

ADB Updates Safeguard Policies for Enhanced Effectiveness and Relevance

18 July 2005

ADB has embarked on a safeguard policy update to enhance the effectiveness of its safeguard policies, and ensure the relevance to changing client needs and new lending modalities and instruments.

ADB is informing stakeholders across countries, sectors, and agencies on the safeguard policy update. We look forward to receiving comments from the stakeholders on the safeguard policy update discussion paper which will be posted in due course.

Background

ADB has three safeguard policies that seek to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse environmental impacts, social costs to third parties or marginalization of vulnerable groups that may result from development projects. These policies are:

- [Involuntary Resettlement](#) (1995)
- [Indigenous Peoples](#) (1998)
- [Environment](#) (2002)

Although procedural compliance with safeguard policies is generally working well, full substantive achievement of safeguard policy objectives is more difficult to achieve. Experience has shown that more attention should be placed on monitoring safeguards during project implementation, with more clarity required in the scope and coverage of the safeguard policies. In the application of safeguard policies, it is important that capacity building should be an integral part of project processing and implementation, and that disclosure and consultative processes for affected persons and other stakeholders are more effective.

Objectives

A safeguard policy update is being undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of ADB's safeguard policies, and ensure that those remain relevant to changing client needs and to new lending modalities and instruments.

The safeguard policy update will

- explore opportunities to better articulate a coherent set of safeguard requirements - currently spread across various sector and safeguard policies
- rationalize safeguards documentation at different stages of the project cycle
- optimize ADB's internal resources for safeguard review and compliance
- work toward greater harmonization among ADB, other multilateral development banks and borrower processes
- strengthen incentives to build the capacity of ADB developing member countries (DMCs) and their ownership to deliver safeguards

The Announcement

This announcement is intended to inform stakeholders across countries, sectors and agencies on the safeguard policy update. Stakeholders will be invited to review and react to a discussion paper on the subject that will be posted in due course.

Proposed Consultative Process

In the development of the policy update, ADB takes the consultative process very seriously, and looks forward to open and extensive discussions that should fully reflect a variety of views and opinions in preparing such a guiding document for the institution. The consultations will involve DMCs, executing agencies, civil society representatives, development partners and private sector institutions during the course of the update process.

It is expected that the consultative process will include:

- external expert consultations to run in parallel with country and regional consultations
- five regional consultations
- five or more country consultations
- consultations in North America, Europe and Japan
- website, electronic and mail consultations to run in parallel with consultation workshops

Timeline

Milestones	Date
Announcement on the web	July 2005
Discussion note posted on the web	October 2005
Structured series of country, agency and civil society consultations	Beginning January 2006
Draft paper for ADB Management discussion	December 2005
ADB Board consideration of a draft paper	April 2006
ADB Board consideration of a final paper	November 2006

Inquiries and Suggestions

Although the discussion note will be posted later, inquiries and suggestions from stakeholders are welcome. ADB may not be able to respond individually at this preliminary stage, but the documentation will be a valuable resource base in setting the stage for formal consultations. You are welcome to send comments to safeguards_update@adb.org.

Contact

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