

Simplified Ex-Post Evaluation for Technical Cooperation Project

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Project Name	Palau International Coral Reef Center Strengthening Project	February 2010 – December 2010

I Project Outline

Country Name	Republic of Palau			
Project Period	October 2002-September 2006			
Executing Agency	Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC)			
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Ministry of the Environment, Japan Wildlife Research Center, Establishment of Tropical Marine Ecological Research, Marine Science Museum Fukushima Prefecture, Yokohama Hakkeijima Sea Paradise			
Total Cost	326 million yen			
Related Projects (if any)	The Project for Establishment of Palau International Coral Reef Center (2000-2001), The Capacity Enhancement Project for Coral Reef Monitoring (2009-2012), Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) for Environmental Education			
Overall Goal	Conservation and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystem and related biota in Palau are improved.			
Project Objective	To attain self-sustainability of PICRC, the center's administrative, research, exhibition, and education capacity are strengthened.			
Output[s]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PICRC is administrated in organized and planned manner. 2. Aquarium is self-sustained in exhibition, operation, and maintenance. 3. Coral reef research and monitoring function is firmly established. 4. Education division is capable of conducting environmental education on coastal resources for students and communities. 			
	Inputs (Japanese Side)		Inputs (Palawan Side)	
Experts	5 for Long term, 15 for Short term		Staff allocated	16
Equipments	351,000 US dollar		Equipments	Existing equipment
Local Cost	515,672 US dollar		Local Cost	-
Trainees Received	11		Land etc provided	Land and facilities of PICRC
Others	2 of JOCV		Others	450,000 US dollar of annual budget from the Government

II Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the evaluation

- PICRC, an institution for research on and the protection of coral reefs, has an important role to play in industry promotion and environmental protection in Palau. Therefore, the relevance of this project is high.
- This project helped PICRC enhance its operation and management abilities and research skills, and since the implementation of the project, PICRC has indeed gained recognition among tourists to Palau and research institutions and environmental protection organizations, both at home and abroad. As a result, now that PICRC plays this role in the protection of coral reefs, especially in Micronesia, the effectiveness of this project is high.
- In this project, appropriate inputs were provided for the outputs and objectives to be reached, except in the area of education and public relations. In terms of education and public relations, a judgment cannot be made as to whether sufficient inputs were provided for the objectives to be achieved, including whether experts had to be sent to Palau. The effectiveness of the project, therefore, is judged to be fair.
- PICRC has most of its operating expenses financed through subsidies from the government. With the probability of a reduction in these subsidies, the sustainability of the effects of this project is judged to be fair.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

<Recommendation to PICRC>

- It is desirable that efforts be continued to increase income from sources other than government subsidies.

<Recommendations to JICA>

- As most of the project design matrix (PDM) indicators lacked a quantitative definition for them, with some represented by abstract terms, such as "stable" or "without major disruption," there were some cases where a single criterion to be used in judging how well an output had been achieved was applied twice to two different indicators. For this PDM, several indicators were set for a single output, so there was no problem in terms of the evaluation. However, in order to adjust the composition of the PDM and clarify the outputs to be reached, it seems to have been necessary to revise the PDM during the implementation of the project or at the time of the mid-term evaluation.
- As pointed out in the terminal evaluation, the project had such a wide range of coverage that it failed to achieve some of the outputs in the field of education and public relations, for which no expert was sent to the country. In order to secure the accomplishment of the project outputs, it seems that a selection should have been made at the planning stage in terms of the range of cooperation to

be offered. During the project, some of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) sent to PICRC carried out after-school programs at schools in the local communities. This fact suggests that even when there was no likelihood of experts for education and public relations being sent to the country, the aid framework, including the JOCVs' activities, could have been reviewed so that they worked in the field of education and public relations to achieve the outputs of the project.

1 Relevance

(1) Relevance with the Development Plan of Palau

The Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan, formulated in 1996, mentions the systems to be maintained to preserve the natural marine environment for tourism and culture as one of the development strategies for the continuous improvement of the people's quality of life in Palau.

(2) Relevance with the Development Needs of Palau

For Palau, coral reefs are important natural resources as fishery sources, seawalls, and tourism assets. PICRC is expected to play an important role in research on and the protection of coral reefs. However, at the time of planning of this project, shortly after its inauguration in January 2001, PICRC had not yet acquired sufficient capacity to develop as an independent organization.

(3) Relevance with Japan's ODA Policy

Japan and Palau have maintained a close relationship in the fishery industry. This started when the former governed the latter as a part of the South Sea Islands, and was strengthened with the Non-governmental Fisheries Agreement that they concluded. The Miyazaki Initiative, announced in April 2000 at the Second Japan-South Pacific Forum Summit Meeting, referred to the preservation of coral reefs as one of the common challenges, declaring that Japan would provide aid to make PICRC a center of cooperation for coral reef protection.

In the light of the above, this project has been highly relevant with the country's development plan, development needs, as well as Japan's ODA policy, therefore its relevance is high.

2 Effectiveness / Impact

(1) Achievement of Project Outputs and Project Objective(s)

This project transferred to PICRC the techniques for operation and management of PICRC, the displays, operation and management of its aquarium, the research on and monitoring of coral reefs, and education and public relations about the environment for local communities, and with these techniques it is now able to study coral reefs, provide technical support for domestic environmental protection organizations, and produce scientific literature and international reports. Its staff, having obtained advanced skills, can work by themselves at the affiliated aquarium for its displays, operation and maintenance. With a larger number of staff assigned to it, and training and job experience accumulated among its workers, who in the process have acquired more and better skills than before the project, PICRC is being operated and managed more smoothly. Although PICRC still relies on subsidies from the government as a source of income, having failed to secured financial independence, it earns more by itself than before the project. In terms of education and public relations for local communities, however, the project failed to achieve some of its outputs. It can be said, therefore, that the project succeeded in achieving most of its outputs, with some failures.

In this project, PICRC has achieved considerable advancement in its capabilities regarding aquarium operation and research, and also improved its organization to become better qualified for education and public relations. The judgment is that, therefore, most of the project objectives have been achieved.

(2) Achievement of Overall Goal, Intended and Unintended Impacts

With the studies it has conducted jointly with other institutions, and its theses published in scientific journals, PICRC has gained recognition around the world among the parties concerned. Data it collects using the techniques that were transferred to it, such as GIS-related technologies, which it needs to monitor coral reefs, are also effectively used for other purposes, for instance, by the central government for a wind power generation project or ordinary weather forecasting.

In the light of the above, this project has largely achieved its objectives, therefore its effectiveness is high.

3 Efficiency

(1) Outputs

As stated above under (1) of "Effectiveness / Impact", this project has produced most of the outputs originally planned.

(2) Elements of Inputs

Inputs into this project were provided as stated in the "Project Outline." In terms of the experts to be sent, some alterations were made (coral and fish rearing) and some divergence from PICRC's needs was identified (GIS database management), but the outputs have also been achieved in the fields for which the experts were responsible. In the field of education and public relations, it is unknown whether the inputs needed to achieve the expected outputs were actually provided, as seen in the fact that no expert in this field was sent to Palau. As the analysis conducted for the terminal evaluation concluded that, the "inputs were all provided efficiently in terms of quality, quantity and timing," it can be said that, after all, the outputs were achieved with no substantial effects from the lack of contribution from such inputs, other than education and public relation for local communities, as discussed above.

(3) Project Cost, Period of Cooperation

The project period, designed to end in 48 months in the plan, actually ended in 48 months, just as planned (100% of the plan). The project cost, ¥329 million in the plan, actually totaled to ¥325 million, lower than planed (98.8% of the plan).

In light of the above, as some of the inputs that were provided to this project seem inappropriate for the achievement of outputs and project objectives, its efficiency is fair.

4 Sustainability

(1) Related Policy towards the Project

As seen in the fact that no revision has been made so far to the Palau International Coral Reef Center Enabling Act, Environmental Quality Protection Act, Marine Protection Act, or any other act concerned, the system of policies necessary to maintain the effects of the cooperation have already been established.

(2) Institutional and Operational Aspects of the Executive Agency

No change has been made in PICRC's position in the organization or in any part of its structure. Most of the counterparts who underwent training in this project have already resigned, but a sufficient number of replacements have been employed, so that the systems and people required to continue the effects of the project and operate and maintain its facilities and equipment can be secured.

(3) Technical Aspects of the Executive Agency

PICRC's employees and researchers work among and with the staff of the state government to share and maintain their skills. They also conduct joint studies with research institutions overseas to enhance their expertise. This demonstrates that there is nothing to be concerned about in terms of the technical aspects of PICRC.

(4) Financial Aspects of the Executive Agency

This project enabled PICRC to earn more from its own sources of income, but since the completion of the project, PICRC's revenues have failed to grow. PICRC still depends largely on government subsidies for its operating expenses. In addition, government subsidies for fiscal 2009 (the year beginning from October 2009) were cut by 5.6% compared to the preceding year. There is some concern about whether PICRC will be able to secure sources of income that it will need to preserve the effects of the project and operate and maintain its facilities and equipment.

(5) Continuity of Effectiveness and Impact

PICRC is playing a central role in the protection of coral reefs in Micronesia. Its research has yielded outputs that are being effectively used for environmental protection efforts within and outside Palau. A technical cooperation project is now being carried out to support the monitoring of coral reefs. Once its staff are trained through the human resources development programs offered in this project and obtain the scientific techniques for monitoring, PICRC will be regarded as a hub institution for research on and the protection of coral reefs in the entire region of Micronesia. The necessary maintenance is carried out for the equipment it was granted in the project, so the effects that were observed at the time of the terminal evaluation are judged to have remained as they were at ex-post evaluation.

In the light of the above, some problems have been observed in the financial aspects of the executing agency, therefore, sustainability of the project effects is fair.