

**The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**for Consultancy Services of National Expert for the Training on Land Degradation Neutrality for the National Agency for Sustainable land management and land use monitoring (NASLMLUM)**

*Ref. no.* **027RECC/G/FAO-28-2024**

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| **Contract Title:** | | **Consultancy Service of National Expert for the Training on Land Degradation Neutrality for the National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring (NASLM)** | | | | | |
| **Contract Type:** | | **Service Contract - Global Price Based** (*Subcontract Service Agreement*) | | | | | |
| **Budget Line:** | | | **BL 5013-03-12 [*Trainer for LDN for the NASLM*]** | | | | |
| **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 | | | | | |
| **Expected Start Date of Assignment:** | | | | | May, 2024 | **Duration:** | **4 months**  (up to September, 2024) |
| **Estimated Number of Working Days:** | | | | | 50 working days |  |  |
| **Reports to:** | Sophiko Akhobadze  Ana Rukhadze | | | | | RECC Executive Director  RECC Project Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development | |

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

**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.

The project seeks to tackle land degradation issues using with a special focus on the pasturelands using LDN hierarchy of responses (avoid>reduce>reverse), supporting the country to implement its national LDN targets #1 and #4. The aspirational goal of a land degradation neutral world, to be realized by reducing the rate of land degradation and increasing the rate of restoration of degraded land, was agreed at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012. Subsequently, target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) sets out a new global ambition: to achieve a Land Degradation Neutral World by the year 2030. Land degradation neutrality aims to maintain and increase the amount of healthy and productive land resources, in line with national development priorities. Land degradation neutrality is a flexible target that can be implemented at local, regional or national scales.

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.

The project sets out to support the national efforts to implement LDN targets of Georgia through restoration and sustainable management of the degraded pasturelands. It follows the STAP (GEF) guidelines “Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality” and takes a phased approach. First, the country has selected three target municipalities based on the priorities of the LDN TSP, and the target landscapes for implementation activities.

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

The experiences of this project will be replicated across Georgia through activities of national and international partners, and shared with other countries in the region and at UNCCD.

Within the component 2, pasturelands multi-factor assessment methodology, as well as guideline for development of a Municipal Pasturelands Management Plans have been developed and are being tested in the three target municipalities. Both methodologies relais on i) UNCCD-endorsed Good Practice Guidenance Remote Sensing Analyses, ii) participatory stakeholder inputs and analysis, and iii) field surveys to verify on-ground realities and trends, with the aim of contributing information and data to the LDN conceptual framework. These methodologies is developed for decision-makers, land use managers and technical staff respinsible for monitoring land use, land tenure and productivity, which includes land degradation status and trends.

According to the **National Pastureland Management Policy Document,** developed within the component 1 of the project, National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring (NASLM) will be given a mandate over state pastures governance and management, that includes responsibilities regarding sustainable management of state pastures at the national and local levels, pasturelands inventory and assessment, pasturelands sustainable use and planning, avoidance and mitigation of land degradation on pasturelands. The NASLM will coordinate the national-level process of pasture categorization and classification, development of unified methodologies for pasture use planning at the municipal level, setting of carrying capacity of grazing units and for grazing unit planning where this is to be applied. The NASLMLUM should also produce regulations and protocols for sustainable pasturelands management based on LDN targets and hierarchy of responses. The current responsibilities of the NASLM also include recording land resources, creating a unified data base, monitoring of land use, participating in the planning of measures to combat desertification and land degradation.

From the above, it is important to strengthen the NASLM capabilities by providing appropriate technical methodologies, manuals and trainings, so that the requirements of the UNCCD and LDN principles are fully integrated and taken into account in the process of performing the functions assigned to it, especially regarding land assessment, monitoring and planning.

Taking into account the current functions andexpected extenstion in the NASLMLUM responsibilities in terms of sustainable pasture management, the project supports the strengthening of its capacities to apply of SLM and LDN oriented sustainable land management, assessment and monitoring.

**1.2. General Objective of the assignment**

National expert performs functions of the RECC Project Team National Expert for Specific Tasks and is responsible for providing trainings to NASLM staff on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in order to strengthen NASLM capacity to support implementation of UNCCD requirements set out in the LDN principles and LDN oriented sustainable land management.

He/She will work under the overall guidance and supervision of the RECC Executive Director (Project Policy and Institutional Advisor – Project Supervisor/Manager), Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development (RECC Project Core Team Coordinator) and 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).

The project will ensure all necessary logistical arrangements, including the venue, are made for the successful conduction of the trainings.

**2. Scope of the Assignmnet**

**2.1. Specific Task**

Achieving LDN requires land managers to monitor land use decisions that may impact neutrality, and estimate their likely cumulative impacts, so that these can be counterbalanced by reversing land degradation on the same land type elsewhere. The series of trainings, provided within this assignment will strengthen capacity of NASLM for LDN monitoring and land-use planning process based on SLM principles.

Through the series of trainings, the methodologies of pasturelands assessment and pastureland management planning at municipal scale developed within the project will be provided for the Agency's specialists, as well as the results of the testing of the mentioned methodologies in the pilot municipalities of the project and the experience gained will be shared.

The pasture assessment and management planning methodologies are designed to aid users in the land inventory, monitoring and planning processes as per the needs of the LDN conceptual frameworks. It does require preliminary knowledge of LDN concepts and principles, as well as the support of trained staff. Therefore series of the trainings will cover wide range of issues related to the UNCCD requirements, LDN conceptual framework and principles, LDN national targets, using of three LDN voluntary indicators (land, cover, land productivity and SOC) for assessment the state and trend of land degradation, application of LDN for land restoration, management and monitoring at national and sub-national scales.

From the above, the national expert for providing trainings to NASLM staff on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is responsible for development of training modules targeted at NASLM staff, with due gender consideration on following issues:

1. Main requirements of UNCCD and LDN conceptual framework, LDN national targets and linkage with SDG, SLM, linkage to LDN and mainstreaming LDN in Land use planning;
2. National reporting to UNCCD, LDN monitoring system, LDN indicators and their links to land management sustainability;
3. Pasturelands multi-factor assessment methodology;
4. Pastureland Management Planning at municipal level;
5. Application of the SLM/LDN technologies with specific focus on pastureland restoration and sustainable management (LDN oriented sustainable pastureland management).

**Expected results:**

* Raised awareness and enhanced knowledge of NASLM specialists on UNCCC requirements and LDN conceptual frameworks, reporting and monitoring systems, LDN indicators;
* NASLM specialists are well acquainted with pasturelands assessment and municipal level planning methodologies developed within the project and their practical application;
* The knowledge and experience obtained as a result of testing the assessment and planning methodologies in the pilot municipalities is transferred to the NASLM;
* Participants are aware how to integrate LDN principles in land assessment, monitoring and planning that contributes scaling up of selected approaches for pasturelands assessment and planning.

**2.2. Planed Activities under the Assignment**

The following steps are envisaged to be undertaken by the National Expert within the assignment process:

***a. To carry out capacity needs assessment to determine the capacity development needs of NASLM on UNCCD and LDN Conceptual Framework, on LDN oriented sustainable land management***

National expert will develop questionnaire for capacity needs assessment to determine the capacity development needs of the NASLM on UNCCD and LDN conceptual Framework, as well as on LDN oriented sustainable land management and will conduct at least 15 interviews with representatives of different departments of the NASLM. The national expert will develop **Report on capacity needs assessment of the NASLM on** UNCCD and LDN conceptual Framework, as well as on LDN oriented sustainable land management

***b. To develop 5 training modules and presentations based on capacity needs assessment***

The national expert will develop training modules according to the 5 thematic areas mentioned in the specific tasks (chapter 2.1).

The training modules are subject for review and approval by the RECC.

Structure of the training modules see below:

Structure of the Training Module:

|  |
| --- |
| **Title of the Training Module**   * Table of Contents * Abbreviations * Description of Training Module (Introduction) * Training Module * References * Presentation * Supporting Materials (*Texts and extracts from relevant legislation and/or regulations*) |

***c. Conducting five sessions of the training for NASLMLUM staff with due gender consideration***

National expert will conduct 5 sessions of 3 hours, of which 2 hours of lecture/presentation and 1 hour of questions and debate. National expert is responsible to develop training agenda and list of participants in agreement with RECC and NASLM. Gender equality should be considered while planning of training sessions.

**d. Development of detailed evaluation form for pre and after training knowledge level assessment**

National expert will develop report on the conducted trainings including analyses of evaluation of trainings by the participants and recommendations for further learning activities.

**2.3. Reporting obligations: Deliverables, reporting Schedule and Estimated Time Input**

The National Expert will report to the RECC Executive Director (Project Policy and Institutional Advisor – Project Supervisor/Manager) and Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development (RECC Project Core Team Coordinator).

National Legal Expert will submit reports (in soft copies) to the following deliverables in Georgian Language.

*Table 1. Reporting Obligations*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Report Index** | **Name of Deliverable/Means of Verification** | **Estimated Number of Working Dayes** | **Time of Submission** |
| R1 | **Questionnaire** for capacity needs assessment to determine the capacity development needs of the NASLM on UNCCD and LDN Conceptual Framework, on LDN oriented sustainable pasturelands management | 5 | June 1, 2024 |
| R2 | **Report** on capacity needs assessment of the NASLM on UNCCD and LDN Conceptual Framework, on LDN oriented sustainable pasturelands management | 10 | July 1, 2024 |
| R3 | **Training modules and presentations on:**   1. Main requirements of UNCCD and LDN conceptual framework, LDN national targets and linkage with SDG; 2. National reporting to UNCCD, LDN monitoring system, LDN indicators and their links to land management sustainability; 3. SLM, linkage to LDN and mainstreaming LDN in Land use panning; 4. Pasturelands multi-factor assessment methodology; 5. Pastureland Management Planning at municipal level; 6. Application of the SLM/LDN technologies with specific focus on pastureland restoration and sustainable management (LDN oriented sustainable pastureland management | 25 | August 30, 2024 |
| R4 | **(i) Detailed evaluation form** for pre and after training knowledge level assessment;  **(ii) Training Agenda;**  **(iii) List of participants.** | 1 | September 30, 2024 |
| R5 | **Providing of trainings and Report on the conducted** **trainings** including analyses of evaluation of trainings by the participants and recommendations for further learning activities. | 9 | September 30, 2024 |
| Total |  | 50 |  |

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

**2.4. Payment Schedule**

National Expert 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 and National Legal Expert) and submitted by the National Legal Expert of original invoices to the RECC.

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, R2 | 30% |
| R3 | 50% |
| R4, R5 | 20% |
| *Total* | 100% |

**3 . OVERALL DUTIES and Responsibilities, Qualifications, Experience and Technical Competencies**

**3.1. Overall Duties and Responsibilities**

National Expert will have the following tasks:

* Liaise with the RECC Executive Director (Project Policy and Institutional Advisor – Project Supervisor/Manager), Technical Advisor in Agricultural Development (RECC Project Core Team Coordinator), FAO, MEPA, project partners and other stakeholders to ensure flow of expected deliverables under this Terms of Reference;
* Provide support in liaising with governmentla entities and other stakeholders on consultations related to the outputs;
* Implement other duties as per assignment.

**3.2. Qualifications and Experience Requirements**

National Expert should have:

* At least master’s degree in natural scencies and environmnetal management, or related field;
* A minimum 10 years of professional experinece in areas relevant to the assignmnet (UNCCD, LDN processes) and with good understanding of global and national context in areas relevant to the assignment;
* Specific knowledge of UNCCD and LDN conceptual framework;
* At least 10 years of experience as a consultant in providing trainings in the filed of environmnetal protection and land resources management;
* Practical experinece in implementation of regulatory framework for land management (incl. assessment, planning, monitoring and restoration of pasturelands);
* Excellent presentation and report writing skills (in Georgian and English).

**3.3. Technical Competencies**

* Good analytical and managerial skills, ability to express ideas clearly and concisely both orally and in writing;
* Ability to establish and maintain working relations with a variety of stakeholders;
* Ability to work under pressure;
* Ability to plan and manage tasks independently;
* Ability and willingness to work independently;
* Good interpersonal and communication skills;
* Good reporting skills;
* Good organizational and communication capacity;
* Good written and oral working knowledge in Georgian
* Advanced computer skills.

**4. 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.

The quality of each technical offer will be evaluated in accordance with the award criteria and the associated weighting as detailed in the evaluation grid specified in Annex 1 of this Terms of Reference.

**Annex 1. Evaluation Grid**

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| --- | --- |
| *Ref. no. 027RECC/G/FAO-28-2024*  **National Expert for the Training on Land Degradation Neutrality for the National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring (NASLM)** | |
| **EVALUATION GRID** | **Maximum** |
| **Organisation and Methodology** | |
| ***( Max 20 points )*** | |
| *Rationale* | 5 |
| *Strategy* | 5 |
| *Timetable of activities* | 10 |
| **Total score for Organisation and methodology** | **20** |
| **Expert** | |
| ***( Max 80 points )*** | |
| ***Adequacy of educational background for tasks***  *(master degree (or higher) in areas relevant to the assignment)* | 10 |
| ***General Professional experience*** | |
| *At least 10 years of experience and good understanding of global and national context in areas relevant to the assignment* | 20 |
| ***Specific Professional experience*** | |
| *Specific Knowledge of UNCCD and LDN Conceptual framework* | 20 |
| *Practical experience in implementation of regulatory framework for land management (incl. assessment, planning, monitoring and restoration of pasturelands)* | 15 |
| *At least 5 years of experience for providing of trainings* | 15 |
| **Total score for Expert** | **80** |
| **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)