

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Demonstration of EPR and Plastic Credit Systems in India For hiring a training & coordinating consultant

This Terms of Reference (TOR) defines the work of the Training & Coordinating Consultant [*“Consultant” hereafter*] to coordinate a field trip and training to strengthen capacity of government officials and other stakeholders on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Plastic Credits. This TOR provides an outline of the assignment, the expected deliverables and results, and the details of the collaboration.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Assignment Summary

This new training includes the government officials (participants of the Maldives EPR training on February 17-18, 2025, and some new officials), PLEASE grantees, and other private sector representatives (including the network and alliances of producers, brands practicing voluntary EPR schemes). The idea here is to move from the theory of EPR and Plastic Credits (Maldives Training) to understanding and practical demonstration of the instruments and elements that need to be defined while building and implementing an ERP system. It also includes visits to Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners (PIBOs) and plastic waste processors (PWWs) in India, interaction with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) EPR team (UPC-II Division) in India, visit to the CPCB EPR portal (IT system), and various practical aspects.

1.2 PLEASE & SACEP Background Information

The **Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE)** Project, funded by the World Bank, and implemented by the **South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**, with technical support from the United Nations Office for Project Support (UNOPS), aims to catalyze actions that reduce the flow of plastic pollution into South Asian Seas creates a platform for steering the discussions and actions against marine plastic pollution.

PLEASE project (<https://please-project.org/>) implemented by SACEP helps coordinate activities and facilitate the region’s transition to a circular plastic economy by encouraging investments and greater collaboration between the public and private sectors and across countries. Since many of South Asia’s rivers and seas span across national boundaries, a regional approach is necessary to address plastic pollution that leaches into waterways and ends up in the ocean. The PLEASE Project provides a platform to take forward actions on preventing and controlling marine plastic pollution through conducting stakeholder consultations, and supporting and promoting circular economy approaches that are restorative and regenerative by design, which will

ultimately reduce the leakage of plastics into rivers and seas. The Project consists of the following components:

Component 1. Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste

Component 2. Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

Component 3. Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

SACEP (<http://www.sacep.org/>) organized a regional training program on innovative financing options for addressing plastic pollution in the South Asia Region in Male, Maldives, on February 17-18, 2025. The training program included Extended Producer Responsibility and plastic credits. The final report of the training program recommended further training on learning from India's EPR implementation. Therefore, SACEP is seeking to organize a field visit and training in India to provide participants with a practical demonstration of EPR and plastic credit systems, as well as an opportunity to engage with stakeholders.

2. Objective

The overall goal of the project is to learn how EPR and Plastic Credits systems, which are already operational in India, function in practice—moving from theory to practice—to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions that will stem plastic pollution flowing into the South Asian Seas.

2.1 Sub-Goals

The objectives of the field visit and training are to provide participants with a practical understanding of:

- a) The instruments and elements that need to be defined while designing, approving, and implementing an EPR regulation and system, as well as the challenges.
- b) How to regulate, operate, and verify the compliance of PIBOs to the EPR regulation.
- c) How to ensure the effective distribution of EPR funds to waste operators for waste recovery and waste management infrastructure under the EPR regulation.
- d) Facilitate interaction with key stakeholders in India's EPR system, including government officials, PIBOs, PWPs, CPCB/SPCB, Local bodies participating in EPR
- e) Get an insight into the functioning of the EPR portal (IT system)
- f) Understand the monitoring and audit system during EPR execution
- g) Plastic Credit projects in India: their design, implementation, revenue-generating potential, compliance, and challenges.
- h) Facilitate interaction with key stakeholders of plastic credit projects, including Project operator, consultant, credit standards setter, auditor, and Credit buyers.

2.2. Target participants

The training should include the following audience participants for EPR and Plastic Credits.

(I) **For the EPR part**

- a) Primarily for the Government officials from South Asian countries Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka (including participants of the Maldives EPR training).
- b) Private sector representatives (including the network and alliances of producers and brands practicing voluntary EPR schemes, stakeholders from waste collection and recycling) from the South Asian countries.
- c) PLEASE Project Grantees

(II) **For the Plastic Credits part**

- a) Primarily for the PLEASE Project Grantees
- b) Private sector representatives from the South Asian countries: (i) possibly either recyclers, waste operators (as potential offerors of credits), and/or (ii) consumer goods companies, as potential buyers of credits.
- c) The Government officials from South Asian countries Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, (participants of the Maldives EPR training).

3. Scope of Work

The training and field visit is to be organized in India. The coordination of the stakeholders and planning will be done together with the help of SACEP/ PLEASE staff.

4. Key tasks and activities

(I) **Training and Field Visit Planning & Coordination**

Stakeholder Identification & Outreach

- a. Identify and confirm participation of key organizations: MoEFCC, CPCB, SPCB, ULBs, PIBOs, recyclers, waste operators, EPR regulation designers, plastic credit project operators, consultants, auditors, standard-setters, and credit buyers.
- b. Schedule meetings, site/office visits, and practical sessions with all relevant stakeholders. (Consultant must submit a tentative plan with stakeholders' group to be covered)

Logistical Arrangements

- a. Coordinate all travel, accommodation, and local transportation for participants.
- b. Arrange necessary permissions and entry passes for facility/site visits.
- c. Prepare and distribute a detailed itinerary in advance.

(II) Regulatory Engagement & System Design

- a. Organize visit to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), SPCBs, and MoEFCC
- b. Engage with the EPR team (respective division at CPCB/SPCB, MoEFCC) and verification/inspection officers.
- c. Walkthrough of portal features: registration, compliance tracking, documentation, fund flows, and data analytics.
- d. Discuss the regulatory framework, policy objectives, and inspection protocols.
- e. Explore the process, instruments, and criteria used in revising the EPR guidelines.
- f. Understand the key challenges and opportunities identified during the regulatory update.
- g. Explanations on record-keeping requirements, verifications carried by SPCBs, real-time data submission, and third-party audits.
- h. Discuss penalties, compliance verification, and support available for PIBOs and waste operators.

(III) Sectoral Practices

- a. Conduct visits to PIBOs (Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners) and PWP (Minimum two, but the consultant must propose an adequate number of visits and potential visits that can add value to overall training)
- b. Observe operational practices for EPR compliance.
- c. Discuss strategies for efficient implementation and monitoring.
- d. Learn about logistical, financial, and technical challenges in the recovery and recycling chain.
- e. Understand the role of waste management infrastructure in the EPR framework.

(IV) Practical / Workshop Sessions

- a. Interactive sessions on defining targets, financial mechanisms, verification, and stakeholder engagement.
- b. Group exercises to address common challenges and share solutions from the Indian context.

(V) Plastic Credit Programme Implementation

- a. Select a business that issues/sells credits under Verra, PCX, or OBP standards.

- b. Tour the facility and review documentation for credit issuance.
- c. Engage with the project developer on all stages: application, registration, validation, monitoring, verification, certification, and credit sale.
- d. Arrange sessions to understand the roles and responsibilities of each actor in the plastic credit value chain and Compliance and reporting mechanisms
- e. Market demand and revenue generation aspects
- f. Discuss the alignment, complementarities, and potential frictions between EPR regulations and plastic credit schemes with representatives from both CPCB and credit standard organizations.

(VI) Reporting & Documentation

Document key findings, lessons learned, and best practices observed during the field visits and sessions and prepare actionable recommendations tailored to South Asian regional challenges, drawing from the Indian EPR and credit experience.

5. Deliverables

- (I) Detailed workplan and agenda, stakeholder list in one month after signing the contract
- (II) The expected deliverables of the field visit are:
 - a. A visit to India's CPCB/MoEFCC to cover all points under 4, where meetings will be held with the stakeholders, including visit or discussion with ULBs, PIBO, and PWPs. This will last no more than 2 days (this is suggested at this stage, but the consultant can recommend options to SACEP and, in close coordination, agree on a final plan)
 - b. A visit to a successful Plastic Credit project where all points in 4 will take place. This will last no more than 8 hours.
- (III) Presentations and training materials.
- (IV) Photographic Documentation of visit
- (V) A report summarizing the key learnings and recommendations from the field visit and training program.

6. Timeline

The field visit and training program should be conducted within 3-4 months from award of the contract.

7. Tentative Team composition

The consultants for the assignment should have experience conducting similar work with multilateral/bilateral development organizations. The consultant will be required to deploy the adequate experts and staff for the tasks

Role	Key Responsibilities
Team Leader / Project Manager (10 years work experience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overall coordination; client liaison; oversight of agenda delivery, reporting, and quality control.
EPR/Plastic Credit Technical Expert (7 years work experience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lead discussion on EPR law, policy, and compliance; responsible for sessions with CPCB, PIBOs, and EPR portal demonstrations.- Lead discussion with plastic credit mechanisms, project cycle (application, monitoring, certification), and market linkages.- Additionally, must have proven experience in designing and delivering workshops, practical sessions, and knowledge-sharing components related to EPR and Plastic Credit.
Support team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Experience in interfacing with government, local bodies, industry, and the informal sector; ensures all stakeholders are invited and engaged.- Can arrange site visits, transport, permissions; manages day-to-day logistics to ensure smooth operations.- Takes detailed notes, prepares deliverables (minutes, reports, feedback), manages materials, and records outputs.- Supports multilingual groups for effective communication and learning during the visit.

8. Budget

SACEP will provide funding for the field visit and training program, including travel, accommodation, and training costs. The Consultant's time budget will be provided in the Consultant's proposal.

9. Proposal Submission

Interested organizations should submit a proposal that includes the following:

- (I) A detailed description of the proposed field visit and training program, including the agenda, training methodology, and list of speakers/facilitators in lines with expectation in (4)
- (II) A budget for the consultants' hours;
- (III) Information about the organization's experience in organizing similar training programs.
- (IV) CVs of the key personnel involved in the training program.

10. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- * Relevance of the proposed program to the objectives of the TOR.
- * Technical soundness of the proposed program.
- * Experience of the organization in organizing similar training programs.
- * Cost-effectiveness of the proposal.

11. Submission contact information

Please submit proposals to:

Project Director, #45, Rosemead Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka,

E-mail: pleaseproject@sacep.org

Tel: +9411-2662106

12. Ethical, Environmental, and Social Safeguards

- i. The Consultant shall ensure that all activities under this assignment are designed and implemented strictly with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and relevant national regulations. The ESF sets out ten Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) to promote sustainable development, prevent harm to people and the environment, and ensure inclusive, ethical, and transparent project delivery.
- ii. Ethical Conduct: All project activities must adhere to the highest standards of professional and research ethics, including respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and zero tolerance for harassment, exploitation, or abuse. The Consultant shall ensure that free, prior, and informed consent is obtained in all engagements, particularly with indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups.

- iii. Environmental Safeguards: The Consultant will identify, assess, and manage environmental risks and impacts. This includes minimizing pollution, promoting resource efficiency, conserving biodiversity, and avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts on natural habitats and ecosystem services.
- iv. Social Safeguards: The Consultant shall promote social inclusion and equitable access to project benefits, with particular attention to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (including women, children, people with disabilities, and marginalized communities). All labour practices must ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and the prohibition of child or forced labour.
- v. Community Health and Safety: The Consultant must assess and mitigate any potential risks to community health and safety, including those arising from project activities, waste management operations, and stakeholder engagement processes.
- vi. Stakeholder Engagement and Grievance Redress: The Consultant will develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to ensure ongoing, meaningful consultation and timely information disclosure throughout the project cycle. A transparent, accessible, and responsive grievance redress mechanism must be established to promptly and effectively address affected parties' concerns.
- vii. Cultural Heritage: The Consultant shall identify and protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage that may be affected by project activities.
- viii. Monitoring, Reporting, and Compliance: The Consultant will continuously monitor environmental and social risks and impacts, document mitigation measures, and report compliance with safeguard requirements to the Client and the World Bank. Any incidents or non-compliance must be reported immediately, with corrective actions taken as appropriate.
- ix. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening: Where relevant, the Consultant shall support the Client and local stakeholders in strengthening institutional capacity for environmental and social risk management and compliance with the World Bank's ESF.