

China to share experiences in transforming desert

China is aiming to transform a barren desert into an economic development area with vegetation coverage of 53 percent. An international forum will be held on July 28 in Kubuqi Desert, aiming to share the Chinese experience in reforesting the desert.

This experience, known as the Kubuqi Model, urged people to create enterprises using technology to control desertification on a large scale.

Erik Solheim, executive director of United Nations Environment Programme(UNEP), said that the Kubuqi Model offered precious experience for other countries and regions suffering from desertification and that such experience should spread along the Belt and Road for local benefit.

Farmers and herdsman in Kubuqi plant liquorice to improve soil and build photovoltaic power stations for electricity. They lifted themselves out of poverty while fighting desertification.

“The desert is terrible, but the problem can be tackled,” said Luo Bin, an official of State Forestry Administration in charge of desert control.

“Years of effort and practice have proved that desert can turn green,” said Wang Wenbiao, chairman of ELION Group, which initiated the desert control plan in Kubuqi.

Wang also said that people would not bring sand storms under permanent control unless they combined policy support, commercial investment, market-based local agriculture and continuous improvement in the local environment.

Kubuqi is the seventh largest desert in China, covering a total area of 18,600 square kilometers. Beijing, only 800 km from the desert, was often troubled by sand storms in the past.

Chinese people have forested more than 6,000 square kilometers of Kubuqi and reduced 90 percent of sand storms in the desert.