

Meeting Summary
NGO Forum on ADB and Office of External Relations
“Public Communications Policy”
14.45-15.45, 30 March 2005

OER distributed copies of the W-Paper, which was considered by the Board of Directors on 10 February, and explained the evolution of the draft policy since the series of external consultations held during 2004.

Reflecting feedback received through the consultations, the W-Paper includes, *inter alia*:

- a detailed appendix of documents and their proposed level of disclosure
- a more direct policy statement
- more specific details about the stages of disclosure for selected draft documents
- process guarantees
- more specific exceptions to the presumption in favor of disclosure
- a public interest override to those exceptions (with Management making a decision on what public interest would warrant an override)
- requirement for a publicly disclosed annual report on implementation

NGO Forum recognized that the formulation of the PCP has been better than other ADB policy preparation processes, even if some areas have not been addressed as recommended by NGOs, e.g. the lack of a fully independent review panel, and differing treatment of private sector and public sector information and documents.

OER noted that Board members focused their remarks at the January meeting on the lack of an external relations strategy. OER added that, in line with the current Disclosure Policy, the PCP R-Paper would not be disclosed.

OER added that Board consideration of the PCP R-Paper could be expected in the coming weeks, with implementation not long thereafter. The document moves in the direction advocated by NGOs and experts concerned with transparency, e.g. disclosure of private sector information/documents is increased, and the W-Paper's Appendix 6 (identifying specific parts of the PCP that would be subject to compliance review) has been removed and replaced by a much shorter list of paragraph numbers, following the precedent established by ADB's Environment Policy.

Participants

ADB

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NGO Forum on ADB

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