

Country Name	The Natural Environment Conservation Project in the Iguazu Area
Argentina	

I. Project Outline

Project Cost	273 million yen	
Project Period	April, 2004 – March, 2007	
Implementing Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Ecology, Renewable Natural Resources and Tourism (MERNRyT: Ministerio de Ecología Recursos Naturales Renovables y Turismo) - National Parks Agency (APN: Administración de Parques Nacionales) - Municipal Government of Andresito (Municipalidad de Comandante Andresito) 	
Cooperation Agency in Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Environment, Japan Wildlife Research Center 	
Related Projects (if any)	<p><u>Cooperation by Japan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project of Conservation in the Green Corridor at Iguazu Region (Technical Cooperation, March 2008 – March 2011) - Training course for Central and South American Region: Planning and Management of Eco-tourism in Tropical and Subtropical Area (Training in Japan, 2011) <p><u>Cooperation by other donors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proyecto Araucaria XXI Bosque Atlántico (The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Biodiversity Foundation), November 2006 – December 2012), including financial aid by the Embassy of New Zealand 	
Background	<p>Argentina is a country with rich biodiversity and has been making proactive efforts to conserve the biodiversity. The environmental policies of the country are based on the General Environmental Policy. The principles announced in November, 2011 addressed compatible conservation of biodiversity and natural resources and improvement of quality of life for the present and future generations by rational and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources. In Argentina, many activities for conservation of biodiversity and natural resources have been implemented in not only “the national conservation areas” which are managed by APN, the central government agency, but also “the provincial conservation areas” which are managed by the provincial governments. The Iguazu National Park, the target area of this Project, constitutes a part of Parana forest where a variety of animals and plants live. Also, the surrounding areas of the national park have valuable natural environment as “buffer zones”. However, the natural environment in the areas of the national park and the buffer zones had been rapidly deteriorated due to the migrations and illegal economic activities within the national park and the overuse of land including expansion of farm lands in the buffer zones, where APN cannot cover. Therefore, the provincial government of Misiones elaborated “the Green Corridor Plan” which connects national parks, provincial parks and other state conservation areas by natural environment. Under this situation, the government of Argentina requested the government of Japan cooperation to prepare and implement a conservation area management plan which enables improved quality of life and conservation of natural resource and biodiversity by cooperation and collaboration among the central government, the state government and the local people.</p>	
Inputs	Japanese Side	Argentine Side
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experts: 29 short term experts 2. Trainees Received: 8 trainees 3. Equipment: 13.4 million yen 4. Local Cost: 54.5 million yen 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Counterpart: 51 persons 2. Land and facilities: Project office in Andresito and a land for Jacuí Office of the Iguazu National Park
Project Objectives	<p>Overall goal</p> <p>To improve the management and the utilization of Iguazu National Park and the public sanctuary, and to strengthen the conservation of the natural environment in the Green Corridor.</p>	
	<p>Project Purpose</p> <p>To develop officers' capacity for management of the natural environment of the National Park Agency (APN) and state government (MERNRyT) and Andresito city in the project area*.</p> <p>*The project area: the public sanctuary in the north of the Green Corridor and its buffer zones.</p>	
	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To share and utilize information and data on the natural environment among the relevant organizations in proper forms for utilization for natural environment management. • To upgrade the capability of the C/Ps in promoting the dissemination and educational activities on natural environment protection targeting local citizens in the project area and tourists. • To accumulate the knowledge and experience of sustainable natural resource utilization through the implementation of a pilot program and transfer them to local community. 	

II. Result of the Evaluation

Summary of the Evaluation

The target area of the project, the Iguazu National Park and its surrounding areas, is covered by Parana forest, one of the most valuable ecosystems in the world. The area is designated as a world natural heritage and one of the major tourist sites in Argentina. However, since expansion of farm lands, inappropriate use of natural resources and insufficient management system for the conservation areas have been decreasing the rich biodiversity in the areas, the improvement of management system for the Iguazu National Park and the state conservation areas and, in particular, enhancement of natural environment conservation management system in the Green Corridor were critical and urgent issues.

The project has achieved the purpose to improve natural environment management capacity of officers working for APN, MERENRyT and Andresito City in the target area. As for the overall goal, the project enhanced natural environment conservation in the target area by joint efforts of the three counterpart organization to manage the national park and the state conservation areas, and by the introduction of "the Green Corridor" concept. As for sustainability, some problems have been observed in terms of implementing agencies' structural and technical aspects though no problem was observed in political and financial aspects.

For relevance, the project has been highly relevant with Argentina's development policy, development needs as well as Japan's ODA policy. For efficiency, the project cost slightly exceeded the plan.

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

1 Relevance

This project has been highly relevant with Argentina's development policy "the General Environmental Policy" which addresses compatibility of conservation of biodiversity and natural resources with improvement of quality of life for the future and the current generations by the rational and sustainable use of natural resources, development needs of "control and manage of illegal coursing and logging", as well as Japan's ODA policy for Argentina, at the time of both ex-ante evaluation and project completion. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

This project achieved the project purpose of "improvement of capacity for natural environment conservation of staff of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City. It was judged, based on 6 indicator items*, that staff of each C/P organization have attained the sufficient level to implement the natural environment management by themselves without support. The overall goal of "enhancement of natural environment conservation in the Green Corridor by improved management and utilization of the Iguazu National Park and the state conservation areas" has been achieved due to the continuation of eco-tourism activities based on the Ecolodge developed as a pilot activity of the project, sustainable production activities in the buffer zones, and implementation of environment education and dissemination activities by the joint efforts of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City.

Besides that, the regional development and promotion office of APN was established as a result of the project. The regional office of APN has been promoting community based activities, including Caure-i, a cooperative aiming at cultivation, processing and sales of organic cassava and Canure-I Creativo, a women's group to implement trainings on handicraft production and sales as well as awareness campaign on gender. The environment education targeting the local people and schools was implemented by the collaboration with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation just before the end of the project. Such collaboration contributed to continuation and promotion of the activities initiated by the project. In addition, APN has been implementing various activities for capacity development for natural environment conservation of related organizations not only in Argentina but also outside of the country by dissemination of the method and the strategy for natural environment conservation, including participation of the coordinator of the APN regional office as a member of advisory committee of the Iguazu National Park of Brazil (Parque Nacional Iguazú do Brasil). Furthermore, a project to connect the Iguazu National Park and Brazil by the Green Corridor is planned by the joint coordination of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City.

Therefore, the effectiveness/impact of this project is high.

Achievement of the project Purpose and the Overall Goal

Outcomes	Indicators (Target)	Actual Achievement
Overall Goal Enhancement of natural environment conservation in the Green Corridor by improved management and utilization of the Iguazu National Park and the state conservation areas	Coverage and connectivity of the forest surface are maintained in the project area five years after the termination of the project.	(At the time of ex-post evaluation in 2012) - The coverage of forest in the project area has been maintained. - It is planned that a project connecting the Iguazu National Park and Brazil by the Green Corridor will start in 2012 under the collaboration of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito city.
	The number of eco-tourism activities, which utilize natural resource in sustainable ways and put little impact on its environment, are increased five years after the termination of the project.	- The eco-tourism activities based on the Ecolodge has been continuing. Three more companies which were established after the project completion, have been trying to attract tourists. - The regional development project in the Iguazu National Park has been promoting practices of sustainable development activities, such as sustainable cultivation of

		cassava in the buffer zones and production of handicrafts made from calabash.
	Survey for collecting information and its updating are undertaken about natural environment in the target area.	- Implementation of the natural environment survey in the Uruguay State Park (2009)
	Activities such as awareness-raising, environment education, and eco-tourism are carried out based on the results of the survey for conserving natural environment.	- Implementation of environment education and dissemination activities in Andresito City based on the survey results as above under the collaboration of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City.
<u>Project Purpose</u> Improvement of capacity for natural environment management of officers of APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City in the target area.	At least 2 C/Ps have become capable of carrying out the tasks related to each of 6 items necessary for natural environment management*	(At the time of project completion in 2007) - All the C/P members attained the level to implement necessary activities of the 6 items without support.
	Capacity of the management of the natural environment of APN personnel.	- Attained the level to implement necessary activities of the 6 items.
	Capacity of the management of the natural environment of the MERNRyT personnel	- Attained the level to implement necessary activities of the 6 items.
	Capacity of the management of the natural environment of the Andresito city officers.	- Attained the level to implement necessary activities of the 6 items.

Source: Terminal Evaluation Report and interviews with the counterpart organizations.

Note 1: *6 items are as follows: 1) Capacity to gather, organize and present information and data; 2) Capacity for measuring the coordination with the involved institutions; 3) Capacity for developing and improving dissemination and environmental education programs; 4) Capacity for developing and improving dissemination and environmental education materials; 5) Capacity to execute the dissemination and environmental education programs; 6) Capacity for the sustainable use of natural resources.



Environment Education Activities



Ecolodge



Women's group activities for handicraft making

3 Efficiency

While the inputs were appropriate for producing the outputs of the project and the project period was as planned (ratio against the plan: 100%), the project cost was slightly higher than the plan (ratio against the plan: 109%) due to the increase of trainees received in Japan and the increase in the local cost. Therefore, efficiency of this project is fair.

4 Sustainability

The activities initiated by the project have been recognized to be important since the legislative regulations on land use in the project area have been strengthened by the enactment of the "National Law of Minimum Standards for the Environmental Protection of Native Forests". There has been no significant change in each counterpart organization. However, staff allocation has not been sufficient though APN assigned 2 personnel for the regional development and promotion office, and MERNRyT newly established the Land Use and Planning Division. In terms of environment education, the sufficient number of staff has not been assigned despite the joint collaboration among APN, MERNRyT and Andresito City. While MERNRyT is responsible for management of the Ecolodge and assigns the chief of the lodge and park rangers, the pilot activities of eco-tourism based on the Ecolodge have been implemented by the joint coordination committee, which is organized on ad hoc basis by the three counterpart organizations to develop an annual activity plan, the chief engineer, the chief of Ecolodge, and Selva Adentro Limitada (cooperative). The pilot activities have been improved through quarterly issue of E-letter and trainings for the cooperative members. Although each counterpart organization has been making efforts to improve their skills in order to continue their activities, the unified system for dissemination of necessary skills and knowledge has not been established. All the counterpart organizations have been ensuring necessary

budgets for continuation of the activities despite that the concrete amount of their budgets are not verified.

Therefore, due to some problems in, structural, and technical aspects of the counterpart agencies, sustainability of the project effect is fair.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency:

- Among the three organizations acting in the project area, MERNRyT needs to assign more park rangers in the project area in order to manage and control of the buffer zones located in the northern area of the Green Corridor, which is targeted by the overall goal of the project. In addition, it is recommended that MERNRyT shall reconsider their budget allocation because of the insufficient equipment for the daily conservation activities, such as GPS, binocular telescope, and radio. In addition, it is necessary to surely implement the planned project to connect between the Iguazu National Park and Brazil.

Lessons learned for JICA:

- Before starting the project, the central, state and municipal government had different activities at each administrative level due to no common understanding on conservation of natural environment and biodiversity. Through the project, the three administrative organizations, APN controlling national parks, MERNRyT controlling the state conservation areas and municipal government managing the lands except the national and the state conservation areas, recognized the necessity to jointly implement activities for the conservation areas. Such common recognition facilitated communication among the administrative organization at different level and smoothly implemented human resource development at each organization. As a result, the collaboration among the central, state and municipal governments was realized. The collaboration enhanced capacity of each organization, improved the decision making system and enabled implementation of joint activities. In the case that the project requires collaboration of various organizations, it is expected that the opportunities to share information among the relevant organizations during the project, such as the joint coordination committee or other meetings led by JICA can create foundation of continuous collaboration even after the project completion. The key points of the project are maintenance of common direction among the three counterpart organizations through continuous implementation of the joint activities as planned and collaboration with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation just before the completion of the project.