

## **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

### **Committee for Environmental Protection under Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (CEP RT)**

**Assignment:** Preparation of Tajikistan Resilient Landscape Restoration Project (P171524)  
**Title:** Technical Project design, environmental and social assessment, institutional assessment, economic analysis, monitoring and evaluation  
**Reference:** TRLRLP.CS.CQS.01/2021  
**Deadline:** April 05 , 2021

The Government of Tajikistan has received a project preparation grant (PPG) funding to prepare the Tajikistan Resilient Landscape Restoration Project. The overall project objective is to increase adoption of landscape restoration practices by rural communities in selected regions and promote collaboration by Central Asia countries on transboundary landscape restoration. The Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) is the implementing agency for the preparation of the project. The objective of the PPG is to finance the preparation activities of the proposed Tajikistan Resilient Landscape Project.

The CEP intends to apply part of the PPG proceeds for the consulting services (“the Services”) that include technical design of the proposed project, environmental and social assessment, institutional assessment, economic analysis, and monitoring and evaluation.

Implementation period of the assignments is 5 months.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment attached to this request for expressions of interest (Attachment 1).

The CEP now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The shortlisting criteria are:

- At least 5 years of experience in technical project designing and socio-economic researches and assessment.
- At least 3 years of experience in preparing environmental impact assessment.
- Ability to quickly mobilize personnel for field-based activities;

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to the III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016 revised November 2017 and August 2018, setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Consultants’ Qualification-based Selection method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by 4PM (Dushanbe time) on April 05 , 2021.

Further information can be obtained at the address below between 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Committee for Environmental Protection under Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (CEP RT)

**Attn: Mr. Sheralizoda B.A – CEP Chairman**  
5/1 Shamsi str., 2-floor, room 38, Dushanbe, Tajikistan  
tell: (+992) 235 44 36  
E-mail: cepprj@gmail.com

**Description of specific tasks and scope of services**

Specific tasks under this assignment include the following.

*Technical Project Design*

*I. Institutional and Policy Assessment*

Institutional and Policy Assessment will:

- Analyze laws, policies, sectoral strategies and institutions involved in forest restoration, protected area management, and rangeland management; identify inconsistencies and areas for improvement, if any; and recommend measures for strengthening policies based on international best practices.
- Undertake capacity needs assessment and present short-,medium-, and long-term capacity building measures for key agencies such as CEP, Special Protected Areas Enterprise, Forestry Agency, other government agencies, communities, private sector, and civil society in landscape restoration and protected areas management, ecosystem based adaptation and climate risk mainstreaming. The capacity needs assessment should also cover capacities for spatial planning and use of spatial data.

Regional cooperation assessment will:

- Analyze regional policies of Central Asia countries, with particular reference to Tajikistan on forest, pasture and agricultural lands; protected area management and biodiversity; and identify potential areas for harmonization of regional policies to improve management of critical resources.
- Identify areas for promoting new regional cooperation and improving existing ones, if any, for cross-border landscape restoration, including measures on enhancing resilience of regional transport roads.
- Identify specific measures for strengthening capacity of Central Asia countries, with particular reference to Tajikistan, on landscape restoration, through a) knowledge management, b) regional digital platform for storing, hosting and publishing data and publications, and c) monitoring of RESILAND CA+ program impacts, and tracking the adoption of innovative technologies

Outputs under this activity include the following: a) a report on assessment of national institutions and policies for landscape restoration, and b) a report on assessment of regional institutions and policies for landscape restoration.

*II. Technical studies for Project Design*

The technical studies will:

- Analyze causes of landscape degradation, barriers to reverse degradation, and measures to increase productivity of the landscape.
- Assess current status of protected area management and rank PAs based on a) need for management plans with boundary mapping and spatial planning, and b) need/opportunity for landscape restoration, afforestation, reforestation, pasture management; and other activities within the protected area.

- Conduct rapid biodiversity assessment in the identified PA.
- Assess specifically potential of agroforestry for landscape restoration, existing agroforestry practices, and measures to improve them. Assess farmer's preference to agroforestry system, including ranking of desirable species (fruits, fodder, forest, nuts, and other species).
- Assess status of forest nurseries and production of seedlings and recommend measures for strengthening nursery management, including ranking of species desirability for seedlings production.
- Assess successful water resource management practices in the country and recommend rangeland management activities based on international or regional best practices to be considered under the project in sub-river basin and watershed level.
- Assess successful rangeland management practices in the country and recommend rangeland management activities based on international or regional best practices to be considered under the project in sub-river basin and watershed level.
- Design small grants mechanism, including selection of beneficiaries, grant amount, beneficiary contributions, and eligible investments under sub-basin level integrated landscape management plans and watershed level action plans to encourage increased adoption of landscape restoration practices. Grant recipients would include **pasture user unions** (for activities related to pasture management e.g. pasture improvement, water points, pasture access, fodder production, livestock husbandry, training, extension, shelter belts, agroforestry), and **households** (for agroforestry and climate smart agriculture e.g. sustainable intensification, organic production, integrated pest management, seed and crop choices, agroforestry, woodlots, agro-biodiversity practices).
- Identify measures to provide technical support and capacity building for grantees in the design and implementation of investments in this component. Small grants to communities should follow community driven approaches implemented in other Bank funded projects in agriculture, tourism and socio-economic development.
- Prepare a Grant Operational Manual based on similar manuals prepared for other relevant projects to engage communities to undertake restoration activities identified in the sub-basin level integrated landscape management plan and watershed level action plans. The implementation of the watershed level action plans will focus on the adoption of priority sustainable land management and climate smart agricultural practices. With a focus on implementation in transboundary corridors, community-driven activities seek to address the need to link restoration with improving the resilience of rural populations and the improved integrity of transboundary resources.
- Identify activities for boosting the post COVID-19 recovery of rural livelihoods in project sites, such as vocational training for locally appropriate market-based activities, which will provide additional employment opportunities.
- Identify approaches to ensure the active and effective participation of women in community meetings, planning, decision-making, capacity building and management community-driven plans and investments.
- Prepare a draft Project Operation Manual.

Outputs under this activity include the following: Separate reports, as specified above, on landscape degradation, assessment of protected area management, forest management, agroforestry, rangeland management, water resource management, grant mechanism, grant operational manual, and project operation manual.

### *III. Site assessment and selection of the project area*

- Select the sites for project interventions based on a combination of criteria. An initial pre-screening of districts has been conducted using the following criteria - poverty incidence, potential for integrated landscape restoration (incorporating pasture, agriculture, water, forestry, biodiversity), regional and transboundary corridors, and complementarity with government and donor-funded initiatives. When overlaid on the current arrangements of river basins, potential project sites fall in the following river basins: a) Syr Darya (in Sughd oblast, bordering Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic); b) larger Panj (in Khatlon and Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous oblasts, bordering the Kyrgyz Republic and Afghanistan); and c) Vakhsh (in the Region of Republican Subordination and Khatlon oblasts, bordering Afghanistan). These sites include protected and forest areas that share boundaries with the above countries, along with sub-basins and watersheds that form upper catchments and include tributaries of regionally important rivers. Resources of national and regional significance in these sites include riparian forests (tugai), threatened fauna (snow leopard) and infrastructure (dams). During project preparation further analysis will be conducted and consultations held with government and other stakeholders to finalize project sites.

More specifically,

- Based on the criteria used for ranking protected areas as mentioned above, identify two protected areas to which the project should support for **Management plans (protected area management plan, biodiversity management plans, if necessary)**.
- Identify most suitable sites for afforestation, assisted natural regeneration, forest protection, joint forest management (JFM), and other activities planned in the National Strategy on Forestry Development, and develop annual plans with targets for each of these activities.
- Identify a **sub-basin for landscape management plans**, in consultation with key stakeholders, including relevant government ministries and agencies at national, regional (oblast) and local government levels, in close coordination with the River Basin Organizations (RBOs) and River Basin Councils (RBCs).
- Within the sub-river, identify watersheds for **watershed level action plans** comprising one or more jamoats, which in turn would be reviewed and integrated at district level.

Outputs under this activity include the assessment of the site and selection of the project areas, including protected areas, forest areas, sub-basins, and watersheds.

### *IV. Environmental and Social Assessments*

- Undertake environmental and social assessment, identify significant positive and negative (including direct, indirect, cumulative and associated) impacts, immediate and long-term effects related to the implementation phase of the proposed interventions. Propose risk management and impact mitigation measures and prepare the corresponding environmental and social instruments for the Project in accordance with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements. More specifically,

- Prepare the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF); Process Framework and Labor Management Procedures for the Project in accordance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and relevant Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and applicable provisions/ requirements.
  - Assessment of the World Bank and Tajikistan's Environment and Social Assessment policies, legal, and administrative conditions in terms of completeness and appropriateness, and gaps between Tajikistan and World Bank requirements and propose reconciliation provisions under the proposed project.
  - Organize continuous stakeholder consultations and information disclosure to ensure that feedback is appropriately incorporated into project design and the above-mentioned ESF documents.
  - Coordinate with CEP and other consultants to integrate environmental and social aspects in the project design.
  - Contribute to the development of the capacity building program for the environmental and social risk management and impact mitigation, preparation and implementation of the ESF documents.
  - Prepare a gender gap analysis in the forestry sector
- Outputs under this activity include the following:
    - Environmental Assessment
    - Social Assessment
    - Environmental and Social Management Framework;
    - Environmental and Social Commitment Plan;
    - Stakeholder Engagement Plan;
    - Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF);
    - Process Framework;
    - Labor Management Procedures;
    - Gender Gap Analysis.

#### *V. Economic and Financial Assessment*

- Prepare Economic and Financial Analysis for the proposed project. Output under this activity: Economic and Financial Analysis.

(Note: This activity will be carried out by an expert hired separately, but the consulting team is expected to closely with that expert)

#### *VI. Monitoring and Evaluation and Results Framework*

Develop Monitoring and Evaluation and Results Framework for the proposed project, including theory of change and indicators to measure project outcomes. Output under this activity: M&E and Results Framework. incl. indicators, baselines and targets.