

## Terms of Reference

### Impact Evaluation of the Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) Project

#### 1. Overview: SACEP & PLEASE Project

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.

SACEP (<http://www.sacep.org/>), an intergovernmental organization, established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia, is mandated to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region. Through PLEASE project (<https://please-project.org/>) 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

Under Component 1, a total of 28 grant-supported initiatives has been implemented across Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. These include:

- 12 Regional Block Grants (RBGs): Each valued at up to USD 1.5 million to support large-scale, replicable solutions for reducing plastic waste.
- 16 Innovation Grants (IGs): Each valued at up to USD 120,000 to pilot innovative, cutting-edge approaches that can be scaled and adapted across the region.

All projects are guided by the Avoid, Intercept, and Redesign (AIR) framework aimed at promoting alternatives to plastic products, minimizing plastic waste leakage, establishing sustainable recycling systems, and fostering innovative solutions to plastic management challenges.

#### **Component 2.** Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

Under this component, 9 technical assistance (TA) activities in six South Asian Countries, facilitates the country's transition toward a more circular plastic economy through supporting the development of

enabling Policies, Strategies, Action Plans, and standards based on better analytics and through public-private sector engagement, dialogue and collaboration.

### **Component 3. Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions**

The objective of this component is to strengthen regional organizations' capacity to coordinate and to support their member-states to better deliver on solutions to mitigate plastic pollution that flows into rivers and seas across South Asia and transition to a more circular plastic economy. To this end, state-of-the-art new SACEP regional HQ building has been constructed, and the institutional capacity assessment and capacity building activities have been planned to build SACEP's institutional capacity to better achieve its mandate of achieving regional collaboration and environmental stewardship.

## **2. Objective(s) of the Assignment**

The primary objective is to conduct an independent evaluation of the project's overall achievements and impacts in the PLEASE Project countries and regionally in South Asia, with reference to the objectives and indicators outlined in the Project's Results Framework. Specifically, the evaluation will:

1. **Assess Project Impact and Effectiveness:** Examine the extent to which the project has achieved its intended outputs, outcomes, and broader impacts including both expected and unintended results across the Regional Block Grants (RBGs), Innovation Grants (IGs), and Technical Assistance (TA) components. Identify the extent to which observed changes can be credibly attributed to the project's interventions, through the use of counterfactual analysis, comparative data, and triangulation.
2. **Evaluate Competitive Grant Investments:** Assess the effectiveness of RBG and IG interventions in reducing plastic waste through innovative, replicable, and scalable solutions, and determine their contribution to advancing a circular plastic economy in South Asia.
3. **Examine Environmental Contributions:** Measure the project's role in reducing plastic pollution, strengthening waste management systems, and supporting progress toward global and regional environmental goals.
4. **Analyze Social Outcomes:** Evaluate changes in community awareness, participation, and livelihoods related to plastic waste management, with particular attention to inclusivity, youth engagement, human rights, and gender equality.
5. **Assess Economic Impact of Innovations:** Analyze the economic contributions of RBG and IG innovations, including their potential to generate income, create jobs, improve resource efficiency, and provide cost-effective alternatives within the circular plastic economy framework.
6. **Assess Cost-effectiveness and Efficiency:** Analyze the efficiency of project implementation across components, including resource use, timelines, and delivery mechanisms. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of grant-funded interventions and institutional support in achieving intended outcomes.

7. **Review Sustainability and Scalability:** Analyze the operational, financial, and technical sustainability of supported initiatives, and assess their potential for replication and scaling within and beyond the region.
8. **Assess Institutional Strengthening and Regional Integration:** Review the effectiveness of efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of SACEP and regional organizations to coordinate, collaborate, and support member states in addressing transboundary plastic pollution challenges, while also evaluating the role of regional mechanisms in advancing a circular plastic economy.
9. **Evaluate Public and Private Sector Engagement:** Assess how effectively the project has engaged public and private stakeholders, and the extent to which their solutions and partnerships have contributed to national and regional transitions toward circularity.
10. **Review Project Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:** Assess the effectiveness, reliability, and utilization of M&E tools, data, and reporting systems in tracking progress, informing decisions, and enabling adaptive management during implementation.
11. **Capture Lessons Learned and Good Practices:** Synthesize evidence, lessons, and good practice examples emerging from the RBG, IG, TA, and institutional capacity components, to inform future policy, investment, and program design.

### 3. Scope and Expected Deliverables

SACEP intends to commission an independent evaluation of the PLEASE Project, to assess the overall impacts of project activities in alignment with the project's objectives and the indicators defined in its Results Framework. The evaluation will also examine the contribution of project interventions toward reducing plastic leakage into rivers and seas, strengthening institutional capacity, and fostering transitions toward a circular plastic economy in South Asia. It will assess project performance against internationally recognized evaluation criteria including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact following the internationally accepted evaluation principles.

The scope of the evaluation will cover the full duration of the PLEASE Project, from its commencement in 2020 up to its expected completion date in 2026. The evaluation team will assess the achievement of the main project development objectives and the specific sub-objectives under PLEASE's three core components. Special attention will be given to the impact of block grant/innovation grant investments, the effectiveness of public-private partnerships and policy interventions, and the strengthening of regional institutions such as SACEP in delivering coordinated solutions across South Asian countries.

The impact evaluation will have an additional purpose of generating lessons learned and providing recommendations for strengthening the design, implementation, and scaling-up of future interventions to combat plastic pollution and promote circular economy practices in the region. The evaluation report should also highlight innovative and replicable approaches emerging from the project, showcasing good practices that could inform national and regional strategies. It will also assess the effectiveness and utility of the project's M&E systems in tracking progress and enabling adaptive management.

The evaluation findings should enable National Focal Points in each country, Grantees, the World Bank, and other stakeholders to verify the project's contributions to development impact and sustainability, providing an analysis of progress toward environmental objectives, delivery and completion of outputs/activities, and outcomes/impacts against the project's Results Framework (Annex 1). The evaluation shall provide both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the PLEASE Project outcomes, and their contribution to national and regional transitions to a circular plastic economy in South Asia.

#### 4. Evaluation Approach & Methodology

The impact evaluation of the *PLEASE Project* will be conducted in accordance with the World Bank's Evaluation Policy, relevant international evaluation standards, and the Monitoring and Evaluation principles of independence, impartiality, credibility, and utility to ensure relevance and influence of the Project. Evaluation findings should be adequately reported adhering to standards for effective communication and data presentation. The evaluation will result in a Final Report aligned with international practices and World Bank evaluation standards. The report will include detailed sections on project background, theory of change, M&E design and use, achievement of development objectives, intermediate outcomes, efficiency, sustainability, and lessons learned.

The evaluation will be carried out as an independent, in-depth assessment using a participatory and consultative approach, ensuring that all key stakeholders including SACEP, national focal points, World Bank representatives, UNOPS, recipients of block and innovation grants, and private sector and civil society partners are regularly engaged and consulted throughout the process.

The evaluation will review the project's progress and outcomes against the indicators defined in the Results Framework, with a focus on measuring relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. The assessment will also explore the contribution of the project to reducing plastic leakage, fostering public-private partnerships, strengthening national policies and standards, and enhancing regional institutional capacity. It will also assess the effectiveness and utility of the project's M&E systems in tracking progress and enabling adaptive management.

The evaluation team will adopt a mixed-methods approach to ensure evidence-based findings, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data. Suggested methods include:

1. Desk review of project documentation, monitoring reports, and relevant literature

Desk Review of project documentation, including the original Project Appraisal Document, Annual and Semi-Annual Progress Reports, Implementation Status and Results (ISR) reports submitted to the World Bank, financial and safeguards reports, mission aide-mémoires, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) records, and relevant correspondence between SACEP, World Bank, UNOPS, and participating countries. A comparative analysis of baseline information (including plastic waste generation, leakage levels, and policy/institutional gaps at project inception) with current data collected during project implementation. Where feasible, control or non-project sites in South Asia may be used as comparators to assess added value, particularly in relation to block grant interventions, policy and action plan improvements, and institutional strengthening.

2. Statistical and data analysis of lifecycle and results framework indicators along with TOC (Theory of change - Annex 2) Review of the Project Results Framework to assess performance against defined indicators, targets, and milestones across all three components of the PLEASE project.
3. Consultation with the key stakeholders and beneficiaries- including government, private sector, grant recipients, beneficiaries, donor (World Bank), implementation support partner (UNOPS), and other stakeholders. On-site Observation of results achieved through block grant-funded projects and demonstration activities, including visits to selected recipient organizations, consultations with beneficiaries, and assessment of the scalability and replicability of implemented solutions. Assessment of project implementation processes, challenges, and adaptive mitigation measures. Methodologies to be applied include Focused group discussion, Key Informant Interview/surveys, field visit, among other applicable consultation tools and methodologies including remote/virtual meetings, where/when field visit and in-person consultation is not possible. A representative sampling approach (minimum 10%) will be applied for stakeholder and beneficiary consultations.
4. Analysis of Public-Private Engagement and Policy Outcomes: Assess the extent and quality of partnerships, stakeholder dialogues, and improvements in national marine litter action plans, policies, and standards. Examine how lifecycle data systems and evidence-based approaches have influenced decision-making at national and regional levels.
5. Analysis of to what extent and how has the project influenced national or regional policy frameworks and regulations related to plastic waste management and policies/standards/guidelines to promote a circular plastic economy in participating South Asian countries, including harmonizing policies in the South Asian region to tackle transboundary nature of plastic pollution.
6. Institutional Capacity Assessment of SACEP and other regional actors to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional strengthening efforts, regional coordination, and alignment with broader World Bank country engagements and regional frameworks.
7. Assessment of Training and Capacity Building Outcomes, including technical training, skill development, and knowledge-sharing activities, at both institutional and beneficiary levels.
8. Cost-effectiveness and Efficiency Analysis of project interventions, including block grant investments, capacity building programs, and institutional support measures, to determine their economic, social, and environmental value.
9. Economic Impact Assessment of Innovations: Conduct an economic evaluation of innovations introduced under the RBG (Regional Block Grant) and IG (Innovation Grant) mechanisms. This includes assessing their contributions to income generation, employment creation, resource efficiency improvements, and the availability of cost-effective alternatives in the circular plastic economy. Methods may include cost-benefit analysis, input-output analysis, or livelihood impact studies, depending on the nature and data availability of each intervention.

The evaluation findings will be triangulated using data from multiple sources—such as stakeholder interviews, observed changes, and relevant benchmarks—to establish linkages and measure results, and also to capture why certain outcomes were achieved or not achieved and under what enabling or constraining conditions. Additionally, wherever applicable, it is expected to draw from baseline and external datasets to explore what would have occurred without the project interventions.

The evaluation process will also analyze the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of interventions, identify innovative and replicable solutions, and provide practical recommendations for strengthening future national and regional efforts to transition to a circular plastic economy in South Asia. This analysis should include a comparative review of the cost-effectiveness and outcome-per-dollar value of Innovation Grants (IGs), Regional Block Grants (RBGs), Technical Assistance (TA) and institutional support activities, considering operational and environmental returns on investment.

The evaluation findings must document Good Practices and Innovations that emerged from project activities, highlighting replicable and scalable models relevant to South Asia's transition to a circular plastic economy. Similarly, use of Storytelling and Multimedia Documentation to develop case studies, human-interest stories, photography, essays, and short videos that illustrate the tangible impact of project interventions on communities, institutions, and ecosystems are mandatory. These will serve both as evaluative evidence and as communication material for wider dissemination and knowledge sharing.

## 6. Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will use the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability), complemented by a Learning and Innovation lens.

### A. Relevance

- To what extent were the project's objectives consistent with:

National and Regional priorities and policies on plastic pollution? Global frameworks (SDGs - particularly SDG 12, 13, 14, and 17, Paris Agreement, other regional integration mandates of SACEP to its member countries, MOU)

- Were the project's approaches (AIR: Avoid, Intercept, Redesign) well-suited to addressing plastic pollution challenges in South Asia.
- To what extent did the design remain relevant in light of evolving global debates (e.g., INC process for a Global Plastics Treaty) Discuss at Contributions to Global and Regional Targets.

### B. Effectiveness

- To what extent did PLEASE achieve its intended outputs, outcomes, and objectives across all three components?

- To what extent can the observed outcomes be attributed to PLEASE interventions, and what evidence supports these claims (e.g., comparisons with non-project areas, baselines, external benchmarks)?
- How effective were the Innovation Grants and Regional Block Grants in piloting scalable solutions?
- What evidence exists of behavioral or institutional change in plastic waste management practices?
- How effective was the project's M&E system in tracking results, supporting decision-making, and enabling adaptive learning?
- Were gender equality, youth engagement, and social inclusion objectives achieved?
- What unintended outcomes (positive/negative) emerged?

#### **C. Efficiency**

- Were resources (financial, human, technical) used efficiently to deliver outputs and outcomes?
- How cost-effective were the grant mechanisms (Especially innovations) in generating environmental and social benefits?
- Were project governance, decision-making, and reporting structures efficient and supportive of timely delivery?
- To what extent did the project leverage partnerships/coordination (private sector, NGOs, governments) to maximize efficiency?

#### **D. Impact**

- What are the observable or measurable contributions of the project to: Reduction in plastic waste leakage to rivers/seas? Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation (marine/terrestrial)? Climate benefits (Air pollution - need details), Plastic pollution, collections, recycling and upcycling?
- How did the project contribute to improved community well-being, livelihoods, and resilience?
- How has PLEASE influenced policy dialogues or institutional arrangements at national or regional levels?
- How has the project contributed to the development, strengthening, and harmonization of plastic waste management policies and regulations across South Asian countries

#### **E. Sustainability**

- To what extent are the benefits and results of PLEASE likely to continue beyond the project's closure?
- How sustainable are the funded grant initiatives (financially, technically, institutionally)?
- Has PLEASE built institutional capacity within SACEP and national partners to sustain regional cooperation on plastic pollution?
- What are the prospects for scaling up successful pilots/approaches?

- What are the key risks that could affect the long-term sustainability of results, and how can they be mitigated?

#### F. Lessons Learned, Innovation & Best Practices

- What innovative practices, business models, or technologies emerged from PLEASE?
- What were the main enabling factors and barriers for successful implementation?
- Which lessons from PLEASE are most transferable to other regions or future global programmes?
- How can findings from SACEP inform the design of future circular economy and plastic pollution projects?

### 4. Reporting, Review Procedures, and Evaluation Deliverables

The assignment must be completed within 120 calendar days from contract signature, and the final impact evaluation report must be submitted no later than June 30, 2026.

The consultant will be responsible for submitting the following key deliverables during the evaluation process.

Phase	Key Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
<b>Desk Review &amp; Methodology Development</b>	Review of project documentation (PAD, ISR, PIRs, M&E manual, safeguards reports, mission aide-mémoires, etc.). Develop evaluation instruments: evaluation matrix, data collection tools, sampling strategy, logic model.	<b>D1. Draft Inception Report</b> including: – Evaluation methodology and work plan – Evaluation matrix and tools – Stakeholder list and site visit plan – Schedule of activities – Risks and mitigation strategies – Evaluation report template	Within 25 days of contract signing
<b>Inception Phase &amp; Validation</b>	Presentation of the draft Inception Report to SACEP, PIUs, and World Bank. Finalize based on feedback.	<b>D2. Final Inception Report</b> approved by stakeholders	Within 40 days
<b>Field Mission</b>	Field visits in coordination with SACEP/PIUs. Collect qualitative and quantitative data via interviews, FGDs, surveys, observation, multimedia. Conduct preliminary findings presentation.	<b>D3. Preliminary evaluation report based on filed mission</b> – Fieldwork summary – Findings of FGDs, KIIs, surveys – Outline of draft evaluation report	During days 41–70
<b>Data Analysis &amp; Draft Report</b>	Analyze evidence, triangulate findings, conduct counterfactual and efficiency analysis. Draft report using WB format.	<b>D4. Draft Impact Evaluation Report</b> including: – Attribution and counterfactual analysis – Comparative IG/RBG efficiency – Stakeholder feedback – Preliminary recommendations	Within days 70–90



<b>Review &amp; Final Report</b>	Revise draft report based on consolidated stakeholder comments from SACEP, World Bank, UNOPS, PIUs.	<b>D5.1 Final Impact Evaluation Report</b> aligned with World Bank standards  <b>D5.2 Project Evaluation infographic highlights/summary</b> -Highlights of evaluation report summarized in numbers, and visual illustrations	By day 105
<b>Dissemination &amp; Learning</b>	Present final results, lessons learned, and recommendations at a regional workshop/consultation.	<b>D6. Final presentation slides</b>  <b>D7. Stakeholder briefing and learning materials</b>	By day 120

### Required Annexures in the final report

The final evaluation report must include the following annexes:

- Final evaluation matrix (linking questions to indicators, methods, sources)
- Cost-effectiveness and efficiency analysis (planned vs actual)
- Comparative analysis of IGs and RBGs (outcomes per dollar)
- Lessons learned matrix with operational implications
- Safeguards compliance summary
- Summary of stakeholder consultation processes
- Beneficiary data (disaggregated by gender, location, sector)
- Case studies, photo documentation, and human-interest stories
- Copies of all data collection tools used during fieldwork
- List of references and documents reviewed, and
- Other relevant supplementary information

## 8. Team Composition & Qualification Requirements for the Key Experts

The Consulting Firm must have been in operation for a minimum of 10 years with experience of handling at least one assignment focusing on waste/plastic pollution, natural resource management / sustainable land management. Details of key professionals are as under:

S. No.	Key Experts	Area of Specific Expertise Desired	Qualifications and Experience
1	Team Leader	Expertise in leading impact evaluations related to plastic pollution, environment management, and policy reforms. Strong experience in managing multi-disciplinary teams.	• Post-graduation in project management, environment management/natural resource management/public policy or related field.
			• Minimum 12 years of professional experience, including 8 years in leadership of evaluation/impact assessment assignments.
			• Proven experience with donor-funded projects (World Bank/GEF/UN/ADB preferred).

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong record in delivering independent evaluations in environment, pollution reduction, or coastal/marine resource management.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Gender Specialist</b>	Expertise in integrating gender considerations into evaluation of environment and plastic waste management projects. Skilled in applying gender-sensitive approaches in data collection and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-graduation in gender studies, sociology, social development, or related field.</li> <li>• Minimum 8 years of relevant experience in gender mainstreaming, preferably in environment/natural resource projects.</li> <li>• Proven track record in gender-sensitive evaluations and community engagement.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Technical/Plastic Waste Management Expert</b>	Expertise in technical aspects of plastic pollution, solid waste management, circular economy solutions, recycling systems, and policy frameworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-graduation in environmental engineering, waste management, or related discipline.</li> <li>• Minimum 10 years of experience in solid waste management and plastic pollution reduction initiatives.</li> <li>• Familiarity with international best practices, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and policy advocacy.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist</b>	Expertise in M&E results frameworks for environment and pollution management projects; familiarity with impact evaluation methodologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-graduation in statistics, economics, social sciences, project management or related field.</li> <li>• Minimum 8 years of experience in monitoring and evaluation of donor-funded environment and natural resource management projects.</li> <li>• Experience in conducting evaluations of GEF/World Bank-funded projects preferred.</li> <li>• Strong skills in data analysis, outcome mapping, and report writing.</li> </ul>
5	<b>Grant Management Specialist</b>	Expertise in financial oversight, compliance, and evaluation of grant-funded initiatives in environment, natural resource management, or waste management sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-graduation in finance, economics, business administration, social science, project management, or related discipline.</li> <li>• Minimum 8 years of professional experience in grant/financial management of donor-funded projects.</li> <li>• Knowledge of fiduciary standards, financial reporting, and compliance monitoring in line with international donor requirements.</li> </ul>
6	<b>Economist</b>	Expertise in economic analysis of environmental projects, cost-benefit assessments, socio-economic impact evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-graduation in economics, development economics, environmental economics, or related discipline.</li> <li>• Minimum 10 years of professional experience in economic analysis of donor-funded projects, preferably in environment and natural resource management.</li> <li>• Proven expertise in cost-effectiveness analysis, economic modeling, and assessing financial sustainability of interventions.</li> <li>• Familiarity with World Bank/GEF economic evaluation methodologies preferred.</li> </ul>

7	Policy & Institutional Development Specialist <i>(Optional, as needed)</i>	Expertise in assessing regional and national environmental governance systems, policy alignment institutional capacity development.	• Post-graduation in public policy, environmental governance, international development, or related field.
			• Minimum 10 years of experience in institutional assessments, policy analysis, and capacity development in the environment or natural resources sector.
			• Experience working with multilateral agencies or regional cooperation platforms (e.g., SACEP) preferred.
8	Knowledge Management / Communications Specialist <i>(Optional, as needed)</i>	Expertise in impact storytelling, case study development, knowledge product design, and use of multimedia tools for project visibility and learning.	• Post-graduation in communications, journalism, development studies, or relevant field.
			• Minimum 8 years of experience in communication and knowledge management for environmental or development projects.
			• Proven skills in drafting human-interest stories, managing multimedia documentation, and supporting knowledge-sharing across stakeholders.

**Note:** The level of engagement for part-time experts shall be proposed by the selected Consultant (firm), based on the specific advisory inputs required in relevant sectors/sub-sectors within their areas of expertise. The Consultant may include additional experts, such as specialists in **policy and institutional capacity** or **knowledge and communications**, to ensure comprehensive coverage of the assignment scope. However, such inclusion shall not have any additional financial implications. Sub-contracting of any part of the assignment will not be permitted.

## 9. Ethical Consideration

The evaluation team is expected to uphold the highest ethical standards throughout the assignment. This includes:

- Informed consent for all participants
- Confidentiality and anonymity of individual responses
- Avoidance of conflicts of interest
- Respect for local cultural and social norms
- Transparent and objective data handling and reporting
- Implementation of safeguards to prevent misuse or misrepresentation of data

All ethical protocols must be clearly described in the Inception Report and applied consistently throughout data collection and reporting.

## **10. Client's Input and Counterpart Personnel**

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), through its Project Implementation Unit (hereinafter referred to as the "Client"), shall provide the Consultant with necessary services, information, and facilities required for the assignment, free of charge, as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The Client shall also assign counterpart personnel to support the evaluation team, including logistical coordination, stakeholder engagement, and facilitation of field visits, interviews, and consultations across project sites. These personnel will not interfere with the independence of the evaluation team but will enable effective access to stakeholders and data sources.

The SACEP PIU shall serve as the primary liaison for all project-related arrangements and provide timely responses and approvals to support the evaluation process.

In the event that the required services, information, or facilities are not provided in a timely manner, the Parties shall mutually agree upon:

1. A reasonable extension of the assignment timeline;
2. The Consultant's right to procure required services or facilities from alternate sources; and
3. Any adjustments to payment, if applicable, to cover additional incurred costs

## **11. Intellectual Property Rights**

a) SACEP (hereinafter referred to as the "Client") shall retain all rights, title, and interest in its intellectual property. The Consultant and its Experts are granted no rights or ownership in the Client's intellectual property, except as required to perform the Services under this assignment. The Consultant shall retain all rights, title, and interest in its own pre-existing technology, tools, methodologies, and proprietary information, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

b) During the course of providing the Services, the Consultant may generate or produce works of authorship, including but not limited to reports, data, analyses, training materials, methodologies, documentation, case studies, photographs, videos, and related content (hereinafter referred to as the "Work Product").

c) All Work Product, and associated intellectual property rights created and delivered under this assignment, shall be the sole property of SACEP. The Consultant agrees to assign and transfer all such rights to SACEP, and waives any future claims to ownership, unless otherwise stated in the contract.

## **12. Submission of technical proposal at the request for expression of interest stage (REOI)**

The firm will be selected in compliance with the World Bank Procurement Regulations. Consulting Firm will be selected on Consultant's Qualification-based Selection (CQS) method.

Firms are required to submit technical proposals with a strict page limit to a total of 50 (fifty) pages (there is no limit on annexes). Reviewers reserve the possibility to only consider and evaluate the 50-page

proposal (excluding annexes). The Consulting Firm shall provide a summary table of experience in the Technical Proposal with the following information.

**a) Project Understanding and Approach:** Provide a detailed narrative that demonstrates a clear understanding of the project objectives, scope, and expected outcomes. Outline your proposed methodology and approach in conducting the project evaluation.

**b) Work Plan:** Present a comprehensive work plan that includes a timeline of activities, milestones, and deliverables. The plan should detail the sequence of actions intended to achieve the project's objectives within the stipulated timeframe, identifying key dependencies and critical paths.

**c) Team Composition and Expertise:** Specify the composition of your project team, including the roles and responsibilities of each member. Provide brief bios that highlight the qualifications, experience, and expertise of team members relevant to the project. Demonstrate how their combined skills and experience make them particularly suited to delivering the project successfully.

**d) Past Performance and Experience:** Include case studies or summaries of previous projects that demonstrate your firm's experience and track record in similar assignments. Focus on projects related to environmental training, plastic waste management, and policy development, highlighting the outcomes and impact achieved.

**e) Evaluation and Monitoring Plan:** Describe the mechanisms and tools you will use to evaluate the project's progress and impact. Include your approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the training program and the methodologies for assessing the SUP value chain study's outcomes.

The technical proposal should include the financial quotation with the detailed budget breakdown.

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.
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- a. Methodology/Approach of the Proposal (30 points): This criterion assesses the proposed methodology and approach in detail. It should include the collection and sampling points across various geographical areas, sectors, commercial/institutional districts, and seasonal climatic changes. Evaluation will consider the use of statistically representative methods, methodologies for stakeholder consultation, mapping techniques, and health and safety plans for field activities related to sampling and data analysis.
  - b. Past Experience (30 points): The Consulting Firm must provide at least three traceable references related to project-related experiences undertaken in the past three years. Each reference should include a brief description of the scope and scale of the work undertaken, along with the contract value. Points will be awarded based on compliance with the experience and qualification requirements outlined in the TOR.

c. Team Capacity (20 points): This criterion evaluates the capacity of the project team recommended for engagement and utilization in contract execution. The firm should demonstrate the skills, qualifications, and relevant experience of each team member. The CVs of staff should be concise, not exceeding 3 pages in total, and structured to include professional qualifications, a brief description of recent relevant experience, previous employers and positions held, and the role each individual will play in the proposed bid.

d. Cost-effectiveness of the proposal (20 points)

Firms are required to submit technical proposals within a strict page limit of 50 pages, with no limit on annexes. Reviewers will only consider and evaluate the 50-page proposal (excluding annexes). The consultant should provide a summary table of experience in the Technical Proposal and detailed citations for each project in an Annex of the proposal.

Technical proposals failing to score a minimum of 70 out of 100 points on these criteria will not proceed for further consideration. The highest-ranking Consulting Firm meeting the technical requirements of the EOI will be invited to submit an RFP, primarily with a financial bid alongside technical information for contract negotiation. The successful Consulting Firm will be required to enter into a time-based Contract to compete for the scope activities outlined in the TOR.

#### Submissions:

The procurement of the consulting firm will be carried out on Based on Consultants' Qualification (CQS) therefore the Consulting firm shall not submit any financial bid submissions along with the requested technical submissions of REOI.

REOI submissions can be submitted by email or by dispatching the hard copies into the tender box located in the Project Implementation Unit of the PLEASE project Regus, Level 2, No 192/10 9th Lane, 2nd Floor, Nawala Road, Nawala, Kotteat 9<sup>th</sup> Lane, Nawala, paramount Towers, Nawala, Sri Lanka.

Interested Firms can submit the Expression of Interest to:

"please.project@sacep.org" please.project@sacep.org to the attention of

1. Anjalie Devaraja, Project Director, anjalie.please\_project@sacep.org

2. Withanange Lakshman, Finance Specialist and officiating Project Director

lakshman.please\_project@sacep.org

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## Annexure -01 - Project Result Framework

### Project Development Objectives(s)

To strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas

### Project Development Objective Indicators

Indicator Name	DLI	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
Strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution							
PDO 1: Circular Plastic Economy Innovations Developed & Tested For Application in Participating South Asia Countries (Number)		0.00	2.00	5.00	20.00	25.00	30.00
PDO 2: Policies/standards /guidelines to promote a circular plastic economy harmonized and agreed by at least 3 countries at regional PPP convenings (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
		No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
PDO3: SACEP’s institutional capacity strengthened to drive							
results for plastic pollution reduction across the region (Yes/No)							
Intermediate Results Indicators by Components							
To improve identification and testing of possible plastic pollution mitigation solutions							
IR1.1: Regional Competitive Block Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste administered by SACEP (disaggregation by ‘under implementation’ and ‘completed’) (Number)		0.00	2.00	5.00	10.00	20.00	20.00
IR1.2: Regional Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste to women-owned enterprises or groups (Number)					1.00	4.00	8.00
IR1.3: Share business development services to women (TA) (Percentage)		0.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00

IR1.4: Regional circular plastic economy innovations knowledge sharing		No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
hosted by SACEP operational (Yes/No)							
IR1.5: People reached in plastic pollution and mitigation awareness campaigns (disaggregated by country and sex) (Number (Thousand))		0	1,000.00	2,000.00	5,000.00	8,000.00	10,000.00
<b>To increase leveraging of private and public sector engagement and solutions in plastic pollution</b>							
IR2.1: Regional public and private engagement mechanism branded and operational (Yes/No)		No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IR2.2: Annual regional convening of public sector policy and decision makers with private sector representatives on sharing of PPP circular plastic economy solutions (Number)		0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
IR2.3: National policies reviewed with recommendations for revisions and/or action plans (disaggregated country) (Number)		0.00	8.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
IR2.4: Consultations on marine litter actions carried out with targeted people and/or organizations in participating countries (Number)		0.00	0.00	8.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
IR2.5: Annual convenings of regional organization heads, including government decision- makers to collaborate and coordinate on circular plastic economy policy solutions branded and operational		0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	3.00
<b>To build institutional capacity</b>							
IR3.1: Training and capacity building provided to SACEP staff across all project functions (Number)		0.00	3.00	6.00	12.00	18.00	24.00



## Annexure -02

