

During my Leadership in Action project, I worked with the Wetland and Grassland Conservation Group of Shan Shui Conservation Center, based in Yushu, where the team has carried out long-term conservation on the grasslands and rivers. I have always been passionate about wetland ecosystems, but this was my first direct experience with bird surveys and monitoring alpine wildlife. I learned to fly drones to count birds in high nests, and to use infrared camera traps and process the resulting data. At first, however, my work felt trivial. Conservation sounds important in theory, but the daily reality—long sheets of monitoring data—often seemed abstract, and I sometimes questioned its impact.

Conversations with more senior colleagues helped me realize this doubt is common. Even for experienced conservationists, progress can feel slow and the results intangible. Yet over time I began to see that meaning lies not only in “solving problems” but also in the purpose and direction of our efforts. For example, when we identified a research gap in local river ecosystems, I proposed a plan for fish species and water quality monitoring. Although we lacked time to fully implement it, we turned our attention to something urgent: fish blocked by artificial dams in the city center. Together, we designed and installed six simple fishways to help them pass.

We also experimented with an ecotourism initiative. In a place with few visitors, we set up a small exhibition to introduce local bird species, show vegetation and soil samples, and display our monitoring work. Even if only one person left with a better understanding of conservation—driving more carefully to avoid roadkill or choosing not to discard plastic—it felt like a real contribution.

From these experiences, I came to understand that being a good and ethical leader is not measured solely by dramatic outcomes, but by a commitment to values and persistence in daily actions. Ethical leadership means holding onto purpose even when results are not immediate, and ensuring that every decision, no matter how small, aligns with the goal of making the world better.

To me, being a global citizen means engaging deeply wherever I am, recognizing the interconnectedness of ecosystems and communities, and contributing to solutions at both local and global levels. Going forward, I will continue developing as an ethical leader by grounding myself in purpose, valuing collaboration, and focusing on steady, concrete actions that bring incremental positive change. I have learned that leadership is not about being at the center of change, but about being part of the collective effort that keeps change moving forward.