million RMB. The allocation of applications in this fund were in an almost balanced distribution that 2 in Chemical Sciences, 4 in Life Sciences, 2 in Earth Sciences, 3 in Material Sciences, 2 in Information Sciences, and 2 in Management Sciences. Because of the abruptly increased