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RURAL TRANSFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A COORDINATED PERSPECTIVE

Zhang Wei Hong[1] and Liu Xiu Ming[2]

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Abstract

Agricultural production stands as a cornerstone of rural development, yet it carries the potential for environmental repercussions. The employment of fertilizers and pesticides, alongside the discharge of livestock manure, presents a significant risk to soil, water, and air quality, with far-reaching consequences for both ecosystems and human well-being.Fertilizer application stands paramount in bolstering crop yield and quality. However, the unbridled use of these vital supplements culminates in the accumulation of excess nutrients, notably nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, within the soil matrix. This burgeoning nutrient load not only begets soil pollution but precipitates a suite of cascading effects including diminished soil fertility, nutrient imbalances, and soil acidification, all of which reverberate through the delicate fabric of the ecosystem.

1. Introduction

1.1. Agricultural Production and Environmental Pollution

Agricultural production is a vital component of rural development but can also lead to environmental pollution. The use of fertilizers, pesticides in agriculture, and the discharge of manure from livestock farming can pollute the soil, water, and air. These pollutants adversely affect ecosystems and human health.

The use of fertilizers is crucial to improving the yield and quality of crops. However, the excessive use of fertilizers leads to over-accumulation of nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium in the soil, resulting in soil pollution. This pollution not only reduces soil fertility but can also lead to nutrient imbalance and soil acidification, negatively affecting the ecosystem.

The widespread use of pesticides has a significant impact on the environment. The use of pesticides in fields can effectively control pests and diseases, thus improving crop yields. However, the overuse and misuse of pesticides

[1] School of Economics and Management, Zhejiang Ocean University, Zhoushan, Zhejiang, China
[2] Jiugang Jiuquan Iron and Steel (Group) Co., Ltd., Jiayuguan, Gansu, China

can lead to the pollution of surface water and groundwater. Pesticide residues in agricultural products may pose potential health risks, especially to those who are exposed to these products over a long period.

The discharge of manure and wastewater from livestock farming is also a significant source of pollution in agricultural production. The development of livestock and poultry farming has provided vital support for the rural economy, but the large amount of manure and wastewater discharged can pollute soil and water bodies, especially when livestock farming is large-scale and concentrated. The nitrogen, phosphorus, and organic matter discharged can enter water bodies, leading to eutrophication, disrupting the balance of aquatic ecosystems, and affecting the quality and health of water organisms.

1.2. Land Resource Development and Ecological Destruction

Land resources are developed and utilized to support rural development, often leading to ecological destruction. Excessive land reclamation, deforestation, and overgrazing lead to soil erosion, depletion of water sources, and loss of biodiversity, causing serious damage to the ecosystem.

To support rural development, the exploitation and utilization of land resources are inevitable.

However, activities such as excessive land reclamation, deforestation, and overgrazing often lead to ecological destruction, severely affecting the soil, water sources, and biodiversity.

Excessive land reclamation irreversibly damages the soil. Rural development requires vast amounts of land for cultivation, construction, and industrial use. Excessive land reclamation disrupts the soil structure and fertility, leading to a decline in soil quality. Soil erosion, water and soil loss, and hillside farming during reclamation cause soil loss and infertility, affecting the growth and yield of crops.

Deforestation is the over-exploitation of forest resources, causing serious damage to the ecosystem. The demand for timber in rural areas often leads to deforestation, and forest resources cannot be effectively protected and managed. This results not only in habitat destruction and species extinction, but also the reduction of water sources, soil erosion, and climate change. Forests are an integral part of the ecosystem, and their destruction will have far-reaching impacts on ecological balance and agricultural production.

Overgrazing also damages the grassland ecosystem. Grasslands are crucial pasture resources, but overgrazing leads to grassland degradation and loss of biodiversity. Overgrazing causes vegetation damage, soil erosion, and grassland degradation, reducing grassland productivity and water conservation capacity. This has a negative impact on the livestock industry in grassland areas and the livelihood of farmers and herders.

1.3. Rural Industry and Environmental Pressure

The development of rural industrialization is an important way to adjust the rural economic structure and increase farmers' income. However, pollutant emissions from industrial production processes can have negative impacts on the rural environment.

The emission of waste gas during rural industrialization leads to air pollution. Many rural industrial enterprises use energy sources like coal and fuel, emitting large amounts of dust, harmful gases, and volatile organic compounds. These pollutants accumulate in the atmosphere, adversely affecting air quality and human health, particularly polluting surrounding farmland, water sources, and residential areas. [2]

Wastewater discharge during rural industrialization causes water pollution. The chemicals used in rural industrial production and the wastewater produced by the process, if not properly treated and controlled, are directly discharged into water bodies, resulting in water quality deterioration. Harmful substances in wastewater harm aquatic organisms and ecosystems and also affect the quality of irrigation water and the safety of agricultural products.

Solid waste generated during rural industrialization can also have negative impacts on the environment. Industrial production generates waste, including production waste, packaging materials, and discarded products. If not

effectively treated and disposed of, these can pollute soil and water sources and even have long-term effects on surrounding ecosystems and farmland.

1.4. Rural Domestic Wastewater and Water Pollution

The treatment of rural domestic wastewater is an important task for protecting the rural environment and water resources. Due to a lack of standardized wastewater treatment facilities in rural areas, large amounts of organic wastewater and pollutants are directly discharged into water bodies, leading to severe water pollution.

Rural domestic wastewater contains large amounts of organic waste and suspended solids. If these are discharged directly into water bodies without treatment, it can lead to eutrophication and water quality deterioration. These pollutants deplete the dissolved oxygen in the water, causing aquatic organisms to suffocate and die, disrupting the balance of the aquatic ecosystem. [2] At the same time, nutrients in the organic wastewater can promote the rapid growth of algae, causing algal blooms, which further exacerbates water pollution.

The disposal of rural garbage also poses a problem. Some villagers dump garbage at will, leading to soil and water pollution. Improperly disposed garbage decomposes to produce harmful gases and leachate, the harmful substances of which can infiltrate soil and groundwater, polluting soil quality and groundwater resources. Additionally, large amounts of garbage can also hinder the normal use of farmland, obstructing the development of agricultural production.

2. The Impact of Environmental Protection on Rural Development

2.1. The Impact of Ecological Deterioration on Agricultural Production

The deterioration of the ecological environment can have severe impacts on agricultural production. Firstly, soil pollution and land degradation are significant problems faced by agriculture. Soil pollution, caused by the long-term use and discharge of substances such as pesticides, fertilizers, and heavy metals, can decrease soil fertility and crop growth potential. Land degradation, including soil erosion, salinization, and desertification, leads to the loss of land resources and a decrease in crop yields.

Secondly, water pollution can also have a negative impact on agriculture. Fertilizers and pesticides used in agricultural activities, and wastewater discharged from farming can enter water bodies, causing eutrophication, water quality deterioration, and the death of aquatic organisms. This affects the quality of irrigation water and, consequently, the growth and quality of crops.

Moreover, the disruption of ecosystems can disturb the ecological balance in agriculture, leading to an increase in crop diseases and pests. Ecosystems provide numerous ecological services, such as natural enemies for controlling crop diseases and pests, and pollination agents. Once ecosystems are disturbed, these services are affected, and agricultural production faces higher risks from diseases and pests.

In conclusion, the deterioration of the ecological environment has direct and indirect impacts on agricultural production, from the decrease in soil quality and fertility, deterioration of water quality, to the increase in crop diseases and pests, all of which pose challenges to agriculture.

2.2. The Impact of Environmental Pollution on the Health of Rural Residents

Environmental pollution directly affects the health status of rural residents. Firstly, air pollution poses a threat to the health of rural residents. Common sources of air pollution in rural areas include heating with coal, rural industries, and burning crop residue. These pollutants release particles and harmful gases, such as PM2.5, SO2, and NOx, which negatively affect the respiratory system and increase the risk of respiratory diseases among rural residents.

Secondly, water pollution also poses a threat to the health of rural residents. Water sources in rural areas often suffer from pollution caused by agricultural and domestic wastewater, including fertilizers, pesticides, and animal

waste. Drinking polluted water can lead to waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, intestinal parasitic infections, and waterborne viral infections.

Furthermore, soil pollution may indirectly affect the health of rural residents through agricultural products and the food chain. Fertilizers, pesticides, and heavy metals from wastewater used in agricultural activities can remain in agricultural products. Long-term intake can pose potential risks to human health, leading to chronic poisoning or the development of chronic diseases.

Therefore, environmental pollution has direct and indirect impacts on the health of rural residents, including respiratory diseases, waterborne diseases, and chronic illnesses related to soil pollution.

2.3. The Impact of Pollution Control Costs on Rural Economic Development

Controlling rural environmental pollution requires substantial investment and resources, which can impact rural economic development. Firstly, substantial investment is needed to remediate polluted soil and control pollution in farmland and water bodies. Soil remediation involves the rectification of pollution sources and the application of remediation technologies, requiring significant financial and human resources. Controlling pollution in farmland and water bodies requires the construction and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities and agricultural water conservation projects, also demanding considerable investment.[3]

Secondly, significant funds are needed to improve rural industrial pollution and domestic wastewater treatment systems. The control of rural industrial pollution requires the application of advanced pollution control technologies and equipment, which can be a substantial economic burden for rural enterprises. Enhancing rural domestic wastewater treatment systems requires financial and technical support to ensure the safe treatment of wastewater and resource recovery.

The increased costs of pollution control can exert pressure on rural economic development. The allocation of funds and resources may limit the development and investment in other economic projects, affecting the restructuring and sustainable development of the rural economy.

2.4. The Impact of the Ecological Environment on Rural Social Stability

The destruction of the ecological environment can have negative impacts on rural social stability. Firstly, the degradation of ecosystems can deteriorate the living conditions of rural residents, increasing potential for social dissatisfaction and conflict. Living under deteriorated environmental conditions, such as difficulties in accessing clean water, air pollution, and declining living standards, can negatively affect social stability.

Secondly, rural areas rely on natural resources for economic activities, such as agriculture and fishing. If the ecological environment deteriorates leading to a reduction or decline in the quality of resources, it may result in reduced income for farmers, increasing the risk of poverty and social instability. For instance, water pollution and the depletion of fisheries can impact farmers' income from fishing, intensifying the economic pressure in rural areas.

In conclusion, the deterioration of the ecological environment has negative impacts on rural social stability, including an increase in social dissatisfaction and risks of reduced income for farmers. Therefore, protecting and improving the rural ecological environment is one of the essential tasks in maintaining rural social stability.

In summary, environmental protection issues profoundly impact rural development. To achieve sustainable development in rural areas, it is crucial to pay attention to environmental protection. Effective measures are needed to protect the ecological environment, improve the living conditions and health status of rural residents, and promote the stable development of the rural economy and society.[3]

3. Strategies to Resolve Conflicts Between Rural Development and Environmental Protection

3.1. Establish a Coordinated Mechanism for Environmental Protection and Rural Development

3.1.1. Improve the Legal and Regulatory System for Environmental Protection

The establishment and revision of laws and regulations on rural environmental protection should be strengthened, ensuring they meet the needs of rural development. These laws and regulations should set clear environmental protection standards and measures, ensuring the quality and sustainability of the rural environment. Meanwhile, the enforcement of environmental laws should be strengthened to ensure effective implementation.

3.1.2. Strengthen Policy Linkage Between Environmental Protection and Rural Development

Policy measures that encourage mutual promotion between environmental protection and rural development should be developed. Policies should consider the unique development needs of rural areas and the requirements of environmental protection, and set up incentives for farmers to adopt environmentally friendly measures, with financial support and preferential policies provided. At the same time, environmental protection should be incorporated into rural development planning to ensure consistency between environmental protection and rural development goals.

3.1.3. Innovate the Organizational Management Mode for Environmental Protection and Rural Development

Cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary coordination mechanisms should be established, and the organization and management of rural environmental protection work should be strengthened. Specialized environmental protection departments or institutions responsible for coordinating work related to rural development and environmental protection need to be set up. Communication and collaboration between different departments should be strengthened, and it's necessary to jointly formulate and implement policies and plans for environmental protection and rural development. It's important to establish a joint defense and control mechanism for rural environmental protection work, strengthen resource sharing and information exchange, and improve the synergy of environmental protection work.

By establishing a coordinated mechanism for environmental protection and rural development, the balance between resource utilization, environmental protection, and sustainable rural development can be achieved. This provides a more sustainable foundation for rural development while protecting and improving the rural ecological environment.

3.2. Promote Rural Ecological Civilization Construction:

3.2.1. Promote Green Agricultural Development

Farmers should be encouraged to use eco-friendly farming techniques, reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, promote organic and ecological agriculture, and promote sustainable agricultural development. Agricultural environmental protection projects should be supported, such as ecological farmland and agricultural water conservation projects, to enhance the stability and resilience of farmland ecosystems.

3.2.2. Strengthen Rural Ecological Infrastructure Construction

It's important to increase investment to build rural ecological infrastructure, including agricultural water conservancy projects, ecological restoration projects, and rural environmental monitoring networks. The aim is to improve the quality of the rural ecological environment. The construction of ecological protection areas should be strengthened to protect the integrity and stability of rural ecosystems and maintain the diversity and beauty of rural landscape ecology.

3.2.3. Improve Awareness of Rural Ecological Environmental Protection

It is necessary to carry out environmental education and publicity activities, raise farmers' awareness of ecological environmental protection, advocate for green lifestyles, and reduce negative impacts on the environment. Farmers'

consciousness and capabilities to participate in ecological protection should be cultivated, forming a good atmosphere for the whole society to pay attention to and participate in rural ecological environmental protection.

3.3. Optimize the Allocation and Use of Rural Resources:

3.3.1. Rational Use of Rural Land Resources

It is helpful to strengthen land use planning and management, promote the scientific use of rural land resources, protect arable land and ecological land, and reasonably demarcate agricultural land, ecological protection land, and urban construction land. Land consolidation and efficient use projects should be implemented to improve land use efficiency and agricultural output.

3.3.2. Efficient Use of Rural Water Resources

People should strengthen the management of rural water resources, promote water-saving irrigation techniques and the construction of agricultural water conservancy facilities, improve water use efficiency in rural areas, and reduce waste and pollution of water resources. It's also important to strengthen soil and water conservation work, reduce soil and water loss, and improve the sustainable use of water resources.

3.3.3. Sustainable Use of Rural Energy Resources

The use of renewable energy in rural areas should be promoted, such as solar energy and wind energy, and reduce reliance on traditional energy sources. It's necessary to strengthen the development and utilization of rural bioenergy, such as biogas and biomass energy, and achieve the circular use and sustainable development of rural energy.

3.4. Strengthen Rural Pollution Control and Environmental Protection:

3.4.1. Remediation and Control of Agricultural Pollution Sources

It is helpful to strengthen pollution prevention and control in agricultural production, promote green agriculture technologies and organic farming modes, reduce the discharge of agricultural non-point source pollution, and strengthen the management and control of pesticide and fertilizer use. In addition, a monitoring system for agricultural non-point source pollution should be established, and the monitoring and evaluation of the agricultural environment quality should be strengthened.

3.4.2. Rural Industrial Pollution Control and Technological Innovation

It's suggested to strengthen pollution control in rural industrial enterprises, promote emission reduction and technological innovation of industrial pollution sources, improve the environmental management level of rural industries, and promote green production and circular economy models. Rural industrial enterprises should be encouraged to carry out clean production transformation, and resource utilization efficiency and emission reduction capabilities should be improved.

3.4.3. Treatment and Resource Utilization of Rural Domestic Sewage

It's very important to build and improve rural domestic sewage treatment facilities, promote the resource utilization technology of rural domestic sewage, realize the safe treatment and resource recycling of rural domestic sewage, and reduce pollution and waste of water resources. And it is also helpful to strengthen rural garbage classification and treatment, and promote the resource utilization and harmless treatment of rural domestic garbage.

4. Conclusion

By comprehensively adopting the strategies above, we can achieve harmonious development between rural development and environmental protection. This requires the joint efforts of government departments, farmers, and all sectors of society. Strengthening cooperation and communication, and creating an atmosphere of collective participation, will drive rural development onto the path of sustainable development.

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