

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: CWAE

TA No., Country and Name TA 6236-REG: Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management			Amount Approved: \$1,250,000	
Executing Agency: Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding; ADB TA funding program Global Environment Facility Global Mechanism	Amount Undisbursed: \$61,969	Amount Utilized: \$1,188,031	
TA Approval Date: 23 March 2005	TA Signing Date: 6 May 2005	Fielding of First Consultant(s): 7 April 2005	TA Completion Date Original: 31 Dec 2005 Actual: 31 Dec 2006 Account Closing Date Original: 31 Dec 2006 Actual: 30 Nov 2007	
Description				
<p>The Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM) is a partnership of Central Asian countries (CACs) and development cooperation partners¹ dedicated to combating land degradation and improving rural livelihoods. ADB, through this regional technical assistance (RETA), cofinanced by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Global Mechanism (GM), led the design phase of CACILM as a 10-year program of country-driven action and resource mobilization (December 2006–June 2016) to achieve in the CACs: (i) strengthened policy, legislative, and institutional frameworks, creating conditions conducive for sustainable land management; (ii) increased capacity of key institutions responsible for planning and implementing land management; and (iii) improved management and natural systems through the combined impact of appropriate enabling conditions and targeted project investments.</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs				
<p>The expected impact of the CACILM program is to combat land degradation and improve rural livelihoods in the Central Asian countries. The outcome of the TA is to establish CACILM as a partnership among countries and funding agencies to support the development and implementation of National Programming Frameworks (NPFs) for more comprehensive and integrated approaches to sustainable land management in the region. The TA had four outputs: (i) NPFs for each country, including a prioritized program of projects and technical assistance, and related concept papers; (ii) the CACILM partnership brief and supporting GEF documentation, prepared in accordance with GEF guidelines on the programmatic approach; (iii) established mechanisms for consultation and coordination within and between countries that enhance the participation of all stakeholders; provide efficient and effective mechanisms for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of CACILM; and enhance harmonization of funding agencies; and (iv) increased awareness and commitments by national and funding agency stakeholders.</p>				
<p>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities. The TA was well formulated with a clear design and monitoring framework. The terms of reference were adequate. Consultant recruitment was cumbersome as consultants (5 international, 15 domestic) were recruited as individuals. Most international consultants performed satisfactorily. The performance of the domestic consultants, while generally satisfactory, was variable from country to country. Staff acted as chairperson of the CACILM Task Force, participating in six meetings in various countries. In addition, staff conducted a review mission, visiting each country to consult with National Working Groups and to provide guidance to international and domestic consultants. Multi-stakeholder National Working Groups coordinated and monitored activities; and through their membership, broadened the participation of all stakeholders. Their role included oversight of NPF preparation, coordinating various workshops and meetings, and facilitating approvals by government of official documents. A team leader was to be recruited to lead activities in all five countries. During RETA inception, it was decided that a more effective approach would be to have five country teams, each led by an international consultant, supported by three domestic consultants. As a result, a team leader was not recruited and an international natural resource management specialist was recruited. RSDD staff provided implementation support and assistance in securing GEF cofinancing. The TA's success was enhanced by use of resources from TA 5941-REG: Combating Desertification in Asia.</p>				

¹ The main partners from countries are the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation and the UNCCD national focal points. The development cooperation partners are the members of the Strategic Partnership Agreement for UNCCD Implementation in the Central Asian Countries (SPA): Global Mechanism (GM), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CCD Project of German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), International Center for Agricultural Research on Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and World Bank.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

Output 1. The NPFs developed embodied a 10-year program that laid down the sequence of work and the required investment needed in each for the five Central Asian Countries.

Output 2. The NPFs are linked and coordinated under the CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework (CMPF) which was approved by GEF Council in August 2006, with a commitment of \$20 million of grant. The RETA also produced the CMPF Support Project, which is cofinanced by GEF (\$3,050,000 approved November 2006), ADB TA 6357-REG: CMPF Support Project (\$800,000 approved November 2006) and IFAD (\$200,000 approved April 2007).

Output 3. The CACILM approach is to maintain country ownership, expand and deepen stakeholder participation, and facilitate transparent dialogue within development partners. The primary mechanisms within country were through the National Working Groups and interim National Secretariats. The Working Groups led the development of NPFs and convened three multi-stakeholder workshops to guide and review the NPFs. The National Secretariats were responsible for supporting the Working Groups and coordinating NPF consultants. Effective multicountry consultation and coordination was achieved through six CACILM Task Force meetings and three multicountry stakeholder workshops. The NPFs and the CMPF have plans for stakeholder participation and performance monitoring and evaluation systems. Each CACILM subproject is also required to have such plans and systems.

Output 4. The RETA fostered increased awareness and commitments by national funding agencies through participation of economic and financial ministries officials in the CACILM Task Force meetings. In addition, the national programming frameworks, national coordination councils, and national secretariats that were established to implement CACILM required formal approval by governmental or the ministerial level. Development cooperation partners increased their awareness through participation in the CACILM Task Force, including reviewing and commenting on all NPFs and the CMPF. Over the period of RETA, the membership in the SPA has increased.

Outcome: The CACILM Partnership is firmly established and the CMPF began implementation in December 2006. Committed funding for the first phase is \$155,000,000, of which, \$20,000,000 is grant financing from GEF.

The closing date of the TA was first extended to provide adequate time for preparation of the CMPF and then further extended to provide bridge funding for the initial implementation of the CMPF until the GEF funding was confirmed

Overall Assessment and Rating

Highly Successful.

Major Lessons

Costs of Making Participation Effective. The development of the CMPF and the NPFs was achieved through a participative multi-stakeholder approach. While effective, the many national and multicountry meetings required significant time input from participants, with significant operating costs for workshops and consultants. Consideration needs to be given to making such participative processes more efficient during implementation.

Costs of ADB Project Coordination and Leadership. Program coordination was made effective by significant ADB staff inputs including the leading CACILM Task Force and arranging for its six meetings. This included seven missions (one per task force meeting; and one review mission). Because of the importance of ADB's leadership role, these activities could not be easily delegated. Future ADB-led regional activities, requiring close collaboration between development partners, should plan for significant staff inputs for coordination.

Varying levels of Country Capacity. The capacities within the five countries are very different. While CACILM used the same structure and approach for each country, there were differences in the operations of the National Working Groups, the consultation processes, and ability of the countries to formulate a sound national program with fundable project concepts. During implementation, attention will be needed to ensure that the countries are supported in the further development and implementation of their NPFs.

Working with GEF. The CMPF was developed with expectations of funding from GEF (to date the CMPF has received \$20 million from GEF). However, fulfilling GEF requirements placed a significant additional burden on the administration and implementation of the RETA. In addition, changing attitudes within GEF created considerable uncertainty and tension within the CACILM partnership. In the future, ADB should re-evaluate whether important initiatives should be developed without firmer funding commitments from all potential co-financiers.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

ADB's follow-up is well prescribed in the CMPF. ADB is responsible for leading and chairing the CACILM Task Force and implementation of the CMPF Support Project. ADB also will implement three subprojects, one in each of Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Continued provision of staff time at the headquarters and resident mission level should be firmly secured to support CACILM implementation.