

ANNEX I – TERMS OF REFERENCE

National or International consultant: National Consultant

Title of consultancy: Preparation of Regional Management plans for Forests in the High Mountain Areas in Akkar & Jbeil Districts

Project Title: Land Degradation Neutrality of Mountain Landscapes in Lebanon (LDN)

Period of assignment/services: 50 days spread over the period between May 2021 and November 2021

Is this a LTA (yes/no): No

I. Background

The Land Degradation Neutrality of Mountain Landscapes in Lebanon (LDN) project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Environment in Lebanon, seeks land degradation neutrality in mountain lands by rehabilitating degraded land and preventing further degradation. It will do this initially at the pilot scale to gain the necessary skills and know-how as well as confidence before it can be up scaled and replicated post-project comprehensively. The pilot areas will be the mountain ranges in the Cazas of Jbeil and Akkar. The project duration is five years.

Rehabilitation practices will be tested for technical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and benefits in the agriculture, mountain pastures and forestry sectors, the quarrying sector, and the eco-tourism and outdoor recreation sectors. Prevention will be achieved through comprehensive land use planning and the monitoring for compliance with set conditions and their enforcement.

There will be clarification of roles and enhancement of capacities particularly at local government level. The institutional and regulatory context will be reviewed, updated, and strengthened to prevent new degradation of forests, rangelands, and agricultural lands. The project will aim for a robust, comprehensive, and appropriate legal framework which will assess biodiversity and key ecosystem goods and services to inform permitting decisions.

Ultimately, the key to achieving LDN is in making the most effective land use planning decisions and in implementing and upscaling these together with appropriate restoration measures – which is reflected in the three Outcomes of the project which are:

1. Outcome 1: Degraded mountain land in selected mountain districts of northern Lebanon identified, rehabilitated, and restored.
2. Outcome 2: Mountain lands managed sustainably to prevent degradation.
3. Outcome 3: Project monitoring and evaluation, communication, knowledge management and financial mechanisms for the dissemination and replication of the results of the project with the aim of achieving land degradation neutrality.

The project will develop new financing mechanisms for sustainable land management (SLM) and forest management based on international best practice and a knowledge management platform to

facilitate sustainability, replication and up-scaling of the new practices leading to land degradation neutrality.

To pilot the approach, the project will focus on the districts of Akkar and Jbeil and apply comparative remedial methodologies to restore mountain lands to their valuable ecological functions such as sustainable agricultural productivity, biodiversity habitat and ecosystem services.

Despite the crucial contribution of forests to life on earth and human well-being, deforestation and forest degradation continue in many regions. Many drivers of deforestation lie outside the forest sector and are rooted in wider social and economic issues, including challenges related to reducing poverty, urban development and policies that favor land uses which produce higher and more rapid financial returns, such as agriculture.

Urgent action and cross-sectoral policy coordination at all levels to secure sustainable forest management, including forest conservation, restoration and expansion is needed.

In the recent past, reversing the effects of human-induced deforestation has become a priority for the Lebanese Government that has been allocating resources for afforestation and reforestation activities and for improved management. Several initiatives have been undertaken and are planned not only by central authorities but also by municipalities and NGOs with the support of academic institutions.

The project is seeking this consultancy to develop strategic management plan for forests in Akkar and Jbeil districts. The consultancy will be done, under the supervision of the Project Manager (PM), in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Environment (MoE) as well as local authorities.

II. Scope of work

Forests are at risk from illegal or unsustainable logging, unmanaged fires, pollution, dust, diseases, pests, fragmentation and impacts of climate change, including severe weather events such as droughts. All of which threaten forest health and the ability of forests to function as productive and resilient ecosystems.

The objective of this consultancy is to set strategic management plans for the optimal coordination of the ecological, economic, and social demands on the forests of Akkar and Jbeil districts. The strategic issues of a long-term timeframe (i.e., 20 years) should provide a general framework for actions at sub-national levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation and improve existing forest cover. They should also provide a framework for forest-related contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC, the CBD, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other international forest-related instruments, processes, commitments, and goals.

The strategic management plans will provide a unified system based on international best practices, adapted to the national context, taking into consideration the local circumstances and skills. It will also create favorable conditions for an efficient and innovative forestry sector, along with potential replication in other Lebanese regions. These strategic plans will help in improving the management of forests and increasing forest cover as well as contributing to an enhancement of local livelihoods by a more sustainable and equitable use of forest products.

The management plans will cover the forest areas and the different types of forest ecosystems of Jbeil and Akkar districts.

III. Key Tasks and Responsibilities

Under the overall guidance UNDP/LDN team at the Ministry of the Environment and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Agriculture, the consultant will assume the lead responsibility of preparing the outputs mentioned herewith.

More specifically, the consultant will carry out the following tasks:

- Task 1: Development of strategic management plans for forests in Akkar & Jbeil districts
- Task 2: Execution of targeted trainings for the adoption of the strategic plans by local authorities

The tasks to be undertaken by the consultant are developed as follows:

Task 1 Development of strategic management plans for forests in Akkar and Jbeil districts

The consultant should prepare two separate strategic plans, one for Akkar and one for Jbeil, in conformity with Lebanon's forest policy, legislation and regulations considering internationally recognized good practices in forest policy, planning, and ecological restoration, in similar habitats. Strategic goals should come in line with Lebanon's National Forest Program (NFP) vision and mission of 2015-2025, and should consider involving provisions for strengthening cooperation, coordination, coherence, synergies and political commitment and actions at all levels.

The strategic planning process needs to be based on the principles of sustainable development and sustainable forest and ecosystem management. It should recognize relationships among the various ecosystem components and their functions, consider the impact of activities on the ecosystem, and recognize large, ecologically relevant landscape units for their strategic importance. Ecological and social values must be considered as the basis for future planning and decision-making.

The strategic management plans should reflect on how forests and Other Wooded Land (OWL) can contribute to human wellbeing, sustainable development and the health of the natural environment, provide essential ecosystem services, prevent land degradation and desertification and reduce the risk of floods, landslides, droughts, dust and sand storms and other disasters, contribute substantially to climate change mitigation and adaptation and in conserving biodiversity, cultural and spiritual values.

The strategic management plans should include the following as a minimum:

- State of the forest resources (distribution, structure, fragmentation, etc.) and planning units for use in targeted forest management planning
- Delineation of areas for forest protection, biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism and environmental education, infrastructure development, risks, research, etc
- Known climatic conditions and how these affect a forest area, projected change in climatic conditions and likely impacts of these changes on forests.
- Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management
- Operational planning guidelines
- Criteria and indicators for monitoring including baseline data where applicable
- All necessary GIS maps and databases of existing forest cover, forest fragmentation, planning units, and risks, among others. These should facilitate the development and implementation of local forest management plans.

Task 2 Execution of targeted trainings for the adoption of the strategic management plans by local authorities

The Consultant shall prepare a Training Plan and Material addressed principally to local authorities and actors including mainly forest rangers, municipalities, and other relevant stakeholders. A minimum of two trainings per district shall be organized and implemented to guarantee a full understanding of the strategic plans developed in Task 1 above, and adoption by the local authorities. The training should include an awareness section on addressing LDN in (i) forestlands, (ii) rangelands, (iii) agriculture, and (iv) land use planning targeting local authorities in charge of policy making and management at the local levels. Trainings should be delivered in Arabic and supplemented by English where needed. Based on the trainings executed, the Consultant shall develop a training report including an account of activities, recommendations for future trainings and target groups.

IV. Methodology

The methodology of work shall consist of field surveys, desk review of relevant project documentation, national and international reports, scientific publications, and other resource tools in addition to direct consultations with key local stakeholders and data providers. With the guidance of the project management team, the report and outputs shall be circulated for comments and the final report should incorporate received recommendations from stakeholders.

V. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

- **Inception report:** the inception report shall include the preparatory work such as collection and review of relevant documents, literatures, maps, etc. The inception report shall be the outline of the final report. This report will help the consultant(s) to go forward with scheduled time to achieve final goals. It should also contain the general methodology for further analysis, and scheduling of the project. The report should include the detailed work plan describing the activities and timeline.
- **Draft Strategic Management Plans:** The Draft Strategic Management Plans Report shall fully document all aspects of the study. The consultant(s) shall make a presentation of their findings of the study.
- **Final Strategic Management Plans** to include all items listed within the tasks (section II) along with all comments and recommendations.
- **Training Plan and Material**
- **Training report**

All deliverables should be handed out in three hard copies as well as one soft copy (word format and excel format for tables) and a PDF format for web publishing. If relevant, copies of high-resolution maps and graphics should also be handed out to the project management team. The deliverables should be submitted in the English Language, except the training material which should be submitted

in Arabic. Supporting documentation produced in the framework of this assignment including reports compiled, data collected and synthesized, maps (if any) should be delivered to the project for their records and future use.

During the fulfillment of the assignment, the Consultant will ensure regular communication with the project team and will ensure a timely delivery of the expected outputs and will regularly inform the project team of the progress as well as any obstacles that might occur.

Deliverables/ Outputs	Estimated number of working days	Estimated Duration to Complete	Review and Approvals Required
Inception report including detailed work plan and Methodology	5 days	One month from Contract signature	UNDP project Team
- Draft strategic management plans for Akkar and Jbeil - Training Plan in English - Draft Training Material in Arabic	20 days	Four months from Contract signature	UNDP project Team
- Final strategic management plans for Akkar and Jbeil	15 days	Five months from Contract Signature	UNDP project Team
- Final training material in Arabic and training report in English	10 days	Seven months from Contract signature	UNDP project Team

VI. Institutional arrangements

The Consultant shall report to UNDP on the tasks mentioned in section III; coordination meetings with UNDP, MoE and MoA shall be called for as needed.

VII. Duration of work

The assignment will be 30 working days spread out over a 7-month period from contract signature (estimated in May 2021) to November 2021.

The workload might be distributed unequally over time with more and less intense periods of work.

VIII. Duty station

The assignment requires deskwork, meetings, as well as coordination between the different related entities. The Consultant will perform the needed using his/her own property and technology and will hold direct responsibility for the quality of delivered outputs.

IX. Requirements for experience and qualifications

▪ Academic Qualifications:

Graduate Degree (MSc/PhD) in at least one of the following fields: forestry, forest management, or closely related fields.

▪ Years of experience:

Minimum of 10 years' experience in forest resources management, forest inventory, monitoring, and assessment.

▪ Technical experience:

- Expert knowledge in existing related policies, legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Expert knowledge with experience in forest management planning at the local level.
- Experience working with central and/ or local agencies, NGOs, private sector, civil society on Forestry- related assignments.
- International Experience in forest management is an asset.
- Experience with UN or international donor project(s) is an asset.

▪ Competencies:

- Advanced writing and editing skills in English.
- Computer literacy for Microsoft Office Package or equivalent.
- Excellent communication and consultation skills.
- Proven analytical skills and capacity in producing quality reports and documents.

X. Presentation of Proposal and Offers

For purposes of generating Offers whose contents are uniformly presented and to facilitate their comparative analysis, it is best to recommend the preferred contents and presentation of the Offer to be submitted, as well as the format/sequencing of their presentation. The following documents may be requested:

- **Personal CV or P11**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references.
- **Brief description** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a methodology to complete the assignment.
- **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs.

XI. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Payment will be made against each deliverable/output (or a package of deliverables/outputs) on pre-agreed workday basis - an IC Time Sheet must be submitted by the Consultant, and duly approved by the Project Manager; this shall serve as the basis for the payment of fees, in addition to the PO raised for each assignment (s).

The payment will be issued according to the following schedule:

Payment	Deliverables	Potential Dates
20%	Inception report including detailed work plan and Methodology	One month from Contract signature
40%	Draft strategic guidelines for Akkar and Jbeil; Training Plan in English & Draft Training Material in Arabic	Four months from Contract signature

20%	Final strategic guidelines for Akkar and Jbeil	Five months from Contract signature
20%	Final training material in Arabic and training report in English	Seven months from Contract signature