



# Completion Report

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Project Number: 35469  
Technical Assistance Number: 6039  
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## REG: Formulation of the Pacific Region Environmental Strategy 2004–2008

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

<b>TA No. and Name</b> TA 6039-REG: Formulation of the Pacific Region Environmental Strategy 2004-2008		<b>Amount Approved:</b> \$400,000 (including \$100,000 co-financing from NZAID)	
		<b>Revised Amount:</b>	
<b>Executing Agency:</b> Asian Development Bank, Pacific Department	<b>Source of Funding:</b> Co-financed by ADB and Government of New Zealand	<b>TA Amount Undisbursed</b> \$42,385	<b>TA Amount Utilized</b> \$357,615
<b>Approval</b> 26 June 2002	<b>Signing</b> 03 July 2002	<b>Completion Date</b>	
	<b>Fielding of Consultants</b> July 2002	<b>Original</b> 31 March 2003	<b>Actual</b> 30 April 2005
		<b>Closing Date</b>	
		<b>Original</b> 31 March 2003	<b>Actual</b> 20 October 2006

## **Description**

Pacific countries have a high level of economic and cultural dependence on their natural environment. This environment, however, has been under pressures brought about by destructive exploitation resulting in depletion of marine, mineral, land, water, forest and biodiversity resources, and various environmental problems such as degradation of coastal environments, poor waste management, urban pollution, etc. Aside from that, the Pacific countries are also vulnerable, particularly due to geographic isolation, fragile environments, rapid population growth and urbanization, limited land resources, and high dependence on marine resources. Addressing these concerns is vital to sustaining economic advancement and poverty reduction in the Pacific. This regional technical assistance (TA) was formulated in 2002 considering the lack of suitable and up-to-date environmental strategy for the Pacific. For instance, the Pacific Strategy for the New Millennium (September 2000) which was formulated in response to five key development challenges facing the Pacific developing member countries (PDMCs) did not specifically address environmental strategic response and future interventions on environmental management. On this basis, this TA assessed the environmental conditions, trends and opportunities in the region in preparing an operational strategy, particularly the Pacific Region Environmental Strategy for 2005-2009 (PRES), to support the region's efforts for sustainable development.

## **Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs**

The main purpose of the TA was to produce a regional environmental strategy based on a review of major environmental challenges in the region and formulate the strategic objectives and activities for 2005–2009. The focus was on a clearly defined operational strategy detailing specific modalities for intervention, both through country or regional environmental assessments and lending programs, and the mainstreaming of environmental considerations in the non-environmental projects. The TA involved the following activities: (i) review of the current state of the Pacific environment, focusing on major environmental issues as well as the major characteristics of the Pacific Islands; (ii) analysis of the past assistance, lessons learned, and experiences, both by ADB and other major funding institutions; (iii) conduct of case studies to generate insights on potential environmental management strategies and approaches that will help facilitate integration of environmental considerations into development processes; and (iv) formulation of an ADB environmental strategy.

## **Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities**

The TA inputs in terms of consultants, financial requirements, and design and processes undertaken were adequate in meeting the objectives of the TA project and there was no substantial changes were made in the original scope and objectives of the TA. A team of four international consultants and two local consultants were recruited individually, and the composition was appropriate in facilitating the implementation of the TA. The total international consultants' input was 9.7 person-months and the domestic consultants' input was 19 person-months. The performance of the international consultants was satisfactory. The TA implementation period was substantially extended from 8 to 38 months to accommodate several regional meetings that provided a more comprehensive consultation processes. Such extension was also required to complete the implementation of case studies, printing of publications, and detailed study on country environmental analysis (CEA) for Fiji Islands. Substantial time was spent for administrative matters related to liquidation of advance provided to the regional non-governmental organization and closing of consultants contracts.

The consultant team delivered their tasks as defined in their terms of reference. The participatory approach employed during the consultation processes helped in drawing feedback from key officials and representatives of NGO's, community organizations, and other donor agencies. This provided opportunities to formulate and develop a more participatory environmental strategy for the region. Overall, the delivery of the above inputs by ADB, as the implementing agency of the TA, is satisfactory based on the positive feedbacks derived from concerned government agencies, regional organizations, and multilateral organizations, and the published/printed output.

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

Draft reports containing the environmental strategy were presented in three regional consultation meetings: (i) a PRES consultation workshop in the Fiji Islands (21–22 March 2003); (ii) the Second High Level Climate Change Adaptation Consultation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round Table Meeting on Climate Change in the Fiji Islands (8–10 May 2003); and (iii) the 2003 Pacific Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting (FEMM) in the Republic of Marshall Islands (9–13 June 2003). In addition, the draft environmental strategy was also presented in two ADB in-house seminars. All relevant comments and suggestions solicited from these consultation meetings were incorporated in the final PRES report. The final report identified eight environmental challenges as being of highest priority. Based on these environmental challenges, appropriate strategy is formulated and presented in a two-volume publication entitled "Pacific Region Environmental Strategy 2005-2009", accompanied by a separate executive summary.

Volume I presents the main findings highlighting the current environmental issues, lessons learned from external environmental assistance, and the regional environmental strategy 2005-2009. Volume II presents the lessons learned and experiences gained from five separate case studies undertaken in Tuvalu, Fiji Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, and Vanuatu, that focused on protected area management and biodiversity conservation, tourism and resort development, waste management, and planning and policy formulation. The TA also developed country programming environment briefs for Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, and Samoa, which were incorporated in the Country Strategy Program Updates of these countries. As part of the TA, a CEA for Fiji Islands was also produced to present in more detail the proposed mainstreaming of environmental consideration in economic and development planning processes at country level. Outputs of the CEA for Fiji Islands have been taken into consideration in the draft Fiji Country Partnership Strategy, 2007-2011. The TA developed a project website (<http://www.adb.org/projects/pres>) which served as an extension mechanism in disseminating the PRES draft report to concerned individuals and organizations, as well as an alternative venue in sharing comments and views on the PRES report. The final report is displayed at <http://www.adb.org/Pacific/strategy-paper.asp>.

The main outputs of the TA, particularly the Pacific Region Environmental Strategy 2005-2009<sup>1</sup>, Country Programming Environmental Briefs, Fiji Islands' CEA, and the websites were fully accepted by the country officials, regional agencies and donor agencies through the feedbacks and reactions received. These showed strong evidence that the TA outputs were positively accepted and useful to them. The key outputs of PRES have also been reflected in the Pacific Strategy for the Asian Development Bank 2005-2009, and they have also become the basis in formulating priority actions in country environmental analysis prepared under TA 6204-REG: Mainstreaming Environmental Consideration into Economic and Development Planning Processes in Selected PDMCs. Several priority actions have been adopted in Country Strategy and Program (CSP) and Country Strategy Program Update (CSPU) for implementation. Considering the above, the TA design including relevance of objectives, terms of reference, and formulation (including extension of stakeholder participation and ownership) have been evaluated as satisfactory throughout the TA implementation.

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

PRES provides foundation in formulating a development assistance framework for the Pacific region, particularly in the area of environmental management. It also provides foundation for further preparation of country level analysis, i.e. the CEA. It also provides the basis for sustainable development in the region as well as in identifying important opportunities for leveraging resources and helping encourage greater local responsibility through partnerships with local, national, and regional organizations. ADB, and to some extent other concerned Pacific islands governments, regional organizations, and international development agencies, will be guided by an environmental strategy, which hopefully will result in a more judicious use of resources and better complementation and harmonization of development efforts in the region, although the full implementation of the recommendations has yet to be attained and will take several more years. The general objective of the TA was achieved; and the TA is rated as Successful.

#### **Major Lessons**

Case studies have been effective tool in undertaking in-depth assessment of local situation, and have provided better understanding of environmental challenges, institutional issues, and steps to be taken to address the issues. Therefore, it is necessary that case studies should be undertaken by credible and committed persons or consultants. The website provided an effective and efficient venue for key stakeholders in sharing their views and comments on the formulated strategy, and it also gives ADB a better opportunity to promote its goal in poverty alleviation and environmental conservation, particularly in the Pacific region. The TA implementation was originally designed for eight months, but then extended to accommodate changes in schedule, case studies, etc. It was learned that such timeframe is too short given the participatory and consultation process undertaken to come up with a more Pacific-oriented and locally and institutionally-accepted environmental strategy. Future TAs should pay particular attention to TA timeframe, especially when local people and stakeholders are involved or will play an important role in the implementation. Substantial time was also spent in administrative matters, e.g. in liquidation of advance of consultants. Providing strict deadline for completing such administrative matters should be included in the consultants' contract.

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

TA implementation has taken much attention and substantial staff time, therefore, in implementing similar type of undertaking in the future, consideration should be made whether hiring consultants through a consulting firm to lessen administrative burden of the project officer would be better option without scarifying the quality. The PRES's two-volume publication with the executive summary has been extensively circulated and distributed to the stakeholders participated in the preparation process as well as to government agencies and donor agencies as users of the publication. ADB should encourage concerned Pacific countries and regional institutions to formulate relevant program of actions that will foster effective adoption of the environmental strategy. The PRES will help facilitate the incorporation of environmental consideration into planning and development processes in the region. The key outputs of PRES has been adopted in the Pacific Strategy 2005-2009, and several priority actions have been incorporated in CSP and CSPU, and it will also be used for further preparation country level environment strategy and country partnership strategies to facilitate mainstreaming environmental consideration in economic and development planning processes.

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<sup>1</sup> The original title of the TA is REG: Formulation of the Pacific Region Environmental Strategy (2004-2008). However, in the final output of the RETA, it was decided to adjust the year coverage to 2005–2009, since the environmental strategy recommended was applicable to year 2005–2009.