

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: RSES

TA No. and Name TA 6234-REG: Regional Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network			Amount Approved: \$250,000	
			Revised Amount: —	
Executing Agency ADB		Source of Funding GCF	Amount Undisbursed: \$23,404.01	Amount Utilized: \$226,595.99
TA Approval		Date TA Signing	Fielding of First Consultant(s):	Completion Date Original 31 Dec 2006 Actual 31 Jan 2007
9 March 2005			July 2005	Closing Date Original 31 Dec 2006 Actual 31 Jan 2007
Description				
<p>Governments throughout Asia have developed laws and regulations to promote environmental sustainability over the last two decades. Many international environmental conventions have also been ratified by governments in Asia, bringing additional responsibilities in their implementation. Governments have realized that the issuance of laws and regulations is only one step. Full implementation is the next step, and in fact “law without compliance, violation without enforcement, and enforcement without seriousness” are still the prevailing norms in many DMCs and result in poor compliance outcomes.</p> <p>While each country has a different legal and institutional framework, most face common challenges in ensuring compliance. Limitations of institutional capacity, technology gaps, financial shortfalls, low public participation and weak political will to enforce existing policies and laws are all challenges requiring long-term efforts and commitment to overcome. Regional cooperation can play an important and catalytic role in furthering knowledge and capacity building, information sharing, dissemination of good practices on environmental enforcement and compliance, and in tackling regional and global environmental problems. ADB approved this TA in 2005 to promote environmental enforcement and compliance through regional cooperation. The TA was co-financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs				
<p>The impact of the TA is to support effective implementation of environmental laws and regulations leading to improved environment and health conditions in Asia. The outcome of the TA are to (i) strengthen institutional and practitioner capacity, (ii) improve citizen participation in environmental enforcement and compliance, and (iii) capture and share innovative solutions and best environmental compliance and enforcement models in the region.</p> <p>The outputs of the TA are: (i) establishment of the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN); (ii) identified country enforcement and compliance program challenges through national program assessment; (iii) country-level compliance and enforcement indicators; (iv) pilot demonstrations; (v) strengthened practitioner capacity through training; (vi) shared innovative solutions and best practices within the Region, and (vii) regional guidelines.</p>				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities				
<p>A consulting firm, Planning and Development Collaborative International, Inc. (PADCO), has served as the AECEN Secretariat and performed satisfactorily. All specified activities under the TA were completed on time. The Executive Committee composed of representatives from nine member countries and sponsoring development agencies (ADB and USAID) played an important role in providing overall guidance to help realize AECEN's mission, including setting goals and policies, reviewing and approving annual work program, and fostering cooperation among member countries. The AECEN formal launch was held at ADB Headquarters with strong staff support from RSDD and SERD. ADB staff attended the 2005 and 2006 AECEN Annual Forum, and provided reviews and comments on key AECEN documents and all TA reports.</p>				
Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome				
<p>Among AECEN's important achievements are: (i) the formal launch of the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) in August 2005. Since its establishment in 2005, membership in AECEN has grown to ten national and subnational environmental agencies from PRC, India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam; (ii) outputs of pilot activities in two countries--(a) the hotline program (public participation) in Chongqing Municipality, PRC, and (b) development of national indicators on compliance and enforcement in the Philippines--have been included in the national plan for further application; and (iii) an important set of regional guidelines on the Principles and Practices of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement was</p>				

drafted and presented at the AECEN Annual Forum in 2006. The guidelines will be finalized in 2007.

Other milestones achieved under the TA included: (i) AECEN website established and operated, while it needs to be enhanced with more links to enable more effective information sharing for its stakeholders; (ii) regional capacity building training workshops in PHI, THA and VIE held helping develop national environmental compliance and enforcement indicators; (iii) country environmental compliance and enforcement program assessment in Sri Lanka prepared; (iv) 2005 and 2006 AECEN Annual Regional Forum held in Thailand and Vietnam, respectively; and (v) participation in the Better Air Quality Workshop in December 2006 through a special session using TA contingency funds.

Overall Assessment and Rating

This TA is rated as successful. All activities planned under the TA were completed in a timely manner. Good practices and approaches resulting from pilot programs in PRC and PHI were incorporated in the respective government plans for further application. The draft regional guidelines on Principles and Practices of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement were shared among member agencies and considered useful. Areas for improvement includes: (i) quality of country assessment reports; and (ii) upgrading of AECEN website to include relevant links and links to the members' sites to enable more effective information sharing.

Major Lessons

1. It is important that the design of annual programs and activities be driven by the needs of member countries/agencies, and aligned with their own priorities. This will ensure that the programs and activities (including pilot programs) are relevant, have immediate impact and are sustainable.
2. Member agencies should take a lead role in the entire decision-making process, from the design and implementation of the programs and activities, to information sharing and annual forum organization. This will allow the member agencies to be responsible for the success (or failure) of its endeavors, thus working hard towards the achievement of its goals.
3. The Secretariat has played an important and positive role in planning and implementing annual programs and activities, and organizing annual forums. However, it would be more effective if the responsibility of Network Secretariat could be transferred from the consulting firm to a government or regional agency, for better strategic focus, enhanced member ownership and long-term sustainability.
4. Identifying effective national coordinators or focal persons is critical to ensure strong commitment and smooth working relationship among network members.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

AECEN still within in its first two years of operations, is in its nascent stage. AECEN must move forward to establish itself as a value-adding sustainable network of high relevance to its members. In the coming years when AECEN is proposed to become a regional knowledge hub on environmental compliance and enforcement, substantive improvements in operations should be made. Future support may focus on measures (e.g., enhancement of the AECEN website to facilitate uploading and sharing of good practices; preparing a compilation of good practices on compliance and enforcement; organizing a formal and informal exchange of ideas) to facilitate generating and sharing knowledge on environmental enforcement and compliance, and developing mechanisms to sustain technical rigor and financial independence (e.g., diffusion of knowledge from similar networks outside the region to AECEN; development and sale of knowledge products; and developing a pool of experts to conduct training of specific groups, etc.)

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