

The International Research and Training Center on Erosion and Sedimentation (IRTCES) was jointly set up by the Government of China and UNESCO on July 21, 1984, in Beijing, China. The Ministry of Water Resources is the governmental executive agency.

Since its founding, IRTCES has devoted itself to research and training to solve scientific and engineering problems related to erosion and sedimentation, and is one of the most important representatives of China as a partner of UNESCO. IRTCES has conducted many international and domestic technical cooperative research and consulting programs and projects related to erosion and sedimentation, and organized international and domestic training courses, symposia, and workshops. It publishes the International Journal of Sediment Research, the Gazette of River Sediment in China, and other Chinese and English publications. IRTCES awards the Chien Ning Prize for outstanding sediment researchers and engineers. It is the organizer and promoter of the National Information Network of Erosion and Sedimentation and the Sediment Measurement and Research Team. IRTCES Serves as the Secretariat of the World Association for Sedimentation and Erosion Research (WASER).

IRTCES welcomes future cooperation and collaboration with sister organizations, including government bodies, research institutes, universities and consultants in sediment-related fields all over the world to promote international development on erosion and sedimentation, sustainable utilization of natural resources and melioration of the ecological environment.

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Sedimentation problems are a matter of global concern. According to a preliminary statistics, the annual erosion of surface soil from global river basins amounts to 60 billion tons; as much as 5 to 7 million ha of farmland are annually ruined and about 1% of the precious storage capacity of the world's reservoirs is annually lost to deposition, which causes aggravation of flood and drought disasters and deterioration of ecology and environment. Therefore, there was an urgent need to establish an international center to strengthen the research and training activities and technical co-operation among the member states of UNESCO in the field of erosion and sedimentation. UNESCO certified the feasibility of establishing a center in 1981, and concluded that it was suitable to establish it in China.

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1978-Chinese experts explored the possibility of establishing a research and training center on sedimentation and erosion.

1980 (March 28)-Chien Ning, academician of the Chinese Academy of Science, proposed the establishment of a center at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on River Sedimentation.

1980 (April 23)-China's deputy officially proposed the establishment of a center at the 109<sup>th</sup> Executive Conference of UNESCO.

1980 (September 24)-The 21<sup>st</sup> Session of UNESCO adopted the revised proposal for establishing an international research and training center on erosion and sedimentation.

1983-The 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNESCO's General Conference (held in Paris) adopted a resolution to establish the International Research and Training Center on Erosion and Sedimentation (IRTCES) in China.

1984-The People's Republic of China and UNESCO signed an agreement for the establishment of the Center.

1984 (July 21)-Inauguration ceremony of IRTCES.

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