

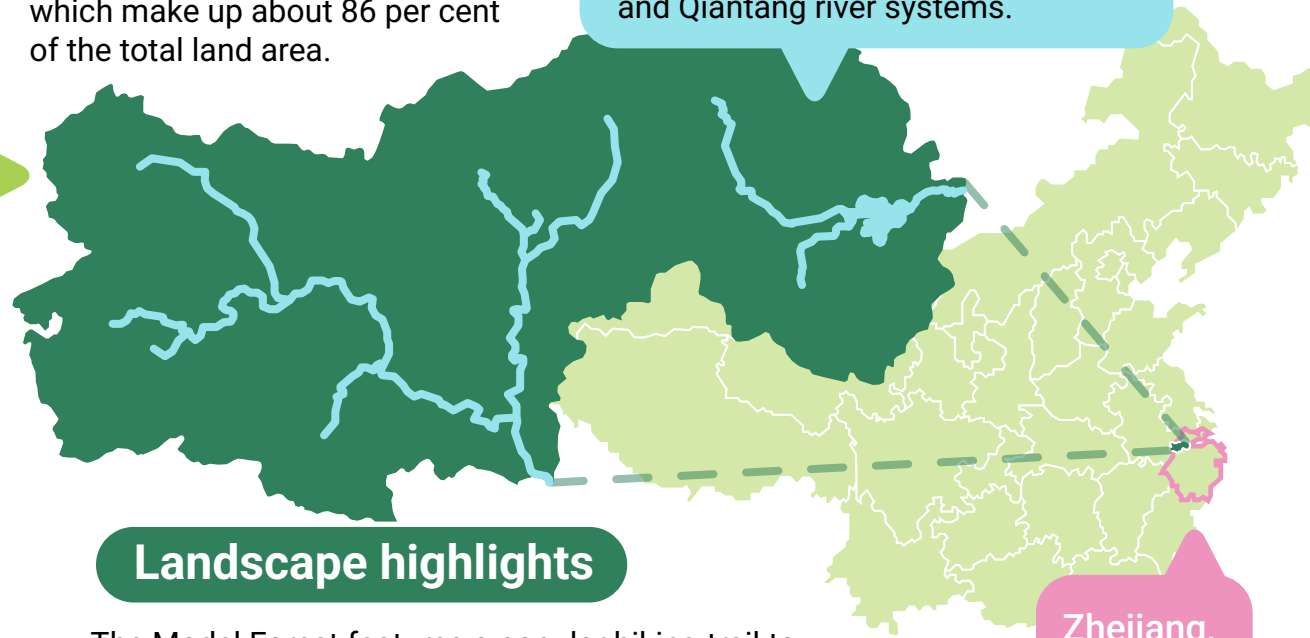
Lin'an Model Forest

Landscape snapshot

Lin'an Model Forest covers the Lin'an District of Zhejiang Province, China. The area is characterized by low mountains and rolling hills, which make up about 86 per cent of the total land area.

Major rivers include Zhong-tiao-xi, Nan-tiao-xi, Chang-hua-xi and Tian-mu-xi, all part of the Yangtze and Qiantang river systems.

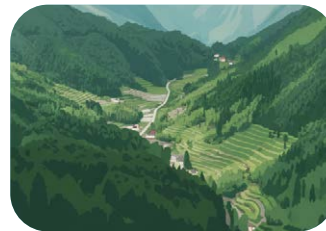
Lin'an
District



Zhejiang,
China

Landscape highlights

The Model Forest features a popular hiking trail to **Qingliang Peak**, which rises to 1,787 metres above sea level. Total standing forest stock: **18.22 million** cubic metres



Tianmu Mountain National Nature Reserve

- Home to the world's oldest wild ginkgo forest
- Contains the largest ancient *Cryptomeria fortunei* forest
- Habitat of endangered species such as the Tianmu ironwood



Qingliangfeng National Nature Reserve

- Features a rich subtropical forest ecosystem
- Specializes in the conservation of South China's sika deer

Sustaining livelihoods
beyond timber in
China's hickory hub



Member of the Regional Model Forest Network – Asia since 1999



HUMAN POPULATION

~ **549,900** inhabitants,
including 39 ethnic groups
and 5 ethnic villages



AREA

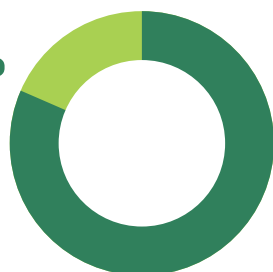
311,872 hectares



Forest profile

~ 82.6%

forest cover, with pine, Chinese fir, hickory, Chinese yew and bamboo as key species (IUCN, 2025)



Total forest area:
around **0.26 million**
hectares



Plantation forest:
0.15 million
hectares

Natural forest:
0.11 million
hectares



Production forest:
about **0.17 million**
hectares

Conservation forest:
about **0.09 million**
hectares



Forests are collectively owned and managed by communes, villages and farmers.

Key supporter:

the Lin'an Model Forest partnership committee, representing 28 members



research
institutes



private
companies



NGOs



local
communities



Biodiversity highlights

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves within the Model Forest:



Tianmu Mountain National Nature Reserve

Home to 7,173 animal species and 2,668 species of higher plants, including 74 nationally protected wildlife species and 43 nationally protected plant species.

Notable species include:



Ginkgo
biloba



Cercidiphyllum
japonicum
Siebold & Zucc.



Liriodendron
chinense
(Hemsl.)
Sarg.



Cryptomeria
japonica var.
sinensis
Miquel



Qingliangfeng National Nature Reserve

Home to 2,452 species of higher plants, 355 vertebrate species, and 2,567 insect species.

Representative species include:



Cervus
nippon
kopschi



Phalaenopsis
zhejiangensis
(Z.H. Tsi)
Schuit.



Corylus
chinensis
Franch.



Oyama
sieboldii
(K. Koch) N.H.
Xia & C.Y. Wu



Notable achievements

Thriving economy of non-timber forest products (NTFPs)



Hickory

- 16,300 tons produced in 2022
- 38,000 hectares of ecologically managed hickory forests



Dried bamboo shoot

- Lin'an ranks #1 in China for bamboo shoot production
- 29,000 tons of dried bamboo shoots produced in 2022



Tea gardens

- 3,492 hectares (2023)
- 2,900 tons of tea produced
- USD 52 million in production value

Rise in per capita income: USD 144/person in 1990 to USD 6,690/person (**46 times higher**) in 2024

Hickory revitalizes Lin'an's landscape and economy



Lin'an district's economy was once heavily dependent on timber as a main source of income. By the late 1980s, however, widespread forest loss and degradation had disrupted timber production, while extensive bamboo monocultures had led to biodiversity decline and ecosystem stress. In response, local farmers in Lin'an district, with government support, shifted their focus towards non-timber forest products such as hickory nuts and tea, while also developing value-added processing for bamboo shoots. This transition has helped establish a more sustainable and diversified forest-based economy.

Today, Lin'an is China's leading hickory producer, with more than 38,000 hectares of ecologically managed hickory forests. In 2022 alone, the district yielded over 16,300 tons of hickory. The local economy is further supported by the production of dried bamboo shoots and tea. Lin'an ranks first in China for dried bamboo shoot production, contributing 29,000 tons in 2022. The county also boasts 3,492 hectares of tea gardens, producing 2,900 tons of tea valued at USD 52 million in 2023.

The thriving non-timber forest product sector has transformed Lin'an's economy. By 2024, the district's per capita income had grown to 46 times its 1990 level. This remarkable progress has inspired communities to take on a more active role in sustainable forest management, securing both ecological resilience and long-term prosperity. The booming hickory industry has also drawn increasing numbers of visitors to Lin'an, spurring the rise of ecotourism and agritourism thanks to the district's proximity to Hangzhou, Shanghai, and other major cities in the Yangtze River Delta. The village of Baisha, in particular, has emerged as a provincial tourism hotspot, where vibrant countryside tourism now engages about 90 per cent of the local labor force and continues to revitalize rural livelihoods.

Current work

-  Restoring degraded Chinese fir plantations by transforming them into mixed conifer–broadleaf forests, enhancing biodiversity, soil carbon storage, and farmers' incomes.
-  Improving soil conservation and biodiversity in economic forests (hickory and Chinese torrey) through ecological management.
-  Strengthening long-term sustainability by ensuring farmers can benefit economically from staggered harvests of fir and broadleaf species.
-  Developing ecotourism and agritourism driven by the booming hickory industry.

Future priorities

-  Increase broadleaf cover in monoculture plantations.
-  Enhance ecosystem services in degraded forests through landscape restoration.
-  Improve productivity, biodiversity and soil and water conservation in economic forests (hickory and Chinese torrey).
-  Expand ecotourism and agritourism opportunities building on the success of the booming hickory industry.





Vision

To steadily take forward the development of a modern agroforestry industry with strengthened ecologicalization, agglomeration, special features, boutique quality and integration.

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