

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

TAR: OTH 34012

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
FOR
COMBATING DESERTIFICATION IN ASIA

September 2000

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CAR	–	Central Asian republics
CCD	–	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CDM	–	clean development mechanism
DMC	–	developing member country
GEF	–	Global Environment Facility
ha	–	hectare
IFAD	–	International Fund for Agricultural Development
M&E	–	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
PRC	–	People's Republic of China
TA	–	technical assistance
UN	–	United Nations
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	–	United Nations Environment Programme

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations (UN) Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) is an international treaty of contracting states ("Parties") that is directed at land degradation and poverty in dryland areas. In 1999, Asian Development Bank (ADB) accepted an invitation to become a member of the Facilitation Committee of the Global Mechanism of the CCD, for which the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are the founding members. The mandate of the Global Mechanism is to promote effective mobilization and use of resources for CCD implementation. The Global Mechanism, in close collaboration with its partner institutions,¹ intends to respond to country-driven requests to assist developing member countries (DMCs) to implement the CCD. The regional technical assistance (TA) for Combating Desertification in Asia is intended to assist in this process.² Further to discussions with CCD national focal points during fact-finding in March 2000, as well as consultations with the CCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism, an understanding has been reached on the TA objectives, scope, terms of reference, budget, and implementation arrangements.

II. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

2. The CCD defines desertification to be "land degradation in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas³ resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities." The objective of the CCD is to "combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought...through effective actions at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, ...with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas. Achieving this objective will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus simultaneously, in affected areas, on improved productivity of the land and the rehabilitation, conservation, and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level."

3. The CCD provides an internationally agreed framework for arresting dryland degradation in all developing regions, through national action programs for policy, legislative, and institutional reforms at the macro level, combined with community-based resource management at the local level. Developing Parties to the CCD take on obligations to (i) give due priority to combating desertification and allocate adequate resources for this purpose; (ii) establish strategies and priorities for desertification control within the framework of national sustainable development plans; (iii) address underlying causes of desertification, paying special attention to socioeconomic factors and poverty; (iv) promote awareness and facilitate full participation of affected communities; and (v) provide an enabling macroeconomic, institutional, and legislative environment. Obligations of developed Parties include (i) providing substantial financial resources and other forms of support to implement strategies and programs, and (ii) facilitating access to appropriate technology. Eighteen donor member countries of ADB and 32 DMCs have ratified the CCD.

¹ The partner institutions of the Global Mechanism include ADB, CCD Secretariat, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IFAD, Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Bank.

² The TA was endorsed by the RETA Screening Committee on 3 December 1999 and first appeared in *ADB Business Opportunities* in January 2000.

³ In the CCD, "Arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas" means areas, other than polar and subpolar regions, in which the ratio of annual precipitation to potential evapotranspiration falls within the range of 0.05-0.65.

4. The CCD is relevant in Asia because the region's poverty reduction and rural development prospects depend on the sustainability of land use systems. According to a UN assessment, degradation affects 1,341 million hectares (ha) of agriculturally productive dry lands in Asia, or about 70 percent of the total dry lands area. Some 35 percent of all irrigated land, 56 percent of rain-fed cropland, and 76 percent of rangelands are degraded. More than 50 percent of the world's irrigated lands severely affected by waterlogging and salinization are also found in the region. ADB's study on measuring environmental quality in Asia⁴ identifies land degradation as the environmental problem with the highest cost of remediation. Hunger, poverty, and deprivation remain acute in dry land zones, and population growth during the next 20 years will place increasing pressure on these marginal areas. As highlighted in ADB's rural Asia study,⁵ the vast majority of Asia's rural population relies directly or indirectly on the productivity of natural resources for household food security. The study also emphasized the natural resource constraints facing equitable agricultural growth, especially on less favored lands.

5. Drought and desertification and the resultant loss of resilience in livelihood systems do not affect all groups equally. The dependence of the poor on the productivity of natural resources makes them especially vulnerable to land degradation and natural hazards such as drought. Poor households suffer from negligible capital assets, ill-defined or nonexistent property rights, limited access to financial services and markets, inadequate safety nets in time of drought, absence of technological packages suited to smallholder rainfed agriculture, and exclusion from decision making. Without an enabling policy and institutional framework that provides appropriate incentives for resource management, this can result in household coping strategies that lead to further environmental degradation, increased vulnerability, and impoverishment.

6. In all DMCs, concerted effort is needed to overcome shortcomings of past programs on desertification control, including (i) failure to adopt an integrated and cross-sectoral approach; (ii) insufficient interministerial coordination; (iii) inadequate attention to the policy, legislative, and institutional enabling environment and the role of incentives; (iv) lack of public participation; (v) neglect of social factors, traditional knowledge, and technology transfer; and (vi) weak political will to confront root causes. There is a need to achieve coherence among the strategic plans that already exist, and to make sure that CCD national action programs add value rather than duplicate these. Parties are increasingly aware that the objective of national action programming should be to mainstream CCD objectives, promote policy integration across sectors, catalyze legislative and institutional change, and facilitate capacity building and investment.

7. Nine ADB DMCs have large land areas within the arid, semiarid and dry subhumid zones. These are the Central Asian republics (CARs): Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; People's Republic of China (PRC); India; Mongolia; and Pakistan. According to CCD's inventory of desertification,⁶ almost half of the PRC is in arid and semiarid zones. Estimates of land degradation vary between 8 and 27 percent of total area. In Mongolia, 30 percent of land is moderately affected by land degradation and 3 percent is affected severely. Almost 90 percent of cultivated area is affected by soil erosion. Cultivated land per capita is 0.16 ha. Desert pasture types cover 19.4 percent of grazing land. All of Central Asia is in the arid and semiarid zone. About 60 percent of total land area is affected by

⁴ TA 5542-REG: *Study of Environmental Indicators and Indexes*, for \$418,000, approved on 16 August 1993.

⁵ ADB. 2000. *Rural Asia: Beyond the Green Revolution*. Manila:ADB.

⁶ CCD Secretariat 1998.

land degradation, and the rest is mainly desert. With the exception of Kazakhstan, there is limited cultivated land per capita (between 0.15 ha and 0.35 ha) and much of this suffers from waterlogging and salinization. In India, 76 percent of land area falls within arid, semiarid, and dry subhumid zones. Almost all dry lands in India are degraded. About 80 percent of Pakistan is arid and semiarid and nearly 12 percent is dry subhumid, while 40 percent of irrigated land and 70 percent of rainfed land is degraded.

8. Among Asian developing Parties, the nine DMCs identified above have advanced the most in formal CCD implementation. All have ratified the CCD through decision of parliament or equivalent, appointed a national focal point, and established a high-level interministerial national coordinating body to review and guide CCD implementation. They have all initiated national action programming, while PRC, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan have formulated CCD national plans of various kinds. They have also complied with CCD reporting requirements, by submitting national progress reports in anticipation of the Fourth Conference of Parties in December 2000, which will review implementation in Asia. In addition, CARs have started to prepare a subregional action program.

9. In helping these DMCs, the Global Mechanism and its partner institutions offer policy dialogue expertise in environment, agriculture, and rural development, together with the prospect of substantial TA and finance for well-conceived programs for poverty reduction in dryland areas. The Global Mechanism has initiated work to assist Parties to convene national and subregional forums on partnership building and resource mobilization. The forums will bring together stakeholders, including civil society and nongovernment organizations (NGOs), to (i) integrate national action programs within sustainable development plans, (ii) identify priority areas for intervention, and (iii) build partnerships around mutually agreed areas of collaboration in order to mobilize domestic and external resources. The initiatives will be monitored and sustained by the national coordinating body, backstopped by the Global Mechanism and the CCD Secretariat.

10. The Global Mechanism, in close collaboration with the CCD Secretariat and other partner institutions, intends to respond to country-driven requests to convene CCD forums, beginning with the most affected DMCs. TA is required to assist DMCs to review enabling policy and institutional and legislative factors, create opportunities for mainstreaming CCD objectives in development planning, and identify investment and TA options. In addition, TA is required to help DMCs tap new and innovative sources of environmental finance. This includes Global Environment Facility (GEF) Operational Program 12 on Integrated Ecosystem Management, which will provide grant and concessional financing for land degradation control as it relates to the GEF focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, and international waters. The Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, for which ADB is providing capacity building support,⁷ and other carbon trading arrangements may also offer a new source of finance for carbon sequestration in dryland areas. ADB as the regional development bank for Asia and the Pacific, and as a partner institution of the Global Mechanism, is in a position to help interested DMCs in this area.

⁷ TA 5861: *Capacity Building for Implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the Clean Development Mechanism*, for \$385,000, approved on 1 September 1999.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Objective

11. The TA will assist DMCs that are Party to the CCD to refine, adopt and implement national action programs to combat desertification in arid, semiarid, and dry subhumid regions.

B. Scope

12. The TA will complement ongoing and planned activities in support of CCD implementation. It will be launched at a regional workshop of CCD national focal points that will take stock of CCD implementation in Asia and identify policy, legislative, and institutional barriers to fulfilling CCD objectives. The regional workshop will be organized jointly with the Global Mechanism and the CCD Secretariat. The final list of participating DMCs will be confirmed at the workshop.

13. The TA will finance activities to support selected DMCs to undertake one or more of the following: (i) prepare regional, subregional, or national policy/strategy papers to address issues identified at the regional workshop, and strengthen their national action programming; (ii) convene national and subregional forums on CCD implementation, that will bring together stakeholders including civil society and NGOs; and (iii) identify investment, TA, and capacity building concepts for financing by developed country Parties; multilateral funding agencies, including the GEF; and the clean development mechanism (CDM). The national activities will be agreed upon during a formal Global Mechanism consultation mission to each participating DMC, and will draw upon the participatory consultations that each DMC has undertaken in fulfilling its CCD obligations. The activities will be shaped by each participating country's specific requirements and priorities, bearing in mind that each DMC is at a different stage of national action programming. In the case of the CARs, it is likely that activities will be carried out on a subregional basis to reflect the needs of the subregional action program. The TA framework is given in Appendix 1.

14. The processes supported under the TA are expected to be firmly nested within each participating country's institutional framework for CCD, and will become a formal part of the work program of the Global Mechanism and its partners. The activities will be closely coordinated with ADB's own country operations, and the outputs will be used by country strategy and programming missions. Lessons of CCD implementation, including TA supported activities, will be reviewed at the annual meeting of CCD national focal points in 2002.

C. Cost Estimates and Financing Plan

15. The total cost of the TA is estimated at \$450,000. ADB will finance \$250,000 on a grant basis from the ADB-funded TA program. The Global Mechanism will provide \$200,000 to be administered by ADB. The Global Mechanism also expects to provide resources on a parallel cofinancing basis. The participating governments will provide the salaries of counterpart staff, office equipment, and supplies. Details of the cost estimates and financing arrangements are shown in Appendix 2.

D. Implementation Arrangements

16. ADB will be the Executing Agency for the TA. The regional level activities will be implemented by the Environment Division of the Office of Environment and Social Development

in collaboration with the Global Mechanism and in coordination with the CCD Secretariat and other relevant international, regional, and subregional institutions. At the country level, the TA will be coordinated closely with the CCD national focal point of each participating DMC. In keeping with the CCD's emphasis on public participation, the national focal points are expected to ensure broad participation of stakeholders in CCD implementation, and this will extend also to all activities supported by the TA. Within ADB, a steering committee of ADB staff from concerned departments/offices will be constituted to provide guidance. It will also serve as a mechanism to associate project departments with TA implementation and promote knowledge exchange.

17. The TA will be carried out over a 14 month period, beginning in October 2000 and ending in December 2001. The TA will require the services of an international consultant for a total of 7 person-months, and domestic consultants for a total of 20 person-months. The number of domestic consultants will be decided at TA inception. The consultants will have expertise in environmental policy, natural resource management, resource economics, socioeconomics, and land management. ADB and Global Mechanism staff may act as resource persons as required.

18. The international and domestic consultants will be recruited as individuals. The international and domestic consultants will be recruited in accordance with ADB's *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants* and other arrangements satisfactory to ADB for the engagement of domestic consultants. The consultants' terms of reference are shown in Appendix 3.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

19. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved (i) the administration by ADB of a portion of the technical assistance in an amount not exceeding the equivalent of \$200,000, to be financed by the Global Mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification, on a grant basis; and (ii) the provision of the balance of technical assistance in an amount not exceeding the equivalent of \$250,000, to be financed by ADB on a grant basis for the purpose of Combating Desertification in Asia.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

Design Summary	Performance Indicators/Targets	Monitoring Mechanisms	Assumptions And Risks
<p>Goal</p> <p>To combat desertification and reduce poverty in Asia.</p>	<p>Land degradation trends reversed, resource constraints to poverty reduction reduced.</p>	<p>Data/statistics on land degradation and poverty.</p>	<p>Political will and commitment to address root causes.</p>
<p>Purpose</p> <p>To support developing member countries (DMCs) in the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), so that goal may be achieved.</p>	<p>Effective strategies for promoting CCD implementation are adopted.</p>	<p>National Reports to CCD Conference of Parties (COP), number of DMCs with CCD National Action Program to Combat Desertification (NAP).</p>	<p>Political will and commitment can be harnessed, CCD is recognized as appropriate framework for combating poverty and desertification.</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>Strengthened national action programming process, a policy dialogue agenda on dryland management, and a pipeline of investment and capacity building concepts.</p>	<p>Robust national action programs are articulated, policy and institutional barriers are identified together with barrier removal activities, and partnerships/project concepts are endorsed.</p>	<p>National reports to CCD.</p> <p>Technical Assistance (TA) review missions.</p> <p>Reports of TA consultants.</p> <p>Communication with CCD Secretariat.</p>	<p>National focal points and consultants fully responsive to CCD principles.</p> <p>Availability of relevant data and information.</p> <p>Relevant ministries are willing and able to coordinate.</p>
<p>Activities</p> <p>Preparing strategy papers.</p> <p>Convening of CCD forums.</p> <p>Identifying investment and capacity building concepts.</p>	<p>Inputs</p> <p>International consultants (7 person-months); domestic consultants (20 person-months) with expertise in policy, resource management, resource economics, socioeconomics and land management.</p>	<p>TA review missions.</p> <p>Reports of TA consultants.</p>	<p>High quality consultants can be mobilized.</p> <p>Credible CCD national forums are conducted, based on substantive preparation and in keeping with CCD emphasis on participation.</p>

(Reference in text: page 4, para. 13)

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN^a
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Item	Total Cost
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration and Per Diem	
i. International Consultants	158,000
ii. Domestic Consultants	64,000
b. International and Local Travel	55,000
2. Training, Seminars, and Conferences	85,000
3. Resource Persons ^b	15,000
4. Reports	20,000
5. Contingencies	53,000
Total	450,000

^a The technical assistance (TA) will be jointly financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and by the Global Mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification. ADB will finance \$250,000 on a grant basis from the ADB-funded TA program. The Global Mechanism will provide a grant of \$200,000 to be administered by ADB.

^b Resource persons may include staff of ADB. Cost of travel and per diem will be covered.

Source: Staff estimates.

(Reference in text: page 4, para. 15)

OUTLINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

A. Objective

1. The specific objective is to assist the Asian Development Bank's developing member countries (DMCs) that are "Parties" to the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) to meet their CCD obligations to refine, adopt, and implement national action programs to combat desertification in arid, semiarid, and dry subhumid regions.

B. Scope of Work of Consultants

2. A total of 7 person-months of international and 20 person-months of domestic consultants will be recruited. The international and domestic consultants will have expertise in environmental policy, natural resource management, resource economics, socioeconomics, and land management.

3. The activities to be supported by consultants will be shaped by each participating country's own specific requirements and priorities, and may include (i) preparation of regional, subregional, or national policy/strategy papers to promote CCD implementation; (ii) support for convening of subregional or national forums on CCD implementation; and (iii) identification of investment project, technical assistance (TA), and capacity building concepts for financing by developed country Parties; multilateral funding agencies, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF); and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

4. The consultants will work closely with CCD national focal points and the respective national coordinating body in each participating country, and will maintain close coordination with the CCD Secretariat, the Global Mechanism and its partners, and developed country Parties to the CCD.

C. Terms of Reference

1. International Consultant

5. The international consultant will undertake the following tasks, in close consultation with CCD national focal points:

- (i) participate in Global Mechanism country missions to diagnose policy and institutional barriers to effective CCD implementation, including participation of affected populations, and listen to CCD stakeholders;
- (ii) provide guidance to domestic consultants to inventory ongoing and planned activities in support of the CCD, and compile data on current and planned domestic and external resource flows linked to the CCD;

(Reference in text: page 5, para. 18)

- (iii) (a) review, upon request, the adequacy of draft national action programs to combat desertification in terms of the principles laid out in the CCD (including participation, bottom-up orientation, process approach, and linkages to poverty reduction), and emerging best practices; (b) assess their functional relationship to other sustainable development frameworks; and (c) advise on consultation mechanisms to enhance participation by civil society and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in national action programming;
- (iv) as inputs to each CCD forum, assist the CCD national focal point to prepare approach papers and strategy notes for each participating country covering, inter alia:
 - (a) the interface between the CCD national action program and government sectoral strategies and national sustainable development strategies, with particular emphasis on the scope for integrating CCD objectives and activities into government processes of strategy formulation, planning, budgeting, and negotiation of external finance, including at the subnational level;
 - (b) frameworks for intervention, including an overview of issues (such as the policy environment, legislative and regulatory aspects, institutional reform, and possible scope for capacity building and investment projects); linkage to poverty reduction efforts; and the scope for strategic partnerships with GEF and developed country Parties, and for CDM initiatives;
 - (c) potential synergies between the CCD and various funding agencies frameworks, such as the GEF Operational Program 12 on Integrated Ecosystem Management, and the implementation of other environmental conventions such as the Biodiversity Convention, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Ramsar Convention;
 - (d) criteria for selection of projects that would respond to GEF Operational Program 12 or the CDM, and identification of priority regions within countries that might be suitable for the GEF integrated ecosystem management approach;
- (v) assist the national focal point to adapt the Global Mechanism's conceptual framework for strengthened monitoring and evaluation (M&E) into an M&E plan to assess progress in national action programming;
- (vi) render technical assistance TA as requested by participating governments and provide guidance/advice to domestic consultants, and review all outputs of domestic consultants;
- (vii) compile materials for convening an inception workshop of CCD national focal points, and prepare the inception report and workplan;
- (viii) advise on arrangements and assist the Global Mechanism in organizing any agreed subregional and national CCD forums, including mechanisms for stakeholder consultation;

- (ix) document TA interventions in each participating country, including the status of CCD implementation; and
- (x) prepare a brief synthesis paper on lessons learned in CCD implementation with particular emphasis on the CCD forum approach and TA-supported activities.

2. Domestic Consultants

6. The domestic consultants will undertake the following tasks, in close consultation with CCD national focal points:

- (i) conduct policy and analytical reviews on the themes selected at the inception workshop, including at national and subnational level;
- (ii) compile an inventory of CCD activities, and compile data on resource flows to CCD-related activities;
- (iii) identify ecosystems in the arid, semiarid and dry subhumid zones of each country that might qualify as high priority sites for GEF Operational Program 12 initiatives, and that offer substantial scope for poverty reduction efforts;
- (iv) assist the international consultant and Asian Development Bank (ADB) staff to prepare GEF project preparatory grant proposals for GEF finance, and identify potential CDM opportunities, by compiling necessary background data and information;
- (v) assist in the organization of national subregional CCD forums, and prepare relevant background documentation; and
- (vi) prepare proceedings of CCD forums.