

Communicating research

AOP budgeted expenditure in 2006–07	\$680,000
Actual expenditure in 2006–07	\$657,485
Expenditure in 2005–06	\$689,749
Expenditure in 2004–05	\$776,556
Proportion of total ACIAR expenditure 2006–07	1.1%

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Communications and
Secretariat Unit



Key performance indicators	Performance 2006–07
Information on project achievements and impacts is widely available in print and web-based media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project milestone reporting and summaries were posted on the website; achievements and impacts were captured in a suite of impact assessment publications, adoption studies and the country profiles. <i>Partners in Research for Development</i> magazine and bi-lingual in-country newsletters continued to provide information on ACIAR's research. Research outcomes were also communicated through a range of briefings, events and activities, media releases, television and radio coverage.
Evidence of continuing demand for and appreciation of ACIAR's scientific and corporate publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13,747 copies of ACIAR publications were disseminated in hard copy format, with 421 copies sold upon request, earning a net income of \$13,771. A total of 277,403 separate visitors viewed ACIAR's website, with more than 7,415,000 hits recorded. Website traffic has grown by 38%. Publications lists featured each month in the top 10 pages visited. Twenty five percent of visitors downloaded publications.
Targeted stakeholder groups are satisfied that their information needs are being effectively met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to recommendations from ACIAR's Survey of Stakeholders, conducted in early 2006, ACIAR has improved information dissemination to partners, including holding annual meetings with stakeholders, provision for senior executives from research providers to meet with the ACIAR Board of Management and development of joint publications with partner organisations.
ACIAR's use of information and communication technologies for disseminating agricultural research information for development is consistent with current best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACIAR's information-rich website provides the first port of call for information about ACIAR. ACIAR provides electronic versions of its scientific and corporate publications, free of charge on its website. The website is undergoing a process of continuous improvement and new technologies are monitored and explored.

Position

ACIAR has a statutory obligation to communicate the results of the research it funds. With a wide range of stakeholders, the Communications Program targets specific audiences through the ACIAR website, printed and electronic publications, and other communication activities that raise awareness of the Centre's activities and outcomes.

ACIAR's scientific publishing program provides an avenue for project participants to communicate and disseminate results of their research to next user groups by providing low-cost access to a range of publications; from 'how-to' manuals to workshop proceedings, technical reports, monographs and a suite of corporate publications.

The Communications Program uses ACIAR's website as the primary source of information on project activities and outcomes, dissemination of free publications and an associated on-line shopping facility, with material also provided in hard copy and on CD-ROM. Translations into regional languages and use of multimedia technology are also supported.

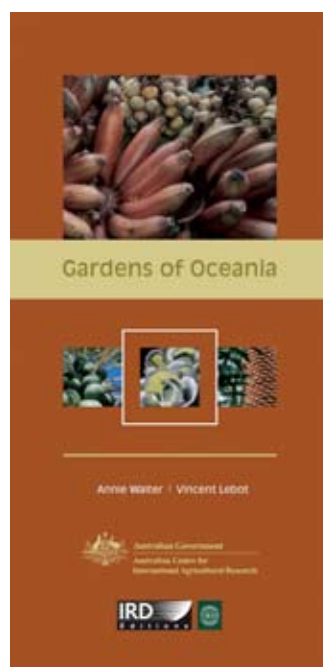
Other activities include raising public awareness of ACIAR's work through a range of briefings, events and activities, media releases, television and radio coverage, targeting specific audiences and communicating research outcomes, and the provision of materials at major scientific conferences and events.

Achievements

In the 2006–07 year, ACIAR published and distributed 14 new titles in its scientific series (six monographs, three proceedings, two working papers and three technical reports), and eight reports in its impact assessment series. These are listed in Appendix 4, together with the corporate and research awareness titles produced during the year.

More than 13,000 hard copies of publications were distributed, of which 421 were sold to developed-world customers, earning a net income of \$13,771. Complimentary copies are distributed on request to people and institutions involved in agricultural research, development and extension in ACIAR's partner countries. Current ACIAR publications are available as downloads from the website, and these are also frequently accessed.

The most popular hard copy titles included *Gardens of Oceania* (Monograph 122), *Aquaculture in Papua New Guinea: status*



of freshwater fish farming (Monograph 125); and *Economically Important Sharks and Rays of Indonesia* (Monograph 124), written in both English and Indonesian, which is the first of its kind to provide identifications of the sharks and rays marketed in Indonesia, many of which are being over-fished. The guide should help in the identification of many of those species.

Coconut revival: new possibilities for the 'tree of life' (Proceedings 125) reports on a workshop on the palm, one of the most important crops grown in the humid tropics, with more than 11 million farmers, mostly smallholders with low income, growing the palm in 90 countries.

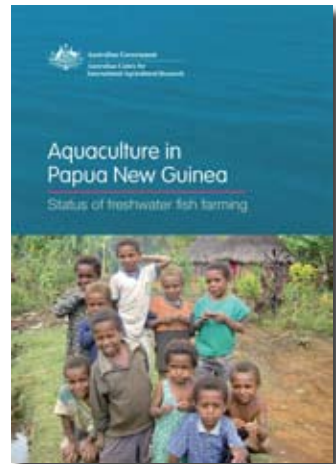
Agricultural Water Management in China (Proceedings 123) and *Towards improving profitability of teak in integrated smallholder farming systems in northern Lao PDR* (Technical Report 64) were also popular titles. A Publication Catalogue was produced in 2006–07 profiling ACIAR publications in a ready-reference format.

Agricultural development and land policy in Vietnam (Monograph 123a, published in Vietnamese) and *Agricultural development and land policy in Vietnam: policy briefs* (Monograph 26, published in both English and Vietnamese), focused on the impacts of the Vietnamese Government's new policies on agriculture and the provision of economic models suitable for analysing policy reforms.

The proceedings of a workshop held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, *Heart rot and root rot in tropical Acacia plantations* (Proceedings 124), was published to support the cultivation of fast-growing hardwood acacias. Acacias are increasingly important to the economies of many countries around the Pacific Rim, including Australia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Adoption of ACIAR project outputs: studies of projects completed in 2002–2003 examined the extension and adoption of research outcomes from a series of projects that ended four years earlier.

The flagship ACIAR magazine *Partners in Research for Development* continued to attract favourable attention from Australian and overseas recipients. The magazine profiled ACIAR research on animal health, biosecurity and the farm-to-market supply chain, along with



project activities in the Mekong countries. Other features included continuing the work of helping rebuild research capacity in tsunami-devastated areas of Aceh, Indonesia, and profiles of key stakeholders in partner countries.

A third series of the *Country Profiles* was produced in 2006–07. Each Profile comprised a current overview of ACIAR's program with summaries of active and recently concluded projects for each of ACIAR's partner countries or regions.

The Communications Program supported a range of briefings, events and activities, media releases, television and radio coverage, that targeted specific audiences and communicated research outcomes. A highlight was a media event to promote two projects in Vietnam. This event included joint sponsorship by ACIAR and the Crawford Fund of an Australian journalist to visit and report on projects in Vietnam. Other activities were undertaken in East Timor, Indonesia, China, the Philippines, Pakistan, and India. ACIAR projects received significant coverage in all partner countries via media stories, partner organisation newsletters and other activities.

The development and delivery of bilingual country-specific newsletters, together with other ongoing activities kept Australian embassy staff and international partners up-to-date with ACIAR projects, achievements and activities. ACIAR also maintained a presence at several conferences, such as the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society Conference and the Annual Crawford Fund Seminar.

Developing capacity in scientific and general communications for partner-country scientists was undertaken through support for various ACIAR training and education programs. Information and support were also provided to program areas and country offices.

ACIAR's website

The information-rich ACIAR website (www.aciar.gov.au) is the first port of call for people wanting to find information about the Centre and its work. Accessibility is a key design feature, allowing users in Australia and developing countries to find timely and up-to-date information, including electronic publications, which are available for free download.

The site features detailed project information, with a growing number of concluded projects and their impacts reported on, as well as details of all active projects, including progress reports. Australian and



international research partner information and project involvement is included, together with detailed reporting and planning documentation on ACIAR priorities and outcomes.

Information from throughout the lifecycle of a project is included, from activation to final reporting stages. Searching options allow projects to be grouped by country, by program discipline and Australian or multilateral partner organisations.

Website traffic continued to rise against that recorded during the 2005–06 financial year. Website statistics for the 2006–07 year demonstrated that visits, hits and usage all continued to trend upwards. More than 7 million page hits were recorded by more than 270,000 unique or separate visitors, which is an increase in site traffic of 38%.

ACIAR's online bookshop, which allows visitors to search for titles, freely download electronic publications and purchase hard copy publications, remained one of the most popular destinations on the site. Publication lists allowing visitors to access publications by their type (monographs, technical reports etc) or subject matter (animal health, forestry etc) featured in the top ten most visited pages each month. A quarter of visitors downloaded ACIAR publications.

The chart shows the number of unique visitors to the site along the right-hand axis and the number of hits on the left-hand axis.

A number of site enhancements were made through the year, including installation of a new content management system and redevelopment of the 'For researchers' information. The website is undergoing a process of continuous improvement, and new technologies are monitored and explored.

Trends in visitor use of the ACIAR website—www.aciar.gov.au

