TERMS OF REFERENCE

Research and content management consultant for the sand and dust storms toolbox

Consultancy reference number: CCD/20/COMMS/42

Background

Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The mandate of the Convention and its 197 Parties is to support “a future that avoids, minimizes, and reverses desertification/land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels – and to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) are a global challenge that requires immediate action at all levels. SDS have multiple impacts on environment, climate, health, economic activities, urban infrastructure, agriculture and livelihood. As a result of human induced climate change and unsustainable land and water use practices, the frequency and intensity of SDS is increasing in some areas. Globally up to 25-50 per cent of dust is attributed to originating from human activities such as unsustainable management of land and water including agriculture, changing top-soil characteristics, overgrazing, deforestation, and mining. Mitigation of these anthropogenic SDS sources is an important element of SDS policy in source areas. The UNCCD Parties adopted substantial decisions on SDS (decision 31/COP.13, decision 25/COP.14) to address SDS impacts at all levels with a view to achieving land degradation neutrality (LDN).

The UNCCD Parties, at COP 14 in India, requested the UNCCD secretariat to build the capacity of Parties to address SDS by developing a toolbox including decision-making support tools, in collaboration with relevant UN entities, institutions and partners. The aim of the SDS toolbox is to provide SDS stakeholders with easy access to tools, methodologies, approaches, case studies and other resources to support the development and implementation of SDS policy plans at various levels. The objective is to enhance the preparedness and resilience of vulnerable ecosystems and populations to the adverse and negative impacts of SDS.

The SDS toolbox will be built upon existing tools, information and data, including the UNCCD Policy Advocacy Framework on SDS, the UNCCD SDS Compendium, and the SDS Source Base-map. It collates tools and methodologies developed by the UNCCD and its partners, organized in modules and presented in a structured way. It provides guidance for stakeholders to compare, assess and choose tools that are relevant in their own context. The scope of the toolbox will be focused on the following types of tools related to SDS:

- Source Mapping
- Observation, Monitoring, Forecasting and Early Warning
- Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping
- Risk Mitigation Measures including source management

**Consultant’s Tasks and Deliverables**

Under the overall supervision of the Chiefs of the External Relations, Policy and Advocacy (ERPA) and Communications units of the UNCCD and the direct supervision of the responsible Programme Officers, the consultant will support the work of the secretariat on the UNCCD SDS Toolbox, being developed by the UNCCD in collaboration with partners. This will entail, among others, the following activities:

A/ Inventory of existing tools:
- Taking a structured inventory of SDS related tools, through:
  - Desk (and online) research of tools used in national, regional and global context;
  - Information about available tools supplied by partners;
  - Available information in the UNCCD SDS Compendium;
- Compiling the above inventory for the SDS Toolbox database that supports country Parties in improving their preparedness and resilience in relation to SDS;
- Assist with the development and implementation, including design of the logical structure and schema for the SDS toolbox, including a decision support tool (which is implemented in the form of an interactive online Q&A);

B/ Prepare content for the SDS Toolbox:
- Developing online content for the SDS toolbox: conducting research, writing and editing text, and assist in the development of supporting graphic materials;
- Preparing, editing and uploading of all content collected above, into the content management system (CMS) used for the SDS Toolbox;
- Refine, update and redesign existing training materials;

C/ Assist with the implementation of the SDS Toolbox:
- Assist with the project management of the technical implementation of the toolbox and the database, within the UNCCD Knowledge Hub;
- Assist with the organization of workshops and meetings with partners and selected stakeholders;
- Perform other duties as requested.

**Contractual Terms**

The consultancy will be carried out over a period of six months, starting as soon as possible. The consultant will prepare an overall work plan for the entire contract period at the beginning of the assignment which will be discussed and agreed with the supervisors.

**Requirements**

- Degree in social sciences, rural development, geography, natural resource management, economics or any related field relevant for the consultancy;
- Research experience in the field of relevant disciplines preferably related to natural disaster, including sand and dust storms;
- Experience in research, writing and content management (preferably on environmental themes);
Experience with web content management tools, preferably Drupal;
Strong English writing and editing skills;
Ability to perform and deliver under tight deadlines;
Experience in and understanding of the dynamics of an intergovernmental process would be an asset.

Submission of Application
Applications should be submitted by e-mail to staffing@unccd.int. This should include a cover memo, CV and/or UNCCD Personal History Form (P11)\(^1\), specifying the position CCD/20/COMMS/42 in the subject line. Please also provide cover letter with a brief work plan and milestones as well as expectations for remuneration.

The deadline for applications is 28 September 2020. Only applications submitted by the deadline will be considered. No telephone calls will be returned. Please address your application as indicated above and do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat of the UNCCD.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 14 September 2020

\(^1\) [https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/UNCCD%20P11%20Form_1.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/UNCCD%20P11%20Form_1.pdf)