



ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION-ASIA (ECO-ASIA)

**QUARTERLY REPORT
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2005**

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**By
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1.0 Summary

In this quarter, Planning and Development Collaborative International, Inc. (PADCO) launched Environmental Cooperation-Asia (ECO-Asia) by completing a series of project planning, design, management, and implementation activities. Primary activities focused on: (1) project start-up; (2) work plan development, including preliminary work plan meeting and consultation meeting with USAID missions; and (3) initial project implementation. Principal achievements this quarter centered on rapid field mobilization, establishment of core project relationships (including USAID missions), and development of program management and administrative systems. While PADCO submitted all major deliverables and facilitated a successful launch of the project, outstanding start-up challenges include: completing Thailand project office registration, staffing of some key positions (DCOP, Communications Manager and four (to clarify that not all cc positions are vacant) country coordinators), and finalizing field office arrangements with subcontractors in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

2.0 Performance Objectives and Expected Outputs

Project performance objectives for the first quarter focused on project start-up (including mobilizing staff and making appropriate office and other project infrastructure arrangements), preliminary activity planning and design, and partner coordination. Core performance objectives and expected outputs included:

- Completion of Initial Planning Meeting with Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO);
- Preparation and submission of Start-up Plan;
- Completion of Post-Award Briefing Meeting with Contracting Officer (CO) and CTO;
- Development and submission of draft Annual Work Plan;
- Organization of Regional Mission Collaboration Meeting on Annual Work Plan;
- Establishment of project offices and related infrastructure, including transitioning of TSSC IT systems, equipment and furniture;
- Confirmation of staffing requirements and mobilization of key personnel and other core staff;
- Engagement with core program partners to introduce them to ECO-Asia and initiate activity planning and design; and
- Development of draft Performance Management Plan (PMP).

3.0 Summary of Major Accomplishments

Major activities and accomplishments during this quarter centered on: (1) project start-up; (2) work plan development; and (3) initial engagement on project implementation.

3.1 Project Start-up

During the program start-up phase, under the guidance of the Regional Development Mission/Asia (RDM/A), PADCO initiated project start-up activities, including the Initial Planning Meeting with the CTO on October 12, 2005, and the Post-Award Briefing Meeting with the CTO and CO on November 2, 2005. Core start-up activities included:

Staff Mobilization and Recruitment

- Mobilizing key staff, including the Water and Sanitation Team Leader and Governance Team Leader, and recruited replacement for original DCOP;

- Putting in place country coordinators in the Philippines and Thailand, and main technical coordinators for the water and governance components, and the regional programming, as well as management, contracts and administrative support personnel, and short-term technical consultants; and
- Continued recruiting DCOP, Communications Manager and country coordinators for India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

Subcontracting

- PADCO received consent to subcontract for major subcontractors from CO.
- PADCO convened a partners meeting for subcontractors and resource groups in Washington to share ideas on planned activities and support requirements and strategies.

Office Arrangements

- In Bangkok, PADCO completed necessary office modifications to accommodate all contract requirements, including installing new work stations, and making physical modifications.
- PADCO consulted with RDM/A and legal professionals to identify requirements and obstacles for registering ECO-Asia as a USAID project with the Thai government, and subsequently registering PADCO's office in Bangkok.
- PADCO worked with the TSSC and EPSG to transition equipment and furniture to ECO-Asia project offices. PADCO also completed necessary hardware and software computer modifications, secured the domain name for the project and set up ECO-Asia e-mail addresses.
- In Manila, PADCO leased a new, larger project office that will support both the ECO-Asia and LINAW II projects, and completed office build-out.
- PADCO also coordinated with project subcontractors (TAF and TCGI) to initiate arrangements for office arrangements in existing offices in Colombo, Hanoi, Jakarta and New Delhi.

Project Management Systems

- PADCO established core financial management and project backstopping systems and arrangements in Washington D.C.
- TAF prepared draft grants and exchange program guidelines per contract requirements in anticipation of activity implementation in the second quarter.
- To ensure consistent application of human resources and office policies and practices in line with USAID regulations, local law and PADCO policies, PADCO developed an office policies and procedures manual for ECO-Asia project offices in Bangkok and Manila. The office policies and practices manual covers employment policies, staff classification, compensation, benefits, staff evaluation, and ethics.

3.2 Work Plan Development and Mission Consultation

As an initial step in developing the work plan, PADCO prepared a preliminary work plan that included proposed activities and expected outputs. To present the preliminary work plan and share ideas on implementation, PADCO organized a two-day consultation meeting with RDM/A on November 7-8, 2005, in Bangkok.

Based on recommendations from RDM/A at the November planning meeting, PADCO prepared a draft work plan, and convened a regional consultation meeting on December 8-9, 2005, for representatives from bilateral missions, senior managers from ANE and EGAT bureaus, and international development partners. At the meeting, RDM/A and PADCO presented key elements of the work plan and facilitated discussion on strategies for cooperation between ECO-Asia and mission bilateral programs and regional

programs, such as the Blue Revolution Initiative. Through small-group discussions, RDM/A and the bilateral missions defined priority activities and opportunities for cooperation under ECO-Asia. RDM/A and the missions also came to a preliminary understanding on working arrangements and procedures for cooperation.

3.3 Initial Engagement on Project Development

To initiate engagement on activity implementation, PADCO met with key project partners to inform them of ECO-Asia and began to define future activities, many of which are a continuation of past PADCO-led work under the U.S.-Asia Environmental Partnership (US-AEP) program. Specific activities to initiate project development included the following:

- PADCO met with the Southeast Asian Water Utilities Network (SEAWUN) in Bangkok to present the program and discuss future collaboration on regional water-related activities.
- PADCO also joined meetings with the World Bank Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) in Bangkok and in Manila, and met with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) at the private sector consultation meeting on private sector participation and the ADB water policy.
- Together with RDM/A, PADCO attended the Blue Revolution Initiative (BRI) meeting in Cairo to share ideas for collaboration with ECO-Asia and provide ideas. PADCO also joined the follow-on BRI meeting in Bangkok to discuss sub-regional implementation strategies.
- In the role of secretariat, PADCO organized the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) in Bangkok, which led to the finalization of the charter and agreement on the 2006 work plan. Participants included representatives from the People's Republic of China, Philippines, Thailand, ADB, and World Bank.
- To promote linkages with AECEN, PADCO also met with ADB and the Clean Air Initiative-Asia to introduce them to ECO-Asia and discuss strategies for closer collaboration on AECEN.
- PADCO made a trip to Laos to meet with the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to discuss continuation of collaborative activities on transboundary cooperation in the Mekong.
- To support RDM/A collaboration on both water and governance activities, PADCO met with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Washington D.C. to introduce them to ECO-Asia and initiate discussions on potential water and governance activities.
- Together with RDM/A, PADCO met with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in Bangkok to share ideas on ECO-Asia.
- PADCO developed a summary of communications products, and development of preliminary ECO-Asia branding and project descriptions, as well as a protocol for weekly reporting.

During this quarter, PADCO also met with project partners to introduce them to ECO-Asia and discuss future activities in the Philippines (Department of Environment and Natural Resources), and Thailand (Provincial Waterworks Authority, Pollution Control Department).

4.0 Outstanding Issues

Outstanding issues for the next quarter will center on: (1) completing project start-up activities, including staffing, office arrangements and subcontracting; (2) gaining mission support for the program through mission briefings; and (3) finalizing the work plan and initiating implementation of program activities. Key outstanding issues include:

- Completing Thailand project office registration and coming into compliance with local labor, immigration, banking, and taxation requirements. With the support of legal counsel, PADCO will continue to work closely with RDM/A to support efforts to negotiate project approval by the Royal Thai Government, and initiate necessary steps in project office registration and operation.

- Continuing to recruit and fill all remaining project positions, including the DCOP, Communications Manager and country coordinators.
- Continuing to establish necessary field office arrangements with subcontractors in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.
- Working with RDM/A to conduct mission briefings and establish strong and effective working relationships with missions and project partners.
- Moving forward with activity implementation with strategic partners to ensure first-year results.

5.0 Resource Leveraging and Sustainability

During the first quarter, PADCO worked closely with RDM/A to initiate ECO-Asia's core implementation strategy of leveraging programming resources and capabilities with project partners, including USAID missions. During the Regional Mission Collaboration Meeting, PADCO initiated working relationships with ongoing bilateral mission programs in India (FIRE-D), Indonesia (ESP), Philippines (LINAW, FORWARD, Eco-Gov), and Sri Lanka (TALG). As detailed in Section 3.3, PADCO also met with implementation partners and key international development partners to explore strategies for cooperation that will include resource leveraging and ensuring overall program sustainability.

6.0 Performance Objectives for Next Quarter

In the second quarter of performance, PADCO will focus on completing start-up and beginning activity implementation per the first-year work plan. Key performance objectives for the quarter will include:

- Completing mission briefings to confirm cooperation strategies, meet with core partners and identify project opportunities;
- Finalizing and submitting the annual work plan, and defining working arrangements with each mission and related implementation partners;
- Meeting with main project partners (e.g., target cities, AECEN national coordinators) to initiate activity design and implementation for priority country and regional activities;
- Developing a draft activity-level PMP that links with RDM/A's Strategic Objective (SO) PMP;
- Establishing support mechanism for RDM/A on SO PMP;
- Developing a communications strategy and plan and key communications products, including outreach materials, fact sheets, and ECO-Asia website, etc.;
- Completing key hires (DCOP, Communications Manager and country coordinators);
- Finalizing project office arrangements in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, and taking final possession of TSSC equipment and furniture; and
- Making significant progress on Thailand project office registration.