

MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

In the last few years, ADB has played a facilitating role in the context of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including treaties, conventions, and protocols, particularly to support its regional cooperative efforts. The following criteria help determine where ADB assistance can be particularly helpful to DMCs: (i) ADB will concentrate on thematic areas in which it has already acquired expertise, instead of trying to build capacities in new areas; (ii) ADB will focus its participation on MEAs that have clearly identified roles for multilateral development banks; (iii) ADB participation will make a significant contribution to implementing the MEA within specific DMCs or at the subregional or regional level; and (iv) ADB participation will respond to DMC priorities for the relevant MEA. The precise nature of ADB operations in any DMC will be determined through the CSP process, and special attention will be paid to interventions that (i) deliver significant local level benefits as well as global environmental outcomes, (ii) assist vulnerable groups and countries to adapt to global environmental changes, and (iii) facilitate the mobilization of additional resources financial mechanisms of the respective MEA.

The MEAs that are consistent with these criteria are Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and its protocols, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). In addition, regional agreements, such as the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Convention, have been appropriately supported through standard ADB operations programs. Each of these MEAs may furnish specific themes for environmental activities (i.e., loans and TA), including those that help conserve environmental resources for the livelihoods and health of the poor. ADB will assist DMCs to incorporate relevant commitments and opportunities under these international environmental treaties. The opportunities may also be pursued in collaboration with agencies that have special responsibilities for implementing particular agreements.

The special funding mechanisms under the multilateral environmental agreements offer a number of opportunities for DMCs. However, most DMCs lack the financial, economic, and environment policies; human resources; and technological capacity to take full advantage of these mechanisms. ADB is committed to helping its DMCs access financial and other resources under the designated financial mechanisms of international conventions and protocols, such as the GEF. In light of commitments in MEAs on transfer of technology, the international community at large has an obligation to facilitate developing countries' access to environmentally sound technologies, although this obligation does not supercede existing intellectual property rights. ADB is committed to supporting its DMCs to develop the capacity to effectively manage the process of technology transfer.