

Implementation Procedures for the Development and Spread of Climate-resilient Agriculture and Low-carbon Food Systems in Asia (26-INT-04-SP)

Notes:

As outlined in the Project Notification dated 4 August 2026 (Reference No.: 861), the APO Secretariat will implement this project from August 2026 to April 2029 using the funding from the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), with supplementary support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Japan, for dissemination activities in APO member economies.

The JAIF-funded components of this project will be implemented in accordance with the approved project proposal, the JAIF Handbook, and other applicable ASEC/JAIF rules and procedures.

These implementation procedures describe the implementation arrangements for APO member economies.

1. Modality of Implementation

Hybrid.

2. Scope and Methodology

(1) Scope

Promoting climate-resilient agriculture and low-carbon food systems, exploring possible solutions with a particular focus on a carbon-credit mechanism, and disseminating the outcomes to APO member economies.

(2) Methodology

The Expert Committee (EC), established at the inception of the project, comprises international and national agricultural and environmental research institutions, including representatives from the MAFF Japan, ADB, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and participating governments.

The EC is responsible for guiding methodology development, reviewing progress, ensuring scientific rigor, and providing strategic direction.

The APO serves as the EC Secretariat, coordinating committee activities, organizing periodic meetings, facilitating effective communication among stakeholders, and managing overall project activities, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the project life cycle.

3. Activities

This project builds on the first phase implemented by the ADB with support from MAFF, Japan. From August 2026 onward, the APO Secretariat will implement Years 1–3 in collaboration with the EC, participating countries, and the consultants engaged for project coordination and monitoring and evaluation.

The main activities are as follows:

- Development and refinement of methodologies for the JCM for AWD, initially in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.
- Collection and analysis of GHG emission reduction data from paddy fields in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.
- Stakeholder consultations and engagement activities with local communities, farmers' cooperatives, government agencies, and private-sector entities in targeted countries.
- Regular EC meetings for ongoing review, validation, and enhancement of project methodologies.
- Workshops to disseminate methodologies, initially to ASEAN members using JAIF funding and subsequently to APO member economies using MAFF support, as available.
- Field visits and practical demonstrations at selected sites in implementing countries.
- Preparation of progress, evaluation, and final reports documenting methodologies, results, and lessons learned.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

(1) APO Secretariat

- a. Serve as the implementing organization and EC Secretariat for the project from August 2026 to April 2029.
- b. Coordinate the overall implementation of project activities in accordance with the approved project proposal, budget, indicative work plan, and JAIF rules and procedures.
- c. Engage and supervise the international consultant (coordinator) and regional consultant for monitoring and evaluation, as appropriate.
- d. Convene EC meetings, facilitate coordination with participating countries, MAFF, ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)/JAIF Management Team (JMT), and other relevant stakeholders, and maintain proper project records and supporting documents.
- e. Arrange workshops and other dissemination activities for ASEAN members and, subject to available MAFF support, for APO member economies.
- f. Prepare and submit the required narrative and financial reports and coordinate the external audit where applicable.
- g. Ensure compliance with the JAIF Visibility Guide in project communications, publications, meetings, and workshops.

(2) Expert Committee (EC)

- a. Guide the development and refinement of methodologies and related technical outputs under the project.
- b. Review field data, technical inputs, and draft methodologies, and ensure scientific rigor, transparency, and practicality.
- c. Validate project outputs and provide strategic and technical advice for project implementation and dissemination.

(3) Participating Countries

- a. Participate in the EC and provide relevant policy, technical, and field-based inputs needed for methodology development and validation.
- b. Facilitate coordination with relevant ministries, agencies, research institutions, local stakeholders, and project sites in the participating countries, as appropriate.
- c. Support data collection, stakeholder consultations, field visits, and dissemination activities under the project.

(4) Project Steering Committee (PSC)

- a. The PSC comprises the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division (FAFD) of the ASEC, APO, and ASEAN Member States, and will be convened once a year on an online basis.
- b. The PSC reviews the annual work plan, budget, progress updates, and utilization of JAIF funds and provides strategic guidance for project implementation.
- c. The APO Secretariat prepares a meeting summary and shares it with AMS through FAFD within 20 working days after each PSC meeting.

(5) International Consultant (Coordinator)

The international consultant supports the APO in fulfilling this function and will play a lead role in coordinating the EC's discussions and ensuring effective meeting management as follows:

- a. Identify and list relevant laws and regulations that need to be taken into account and implement compliance procedures.
- b. In collaboration with the EC, advise private project developers to organize a farmers' group to enable GHG emission monitoring while developing their capacities on accurate, constant monitoring.
- c. Collect and review relevant literature and conduct field-based data collection on GHG emissions, as needed. Based on the data and applicable national emission factors, propose technical inputs for the EC's consideration.
- d. Prepare input materials and discussion guides to support effective, informed deliberations in EC meetings and facilitate structured discussions.
- e. Organize and conduct public consultations (hearings) on draft methodologies developed by the EC and compile summaries of comments received for further review and validation.
- f. Organize and conduct technical workshops and dissemination events to promote the adoption and visibility of the methodologies developed among stakeholders across AMS.

(6) Regional Consultant (Monitoring and Evaluation)

The regional consultant supports project monitoring and evaluation in line with ASEAN and JAIF requirements and will:

- a. Conduct a baseline review at the onset of implementation.
- b. Conduct a midterm review during implementation.
- c. Conduct a final review at the end of implementation.
- d. Prepare concise evaluation reports for submission to the APO Secretariat, with the final evaluation report to be annexed to the Project Completion Report.

5. Disbursement Arrangements, Monitoring, Reporting, and Visibility

(1) Disbursement arrangements and reporting requirements

The APO Secretariat, as the Proponent/IA (funding recipient), takes full responsibility for the utilization of funds and will manage them professionally to ensure accountability.

The APO Secretariat will accurately follow the details of the approved project proposal, including budget breakdowns, and understands that a budget realignment (cross-subsidy between different budget lines) or the use of the contingency budget, or both, without approval from the ASEAN Sponsoring Body and the Government of Japan is not possible. The APO Secretariat must consult with the JMT as soon as a budget overrun or expenditure not listed in the budget proposal is found to be inevitable.

To clarify the reporting requirements of the Proponent/IA entrusted to utilize the funds from JAIF, a Disbursement Letter will be issued and signed by ASEC and countersigned by the APO Secretariat.

The APO Secretariat will note that the approved funds will be disbursed in tranches according to ASEC's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Project Financial Disbursement and Reporting, effective from 1 January 2016.

For a project with a duration of 12 months or longer, disbursement is expected to follow the applicable JAIF procedures for multiyear projects, with an initial disbursement of 70% of the approved budget, a possible second tranche of 20% once 75% of the initial disbursement has been utilized and the first tranche financial report has been submitted, and the remaining balance, if applicable, to be disbursed upon submission of the PCR and PFR, together with the summary and supporting documents.

Before the APO Secretariat requests the second tranche, the first tranche financial report, accompanied by the summary and supporting documents (e.g., original invoices and receipts or certified true copies), shall be submitted to the ASEC Finance and Budget Division (FBD).

The project shall be considered fully implemented once the last output mentioned in the indicative work plan of the approved proposal is delivered.

The APO Secretariat will submit the Project Completion Report (PCR) and the Project Financial Report (PFR), accompanied by the summary and supporting documents, within 60 days of the end of implementation. For project activities implemented across more than one fiscal year, the APO Secretariat will also submit the Annual Interim Report (AIR) and the Annual Financial Interim Report (AFIR) covering the year ending on 31 December, with supporting documents, to ASEC by 30 January of the following year.

Project monitoring and evaluation will be carried out throughout implementation, including baseline, midterm, and final reviews by the regional consultant. The final evaluation report shall be annexed to the PCR.

Upon receiving financial verification from the FBD, the APO Secretariat is required to refund any unspent balance, together with interest earned from the project funds, if any, to the JAIF account of ASEC within 90 days of the end of implementation.

For expenses where invoices can be obtained, invoices or receipts should be submitted as supporting documents. For other expenses, especially cash transactions where invoices are not available, receipts will be sufficient.

Any significant change to the approved project proposal, including budget realignment, use of contingency funds, no-cost extension, or major changes in implementation arrangements, shall be subject to prior consultation with the JMT and approval by the relevant ASEAN body and the Government of Japan, as required in the JAIF Handbook.

(2) Visibility

As this project is supported by the Government of Japan through JAIF, the APO Secretariat shall follow the JAIF Visibility Guide, including the use of the JAIF logo and acknowledgement of JAIF support, whenever project activities, outputs, or outcomes have communication and visibility aspects.

6. Financial Arrangements

(1) To be met by the JAIF

The approved project activities for Years 1–3 will be financed by the JAIF in accordance with the approved project proposal and budget.

(2) To be met by MAFF, Japan

MAFF will provide supplementary support for workshops to disseminate methodologies to APO member economies in 2026. Any continued support from MAFF in 2027 and 2028 will be subject to budget approval.

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