



Environment Services

INFOCUS

ADB helps countries shift to environmentally sustainable growth paths to ensure long-term poverty reduction and improved quality of life

Challenge

How can ADB continue to promote environmentally sustainable growth in a region confronted with climate change and the environmental effects of rapid economic growth and pervasive poverty?

Strategy

ADB’s long-term strategic framework for 2008–2020 (Strategy 2020) reaffirms the importance of environmentally sustainable growth to achieve its mission to help countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people.

Response

ADB promotes investments in sound environmental and natural resource management, while promoting low-carbon growth and adaptation to climate change. ADB helps countries mainstream environmental considerations into their policies and investment programs, and strengthen their legal and regulatory frameworks and enforcement capacities. It supports regional cooperation on shared environmental public goods, and facilitates knowledge transfer on environmental management and new sustainable technologies. It also requires integrating environmental safeguards into its projects.

“Environmental sustainability is a prerequisite for economic growth in Asia and the Pacific. We simply cannot grow now and clean up later.”

—Nessim J. Ahmad, Director, Environment and Safeguards Division, concurrently Practice Leader (Environment)

ADB’s Strategy 2020 meeting the needs of Asia and the Pacific

Strategic Direction

- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Environmentally Sustainable Growth
- Regional Integration

Drivers of Change

- Private Sector
- Good Governance
- Gender Equity
- Knowledge Solutions
- Partnerships

Read more at www.adb.org/Strategy2020/

Asia’s rapid growth over the past decades has lifted millions out of poverty but these gains and future growth may be at risk because much of the development in the region is not environmentally sustainable.

Natural resources are being degraded and depleted, while cities and towns are increasingly polluted. Impacts from global climate change threaten the productivity and integrity of natural systems. The poor, who depend on these resources for their livelihood, will suffer most.

To help developing member countries (DMCs) achieve environmentally sustainable growth, ADB is taking wide-ranging actions.

Mainstreaming environment in ADB’s operations

ADB continues to support projects with environmental sustainability as a theme. Lending for projects with environment as a theme in 2010 alone reached more than \$5 billion, equivalent to 31% of total lending. Compared with the 3-year rolling average of 29% during 2007–2009, the proportion

of ADB-financed projects with environmental sustainability as a theme reached 37% during 2008–2010, ADB’s highest by far, exceeding ADB’s 3-year rolling average target of 25% in 2010–2012.

Promoting transitions to sustainable infrastructure

To help DMCs make shifts towards environmental sustainability and contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive growth, ADB promotes and supports, through several initiatives, infrastructure investments in clean, efficient, and climate resilient energy systems; shifts to efficient and sustainable modes of transportation; increasing access to reliable and affordable water and sanitation; and climate resilient and livable cities. For instance, ADB’s Sustainable Transport Initiative supports investments in energy-efficient and sustainable modes of transportation, with a focus on investments in clean, low-carbon, climate resilient, safe, accessible, and affordable transport systems; and integrating urban and land use planning approaches that enhance mobility while reducing travel demands.

Improving natural resource management and maintaining ecosystem integrity

ADB is supporting a range of actions to strengthen national resource and ecosystem integrity, with a focus on sustainable land and forest management, coastal and marine resources, integrated water resource management, and agriculture sustainability and food security.

ADB supports regional cooperation initiatives to manage global and regional significant transboundary ecosystems such as the biodiversity corridors in the Greater Mekong Subregion and the Heart of Borneo.

Another example is Coral Triangle Initiative where ADB, in partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and by mobilizing resources from other development partners, is working with Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste to support marine and coastal resource conservation, policy development, and institutional strengthening programs for the Coral Triangle.

Addressing climate change: promoting low carbon growth and adaptation

Continued poverty reduction in Asia and the Pacific will not be possible without proactive efforts to mitigate the causes of global warming and help the region—and especially its most vulnerable citizens in both rural and urban settings: the poor, women, children, and the elderly—to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

ADB will continue to expand support for clean energy, including energy efficiency improvements and the development of renewable energy supplies, by increasing the current \$1 billion annual target to \$2 billion per year by 2013.

ADB provides financing for climate risk management through various bilateral and multilateral sources, including its own Climate Change Fund, to support climate adaptation programs and projects and foster capacity building for climate resilience.

ADB support helps countries incorporate vulnerability risk management into national development strategies and actions, increase climate resilience of vulnerable sectors, climate-proof projects, and address the social dimensions of climate change.

Enhancing environmental governance

ADB helps DMCs integrate environmental objectives into their policies and programs. It engages in policy dialogue and assists in initiating institutional reform.

It helps strengthen countries' legal, institutional, and regulatory frameworks; supports sectors in adopting new policy tools to foster sustainable development; and builds the capacities of national and local environmental authorities, as well as of other institutions.

Forging partnerships

Responding to Asia's environmental challenges requires the full engagement of all development partners across the region, with each bringing its own unique mix of skills, interests, and objectives.

To complement its core competencies and ensure targeted results, ADB works with environmental nongovernment organizations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature and the International Union for Conservation of Nature; civil society; other development institutions, including the United Nations and GEF; and the private sector. ADB also facilitates the sharing of experience and good practices, including those on environmental enforcement and air quality management.

Integrating safeguards in projects

ADB integrates environmental safeguards into projects to avoid, minimize, mitigate and/or offset adverse environmental impacts.

The Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS) governing the environmental and social safeguards of ADB's operations was approved by the Board of Directors on 20 July 2009 and came into effect on 20 January 2010. The safeguard policy calls for a structured process of impact assessment, planning, and management to address the adverse impacts of projects.

The SPS articulates ADB's environmental safeguard policy principles and borrower requirements for delivering safeguards. It formalizes the coverage of environmental assessment to include biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management, pollution prevention and abatement, occupational and community health and safety, and physical cultural resources. SPS finalization and approval was the culmination of an extensive and highly inclusive consultation process.

The SPS also emphasizes safeguard implementation by requiring the establishment of local grievance mechanisms, strengthening ADB's supervision activities, and laying out disclosure and consultation requirements. The SPS emphasizes capacity development in DMCs and introduces provisions to strengthen and apply country safeguard systems in line with Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.

ADB Focal Point
Nessim J. Ahmad
Regional and Sustainable
Development Department

www.adb.org/Environment/

For inquiries, contact
ADB Media Center
mediacenter@adb.org
Tel +63 2 632 5090