

Spring 2024 / Issue 18

Organized by: Office of International Exchange & Cooperation, Beijing Normal University

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Newslet er

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A Delegation Led by Vice-Chancellor & President of Cardiff University Visited BNU

Article source: Office of International Exchange & Cooperation | Release date: 2024-01-16

six-member delegation from Cardiff University, led by Vice-Chancellor & President Wendy Larner and Pro Vice-Chancellor Rudolf Allemann, visited Beijing Normal University (BNU) on the morning of January 11. They were greeted by BNU President Ma Jun and Vice President Wang Ming in the main building.

Ma Jun extended a warm welcome to the visiting delegation. He stressed the collaborative efforts between the two universities since the establishment of the Beijing Normal University-Cardiff University Chinese College in 2015. Collaborations have been forged in disciplines including education, geography, psychology, artificial intelligence, and statistics, resulting in fruitful outcomes. Mr.



Ma briefly outlined the overall objectives, basic approaches, and key initiatives of BNU's disciplinary establishment in the coming five years. Stressing the significance of the strategic partnership between BNU and Cardiff University, he envisioned progress in their existing collaboration through the establishment of joint laboratories and research centers at BNU's Zhuhai Campus. Furthermore, he

urged exploration in collaborative efforts in fields like computer science, neuroscience, and marine science to carry on the tradition of friendship and initiate a new phase of collaboration.

Wendy Larner expressed her sincere appreciation for the warm reception extended by BNU. The memory of the meeting between the two universities at Cardiff University in November 2023 remained vivid in her mind. She noted that the exchanges between the two institutions have maintained a positive momentum, yielding fruitful outcomes in various fields. The impressive achievements of BNU and its objectives in disciplinary establishment have left a strong impression, as she envisioned both universities discovering new pathways, expanding into uncharted territories, and realizing shared growth.

At the meeting, Wang Ming provided the attendees with an update on the development status of the Zhuhai Campus and the Disciplinary Development Plan (2023-2030) for Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai. He also made recommendations on collaborative efforts in interdisciplinary studies, the establishment of Sino-foreign cooperative educational projects or institutions, the establishment of joint laboratories, and others.

The heads of the Faculty of Geographical Science, Faculty of Psychology, School of Chinese Language and Literature, School of International



Chinese Language Education, College of Life Sciences, School of Artificial Intelligence, and Smart Learning Institute, BNU each reported on their collaborative experiences and subsequent plans with Cardiff University. The leaders from the Research Institute, Office of Development and Planning, and Office of International Exchange & Cooperation attended the meeting as well. Cardiff University (CU) is the only university in Wales that is part of the Russell Group of British research universities. In 2015, BNU and CU collaborated to establish China's first educational institution overseas which has been integrated into the China-UK High-level Peopleto-People Exchange Mechanism. In December 2019, the two universities held the "BNU-CU Day" and jointly signed a strategic





partnership agreement. This paved the way for a gradual extension of collaboration into a multitude of academic domains including education, geography, psychology, artificial intelligence, statistics, mathematics, journalism, and media arts, leading to a diversified array of cooperative achievements such as joint research projects, faculty and student exchanges, and dual degree programs.

The 2024 Global Workshop on Climate **Change and Urban Resilience was** Held at BNU

Article source: China Institute of Education and Social Development | Release date: 2024-01-19



he 2024 Global Workshop on Climate Change and Urban Resilience, co-hosted by BNU and the World Bank and organized by BNU's School of National Safety and Emergency Management, was held at the Ying Tung Academic Centre of Beijing Normal University (BNU) on January 16 and 17. Presided over by BNU Vice President Wang Ming, the workshop was held in a hybrid format (off-line and on-line), with nearly 100 delegates from Europe, the Americas, Asia, United Nations agencies, and regional international organizations, including experts and scholars in the fields of disaster risk reduction, climate change, emergency management, ecological environment, urban planning, as well as government officials and corporate leaders, in attendance for face-to-face discussions on the theme of "Cities' Responses to

BNU President Ma Jun emphasized that climate change, as a common global challenge, is crucial to the future of humanity. Strengthening urban resilience is an important consensus in the international academic community



for scientifically addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development. BNU stands ready to partner with insightful individuals from all sectors to jointly establish a highlevel international conference platform, providing high-quality intellectual services for global climate change responses and urban safety initiatives.

Zhang Xuequan, Deputy Director-General of the National Disaster Reduction Center of China (NDRCC). and Yoonhee Kim, Practice Manager for Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience & Land Global Practice, East Asia and Pacific Region, World Bank, attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches. They highlighted the timely nature of the workshop, emphasizing its importance in facilitating global efforts to collectively address the risks of future extreme events and advance the development of resilient cities.

During the high-level dialogues and thematic conference sessions, experts from nine countries, including China, the United States, Japan, Türkiye, Germany, the United Kingdom, Brazil, the Philippines, and Greece, delivered 12 keynote presentations on typical disaster cases. The presentations centered on the experiences and lessons learned by major international cities in responding to significant disasters and extreme weather events in the context of climate change. Discussions revolved around important topics such as the application of disaster risk information in urban planning, early warning and risk communication, strategies for enhancing social participation in major urban disaster responses, and nature-



based solutions. Active interactions and exchanges took place between online and offline audiences.

At the closing ceremony, Ms. Lesley Y. Cordero, a Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist at the World Bank and former Undersecretary at the Office of the President of the Philippines, delivered the concluding remarks for the conference. She expressed her gratitude to the cohost, BNU, for the contributions made by the faculty and students to the workshop. She highlighted the richness of the discussions at this workshop, noting the high reference value of the experience cases shared by the experts. Her vision for the future involves the establishment of a global mutual assistance model to facilitate mutual development.

In recognition of the World Bank's substantial support for the workshop, Wang Ming conveyed his congratulations on the fruitful results of the discussions. He stated that the experience and lessons on extreme disaster and climate event responses introduced during the workshop would be very beneficial for disaster prevention and urban development. He expressed his desire to establish a regular conference mechanism for hosting similar workshops in the future.

This workshop has provided a valuable platform for academic exchange and experience sharing among experts, scholars, and practitioners from home and abroad, presenting abundant data and case



to extreme weather events as well as the development of resilient cities. The upcoming publication of the "Report on the Experience and Lessons Learned in Cities' Responses to Extreme Events," an important result of the workshop, will soon be made available to the public.



information to facilitate the response

Group Photo of Workshop Attendees Beijing Normal University (BNU) is one of the universities in China that initiated comprehensive research on natural disasters at an early stage. After more than a decade of exploration in the fields of safety science and disaster prevention and mitigation engineering, the School of National Safety and Emergency Management was officially established at BNU on April 14, 2021. The professionals with expertise in emergency response and management technologies for mitigating natural



disasters, significant social risks, robust practical and innovative capabilities, and the competence to address the needs of national emergency management. Going forward, the school will host a greater number of such activities and facilitate global collaboration, actively contributing to addressing climate change and enhancing urban resilience.

Zhou Zuoyu was Invited to Attend the Sino-Uzbek Educational Forum

Article source: Office of International Exchange & Cooperation | Release date: 2024-01-25

Forum, hosted by the Ministry of Education of China and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation of Uzbekistan, was held in Beijing on January 22. Zhou Zuoyu, Vice President of Beijing Normal University (BNU) was invited to attend the forum. During the forum, universities from both countries released the Beijing Declaration on **Cooperation Between the Universities** of China and Uzbekistan, and engaged in a series of pragmatic exchanges and cooperative activities. Zhou, on behalf of BNU, held friendly talks with the following Uzbek counterparts: Madjidov Inom Urishevich, Rector of the National University of Uzbekistan; Ikromkhonova Firuza Ikromovna, Vice-Rector of the Tashkent State Pedagogical University; and Tukhtasinov Ilkhomjon Madam inovich, Rector of the Uzbekistan State World Languages University. Following that, BNU entered into a university-level cooperation National University of Uzbekistan and inked a student exchange agreement with the Tashkent State

he Sino-Uzbek Educational



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Continuous friendly exchanges have been maintained between BNU and the educational circles in Uzbekistan. From 2022 to 2023, BNU signed cooperation framework agreements with the Ministry of Preschool Education of Uzbekistan and the Tashkent State Pedagogical University, establishing

a robust basis for cooperation in preschool education and teacher education domains between the two nations. In the future, guided by the high-level strategic leadership of both countries, BNU will continue to advance the depth and breadth of cooperation with Uzbekistan.

Zhou Zuoyu Leads Delegation to Visit Three South Pacific Countries

Article source: Office of International Exchange & Cooperation | Release date: 2024-03-07

o strengthen cooperation with the island nations of the South Pacific, Vice President Zhou Zuoyu led a delegation from February 28 to March 7, 2024, on a visit to Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga. The delegation visited the University of Goroka in Papua New Guinea, Fiji National University, the University of the South Pacific, and Tonga National University. They held discussions with Don Polye, the Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Technology of Papua New Guinea, and were received by James Marape, the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, and Hu'akavameiliku, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga. During the visit, the delegation also called on the Chinese embassies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga. Leaders from the Institute of International Chinese Education, the Faculty of Geographical Sciences,



Pedagogical University.



Visit to the University of Goroka and sign the Chinese education cooperation agreement

the Office of International Exchange and Cooperation, and the UNESCO International Research and Training Center for Rural Education at our university were also part of the delegation.

On February 29, Zhou Zuoyu and his delegation visited the University of Goroka, where they met with President Teng Wanninga, Vice President Matthew Landu, Stephen Potek, and heads of various departments and institutions. The discussions focused on cooperation in Chinese education, teacher education, and rural education, as well as disaster prevention and mitigation, culminating in the signing of a Chinese education cooperation agreement between the two universities.

On March 1, Zhou Zuoyu and his delegation met with Don Polye, Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Technology of Papua New Guinea, and Secretary-General Jan Czuba. Zhou Zuoyu outlined the background of Beijing Normal University and detailed the progress of the visit to the University of Goroka. Members of the visiting group presented the potential areas of cooperation and their intentions. Minister Polye welcomed the delegation's visit and expressed his appreciation for the collaboration between Beijing Normal University and the University of Goroka, expressing hope for both sides to engage in practical cooperation in the fields of education and training, disaster prevention and mitigation, as well as cultural exchanges.



Meeting with Don Polye, Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Technology of Papua New Guinea

On March 1, Prime Minister James Marape of Papua New Guinea received Zhou Zuoyu and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Zeng Fanhua, the Chinese Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, and Teng Wanninga, President of the University of Goroka. Zhou Zuoyu thanked Prime Minister Marape for hosting the delegation and recalled Prime Minister Marape's visit to Beijing Normal University during his trip to China in October 2023. He discussed the significant visit to the University of Goroka, especially the signing of the Chinese education cooperation agreement. Prime Minister Marape expressed his gratitude for Vice President Zhou Zuoyu's leadership in bringing the





delegation to Papua New Guinea and appreciated the warm reception he received during his visit to Beijing Normal University. He fully affirmed the cooperation between Beijing Normal University and the University of Goroka, and expressed his enthusiasm for future collaborations in disaster prevention and mitigation, governance, and poverty alleviation between Beijing Normal University and higher education institutions in Papua New Guinea.



the South Pacific

On the morning of March 4, Zhou Zuoyu and his delegation visited Fiji National University, where they met with Honorary Chancellor Semesa Karavaki and Vice-Chancellor Unaisi Walu Nabobo Rauluni Baba. Both parties discussed cooperation in digital education, cultural exchanges, Chinese education, rural education, and development. They outlined a roadmap for implementation and signed a memorandum of understanding between the two universities. That afternoon, the delegation visited the University of the South Pacific, where they met with Executive Deputy Vice-Chancellor Gurmeet Singh and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Giulio Masasso Tu'ikolongahau Paunga. The representatives introduced their respective institutions, explored potential areas of cooperation, and signed a memorandum of understanding between the

On the morning of March 6, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, Hu'akavameiliku, received the delegation, accompanied by Ruan Dewen, the Chargé d'Affaires at the Chinese Embassy in Tonga. Zhou Zuoyu provided an overview of Beijing Normal University and proposed collaboration in areas such as climate change, digital education, educational poverty alleviation, cultural and heritage preservation, Chinese education, and marine science. Prime Minister Hu'akavameiliku expressed high appreciation for Zhou Zuoyu's proposals and responded by aligning them with

BNUNewsroom

Tonga's developmental needs and status, recommending that the delegation discuss these collaborative efforts in detail with Tonga National University.

On the afternoon of March 6, Zhou Zuoyu and his delegation visited Tonga National University. They were met by Acting Vice-Chancellor Tangikina Moimoi Steen and the deans of the university's principal faculties. Zhou Zuoyu introduced Beijing Normal University and, on behalf of his institution, signed a memorandum of understanding with their counterparts. Leaders of the visiting units detailed their collaborative intentions in areas such as Chinese education, rural education, disaster prevention and mitigation, digital education, and cultural exchanges.



Visit to Tonga National University



During the visit, the delegation also called on the Chinese embassies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga. Zeng Fanhua, the Chinese Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Zhou Jian the Chinese Ambassador to Fiji, and Ruan Dewen, the Chargé d'Affaires at the embassy in Tonga, met with the delegation. They provided specific recommendations and suggestions to promote deeper cooperation between Beijing Normal University and various academic institutions in these host countries.

This visit marks the first time the university has organized a delegation to the South Pacific region.



Visit to the Chinese Embassy in Papua New Guinea



Visit to the Chinese Embassy in Fiji



Through these visits to Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga, the delegation deepened its understanding of the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational contexts of the three countries, thus promoting and enhancing the university's exchanges and cooperation with higher education institutions and related organizations in these nations.

BNU's Representative Team Won the National Championship in the Chinese Regional Rounds of the 2024 Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

Article source: Beijing Normal University Law School | Release date: 2024-02-20

he 65th Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition and the 22nd Chinese Regional Rounds took place at Renmin University of China from February 17 to 19. The representative team from Beijing Normal University Law School achieved an undefeated record in the preliminary rounds, earning the top spot and progressing to the knockout rounds. They went on to win four consecutive matches in the knockout stage, standing out among 65 teams to clinch the championship in the Chinese regional rounds for the first time and receiving a first-place award. This success also secured their qualification to represent China at the international rounds in Washington D.C. Liu Jingyi and Xia Ya were given the Best Oralist award.



Assembled in April 2023, the BNU Jessup team for this edition began training under the guidance of Coach Liao Shiping from the Law School. The competition theme covered areas such as actio popularis, deprivation of nationality, recognition of nationality, consular





protection, freedom of speech, the efficacy and interpretation of Security Council resolutions, as well as privileges and immunities of UN experts. It included four litigation requests, involving the invocation of responsibility by non-victim states, the legality of deprivation of nationality, issues of nationality recognition within the consular convention framework, and obligations to carry out Security Council resolutions.

BNU Distinguished Professor Vikram Channa Narayan Won the 2023 Chinese Government Friendship Award

Article source: BNU Website | Release date: 2024-03-04

n February 4, the 2023 Chinese Government Friendship Award Ceremony was held at the Great Hall of the People. 50 foreign experts from 26 countries across five continents were awarded the honor. Among them was foreign expert Vikram Channa Narayan, a distinguished professor at the School of Art and Communication, Beijing Normal University.

Vikram Channa said, "I am excited to receive this award in the Great Hall of the People. I have been on a journey of discovery in China for over 20 years and have documented numerous rich and colorful China's stories. It is a very special experience for me,



an Indian, to observe the amazing Chinese culture. China and India are the only two countries in the world that share a similar experience in terms of scale and complexity. To understand China, we have to feel it with our hearts. Over the years,



each of these films has opened the door to fostering strong friendships and exploring Chinese geography and culture. The documentaries about China have made distinctive ties of understanding and exchange between us. I am convinced that my choice has been the best possible one!"

Vikram Channa is the incumbent Vice President of Warner Bros. Discovery and the Chief Editor of Greater China and Southeast Asia of the company. His work involves non-fiction program content management, content production and broadcasting, and program production. He has produced more than 2,000 documentaries, with approximately 100 hours of programming aired annually through the Discovery Channel global network, covering eight channel brands under the Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific.

Over the past two decades, his footprints have reached most places in China as he has led his team to produce nearly 200 documentaries about China, making significant contributions to the Sino-foreign friendly communication and cooperation.

In 2016, Vikram Channa became a distinguished professor at BNU and co-established the "Explore - BNU Documentary Workshop" with the Documentary Center of BNU, aiming to connect the industry with the academic community and integrate teaching and creation, cultivate students' international perspectives and professional skills through creative projects, and develop them into proficient international talents. So far, the workshop has been held eight times.



Together with professors of the Documentary Center, Vikram Channa has been instructing students in creating highquality documentary works with international communication



power. Enjoying diversified styles, clever narratives, and novel ideas, these works have won more than 20 awards in domestic and international film and television festivals.

BNUBS Organized a Student Winter Break International (UK) IBL Program

Article source: BNU Business School | Release date: 2024-03-04

tudents from BNU Business School (BNUBS) traveled to the UK for an international inquirybased learning (IBL) program during the 2024 winter break, engaging in a rich array of academic exchanges and practical activities. The program focused on themes such as "International Organizations, Global Competence, and Sustainable Development" and "Artificial Intelligence: Innovation in the Digital Economy." The purpose of the program is to broaden students' international perspectives, acquaint them with international organizational cultures, leverage resources from international organizations, guide students in exploring the frontier trends in the field of future business management, and cultivate students' global competitiveness and awareness of sustainable development.

Leading figures in the domains of global governance, international organizations, and business management were invited to the IBL camp, where they offered instruction to the students. They are: Stephen Perry, an international business leader and Chairman of the 48 Group Club; Daniel Zeichner, Member of Parliament (MP) for Cambridge; Professor Mike Rands, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and Master of Darwin College; Professor Christopher Cullen, Emeritus Fellow of Darwin College, University of Cambridge, and former Director of the Needham Research Institute; Ambassador Hugh Davies, a senior official from an international organization; Professor Duncan Bartlett, Engagement Tutor at The Economist; Marco Schwartz, Managing Director of Davy Capital Markets, UK at Davy, a prominent wealth management firm; Scott Claridge, Creative Development Director at Identity Works, a top-tier Nordic brand consulting

company; and Shahzad Ansari, Head of the Strategy and International Business Subject Group at Cambridge Judge Business School, along with many other distinguished professors and scholars.

Stephen Perry has visited China on multiple occasions, engaging in dialogues with Chinese leaders and members of the business community. In 2018, he was awarded the China Reform Friendship Medal in recognition of his contributions to China's reform and opening-up policy and the advancement of Sino-British relations. During the lecture, he shared with the students the story of his father, Jack Perry, and his interactions with China. In 1953, overcoming various obstacles, Jack Perry led dozens of British businessmen to travel to China, kicking off the "Icebreaking Mission" to help bridge Sino-British relations. Stephen Perry, following in his father's footsteps, is committed to promoting cooperative and friendly Sino-British relations and fostering bilateral exchanges in economic, trade, cultural, and educational spheres.



In the "International Organizations, Global Competence, and Sustainable Development" IBL camp, the students interacted with leading scholars and senior officials from international organizations, delving into the management practices, decision-making processes, and leadership styles across different countries and cultures. They witnessed the academic leadership approaches of premier British universities, leading to a more profound consideration of career development strategies, elevation of cross-cultural communication aptitude, development of global competence, and nurturing of international awareness.

In addition to theoretical studies, the students also embarked on immersive visits to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI), the Needham Research Institute (NRI) at the University of Cambridge, the Bank of England as one of the world's six major central banks, the leading investment bank Panmure Gordon UK, Ltd, and the London County Hall, among others. Through on-the-ground visits and expert explanations, the students obtained profound insights into the latest developments in global shipping, marine environmental protection, and maritime safety. Approaching the topics from a practical perspective, they posed reflective questions concerning organizational management and future trends, all the while experiencing the vital role





played by UN officials in cross-cultural and crossdisciplinary coordination and communication.

The themed IBL camp "Artificial Intelligence: Innovation in the Digital Economy" engaged students in an exploration of the application and innovation of artificial intelligence technology in the domains of business and economics, as well as discussions on future development pathways, through a range of lectures and workshops. It also encouraged exploration into business models and management approaches within the era of the digital economy.



Apart from their regular classes, the University of Cambridge coordinated cultural immersion experiences and company visits for the students from BNU. By visiting various colleges and museums at the University of Cambridge, the students gained insights into the organizational structure of British universities and the cultural traditions and styles of numerous colleges, experiencing the profound cultural heritage of the University of Cambridge. In the course of company visits, they explored the interiors of the BMW MINI car factory, gaining firsthand exposure to the production lines and witnessing the implementation of Industry 4.0 and robotic automation in the manufacturing and assembly processes, thus enhancing a deeper understanding and practical skills in digital economy and innovative management.

Through this program, the students from BNU have showcased their strong foundation in management theories and proficiency in English communication, as well as the positive educational impact on developing innovative thinking, independent critical thought, practical skills, and cross-cultural awareness. The international IBL program during this winter break has offered the students from BNUBS a comprehensive international learning platform that facilitates academic advancement, cultural exchange, and professional development, establishing a robust groundwork for collaboration and communication with international organizations.



BNU International Students Won Prizes in the Second "Travelling+Chinese" Competition of Center for Language Education and Cooperation of the Ministry of Education

Article source: School of International Chinese Language Education | Release date: 2024-02-29

n the second "Travelling+Chinese" video collection hosted by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation of the Ministry of Education and supported by the Chinese Plus Language Centre, the short video "Ten Days for an International Student in Beijing" by Malika Nazarova (Kazakhstan) at the School of International Chinese Language Education and the short video "Today I Am a Tough Girl" by Lim Choyeon (South Korea) and Choi Yumin (South Korea) at the School of Journalism and Communication were awarded the Outstanding Video Production Award, and the Outstanding Participating Organization Award was given to Beijing Normal University.

Video Introduction: "I am an international student from Kazakhstan. In my opinion, Beijing is an impressive metropolis. The first time I came to Beijing, I felt its infinite charm. People on the road seem to be busy all the time; they can't slow down to enjoy the beauty of this city. But Beijing, in my eyes, is charming. Those who have been to Beijing, just like me, will surely



be fond of this prosperous city."

Video Introduction: " Chairman Mao once said: 'We are not true men unless we reach the Great Wall; Counting up, we've done twenty thousand li in all'. The Great Wall is not only a towering wall, but also a witness of China's long history, carrying the rise and fall and glory and shame of the Chinese nation,





and integrating the wisdom and sweat of countless ancestors. Now, let's follow Lin to experience the resolute, tough 'Great Wall spirit' and write our own legend!

The second "Travelling + Chinese" video collection contest attracted about 300 entries from nearly 60 countries and in the end, 62 entries received individual awards.



In 2023, Beijing Normal University (BNU) proactively advanced the implementation of the *Global Development Strategic Plan (2020-2025)*, focusing on disciplinary development, enhancing the internationalization of talent cultivation, scientific research, cultural dissemination, and social services, and making positive contributions to promoting high-quality education development.

Highlight One: Rapidly Advancing International Exchanges onto a New Track

Bartners, facilitate students' engagement in studies at prestigious foreign universities and research centers, and promptly boost the internationalization environment by launching large-scale international student events on campus.

1. Offline communication was advanced and the network of collaborative partners was maintained and expanded.

The resumption of offline exchanges in 2023 witnessed BNU leaders visiting universities and institutions in countries and regions such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Finland, Hungary, Romania, Greece, as well as Hong Kong and Macao, China, hosting delegations from over 30 universities including Rutgers University, the University



of Warwick, Paris-IX Dauphine, the University of Malaya, the University of

Havana in Cuba, as well as international organizations like UNESCO and





2. Large-scale international student events on campus were organized, rapidly improving the international atmosphere of BNU.

On May 20, the 2023 "Global Campus" BNU International Cultural Festival and the Third Jingshi Students International





OECD, fostering close face-toface interactions and deepening collaborations abroad.

The engagement in offline learning exchanges among faculty and students increased, with the number of BNU students engaging in face-to-face exchanges overseas for the year swiftly rebounding to over 2,000, and a surge in active academic exchanges for BNU teachers overseas. Exchange Festival kicked off. Various premium brand activities were organized to provide students with services to gain insights into international situations, connect with international organizations, take part in overseas exchanges, and access information on safe study abroad, creating a vibrant atmosphere of internationalization on campus. During the BNU International Cultural Festival, a rich variety of captivating fetes were launched, where international students from various countries and Chinese students performed dances, instrumental music, and martial arts, presenting their respective national characteristics and cultural flair.



Highlight Two: Embracing Social Responsibility with Enthusiasm

oncentrating on the issues of the times and global changes, BNU leverages its disciplinary strengths to drive forward international educational exchanges and cooperation, joins Sino-foreign high-level people-topeople exchange mechanisms, and strengthens partnerships with international and regional organizations, so as to make positive contributions to the openness of education to the outside world.

1. The 6th China Education Innovation Expo was held to showcase education innovations, share Chinese educational experiences, drive international education cooperation, and collaborate in building a community with a shared future for education. On the morning of November 18, the 6th China Education Innovation Expo (CEIE) opened at the Zhuhai International Convention & Exhibition Center. The CEIE, themed "Together, Sharing, Innovation – High-Quality Development of Education," showcased 2,409 education innovation achievements and featured 91 forums and 1,123 workshops. It attracted over 55,000 visitors during the event, with over 3 million people watching the CEIE via the live streaming platform online, resulting in a total online media platform exposure of more than 60 million. At the opening ceremony, Arizona State University, the University of Helsinki, Moscow State Pedagogical University, and Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), along with other international friendly universities, sent their congratulations and expressed their high appreciation for the CEIE's positive contributions



2. The institutional cooperation with international and regional organizations such as UNESCO and SEAMEO was fortified.

On August 1, BNU hosted the Dialogue Meeting on Partnership for UNESCO's Priority Africa. Mr. Firmin Matoko, Assistant Director-General for Priority Africa and External Relations at UNESCO, along with permanent delegates of African countries to UNESCO such as Angola, Gabon, Mali, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, attended the dialogue meeting to explore ways of enhancing exchanges and cooperation with Africa within the



UNESCO framework.

From December 15 to 16, BNU and the Southeast Asian Ministers of

to fostering educational exchanges and mutual learning. The CEIE has evolved into a significant platform serving national strategies, gathering educational innovation achievements, presenting China's educational accomplishments, sharing Chinese educational best practices, and driving international educational cooperation.

Education Organization (SEAMEO) co-hosted the China-Southeast Asian Symposium – Towards Ecological Civilisation: Education for Sustainable Rural Development. Delving into the realms of "Policy and Practice," "University and Local Exploration," and "Youth in Action," the symposium examined the experiences, challenges, prospects, and roadmaps for grounding sustainable development education in rural settings and fostering the development of rural ecological civilization. Over 400 experts, scholars, youth representatives, university faculty members and students, as well as representatives from NGOs from more than ten countries including China, Laos, Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, attended the event.

BNU Vice President Zhou Zuoyu, SEAMEO Secretariat Director Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, and Secretary-General Qin Changwei of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO delivered speeches.



Highlight Three: Elevating Students' Global Competence

Positioning global competence as one of the core objectives of talent cultivation, BNU endeavors to build a global community with a shared future for youth development by optimizing the talent training system, advance talent cultivation through international organizations, continuously developing international talent cultivation platforms, and nurturing outstanding teachers and leading innovative individuals.

1. Students were encouraged to strive for excellence, enhance their professional qualities, expand their international horizons, and cultivate a strong sense of social responsibility to become future educators and outstanding talents with "global competence."

On December 18, Elizabeth Kiss, CEO of the Rhodes Trust & Warden of Rhodes House, along with her team members, visited BNU and delivered a speech titled "The Rhodes Scholarships: 120 Years of Global Friendship & Impact." BNU President Ma Jun met with the guests Both sides reached a consensus on promoting bilateral exchanges between Rhodes Scholars and BNU students



The Rhodes Scholarship Meeting with Students Held at BNU's library

Ma expressed his gratitude to Elizabeth Kiss for presenting a lecture to the students of BNU to enrich their knowledge about the Rhodes Scholarships. He expressed his hope that outstanding students from BNU would be selected as Rhodes Scholars in the future.

In July 2023, the "Global Competence Summer Training Camp" and the "United Nations University (UNU) -



Visit of Training Camp Participants to the SEAMEO Regional Centre for STEM Education



Group Photo of Training Camp Participants and Staff Members from the ASEAN-China Centre

Chinese Youth Global Climate Change Simulation Summit Summer Training Camp" were held with the theme of nurturing professional individuals with global competence. The training camps encompassed domestic curriculum sessions and practical internships at international organizations abroad, serving as a pivotal channel for students to comprehend and participate in activities within international organizations. In 2023, several students from our university were successfully selected for internship programs launched by international organizations such as UNICEF, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and the ASEAN-China Centre.



Group Photo of BNU Students and Amakobe Sande, UNICEF Representative to China, during the World Children's Day Celebration 2. Continuous efforts were made to advance the building of international talent development platforms such as the China-US Youth Maker Exchange Center. **Jingshi International Summer** School, Forum for International Students, and Global Youth Dialogue, aimed at building bridges for exchange of ideas and common growth between **Chinese and international** students.

On December 2 and 3, the 6th International Students' Ecology and Environment Forum was held. With the theme "Promoting Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature with Ecological Civilization," the forum was live streamed globally, attracting 171 students from universities both domestically and internationally. Representing more than ten countries including China, the United States, Pakistan, Peru, and Jordan, there were students who attend prestigious universities such as Peking University, Tsinghua University, Renmin University of China, Beijing Normal University, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing Forestry University, Tongji University, Nanjing University, Nankai University, Shandong University, Northwest A&F University, and Georgia



of international students, and Development and the Mission of global environmental issues.

young participants from countries

in dialogues, with 200-plus young joining the event online. The participants engaged in discussions on four topics: "Global Education Teachers," "Internet Education," "Youth Responsibility in the New Development," offering numerous constructive suggestions on issues of widespread concern to young

Highlight Four: Boosting Global Competitiveness in Scientific Research

academia by stepping up collaboration with world-class universities nd disciplines, holding high-level international academic conferences with a focus on key research interests and distinctive areas, establishing joint

1. High-profile international academic conferences with brand influence were organized to continuously enhance the academic reputation and global competitiveness of various disciplines.

In 2023, a total of 63 significant international conferences were held by BNU, effectively promoting the connection of disciplines and cutting-edge research and enhancing international exchange, cooperation, and the sharing of achievements.

From August 18 to 20, Global Smart Education Conference 2023, themed "Education Transformation and Data Governance," was convened. It featured the participation of academicians, experts, and scholars in the global education and technology fields, representatives from international organizations, government officials, teachers and students, as well as industry representatives. Through forums, high-level dialogues, exhibitions,





workshops, and other formats, the event aimed to share new trends, theories, and technologies and showcase solutions and excellent cases in smart education. It also saw the participation of over 300 Chinese and international dignitaries, including the Vice President of Mauritius, and leaders from international organizations such as UNESCO, ALECSO, COL, SEAMEO, OECD, and APEC, alongside more than 1,300 delegates.

High-level international academic conferences, lectures, and forums were successfully held for several subject areas, fostering academic exchanges and cooperation on a global scale and propelling innovation in academic research.







2. A high-level international scientific research cooperation platform was established in collaboration with international organizations, top-tier universities, and research institutions.

On March 31, the UNESCO Chair on Artificial Intelligence in Education was inaugurated. The establishment of the UNESCO Chair on AI in Education is a major milestone in the intensified partnership between BNU and UNESCO. Its mission is to foster international collaboration and dialogue in AI-driven education, drive innovation in AI technology, delve into ethical and effective applications of AI in education, and support the development of professionals in the field.

On November 21st, the "China-Africa Policy Dialogue Forum on AI in Education" took place in Beijing. The event was jointly organized by the UNESCO Chair on AI in Education at Beijing Normal University and the



UNESCO Eastern Africa Multisectoral Regional Office. Policymakers, researchers, educators, and representatives from the private sector in China and African countries engaged in in-depth discussions on how to harness the transformative power of innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence, to drive educational transformation. The event also marked the launch of the "China-African AI in Education Community of Practice" laying a solid foundation for further collaboration between China and African countries. The international joint laboratory for "disaster simulation and systemic risk response," proposed by BNU, was approved for establishment, marking the first Ministry of Education-approved international joint laboratory for BNU. The BNU-led laboratory is jointly established with wellknown international academic institutions such as Kyoto



Highlight Five: Fostering Exchanges and Mutual Learning Among Civilizations

y tapping into its research capabilities in humanities and social sciences and its overall strengths as a comprehensive university, BNU advances exchange and mutual learning among civilizations.

1. Carrying on with the "Looking China" International Youth Film Project, the "Understanding China" Forum for International Young Scholars returned to demonstrate a genuine, comprehensive image of China, foster mutual learning between Chinese and foreign youth, and jointly pursue peaceful development.

On November 25 and 26, the 2023 "Understanding China" Forum for International Young Scholars with the theme of "Love and Humanistic Spirit in Chinese Tradition" took place. The forum spanning across humanities, natural sciences, and arts brought together numerous internationally renowned scholars in Chinese cultural studies to engage in profound academic dialogues with accomplished international



University, the University of Western Ontario, and the Global Earthquake Model. It focuses on cutting-edge topics like disaster simulation and systemic risk response, contributing to the gradual realization of a shared global security vision.



young scholars, aiming to share the influence of classical Chinese culture in contemporary global society. Young talents from home and abroad collided with ideas in pursuit of academic excellence and the heritage of the humanistic spirit. 2. International exchange and dissemination of China's governance and social development practices were promoted by publicizing China's poverty alleviation experience.

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TOWARDS 2030



exchange activities on poverty reduction, published the report Towards 2030: Practices of Poverty Alleviation through Education in China, told the stories of China's poverty alleviation efforts and rural revitalization, and contributed Chinese wisdom and approaches to the global poverty reduction cause and sustainable development. It also hosted the

BNU conducted international

International Symposium Transforming Education for Girls and Women in the New Era, themed "Inclusion, Equity, and Quality." Focusing on topics such as "Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and "Promoting Digital Skills for Girls and Women," the forum showcased the achievements in the development of women's and girls' education in contemporary China.



3. BNUers engaged in activities promoting the exchange of Chinese language and culture to drive exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and facilitate people-to-people connectivity.



중국 문화의 교류와 창신 (中國文化的交流與創新

4. Research on enhancing overseas communication capacity was conducted, and a series of reports on overseas network communication capacity building for Chinese universities, central enterprises, and cities was released.

On January 6, 2023, the Series of

for overseas network communication. Empirical research was conducted to assess the overseas communication impact of Chinese universities,

X accessorate



Launch Event of Series of Reports on Overseas Network Communication Capacity Building for Chinese Universities, Central Enterprises, and Cities 2022

12 experts and scholars from engaged in lively discussions on the



China's international communication capacity building.

京师中国传媒智库发布第37期 2022中国大学、央企、城市海外网络传播力 建设系列报告发布会

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BNUers Participated in a Hanfu Show during the 2024 CCTV **Spring Festival Gala**

Article source: BNU Website | Release date: 2024-02-28

he 2024 CCTV Spring Festival Gala program "Nian Jin" skillfully combines ancient clothing with modern stage to create a visual and auditory feast, showing the changes of dress patterns from the Han Dynasty to

the Ming Dynasty. Zhang Silin, a graduate student in Class 2022 from the School of Journalism and Communication of Beijing Normal University, was among the beauties dressed in exquisite Hanfu (the traditional clothing of the Han

Zhang Silin (the second from right)



Zhang Silin (the first from right)

ethnic group in China).

Zhang showed the costumes of the early Tang Dynasty. This set of Hanfu was made with reference to the murals of the tomb of Prince Yide in Shaanxi History Museum and the Tang Dynasty brocade collected by the Ethnic Costume Museum of Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology.

Zhang Silin said that she began to contact the restored Hanfu at the beginning of 2023, and was very honored and excited to participate in the CCTV Spring Festival Gala, and to show the beauty of the classical patterns with her peers."I believe that in the future, Hanfu will be mentioned, understood and loved by more and more people, and traditional culture will have richer contemporary expressions."

in, one of the first batch of joint master students of Beijing Normal University-UAE University's "Future Media and Innovation Research Talent



Project", studied in the UAE from August to December 2023. She is always a messenger of Chinese culture and operates the national style self-media account, which now has more than 30,000 followers all over the internet. During her study







Silin (first from right) with female soldiers of the escort formation



Invite foreign friends to experience Hanfu

BNUers Participated in a Creative Folk Customs Show during the 2024 CCTV Spring Festival Gala

Article source: BNU Website | Release date: 2024-02-19



he Spring Festival is the CCTV Spring Festival Gala. most important holidays in China. The CCTV Spring Festival Gala, which accompanies Chinese people to wait for the great day every year, has become an important festival element in China. BNUers took part in a creative dance performance in the 2024

This program, directed by the renowned director Zhang Yimou, cleverly presents intangible cultural heritage through multimedia and real-time interactive technology. The show adopts many local dialects and combines traditional

ways of making noodles and pastries such as cutting noodles, pulling noodles, throwing pancakes, and dragon beard noodles with the body shape of the dancers. Therefore, it integrates technology and arts to bring out new artistic vitality in the new era of different regional





In the winter of 2023, the School of Art and Communication of BNU was recommended by Zhang Yimou to participate in the 2024 Spring Festival Gala. In the end, 20 students from the dance department participated in the celebration. They took care of both their studies and rehearsals, and they successfully completed the rehearsals and live broadcast of the show.









A Chinese Love Story with a Foreign Twist

Article source: People's Daily Online | Release date: 2024-02-18

s a British student currently studying at Beijing Normal University (BNU), with an aspiration to work in China in the future, I'm often asked: "What is it that you love about China?" and "Why do you want to live and work in China?"

These questions may seem somewhat easy to answer, but in recent years, I've always found it difficult to answer

succinctly. In the beginning, I was attracted by traditional Chinese culture, but my love for China now goes far beyond enjoying traditional festivals and legends.

Some might say that my love for China was love at first sight — which implies the sort of feeling that fades away with time — but my feeling is not so superficial. My love of China really is a true love, in the same way

that a husband and wife are able to love each other for life. If someone asked a man, "What is it that makes you love your wife?", Is this possible to answer? In the same way, it is not possible for me to answer why I love China in the way that I do. Though I am not Chinese and do not have Chinese relatives, I nevertheless believe my love for China is not dissimilar to the way in which Chinese people love their own country, as it is also impossible for them to use clear and succinct language to express their love for their country.

My first visit to China was in 2016 with my school and Chinese teacher. At that time, I had studied Chinese for four years. When our teacher announced to us that she had arranged a trip to Beijing, I was ecstatic at the thought, but I knew that finding the not-insubstantial amount required to pay for the trip would be a challenge. However, I did not lose hope. Through organizing some cake sales in the school canteen as well as a sponsored swim, within a vear, I was able to collect the funds I needed to go to Beijing.

Before going to China, the farthest place I had been to was Normandy, France, approximately 500 kilometers from my hometown of London. I had not flown on a jumbo jet before, let alone been on a long-distance flight. One could say those six days in Beijing were life-changing for me. As I thought at the time that I may have to wait until I started working before I would have the opportunity to return to China, I very much cherished those six days in Beijing.

I took over 1,000 photos, used my broken Chinese to write diary entries, and persisted in using Chinese to communicate with the locals. One day we visited a middle school where I met a teacher who, seeing my passion for China and Chinese, suggested that I consider coming to Beijing to study in the future.

So, my pursuit of studying, and ultimately working in China, had begun. First, I studied at Tsinghua University for a time, although this was cut short due to COVID-19, before applying for the joint honors degree program that I am currently in, which allowed me to study at BNU for two years as part of the program.

My six months at Tsinghua and nearly two years at BNU, has very much consolidated my aspiration to live and work in China. During my time at BNU, I have tried my best to embed myself into university life and engage with Chinese students naturally, yet proactively. One of the ways in which I've done this, is by pursuing one of my other passions - playing the violin and joining the university's String Society, of which I am now vice

president. Organizing concerts and rehearsing with fellow students has really made me feel a part of the community at BNU. Although I am a foreign student, and my Chinese is far from perfect, this foreign identity is nevertheless forgotten. In fact, my Chinese friends outnumber my friends in the UK, and Chinese has become my first language of choice. It has become the norm for me to use Chinese when thinking, such that I believe the way in which I think has become quite different from that of a "standard" Westerner. This is the power of learning a language and why it is so important — it builds bridges, resolves misunderstandings and makes the people of the world more connected.

Though I may be British on the outside, on the inside I have developed a heart for China, a passion for China, a love for China, and it is this heart for China that is my life force and my destiny.

Oliver Hassan is a British student currently pursuing a dual degree in Chinese language and culture at Beijing Normal University and Cardiff University.

Academic

The Team Led by Professor Zhang Keli from BNU Faculty of Geographical Science Published a Paper in Earth-Science Reviews, Systematically Revealing SIRSD

Article source: Faculty of Geographical Science | Release date: 2024-03-04

Professor Zhang Keli's team from the Faculty of Geographical Science, BNU published a paper titled "Scale issues in runoff and sediment delivery (SIRSD): A systematic review and bibliometric analysis" in the international geoscience journal *Earth-Science Reviews*. The paper systematically reveals the scale issues in runoff and sediment delivery (SIRSD) through a comprehensive review and analysis of relevant studies spanning nearly a century.

This study, for the first time, reviews SIRSD's roots and summarizes the different patterns of spatial scale effect on runoff and sediment delivery, along with their underlying mechanisms and driving factors. Additionally, it provides quantitative insights into the SIRSD domain's development history, thematic structure, geographic distribution, international cooperation, and methodologies using bibliometric methods. Findings show that: i) SIRSD arises from the gap between the nonlinearity of runoff and sediment delivery across scales and our ability to measure it. Point-based and short-term measurements cannot capture the non-linearities from the spatio-temporal heterogeneities and cross-scale interactions of factors or processes. ii) Previous literature provides evidence that the spatial scaling of specific runoff (r), soil erosion (SE), sediment yield (SSY), or sediment delivery ratio (SDR) with drainage area (A) or slope length (L) exhibits contrasting patterns due to distinct mechanisms. Infiltration-excess and saturationexcess processes account for inverse and positive r-A relations, respectively. Interrill-erosion and rill-erosion cause inverse and positive SE-L relations. Hillslope-erosion and channel/ bank-erosion explain inverse and positive SSY-A relations.



Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework for Understanding SIRSD

Downstream increasing deposition and additional sediment inputs drive inverse and positive SDR-A relations. These scaling relationships can be nonlinear or complex due to spatial heterogeneities in land use, vegetation, topography, climate, lithology, and soil characteristics. Hence, applying an empirical scaling equation developed from the region with distinct environmental contexts is not recommended. Furthermore, the existing scaling patterns or equations may require updating given global climate and land use change.

SIRSD is a complex and multidisciplinary issue investigated by scientists from 93 countries since 1928. International research has substantially facilitated the understanding of SIRSD; still, more collaboration should focus on lessdeveloped countries with high soil and water loss risks and urgent conservation needs, such as those in Africa and South America under cropland expansion. Scale mismatch and scale break have discredited large-scale erosion and sediment assessments. Incorporating gully and bank erosion into modelling, extending the scale range of the L factor, and expanding the sediment scaling scope from watershed to slope may make a difference. Therefore, more research with nested design incorporating multiple scales is necessary for cross-scale analysis and scalable modelling. Addressing global climate change requires improving real-time urban flood forecasting and integrating downscaled climate



A: Drainage Area Coefficient (%); S SDR: Sediment D



Fig. 2: Patterns of Spatial Scale Effect on Runoff and Sediment Delivery and the Underlying Mechanisms or Driving Factors

km2); L: Slope Length (m); r: Depth of Runoff (mm) or Runoff : Soil Erosion (t·km-2·yr-1); SSY: Sediment Yield (t·km-2·yr-1); livery Ratio

Changes in Hydrological and Erosion-Related Research (c

models with hydrology, erosion, and sediment transport models.

The lead author of this study, Ke Qihua, is a Ph.D. student from the Class of 2019 in the Faculty of Geographical Science at Beijing Normal University, with Professor Zhang Keli serving as the corresponding author. The study was supported by the National Key Research and Development Program (2021YFD1500701), the National Natural Science Foundation of China (41730748), and an independent research project (2021-ZD-05) funded by the State Key Laboratory of Earth Surface Processes and Resource Ecology, Beijing Normal University.



Collaborative Research by the Center for Global Change and Public Health and the Team from Princeton University Reveals HPAIVs Related to Bird Migration

Article source: Faculty of Geographical Science | Release date: 2024-02-19

n collaboration with the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University, the team

from the Center for Global Change and Public Health, BNU conducted genomic dynamic analysis using global bird tracking

data and highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (HPAIV) genome sequences. They quantified the risk of virus transmission across



various bird species based on factors including time, space, and species. The findings were published online in Nature Communications in February 2024, titled "Synchrony of Bird Migration with Global Dispersal of Avian Influenza Reveals Exposed Bird Orders." Dr. Yang Qiqi, Prof. Tian Huaiyu, and Prof. Bryan Grenfell serve as

the corresponding authors of the paper, with Dr. Yang Qiqi as the lead author. The study was completed by the students of the research group following the groundwork laid in previous studies (Tian et al., PNAS, 2015; Yang et al., PNAS, 2020).

virus (HPAIV) H5, particularly



Highly pathogenic avian influenza

clade 2.3.4.4, has caused worldwide outbreaks in domestic poultry, occasional spillover to humans, and increasing deaths of diverse species of wild birds since 2014. Wild bird migration is currently acknowledged as an important ecological process contributing to the global dispersal of HPAIV H5. Findings show that seasonal bird migration can explain salient features of the global dispersal of clade 2.3.4.4. The joint team detects synchrony between the seasonality of bird annual cycle phases and virus lineage movements, and reveals the differing exposed bird orders at geographical origins and destinations of HPAIV H5 clade 2.3.4.4 lineage movements. The study provides a phylodynamic framework that links the bird movement ecology and genomic epidemiology of avian influenza; it highlights the importance of integrating bird behaviour and life history in avian influenza studies. The study was a special project approved by the State Key Laboratory of Remote Sensing Science and supported by Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (2233300001) and BNU-FGS Global Environmental Change Program (No.2023-GC-ZYTS-11).

Publication in Nature Communications by the Team Led by Qiu Xiaobo and Jiang **Tianxia from the College of Life Sciences, BNU Reveals Molecular Mechanisms Underlying the BIRC6-Mediated Regulation** of Apoptosis and Autophagy

Article source: College of Life Sciences | Release date: 2024-02-02

hrough a collaborative effort between the team authors including doctoral student Liu Shuoshuo and

additional international peer-reviewed articles on the presented in these articles are entirely consistent with et al., Science, 2023).

the onset and progression of various diseases such as proteins, damaged organelles, and pathogens under delicate equilibrium between cell survival and death.

Prof. Qiu Xiaobo identified BIRC6 as an inhibitor-ofapoptosis protein (IAP) two decades ago, noting it as the sole essential protein among the eight IAPs identified to during apoptosis (Qiu et al., EMBO J, 2004). Following this, along with international peers, he found that Subsequent to this, his team further found that BIRC6 acts not only as inhibitor of apoptosis but also enhances to LC3-II precursor under particular stress conditions, ultimately inhibiting autophagy (Jiang et al., PNAS,

Xiaobo and Gao Ning's teams, it was discovered that interaction between BIRC6 and procaspase 9, it does while displaying a relatively weaker inhibitory effect on the activity of caspase 3, indicating that BIRC6 conditions, indicating that the mutual antagonism between Smac and BIRC6 may play a critical role in the



that the region within the dimeric BIRC6 obstructing the binding of the LIR motif to LC3 coincides with the site where the BIR domain of BIRC6 binds to Smac,

The association between mutations or overexpression the National Key Research and Development Program of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Original Exploratory Program and Key Program of the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and others.

The Walnut Research Team at BNU Made New Progress in the Study of Ghost Introgression

Article source: College of Life Sciences | Release date: 2024-01-20

n January 15, the latest advancement in the exploration of ghost introgression was unveiled as the Walnut Research Team at BNU had their research paper titled "Detection of Ghost Introgression Requires Exploiting Topological and Branch Length Information" published in Systematic Biology, an authoritative professional journal in the field of biodiversity research.

In recent years, the study of hybridization and introgression has made significant progress, with ghost introgression (the transfer of genetic material from extinct or unsampled



lineages to extant species) emerging as a key area for research. Accurately identifying ghost introgression, however, presents a challenge, as the most commonly used detection methods only utilize information related to gene tree topology, which fails to accurately distinguish between different scenarios of introgression. In this study, the authors examined various gene flow scenarios occurring under the assumption of a given species tree AB | C (Fig. 1a-c). They evaluated the performance of prevalent phylogenetic methods for detecting introgression, including heuristic methods like HyDe, PhyloNet/MPL (or SNaQ), and the full-likelihood method BPP, through mathematical analysis and computer simulations.

The findings suggest that heuristic approaches relying on site-pattern counts or gene-tree topologies struggle to differentiate ghost introgression from introgression between sampled non-sister species (Fig. 2). Specifically, due to the assumption of hybrid speciation, HyDe's interpretation is unequivocally oriented toward inflow cases when the statistically significant test confirms the presence of introgression. As such, HyDe works well only in inflow cases, but it can misidentify both the donor and recipient of introgression in both ghost introgression and outflow cases. Both PhyloNet/MPL and SNaQ are liable to confuse these three gene flow scenarios, potentially misidentifying ghost introgression as non-sister-species introgression, or erroneously classifying non-sister-species introgression as ghost introgression. By contrast, the full-like method BPP, which is based on multilocus sequence alignments, is capable of detecting ghost introgression in phylogenomic datasets by taking into account both the gene-tree topologies and branch lengths. Although the full-likelihood method is present, along with the MCMC-SEQ method in the PhyloNet software package and the Species Network method in the BEAST software package, the computational intensity of these approaches precludes their utility for phylogenomic datasets. Therefore, for the detection of gene flow in realworld scenarios, the authors have outlined a two-step working strategy: (1) standard rapid gene flow detection methods (such as the D-statistic, PhyloNet-MPL, PhyloNetwork-SNaQ, etc.) are employed to confirm the presence of gene flow and the species involved (gene flow donors and recipients); (2) three species directly connected to the gene flow event and corresponding multilocus sequence data are selected, utilizing the fulllikelihood method BPP to identify specific gene flow scenarios as well as the donors (including ghost lineages) and recipients of gene flow.

The study was officially published in Systematic Biology on January 15, 2024. Systematic Biology, established in 1952, serves as the official journal of the Society of Systematic Biologists, with an annual publication volume of approximately 80 articles. Pang Xiaoxu, a doctoral student in BNU Department of Ecology's Class of 2021, is credited as the lead author of the paper, with Prof. Zhang Dayong serving as the corresponding author.

a) Ghost introgression b) inflow c) Outflow $\frac{1}{1000}$ $\frac{1}{10000}$ $\frac{1}{1000}$ $\frac{1}{1000}$ $\frac{1}{1000}$



Following the paper on the impact of ghost introgression on species tree inference and divergence time estimation, initially published in Systematic Biology in January 2023, this article represents another significant advancement in the field of ghost introgression research. This work was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (31421063 and 32170223), the "111" Program of Introducing Talents of Discipline to Universities (B13008), Beijing Advanced Innovation Program for Land Surface Processes, and the National Key R&D Program of China (2017YFA0605104).





Photo from: BNU Weib





Photo from: BNU Weibo Photo by: @ 小满也爱吃橙子 @ 三水 mml @ 小绿不是鸭嘴兽 @tsg



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