

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Plastic Waste Expert for the Project Implementation Unit of Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) Project

Background

Plastic waste that pollutes the land flows into rivers and ends up in oceans, threatens development and has far-reaching economic, ecological, and health impacts. South Asia is the third-largest contributor to global plastic waste, and unless action is taken, the region's waste is estimated to double by 2050.

The Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) project, financed by the World Bank, will help 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 objective of the Project is to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas.

The Project consists of the following parts:

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

1.1 Supporting circular plastic economy solutions to reduce plastic waste by implementing a program of regional competitive block grant investments, providing Regional Competitive Block Grants ("RBGs") to eligible organizations in South Asia ("Eligible RBG Beneficiaries").

1.2 Facilitating the exchange of circular plastic economy knowledge between Eligible RBG Beneficiaries and selected South Asian countries and promoting awareness-raising activities.

Part 2. Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

2.1 Supporting the development of strategies, action plans, policies, and standards to harmonize plastic pollution mitigation measures through (a) developing and implementing a multi-year plastic policy support program, working with leading universities and organizations; (b) developing a database for lifecycle analysis, data collection, and modeling related to plastic across selected industry value chains; and (c) supporting communication activities.

2.2 Supporting circular use of plastic in the economy through regional public-private collaboration and engagement in South Asia, including designing and organizing annual or more frequent meetings of representatives from public and private sectors.

Part 3. Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

3.1 (a) Carrying out works to support the construction of the SACEP new headquarters and providing technical assistance to, and building capacity of, SACEP to discharge its functions, including coordination with relevant regional organizations and uniform collection, analysis, and interpretation of pollution data. The implementation of construction and supervision of the new headquarters building for SACEP is supported by UNOPS.

(b) Supporting the development of a fund for the sustainability of existing activities and accelerating circular plastic economy solutions (“Sustainability Fund”).

3.2 Supporting SACEP in the implementation and overall management of the Project, regarding the aspects related to social and environmental safeguards, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, complaints handling mechanisms, as well as financial audits.

Implementing Agency

SACEP is the responsible implementing agency for this project. SACEP is an inter-governmental organization established by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in 1982 to promote and support the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the region. In addition, SACEP serves as the secretariat of the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP), one of 18 such Regional Seas Programmes of the United Nations Environment Program. The regional project would strengthen SACEP to administer relevant project activities via the following sectional structure, which includes a Ministerial Level Governing Council (GC), Consultative Committee (CC), National Focal Points (NFPs), Subject Area Focal Points (SAFP), and a Colombo-based Secretariat.

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is established by the SACEP Secretariat to assist the project implementation and be administratively housed within the Secretariat as a subsidiary organ, which it is able to establish according to its existing mandate. The PIU is responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the project, including planning, budgeting, technical coordination, implementation supervision, M&E, and ensuring compliance with the World Bank environmental and social (E&S) standards. In addition.

Key Tasks:

The Plastic Waste Expert will report to the PIU Project Director and will provide technical assistance to support innovative circular economy solutions for plastics and facilitate knowledge exchange, support for regional policy harmonization, dialogue among partners and stakeholders, and finance mobilization across the region under the PLEASE project. In case PIU recruits specialized consultants required for specific technical assistance in plastic pollution, the specialist on plastic pollution will serve a key role in supervising the work of these consultants.

Technical Support:

Under the overall supervision of the Director General and the management of SACEP and in close cooperation with the Project Steering Committee and the Project Director, the specialist will focus primarily on ensuring the successful execution of PIU activities and leveraging his or her deep background in and knowledge of political and practical issues and significant relationships within SACEP member states.

Key tasks will include:

Technical

1. Advise on conceptualizing PLEASE project activities, bringing in relevant knowledge, examples, and best practices into PLEASE project implementation, and provide high-quality technical advisory inputs and advice to SACEP on any marine plastic pollution-related technical issues and queries as requested from stakeholders to ensure strong buy-in on proposed methodologies related to the project implementation;
2. Coordinate for the development and implementation of national strategies and policies in marine plastic pollution in SACEP member states under Component 2, advise in identifying and selecting suitable candidate organizations to implement the project components, prepare the scope of work of the various activities, and detailed Terms of Reference, including defined quality criteria, identify technical criteria and proposal evaluation guidelines, provide technical support in evaluating the proposals and selecting suitable candidates to implement project activities
3. Coordinate the development of a database for lifecycle analysis, data collection, and modeling related to plastic across selected industry value chains;
4. Contribute to the preparation of Progress Reports, Annual Reports, Project Completion Report, and other reports that may be required;
5. Result Orientation and Quality Assurance:
6. Assure the high-level technical quality of the activities developed by PLEASE, validate and perform a quality review, from the technical point of view, of the knowledge products of the project (documents, background papers, analyses, publications, etc.);
7. Support SACEP in the identification of, and facilitate consultations with, relevant stakeholders and partners.
8. Provide high-level technical inputs to the technical content of the events, including annual or more frequent meetings and conferences of representatives from the public and private sectors, organized under the PLEASE project to enable and support circular use of plastic in the economy through regional public-private collaboration and engagement in South Asia;
9. Provide high-level technical inputs to the technical content of the events to enable the exchange of circular plastic economy knowledge between eligible RBG Beneficiaries and selected South Asian countries and promoting awareness-raising activities; providing guidance to the selected grantees;

10. Provide high-level technical inputs to the technical content of awareness campaigns in the region led by the Communications team, and advise SACEP in providing strategic inputs on developing and implementing impactful outreach activities.
11. Develop a Roadmap for establishing a Regional Center for Circular Plastic Economy Policy Research and Solutions and Sustainability Fund to be based in SACEP;
12. Represent the PIU and the Project Director in national and international events if required;
13. Any other task necessary for effective and timely implementation of the project as assigned by the Project Director.

Required Qualifications, Expertise, and Competencies

Eligible candidates should have the following minimum qualifications, experience, and competencies:

1. A minimum of 10 years' experience in plastic waste management with a focus on marine plastics and circular economy, policy and regulatory frameworks, standards, methodologies, and tools, technical solutions and business models for waste management, recycling, innovative packaging design, and plastic packaging management solutions, solid waste management and extended producer responsibility (EPR). Ability to develop innovative solutions to marine plastic pollution is desirable.
2. Experience in providing similar services in South Asia Region in the last five years;
3. Experience in coordination with national governments and/or enforcement authorities, managing stakeholder relations with other key players, including academic, civil society, business, and international organizations, is required.
4. Postgraduate/Masters University degree in environmental science, Marine Science, Natural Resource Management, Environmental Law or any related discipline from a recognized University and PhD in any of the field from a recognized university will be preferable;
5. Relevant professional experience must be for at least two (2) years of experience at the international level.
6. Regional experience in the South Asia region is a distinct advantage.
7. Prior experience in managing and developing projects financed by bilateral and multilateral development agencies will be preferable;
8. Prior experience developing, supporting, or managing multi-donor-supported projects would be a strong asset.
9. Prior experience in leading and/or supervising a team of contractors and consultants in multiple locations in south Asia region will be an added advantage

10. Prior experience convening international conferences and sharing views; making presentations and working as a resource person in international conferences;
11. A good understanding of the governance and policy structures of countries in the South Asia region, and knowledge of leading academic voices, policy-makers, and civil societies in South Asia region;
12. Proven experience working with Government, civil society, international organizations, and donors;
13. Demonstrated ability in team management and collaboration;
14. Excellent communication skills in English;
15. Computer literacy of acceptable standards.

Working Schedule

This is a full-time position. The service is initially for a period of 20 months. The contract is renewable, subject to satisfactory performance, for the duration of the project. There will be an initial performance review by the Project Director after 2 months. Thereafter, there will be a performance evaluation by the Project Director every 6 months.

Salary

Appropriate compensation will be offered to the right candidate.