



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy: Development of regional PFI (Peace Forest Initiative)

Consultancy reference number: CCD/24/C/22

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.”

Land and forest degradation in conflict areas is an emerging concern for the global community. Globally, around 1.8 billion people – over 20 per cent of the world’s population – live in fragile, conflict-affected countries. The long-term negative effects on communities are exacerbated by their vulnerability and undermine their resilience to climate-related disasters, such as extreme heat, droughts, and floods. People in conflict areas are considered the most vulnerable and frequently suffer from a lack of basic needs (e.g. food, clean water, fuel) traditionally obtained from the land and forest.

Prolonged conflict is a significant root cause of degradation of natural resources and the ecosystem services they provide. Conflict has both direct and indirect impacts on land. It can directly destroy land and forest through physical damage, such as soil erosion and contamination when people are forced to use land and forest resources unsustainably. Scarcity of basic needs tends to drive people to overexploit already depleted natural resources which can lead to irreversible land degradation or desertification. In most conflict areas, there are little or no governance, institutions or policies to help effectively avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation. This increases the risk of land and environmental degradation in post-conflict areas. Poor governance, combined with limited access to natural resources (e.g. forest and pasture lands), is often seen as a primary driver and amplifying factor in a given conflict situation. There is an urgent need for interventions to protect environmental assets in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Sustainable land management (SLM) is a powerful measure to protect people from the loss and damage caused by land degradation. Land degradation neutrality (LDN) provides a flexible tool for integrating policy-making in the pursuit of multiple environmental and socioeconomic objectives. LDN actions can safeguard rural communities by providing ecosystem services, including clean water, food, biomass fuel, animal fodder and jobs, and thus improve the living conditions of local communities affected by land degradation.

The Peace Forest Initiative (PFI), launched during the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of the UNCCD in 2019, aims to promote joint actions and cross-border cooperation on land and forest restoration under the LDN approach while building confidence and peace in conflict affected areas. The UNCCD secretariat will play a central role in promoting and operationalizing the PFI through partnership building, noting its potential contribution to increasing cooperation on LDN, including land restoration and reforestation in transborder areas in participating countries. LDN (SDG 15.3) can be effectively linked to the SDG 16 (peace and justice) through PFI.

Objective of consultancy

UNCCD work programme and target relevant to the PFI is successfully delivered. Overall, countries will be increasingly willing to advance land-based activities to improve security and stability.



Duties and Responsibilities

Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD and the direct supervision of the responsible Officer, and working collaboratively with all staff and relevant partners, the incumbent will perform the following main duties:

- Provide coordination and substantial support to the development of regional PFI in South Caucasus and Central Asia. This includes providing technical and analytical inputs and consulting, supporting the design and planning, organisation, facilitation and reporting of regional meetings and consultations (online/offline), identifying and engaging with partners and donors including mapping, among others.
- Develop regional PFI activity plans and strategic documents, and prepare topic-specific (pre)concept notes of projects and programmes identified within the context of defined regional PFI activity plans, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and partners.
- Provide substantial input to the full-scale project document development tailored to the identified funding sources.
- Provide substantial input to the development of strategic documents of global PFI operation, including the report on the land-peace-security nexus, where appropriate.
- Support the preparation and organization of PFI related events at different fora including the UNCCD COP16.
- Any other duties pertaining to this consultancy as may be determined by the supervising officer.

Deliverables

- Two (2) PFI action plans and strategies at regional level.
- Two (2) regional workshops organized.

Contractual terms

The service of the selected consultant is estimated to be for a period of 09 months (part-time), starting April 2024. This contract is based on deliverables and payment is defined by output. The consultancy is home based, part-time. Women are encouraged to apply.

All products resulting from this contractual arrangement are the exclusive property of the UNCCD.

Requirements

- Advanced university degree in natural resource management, environmental policy, development economics, international politics or related disciplines.
- A minimum of 5 years working experience related to the above disciplines, including in-depth knowledge of sustainable land/water management and restoration policies, programmes and good practices.
- Solid knowledge of the UNCCD, related UN and intergovernmental processes.
- Proven experience in research and publishing in the field of relevant disciplines, preferably related to natural resource management and governance, climate security, including non-scientific communications.
- Substantial record of experience in transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary work.
- 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/24/C/22**.

The deadline for applications is **28 March 2024**. 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: 21 March 2024

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