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SEMINAR

Thurs, 21 Aug 2025 | 4 pm | DBS Conference Room 1

Hosted by Assoc Prof Roman Carrasco

Evaluating the Impacts of Two Decades of Eco-poverty Alleviation across China

By **Tien Ming LEE**
Professor
Sun Yat-sen University

Poverty is a global challenge identified as a priority by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Ecological agriculture is a pathway to sustain yields and incomes, while reducing adverse impacts on the environment through building the strengths of natural ecosystems into agroecosystems. However, the effects on livelihoods and poverty reduction are unclear. The integrated impacts of large-scale ecological restoration projects on biodiversity–eco-environment–society are seldom evaluated. The presence of different environment-poverty traps may also complicate matters. To evaluate the impacts of sustainable agriculture and ecological restoration projects on the natural and social capital, we compiled the largest-to-date temporal and spatial datasets over the last two decades for over 1800 counties with different economic development statuses across mainland China Our results reveal uneven outcomes and trade-offs, uncover evidence-based pathways to improve rural livelihoods and alleviate poverty, as well as strategies to escape environment-poverty traps. By sharing the China experience, we hope to offer sustainability solutions for poverty reduction worldwide.

About the Speaker

Tien Ming Lee is a Professor at the School of Ecology at Sun Yat-sen University since 2017, and a visiting fellow at the Oxford Martin School at the University of Oxford. Defending his PhD from the University of California, San Diego, he then completed postdoctoral fellowships at Columbia, Yale, and Princeton Universities. An interdisciplinary scientist by training, Prof Lee is interested in issues related to socio-ecological systems, climate change, and sustainable development. He served as a contributing author for the Sustainable Use Assessment at IPBES, and is on the editorial board of journals such as the Journal of Applied Ecology, Conservation Biology, Conservation Letters, and PLoS Biology.