

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES AND AusAID PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Partnership Principles

1. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Department of the Environment and Water Resources (DEW) have a record of cooperation on environment issues of common interest. In reaffirming their commitment to promoting sustainable development, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, the agencies agree to deepen their partnership in relation to international environment and development issues and also in relation to their engagement with relevant international institutions, including the secretariats of multilateral environment agreements (MEAs).

Within this context, the agreement is governed by the following principles:

- a) the relationship between the agencies will be one of partnership, valuing the contribution each can make to the achievement of common goals; and respecting each agency's responsibilities;
- b) the partnership will be underpinned by mutual respect, professionalism, integrity, cooperation, the sharing of ideas and open communication. Each agency will follow a 'no surprises' approach in areas of shared strategic priority;
- c) the agencies will work collaboratively to identify and agree on shared strategic priorities for Australia's engagement on environment and development issues. This will involve setting joint objectives and recognising the comparative advantages of each agency. Where appropriate, subsidiary arrangements to this Agreement such as memoranda of understanding or schedules may be established.
- d) compliance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, especially section 160 thereof relating to the environmental impact of projects implemented under Australia's overseas aid program.

Shared Strategic Priorities

2. AusAID and DEW will work together to:
 - a) strengthen regional capacity to deal with environment and heritage issues, with priority accorded to climate change, water management and strengthening environmental governance;
 - b) encourage improvement of international environmental governance in agencies such as UNEP, UNDP, the GEF, OECD, SPREP and other multilateral and regional bodies, particularly with a view to increasing their effectiveness in the Asia Pacific region;

- c) ensure development strategies and programs reflect and where appropriate respond to the environmental challenges facing key development partners in the region;
- d) ensure coordination of and consistency between our positions on environmental and development policy issues in bilateral and multilateral fora;
- e) engage where relevant on emerging international issues at the development-environment interface, including climate change and water.
- f) cooperate in the promotion of good environmental governance in the region including through mobilisation of DEW and other Australian public sector expertise for capacity building and policy/regulatory assistance.

Agency Skills and Strengths

3. Each Agency brings different skills and strengths to the Partnership.
4. AusAID's strengths lie in:
 - a) extensive knowledge, experience and expertise on poverty reduction, development and environment issues in developing countries;
 - b) experience in strengthening environmental management, environmental standards and environmental policy frameworks and institutions in developing countries and expertise in the management of cooperation programs with these objectives;
 - c) well-established networks and relationships with partner governments, civil society organisations, other donor agencies and research and professional associations in developing countries and Australia; and,
 - d) extensive overseas infrastructure and delivery systems.
5. DEW's strengths lie in:
 - a) the development and delivery of legislation, policies and programmes for protecting the environment, water resources and heritage, responding to climate change, promoting environmental research, ensuring sustainable use of natural resources and strengthening environmental education and communication;
 - b) extensive experience in policy advice and sharing of best practice with domestic and international stakeholders, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, on environmental and heritage protection, water resource management and sustainable development;
 - c) well-established networks with environmental scientific and research organisations and professional associations domestically and internationally; and,
 - d) expertise in governance and public sector management, particularly in the environment sector.

Coordination Arrangements

- 6. Both agencies agree to meet at least annually at the Executive level to identify strategic issues of common interest and to set priorities for cooperation and joint work. Either agency will be able to seek further meetings at this level if necessary.
- 7. Meetings at the Branch-head level and below will be initiated when necessary to take forward issue-specific work.
- 8. Both agencies agree to provide and update information on points of contact on specific issues to facilitate effective engagement.



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David Borthwick
Secretary
Department of the Environment
and Water Resources

5 July 2007



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Bruce Davis
Director General
AusAID

5th July 2007