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Term of Reference

Consultant service to conduct the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment in 7 villages in Salavanh provinces.

Summary: WWF invites proposals from firms/consultant(s) to conduct Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment in 7 villages of Salavanh provinces.

Duration: March- April 2024.

Proposal deadline: Open for one week (Mar 21 – Mar 29)

1. Project Background

Building on the achievements of the Lao-Thai Fisheries Project (Phases I and II), WWF-Laos and WWF-TH will continue their collaboration to improve the sustainable management of freshwater ecosystems along the Middle Mekong. The current project will this time focus on the stretch of the Mekong River going through the Phou Xieng Thong NPA on the Laos side (Salavan Province) and the Pha Taem National Park on the Thailand side (Ubon Ratchathani province). The Phou Xieng Thong - Pha Taem Mekong Section (PXT-PT) differs from the Mekong immediately to the north, becoming steeper in a rock-channel, and alternating between narrow rapids and deep pools, some of which are amongst the deepest in the Lower Mekong. These pools provide ideal grounds for fishes to breed, spawn, feed and find refuge. Information gathered from local communities suggests the presence of a large variety of fish species in this stretch of the river, including eleven Critically Endangered, Vulnerable and Near Threatened species.

Beyond the aquatic species, the terrestrial habitats of the two national parks bordering this stretch of the Mekong are equally as significant with the presence of large mammal species and bird species such as Banteng (*Bos javanicus*), Gaur (*Bos gaurus*), green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*), Muntjac (*Muntiacus*), and Asian palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*). The combination of diverse aquatic habitat, adjacent forest and wetland habitat make this section of the Mekong of high conservation value and offers unparalleled opportunity for transboundary, integrated terrestrial and freshwater conservation impacts. In light of such assets, the area is of interest as a potential Transboundary ASEAN National Park. Yet the same area is also considered for the construction of a hydropower plant just south to the project target area, which could potentially inundate a vast area, with direct implication on river habitats, fish populations and the livelihoods of the villagers living along this stretch of the Mekong.

Communities living along this stretch of the river generally depend on agriculture, mostly of rice and cassava, for their livelihood. Fisheries is also an important source of livelihoods both for domestic consumption and for income particularly when crops or other sources of income fail. However, a decline in fish stocks and diversity has been reported. Reasons for declining fish stocks include unregulated fishing practices; unpredictable water levels due to changing seasonality and hydropower dams; disturbed migratory passage due to hydropower dams; and reduced ecological health of deep pools due to increased land erosion and sedimentation caused by sand/gravel mining and hydropower dams

2. Scope of Work

To conduct detailed Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for 7 villages using the IUCN's Methodology and tool for Rapid Assessment of Climate Change Vulnerability.

The scope of work will include:

- Review existing data available for the project and previous climate change vulnerability assessment conducted by WWF-Laos;
- Propose a sound participatory climate change vulnerability assessment methodology to the project team (based on the IUCN WET VA methodology, or other);
- Implement the climate change vulnerability assessment of 7 target villages that provides:
 - **Baseline information including:** past, current and projected climate trends; extreme weather events that occurred in the area; hydrological characteristics of the Mekong section; land use, conservation and zoning area; information on gender in the target area information on the vulnerable groups within the local communities, and a stakeholder analysis the main sources of livelihoods and food sources (past and present) together with their sensitivity, vulnerability and adaptive capacity to climate change and to other drivers identified, and any other relevant information.
 - **Habitats analysis:** present the key habitats present in the 7 target communities and surrounding, the natural services they provide, how they contribute to the communities' livelihoods and food security, analyse their vulnerability to climate change and to other drivers, and present conservation options;
 - **Species analysis:** select key species and analyse vulnerability to climate change based on contribution to the communities' livelihoods, food security and culture, analyse their vulnerability to climate change and to other relevant drivers, and present conservation options;
- All raw data and tools acquired are expected to be handed over to WWF Laos and should not be shared with other third parties without consent from WWF.

3. Components of the report.

The study will include:

- An executive summary
- Project background
- Detailed Methodology
- Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment result, which will include:
 - Habitat analysis:
 - What are the key habitats present in the target communities?
 - How vulnerable are these habitats to climate change and other drivers?
 - What are the natural services provided by these habitats?
 - How do these habitats contribute to the communities' livelihoods and food security?
 - What conservation options could be put in place for these habitats, and what would be the costs and investments necessary to achieve the suggested conservation options?
 - Species analysis:
 - What are the key species (including native and non-native species) present in the target communities and their surroundings?
 - What is the reason for their importance (flagship, keystone, economical, other)?

- How affected are these species by climate change and other drivers?
- What other factors are affecting these species' survival?
- What conservation options could be put in place to conserve these species, and what would be the costs and investments necessary to achieve the conservation of these species in the target area?

4. Methodology

The firm/consultant(s) are expected to utilize a participatory climate change vulnerability assessment methodology, which may be based on the IUCN WET VA methodology or any other suitable approach.

5. Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

Deliverables/ Outputs	Estimated Duration to Complete	Target Due Dates
a. Participate in inception meeting with relevant project staffs and finalize tool(s).	1 day	March 2024
b. Field visit to community in 7 villages in Salavanh Province.	7 days	March 2024
c. Complete draft report sent to WWF-Laos	7 days	Early April 2024
<i>Draft Review by WWF-Laos</i>	<i>5 days</i>	
d. Final report incorporating all feedback.	5 days	Mid-April 2024

6. Institutional Arrangement

The hired firm/consultant(s) will be working closely with WWF-Laos.

7. Duration of the Work

The assignment will be for **20 working days between March – April 2024.**

8. Duty Station

The firm/consultant(s) will be required to travel to the field in communities in Salavanh Province, and will be home-based during the redaction of the study.

9. Required Competencies and Qualifications of the Successful Contractor/Consulting team

Competencies:

- Demonstrates commitment to WWF-Laos' mission, vision and values.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Methodological and practical expertise to conduct quality study.
- Ability to perform a variety of specialised tasks related to project planning, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Responds positively to feedback.
- Ability to work independently.
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude.
- Demonstrates openness to change and ability to manage complexities.
- Ability to work in a multicultural environment.

The following attributes are essential:

- Postgraduate degree (M.S) in environmental sciences, international development, with specific academic or professional background related to conservation, monitoring and evaluation or other closely related fields;
- At least 8 years of technical experience in conservation and/or development sector or other related fields in South-East Asian countries;
- Substantial relevant experience in the design and implementation of integrated development and climate-related projects;
- Proven track record of working with local communities, especially in remote communities.
- Strong analytical skills;
- Exceptional ability in communication and networking, negotiations and writing;
- Flexibility and ability to operate in different cultural settings and with a variety of stakeholders; culturally and gender sensitive.

10. Applications

Kindly submit your proposal to procurement-laos@wwf.org.la by..... Ensure that your submitted proposal includes:

Technical Proposal, indicating at a minimum:

- Proposed methodology.
- Work plan, including milestones.
- Professional references.

Financial Proposal, indicating at a minimum:

- Consultancy fee for proposed consultant(s) broken down by No. of days.
- All related implementation costs (travel, DSA, equipment, logistics, etc.,).
- Including all TAXES.

Curriculum vitae of proposed consultant(s):

- If applying as team at least lead consultant meet competencies and qualification requirement above, for the team members should have at least experiences in performing similar tasks.

Your adherence to these submission requirements is appreciated. Thank you.