

The Supreme People’s Procuratorate’s Public Interest Litigation
Case on Urging the Remediation of Ecological and Environmental
Damage in the Nansi Lake Basin

(Procuratorial Case No. 218)

[Keywords]

Procuratorial Public Interest Litigation; Cross-regional Riverbasin Governance; Application of Legal Oversight; Ecological Damage Compensation; Technical Support; Procuratorial Hearings

[Summary]

In public interest litigation involving rivers, lakes, and other cross-regional waters, higher-level procuratorial authorities may coordinate across jurisdictions to ensure an integrated approach. Modern technologies may be used to support investigation and evidence collection, and administrative or civil litigation may be initiated in accordance with the law. Procuratorial authorities may seek support from local Party committees, leverage legal oversight mechanisms to create synergies, urge local governments and administrative agencies to fulfill their statutory duties, and promote coordinated ecological governance between upstream and downstream areas. Judicial transparency should be ensured throughout the process. Where necessary, hearings may be held at different stages— whether for individual cases, related cases, or the matter as a whole —with formats adapted to practical needs. After pollution control objectives are achieved, procuratorial authorities may further promote long-term mechanisms for regional coordination and the sustainable realization of ecological value.

[Basic Facts]

Located at the junction of Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui and other provinces, the Nansi Lake comprise four interconnected lakes—Weishan Lake, Zhaoyang Lake, Dushan Lake, and Nanyang Lake. Fifty-three rivers flow into the basin, which spans 1,266 square kilometers and drains a watershed of 31,700 square kilometers, making it the largest freshwater lake system in northern China. The lakes form a key shipping corridor of the Beijing–Hangzhou Grand Canal and serve as the main water channel and an important regulating reservoir for the eastern route of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project. The basin’s ecological health directly affects the livelihoods and well-being of more than two million shoreline residents, highlighting its strategic importance.

However, historical legacies, geographic differences, and uneven socioeconomic development led to inconsistent environmental priorities, enforcement standards, and regulatory practices across the region. These issues, compounded by unmanaged,

fragmented, and overlapping jurisdictional problems, turning the Nansi Lake into a concentrated pollution hotspot.

Industrial pollution posed a major challenge. Many industrial parks failed to develop adequate wastewater treatment facilities in time, and some enterprises discharged pollutants in excess of permitted limits or through concealed outlets. On top of it, forty-one coal mining enterprises within the lake area across Shandong and Jiangsu discharged mine water with sulfate and salinity levels far exceeding regulatory standards, degrading water quality and, when the wastewater reached surrounding farmland, reducing agricultural productivity and quality. **Domestic sources of pollution** were also widespread. As of early 2021, 4,855 fishing households, comprising 16,332 people, lived on houseboats across 12 townships and 53 villages in the Weishan County Lake Area. A large portion of domestic sewage was discharged directly into the lake, while household waste was frequently discarded into the water, accumulating on the lake surface and along the shoreline. **Aquaculture was another persistent source of pollution.** Traditional high-density fish farming—covering more than half of the lake area—has caused severe eutrophication, leaving sections of the water dark, foul-smelling, and oxygen-depleted. **Vessel-based pollution** was unevenly regulated. Approximately 82,000 vessels, most exceeding 2,000 tons, pass through the lakes annually. Discrepancies between provincial regulations for vessels and port facilities resulted in some ships discharging domestic sewage and oily wastewater directly into the water, and floating waste could be found along shipping routes year-round.

Although the environment improved after over a decade of pollution control efforts by local Party committees and governments, the situation of "pollution recurring alongside remediation" was never fundamentally reversed. This was due to the complexity of the issue—specifically, the convergence of multiple pollution sources coupled with inconsistent cross-jurisdictional governance. Surface water data from the China National Environmental Monitoring Center showed that during the August 2020 flood season, multiple monitoring sections of the basin recorded water quality between Grade IV and below Grade V (the lowest tier under the National Standard), with permanganate indices and total phosphorus levels significantly exceeding permissible limits.

[Law Enforcement by Procuratorial Authorities]

1. Filing of Public Interest Litigation by the Supreme People's Procuratorate

The severe ecological damage in the Nansi Lake Basin is closely linked to fragmented enforcement, inconsistent standards, and weak regional coordination. Neither a single administrative oversight system nor separate provincial management proved sufficient to address the problem.

Given the cross-jurisdictional nature of the damage—which spanned multiple

provinces and involved various competent authorities, including those responsible for ecology and environment, natural resources, transportation, and agriculture and rural affairs—the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) formally recommended in March 2021 that the Supreme People’s Procuratorate (SPP) initiate public interest litigation to advance ecological restoration in the basin. Later that month, the SPP and MEE conducted a joint field investigation and directed procuratorates in Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, and Henan to carry out preliminary inquiries. Considering the scale and complexity of the damage—and the number of potentially responsible entities—the SPP formally filed a public interest litigation case on April 8, 2021. An integrated Task Force was established, unifying procuratorates across four administrative levels. The SPP formed a central team led by a senior prosecutor, while procuratorates in Shandong, Jiangsu, and Anhui province each set up dedicated sub-teams. A technical unit composed of specialists from the SPP and local procuratorates provided expert support. More than 200 personnel—including public interest litigation prosecutors, technical experts, and judicial police—were mobilized to advance the case under unified objectives, standards, and procedures.

2. Using Technology in Investigation and Evidence Collection

The Nansi Lake Basin covers a vast area with a dense network of waterways, fish ponds, factories, mines, and villages. Traditional investigative methods alone could not efficiently identify pollution hotspots—such as black and odorous water bodies—across the entire basin. To address this challenge, the Supreme People’s Procuratorate (SPP) commissioned the Aerospace Information Research Institute of Chinese Academy of Sciences to conduct comprehensive monitoring using satellite remote sensing and big data technologies. Satellite imaging offers broad coverage and frequent updates, making it well suited for tracking environmental conditions across large, cross-regional areas. Multispectral imaging can also detect indicators such as eutrophication, suspended solids, and black and odorous water bodies beyond the limits of visual observation. These technologies provided scientific support for identifying litigation leads, tracing pollution sources, and securing evidence.

Remote sensing data showed that by October 2020, 24% of the basin’s waters were highly eutrophic, 15% registered elevated black and odorous indices, and 14% had high concentrations of suspended solids. Exceedances were especially pronounced during the flood season. From June to September 2020, 23.1% of monitored sections failed to meet required standards, including 4.3% classified as below Grade V—the lowest tier in the national criteria. Several rivers previously without national monitoring stations were also found to fall short of Grade III standards or to have deteriorated to below Grade V. By combining land-cover analysis with atmospheric and environmental data, investigators identified 520 problem sites across three categories: water pollution, land use, and industrial sources. These included 183 black and odorous water bodies, 58 cases of eutrophication, 40 instances of suspended solids pollution, 38 sites of ecological damage linked to quarrying and mining, 58 cases related to coal mining

subsidence, and 9 instances of land-use change, involving 134 polluting industrial and mining enterprises. After further analysis, 84 priority leads were referred to investigative teams in three provinces for on-site verification.

At the same time, the technical team joined field investigations, assisting prosecutors in reviewing environmental impact assessments, discharge permits, and other compliance records for implicated enterprises. They also conducted on-site inspections, collecting 134 samples—124 water and 10 soil—and performing 172 rapid tests. Using the facilities and expertise of the SPP's Technical Information Research Center, more than 650 indicators—including chemical oxygen demand, ammonia nitrogen, total phosphorus, and sulfate—were quantitatively analyzed, with formal inspection reports issued accordingly.

3. Integrated Supervision and Coordinated Performance of Duties

To leverage local procuratorates' familiarity with regional conditions, ensure targeted supervision, and resolve issues efficiently, the Task Force adopted an integrated case-handling mechanism. This model established a framework where higher-level procuratorates led coordination and oversight, while lower-level offices focused on casework in the field. By coordinating different procuratorial functions in accordance with the law, the Task Force adopted a strategy of filing cases by hierarchy and category, combined with progressive supervision as needed.

Case leads with relatively clear facts and fewer barriers were assigned to procuratorates at or below the municipal level. Matters spanning multiple prefectures within a single province, or involving significant procedural complexity, were handled by provincial procuratorates. Cases crossing provincial boundaries were filed directly by the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP). In total, procuratorial authorities across four levels filed 205 public interest litigation cases: 196 by municipal and county procuratorates, 8 by the provincial procuratorates of Shandong and Jiangsu, and 1 by the SPP.

Various procuratorial case-handling methods were applied strategically to address different types of violations. Where pollution sources were complex and/or widespread, or responsible parties were difficult to identify, administrative public interest litigation was prioritized to compel competent agencies to mobilize resources for pollution control. The Task Force followed a step-by-step approach—consultation, procuratorial recommendations, and litigation—to minimize procedural barriers, conserve judicial resources, and maximize efficiency. When consultations and recommendations proved insufficient, litigation was pursued to safeguard the public interest and uphold judicial authority. Of the cases handled, 185 were administrative public interest matters, accounting for over 90% of the total. Among these, 31 were resolved through consultation, 153 through procuratorial recommendations, and one proceeded to administrative litigation. In addition, 20 civil public interest lawsuits were filed against enterprises responsible for unlawful pollution, seeking injunctive relief

and compensation for ecological damage. Finally, through oversight of the enforcement of administrative and civil rulings, the legal effectiveness of judicial decisions was further enhanced.

Cross-regional and interagency collaboration was strengthened. To address longstanding challenges rooted in fragmented governance, the Task Force promoted formal cooperation across jurisdictions. Procuratorates in Jiangsu and Shandong were coordinated to jointly issue the *Opinion on Deepening Cross-Provincial Collaboration to Strengthen Public Interest Protection in the Nansi Lake Basin*. Procuratorates in Xuzhou and Pei County (Jiangsu) worked alongside their counterparts in Jining, Weishan County, and Yutai County (Shandong) to simultaneously handle 120 administrative public interest cases involving pollution in the Datungang River, a key tributary of the basin. Coordination between administrative enforcement and procuratorial litigation was also further bolstered, through the *Implementation Opinions on Enhancing Coordination Between Water Administrative Enforcement and Procuratorial Public Interest Litigation in the Huai River Basin*, jointly issued by the provincial procuratorates of Jiangsu, Shandong, and Anhui, in conjunction with the Huai River Water Conservancy Commission.

4. Promoting Standardized Administrative Enforcement

Investigations found significant gaps in wastewater regulation across the basin. Although Shandong Province had local standards for industrial and mining discharges, 36 coal mines within the jurisdiction of Shandong Province lacked desalination facilities, and their wastewater frequently exceeded limits for total salinity and sulfate. Jiangsu Province, on the other hand, had five coal mining enterprises located within the basin, but no local standards governing these pollutants. Instead, the province was enforcing the national *Pollutant Emission Standard for the Coal Industry* (GB20426-2006), but it does not set limits for total salt or sulfate in mine water tailings, leaving regulators without a clear legal basis for enforcement.

Recognizing that inconsistent discharge standards were a major barrier to integrated basin governance, the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) coordinated with the Huai River Basin Ecological and Environmental Supervision Administration of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment to urge Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, and Henan to jointly develop comprehensive discharge standards for the Nansi Lake Basin. The resulting standards focus on three key sources—municipal wastewater treatment plants, centralized industrial treatment facilities, and industrial enterprises—and adopt a basin-wide, ecosystem-based approach. They establish differentiated discharge limits for core, key, and general protection zones. As the first nationally coordinated yet locally enacted basin-wide discharge standard, the policy fills a longstanding gap in consistent enforcement and provides a clearer legal basis for water protection.

The basin also encompasses the Nansi Lake Nature Reserve, a provincial-level nature

reserve established by Shandong Province. To effectively eliminate major ecological and environmental risks within the reserve, the SPP Task Force invited the Ministry of Natural Resources, the National Forestry and Grassland Administration, and legal experts to deliberate on the scope of validity of relevant laws and regulations, as well as the prerequisite conditions for the lawful withdrawal of coal mines within the basin. Furthermore, the Task Force sent a letter requesting an authoritative clarification from the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Ministry of Natural Resources provided active support, clarifying that the management of the Nansi Lake Nature Reserve should be implemented in accordance with the *Regulations on Nature Reserves* and other relevant laws. The Ministry also provided timely guidance to Jiangsu Province in formulating an implementation plan for the orderly withdrawal of coal mines from the nature reserve, effectively removing the enforcement obstacles within the basin.

5. Integrating into the rule of law supervision system while fighting the battle against Pollution

Resistance to pollution control in the Nansi Lake Basin stemmed from uneven commitment to ecological priorities and green development, compounded by practical constraints, such as funding gaps tied to historical underinvestment in environmental infrastructure. The Task Force responded by positioning procuratorial public interest litigation as both a supervisory tool and a platform for coordination, integrating the legal oversight system into the overall management framework, and consolidating governance resources.

As a primary safeguard, the Task Force leveraged the institutional strength of the Party committee's leadership and their support for procuratorial public interest litigation. Procuratorates in Shandong, Jiangsu, and Anhui promptly shared the SPP's filing of the case to their respective provincial leadership, and received endorsement for the work. One priority case involved untreated domestic sewage flowing directly into the Pearl Spring Canal in Ligu Town, Xuzhou City. After the local procuratorate filed the case and issued recommendations, authorities quickly sealed more than 20 sewage outlets and carried out dredging, interception, and pipeline upgrades. These measures ensured that the canal's water quality consistently reached Grade III standards.

To further enhance the effectiveness of targeted supervision, the Task Force actively sought public opinion and pooled collective wisdom by inviting deputies to the People's Congress, members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, people's supervisors, and community representatives to participate in public hearings, advancing the practice of whole-process people's democracy. During a site visit to Huxing Village in Weishan County in June 2021, residents voiced concerns about fishermen struggling to find work after relocating ashore. In response, the Task Force worked with local authorities to adopt a phased relocation strategy—"relocate those ready first"—while providing employment assistance. For households not yet able to relocate, the government installed sewage collection systems and built treatment stations to prevent direct discharge into the lake.

The Task Force also emphasized synergy with media, inviting journalists to witness the case-handling process and proactively accepting oversight to promote standardized practices, effectively enhancing the "supervisory rigidity" of procuratorial public interest litigation. In June 2021, a crew from China Media Group's *Legal Report (Jinri Shuofa)* joined the SPP Task Force for several days of field investigations. In 2022, under the supervision of the *People's Daily* and other media outlets, the Task Force conducted a "look-back" inspection to assess the effectiveness of the case. They conducted on-site reviews of the domestic sewage treatment for houseboats, the living conditions of relocated fishermen, and the progress of the modern fisheries industrial park and eco-agricultural/fishery industry cluster innovation projects to track and evaluate the long-term outcome of the case.

6. Exploring Mechanisms to Link Ecological Damage Compensation

Investigations showed that more than 40 coal mining enterprises within the Nansi Lake Nature Reserve discharged wastewater with sulfate levels far exceeding permissible limits. Under the *Civil Code of the People's Republic of China*, responsible parties must compensate for ecological damage, including punitive damages or ecological restoration. However, in handling civil public interest litigation cases for ecological damage, procuratorial authorities face practical obstacles such as difficulties in evidence collection and appraisals, the high cost of expert assessments, excessively long case cycles, and as a result, slow recovery of the damaged ecosystem. To accelerate remediation, the Task Force prioritized urging administrative authorities to initiate ecological damage compensation proceedings. Where no claims were filed—or negotiations failed and the claimant did not sue—the procuratorates stepped in as a supplementary safeguard by bringing civil public interest actions. After transferring relevant leads to the Shandong Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment, the provincial Task Force supported the Department in negotiating compensation agreements with 24 coal mining enterprises that had illegally discharged pollutants. The agreements totaled 850 million yuan in compensation. In cases where compensation procedures were not initiated, procuratorial authorities filed five civil public interest lawsuits, recovering an additional 12.68 million yuan for ecological restoration.

7. Case Conclusion

Case Outcomes

Through these legal actions, relevant administrative agencies were urged to perform their duties in accordance with the law. Multiple pollution sources were controlled at their roots, effectively establishing an integrated, basin-wide ecological governance framework linking upstream and downstream areas. **First, the unification of enforcement standards advanced basin-wide management.** Upstream coal mining enterprises in Jiangsu were found to be discharging wastewater that failed to meet the newly adopted comprehensive discharge standards. After being urged to carry out

technical upgrades, the enterprises brought sulfate levels into compliance by the end of 2021. **Second, the improvement of pollution control facilities significantly enhanced vessel pollution management.** In December 2021, the Shandong Provincial Department of Transportation completed a province-wide program to build standardized collection and transfer facilities for ship-generated waste at ports and terminals. Ships' sewage storage systems were modified with lead seals and disconnection mechanisms, and a smart, real-time monitoring platform was introduced. This provided a national model for "ship-port-city" closed-loop supervision across all river basins. **Third, clarified responsibilities promoted the systematic treatment of urban/rural domestic sewage and aquaculture pollution across three provinces.** Jining City in Shandong upgraded sewage facilities for lake fishermen and 275 lakeside villages. Weishan County installed waste treatment systems at 81 large farms and 405 smaller operations, completed ecological upgrades on 15,000 mu (about 1,000 hectares) of ponds, and expanded ecological aquaculture to 220,000 mu (approximately 14,700 hectares). In Tongshan District of Xuzhou City, Jiangsu Province, 74,000 mu (approximately 4,933 hectares) of fish ponds were removed, restoring large areas of the lake to their natural state. Dangshan County in Anhui accelerated the construction of riverside sewage pipelines. The results were substantial. In 2021 alone, more than 55,200 tons of garbage and solid waste were cleared, 1,704 illegal lakeside structures and aquaculture operations were dismantled, 514 black and odorous water bodies were treated, and 404 kilometers of polluted or illegally occupied river channels were rehabilitated—effectively stopping the long-standing flow of untreated sewage into the lakes.

Satellite analyses by the Aerospace Information Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences—using consistent locations, timeframes, and data—showed marked improvements between October 2020 and October 2021. The share of highly eutrophic waters fell from 24% to 8%, while normal water bodies increased from 38% to 61%. Areas with high black-odor indices dropped from 15% to 10%, with normal conditions rising from 32% to 59%. Waters with high suspended solids declined from 14% to 7%, and normal areas expanded from 27% to 71%.

National monitoring data confirmed the trend. At the Second Dam section of the Nansi Lake, water quality improved from Grade V to Grade III in August 2021 compared with the same period the previous year, with notable reductions in total phosphorus and the permanganate index at 14 river inflow stations. By 2022, the proportion of national monitoring sections rated as having excellent water quality reached 100 percent for the first time on record.

Public Hearings

During the case handling process, procuratorial authorities across three administrative levels in the three provinces conducted 54 public hearings to address factual determinations and legal applications in complex individual cases. These hearings strengthened oversight and encouraged administrative agencies to take more effective corrective action. Following the conclusion of individual cases between November and

December 2021, the three provincial task forces convened four additional hearings to assess outcomes of cases involving industrial, agricultural, and vessel/port pollution. On February 10, 2022, the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) organized a comprehensive hearing in Jinan, Shandong Province centered on three questions: "What has been achieved since the SPP filed the Nansi Lake public interest litigation case? Have the root causes of basin governance been resolved? What challenges remain?". After the Task Force presented the case details, the Aerospace Information Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the China National Environmental Monitoring Centre, acting as independent professional third parties, provided data-driven evaluations demonstrating the changes in water quality before and after the intervention. The hearing invited representatives from relevant national ministries, provincial departments of ecology and environment and transportation, municipal and local governments, enterprises, and village communities to offer their perspectives. Five deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) and various academic experts served as hearing officers and shared their formal opinions. The Task Force conducted the proceedings via the China Procuratorial Hearing Network, with a full live broadcast across 19 new media platforms, including the SPP's official Weibo, Justice Network's Bilibili account, China News Service, and the Legal Report video channel. The event reached 12.706 million viewers on the day, demonstrating a proactive commitment to oversight by the public and the media.

Deciding to Terminate the Review

Based on remediation progress and the results of the public hearing, the SPP determined that the most visible pollution problems in the Nansi Lake Basin had either been fundamentally resolved or placed on clear remediation paths. Water quality had improved significantly, and the case had achieved its intended objectives. On April 19, 2022, the SPP formally decided to terminate the review of the public interest litigation case on urging the remediation of ecological and environmental damage in the Nansi Lake basin.

8. Advancing Long-Term Mechanisms for Ecological Protection

Because basin governance is inherently long-term and cyclical, safeguarding the Nansi Lake requires sustained effort. To prevent pollution from re-emerging alongside economic development and daily activities, the SPP prioritized follow-up monitoring after the case closed. Aquaculture remains a primary source of income for local farmers. While a blanket ban might have improved water quality in the short term, it would have severely affected livelihoods. Instead, the SPP recommended an orderly transition toward ecological aquaculture and environmentally sustainable industries. To help bridge funding gaps for large-scale ecological upgrades, the SPP coordinated with financial institutions, including the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, to develop the *Public Interest Litigation + Rural Inclusive Finance* Action Plan, bridging to direct financial resources to ecological projects. It also facilitated a financial cooperation agreement between Jining City and banks, mobilizing financial and social capital to support transformation and upgrade of local industries, mining sector, and

aquaculture, and ensure stable livelihoods for fishermen relocating from the lakes. This approach promotes integrated regional development and the realization of ecological product value in the Nansi Lake Basin. As of late September 2024, ecological aquaculture covered 88 percent of Weishan County. Following comprehensive environmental restoration, the Weishan Lake Area in Jining, Shandong Province, has been officially designated a National 5A Tourist Attraction—serving as a vivid practical example of transforming "lucid waters and lush mountains" into "invaluable assets."

[Guiding Significance]

(1) Adopt integrated case management and ensure the comprehensive performance of duties to build a coordinated supervisory approach.

Ecological and environmental damage that spans multiple jurisdictions often results in inconsistent enforcement and judicial standards. In such cases, a higher-level procuratorial authority with jurisdiction over the relevant administrative regions may initiate public interest litigation. Depending on the needs of the case, it may lawfully deploy procuratorial personnel and organize subordinate authorities to handle cases in a structured manner through leadership, assignment, delegation, or supervision. For the same instance of public interest harm, administrative public interest litigation serves as the primary approach. Consultation, procuratorial recommendations, and litigation should be used in a progressive manner during this process to encourage administrative authorities to fulfil their regulatory responsibilities, thereby effectively protecting the public interest. Civil public interest litigation should be brought against responsible parties in accordance with the law.

(2) Use technical tools for investigation and evidence collection in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

When rivers, lakes, or other water bodies cover large catchment areas with complex conditions, traditional investigative methods may not be sufficient to identify leads or establish the facts. Procuratorial authorities may therefore integrate resources from public interest litigation teams, technical divisions, and judicial police. Satellite remote sensing can help quickly detect suspected direct sewage discharge, illegal mining, and unauthorised construction. Professional expertise and technologies—including drone imaging, rapid testing, and laboratory analysis—can provide comprehensive support for investigations, evidence collection, expert assessment, verification, and impact evaluation.

(3) In major and complex cases, proactively seek the support of Party committees and governments while incorporating democratic, public, and media oversight.

When serious violations affecting the public interest encounter significant resistance, procuratorial authorities should communicate with Party committees and governments to secure their understanding and support. Deputies to the People's Congress, members of the People's Political Consultative Conference, and volunteers may be invited to participate in the public interest litigation process, while strengthening the linkage between procuratorial work and the formal suggestions and proposals made by these

representatives. Media engagement and public communication can further improve the transparency and consistency of prosecutorial oversight while enhancing the overall impact of case handling.

(4) Where investigations confirm harm to the public interest and legal requirements are met, recommend statutory authorities to initiate ecological and environmental damage compensation procedures or civil public interest litigation.

Even where administrative authorities have fulfilled their regulatory duties, unlawful conduct may continue and public interests may remain at risk. When the conditions for ecological and environmental damage compensation consultations are satisfied, procuratorial authorities may urge designated state organs and rights holders to initiate such procedures or file civil public interest litigation. If rights holders fail to act, or if consultations do not lead to an agreement and no litigation follows, procuratorial authorities should initiate civil public interest litigation in accordance with the law.

(5) Organize hearings, in accordance with relevant regulations, when questions arise regarding the lawful performance of administrative duties or the effective protection of the public interest.

For cases involving complex factual issues, the application of law, or substantial resistance to corrective measures, public hearings may be convened to fully consider the practical challenges faced by administrative authorities. This approach strengthens oversight and encourages timely and proactive fulfilment of legal responsibilities. Joint hearings may be held for cases involving similar offenders, unlawful conduct, or harm to the same public interest. For major or complex matters filed as a single case but handled separately, comprehensive hearings covering the entire matter may be organized. Emphasizing the objectivity, professionalism, and authority of independent expert assessments can further enhance judicial credibility.

(6) Explore lawful pathways for realizing the value of ecological products and establish long-term protection mechanisms.

To consolidate the outcomes of ecological environmental public interest litigation, procuratorial authorities may issue social governance recommendations where problems have been temporarily resolved but risks of recurrence remain, and where local authorities and the public have expressed a need for continued coordination. Such recommendations can support local governments in addressing issues at their source and in developing long-term protection measures, including regionally coordinated development, mechanisms for realizing the value of ecological resources, and river basin ecological compensation, contributing to Chinese modernization characterized by harmony between men and nature.

【Laws and Regulations Referenced】

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Prosecuting Authorities: Supreme People's Procuratorate; Shandong Provincial People's Procuratorate; Jiangsu Provincial People's Procuratorate; Anhui Provincial People's Procuratorate.

Handling Body: Nansi Lake Special Task Force.