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Dear Editor in chief,

July 15, 2022

I am pleased to re-submit (Previous ID was “MS-2022-716”) our original research article entitled “Approaching social-ecological matches of river basin systems for sustainability” for consideration for publication in the special issue “coupled human and nature system” of *National Science Review*. We thank the editors of *National Science Review* who suggested we improve the manuscript by highlighting methodological innovation and wider applications in the future. In the new manuscript, we mindfully followed all the suggestions and attached a response letter in detail to introduce how our improved manuscript highlights our contribution to help in sustainability challenges worldwide.

We trust that this new version will satisfy you and is appropriate for publication by *National Science Review* now because it provides insights contributing to worldwide social-ecological systems management by exploring causal linkages between SES structures and sustainability-related outcomes. Furthermore, our approach of quasi-natural experiments analysis creates a paradigm for future studies of quantitatively analyzing how human-introduced institutions impact the outcome of complex coupled human-nature systems. Thank you once again for the time that you have spent reviewing this manuscript.

The manuscript includes 1 text (4156 words), 5 figures, 1 supplementary material (appendix with four sections). We have no conflicts of interest to disclose. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Shuai Wang (On behalf of the author team)

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