

The 40th Symposium on Capacity Building in 100 Universities/Towns on Big Data was Held in Awat Township, Korla City, China

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On October 20, 2023, the 40th symposium of the “Capacity Building in 100 Universities/Towns on Big Data” with the theme of “Brand Protection and Application of Korla Fragrant Pear” was successfully held in Awat township, Korla city, Bayingol Mongolian autonomous prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. The event was jointly organized by the Geographical Society of China and the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and co-hosted by the People’s Government of Awat township, Korla city, and the Bureau of Science and Technology of Korla city. The conference focused on proposing technological solutions to the practical problems existing in the protection and application of the Korla Fragrant Pear brand.

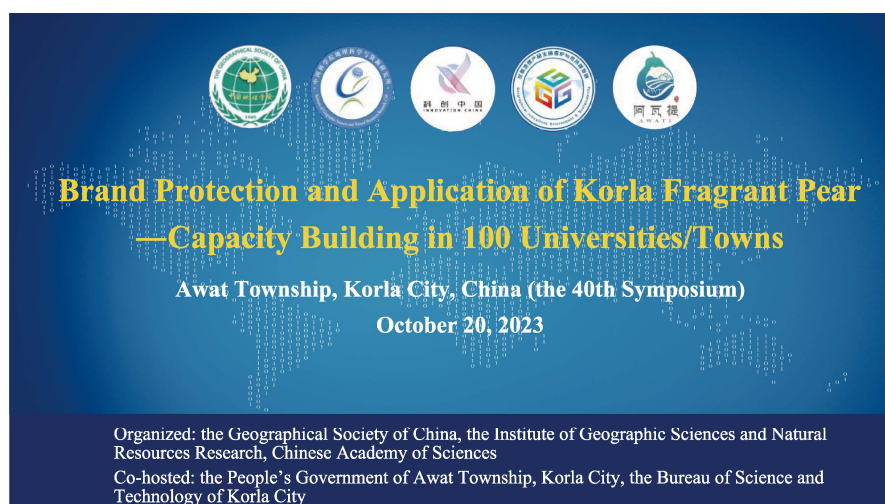


Figure 1 The 40th symposium of Capacity Building in 100 Universities/Towns on Big Data

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Figure 2 Awat township—the home of Korla pear

The meeting was chaired by Hou, Jianzhu, Deputy Secretary of the Party Group and Director of the Bureau of Science and Technology of Korla city. The reports were delivered by Prof. Gui, Dongwei, from the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Chief Expert of the Science and Technology Service Team for Landmark Habitats of China—Korla Fragrant Pear Kongque River Oasis Case, and Prof. Liu, Chuang, from the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Vice Chairman of the Asia-Pacific Regional Organization of “One Country, One Product” under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Ayniwal Aisha, the director of the People’s Congress of Awat township, also delivered a report.



Figure 3 Pear blossoms of Korla Fragrant Pear during the Pear Festival



Figure 4 Korla pear in harvest season

Prof. Gui, Dongwei’s report was titled “Awat Township Case of Korla Fragrant Pear Kongque River Oasis”. He presented a case study conducted in Awat township, Korla city, as a typical research area. He highlighted that the Korla Fragrant Pear Kongque River Oasis case, as the 14th case of Geographical Indications Environment & Sustainability, and the first case in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, has unique environmental and quality advantages. He explained from a scientific perspective that the oasis nurtured by the Kongque River, one of the main tributaries of the Tarim River, has unparalleled advantages in soil, water quality, climate, and topography. Korla Fragrant Pear has a history of cultivation in Awat township for hundreds of years, and its varieties are well-suited to the unique geographical conditions of Awat township. The method of origin tracing of Korla Fragrant Pear supported by geographic big data and Internet of Things technologies can greatly reduce and detect counterfeit products in the market.



Figure 5 The notice board of Korla Xiangpear Kongqi River Oasis case

Prof. Liu, Chuang pointed out at the conference that Korla Fragrant Pear was listed in the first batch of the “China-Europe Geographic Indication Product Agreement” in 2021, and its brand value has been increasing year by year, which is a precious asset of the original production area of Korla Fragrant Pear. Protecting and utilizing the brand of Korla Fragrant Pear is an important task for rural revitalization and high-quality development in the production area of Korla Fragrant Pear.

As a geographical indication product approved by the state, the geographical distribution of Korla Fragrant Pear is not limited to Korla city. In addition to Korla city, the region includes three cities and seven counties such as Aksu city, Alar city, Yuli county, Luntai county, Kuche city, Shayar county, Xinhe county, Awat county, and Wensu county, covering an area of over 180,000 km². In this vast area, there are significant differences in geographical conditions, such as north-south span, east-west span, altitude span, and seasonal variations in climate, which have a certain degree of confusion for market management and consumer orientation of pears. In order to ensure the origin tracing of Korla Fragrant Pear, the inclusion of geographic technology has become the most important means on the basis of legal protection and utilization of the brand of Korla Fragrant Pear.

She pointed out that in September 2021, the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Science, the Geographical Society of China, and other units took the lead in launching the “Geographical Indications Environment & Sustainability 2021–2030 (GIES)” at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), which was later included in the Innovation China. In 2022, the Korla Fragrant Pear Kongque River Oasis case was included in Geographical Indications Environment & Sustainability (GIES). The specific plan is to use Awat township as an example to differentiate pears from different geographical regions based on differences in geographical conditions, laying the foundation for the origin tracing of pears and providing scientific basis. This is an important link that cannot be ignored in protecting the brand of Korla Fragrant Pear.

Ayniwal Aisha, director of the People’s Congress of Awat township, emphasized at the conference that as the first township of Chinese pears, the People’s Government and enterprises of Awat township should recognize the value of geographical indication products and have the responsibility to protect and utilize this brand. Enterprises should ensure that

the production process of Korla Fragrant Pear meets the standard requirements to ensure its quality. At the same time, with technological support, establishing a product tracing system will allow consumers to trace the production, processing, and sales of Korla Fragrant Pear, ensuring that consumers can buy authentic Korla Fragrant Pear from Awat township. This will help promote the development of the Korla Fragrant Pear industry in Awat township and increase farmers' income. Meanwhile, government departments should strengthen market supervision, crack down on counterfeit and shoddy Korla Fragrant Pear products, and safeguard consumer rights.

Representatives of enterprises, including Liu, Zhemin, General Manager and Shen, Zhenming, President of the Pear Association, as well as representatives of large-scale pear growers, expressed their views on the industrial development of Korla Fragrant Pear and the role of science and technology in supporting rural revitalization. Everyone unanimously agreed that technological support for the origin tracing of Korla Fragrant Pear is crucial for the healthy development of the market, environmental protection and sustainable development of the original production area, and the enhancement of the brand value of Korla Fragrant Pear.

The successful holding of the “Capacity Building in 100 Universities/Towns on Big Data” in Awat township, Korla city, effectively responded to the theme of “Brand Protection and Application of Korla Fragrant Pear”, aiming to promote the widespread application of geography and big data in rural revitalization and development. The successful hosting of this conference has not only brought new development opportunities to Awat township, Korla city, but also provided valuable experience and references for other rural areas.



Figure 6 Group Photo of the 40th symposium on Capacity Building in 100 Universities/Towns on Big Data