



# Technical Assistance Consultant's Report

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Project Number: 381730102 (RETA 6236)  
2006

## Regional: Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (Cofinanced by the Global Environment Facility and Global Mechanism)

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For The Asian Development Bank

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**Asian Development Bank**

**CACILM Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management  
PDF-B design phase**

**FINAL REPORT**

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Almaty, 19 April 2006

1) Overview of Tasks according to the TOR and their fulfilment

**Scope of Work:**

The consultant will have primary responsibility for: (i) review of, and quality control over, natural resource management dimensions of the NPF situational analysis, and (ii) formulating responses to natural resource and land degradation problems, and (iii) recommending approaches for achieving sustainable land management. The consultant will also have responsibility for preparation of the National Programming Framework for one of the five Central Asia countries. The consultant will report to the ADB Task Manager, while maintaining close interactions with the five domestic natural resource management specialists.  
*Done.*

**Detailed Tasks:**

Within the approach prescribed in the PDF-B TOR, the natural resource management specialist will:

- (i) Based on existing information, work with the International land use specialist and domestic natural resource management consultants to prepare spatial analyses, for each country, of land degradation problems. These analyses should include all aspects of land degradation from agriculture (rain-fed and irrigated), pastures and rangelands, deforestation, and natural disasters;

*This task was adapted and the analysis was only done in the frame of the preparation of NPF Kazakhstan and in form of direct advice and comments on the other NPFs.*

- (ii) Determine the role of current natural resource management practices in causing land degradation, and recommend practices that will achieve more sustainable patterns of land use;

*This task was adapted and the analysis was only done in the frame of the preparation of NPF Kazakhstan and in form of direct advice and comments on the other NPFs.*

- (iii) Work with consultant team members to differentiate baseline investments from those that would achieve global or regional incremental benefits, or otherwise be eligible for Global Environment Facility (GEF) co-financing;

*Done, in the frame of discussions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Workshop, selection criteria in the NPF and comments on the proposed projects in the investment table.*

- (iv) Supervise preparation of concept papers for the proposed investments (to create enabling policy, legal, and institutional conditions, and/or to support on-the-ground projects) that will form core elements of the NPFs, and which will be subject to review and approval prior to inclusion into CACILM Partnership Framework;

*Done, due to the large number of project concept, there often limited coherence with the NPF and the mostly late submission detailed supervision was not in all cases possible.*

- (v) Prepare the English language version of the NPF for one of the five Central Asia countries; and

*Done, for NPF Kazakhstan in two versions (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> draft). Additionally the Russian version was in detail compared and corrected.*

- (vi) Provide inputs into CACILM Partnership Framework on: (i) natural resource management aspects, and (ii) the national program for one of the five Central Asia countries.

*Inputs were mainly provided via the NPF. Direct involvement of the consultant in the CACILM PF development was limited by the scheduling of this activity outside the contracting period and available working time.*

The consultant was recruited in replacement of the Team Leader/International NRM Specialist. When the contract started (1<sup>st</sup> September 2005) the Kazakhstan national team was only formed. The ADB Task Manager determined the work on the NPF Kazakhstan as priority of the consultant's work. At this time the work in the other four Central Asian Countries was already well in process. Thus it was decided to abstain from the preparation of a separate background report on NRM issues in Central Asia and provide instead specific comments and advice on the draft NPFs during their development. The Task Manager decided that the consultant should make only short visits to the other CA countries for provision of guidance on NRM issues and refrain from a mission to Turkmenistan. (See also mission report September 2005.)

## 2) Overview on the activities carried out

### Activities in Kazakhstan

- The consultant took part in the Working Group meetings, held at the 3 September 2005 in Astana and 27 September 2005 in Almaty. During the meetings the Consultant Team has been presented to the Working Group the structure and content of the NPF as well as collaboration mechanisms have been discussed. During the Working Group meetings the requirements and opportunities for proposing project concepts have been broadly presented.
- The consultant provided initial guidance to the National Consultants and facilitated an intensive discussion about NPF contents and the contributions from each consultant.
- The consultant compiled the contributions from the NCs into a draft NPF, has reviewed all sections and has provided recommendations on their improvement.
- On the basis of the National Consultants' contributions and own data assessments the consultant prepared the first draft of the NPF which was presented to the CACILM Task Force and other stakeholders in advance to the Task Force meeting in Tashkent, 17-19 November 2005.
- The consultant played a key role in the preparation and conduction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Workshop, held in Almaty 25 and 26 November 2005. He guided the National consultants in presenting the key contents of NPF sections prepared by them, presented several sections and facilitated the work of the workshop participants on the NPF sections on options analysis and program content.
- On the basis of the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Workshop, the revised NPF structure adopted by the Task Force, specific comments on the NPF received from the International Expert on Land Management and several discussions with the National CCD Focal Point the consultant supported by the National consultants team prepared a revised draft of the NPF which has been adopted.

- It turned out that for the translators available the specifics of the NPF were difficult to catch and thus the quality of translation was not always satisfying and in some cases leading to significant misunderstandings. Thus the consultant spent significant time on the editing of translated sections of the first and second drafts of the NPF in both languages, Russian and English and supported thus a high quality of the documents and the acceptance by the parties involved.
- The consultant actively facilitated and advised on the preparation of project concepts by national stakeholders and international organizations. The timeframe (most stakeholders provided their project concepts very short before or even after the deadline set by the Task Force) did not allow the consultant to provide each project proposer with a detailed review. On the other hand many project proposals have just been revived from older programmes, like the NAP CCD (from 1999), without taking into consideration the reasons for reluctance of donors to support these projects and despite of their low conformity with UNCCD, GEF OP 15 and CACILM criteria. Thus the overall project portfolio exceeded several times the co-financing possibilities in the frame of CACILM. In the discussion with the National CCD Focal Point and other stakeholders the necessity to identify significant national co-financing was repeatedly communicated. But unfortunately it was not always possible to attract such financial contributions.
- The consultant personally drafted one specific project concept for the NPF Kazakhstan.

#### Activities in other countries

- The consultant made in September a mission to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to meet the responsible international consultants and to advise the domestic teams on NRM aspects.
- In Kyrgyzstan he took part in the Working Group meeting and met with potential partners of the CACILM process for advising on the inclusion of project ideas. In the further process he provided consultation to partners on project concept development.
- In all three countries the consultant provided written comments on the draft NPF sections available during his visit in September 2005. These comments were mainly provided in Russian and incorporated in the relevant sections of the NPFs.
- The consultant provided detailed written comments on the first draft NPFs of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and on the second draft NPFs of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- On the first draft Turkmenistan the consultant did not provide comments because he did not have the opportunity to visit the country and did not possess significant inside knowledge on the specifics there. As the field of specialization of the consultant responsible for the preparation of the Turkmenistan NPF was close to the consultant's professional area there was seen only a reduced need for specific comments. On the special request of the consultant responsible for the NPF Turkmenistan the consultant made a review of the second draft and provided on some sections short text fragments.

#### General activities

- The consultant made a revision of the Russian version of the NPF structure to correct the most problematic translation errors misleading NCs while preparing NPF contributions
- The consultant revised the general structure of the NPF together with other ICs on the basis of the recommendations from the Task Force meeting Almaty June 2005. This revised version was in the most countries used for preparing the first draft NPF.

- Based on the decision of the Task Force Meeting in Tashkent, November 2005 a new and shorter NPF structure was adopted. The consultant made a revision of the Russian version of this new structure.
- The originally envisaged participation of the consultant in the Task Force meeting in Bishkek February 2006 was unfortunately not possible, due to reasons outside the consultants influence.

### 3) Outputs

- Revised outline of NPF in English and Russian
- Revised Russian translation of the new NPF outline
- National Programming Framework Kazakhstan in first and second version including annexes in English and Russian languages
- Project concepts for the NPF Kazakhstan
- Written comments on NPF sections for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (Rus.)
- Reviews of the NPFs Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (Eng.)

### 4) Problems and conclusions

- The Kazakhstan team was formally already formed when the consultant started his job. However, de-facto until this date few activities had started and thus the work was begun with a delay of about more than two months compared to the original schedule.
- The capability of the national team members to carry out the assigned tasks varied significantly and the produced outputs were not entirely meeting the requirements. Thus gaps had to be filled by inputs of other team members and the consultant himself. Obviously there did not take place a recruitment process, based on clear requirement criteria. The differing amount of input from the different experts was not reflected in the allocated amount of working time and respective salaries. This led to some reduction of motivation among the national team members.
- Secretariat (Kazakhstan): The secretariat did not fulfil the expected function to support the process of NPF elaboration and stakeholder communication. During a significant period of work the deputy team leader did not have full access to the hardware needed (Notebook computer). These shortages negatively affected the elaboration of the NPF and the support to the national partners in the preparation of the project concepts. For the implementation of CACILM at the national level significant efforts for the recruitment of a capable and efficiently working national team will be needed.
- The originally provided NPF Outline paid much attention to the description and analysis of the current land-use situation. This provided a useful background for the development of a meaningful programming framework but caused some frustration among the national team when it came to the final much shorter version and significant parts of the consultants' contributions were further not used. The quality of the translation of the first version of the NPF outline was insufficient and caused initially significant misunderstandings about the expectations concerning the contents of various sections.
- The development of project concepts was much scheduled as a process parallel to the NPF development. This caused the problem that on the one hand many project concepts were not fully in accordance to the NPF and on the other hand many project concepts have only been delivered shortly before or after the deadline of NPF submission. The parallel development of NPF and project concepts limited the the

consultant' and the national team's opportunities to provide guidance and inputs to the development of the project concepts.

- The project concepts included into CACILM financing portfolio have not been finally discussed with the consultant. As the consultant was not invited to the Task Force meeting in Bishkek he could not sufficiently contribute to the selection process. Projects on which no project concepts had been provided to the consultant and the National team and which were not discussed within the team and at the National Workshops have been included into the CACILM financing planned for GEF 4 (e.g. UNEP Ili-Balkhash, World Bank Irrigated Ecosystems Management). A project which was clearly negatively evaluated in the team has however been included in the tentative list for GEF 4 (Oasis Farming systems), while other project concepts, much clearer meeting the NPF criteria and priorities have not been considered. The consultant recommends reviewing again the projects included in the CACILM GEF 4 financing.
- Commitment of national counterparts: The commitment of the Working Group was not optimal. For example the provision of requested data by the WG members was considered a problem by the NCs. Due to overload with various duties as head of a department in the Ministry of Environmental Protection and person responsible for several environmental conventions the Focal Point was not in all cases available for the CACILM activities and provided few direct contributions. Fortunately he could make it possible to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Workshop.
- The other international consultants provided the domestic team members with written instructions on their specific field of work. In contrast to the originally intended direct supervision of the national consultants by the international consultants of the respective area the supervision and guidance of all domestic consultants in Kazakhstan was directly carried out by the consultant responsible for the country. This was probably mainly caused by language barriers and communication difficulties (the obligation of the domestic consultants to provide English versions was on the one hand not clearly enforced and on the other hand the communication ways: domestic consultant – international technical consultant – international consultant with country responsibility were considered being too difficult).
- Comments on the NPF (first version) were only received from the consultant on land management and considered in the preparation of the new draft, but not from the other international consultants and not on the second version. The communication within the team of international consultants was mainly carried out via email. International consultants' meetings at the beginning of the process and in a later stage might have had the potential to increase the efficiency of communication.
- The allocated working time of 83 days was not entirely sufficient to fulfil the tasks assigned under the given circumstances. Thus the consultant spent a significant additional working time on the fulfilment of the assigned duties. Excess time of 10 days has been counted by the consultant in the claims form.

Concluding, the national team of Kazakhstan supported by the National UNCCD Focal Point, the national working group and various partners produced together with the consultant a National Programming Framework, including a significant number of project concepts, which will provide an excellent programmatic basis for achieving more sustainable land management practices by implementing capacity building measures to improve policy, legal, institutional and economic incentive frameworks and to implement on the ground activities. The involvement into the regional multi-country partnership framework will ensure the achievement of synergies and the transboundary and joint addressing of land degradation problems to achieve sustainable land-use in Central Asia.

