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# *Fengshui* forest management by the Buyi ethnic minority in China

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### Abstract

*Fengshui* forests, very popular among the ethnic minorities in the rural areas in Guizhou Province of China, have spiritual symbolic meanings and are strictly managed. This paper examines the nature, history, local perceptions and management of *fengshui* forests in two Buyi villages in the Guizhou Province. With their long history, the *fengshui* forests are perceived to provide good wishes, security, unity, fortune, wealth and health to the local communities. *Fengshui* forests act as a form of "community based nature reserve" which maintains the health of natural forests, especially hydrological features and prevention of soil erosion. *Cunguimingyue* (Folk Regulation and Customs) is the primary local normative mechanism that maintains the *fengshui* forests in a good condition. The lessons learnt from local *fengshui* forest management needs to be incorporated in for contemporary China's forest policy formulation as these forests play an important role in rural livelihoods.



## Keywords

Customary regulation; Guizhou; Traditional knowledge; Forest history; Forest management; Forest policy; Livelihoods

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