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USAID Awards \$21.5 Million Contract to Promote Low Carbon Development across Asia

Bangkok, Thailand, October 1, 2011 – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded ICF International a \$21.5 million, five-year contract that will help developing countries in Asia achieve sustained low-carbon development.

Known as the Low-Emissions Asian Development (LEAD) program, the award will assist up to 11 Asian countries in developing low emission development strategies (LEDS) that were introduced in the Copenhagen Accord reached in 2009. These are: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

As the world prepares for the next international climate negotiations in Durban, South Africa this December, it is widely recognized that both developed and developing economies will have a critical role in addressing climate change.

Asia is increasingly at the center of this discussion. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from Asia's fossil fuel use are expected to increase from about 33 percent today to 45 percent of world totals by 2030, while Asia's developing countries already make up more than half of the world's emissions from deforestation and other land-based sources. Asian developing nations are also expected to face significant adverse impacts from climate change.

Rather than pursuing "business-as-usual" development, the LEAD program is designed to help Asia's developing countries "leap-frog" ahead by adopting new low-carbon policies and practices and tap into expanding global markets in green technologies and services. LEAD will help Asian governments, businesses, and others develop and strengthen the policies, institutions, resources, and skills needed for sustained low emissions development. The program will also help governments prepare national greenhouse gas inventories—detailed reports summarizing total carbon emissions from all major economic sectors. All countries must now submit these inventories to the United Nations every two years.

In addition, LEAD aims to expand carbon market investment in Asia, by working with the private sector to prepare corporate inventories and participate in these markets. Further, the program will promote regional knowledge sharing and experiences, ultimately building a cadre of local experts for carbon accounting services.

The LEAD program was awarded to ICF International following a fully open and competitive process. In addition to ICF, the program will engage technical expertise and resources from other US Government agencies, including the US Forest Service, US Environmental Protection Agency, and US Department of Energy.

"The United States Government made significant commitments to support developing countries in the recent international climate negotiations, and launching the LEAD program is part of that

commitment,” remarked Michael Yates, Mission Director for USAID’s Regional Development Mission for Asia.

“There is a great deal at stake in Asia, both with respect to Asia’s growing contribution to global carbon emissions, as well as the near- and long-term impacts associated with climate change,” he added. “Any country’s economic development strategy needs to take into consideration the remarkable opportunities presented by promoting green growth, and through LEAD we aim to help make low emissions, resilient development a reality. We are excited about the new partnerships we expect to establish and the new Asia-wide cooperation that will be possible through this regional initiative.”

About USAID

The United States Agency for International Development has been the principal US agency extending foreign assistance since 1961. In Asia, USAID programs address many problems that cross national boundaries, such as human and wildlife trafficking, HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases, global climate change, natural resources conservation, food security, trade, and political and economic conflict. For more information, visit www.usaid.gov.

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