

3 Chinese irrigation projects honored as world heritage

Three ancient irrigation sites from China have been inscribed as world heritage: the Huang Ju irrigation, Hanzhong three weirs and Yellow River ancient canalization projects.



The project that diverts water from the Yellow River for irrigation in the Ningxia Hui autonomous region. [Photo/CCTV]

The 23rd International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage announced the trio's inclusion as world's Heritage Irrigation Structures in Mexico City, capital city of Mexico, on Tuesday.

The Huang Ju Irrigation Project is located in Southeast China's Fujian province. It was named after its designer Huang Ju, an official in the Sui Dynasty (581-618), more than 1,400 years ago. The system had two canals, watering an area of more than 20,000 mu (1,333 hectare) in ancient China.

The Hanzhong Three Weirs Project in Shaanxi province was composed of Shanhe Weir, Wumen Weir and Yangzhen Weir, all completed in the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220).

The Hanzhong Basin has a long history of irrigation, dating back to the first century. The most developed period of farm watering along the Hanshui River was in the 11th century, with the above three weirs in Hanzhong as typical systems.

The Yellow River Ancient Canalization Project was situated in Northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region. Its construction started in the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC).

A total of 14 canals originated from the Yellow River, or the country's mother river, serving the area for more than 2,200 years. The watering system helped the region evolve from nomadic civilization to agricultural one.

The three projects were inscribed into the list of world heritage irrigation structures for their contribution to people-centered water management systems, which are important to humanity and sound environment.

China now has 13 systems identified in the world's watering heritage program, including previously recognized Zhengguo Canal in Shaanxi province and Dongfeng Weir in Sichuan province, both added in the heritage register in 2014.

International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage has been organizing its flagship triennial event International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage since 1951.