

Second Donor Roundtable on PRC/GEF Partnership on Land Degradation – ADB Resident Mission, Beijing – 7 February 2002

Record of Discussion

1. Introductions

2. Welcome Remarks – Mr. Bruce Murray, Director, PRCM

This is an update on the status of the PRC/GEF Partnership, under GEF's Operational Program on Integrated Ecosystem Management (OP 12). A first donor meeting was held last March. Since then there have been some delays, but the TA team is now on the ground and has started work. The TA project, including the GEF PDF-B grant, totals \$1,150,000. The TA team will develop a Country Programming Framework, including investment packages in priority ecosystems. ADB is supporting complementary projects to develop a soil and water conservation strategy in the Ministry of Water Resources and will begin a project aimed at combating desertification in Gansu province in March of this year. We are also supporting the development of implementing regulations for the recently-passed Desertification Law.

A website has been developed at www.adb.org/projects/PRC_GEF_Partnership and a Chinese language website established at the PRC GEF Secretariat at www.gefchina.org.cn will be available in English in September

We encourage donor feedback. This is not an ADB partnership- it is a PRC partnership. It is seeking GEF commitment to providing resources. ADB is interested in providing resources to support GEF's contribution, and hopefully other donors will also be interested.

3. The PRC/GEF Partnership – Mr. Bruce Carrad

The Partnership uses a programmatic approach to provide sustained support for the implementation of a prioritized medium to long term program (instead of the traditional project by project approach). This builds on the long term nature of the Western Development Strategy and other Government plans and programs. It facilitates dialogue on policy and institutional reform and promotes more efficient resource flows, notably from GEF.

The Partnership will develop a Country Programming Framework (CPF), which will represent the agreement between the Government and GEF to commit resources towards sequenced priorities over an agreed time frame, provisionally ten years. The CPF will contain:

- critical policy, legislative and institutional issues and recommendations
- identification of priority ecosystems for support
- prioritized investment packages
- objectives, milestones and indicators of favorable outcomes

Mr. Carrad then invited the TA Team Leader, Mr. Ian Armitage, to provide details of the TA. The team consists of 6 international and 15 domestic consultants, working to develop a CPF by mid-July for presentation at the Second GEF Assembly to be held in Beijing in mid-October, 2002. The Executing Agency is the Ministry of Finance and a multi-agency Steering Committee and Program Management Office has been established. The TA team will be approaching participants on details of their respective programs and for advice on site visits.

Mr Carrad noted that an inception workshop was held on 5 February 2002 and was attended by representatives from sectoral agencies and included the GEF operational focal point from MoF.

There was lively discussion and the workshop was very successful in bringing participants up to date with the project.

ADB requests participants to provide comments on the CPF outline circulated at the meeting and also on the proposed criteria for selection of priority ecoregions.

4. Discussion

Irene Wettenhall - AusAid: Supports and encourages the partnership. Recommends TA team to visit UNDP/AusAid projects in renewable energy and wetland biodiversity conservation. AusAid is funding and implementing a land degradation project in the Alashan area of Inner Mongolia. Further north, in Inner Mongolia, AusAid is undertaking Phase III of a grassland management project.

Richard Reidinger - World Bank: Requested more detail on the program approach. Noted the importance and difficulty of interagency cooperation and provided an example of Ministry of Water Resources and SEPA unable to access grant funds because of disagreements over wording. Perhaps the partnership will have more success because resources are not immediately at issue.

Nessim Ahmad – ADB: Noted that GEF guidance on the programmatic approach (which can be found on www.gefweb.org) will be followed closely, especially the need to tailor the CPF to country needs and preferences. It is envisaged that the CPF will provide a broad umbrella within which all GEF Implementing Agencies and Executing Agencies can bring forward GEF-eligible OP 12 projects that respond to the principles and priorities contained in the CPF.

Bruce Murray - ADB: Interagency coordination is indeed very difficult. ADB was concerned about this and the need to get the appropriate agencies represented on the Steering Committee and PMO was a major reason why start up was delayed. MOF is the Executing Agency, a strong and “non-sectoral” ministry. PRC is unusual in that the GEF focal point is located within MOF, a significant advantage for the partnership.

Yasuyuki Aoshima - UNESCO: Not a funding agency, but supports IHP (International Hydrological Program), as well as Man and the Biosphere (MAB) and World Heritage programs.

KJ Trede - KFW: Partnership approach is useful, and fills a gap in coordination of land degradation initiatives. Looks forward to an exchange of views and information. KFW has ten years of involvement in land degradation projects in PRC, using an approach combining ecological aspects with poverty alleviation. This includes the planting of trees, using appropriate and site-specific methodologies, in association with long-term land use rights through a participatory land use planning approach. KFW is working in 15 provinces, including activities to combat desertification in Ningxia, Inner Mongolia and Gansu (new). Projects are used as learning and demonstration projects for government agencies and officials to introduce the need for specific agreements with individual farmers to promote sustainable investment and management. GITEC is involved in some of these.

Jock Whittlesey - US Embassy: USAID is not present in PRC, and so the focus is on smaller development and rule of law projects, institution building and capacity building, e.g. through exchange of experts. Supporting a partnership between Ministry of Agriculture and USDA to create a soil and water conservation center near Xian (opening in May), and a small water quantity/quality partnership between SEPA and USDA.

Leiv Landro - Embassy of Norway: Most support not in land degradation area. Noted the very narrow approach by the PRC government focused on tree planting.

Stefano Taliani - Embassy of Italy: Supports partnership between SEPA and the Italian Ministry of Environment on the Kyoto Protocol (involving GEF). Also supports land degradation and afforestation activities in Inner Mongolia.

Daniel Wang Dexiang - UNDP: UNDP is a GEF Implementing Agency and also plays a coordinating role for development activities in several areas. The UNDP program in PRC has six practice areas, including sustainable development/environment. A land use project was signed with the Ministry of Land Resources last August, covering ten counties. \$1.5 million was provided by UNDP and \$4.5 million by the Government of PRC. A comprehensive rural development initiative includes Inner Mongolia dryland areas, and will possibly add Xinjiang as a further province. UNDP supports a biodiversity project in Yunnan and an urban planning (in relation to land use) project in five counties.

Chieko Kajisawa - JICA: Working with Ministry of Water Resources and Forestry in Sichuan (2 projects) Ningxia (1), Shaanxi (1). Also cooperating on water resources management and human resources development.

Horst Betz - GTZ: Has 18 ongoing projects in natural resources protection and poverty alleviation, over half of which involve land degradation aspects. See website at <http://www.gtz.de/china/english/index.htm>

Penny de Waal - DFID: PRC/GEF Partnership is a positive development. DFID has an integrated water resources project in Gansu. In Yunnan, promoting multi-agency approaches for policy review, including the impact and process of policy development. A strong network at the working level has fostered increased ownership of the process. This includes monitoring and evaluation of lessons learned in land degradation and soil and water conservation, encouraging community based organizations to move forward. Process of implementation is as important as the structural elements.

Maggie Wang - Mercy Corps International: Great Wall Green Life Program in Shanxi, Ningxia and Inner Mongolia.

Xu Ji - FAO: Supportive of the PRC-GEF Partnership initiative through ADB. Provides policy advice and capacity building to the Government of PRC, focused on the quality and quantity of agricultural production, linked with environmental protection. An FAO mission is due soon to identify areas of cooperation and develop project profiles in the area of water resources development. We will share the mission report.

Jock Whittlesey - US Embassy: It is very important to encourage the involvement of the private sector in land degradation. It is also important to focus resources on areas outside of Beijing, since this already receives a lot of resources. Land degradation, including sandstorms, particularly in Inner Mongolia, is a transboundary issue, with origins in Kazakhstan and Mongolia.

Richard Reidinger - World Bank: This meeting is very useful, in that it focuses on a specific topic to bring donors together, and it should be pursued. The ADB-supported Strategic Options for the Water Sector developed a good ownership of results because it had a multi-agency steering committee and an expert panel.

In response to a request for information on the World Bank/GEF Gansu and Xinjiang Pastoral Development project, Mr. Reidinger indicated that a mission for this project would be in PRC in late February and would coordinate with ADB and others. It was noted that this proposed project is directly relevant to the PRC/GEF Partnership, and the CPF, and that efforts will be made to ensure close consultation as the proposal develops further.

Participant List

Name	Organization
Leiv Landro	Royal Norwegian Embassy
Karl-Joachim Trede	KfW
Daniel Wang Dexiang	UNDP
Chieko Kajisawa	JICA
Jock Whittlesey	U.S. Embassy
Horst Betz	GTZ
Richard Reidinger	World Bank
Deborah Tarabusi	World Health Organization
Stefano Taliani	Italian Embassy
Maggie Wang	Mercy Corps
Penny de Waal	British Embassy
Xu Ji	FAO
Yasuyuki Aoshima (for Axel Hebel)	UNESCO
Irene Wettenhall	AusAID
Bruce Murray	ADB PRCM
Yang Junmei	ADB PRCM
Hong Wei	ADB PRCM
Bruce Carrad	ADB (Manila)
Nessim Ahmad	ADB (Manila)
Spike Millington	ADB (Manila)
Han Su	Ministry of Finance
Ian Armitage	TA Team Leader, DFS
Wenfa Xiao	Deputy TA Team Leader, SFRC
Yongqi Zheng	Project Secretary