A. Introduction

1. The assessment of Asian Development Bank (ADB) knowledge products and services (KPS) provided to the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) covered the country assistance program evaluation (CAPE) period of 2006–2013 and those available in 2014. It examined the PRC knowledge priorities and the extent to which ADB KPS during the CAPE period met the objectives of the relevant ADB strategies. It assessed (i) how ADB has responded to that demand, (ii) the impact of ADB KPS on government decision making and planning, (iii) whether ADB’s KPS delivery was appropriate and timely (relevance), and (iv) what lessons have been learned to help improve ADB’s delivery and timing of valued and possibly transformative knowledge to the PRC.

B. Background and Context

2. The PRC is seen as having a knowledge economy. Its model for economic growth emphasizes knowledge as an independent production factor at par with capital and labor. The country’s growth model is consistent with some recent economic growth theories that broaden the definition of production factor variables to include the accumulation of knowledge. Knowledge is important to the PRC because, among other things, it facilitates the formulation and implementation of necessary comprehensive reform. The government of the PRC is open to learning from experiences at home and in other countries.

1. People’s Republic of China Government Knowledge Priorities

3. The PRC’s 11th five-year plan for 2006–2010 reiterated two principles for development—a “concept of scientific development,” and constructing a “harmonious socialist society.” Under the plan, a harmonious society was deemed the objective and scientific development the method to reach it.

4. The government shifted direction from a singular pursuit of economic growth under the previous plan to “putting people first,” promoting sustainability in economic development, and progressing toward an “all-around well-off” society. Highlighting environmental degradation and a rise in inequality as problems that have occurred during the country’s rapid economic growth, the plan’s focus on sustainable growth called for knowledge solutions (knowledge-driven scientific development) to attain plan targets.

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6. The 11th five-year plan required a 20% decrease in energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product, a 30% decrease in water consumption per unit of industrial value added, 10% in emission reductions, and an increase in forest cover from 18.2% to 20.0%. The plan also had social targets that included an increase from 31% to 35% in the proportion of urban residents with access to retirement insurance, an increase from 23.5% to more than 80.0% in the proportion of rural residents covered by a cooperative health care scheme, and an increase from 8.5 to 9.0 years of schooling in the average educational attainment of the overall population. The plan also emphasized rural development under a “new socialist countryside” (shehui zhuyi xinnongcun) objective, with a focus on increased agricultural productivity, the development of non-agricultural sectors, the
5. In the 12th five-year plan (2011–2015), the PRC has aimed to garner knowledge to upgrade the country’s manufacturing sector, boost local research and development, and increase the global competitiveness of local firms. Key targets and indicators in the plan include raising research and development spending from 1.75% to 2.20% of gross domestic product, increasing the number of patents, and boosting educational attainment.

6. The plan designates seven strategic emerging industries as the drivers of future economic development and sustainable growth. These include (i) energy conservation and environmental protection, (ii) next-generation information technology, (iii) biotechnology, (iv) high-end equipment manufacturing, (v) alternative energy, (vi) new materials, and (vii) clean-energy vehicles. Three of the priority industries align with sustainable growth—alternative energy, clean energy vehicles, and energy conservation and environmental protection. Four represent the PRC’s ambition to move up the value chain—biotechnology, new materials, next-generation information technology, and high-end equipment manufacturing. Access to and the sharing of knowledge already attained in other countries and harvested in the PRC are key determinants to whether the industries are successful in driving development and sustaining growth.

2. ADB Knowledge Strategies in the People’s Republic of China

7. ADB has provided knowledge support to the PRC since the country became a member in 1986, primarily through economic, sector-related, and technical assistance (TA) operations. The early support lacked strategic focus, although opportunities existed to promote policy reforms and project design through TA. In 2000, ADB began supporting TA clusters to improve strategic focus, and in 2003, it approved its first facility-type TA project, a hybrid between short-term TA projects and the TA cluster. The facility-type TA was designed to enable ADB to respond more flexibly and quickly to the PRC’s knowledge needs.

8. ADB’s country partnership strategies have had a fairly clear knowledge focus since 2004. Over the 2006–2014 study period, they progressed from emphasizing dissemination, knowledge provision, and transfer to emphasizing interactive sharing and partnerships, and to emphasizing innovation, co-creation, and cooperation.

9. ADB’s country strategy and program for 2004–2006 for the PRC aimed to strengthen ADB’s knowledge work and improve the impacts of its knowledge products. It committed ADB to a more focused, better targeted, and more forward looking nonlending program that covered emerging topics and fit the country’s changing needs. It emphasized knowledge transfer and strategic policy influence and the leveraging of knowledge work to support operational priorities such as rural development and poverty reduction, better governance, protecting the environment, and improving markets.

10. The country partnership strategy for 2008–2010 identified knowledge and innovation as a crosscutting theme, with knowledge as an integral part of ADB operations as well as innovations in projects and business procedures. The strategy committed ADB to build knowledge and innovation into...
all of its operations and to work with the PRC to build capacity and transfer knowledge in the PRC and to the rest of the region.  

11. Under the country partnership strategy for 2011–2015, ADB has been trying to strengthen the quality of its nonlending operations in the country. Among other things, the strategy highlights the role that knowledge sharing can play in developing and promoting best practices and scaling up demonstration projects. The strategy commits ADB’s East Asia Department (EARD) to work as one with ADB’s knowledge departments to strengthen coordination in TA and knowledge work.

12. Strategy 2020 adopted in 2008 as ADB’s long-term strategic framework for 2008–2020 and the midterm review of this strategy in 2014 highlight the need for ADB to focus more on knowledge solutions and make knowledge development a core factor in achieving operational effectiveness. Strategy 2020 established knowledge solutions as one of the five main drivers of change on which ADB is to concentrate its operations. It calls for ADB to improve performance in knowledge sharing and focus to improve development results. The 2008 document and the 2014 midterm review both require ADB to fill existing knowledge gaps and hone its institutional knowledge.

C. Assessment

1. Overview

13. During the study period, ADB’s EARD produced more than 240 KPS for the PRC. Since 2007, the department has published annually a list of its knowledge management initiatives by knowledge dissemination type. Dissemination types include policy notes and series, special publications, sector and thematic paper series, good practice series, and terminal notes series. Table 1 shows the number of EARD’s published KPS by dissemination type during 2007–2014, and the list is in Appendix 1. The published list of sector and thematic paper series has grown from 10–13 papers annually during 2007–2011 to 20 or more in 2012, 2013, and 2014.

Table 1: East Asia Department’s Published Knowledge Products and Services by Type, 2007–2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dissemination Type</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy notes series</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special publications/products</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector and thematic paper series</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good practice series</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical notes series</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Asian Development Bank, Independent Evaluation Department.

14. For this evaluation, EARD’s published list of knowledge products during 2007–2014 were grouped by theme or sector. The distribution of EARD published list of KPS by sector or theme type during 2007–2013 is detailed in Table 2. No significant trend in sector or thematic distribution is evident. A notable addition to the themes came in 2011 when a special publication on promoting South–South cooperation was produced. It was followed by another in 2012.

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17 The EARD knowledge management initiative does not provide any product groupings by theme or sector.
18 ADB. 2011. *Knowledge Management Initiative*. Manila; ADB. 2012. *Knowledge Management Initiative*. Manila. The publications showcase the knowledge sharing platform of ADB and the PRC as an innovative approach to South–South cooperation. The 2012 compilation refers to a case study that presents (i) the context, activities, opportunities, and challenges for the platform; (ii) how the platform can contribute to aid effectiveness; and (iii) a map of next steps to help achieve the platform objectives.
Table 2: Distribution of East Asia Department Knowledge Products and Services by Sector or Theme, 2006–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector or Theme</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Energy</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and natural resources</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban development</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector management/governance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and social development</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>223</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


15. Other ADB units and the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) have also provided the PRC with knowledge products. The Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Regional Economic Integration, and the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department are important ADB knowledge units that have produced many KPS since 2006. These have included flagship publications such as the Asian Development Outlook and Asian Development Outlook Update on fiscal policy, governance, energy, services sector development, and rising inequality. However, only ADBI tracks its products and services by country, knowledge dissemination type, and subject matter.

16. ADBI calculates that it provided more than 300 KPS for the PRC during the 2006–2014 study period. They covered 19 sectors and themes. The distribution by publication subject is provided in Appendix 2. ADBI’s knowledge production jumped sharply in 2009. For example, the number of ADBI conferences and seminar materials on capacity building jumped to 13 from zero during the 2006–2008 period. From 2010, the production appears to have returned to the previous norm. Of the 300 ADBI products and services ADBI generated in the study period, 200 were conference or seminar materials. This is because all information distributed at ADBI events in support of speaker presentations is put into this category. Generally, this information takes the form of PowerPoint presentations or background papers. The number of documents categorized as conference and seminar materials does not mirror the number of actual conferences and seminars in any given year.

2. ADB Responsiveness

17. ADB has responded to the PRC’s knowledge demand by creating knowledge platforms, knowledge hubs, knowledge management units, and expanding funding facilities that best ensure optimal flexibility and timely support. It has tried but not always been able to present itself as one ADB, but under a forthcoming new ADB approach, it is expected to improve its responsiveness to the PRC’s knowledge needs.

18. In 2006, ADB set up a knowledge management unit in EARD’s front office to manage the department’s initial knowledge management action plan and subsequent knowledge program. The knowledge program aimed to enhance ADB’s responsiveness to the PRC’s requests for policy support and capacity building. The unit’s responsibilities include EARD’s annual Knowledge Management Initiative publication. Publication categories under the initiative include a policy notes series (with some observations and suggestions), special publications, a sector and thematic paper series, a technical notes series, a good practice series, and a special purpose product series (para. 13). Valuable real-time

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19 When the knowledge management unit was established in 2006, $1.0 million funding was also provided under regional TA. The regional TA has been replenished several times and now totals $5.5 million. It is scheduled to be completed in 2016 and is expected to be replaced with a new KPS funding facility.
policy information has been conveyed to the PRC Government at its request via the observations and suggestions series.

19. In 2009, a knowledge-sharing platform strategy was established by ADB and the PRC's Ministry of Finance to (i) promote South–South cooperation as a vehicle to share solutions for key emerging development issues and challenges faced by developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region; (ii) contribute to sound development management and policy making; and (iii) promote regionally inclusive development. The creation of the platform, along with an increase in knowledge dissemination in that year, appears to have been a direct result of ADB's 2008–2010 country partnership strategy for the PRC, which called for ADB to help build the country’s capacity and transfer knowledge in the PRC and to the rest of the region.

20. ADB established its first country knowledge partnership in 2010 through its knowledge-sharing platform with the PRC, which initially focused on the urban and transport sectors. The PRC urban knowledge hub was an initiative of ADB and Tongji University in Shanghai for sharing good practices in urban planning, including the planning of water supply and other municipal infrastructure services. In November 2010, a high-level knowledge-sharing workshop in Beijing helped establish a provisional PRC transport knowledge hub.

21. In July 2014, a memorandum of understanding establishing a knowledge hub on green development and eco-compensation was signed by ADB, the Western Development Department of the PRC’s Development and Reform Commission, and China Agricultural University. The university’s eco-compensation policy research center is expected to host the hub. It will enable policy makers, researchers, and others working on green development, payments for ecosystem services, and eco-compensation to share best practices and disseminate them to development partners and other ADB developing member countries (DMCs).

22. ADB and the PRC also exchanged views in 2012 on developing a regional knowledge sharing initiative (RKSI). Its broad mandate and objective is to share development knowledge and experiences among countries. The RKSI took a step forward in August 2013 when it received its first funds under ADB regional TA. Absent additional funding or a physical partnership with an established institution to house a multilateral knowledge center of excellence, the sustainability of this initiative is uncertain. ADB intends to consult with the PRC Government and to agree on a mechanism for realizing the RKSI mandate.

23. ADB has also provided conventional TA support to the PRC and has continued to refine its facility-type TA projects in the country. The facility-type TA was a small grant program that began in 2003 and is a hybrid of small-scale TA and a TA cluster. Its aim has been to improve ADB responsiveness to the PRC’s articulated needs and to better deliver flexible and timely KPS to the government that respond effectively to emerging policies and capacity development needs.

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20 Knowledge hubs are ADB partnerships with the PRC agencies that aim to expand the mutual learning experience between the PRC and other DMCS in various sectors. Each hub aims to become a center of excellence that can provide thought leadership, undertake research and training, promote collaboration, and use good and best practices in a specific domain. The PRC has also benefitted from other regional knowledge hubs supported by ADB. These include the International Poverty Reduction Center in China, the Asia-Pacific Center for Water Security (including the centers for hydroinformatics in river basins and erosion and sedimentation), the regional platform for carbon capture and storage technology, and the Asia-Pacific Finance and Development Center.

21 This hub operated sought to help realign transport development in the region in ways consistent with emerging challenges by creating sustainable road or rail networks, but it has not been pursued.

22 An aide-memoire captured the details of the discussion, but no memorandum of understanding or any other agreement has been signed to formally establish the RKSI.


24 Para. 7, footnote 9. The small-scale TA cost does not exceed $225,000.
24. ADB has supported seven facility-type TA projects in the PRC since 2003. Four have closed, and two have been extended and are ongoing. A third was approved in 2014. Each facility-type TA is managed by a different project officer in the ADB resident mission in the PRC. In 2015, three facility-type TA projects are operating simultaneously. In the absence of a single focal person or implementation team, coordination and communication issues could arise.

25. Communication and coordination problems have acted as constraints on ADB’s delivery of KPS. Challenges in systematically collecting and centrally storing important knowledge data have constrained ADB’s ability to respond agilely, efficiently, and effectively to member country knowledge demands. ADB’s store of KPS needs to be improved. This is because it has been unable to satisfactorily cull institutional knowledge embedded in its project documents, track it, store it, or effectively use it in subsequent project design and implementation in the PRC.

26. Literature review shows that institutional silos create high costs in terms of duplication of effort, inconsistency, and inefficiency. ADB launched the “One ADB” initiative in 2013 to try to improve clarity, consistency, and congruence within the organization and in ADB’s activities. It also launched a “One ADB” knowledge partnership with the PRC to increase the knowledge dialogue and better coordinate knowledge work. A working group on knowledge partnerships was also established with the PRC in 2014. The group compiled all past ADB knowledge relevant to the PRC and prepared ADB’s 2014 PRC knowledge plan. Box 1 provides important details on the “One ADB” approach.

27. Since October 2013, ADB’s PRC Resident Mission has been gathering information on all new legislation formulated by the government that is relevant to ADB operations 3 or 4 times a year and providing it to all relevant ADB units. Each report includes a commentary on some topic relevant to the PRC’s reform programs—for instance, environmental protection or household registration reform. The reports are intended to increase ADB staff awareness and knowledge of the PRC’s reform program and can be considered a small contribution to achieving the ultimate goal of “One ADB.”

28. Prior to the “One ADB” initiative, EARD shared information on knowledge activity with other ADB departments infrequently. In 2012, the knowledge sharing and services center (KSSC) was established in the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department to connect and coordinate the different knowledge sharing platforms across ADB. Since its inception, KSSC has held one meeting to facilitate improved knowledge product coordination and communications across ADB units.

29. To move “One ADB” approach forward, ADB held its first knowledge operations and review meeting (KORM) in April 2014. The KSSC became responsible for organizing and carrying out scheduled KORMs. The 2014 KORM called for (i) resident missions to manage knowledge and to take an interactive approach with DMCs in coordinating country knowledge work and sharing information, (ii) an information technology system for easy monitoring of TA work, (iii) optimal consultant engagement and ADB-leveraged knowledge, (iv) a balance between meeting the desire of DMCs for capacity building in government and supporting capacity development TA used by ADB to continually build upon its own knowledge base, (v) the continued exploration for the approaches that best use ADB staff knowledge, (vi) improved interdepartmental synergies and avoidance of inefficient redundancy, (vii) the formulation of knowledge plans along with the formulation of partnership strategies, and (viii) recognition that ADB’s knowledge is not only TA-driven. ADB anticipates that joint

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25 For example during 2006–2014, ADB’s Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department produced 12 flagship publications, 17 books, 8 issues of Asian Development Review, 175 working papers, 58 other publication, and 4 databases. However, the department knowledge products are not classified by country or any other category. Therefore, it is not immediately clear which publications or databases were intended to hold information valuable to the PRC.

26 Project documents include ADB reports and recommendations of the President, project completion reports, technical assistant reports, technical assistance completion reports, and consultant reports.

EARD and KSSC efforts through the KORM will result in improved coordination and communication of knowledge between ADB and the PRC and within ADB.

30. Despite these activities and ongoing preparation of a country knowledge plan for ADB’s next PRC country partnership strategy, not all the priorities and challenges related to identifying and delivering knowledge solutions to the PRC through “One ADB” have been met, nor have all the opportunities been exploited. In effect, current efforts still fall short. With continued internal discussions and efforts in ADB, for example, information related to the PRC could be shared more appropriately across departments.

Box 1: “One ADB”

Mobilizing interdepartmental and interdisciplinary teams will be emphasized to provide timely and effective services to client countries under the One ADB approach adopted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 2013.

“One ADB” aims to cultivate a culture in ADB that will consolidate and strengthen delivery of knowledge and services. It also includes measures for promoting better coordination between ADB’s public and private sector operations, strengthening and empowering resident missions, and improving internal information communications technology systems and capacity. Under this approach, performance metrics are expected to soon be a part of annual performance reviews to strengthen teamwork throughout ADB.

Under the “One ADB” approach, ADB departments are to work together to provide knowledge solutions. Resident missions are expected to seek knowledge partnerships and dialogue opportunities with member countries and coordinate ADB support. To ensure that knowledge work is operationally relevant, ADB expects its communities of practice will become more involved in project processing and preparing related knowledge products. Information and communication technology will be used more effectively for storage, retrieval, and dissemination of knowledge products and data. To promote South-South knowledge sharing, ADB will take a lead role. Knowledge solutions, along with other strategic priorities, will help promote innovative development solutions and services in member countries.

Sharing of skills across departments and offices will be promoted under the “One ADB” approach. All ADB departments and offices will work together in providing knowledge services. Knowledge operations will be integrated into ADB country programs, and knowledge management plans will be a required part of a country program strategy. Resident missions will be empowered by providing them with greater authority and mandates. They will seek knowledge partnership opportunities with member countries and coordinate ADB support. National staff will play a greater role than in the past. Communities of practice will become more involved in project processing and preparing related knowledge products to support operations. Through its corporate results framework, ADB will regularly assess stakeholder perceptions of ADB as a source of knowledge and the use of knowledge products through the ADB website.

The “One ADB” approach will bring the institution together to build synergies and use them for optimal demonstrational impact. This will help make the ADB business model and institutional setting more innovative, inclusive, and integrated.

3. Knowledge Products and Services Results

31. ADB KPS have contributed to government planning, policy and decision making, and actions in the PRC. Despite ADB’s shortcomings in harvesting knowledge, its knowledge products had added value to its conventional TA and loan support to the country by the end of the study period. The results also showed that the knowledge products provided by ADB to the PRC, combined with other non-ADB knowledge sources, have been effective and had significant impacts.\(^{28}\)

a. Value Addition through Standalone Knowledge Products

32. ADB knowledge products include TA outputs and independent stand-alones. This assessment found that the themes of stand-alone knowledge products in the PRC were sometimes different from the themes of TA projects. This difference is evidence that ADB knowledge resources brought added value to the PRC beyond its ordinary loan and TA support across sectors.

33. The degree of added value provided by stand-alones—beyond that of ADB’s conventional support—varied depending on sector. In the road subsector of the PRC’s transport sector, ADB’s TA projects focused during the study period on maintenance, safety, sustainability, the environment, and gender equity. However, the independent knowledge products produced by EARD in this subsector focused on general subsector financing, tolling expressways, maintenance, and policy reform.

34. The concentration of ADB TA in the PRC’s finance sector included rural finance, credit laws, small and medium-sized enterprise finance, and capital market development. The focus of stand-alone finance sector knowledge products differed and included monetary finance, housing finance, shadow banking, taxation, and financial governance. ADB provided knowledge support for regional financial market integration under the Association of South East Asian Nations Plus Three cooperation process, the Asia–Europe finance ministers meeting, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Initiative on regional bond market development, the Association of Credit Rating Agencies in Asia, and the East Asia Pacific Central Banks Asian Bond Fund. Such knowledge support appears to have been aimed at meeting the PRC’s changing need to ensure economic and financial stability through regional financial mechanisms.

35. While knowledge products derived from the TA outputs mirrored the limited scope and content of the ADB’s TA projects in the PRC’s social sectors, the products that resulted from staff work varied widely in topic, including rural poverty reduction, social assistance for migrant workers, population ageing, universal social security coverage, conditional cash transfers, gender issues, and the 3Es (education, employment, and entrepreneurship).

36. In the agriculture and natural resources sector, stand-alone knowledge products included policy notes, opinion pieces, and books and monographs published under ADB’s Good Practice Series, which shared successful project experience and international experiences or provided policy suggestions or recommendations. For example, ADB published a flyer based on experience from a project approved in 2011. The flyer provided an overview of how ADB’s agricultural development support helped farmers meet the rising challenges in water security, food production, and climate change.\(^{29}\)

37. Stand-alone knowledge products in energy dealt with the same subsectors and themes as ADB’s loan and TA interventions—energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean coal and carbon capture utilization and storage, emission trading systems, and market-driven low carbon development. ADB provided knowledge support through its technical note series for innovative assessments and discussions on integrated gasification combined cycle power plants, the financing of carbon capture

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\(^{28}\) Knowledge products are defined here as including knowledge and knowledge products drawn from TCRs and consultant reports. Sources have included sector and thematic papers, technical notes, and conference papers and presentations.

\(^{29}\) The project had introduced water conservation and energy-efficient water use practices to farmers in some counties in Shaanxi Province to increase resilience to climate change and declining water table. The provincial government financed the replication of this project in other counties.
and storage in emerging economies, and the opportunities and challenges for concentrated solar thermal power development. These products aimed to meet the PRC’s evolving need for clean and alternative energy innovation, capacity enhancement, and knowledge to promote best practices. They also offer the possibility of scaling up across the ADB region.

### b. Knowledge Product and Service Contributions to Government Decision Making

38. The government confirmed to the CAPE team the importance of ADB knowledge products and their contribution in conjunction with non-ADB knowledge products in helping the government make decisions and formulate action in various sectors. A review of ADB knowledge products delivered to the PRC details these contributions by sector, and these contributions and inputs to policy making are discussed in the main text of the CAPE report.

39. ADB has also responded to a government’s request to provide knowledge inputs and policy advice for the government’s forthcoming 13th five-year plan for 2016–2020 through TA approved in 2014.\(^{30}\) The TA aims to deliver knowledge products that present policy options for (i) developing policies to bring about market-led industrial transformation and technological upgrading to foster innovation-driven growth; (ii) addressing the needs of the rural population and modernizing the agriculture sector to balance rural–urban development; (iii) catalyzing human resources transformation to develop the human capital needed to underpin innovation-driven growth; (iv) mitigating environmental degradation to ensure a sustainable development path; (v) addressing the impact of climate change alongside the process of industrial transformation; (vi) enhancing water security as part of the challenge to sustain inclusive growth; (vii) modernizing public finance, particularly at the local government level, including the development of a sustainable subnational debt management system; and (viii) facilitating the PRC’s further integration into the global and regional economy through trade, investment, and greater involvement in the international financial system. To what extent this work will find a place in the forthcoming plan is not yet clear.

40. While evidence shows that ADB’s knowledge work adds value to its conventional TA and lending support and contributes constructively to government policy and actions, the use and outcomes of ADB knowledge products cannot be monitored or assessed systematically.

### 4. Relevance

41. Bringing about the transformational changes necessary to put the PRC on a sustainable growth path will require more than conventional knowledge and experience. This gives ADB space to seek and develop innovative suggestions and recommendations for sustainable growth that align the country’s particular social-political economy, the PRC’s view of knowledge as a necessary factor for economic development, and knowledge as requisite for sustainable growth. Despite space for improvement, ADB knowledge products were appropriate overall and are rated relevant.

42. ADB’s knowledge products have been relevant with regard to country partnership and individual sector strategies. Specific sector responses have been timely, resulting in knowledge products that are innovative and potentially transformational. However, knowledge products with regard to overall sustainable growth “with Chinese characteristics,” have been more conventional in nature, including ADB suggestions and recommendations, mirroring European and American successes in social-political economic environments quite different from that of the PRC.

43. TA and independent stand-alone knowledge products during the study period were consistent with sector, country, and regional strategies; generally satisfactory in quality; and relevant to ADB’s sector strategies. Many KPS fit the PRC’s changing needs, covered emerging and innovative topics, built capacity, and helped make the PRC and other country knowledge transferable to the rest of ADB’s

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They promoted sector best practices and scaling-up opportunities. The delivery characteristics for knowledge dissemination were in line with ADB knowledge strategies.

5. Lessons and Recommendations

44. Facility-type TA has been essential in delivering timely and appropriate KPS in the PRC. They were designed with speedy response to needs and flexibility in mind. Requests by the PRC for follow-up facility-type TA demonstrate that the facilities have indeed successfully addressed pressing problems. To sustain the effectiveness, efficiency, and flexibility of the facility-type TA approach in the PRC, it is recommended that a facility-type TA team—rather than only a focal person—be set up in the resident mission to ratchet up ADB successful contribution to solving problems in the country in real time.

45. Among other things, ADB-supported knowledge hubs are important in promoting South–South cooperation by making the PRC knowledge transferable to the rest of Asia and the Pacific. However, they are dispersed by sector or subsector, and this makes tracking, planning, and coordinating hub information difficult, if not impossible. There needs to be a single knowledge hub focal point for the PRC—a formal, institutionalized think tank (a center of excellence) that houses all ADB-supported and other knowledge hubs. The RKSI could serve as such a focal point, but without important formalities, executable agreements, and sustainable funding it falls short. A formal institutionalized think tank could manage, track, plan and coordinate various knowledge programs more efficiently than is being done now. This would allow better objective observation of results and improved measurement of successful knowledge transfer and delivery.

46. It is essential that ADB’s forthcoming country knowledge plan for the PRC acknowledges the opportunities for creating more innovative and more likely transformational KPS for the country. Such a plan should discuss the rationale and aim of possible knowledge programs in a transparent way. It is recommended that such a plan include sector or thematic program design and monitoring frameworks to enable informative measurement and evaluation—facilitating the collection of and access to important tacit knowledge for developing future assistance projects, conventional TA and loan-related, as well as stand-alone.

47. In addition to the need for a unified center of excellence, ADB must work much harder to make the “One ADB” culture an operational reality in its activities and delivery of knowledge-driven solutions. Well before it achieves all the “One ADB” goals fully, its departments can collaborate effectively to help tackle the PRC’s development challenges. Such collaboration in developing the next country partnership strategy can identify the right business issues, pinpoint the right underlying obstacles, adopt the right design characteristics, and implement change in the right way. This collaboration is vital to generate seamless, synergetic, and innovative solutions for the PRC.

## 2013

**Policy Notes Series**

- Low-Carbon Development in Small and Medium-Sized Cities in the People’s Republic of China: Challenges and Opportunities (ADB Brief No. 14)
- Addressing Beijing Air Pollution Problem (Observations and Suggestions)
- Shanxi Farmers Embrace Modern Irrigation Methods to Adapt to Climate Change (Knowledge showcase)
- Public–Private Partnerships for Urbanization
- Toward Sustainable Inclusive Growth in the PRC (Policy brief)
- Transiting to High Income Status (Policy note)
- Wages and Competitiveness in the People’s Republic of China (Observations and Suggestions)
- Gender and the 3Es (Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship)—Country Report
- Fostering Farmer Cooperatives in Poor Western Communities of the People’s Republic of China (Observations and Suggestions)
- Sustaining Village Poverty Reduction with Environmental Community Development Funds in the People’s Republic of China
- Reducing Inequality in the People’s Republic of China through Fiscal Reform (Observations and Suggestions)
- Housing the People (Knowledge brief)
- Trade and Employment in Asia (Journal article)

**Special Publications**

- Economics of Climate Change in East Asia
- PRC Country Report on the Economics of Climate Change
- Costs of Adaptation to Rising Coastal Water Levels for People’s Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea
- Trade and Employment in Asia
- Why Should the People's Republic of China Unlock Services? (ADB blog article)
- Reforms High on Agenda of the People’s Republic of China’s New Leaders (ADB blog article)
- Avoiding the Middle Income Trap in the People’s Republic of China (ADB blog article)
- Aging—A Threat to People’s Republic of China’s Growth (ADB blog article)
- Should China Charge Tolls on Expressways? (Op-ed article)
- The Challenge of a Graying China (Op-ed article)
- Fiscal Reforms Adapt to China’s Condition (Op-ed article)
- Public Finance Reform Vital (Op-ed article)
- Green Dream for China’s Reforms (Op-ed article)
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- Modern Agriculture Demonstration District and the New Priority for China’s Modern Agriculture Development
- Increasing Climate Change Resilience of Urban Water Infrastructure: Based on a Case Study from Wuhan City, People’s Republic of China
- Strategic Options for Urbanization in the People’s Republic of China: Key Findings
- International Lessons for Road Safety in the People's Republic of China (ADB East Asia Working Paper Series)
- Workshop Proceedings: Second High Level Workshop on Inland Waterway Transport
- Improving Agricultural Productivity and Rural Livelihoods: A Knowledge Sharing Experience
- New Waterbird Count Data from the Heihe River in Gansu province, western China (Op-ed article)
- Modernizing Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures to Facilitate Trade in Agricultural and Food Products
- Scaling Up of Sustainable Land Management in the Western People’s Republic of China: Evaluation of a 10-Year Partnership
### 2013

- Improving Provider Payment Methods to Increase the Purchasing Capacity of the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme
- Policy Study on Urban Modern Agriculture in Tianjin
- Research on Consulting Service in Industrial Transition and Upgrading in Anhui
- Research on Mechanism of Economic Compensation for Farmland Protection
- Improving Performance Management in Agricultural Construction Projects

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  - Accelerating Reform of Local Treasury Cash Management in the People’s Republic of China (Observations and Suggestions)
  - Financing Low-Cost Rental Housing in the People’s Republic of China (Observations and Suggestions)
  - Greener Pastures from the Sun: Solar Photovoltaic-Driven Irrigation in Qinghai Province (Knowledge Showcase)

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  - Case Study on South-South Cooperation: PRC-ADB Knowledge Sharing Platform
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  - Supporting Sustainable Urbanization
  - Cities, Prepare for a Rainy Day
  - Chance to Rethink Economic Policies

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  - Comparative Analysis of Sewage Sludge Management Options for Chinese Cities
  - Financing Road Construction and Maintenance After Fuel Tax Reform
  - Transport Efficiency through Logistics
  - Urban Transport Strategy to Combat Climate Change
  - Performance-Based Routine Maintenance of Rural Roads by Maintenance Groups: Manual for Maintenance Groups
  - Performance-Based Routine Maintenance of Rural Roads by Maintenance Groups: Guide for Communications Bureaus
  - Flood Risk Management in the People’s Republic of China: Learning to Live with Flood Risk
  - Law, Policy, and Dryland Ecosystems in the People’s Republic of China
  - Toward an Environmentally Sustainable Future: Country Environmental Analysis of the People’s Republic of China
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  - Local Treasury Cash Management in the People’s Republic of China
  - Government Investment Model and Compensation Mechanism for Healthcare Facilities
  - The Impact of Tourism Development on Hunan’s Economy
  - Study on Elimination of Some Major Problems of the Poverty Belt around Beijing and Tianjin
  - Study on the Legal System for Low- and Middle-Income Housing Supply in the People’s Republic of China
  - Pilot Testing Project on School-Enterprises Cooperation for Skills Development in the People’s Republic of China
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  - Research on Central PRC Undertaking Industrial Transfer and Promoting Industrial Upgrade

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- How We Can Protect the Elixir of Life
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- Sustainable Urban Development in the People’s Republic of China: Eco-City Development—A New and Sustainable Way Forward?
- Sludge Strategy for the People’s Republic of China: Promoting Sustainable Solutions
- Community-Based Routine Road Maintenance by Women’s Groups—Manual for Maintenance Groups
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- Earthquake Risk and Earthquake Catastrophe Insurance for the People’s Republic of China (ADB Sustainable Development Working Paper Series)

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- A General Equilibrium Analysis of the Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture in the People’s Republic of China
- Green Transport: Resource Optimization in the Road Sector in the People’s Republic of China
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- Implications of the People’s Republic of China’s Voluntary Carbon Intensity Cut
- Economic Growth and Environmental Regulation: The People’s Republic of China’s Path to a Brighter Future
- Employment, Income, and Public Services for Rural Migrants in Cities—From the Perspective of Urban Poverty

## 2008

### Policy Notes Series

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- Policy Responses to Rising Food Prices in the People’s Republic of China—Observations and Suggestions
- International Experiences and Suggestions on Post-Disaster Rehabilitation and Reconstruction—Observations and Suggestions
- Policy Note on the Impact of Nonsovereign Lending
- Reducing Poverty and Hunger in Asia: The Role of Agricultural and Rural Development
- Knowledge Showcase #1: The Urgent Need for “Smart Urban Transport” to Combat Climate Change in the People’s Republic of China
- Knowledge Showcase #5: Using Economic Instruments to Promote Environmentally Sustainable Transportation in the People’s Republic of China

### Good Practice Series

- Clean Energy: Addressing Climate Change, Energy Security, and Worker Safety—Fugitive Methane from Coal Mines
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<td>Best Practices of Land Degradation Control in Dryland Areas of the People’s Republic of China</td>
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|  | World Trade Organization Accession: Challenges and Opportunities for Railways in the People’s Republic of China |
|  | Balanced Scorecard for State-Owned Enterprises |
|  | Guidelines for Promoting Participatory Town Development |

ADB = Asian development Bank, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, GEF = Global Environment Facility, No. = number, PRC = People’s Republic of China. 
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ADB = Asian Development Bank.
Source: Asian Development Bank Institute