



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Support for SDS work programme

Consultancy reference number: CCD/23/C/13

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 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), Sustainable Development Goals 15.3.

The UNCCD Parties, at COP 15 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, requested the secretariat to:

- (a) Develop a voluntary policy guideline, in consultation with countries affected by sand and dust storms, to assist in the integration of sand and dust storms management into key policy areas.
- (b) Continue developing the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, including the global Sand and Dust Storms Source Base-map and other geographic information system platforms, data, and tools, as feasible, and supporting the capacity of country Parties to use them, in particular to improve knowledge of effects related to desertification/land degradation and drought.
- (c) Compile an inventory of existing sand and dust storms-related tools and technologies beyond the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox and make this information available to Parties;
- (d) Facilitate, as appropriate, the organization of a science–policy dialogue on sand and dust storms as a contribution to developing further guidance and policies to address sand and dust storms.
- (e) Participate actively in the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms and enhance cooperation and collaboration with United Nations agencies, organizations and treaties to address sand and dust storms source mitigation, including in the work of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms on developing a global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms to address anthropogenic sand and dust storms sources and data/information gaps.

Objective of consultancy

In above context, the consultant will support in following up the requests from Parties and in delivering substantive matters related to SDS work programme.

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the overall supervision of the Chief of the Global Policy Advocacy and Regional Cooperation (GPARC) of the UNCCD and the direct supervision of the responsible Officer, and working collaboratively with relevant units (CERP, GM, STI) and partners (FAO, WMO, UNESCAP, UNEP, UNDP, etc) the incumbent shall perform most if not all of the following duties:



- Develop or reformulate a voluntary policy guideline
- Organize a High-Level Science-Policy Dialogue
- Launch and refine the SDS Toolbox
- Support for the observance of the International Day of Combating SDS
- Support in developing a concept note implementation plan linking SDS to LDN
- Conduct trainings and capacity building workshops
- Refine training materials and self-study module
- Support the development of a pilot project on SDS in Northeast Asia
- Draft communications content, including website text and news, op-eds, other editorial pieces
- Perform any other SDS-related activities

Deliverables

Successful performance on duties and responsibilities as described above. As well, the expected outputs can include but are not limited to:

- A draft of voluntary policy guideline reflecting consultations with relevant stakeholders and countries
- A background document for and report of a High-Level Science-Policy Dialogue
- The operationalizing and refinement of the SDS toolbox
- An event for the International Day of Combating SDS
- Required documents on linking SDS to LDN with inputs from UNCCD
- At least 1-2 SDS trainings and capacity building workshops
- An updated training materials and self-study module
- Guidance for SDS pilot project in Northeast Asia

Contractual terms

The service of the selected consultant is estimated to be for a period of 09 months and with a maximum of 100 workdays and as home-based. Start date as soon as possible. If travel required, travel expenses, including for the participation in CRIC21 (Samarkand Uzbekistan, 9-13 October 2023) and SDS trainings and workshops will be reimbursed separately. A daily rate will be agreed before signing the contract and payment for services will be monthly based on the submission of a timesheet.

Requirements

- Advanced university degree in natural resource management, environmental policy, development economics or related discipline
- A minimum of 10 years working experience related to the above disciplines, including in-depth knowledge of sustainable land/water management and restoration policies, programmes and good practices, including sand and dust storms related issues.
- Demonstrated knowledge on sand and dust storms issues
- Substantial record of research and publications, including non-scientific communications.
- Proven experience in the development of teaching/training courses/manuals, including e-learning courses.
- Solid knowledge of the UNCCD, related UN and intergovernmental processes.
- Excellent writing skills and fluency in English is required.



Special notice

Only individuals who can act as independent, individual economical operators are qualified to apply. Individuals who can provide their services only on account of an institution or enterprise not in their individual capacity are not eligible under this procedure.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Secretariat and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultant and individual contractor is responsible for determining tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

Submission of application

The following documents should be sent to staffing@unccd.int as **one document**: UNCCD Personal History Form¹ /CV and cover letter, specifying the following in the email subject line: **CCD/23/C/13**.

The deadline for applications is **16 March 2023**. Only applications submitted by the deadline and with complete documentation will be taken into consideration.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 10 March 2023

¹ UNCCD P-11 form in electronic fill-in .pdf OR .docx format available: <https://www.unccd.int/about-us/secretariat/vacancies/applying-unccd>