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SIGN2 overcomes its challenges during Corona pandemic

In times of social distancing, important meetings need to transition to an online format and field trips may need to be delayed. Therefore, the SIGN2 partners change from physical to digital meetings to handle the situation. The project is thus well prepared for the future, as the numerous successful web meetings of the past months show.

On May 27th and 28th, the half-year meeting of all 13 German partners were for the first time online. In two morning sessions, each partner presented the current status of their work and their progress since the last meeting in November. Mrs. Umlauf from BMBF office in Shanghai participated the meeting. During the discussion round the German partners considered about alternative investigations in Germany because of the current travel restriction to China.

In August, the SIGN2 coordination team arranged online meetings with Prof. YIN from Tongji University and Prof. ZHENG from CRAES (Beijing) to be in touch with the Chinese partners and to discuss the future cooperation. Chinese partners organise to take samples for the German partners. Beside the online meetings, regularly telephone conferences of the German partners are organized to inform every partner about the situation, the ongoing work, delays and further cooperation activities. Furthermore, papers are published (see news from 27/08/20 about Special Issue in STOTEN) as well as are prepared. Chinese partners operate the pilot plant at Suzhou in close contact with the company INGE. The method development is continued in Germany and products are tested at German sites (see news from 30/09/20 about fourth sampling).

Continuing an international project during the corona pandemic inevitably has its challenges, but by frequently holding virtual meetings between the project partners and actively discussing impacts of the pandemic and possible solutions, the SIGN2 project manages to overcome most of the obstacles.

