

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT<sup>1</sup>

Division: SEAE

<b>TA No., Country and Name</b>			<b>Amount Approved:</b> \$600,000.00	
TA 4708-PHI : Strategy for Sustainable Aquaculture Development for Poverty Reduction Project			<b>Revised Amount:</b> N/A	
<b>Executing Agency</b> Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources		<b>Source of Funding</b> Technical Assistance Special Fund	<b>Amount Undisbursed</b> \$26,436.73	<b>Amount Utilized</b> \$573,563.27
<b>TA Approval Date</b>	<b>TA Signing Date</b>	<b>Fielding of First Consultant</b>	<b>TA Completion Date</b> <b>Original:</b> 30 Nov 2006 <b>Actual:</b> 31 May 2008	
2 Dec 2005	31 Jan 2006	3 Jul 2006	<b>Account Closing Date</b> <b>Original:</b> 30 Nov 2006 <b>Actual:</b> 29 Oct 2008	
<b>Description</b>				
<p>The aquaculture sub-sector was identified in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP 2004–2010) as a sector for increased growth for job creation and food security in support of the country's drive towards economic development. To respond to the needs of the Philippine aquaculture sub-sector, a comprehensive sub-sector strategy and integrated action plan was needed to systematically address sub-sector issues with particular emphasis on sustainable aquaculture for food security and poverty reduction that addresses environmental and fish health issues. The technical assistance (TA) output helped Philippine government to provide needed direction in preparing a sub-sector strategy. The study formulated strategic directions and an associated action plan. The study objective was also to identify priority areas for private and public investment in the medium to long-term.</p> <p><b>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</b></p> <p>The TA's impact was to formulate and disseminate a medium- to long-term aquaculture sub-sector strategy and integrated action plan with an investment program to reduce poverty and enhance sustainability of the sub-sector. The outcome was to rationalize the sub-sector policies, institutional arrangements, and planned interventions for expansion of aquaculture production and productivity that will particularly benefit the poor and not harm the environment. The TA outputs were: (i) an assessment of the present status and development potential of the Philippines' aquaculture sub-sector; (ii) an assessment of sub-sector policies and institutions and their relevance to sub-sector development; (iii) identification of areas of national policies, institutional arrangements that required modifications/strengthening by taking into account the implications of decentralized natural resources management; (iv) medium to long-term strategy for the sustainable development and management of the sub-sector, including identification of investment constraints and opportunities; and (v) an integrated action plan to implement the strategy through identification and prioritization of medium to a long-term investment program that will integrate national economic and social objectives as well as technical, policy, institutional, economic, financial and environmental issues.</p> <p><b>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities</b></p> <p>The TA formulation was generally adequate and took into account the lessons learned from similar projects in the Philippines (e.g., Fisheries Resource Management Project). It was prepared with close coordination with the Executing Agency (EA). During the strategy development process, multi-disciplinary team of specialists often had contrary opinions and strong viewpoints on issues making it hard to reach consensus which somewhat delayed the process of strategy development. In this regard, the terms of reference (TOR) of specialists could have been made more output oriented with their specific roles defined in the team context that would have helped minimize the project implementation. If these aspects were covered in the TOR, it could have resulted in better coordination amongst international/national consultants during the strategy development process and would have also helped ADB to better assess individual specialist outputs. This situation was further complicated because the project was implemented by the lead consulting firm consisting of a small group of international consultants (including the team leader) who were supported by a much bigger team of national specialists from the domestic firm. The team leader was also employed for much shorter duration (six months) as compared to overall project duration. The completion period was originally envisaged as seven months, but it took 17 months before the draft final report was submitted. Several factors contributed to the delay as follows: (i) the lack of timely availability of several project consultants (e.g., international aquaculture, environment and health specialists); (ii) lack of coordination and harmony between international and national consulting firms; (iii) conduct of additional poverty and fish lease agreement studies; and (iv) longer time needed during the process of providing and addressing comments on the draft final document. Although the TA was delayed compared to the original TA paper projected completion period, based on the experience of this TA, the 7 month completion period for this type of strategy report was found to be unrealistic, especially if significant stakeholder</p>				

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consultations are conducted. This TA experience showed that average completion time for a strategy study of this magnitude should preferably be between 12 to 15 months.

The strategy development process was highly consultative and stakeholder inputs were sought every step of the strategy development process. The performance of both international and national consultants in the project was satisfactory. Other than the fact-finding mission, no specific review missions were held during TA implementation. The project monitoring involved meetings with the consultants and the Government staff, attendance of key workshops and review of submitted documents. The project originally envisaged a detailed analytical approach for justifying the strategy produced and selection of its priorities, but due to the depth and time required for such analysis, this approach was not found to be feasible and the strategy development and priorities were implemented through a stakeholder driven process by considering the Government and ADB priorities and targets. This understanding and expectations could have been better clarified during the inception mission.

#### **Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome**

The TA produced all outputs specified in the design and monitoring framework (strategy document, consultations and the required reports). The quality of the final report was satisfactory and the report provided an excellent up-to-date review related to fresh and brackish water aquaculture status across all important species in the Philippines. The project followed a strategy that was rooted in a balanced environmental, poverty reduction and economic development paradigm by stakeholder driven visioning and strategy development. The project completed all required reports, including inception, mid-term, draft final and final report, which were of satisfactory quality. A consultation driven strategy development process, supported by highly qualified international and national consultants, resulted in a highly acceptable strategy document from both stakeholders and the EA's point of view. Stakeholder consultations on all aspects of strategy development (credit and finance, role of local government units, marketing, aquaculture research and strategic planning) including fishpond lease agreement surveys and regional poverty case studies have added to a wealth of knowledge and information for the Government that has sufficiently built their capacity in the sub-sector and provided important knowledge base for policy making decisions. An action plan was developed identifying investment opportunities and this was endorsed by the executing agency. However, follow-up of this action plan with national developing planning agency and the legislatures was not completed during project implementation due to time constraints. However, this TA action plan will be very useful for the executing agency to develop future investment programs in the sector.

#### **Overall Assessment and Rating**

The TA was highly relevant, because the Government did not have an up-to-date strategic assessment for the sub-sector and it was consistent with the objectives and priorities of national development plan for the aquaculture sub-sector. The TA was effective because it produced a high quality strategy report with a thorough review of sub-sector issues and constraints that included an indicative investment program embodying the objectives of poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and economic development. The project was consultative in its implementation and project outputs had the acceptance and ownership of the EA and stakeholders. The TA was partly efficient because the consultant inputs were not sequenced timely and the TA implementation was delayed. Overall, however, the TA was successful.

#### **Major Lessons**

Some lessons learned in the TA are the following: (i) TOR of the project consultants could have identified specific outputs and it could have elaborated the responsibility of each consultant with respect to the overall team roles and the mutual responsibilities of each member of the consultant group with respect to the team leader; (ii) regular inception and review missions should have been mounted to identify and make timely revisions as necessary; (iii) unavailable consultants should be replaced soonest with comparable qualified consultants for maximum project effectiveness; (iv) during implementation, consultant's TOR should be revised as soon as found to be ambiguous and counterproductive to TA objectives; and (v) proactive monitoring is needed to resolve potential issues between international and national consultants to facilitate greater coordination and cooperation between them for better project implementation and efficiency.

#### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

It is recommended that the Government, through policy briefs, disseminate the strategy document, which also includes an indicative action plan, to high officials of the National Economic and Development Authority and members of Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee of the national legislature. The Government could be reminded to consider the investment programs specified in the strategy document to update its National Fisheries Industrial Development Plan. The investment program could also be discussed with the Government during the ADB's CPS discussions with the Government in order to review identified investment options to evaluate consistency with ADB's Strategy 2020. It is to be noted that fisheries sector is not a priority sector under ADB's Strategy 2020, but several identified investment options under the TA that relates to livelihood development for poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, infrastructure, etc, should be reviewed for consistency under ADB's Strategy 2020. Nevertheless, the strategy document report is an up-to-date status report on sustainable aquaculture in the Philippines and is an excellent reference material for the Government to conduct future development planning in the sector.