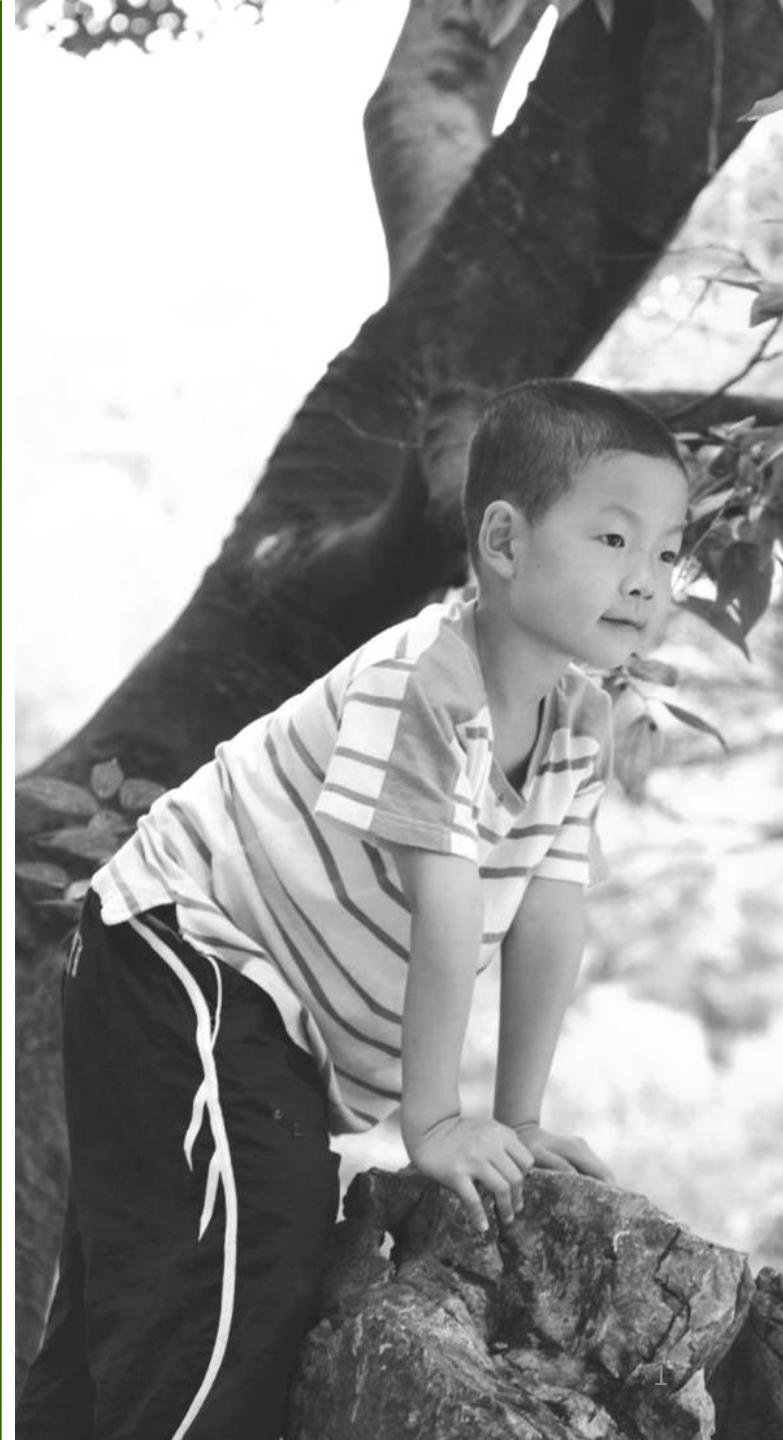




Future Strategies of the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN)

*Promoting Effective Environmental Compliance and
Enforcement in Asia
Using South-South Cooperation*

AECEN Secretariat
IGES Regional Centre



Network Sustainability and 2016-2017 Work Plan

Outcomes of Fundraising Efforts and Discussions with Development Partners

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Other Possibilities Based on Member Interest and Priorities

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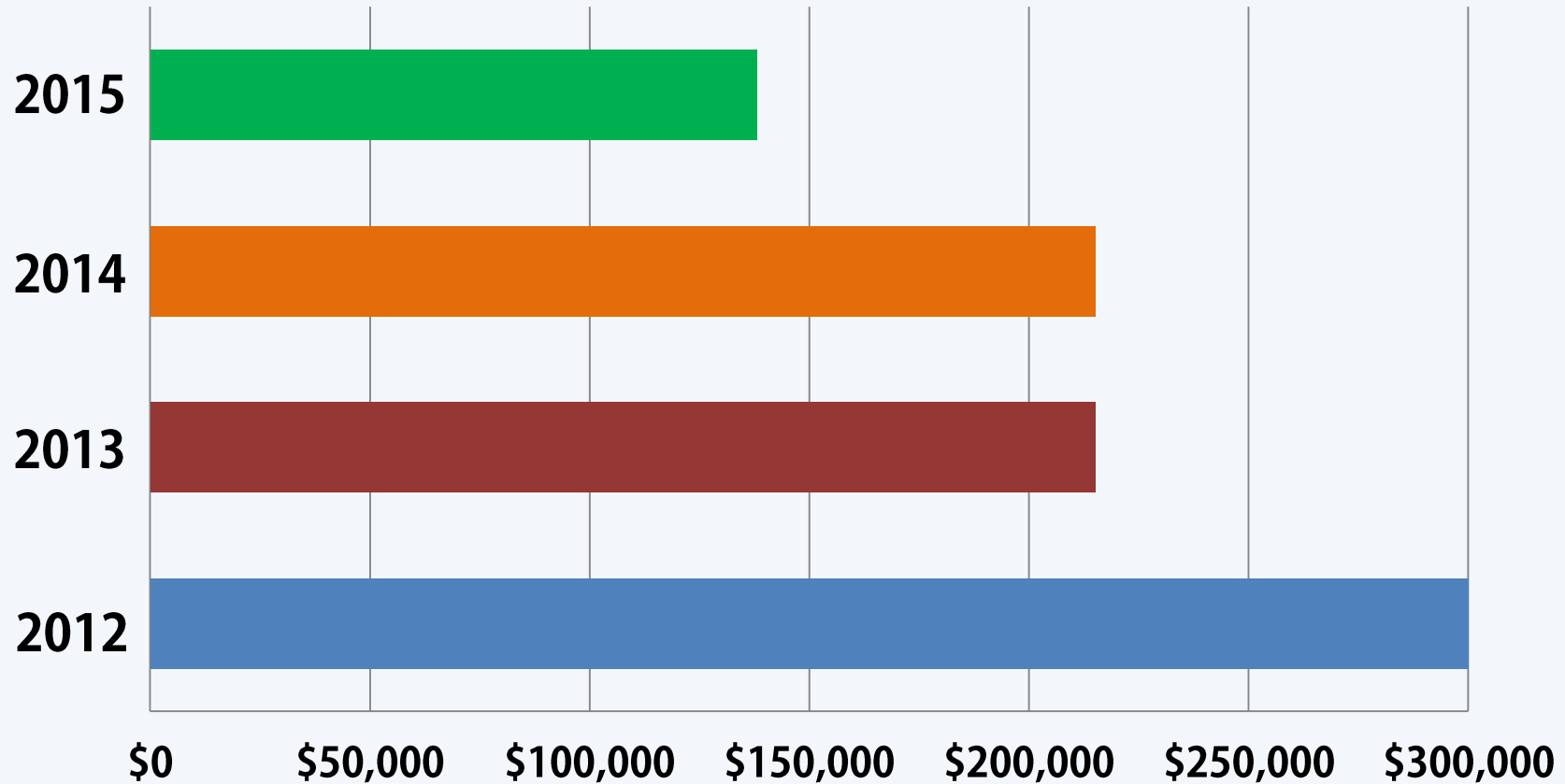
Identifying Future Strategies and Next Steps

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Outcomes of Fundraising Efforts

- Support for AECEN core funds and activities essentially ceased with completion of the USAID funded Eco-Asia project in 2012
(acknowledging the substantive USAID support for AECEN since its inception)
- IGES, as the AECEN Secretariat since 2012, has approached virtually all donors based in Bangkok with the proposition that compliance and enforcement is an important issue recognized by all donors and countries.
- The results, however, have been very patchy to say the least and IGES has had to support the Secretariat largely from its own core funds.
- Typical arguments for the lack of donor support are (a) donor can't fund regional programs; (b) environmental compliance and enforcement doesn't fit in with the topics covered by the donor; or (c) would love to assist but there is currently no available funding.
- Accordingly, the Secretariat has obtained limited funding from ADB and USAID for projects related to environmental and social safeguards.

AECEN Funding 2012 - 2015



2012	2013	2014	2015
\$300,000	\$215,000	\$215,000	\$138,083

Expansion of Mandate into Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

- **As indicated in the earlier presentation on recent activities undertaken by AECEN, most of the work over the past 12-18 months has been in relation to strengthening ESS**
- **The rationale for this approach has been that earlier work by AECEN found that compliance was more culturally acceptable in Asia than heavy-handed enforcement and in a similar vein prevention is better than cure**
- **This realization led the AECEN secretariat to the view that ESS was an essential tool for environmental compliance in Asia (and strategic environmental assessment will become increasingly important as the need for upstream prevention of environmental damage is recognized by the region's governments)**
- **As indicated above, it was also recognized that funding was available for ESS strengthening**
- **However, this change in the mandate has not yet been endorsed by the Executive Committee.**

Institutional Arrangements

- **The strategic shift towards ESS has implications for the current AECEN institutional arrangements**
- **Should ESS be seen as a core activity of AECEN and attempts be made to secure funding for more ESS strengthening?**
- **Should AECEN members/representatives also be drawn from the parts of environment ministries responsible for EIA and/or SEA?**
- **How should this expansion of the AECEN mandate be reflected in the constitution of the Executive Committee?**
- **For discussion:**
- **The secretariat recommends that (a) AECEN should seek additional members from environmental divisions dealing with ESS; (b) countries should be asked if they would prefer to have the pollution control agency or EIA divisions represented on the Executive Committee; and (c) there should be a balance of pollution control and EIA expertise in the Executive Committee.**

Implications for 2016-2017 Work Plan

- **The only reasonably secure funding for 2016-2017 is through the USAID funded Mekong Partnership on Environment, where AECEN will be involved in meetings of the Regional Technical Working Group developing a regional guideline on public participation in EIA**
- **Proposals are being prepared for ADB funding in the areas of air quality management (using the AECEN twinning modality) and EIA (following on from the earlier RETA)**
- **Additional sources of funding will be sought, subject to the discussion on other possible strategic directions in the following slide (including one current submission to USAID)**
- **If the Executive Committee instructs the Secretariat to avoid further involvement in the ESS work, however, then this would clearly impinge on AECEN's ability to cover recurrent costs**
- **Based on discussions regarding the strategic directions, the Secretariat will prepare a Work Plan for 2016-2017 and circulate it for review and comment.**

Possible Directions and Future Strategies

1. Increase the membership categories to include civil society organizations and/or the private sector

- **Pros** – May bring in new sources of funding; may add new and innovative compliance mechanisms; may satisfy civil society watchdog interests
- **Cons** – Would constrain government agencies from openly sharing weaknesses and concerns; may change the agenda from sharing experiences to more corporate interests (like promoting specific monitoring equipment)

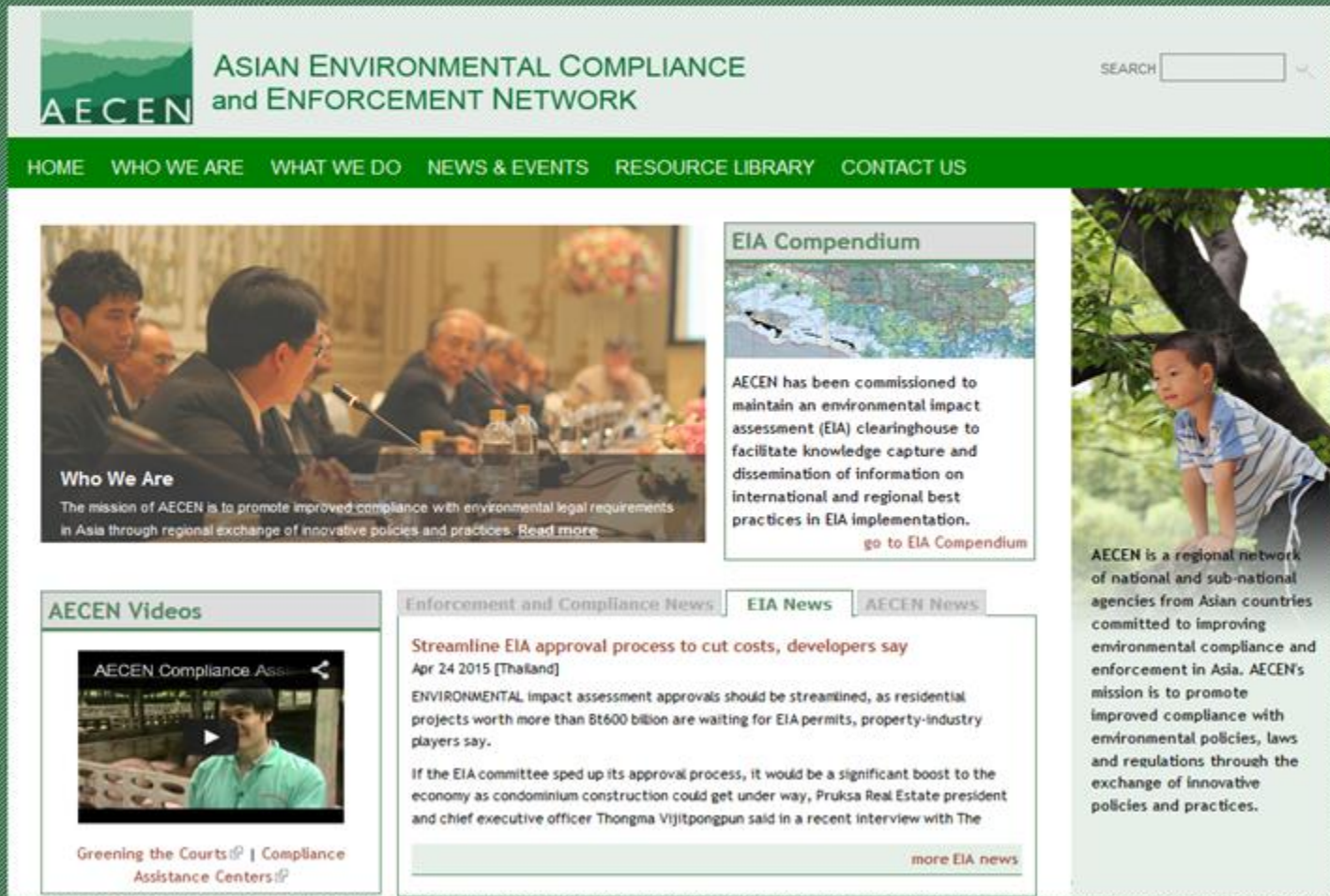
2. Expand the mandate of AECEN to cover “green” environmental issues like wildlife crime, deforestation, forest encroachment, biodiversity loss

- **Pros** – Would make AECEN appear to be a more comprehensive network covering all environmental issues; could relate issues of deforestation to air quality management; could cover all divisions within environment agencies
- **Cons** – Existing networks such as ASEAN-WEN would need to be convinced to merge with AECEN; mandate may become too broad

Possible Directions and Future Strategies

- 3. Expand the membership to include other parts of Asia (such as West Asia, Central Asia) and/or the Pacific**
 - Pros – Expanded membership would bring in more/different ECE experience from other regions; could possibly help in accessing different donors
 - Cons – Creating new membership may raise expectations that AECEN cannot meet without new and additional funding; Pacific may be better aligned with AELERT
- 4. Close down AECEN and merge with similar networks, such as AELERT in Australia and New Zealand and/or ASEAN-WEN**
 - Pros – Currently, AECEN is barely alive and is being supported by limited funding for ESS and from IGES core funds; merging networks may offer a stronger “target” for donors
 - Cons – AECEN has achieved a lot since its creation and has attempted to meet the needs of its members—closing it down would see that legacy forgotten.

THANK YOU



The screenshot shows the AECEN website homepage with a green header and navigation menu. The main content area features several sections: 'Who We Are' with a photo of a meeting, 'EIA Compendium' with a map, 'AECEN Videos' with a video player, 'Enforcement and Compliance News' with a news article, and a sidebar with a photo of a child and a text block about the network's mission.

ASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE and ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

SEARCH

HOME WHO WE ARE WHAT WE DO NEWS & EVENTS RESOURCE LIBRARY CONTACT US

Who We Are
The mission of AECEN is to promote improved compliance with environmental legal requirements in Asia through regional exchange of innovative policies and practices. [Read more](#)

EIA Compendium
AECEN has been commissioned to maintain an environmental impact assessment (EIA) clearinghouse to facilitate knowledge capture and dissemination of information on international and regional best practices in EIA implementation. [go to EIA Compendium](#)

AECEN Videos
AECEN Compliance Assistance Centers

Enforcement and Compliance News | EIA News | AECEN News
Streamline EIA approval process to cut costs, developers say
Apr 24 2015 [Thailand]
ENVIRONMENTAL impact assessment approvals should be streamlined, as residential projects worth more than Bt600 billion are waiting for EIA permits, property-industry players say.
If the EIA committee sped up its approval process, it would be a significant boost to the economy as condominium construction could get under way, Pruksa Real Estate president and chief executive officer Thongma Vijitpongpun said in a recent interview with The [more EIA news](#)

AECEN is a regional network of national and sub-national agencies from Asian countries committed to improving environmental compliance and enforcement in Asia. AECEN's mission is to promote improved compliance with environmental policies, laws and regulations through the exchange of innovative policies and practices.