



Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education
(An Autonomous body of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India)
P.O. New Forest, Dehradun – 248 006 (Uttarakhand), INDIA

Expressions of Interest (EOI) for ‘Development of Road Map for Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management in India’ under the World Bank/GEF assisted Ecosystem Service Improvement Project

Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun intends to engage a nationally reputed consultancy organization/institution (“Consultants”) for ‘Development of Road Map for Sustainable Land and Eco-system Management in India’ under the World Bank/GEF assisted Ecosystem Service Improvement Project (ESIP).

The consultants would need to look into the current state of institutional and policy arrangements in India and how these may be required to be realigned and /or what policy reforms and changes are required to mainstream SLEM practices in making investments choices etc. The implementation period of the assignment shall be six months from the date of award of the contract. TOR for the assignment is given Annexure - I.

Interested consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. Proposal so submitted should include the organization’s mandate, its past experience and credentials (with relevant documentation) and with justification as to why it should be considered as a suitable organization for undertaking such a study.

Eligibility Criteria: Reputed organizations/ institutions having atleast 10 years of professional experience in research, consulting, report writing on issues of national relevance. Experience should include covering policy and institutional issues in different sectors. Familiarity with converting policy reforms related recommendation into specific actions.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the CQS method set out in the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants.

Further information (if any) can be obtained at the address given below during office hours (09.00 to 17.30 hrs).

Interested parties may submit the Expressions of Interest (in person, or by mail, or by post) to the following on or before **10 September 2015**.

Assistant Director General (Biodiversity and Climate Change) &
Project Director, ESIP Project
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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

for

Development of Road Map for Sustainable Land and Eco-system Management in India

BACKGROUND

In India almost 47% of land is under cultivation, about 70% of population dependent on agriculture, 69% of the country is dry land, *i.e.*, arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid, 24.8% area is undergoing desertification, and more than 32% of India's total land area is affected by land degradation. While 72% of India's population is rural and depends mainly on land and water resources, almost 80% of all Indian farmers are under the poverty line. The major causes for land degradation are unsustainable water management, poor agricultural practices, human and livestock pressure on land, deforestation, climate change and industrialization.

In India, there is a major focus on reducing poverty through enhanced productivity from irrigated as well as dry land ecosystems, which requires an approach with adequate emphasis on conservation of natural resources. There are significant opportunities for improving land management practices in order to improve productivity and reduce land degradation. Profitable and sustainable land use and ecosystem practices can be the principal means for protecting India's significant environmental assets and alleviating poverty in the largest and poorest segments of Indian society.

Despite considerable financial investments, studies indicate that the rate of degradation of land in rainfed areas in the 1990s is likely to have proceeded at more than twice the rate observed in the earlier years. Further, our agricultural land is also shrinking at a faster rate due to urbanization and developmental activities. The over exploitation of ground water has become serious problem not only in dry states but also in food producing states like Punjab and Haryana. Appropriate land use and sustainable management of the country's natural resources and agro-ecosystem are the avenues to meet the challenges and to sustain environmental services. Given this background, the XIth Five Year Plan of the Government has placed high priority on raising agricultural productivity to achieve an annual agricultural growth of more than 4.1 percent. The XIth Five Year Plan acknowledges that this goal cannot be achieved with the ongoing shrinking and degradation of the country's natural resources, and therefore, stresses upon conservation, harnessing and developing of natural resources. This will require that we move away from existing inefficient use of land and water resources, including ground water mining, recognize the additional challenges resulting from current climate variability, and expected extreme climate conditions.

ICFRE has implemented the World Bank/GEF assisted Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management Project as Technical Facilitation Organisation (TFO) under Sustainable Land and Ecosystem

Management - Country Partnership Programme (SLEM-CPP) of the Government of India and Global Environmental Facility (GEF). Now, ICFRE is one of the implementing partners of the World Bank/GEF assisted project on 'Ecosystem Improvement Project (ESIP)' and may implement one of the component of ESIP, *i.e.*, Scaling up of Integrated Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management (SLEM) Approaches for Reducing Land Degradation and Desertification: The main objectives of this component are to prevent land degradation and desertification and increase above-ground forest carbon stock through a combination of investments to implement and scale-up tried-and-tested SLEM best practices, increase national capacity for monitoring land degradation and track associated indicators and generate knowledge exchange on SLEM approaches so as to benefit small and marginal farmers and other rural poor. These activities are designed to overcome the twin challenges of arresting land degradation and meeting food security targets. In particular, this component will draw heavily from the lessons and best practice approaches to sustainable land and ecosystem management that were developed and piloted under the GEF financed SLEM project.

The SLEM Approach:

The Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management (SLEM) approach was a joint initiative under the Country Partnership Programme (CPP) of the Government of India and Global Environmental Facility (GEF). The Programme was led by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at the national level, and collaborates closely with State government authorities and other stakeholder groups at the local level. The SLEM-CPP conceived as a multi-stakeholder project supports adoption and implementation of sustainable land and ecosystem management, the essence of which is to apply a multi-sectoral approach to land management, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation issues in several states of India. In order to do so, a number of organizations representing different capacities related to the issues at hand were participated in the program. These include government organizations at union and state levels, non-governmental and civil society organizations. The complexity of the program requires significant efforts at multiple institutional levels in order to achieve the planned results, and secure scaling-up of successful results.

Six SLEM projects were implemented in India with assistance from the World Bank, UNDP and FAO. The project sites under SLEM-CPP cover diverse ecological zones including arid, coastal and mountainous ecosystems and address diverse aspects of land and ecosystem management including coastal agriculture, shifting cultivation, watershed management, and groundwater management.

The SLEM project on "Policy and Institutional Reform for Mainstreaming and Up-scaling Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management in India" was anchored at the Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun. The project envisages identifying gaps and barriers to sustainable land management, and documenting best practices across the country, which could be up-scaled and mainstreamed. The project outcome contributing towards harmonization of the institutional and policy framework, coordination and monitoring of interventions in agricultural and natural resource

management strategies that promotes sustainable land management and enhances agricultural productivity while minimizing environmental impacts.

The Baseline study:

SLEM-CPP being a multi-sectoral approach to land management, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation requires a long gestation period for its impacts to become visible and apparent. In this context technical and institutional baselines have been prepared to monitor the changing status of land degradation and land management over time and to identify gaps/needs for sustained interventions in future. The baseline study has been designed to develop a preliminary understanding of the status of land degradation issues and its impacts on biodiversity and impacts of climate change/variability on land use practices and policy and institutional framework for land and ecosystem management across the country.

The baseline study has been conducted through a choice of indicators for all SLEM components viz., land degradation, biodiversity and impacts of climate change/variability on land use practices and policy and institutional framework across the country. Given the fact that land in India is expected to be in various stages of degradation, the findings of the study shall serve as a benchmark for assessments of the status in future. This may help in drawing inferences on impacts of interventions that aim at reversing the process of land degradation through SLEM. The study is based on secondary sources of information available, information gathered through field visits, focused group discussions and stakeholder consultations. Apart from the comprehensive National level baselines, Baseline has also been prepared for eight selected States.

Outcome of SLEM-CPP

In the SLEM program, the multi-sectoral approach to combating land degradation also takes account the need to conserve biodiversity and consider the implications of climate variability and change, as additional factors that need to be considered to arrive at sustainable solutions. While the focus is on maintaining the integrity of watersheds and landscapes, increasing vegetative cover through agro-forestry, reforestation and afforestation and through ensuring sustainable extraction practices of natural resources are the other thrust areas. An overall decreasing trend in land degradation is expected as well as an improved protection of ecosystem functions and processes resulting in an increase in carbon stocks in the soil as well as in the vegetative cover.

The expected global benefits with regard to biodiversity will be obtained both in terms of ecosystem components and services. Global benefits will in particular be related to agro-biodiversity and be obtained through agro-ecosystems managed as habitats for indigenous species and through sustainable management of vulnerable habitats such as wetlands, dry lands and mountains. Through the

integration of climate variability and change as a factor in the planning and implementation of SLEM, the global benefits (as well as local benefits) will be better safeguarded against climate factors.

OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT:

Development of road map for sustainable land and eco-system management in India.

SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT:

The main objective of the assignment is to develop a roadmap with a detailed action plan for implementing the findings/recommendations made by ICFRE (from the Baseline Study and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework) under SLEM Project. The consultants would look into the current state of institutional and policy arrangements in India and how these may be required to be realigned and /or what policy reforms and changes are required to mainstream SLEM practices in making investments choices etc. The road map would provide specific guideline to different Ministries/Civil Society Originations/Research Organizations involved on combating land degradation.

TASKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN:

1. The Roadmap shall present the current state of policy relating to land and ecosystem management institutional arrangements in India for land (and ecosystem) management.
2. Develop a time sensitive action plan for implementing the key recommendation made by ICFRE under SLEM project for policy reform or realignment and harmonization of the institutional and policy framework to mainstream SLEM.
3. The action plan should detail the specific actions, who will implement that action, what would be the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders etc.
4. The roadmap would prepare an institutional matrix for implementing the key recommendations made by ICFRE under SLEM Project.
5. The roadmap should include institutional arrangements for monitoring selected indicators that are already developed by the ICFRE under SLEM Project.
6. The roadmap and the action plan should be costed.

TEAM COMPOSITION AND QUALIFICATION OF THE KEY EXPERTS:

S. No.	Key Experts	Qualifications and Experience
1	Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post graduation in the relevant field• Minimum 10 years experience in policy and institutional reforms area• Experience in issues related to land management, preferably on land degradation

2	Institutional Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post graduation in the relevant field • Minimum 8 years experience in evaluating the performance of national level institutions • Experience of dealing with institutional reforms
3	Legal Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation in the relevant field • Minimum 8 years experience in policy/ legal environment on issues related to land governance, protected areas management etc.
4	Agriculture, forestry biodiversity and climate change expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post graduation in the relevant field • Minimum 8 years of experience in the field of, forestry, biodiversity, climate change and agriculture sector

Consultants are free to propose additional experts as they deems necessary for the fulfillment of the assignment.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum of 10 years of professional experience in research, consulting, report writing on issues of national relevance.
- Experience should include covering policy and institutional issues in different sectors.
- Familiarity with converting policy reforms related recommendation into specific actions.

DELIVERABLES:

1. Inception report within 30 days of contract signing
2. Interim progress report on 60th day from contract signing
3. Draft final report on 120th day
4. Final report incorporating the suggestions/ comments raised by ICFRE
5. One national level dissemination workshop of the final report with presentation (*This output/ deliverable could be beyond the 4 month contract period and subject to the time given by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India*).

TIME SCHEDULE:

The implementation period of the assignment shall be 4 months from the date of award of the contract.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

Deliverables	Payment Schedule
Inception report within 30 days of contract signing	20%
Interim progress report on 60 th day from contract signing	20%

Draft final report on 120 th day	20%
Final report incorporating the suggestions/ comments raised by the ICFRE	20%
One national level dissemination workshop of the final report with presentation (This output/ deliverable could be beyond the 4 month contract period and subject to the time given by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.	20%
