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# Australia China Environment Development Program

*Partners for a Better Environment*

## Newsletter

ISSUE 3



# Foreword

Welcome to this third edition of the ACEDP E-Newsletter, which we will continue to produce on a regular quarterly basis. We do invite your comments and views on how we can improve the newsletter – should there be more national policy updates? – should we produce it more or less frequent? – should we have links to major national/international workshops seminars and conferences? – any other?

Over to you....



Gunther Mau,  
Program Manager

# ACEDP Spotlights

## SECOND ROUND OF FUNDING UNDER THE ACEDP

The deadline for submitting proposals for funding under the ACEDP during our second round is almost there and any proposal received after 20 March will have to go to the next round in September/ October 2009.

Also going to the next round will be any proposals that require, in the assessment of the PCO, additional work such as confirmation of partner inputs, detailed budgets, work plans and so on.

All proposals that have passed the initial PCO assessment will be circulated to the nine program core partners in Australia and China in late March, giving agencies an opportunity to comment on any proposal if they so wish. In the first half of April, the proposals, together with the PCO assessment and partner comments will be forwarded to the EAT for final appraisal and production of a prioritised merit list that will then be submitted to AusAID and MOFCOM for endorsement.

Endorsed proposals will be included in the ACEDP pipeline for the next year (2009-10) and beyond and applicants will be required to produce a brief Activity Design Document that, after approval by the PCO, will form the basis for an implementation contract. It is hoped this will greatly reduce the time between proposal and implementation and only in some instances will it be necessary to go to public tender or conduct feasibility / design studies.

## ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION IN FORESTRY BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOP COMPLETED

A two-day 'Ecological Conservation in Forestry' Brainstorming Workshop was held in Beijing from 2-3 December 2008 followed by a one-day field trip to Badaling Certified Forest Farm. A total of 35 participants from China and Australia attended the workshop. This included from Australia: AusAID Beijing, the Australian Government Bureau of Rural Science, the Southern Cross University and the University of New South Wales. From China it included the State Forestry Administration (SFA), the China National Forestry Economics and Development Research Centre (CNFEDRC), the Beijing Municipal Forestry Bureau (BMFB), the Qinghai Forestry Bureau (QFB) and the Sichuan Daduhe Forestation Administration. Donor organizations and NGO representatives included the UNDP, ADB, Wetland International, APFNet and Shanshui Conservation Centre respectively.

The objective of the workshop was to define a set of priority activities that can be proposed for funding to different bilateral and multilateral donors, including but not limited to AusAID (ACEDP, Scholarship Program, SAS, etc). During the two-day workshop, the participants discussed and identified two areas of mutual interests: tools for monitoring and evaluating ecological conservation activities and the feasibility study of carbon sequestration and community-based ecological compensation in the forest sector.

Following the workshop, SFA in conjunction with QFB is expected to develop a proposal with the support from Australian experts for submission to ACEDP PCO in March 2009.



## MOBILISATION TRIP TO SUZHOU AND WUXI FOR THE LAKE TAI WATER POLLUTION TREATMENT PROJECT



Meeting in Wuxi

Two mobilisation workshops were held in Suzhou and Wuxi City from 15th to 18th December 2008. The two cities are pilot locations for the 'Lake Tai Water Pollution Treatment Project' and the workshops aimed to introduce local officials to the project and discuss and refine respective roles and responsibilities. The workshops were jointly organised and run by the International Cooperation Centre (ICC) of the National Development and Reform Commission, and ACEDP's PCO.

Local Development and Reform Commissions (DRCs) and Environment Protection Bureaus participated in the workshops and expressed their interest and willingness to being involved in the Project. The two workshops held discussions on the implementation of the Project as well as how the project can best address ongoing long-term as well as emergency needs in the local area. The workshops concluded that Suzhou and Wuxi DRCs will be the leading agencies at the local level for this Project, with tasks clearly allocated to discreet agencies for which focal points were nominated. A leading group, that will comprise representatives of municipal governments and with responsibilities for overall high-level guidance, will be nominated after further discussion with municipal governments.

The workshops were an NDRC ICC initiative and are seen as a pre-requisite for Project implementation in order to ensure common understanding of the Project's activities and unambiguous distribution of responsibilities.

## TRANS-JURISDICTIONAL WATER POLLUTION MANAGEMENT PROJECT - INCEPTION WORKSHOP



Workshop Group Photo of Participants

The Trans- Jurisdictional Water Pollution Management Project launched its Inception Workshop in Beijing on 13-14 January 2009.

More than 50 specialists from Australia and China attended, including program owners AusAID and MOFCOM; the four Chinese core partners MEP, MWR, NDRC and SFA; the Program Coordination Office (PCO); international donors such as the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union (EU); as well as representatives from the four participating provinces along the Zhangweinan river basin (Hebei, Henan, Shandong and Shanxi) along with a number of senior experts from Chinese institutions and universities.

The project will focus on the **Zhangweinan sub-basin of Haihe River** System in NE China. The joint project team, comprising the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES), Australia's Cardno Acil Pty Ltd and the Foreign Economic Cooperation Office of the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP-FECO), presented initial findings, exchanged experience with other donor projects in the same geographic or thematic area and identified the demands of the four participating provinces. A detailed workplan was discussed and agreed upon that will guide project implementation. The project team has produced a final Inception Report incorporating all comments and discussions.

## THE 1ST DONOR NETWORK MEETING ON LAKE TAI

Jointly held by ACEDP and NDRC International Cooperation Centre (ICC), the 1st Donor Network Meeting on Lake Tai was initiated on January 16th 2009. Representatives from AusAID, World Bank and Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands participated in the meeting. ACEDP Program Manager Gunther Mau introduced the background of ACEDP and the purpose of the ACEDP donor networks. These networks are project-specific and they aim to share information, explore synergies, learn from each other's lessons (good and bad) and explore opportunities for co-funding and joint operations. Mr. Huo Enquan, Deputy Director General of the International Cooperation Centre of NDRC introduced the Chinese Government's 'National Lake Tai Restoration Plan' and talked on national priorities on Lake Tai issues. Donors then exchanged information on their activities, including the ACEDP funded Lake Tai Water Pollution Treatment Project, the World Bank funded Lake Tai Wetland Loan Project and initiatives by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Participants favoured this network platform and agreed to continue meetings on an as needed basis.

## EAT - POLICY GAP ANALYSIS & PROGRESS REVIEW MISSION TO CHINA



A team under the leadership of the EAT Chair Peter Millington and comprising EAT member Dr. Si Zhizhong, ACEDP Principle Policy Coordinator Mr Peter Sutherland and the ACEDP Quality Assurance Advisor Dr Alan

Ferguson completed the China mission of the first high-level assessment of ACEDP performance over the last 18 months from Feb 15th to 28th 2009. The team met with the two ACEDP owners – AusAID and MOFCOM and with the four Chinese program core partners – NDRC, MWR, MEP and SFA in Beijing. They also met with one of the major project implementing agencies – the Yellow River Conservancy Commission (YRCC) in Zhengzhou, Henan Province to solicit their opinions on progress, new policy priorities and approaches so as to maximize the policy relevance of the existing 'core projects'.



In Zhengzhou the team met with YRCC policy officials and technical experts involved in ACEDP projects and with YRCC Vice Commissioner Mr. Xu Cheng, to discuss program issues and explore the potential for possible twinning arrangements with Australian river basin agencies. The team also met with the EU Team Leader of the Yellow River Component under the EU-China River Basin Management Program. A field trip was arranged to the People Victory Channel, one of the proposed pilot sites under the ACEDP project proposal "Improving Water Use Efficiency Through Better Irrigation District Management and Water Right Trading."

Further meetings in Australia will be conducted during March. A Mission Report will be produced and submitted to AusAID/MOFCOM for comments, following which the team will provide feedback to partner agencies in Australia and China.

## NEW PCO STAFF

**The PCO welcomes two new offices that joined its staff in December.**

### Mr (Bob) Baohua Ma - Office Manager

Mr Ma joined the PCO team in December 2008 as the new Office Manager with overall responsibilities for PCO logistics, information and contract management. Bob has extensive previous work experience, gained with a number of different AusAID-funded China projects where he worked as interpreter and administrator for about 10 years. In addition, he managed a dairy farm in the USA for one year, worked in a Chinese trading company in Australia for 3 years and for many years in a large State Owned Enterprise in China.

### Ms (Vera) Wei Zhang - Communications and Engagement Officer

Ms Zhang was appointed by GHD in December 2008 as Communications and Engagement Officer. She is responsible for the implementation of the ACEDP Communication and Engagement Strategy, including website update, regular uploads of project fact-sheets, e-newsletter and other related work. Prior to joining the ACEDP team, she worked for GHD China office with responsibilities for coordination and implementation of quality control and environmental management system. She holds a Master of Environmental Engineering Management degree from University of Technology, Sydney in 2007.

The PCO bids a fond farewell to Ms Julia Li Zhou, Senior Program Officer, who was with the PCO team since its inception in July 2007. Julia decided to migrate to Canada and we wish her all the very best in her new life. She will be sorely missed by everyone.

Ms Casey Mei Feng, formerly the PCO Administration Manager, was promoted into Julia's position and is now working as one of the three PCO Senior Program Officers, together with Nikki Yuee Feng and Ivy Jun Yan Wang.

# Policy and Environment Spotlights

## AUSTRALIA

### New Authority Manages Murray–Darling Basin

Source: <http://www.mdba.gov.au/>

On Monday 15 December 2008, the new Murray–Darling Basin Authority absorbed all the functions of the former Murray–Darling Basin Commission, which ceased to exist.

The creation of the new, independent authority, headed by Chief Executive Mr Rob Freeman, means that, for the first time, a single agency will be responsible for planning the integrated management of water resources of the Murray–Darling Basin.

In addition to the commission's former functions, the new authority's role will include:

- preparing the Basin Plan for adoption by the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, including setting sustainable limits on water that can be taken from surface and groundwater systems across the Basin
- advising the minister on the accreditation of state water resource plans
- developing a water rights information service which facilitates water trading across the Murray–Darling Basin
- measuring and monitoring water resources in the Basin
- gathering information and undertaking research
- engaging the community in the management of the Basin's resources.

## Australia's First National Water Markets Report

Source: <http://www.nwc.gov.au/www/html/956-first-national-water-markets-report--17-dec-08.asp?intSiteID=1>

On 17 December 2008, the CEO of the National Water Commission, Ken Matthews, released the inaugural National Water Commission Australian Water Markets Report 2007-2008 and called for the removal of remaining barriers to trade in water. The report provides the first ever consolidated national summary of water markets. It extends beyond the Murray-Darling Basin and features trading summaries for each state and territory, as well as information about their various operational practices, pricing and governance arrangements. The overall value of water market transactions for the year was approximately A\$1.68 billion, with almost all trading activity occurring in the Murray-Darling states. Mr Matthews said, 'Given the protracted drought in the southern basin, that's good news because it shows that water trading has offered irrigators and other water users greater flexibility in responding to economic and climatic pressures'.

## National Centre For Groundwater Research And Training

*Media release 22 January 2009*

Source: <http://www.nwc.gov.au/www/html/975-introduction---groundwater-research-centre.asp?intSiteID=1>

The Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator the Hon Kim Carr, have announced a new \$60 million National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training to be led by Flinders University. The research and training carried out at the Centre will play an important role in training the next generation of expert hydro-geologists and groundwater specialists. The Centre will bring together a critical mass of world-class scientists to provide postgraduate training and conduct internationally relevant research needed to improve groundwater understanding and use.



## New Murray-Darling water market and termination fee rules

Source: <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090211.html>

On 11 February 2009, the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, announced her decision to adopt the water market rules and rules for termination fees recommended by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).

The water market rules give irrigators the right to request irrigation infrastructure operators transform their water shares into individual, tradeable entitlements. This arrangement will ensure that irrigators in regulated systems cannot be unfairly prevented from trading water entitlements out of their irrigation districts. The termination fee rules permit irrigation infrastructure operators to levy termination fees when irrigators opt to terminate their access to the operator's irrigation network. The rules cap the termination fee at 10 times the annual infrastructure access charge.

Both sets of rules contain transitional periods to allow businesses time to adjust to the new requirements. Further information regarding the water market rules and termination fee rules including both sets of rules, a summary of the rules, and the ACCC's advice can be found at [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au).

## 2009 biennial assessment of implementation of the National Water Initiative

*Closing 20 February 2009*

Source: <http://www.nwc.gov.au/www/html/954-2009-biennial-assessment---list-of-public-submissions.asp?intSiteID=1>

The NWC invited public submissions for the 2009 biennial assessment of progress under the National Water Initiative (NWI). The purpose of the assessment is to report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on progress with implementation of the NWI, and to advise COAG on matters to better realise the objectives and outcomes of the NWI. A Commission discussion paper, available for download from the NWC website [www.nwc.gov.au](http://www.nwc.gov.au) is a guide to the process of making a public submission.

## CHINA

### China Vows Efficient Water Usage

Source: [http://en.ce.cn/National/Politics/200902/16/t20090216\\_18213591.shtml](http://en.ce.cn/National/Politics/200902/16/t20090216_18213591.shtml)

Addressing a national conference on the water issue on 14 February 2009 in Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Mr Chen Lei, Minister of Water Resources, made it clear that water authorities throughout the country would draw red lines for controlling the total amount of water use in various sectors, the discharge of pollution into rivers, and the waste of water.

' Only in this way can we finally form a system of scientifically managing China's water resources, a critical natural and strategic factor for economic and social sustainability, ' he said.

According to the statistics, between 1980 and 2000 less waters were received by some rivers in north China including the Yellow, the Huaihe and the Haihe rivers due to the global warming, making their water supply critical for ensuing a relatively quick and steady economic growth for the provinces along them. Meanwhile, soil erosion and water pollution along

some rivers and lakes were once worsening in many areas with the rapid urbanization and economic development.



### China aims to curb pasture degradation in Tibet by 2030

Source: [http://en.ce.cn/National/Politics/200902/21/t20090221\\_18278697.shtml](http://en.ce.cn/National/Politics/200902/21/t20090221_18278697.shtml)

China's chief economic planner on 20 February 2009 announced that the country aims to revive the degraded pasture and harness rat pest in Tibet by 2030. It is the government's latest goal in the fight against global climate change and to protect the ecology of Tibet, which covers more than 1.2 million square kilometres. The State Council, China's Cabinet, approved on 18 February a plan to protect the environment in southwest Tibet.

' The plan is of great importance to ramping up ecological protection efforts in Tibet, fighting global warming, ensuring China's ecological safety and safeguarding the economic and social development of Tibet, ' said the statement from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

Average temperatures in Tibet rose by 0.32 degrees centigrade every 10 years from 1961 to 2007, quicker than the global and national warming rates, according to the statement.

' The plan also aims at curbing soil erosion, safeguarding biological diversity in Tibet, and promoting the use of clean energy in rural areas. Projects, including natural grassland protection, forest fire prevention, wetland protection, growing forest shelter belts against gales and storms, pasture protection against desertification, will be carried out. ' said the statement.

# Activities Update

Note that fact-sheets for any of ACEDP projects can be downloaded from the ACEDP website in both the Chinese and English language. Please visit <http://www.acedp-partnership.org/template/English/activities.aspx>

## Lake Tai Water Pollution Treatment Project

**Sponsor: National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)**

**Location: Wuxi & Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province**

The 1.5-year A\$ 2 million project went to public tender in Australia in December 08. The tender is now closed and submissions were assessed by a Technical Advisor Panel (TAP) that will make its recommendations to AusAID/MOFCOMN later this month. Pending successful negotiation of a contract, mobilization is expected to occur in April/May of 2009. The PCO has established a network of interested donors that will share information and explore synergies and potential cooperation. Any bi- or multilateral donor agency / NGO that are interested to join are encouraged to contact the PCO.

## Inland River Basins Adjusting To Change Project

**Sponsor: Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) / Gansu Water Resources Department / Shule River Basin Management Bureau / Shiyang River Basin Management Bureau**  
**Location: Gansu Province**

A 2-day brainstorming workshop will be held in Beijing to scope the potential for a medium sized intervention in late May. The workshop will provide an opportunity for Australian and Chinese water scientists and managers to share information and experiences on water shortage issues and management approaches. This will lead to joint scoping of proposals for funding - under the ACEDP but also under the programs of other donors. Interested parties are encouraged to contact the PCO.

## Wetlands Management Policy, Guideline And Capacity Building Project

**Sponsor: State Forestry Administration (SFA)**

**Location: Beijing, Hangzhou, Yinchuan, Fujian, Shandong**

This activity is currently being re-designed and a revised Activity Design Document is due to be submitted in March/April.

## Water Ecology Compensation Policy And Mechanism Projects

**Sponsor: Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) / Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP)**

**Location: Beijing, Danjiangkou Reservoir (MEP), Dongjiang River (MWR)**

The project went to public tender in Australia on 28 February 09 and tenders will close on 27 March. Mobilisation is not expected to occur until May 2009. The PCO will shortly invite donors/NGOs to nominate for participation in a donor network for this project. Interested parties can contact the PCO at any time.

## Trans-Administrative Region Water Environment Policy / Guidelines Project

**Sponsor: Ministry of Environmental Protection**  
**Location: Shanxi, Henan, Hebei and Shandong Provinces**

The Trans- Jurisdictional Water Pollution Management Project that is managed on behalf of the ACEDP by Cardno Acil Pty Ltd ([www.cardnoacil.com.au](http://www.cardnoacil.com.au)) launched its Inception Workshop in Beijing on 13~14 January 2009. See the article under SPOTLIGHTS on page 2.

The next important step in the project is a training program in Australia during April 2009. Participants will include delegates from the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental

Science (CRAES) and the four provincial Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPB) from Hebei, Henan, Shandong and Shanxi Provinces.



Inception Workshop

### Public Participation In Social And Environmental Impact Assessment And Basin Water Pollution Control Project

**Sponsor: Ministry of Environment Protection**  
**Location: Jiangsu Province**

The project went to public tender in Australia in late November 2008. Melbourne based IDSS Pty Ltd ([www.idss.com.au](http://www.idss.com.au)) won the tender and mobilization is expected to occur during April. The PCO has called for expressions of interest in participating in a donor network and so far EU, DFID, UNDP, UNICEF and WB have responded positively. Other donor agencies/ NGOs interested in joining are encouraged to contact the PCO.

This project will be implemented in close collaboration with our other 'social' project, the 'Social Impact, Public Participation & Gender Mainstreaming Project' (see below) that went to tender the same day and was won by the same company, IDSS Pty. Ltd.

### River Health And Environmental Flow In China

**Sponsor: Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) / Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP)**  
**Location: Henan Province, Guangdong Province and Liaoning Provinces**

Funding arrangements for this project that involves two Chinese ministries were complex and protracted and are only now complete. Pending final approval by AusAID/ MOFCOM the activity is expected to go to public tender in Australia during April with mobilization scheduled tentatively in mid-year.

### Improving Water Efficiency Through Better Irrigation District Management And Water Rights Trading Project

**Sponsor: Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) / Yellow River Conservancy Commission**  
**Location: Henan Province and Ningxia Province**

This is a merger of two project proposals, the 'Water Rights and Allocation Trading in the Yellow River Basin' and 'Management for Large Irrigation Districts (Yellow River Basin)'. A draft Activity Design Document will soon be available for comments from recipient agencies MWR/ YRCC. The EAT Policy Gap Analysis & Progress Review mission visited YRCC and explored potential twinning arrangements that are one of the many interesting features of this project proposal.



PGA visited People Victory Channel, Zhengzhou

### Social Impact, Public Participation & Gender Mainstreaming Project

**Sponsor: Ministry of Environmental Protection / Ministry of Water Resources / National Development & Reform Commission / State Forestry Administration / Ministry of Commerce**  
**Location: Beijing**

The project went to public tender in Australia in late November 2008. Melbourne based IDSS Pty Ltd ([www.idss.com.au](http://www.idss.com.au)) won the tender and mobilization is expected to occur in April 09. Several donors have expressed an interest to participate in a donor network, including EU, DFID, UNDP, UNICEF and WB. Other interested parties are encouraged to contact the PCO.

### Australia-China Legal Profession Development

**Sponsor: Australian Government Attorney-General's Department / Chinese Ministry of**

## **Justice / Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council of the PRC**

**Location: Australia**

The Australia-China Legal Profession Development Program is a separate Australian Government initiative that provides short-term training and attachments for Chinese lawyers / legal officials in Australia where they take up placements with Australian law firms, Government Department or Agency, Corporate Counsel and/or Courts or other legal institutions.

The Program seeks to strengthen the capacity of lawyers, administrators and officials to implement the law in ways which are transparent, efficient and fair.

Under its Emerging Priorities component, the ACEDP supported the short-term training and attachment of an official from the Legislative Affairs Office with responsibilities for drafting legislation in the area of agriculture, natural resources and environmental protection. The project commenced in February and will conclude in June 2009.

## **Establishment Of A System Of Environmental-Economic Accounting For Water (SEEAW)**

**Sponsor: The International Centre of Excellence in Water Resources Management (ICEWARM) / Chinese Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) / China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research**  
**Location: Australia**

As a result of an ACEDP-funded scoping study to Australia in mid 2008, MWR has identified ICEWARM as a potential partner for future cooperation in the introduction of a 'System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water' (SEEAW) that the Chinese Government has requested MWR to complete by late 2009.

Under its Emerging Priorities component, the ACEDP is funding specialised training for a group of 16 specialists in Australia, including discussions with relevant environment and water agencies at both Federal and State level. Training is scheduled to commence in mid May and conclude in June. The intent of participating agencies is to develop this into a lasting partnership between MWR and ICEWARM.

## **Operational Activities**

### **Monitoring & Evaluation Framework**

The Program MEF was revised to reflect latest AusAID policies. Donor thinking on M&E issues is evolving rapidly and the challenge for the ACEDP MEF will be to capture the overall results of the ACEDP and not just the sum of the outcomes of individual projects. Related issues are the impact of the ACEDP on livelihood in Chinese target groups and its capacity to influence system change. Overall, the ACEDP MEF must be consistent with AusAID country program outcomes for the China Program. M&E Plans of individual ACEDP funded activities too need to be consistent with both country program and ACEDP requirements.

It is for these reasons that the ACEDP MEF will continue to be an evolving document rather than a " piece of paper ".

### **Communication & Engagement Framework**

The Program CEF has been substantially revised by the newly appointed C&E specialist, Mr David Pembroke from Canberra-based CONTENT GROUP. The new framework will be available on the ACEDP website shortly and implementation of an accompanying action plan for calendar year 2009 will commence.

### **New Funding Guidelines**

ACEDP funding guidelines were recently amended and applicants should make sure to only use the latest version that can be downloaded from the ACEDP website.

### **Involvement of Program Core Partners in Selection of Sub-contractors**

Program Core Partners in both countries have embraced the opportunity to become involved in the selection of contractors to implement project that were advertised for public tender. Apart from strengthening professional implementation and approaches to policy dialogue, their involvement also enhances national ownership of ACEDP initiatives.

The PCO will continue that strategy, and enhance where possible, partner involvement in all aspects of activity identification, design, implementation and evaluation.

For further information about ACEDP activities, please visit our website ([www.acedp-partnership.org](http://www.acedp-partnership.org)).



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