

**The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Strategic Environmental IMpact Assessmnet for National Pastureland sustainable Management Policy Concept**

*Ref. no.* **027RECC/G/FAO- [BL 5650-04]- 01-2023**

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| **Contract Title:** | | **Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment for National Pastureland Sustainable Management Policy Concept** | | | | | |
| **Contract Type:** | | **Service Contract - Global Price Based** (*Subcontract Service Agreement*) | | | | | |
| **Budget Line:** | | | **5650-04 [*Contracts – SEA for National Pastureland Policy Document*]** | | | | |
| **Contracting Organization:** | | | The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (RECC) | | | | |
| **Division/Department:** | | | RECC Projects’ Implementation Unit | | | | |
| **Programme/Project Number:** | | | | **“Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands”**  (*GEF Project ID: 10151 / FAO Entity Number: 654524 / FAO Project Symbol: GCP/GEO/006/GFF*) | | | |
| **Duty Station:** | | Tbilisi and Gurjaani, Dmanisi and Kazbegi Municipalities | | | | | |
| **Expected Start Date of Assignment:** | | | | | June, 2023 | **Duration:** | **8 months**  (up to January 30, 2024) |
| **Reports to:** | Sophiko Akhobadze  Ana Rukhadze | | | | | RECC Executive Director  RECC Project Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development | |

**1. Description OF objectives of the SERVICE**

**1.1. Background**

The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (RECC) as operational partner is involved in implementation of the Global Environmental Facility **(**GEF) financed project Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands – GEF Project ID: 10151” (“the Project”) [[1]](#footnote-1). GEF Implementing Agency for the Project is the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

With the above regard, in May, 2020 the RECC and FAO signed Operational Partners Agreement (OPA) for implementation of the Grant Project “Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands”. This Agreement governs the implementation by the RECC of the relevant parts of the Project as defined in the results matrix, work plan and budget in Annex 3 of the OPA. It describes the relationship between the RECC and FAO and their responsibilities.

Under the Project and within the context of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), Georgia aims to maintain and increase the amount of healthy and productive land resources in line with the national sustainable development goals. Georgia has released five voluntary LDN targets. The project is directly linked to the implementation of two of these targets: Target 1: Integrate LDN principles into national policies, strategies and planning documents; and Target 4: Degraded land will be rehabilitated.

Project consists of four subsequent components: (1) Policy and Regulatory/Institutional, (2) Demonstration, (3) Capacity Building and (4) Knowledge Management.

**Component 1 *(Strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework for sustainable management of pasturelands in Georgia)***  represents cornerstone of the Project and particularly refers to development and formal adoption of National Pastureland Management Policy Document (NPMPD) that will be further used for drafting of new national legislation on pastures with focus on implementation of Land Degradation Neutrality(LDN) principles and integration into agricultural and other sectoral national policies and strategies.

Under the component 1 the project contributed to the development of the **National Pasturelands Management Policy Document (NPMPD) Concept** that is validated through stakeholder workshops at a national level and is accessible on the MEPA, NALSMLUM and RECC websites for the wider public. The document contributes to the implementation of LDN priorities, sets out the vision and principles for pasturelands governance and management, defines issues of ownership and rights, institutional arrangements, economic and fiscal aspects, use planning and monitoring. The NPMPD is used for drafting the legislation with a focus on the implementation of LDN principles.

**The Environmental Assessment Code** of Georgia generally requires policy documents (such as the National Pasturelands Policy Concept) to go through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), before being submitted for adoption.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment must be preceded by a scoping report that sets the ambit of environmental work that needs to be done. The Environmental Assessment Code sets out the minimum requirements that should be observed for the development of the strategic environmental assessment report. The code also requires wider consultations with relevant stakeholders in the report development process.

**1.2. General Objective of the Service**

The objective of the consultancy service is to develop a Scoping Report, undertake Strategic Environmental Assessments, and prepare a SEA Report on **National Pasturelands Management Policy Document (NPMPD) Concept**. The activity should be done in close cooperation with the MEPA, considering good SEA practice and EU standards.

The assignment is to be implemented with overall guidance and supervision of the RECC Executive Director (Project Policy and Institutional Advisor *– RECC Project Core Team Supervisor/Manager*), the Project Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development (*RECC Project Core Team Coordinator*) and under the technical guidance of the FAO Project Coordinator (PC) in close consultation with the government designated National Project Director (NPD) representing the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and in cooperation with the International Consultant on Pastureland Management Policy.

**2. Scope of the SERVICE**

Under this Scope of Work, the Consulting Entity shall perform the following tasks:

***a. Review and analyze draft of the National Pasturelands Management Policy Document (NPMPD) Concept***

***b. Liaison with and seek advice from MEPA and major actors in the environmental protection and agricultural sectors during desk review and/or data collection***

***c. Elaboration of scoping report***

The consulting entity will undertake an in depth desk review and analysis of the policy document and will draft the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report at minimum should cover the following issues:

* short information on the strategic document, as well as on the geographical area and the respective populated areas where the strategic document will be implemented;
* short information on the extent of the potential impact of the policy on the environment (including the protected areas, as well as the territory and/or landscape to which the status of local and/or international importance has been assigned) and on human health;
* general information on the potential transboundary impact on the environment and human health;
* general description of the potential alternatives to the measures envisaged by the strategic document;
* information on the types of potential impacts on the environment which will be subject to examination and will be included in an SEA report;
* the relation of the strategic document to other strategic documents;
* general information on the basic studies to be carried out in the SEA process;
* the estimated list of measures planned for preventing, mitigating, and compensating potential adverse effects (if any) resulting from the implementation of the strategic document.

***d. Revise the Scoping Report as per the recommendations of the MEPA and Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health, and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoH)***

The MEPA and /or MoH may request changes to the document if they find that more in depth discussions are needed over certain areas and/or that there is an insufficiency of information for decision-making.

***e. Undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment and prepare the SEA Report***

Based on the MEPA and MoH recommendations on the scope of the assessment and the methodology, and as a result of further studies and consultations with concerned stakeholders, the consulting entity should draft the SEA Report so that it contains the following information listed below:

* information on the contents and objectives of the strategic document and the relation of the strategic document to other strategic documents;
* an assessment of the current status of environmental and human health protection in the area in which the implementation of the strategic document may have significant effects;
* an analysis of the main aspects of the area, environment, and human health which may be subject to significant adverse effects;
* discussion of the potential environmental impact resulting from the implementation of the strategic document;
* information on the potential transboundary impact resulting from the implementation of the strategic document in case preconditions prescribed in the Environmental Assessment Code exist;
* a brief description of measures for preventing, reducing, and or mitigating the potential impact on the environment and human health resulting from the implementation of the strategic document;
* opinions as to the substantiation of the alternatives reviewed;
* conclusion and recommendations for the strategic documents and a proposal for follow-up work, monitoring, and evaluation to be undertaken;
* a non-technical summary of the SEA Report.

***f. Support MEPA in presenting the SEA Report findings at respective public hearings***

The consulting entity will support the MEPA in preparing presentations on the SEA Report findings and if requested, will present it at public hearings; The consulting entity will also be responsible for taking notes and providing justified reasoning when the submitted comments or recommendations of the attendees to said hearings are rejected. At the end, the consulting entity should compile a document summarizing the results of the public hearing.

***g. Analyze provided recommendations and proposals and revision of the SEA Report***

The consulting entity should adjust the SEA Report as per the reasonable requests of the concerned stakeholders. The MEPA and MoH may request revisions to the SEA Report to make it more specific or to consider justified positions made by the public. The consulting entity should revise SEA report based on the MEPA and MoH requirements.

**4. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING SCHEDULE**

The Consulting Entity will submit reports to the following deliverables indicated in Table 1.

All deliverables should be submitted in Georgian language except final SEA Report, which must be submitted in Georgian and English languages.

*Table 1. Reporting Obligations*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Report Index** | **Name of Deliverable/Means of Verification** | **Time of Submission** |
| R1 | ***Scoping Report on Pasturelands Management National Policy Concept*** | July, 2023 |
| R2 | ***Draft SEA Report on Pasturelands Management National Policy Concept*** | September, 2023 |
| R3 | ***Document summarizing the results of the public hearing including justified reasoning when the submitted comments or recommendations of the attendees to said hearings are rejected*** | December, 2023 |
| R4 | ***Revised (final) SEA based on MEPA and MoH requirements*** | January, 2023 |

All deliverables are subject for review and approval by the RECC.

# 7. Payment Schedule

The Consulting Entity shall submit to the RECC the reports in the form and within the time periods specified in Table 1 (Reporting Obligations) as per Terms of Reference, acceptable to the RECC. The payment mode for the service will be applied based on delivered reports and acts of acceptance (*Service Delivery Acceptance Acts*) signed by both sides (RECC andConsulting Entity) and submitted by the Consulting Entity of original invoices to the RECC.

RECC will only make milestone payment based on achievement of specific deliverables as specified in time schedule for submission of deliverables as per Table 1 (Reporting Obligations).

The schedule of payments is specified below:

*Table 2. Schedule of Payments*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Report Index for Deliverables** | **Amount of Transfer**  **in % of total contract ceiling for the Services**  **(*total Value of the Service*)** |
| **R1** | **30%** |
| **R2, R3, R4** | **70%** |
| ***Total*** | **100%** |

**8. CONSULTING ENTITY’S QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

* The assignment is expected to be completed by a consulting entity that must be registered as legal entity (legal person) according to national law;
* The consulting entity must specify the qualifications and experience of each specialist to be assigned to the SEA study;
* The consulting entity will be able to demonstrate - through the curriculum vitae of its team its experience with the professional preparation of environmental assessments in different sub-sectors of the agriculture/forestry/natural resource sector.
* The consulting entity’s proposal must include an understanding of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and a description of the proposed approach to the SEA in accordance with the TOR.
* The Key Expert should be an experienced national consultant with at a minimum of a master degree in a relevant area and at least 15 years experience in environmental and social assessments and land use planning.
* At least one member of the team should have experience with the analysis of gender issues.

**9. CONTACTS, COMMUNICATION AND SUPERVISION**

The Consulting Entity will be under the direct supervision of the RECC Project Core Team based in Tbilisi Head Office for the duration of the service. The Consulting Entity will maintain official communication with the RECC Project Core Team.

**10. AWARD CRITERIA**

Evaluation will be made in accordance with the quality/price based selection method per REC Caucasus procedures and rules. The best value for money will be established by weighing technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis.

When evaluating technical offer of a candidate, a score out of a maximum 100 points could be recievied by the offer in accordance with the technical evaluation grid (setting out the technical criteria, sub-criteria and weightings) laid down in this Terms of Reference (*see below*).

Only offer that achieved a score of 75 or more shall be declared 'technically accepted'.

The quality of a technical offer will be evaluated in accordance with the award criteria and the associated weighting as detailed in the following evaluation grid of this Terms of Reference:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EVALUATION GRID** | **Maximum** |
| **Organisation and Methodology** | |
| ***( Max 30 points )*** | |
| Rationale | 10 |
| Strategy | 10 |
| Timetable of activities | 10 |
| **Total score for Organisation and methodology** | **30** |
| **Key Expert** | |
| ***( Max 70 points )*** | |
| ***Qualifications and skills***  *Adequacy of educational background and specialization for tasks (master degree in environmental policy / natural and exact sciences or relevant fields)* | 10 |
| ***General professional experience***  *Proven record of delivering professional results in conducting environmental policy, legal and institutional analyses and assessments*  *conducting and interpreting environmental policy, legal and institutional analyses and assessments* | 15 |
| *Experience and familiarity with natural resources / land use planning issues* | 10 |
| ***Specific professional experience***  *At least 15 years proven experience in environmental and strategic assessments of agriculture/land use plans and projects* | 20 |
| **Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Use Expert** | |
| ***Specific professional experience***  *At least 10 years proven experience in environmental protection and natural resources use and including pasturelands management issues* | 15 |
| **Total score for Experts** | **70** |
| **Overall total score** | **100** |

1. Project “Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality Targets of Georgia through Restoration and Sustainable Management of Degraded Pasturelands (2020-2023)”.

   (*GEF Project ID. : 10151, Focal Area: Land Degradation, GEF Period: GEF-7, Approved for Implementation: Feb-2020*). [*https://www.thegef.org/project/achieving-land-degradation-neutrality-targets-georgia-through-restoration-and-sustainable*](https://www.thegef.org/project/achieving-land-degradation-neutrality-targets-georgia-through-restoration-and-sustainable) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)