



## An Overview of the The East Asia and Pacific Environmental Initiative

The East Asia and Pacific Environmental Initiative (EAPEI) was established to address critical environmental challenges and opportunities in East Asia and the Pacific in the areas of forest and land use management, coastal and marine resources management and environmental pollution. The EAPEI works to complement other US government assistance in the region by supporting cross-border and regional activities and institutions or by supporting activities in USAID non-presence countries.

The EAPEI follows the Southeast Asia Environmental Initiative (SEA-EI), a one-year program funded in FY 98 to address fire and haze emergency through collaborative work with nations and other donors in the region. The SEA-EI supported better forest management techniques and policies, improved fire prevention and fighting, and improved climate-impact forecasting and environmental monitoring.

The goal of the East Asia and Pacific Environmental Initiative (EAPEI) is to improve environmental conditions promoting improved livelihoods by increasing environmental capacity and knowledge in the region through joint State/USAID and partner efforts. The Strategic Objective is to establish an efficient, transparent and effective grants program contributing to accomplishing the EAPEI goal. The EAPEI makes grants to US federal agencies, international and regional organizations, universities and USAID-registered non-governmental organizations.

To date, EAPEI activities have addressed the following management objectives:

- 1) Promote rational use of renewable natural resources;
- 2) Increase the capacity of national and regional institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, to manage the natural resource base for the next two years and beyond;  
and
- 3) Share knowledge for improved management of natural resources.

The EAPEI has been financially supported by Economic Support Funds (ESF) and programmed by the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. It is managed by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Asia and Near East (ANE) under the ANE/SPOTS Strategic Objective 498-024 "Environment managed for prosperity and sustainability".

The State Department's Office of East Asia and Pacific Affairs (EAP) collaborates closely with USAID in the management of EAPEI. The Department of State retains final decision-making power over the selection of grant recipients due to its control of program funding through the Economic Support Funds.

The EAPEI is currently in its fifth annual grant cycle, and has evolved considerably since its inception in 1998. The Initiative is also facing prospective changes in the coming year, including a possible shift in funding source and levels. Funds for EAPEI have not been requested in the Administration's FY2003 budget. Allocations per year are as follows:

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
\$5,000,000	3,825,000	3,500,000	3,492,000	3,500,000

The EAPEI was established in 1999 to continue the SEA-EI activities of 1998, but added a broader geographic focus (mainland SE Asia and the Pacific), began to work with a more diverse set of partners (NGOs and Universities in addition to U.S. governmental agencies and International organizations), and a marine component was added. A full-time management position was created in 1999, and Tim Resch assumed the Manager position in February 2000. Trigeany Linggoatmodjo was hired in June 2001 as the EAPEI Management Specialist based at USAID/Indonesia.

The evolution of the EAPEI in the last two years has been characterized as becoming more comprehensive in its Request for Application (RFA) distribution, grantee selection, and grant procedures. Applications have increased in detail, quality, size, leverage, and partnerships. Applications also fell from 63 in 2000 to 44 in 2001 and to 29 for 2002 while the total amount requested remained at about \$15 million each year. NGOs have become the primary recipients of EAPEI funds.

EAPEI activities have improved understanding of the root causes and impacts of fires in Indonesia; improved local, national, and regional fire detection, suppression, and management activities; improved environmental planning and management; and helped combat destructive fishing and coral harvest practices in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

The Initiative has supported improvements in fire management and response in Indonesia. Technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service has raised the technical quality of the work of the ASEAN Haze Coordination and Support Unit and helped to maintain information flows about other donors' fire suppression activities. Other forest policy activities supported under EAPEI, particularly in analyzing the sources and impacts of fires and identification of alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture, have proven valuable in identifying policy reform opportunities and promoting decentralization, governance, and equity objectives of the new Indonesian government.

EAPEI supported work by the International Marine Life Alliance and the World Resources Institute in Southeast Asia, and the Nature Conservancy in the Pacific to halt destructive fishing practices such as cyanide and dynamite fishing and over harvesting. Notable progress was made documenting and combating the spread of these practices in the region.

EAPEI supported WWF in enhancing marine conservation efforts in Bali Barat and especially the Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME). This program contributes significant achievement to improved conservation effort of Indonesian world's greatest marine biodiversity. The WWF program focused on North Sulawesi and the Bunaken National Park area as well as conservation finance for other key sites in the SSME.

Implementing partners include 1) U.S. Government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, USDA Forest Service, Department of Interior, Office of Surface Mining and the National Park Service; 2) U.S. non-governmental organizations such as Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, and the World Resources Institute; 3) international agricultural research centers such as the International Center for Research on Agroforestry and the Center for International Forestry Research; 4) the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center; and 5) international organizations such as the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program.

Details are available on the EAPEI web site at <http://eapei.home.att.net/>