

Summary of Terminal Evaluation

1. Outline of the Project	
Country: Islamic Republic of Iran	Project title: Anzali Wetland Ecological Management Project
Issue/Sector: Conservation of natural environment/Biodiversity conservation	Cooperation scheme: Technical Cooperation Project
Division in charge: Forestry and Natural Environment Group, Global Environment Department	Total cost (estimated at completion of the Project): 246,089,000 JPY
Period of Cooperation: From November. 2007 to August 2012	Partner Country's Implementing Organization: Department of Environment (DOE) of Iran
Supporting Organization in Japan: Ministry of the Environment	
<p>1-1 Background of the Project</p> <p>The Anzali Wetland (approx. 193 km²) located on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea in the Islamic Republic of Iran (hereinafter referred to as Iran) is internationally known as an important stopover of migratory birds. It was registered as a Ramsar site (150 km²) in 1975. The Anzali Wetland is among the wetlands located along the southern coastline of the Caspian Sea, where migratory birds fly in via routes passing through Africa and Europe, and through Asia and the Pacific, and extensively utilized by such birds. This wetland is known as an internationally important habitat for endangered species of fish and birds such as the white-tailed sea eagle, also of mammals such as otters.. However, due to the range of interference caused by human activity, the Anzali Wetland has been degraded, and the area was listed in the <i>Montreux Record</i> as a priority site for conservation measures in 1993.. Environmental conditions in the Anzali Wetland have been degraded due to the inflow of sewerage, wastewater and solid waste, and soil from upstream areas.</p> <p>Given this situation, the Government of Iran requested the Government of Japan to provide technical cooperation for a comprehensive research aiming at conservation of the Anzali Wetland. In response to this request, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) conducted a development study entitled "The Study on Integrated Management for Ecosystem Conservation of the Anzali Wetland in The Islamic Republic of Iran" from 2003 to March 2005. The study accomplished the following activities: 1) Development of an integrated Master Plan (M/P) for conservation of the Anzali Wetland, 2) Implementation of pilot activities (including some measures identified in the M/P), and 3) Support for capacity development on wetland management to the related organizations and their staff.</p> <p>As a next step, the Government of Iran asked for the implementation of the technical cooperation project to the Government of Japan for formulating a mechanism of wetland conservation and developing a detailed framework of zoning; the items listed as requiring the technical support on the major items of the M/P. As a result the request, JICA dispatched a preliminary mission in October 2006. The mission collected relevant information, and conducted discussion and coordination with the Government of Iran toward the implementation of the technical support project. After the making of a Record of Discussion (R/D) in February 2007., The Anzali Wetland Ecological Management Project commenced on November 1 2007, with the Department of Environment (DOE) and Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE serving as the Counterpart (C/P).</p> <p>Although the Government of Iran had suspended the project since October 2008 when the project was reaching its middle point, the DOE, the project's implementation body in Iran, requested to resume this cooperation project in April 2010.. JICA therefore dispatched a project consultation mission in September 2010 to organize the implementation structure and activities of the project toward its resumption. After the agreement with relevant Iranian organizations, the project was resumed in April 2011 with the DOE and its Guilan Provincial Office that continuously assigned as the C/P.</p>	
<p>1-2 Project Overview</p> <p>(1) Overall Goal</p> <p>The Anzali wetland management system, for which DOE is a core constituent, practices adaptive management..</p> <p>(2) Project Goal</p> <p>A basic system including institutional and technical aspects for the management of the Anzali wetland, for which DOE is the core constituent, is established.</p>	

<p>(3) Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A basic institutional structure for the integrated wetland management, for which DOE is the core organization, is established. 2) Monitoring procedures for the wetland management is established. 3) Zoning is determined, and management strategies (rules & regulations) for each zone are drafted, considering socio-economic status of the Anzali area. 4) The basis for environmental education using the Environmental Education Center of the Anzali wetland is developed. 5) The basis for ecotourism is developed. <p>(4) Inputs (estimated at the time of evaluation)</p> <p>Japanese side:</p> <p>Dispatch of Experts: 5 persons in the period from November 2007 to October 2008 (22.4 M/M); 6 persons in the period from April 2011 to August 2012 (scheduled to be 27.8 M/M)</p> <p>Training in Japan: 2 persons in April and May 2008; 5 persons in September 2011</p> <p>Provision of materials and equipment: office equipment, and 2 vehicles</p> <p>Cost for local operations: 49.59 million JPY (i.e. C/P training, cost for provision of equipment, consignment of local operation, employment of local staff)</p> <p>Iranian side:</p> <p>C/P: 13 persons after the Project's resumption in April 2011 that include the project director, project manager (Teheran Main Office of the DOE), provincial project coordinator, and vice project manager (Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE)</p> <p>Cost for activities: Part of the cost for local activities was shouldered. The amount is unspecified. Material compensation such as the project office.</p> <p>(5) Project Site</p> <p>Anzali Wetland (Anzali City and Somesara City in Guilan Province)</p>		
<p>2. Evaluation Team</p>		
Members of Evaluation Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Team Leader/Coordination: Mr. Hirohito Takata, Chief, Forestry and Natural Environment Conservation Division 2, Forestry and Natural Environment Conservation Group, Global Environment Department, JICA 2. Cooperation Planning: Mr. Takuya Sekiguchi, Forestry and Natural Environment Conservation Division 2, Forestry and Natural Environment Conservation Group, Global Environment Department, JICA 3. Evaluation Analysis: Mr. Hiroyuki Okuda, Tekizaitekisho LLC 4. Interpreter: Ms. Asieh Saber Moghaddam 5. Iranian Representative of Evaluation Team: Mr. Asan Baghernzdeh, Head of the Water Quality and Environmental Bureau, Guilan Regional Water Organization (GRWO) 6. Member of Evaluation Team: Mr. Reza Khodarahmi, Environmental Office Expert in Agriculture Water and Wastewater, Agricultural Research and Extension and Education Organization (AREEO) 	
Period of Evaluation	From May 12, 2012, to May 31, 2012	Type of Evaluation: Terminal Evaluation
<p>3. Results of Evaluation</p>		
<p>3-1 Achievement of Outputs</p> <p>(1) Output 1:</p> <p>At the first meeting of the Anzali Wetland Management Committee (AWMC) held on July 7 2011, the Governor of Guilan Province (Ministry of Home Affairs) signed a provincial decision regarding the establishment of the AWMC, and officially declared to establish the AWMC under the Provincial Planning/Development Council. The establishment of the AWMC was also approved as a provincial law at the Provincial Planning/Development Council convened on October 29 2011.</p>		

(2) Output 2:

The draft of the environmental monitoring manual was prepared and approved at the first AWMC meeting. Trainings for the monitoring were then conducted in the following fields: geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing, avian monitoring, physical chemistry and biological monitoring, and a framework for the monitoring and the feedback of results. Based on the draft of the manual, the monitoring of water quality, bottom sediments, plankton, and benthos were carried out every month.. The analysis of the monitoring was summarized and issued as a provisional report in December 2011. The draft of the environmental monitoring manual has been revised to reflect the results of the training sessions and the actual monitoring

(3) Output 3:

Based on the results of a socioeconomic survey, road construction plans, zones regulated by law, and such geographical information as ASTER satellite images, the zoning map specified in the M/P was upgraded. The draft zoning and rules and regulations regarding zoning were reviewed through the stages of hearing survey on local people, discussions by experts from relevant organizations, and explanations given at the second AWMC meeting. A final draft is being prepared to obtain the approval of the AWMC at the third AWMC meeting.

(4) Output 4:

The draft of action plan for the environment education was developed and approved at the first AWMC meeting. Educational videos on the environment of the Anzali Wetland (each video is approx. 15 minutes in duration) and materials for the environmental education for elementary school children (e.g. booklet entitled "Let's learn about the environment of the Anzali Wetland," *karuta* game cards, *sugoroku* board game) were developed. The expert staff of the DOE conducted activities for pilot environmental education by using these materials. By reflecting the results of those pilot activities, the draft action plan is being revised for the final version.

(5) Output 5:

The draft of action plan for the ecotourism was developed and approved at the first AWMC meeting. The expert staff of the DOE conducted nature guide training and pilot eco-tours, and the guidelines of Anzali Wetland ecotourism for tour vendors, tourists, and governmental organizations were drafted. An outline was also prepared for the establishment of the Association for Promotion of the Anzali Wetland Ecotourism, of which secretariat will be operated by the Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE, Guilan Provincial Office for Culture, Heritage, Handcraft, and Tourism (GCHHTO), and travel agencies. In addition to these activities, small scale facilities for the ecotourism had been under construction, and 90 % of works have been completed as of May 2012.

(6) Level of achievement toward the Project Goals

The tools for environmental management had been developed through the project's activities (Output 2-Output 5), and the report on the tools was approved at the third AWMC meeting held in June 2012. These tools are based on the data of environmental monitoring, GIS and remote sensing, and socioeconomic survey; and form a foundation for the implementation of the environmental management in the Anzali Wetland.

3-2 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

The project is highly relevant to the national policy of Iran .

- Iran's fifth Five-Year Development Plan (2010 - 2015) mentioned that the project is necessary for ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation in Anzali Wetland, in articles 187, 191, 192, and 193. The project is consistent with such works of the DOE which conducts local wetland management and environmental monitoring as well as national plan
- The Master Plan that developed in 2005 as the fundamental document to address environmental management of the Anzali Wetland, is relevant to dealing with the current status and the trend of degradation that continues to worsen the environment of this area.
- Japan's ODA to Iran targets the conservation of the natural environment and the prevention of pollution as priority area to support.

(2) Effectiveness

The project is highly effective.

- Based on a two-year comprehensive survey (M/P), the Project was designed focusing on the plans of M/P; the wetland ecology management, the environmental management, and organization system that are performed principally by the DOE. The project consisting of the realistic and achievable project purpose, and five outputs necessary to reach the purpose.
- The project has been making significant progress since its resumption in April 2011. The project is expected to yield almost all the outputs, and achieve the project purpose by the time of its completion.
- With the negative effects of the government's vertical administrative structure and the lack of cross-sectoral framework that have been pointed out as a current status of Iran, the establishment of the AWMC for decision making and coordination, which consists of various stakeholders, is the most significant output of the project.

(3) Efficiency

The project is high efficient.

- The inputs from Japan for the project have been effectively and efficiently implemented. The Japan team consists of six experts (and six local) who collaboratively conducted daily work through the project period to transfer technology to the C/P. And the C/P highly evaluated the Japan Team.
- The provincial project coordinator, vice project manager, and other C/P officials from the Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE have proactively participated in the project's activities since the project was resumed in April 2011, and this participation has become a key factor in promoting the project. Conversely, stationing of the project managers at the Teheran Main Office of the DOE where distant from the Anzali Wetland was recognized as an factor to prevent the smooth operation of the project.
- After the project was resumed in April 2011, the project Office was established in the Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE, where Japanese experts and the C/P maintain favorable communication. The Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE has held a total of 20 meetings at alternate weeks since April 2011 until now in order to manage and coordinate the project, thereby demonstrating that the project was implemented efficiently thanks to the favorable coordination and collaboration between Japan and Iran.

(4) Impact

The project has a medium level impact at this time point.

- The AWMC has just begun its activities. At this point, the gap between the project goal (to establish a fundamental system to manage the Anzali Wetland, for which the DOE is the core organization) and the overall goal (to implement adaptive management under the Anzali Wetland management system) is recognized as being larger than initially considered.
- Given the two-year implementation period of the project, the activities and impacts outside the framework of the project have been limited until now. Even under such circumstances, several positive impacts were observed, such as the partnership agreement between the Anzali Wetland and the Kushiro Wetland, the sharing of information with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environmental Facility's (GEF) "Iran Wetland Conservation Project," and the "Anzali Declaration" introduced by the Ramsar Convention secretariat.
- Regarding the implementation of adaptive management at the Anzali Wetland (the overall goal), an annual evaluation and update of AWMC management activities (individual outputs of the project) are selected as indicators. The provincial law governing the AWMC clarifies that the AWMC is responsible for management activities. Moreover, a framework for the AWMC to evaluate/update management activities will be established upon the approval of individual outputs at the third AWMC meeting. At this time point, the AWMC has just begun its efforts toward achieving the Overall Goal.

(5) Sustainability

A medium level of sustainability in development is expected from the project.

- The DOE has been actively implementing such operations as coordination for the AWMC management, the environmental monitoring, revising the zoning map, and conducting pilot activities for the environmental education and the ecotourism. The Counterparts improved their capacity to manage wetlands through the

project, they are also expected to stay in individual DOE offices. The project's activities are highly expected to be sustained in terms of technology and human resources.

- The Government of Iran financially backs the "Anzali Wetland Restoration Project," a national project conducted by the Ministry of Jihad Agriculture (MOJA). It is difficult to predict financial distribution from a provincial budget. And a timely allocation of funds cannot be expected under the current situation. The scheduled budget for the project's activities has yet to be allocated. It is necessary that the DOE secure budget for continuing environment monitoring, running the AWMC, implementing zoning, and practicing environmental education/ecotourism, starting in the upcoming Iranian fiscal year beginning of July 2012.
- Operation and management of the AWMC established by the project have just begun. It is necessary in the future to consider a framework on a practical level for coordination and support for its operation, to run the AWMC stably and continuously. The Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE has yet to decide on a division responsible for operating the AWMC.

3-3 Factors positively affected the results

The following efforts are pointed out as factors that promoted the project: proactive project activities conducted by the C/P of the Guilan Provincial Office of the DOE, cooperation between the governor of Guilan Province and the Japanese ambassador to establish the AWMC, and such national efforts to manage wetlands as Iran's fifth Five-Year Development Plan and the "Anzali Wetland Restoration Project" conducted by MOJA.

3-4 Factors negatively affected the results

The following are pointed out as factors that inhibited the Project: the government's entrenched vertical administrative structure, a low awareness of efforts for cross-sectoral cooperation/coordination among the participating organizations, and in terms of efficiency, assigning the responsibility for, and implementation of the Project solely to the project manager and provincial project coordinator.

3-5 Conclusion

Since the conservation of wetlands is incorporated in the Iranian Development Plan, and considered important from such international standpoints as the Ramsar Convention, the project is highly relevant. The project is effectively designed based on the M/P (2003-2005). Judging from the steady development toward achieving the project Goal, despite the project being suspended for two-and-a-half years, the project is highly effective. Since the project has been conducted through the efforts of Iranian and Japanese staff, entailing favorable communication and smooth collaboration between both parties, the project is judged to be highly efficient. At this point, the project has yet to exhibit any positive impact. However, the memorandum signed in September in 2011 by the DOE and the Kushiro International Wetland Center (KIWC) is considered significant progress toward cooperation and exchange between both parties in the future. At present, the project has a medium level of potential for sustainability judging from the following; even though the project's activities are highly likely to be sustained in terms of technology and human resources, the project faces financial uncertainty. Therefore, it is requested the ongoing convening of the AWMC be guaranteed.

3-6 Major recommendations

1) Appropriate operation of the AWMC

The Anzali Wetland Management Committee, established in the project, is very important for sustainable management of the Anzali Wetland with the collaboration of many stakeholders. Thus, it is desirable to continuously operate the AWMC after completion of the project. For that purpose, the Guilan Provincial Government and the DOE should take heed of clarifying the divisions in charge of the AWMC's management/clerical work, and establishing subcommittees and working-level meetings. The DOE and those implementing the project should further deepen discussions on the details of these points.

2) Continuous monitoring and feedback to the management system

Toward achieving the overall goal (implementation of adaptive management), the DOE should continue the monitoring, and revise the environmental management manual and the action plan based on the monitoring results, under the supervision of the AWMC. Moreover, the environmental monitoring should be expanded to cover fish and microorganisms mentioned in the manual as target items, as well as the monitoring of the birds and the water quality that have already been undertaken in the project.

3) Dissemination of wetland management methods to other wetlands

Judging from the fact that there are several wetlands listed in the *Montreux Record* other than Iran's Anzali Wetland, the management methods which were used for the Anzali Wetland, should be effective for other wetlands in Iran and neighboring nations where regional similarities are recognized. It is desirable to disseminate such methods through schemes entailing the development of a highly versatile wetland management manual adaptable to other wetlands, inviting other wetland managers to Guilan Province for OJT, and collaborating with the Ramsar Regional Center.

4) Establishment of a comprehensive wetland management system

The M/P developed through the developmental survey conducted from 2003 to 2005 suggests that, in addition to the outcomes of the project, watershed management, sewage/drainage management, and waste management should also be conducted. It is expected that activities for these forms of management also be promoted through the AWMC. Collaboration with the Anzali Wetland Restoration project (currently being conducted by MOJA) is also desirable.

5) Establishing cooperative achievement with Kushiro

At the first Wetland Management Committee meeting, the governor of Guilan Province and the Japanese ambassador to Iran mentioned a partnership between the Anzali Wetland and the Kushiro Wetland where training for the project was conducted. In order to achieve adaptive management of the Anzali Wetland - the overall goal of the project; the partnership must be considered effective. It is desirable that the DOE and the AWMC implement activities which contribute to promoting the partnership.

3-7 Lessons learned

1) Flexible delivering additional activities without the project execution plan

In this project, flexibly dealing with on-site needs regarding necessary and meaningful activities come out during the project was very effective in terms of both smooth and highly achievement of project purpose and enhancement of sustainability of the project. Concerning examples of this project, additional activities without the project execution plan included 1) the exchange between Anzali Wetland and Kushiro Wetland, 2) the adoption of Anzali declaration, 3) the presentation at COP11, 4) holdings of study tours, and 5) development of the wetland management guideline. These activities were recognized to contribute to facilitate the project implementation and strengthen sustainability. Therefore it is desirable to examine delivering the requested activities in addition to the execution plans for enhancement of the project outcome.

2) Involvement of relevant prominent figures

One of the highest achievements of this project is the involvement of a multiple of stakeholders concerned with Anzali wetland management in AWMC. The commitment of the Gilan provincial governor and Japanese ambassador is one of the major factors that contributed to governing many stakeholders. Therefore cooperation by relevant persons of each side with high rank is supposed to be considerable effective especially in Iranian context, which can also devote for high-level decision making to assist the activities at the ground level.

3) Necessity of visible technical cooperation for counterparts

In general, Japanese technical cooperation has been performed mainly by on-the-job trainings to ensure the sustainability of the environmental management after the completion of the project. This approach has shown considerable effect on the capacity development for counterparts responsible for each activity, and on the establishment of a reliable relationship with Japanese experts. On the other hand, It is difficult to see a visible effect of the technical cooperation for management level staff that has little opportunity to see these practical training conducted by Japanese experts, and this circumstance sometimes hinder the implementation of the project. It is therefore considered that visible performance such as lecture, seminar, and presentation training should be taken in the technical cooperation to demonstrate the expertise and skills of Japanese experts, and in this way, the understanding and the sustainability of the project will be enhanced.

3-8 Follow-up

This project contained advanced activities for the wetland management in Iran, which were effective for other wetlands as well, and further cooperation for the dissemination of such activities was demanded by Iranian side. In addition, continuous cooperation aiming at achieving overall goal was also to be examined. Based on the demand from Iranian side, implementation of project phase-2 has been determined at timing of the report preparation.