An Unusual Land-Fill: the Highest Geogrid-Reinforced Slope in China

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Background:

- In Dai et al, 2008, the construction of a 52m-high slope for the access road to Jinping Power Station at Mianshagou was described. The finished structure is shown in Figure 1.
- As design of the road progressed it became clear that about 400,000m$^3$ of surplus fill would be generated from tunneling and cuts into the mountain sides.
- No normal landfill site was available in this mountainous territory for this surplus fill.
- A steep-side gulley was available at the side of the road at Jinbazigou but without sufficient capacity at a non-reinforced slope angle.
- Foundation conditions at the foot of this gulley were not suitable for a retaining wall to hold the fill.

Selected Solution:

- Following the success of the Mianshagou slope an even higher geogrid-reinforced slope face was selected for design.
- Design height was 72.5m to allow space for all possible fill. See Figure 2.
- Internal sand-bag formwork was chosen for ease of construction. See Figure 3.

Result:

- At 66m height all available fill used so construction stopped at that height.
- 397,590m$^3$ of fill absorbed.
- 9,790m$^2$ of level ground was created in a region where it is said that “an inch of ground is worth an inch of gold.”
- A porous, self-draining structure.
- A flexible structure well able to withstand the seismic conditions of the site.
- A major cost saving over all other solutions for disposing of the surplus fill with the bonus of the generation of a 1 hectare level site for future use.

Reference: