

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI)  
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTION)  
RECRUITMENT OF A CONSULTANCY FIRM  
FOR  
TO CONDUCT AN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTH ASIA  
CO-ORPORTAIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)- THE CONSULTING  
ASSIGNMENT IS FINANCED UNDER THE WORLD BANK FUNDED PLASTIC FREE  
RIVERS AND SEAS FOR SOUTH ASIA (PLEASE) PROJECT  
LK-SACEP-407977-CS-CQS**

**Country:** SRI LANKA

**Project:** PLASTIC FREE RIVERS AND SEAS FOR SOUTH ASIA (PLEASE) PROJECT.

**Grant No:** D648-8S

**Assignment Title:** RECRUITMENT OF A CONSULTANCY FIRM TO CONDUCT AN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTH ASIA CO-ORPORTAIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP) - THE CONSULTING ASSIGNMENT IS FINANCED UNDER THE WORLD BANK-FUNDED PLASTIC FREE RIVERS AND SEAS FOR SOUTH ASIA (PLEASE) PROJECT

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD:** 4 MONTHS (approx.)  
CONSULTING FIRM RECRUITMENT WILL BE ON CONSULTANTS' QUALIFICATION SYSTEM (CQS) BASIS

The South Asia Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

SACEP is an inter-governmental organization, established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the region. SACEP member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The regional Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia project (PLEASE) is a World Bank-funded regional project that is implemented by SACEP. PLEASE aims to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution in South Asian seas. The project development objective is to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas.

PLEASE has a strong focus in improving the institutional structure of SACEP and building the capacity of SACEP as the foremost institution with the mandate to address environmental issues in the South Asia Region. Under Component 3, Strengthen Regional Integration Institutions, the project supports (i) the building of SACEP's institutional capacity to improve SACEP's capacity. The proposed capacity assessment of SACEP consultancy assignment will be financed under Component 3 of the project.

SACEP requires a detailed assessment to fulfill its mission to promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human in the context of sustainable development and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa; to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all national, regional, and international institutions, governmental and non-governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts. The scope of SACEP's Work Program includes Air Pollution, Biodiversity, Clearing-House Mechanism, Climate Change, conservation of Coastal and Marine Environment, Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife, Data and Information Management, Environmental Education, Environmental Law, Environmentally Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements and Waste Management.

Based on capacity assessment, Component 3 of the PLEASE project envisages strengthening SACEP's organizations' capacity to coordinate and support their member-states to better deliver solutions to global and regional environmental challenges. To achieve this objective, the component would expect to build SACEP's institutional capacity by enhancing accountability, operational, relationship, and knowledge management systems, improving SACEP's effectiveness, and its ability to collaborate with its member states, other regional and international organizations, and institutions.

The capacity assessment of the SACEP needs to employ a comprehensive methodology to ensure a thorough evaluation of its capabilities. The assessment should include the following aspects (i) Strategic Management to evaluate the alignment of SACEP's strategies with stakeholder expectations and needs, and the clarity of these strategies; (ii) Operational Management to evaluate SACEP's efficiency and effectiveness in resource management, including human resources, finances, and operational processes; (iii) Relationship Management to evaluate SACEP's ability to engage with its stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries in a collaborative manner; and (iv) on Knowledge Management to review SACEP's capacity to acquire, manage, and apply knowledge to improve its work. The capacity assessment needs to evaluate all systems in SACEP including management structure, administration and legal, human resources management, procurement and contract management, finance and office administration, budgeting and project formulation, policy and guidelines in respective sectors, constant/continuous engagement mechanism with member states, reporting mechanism to Governing Council and Consultative Committee and anti-harassment internal policies etc. Based on the assessment results, the Consultant should propose an appropriate organizational structure for SACEP that aligns with its current mission and strategic direction.

The eligible candidates to apply for the above assignment should be nationals of member states of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), which consists of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. While the leadership of

SACEP and the World Bank are committed to having a diversity of candidates, women are encouraged to apply.

The scope of works should include but not limited to the following activities:

- i. Gather information on the expectations of the focal points in the member countries, Governing Council and Consultative Committee, donor organizations/Development Partners.
- ii. Review all the strategic documents related to the overall strategy of SACEP (Colombo Declaration, SACEP Strategy 2020-2030, etc.).
- iii. Define how the four key performance dimensions- Strategic Management, Operational Management, Relationship Management, and Knowledge Management- will be assessed and reasons for such interventions..
- iv. Define who the key stakeholders are, their role and influence on SACEP, and planned communication and data collection methods and a tentative schedule of stakeholder engagements. describe the criteria or performance indicators that will be used to assess each of the four dimensions and outline the mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques that will be used.
- v. Outline the expected sections of the draft report and explain how transparency will be maintained and key stakeholders will be consulted in the process of developing the report.
- vi. Explain the review process, which stakeholders will be engaged in the process and a tentative timeline.
- vii. Review and make recommendation to strengthen Grant management capacity of SCACEP, particularly financial management perspective.
- viii. Describe how feedback will be incorporated for finalization, and what process ensures the endorsement of SACEP Member States.
- ix. Based on the findings the consultant makes its own recommendations on the future changes required in the SCACEP structure, capacity improvement, recruitment of staff, engagement mechanism with member states, and other recommendations.
- x. Evaluate the extent to which SACEP's current activities and projects align with its long-term vision and mandate beyond the PLEASE project. Identify any gaps and opportunities for expansion into other environmental-related areas.
- xi. Assess capacity strengthening requirements of PIU for successful implementation of PLEASE
- xii. Conduct interviews with National Focal Points (NFPs), higher-level officials, and key stakeholders from member countries to understand their expectations and perspectives on SACEP's role and responsibilities. Include these insights in the assessment report.
- xiii. Facilitate discussions within SACEP to define its future role and mandate in the context of evolving environmental challenges in the South Asian region. This should involve internal consultations and may result in a refined strategic plan for the organization.
- xiv. Evaluate SACEP's capacity to conduct research and provide evidence-based policy advisory services to national governments in the region. Assess the organization's track record in this regard and identify areas for improvement
- xv. Assess SACEP's ability to lead and facilitate discussions on environmental management at regional and national levels. Evaluate its effectiveness in promoting best practices and cooperation among member states.
- xvi. Review SACEP's capacity to facilitate technical cooperation among member states in addressing shared environmental challenges. Identify areas where technical cooperation can be enhanced.

- xvii. Examine SACEP's infrastructure and IT capacity to store and disseminate knowledge products, data, and research findings for the benefit of member countries. Ensure that SACEP has the necessary tools and resources for effective knowledge sharing.
- xviii. Develop a transparent and scientifically sound, staff performance evaluation template and scoring method that align with SACEP's objectives. Ensure that the template considers the organization's specific needs and goals.
- xix. Identify alternative financing sources and budgeting strategies to ensure the sustainability of SACEP beyond the current funding sources. Provide recommendations for securing financial stability.
- xx. Evaluate staff skill set and propose a comprehensive staff skills development program, including technical capacity development in working areas.. Develop a capacity-building plan that addresses the organization's skill gaps and training needs.

The detailed are given in the TOR Attached.

The ceiling budget allocated for this assignment is USD 200,000. The assignment is required to be carried out by the Consulting Firm within a period of 4 **months** starting May 10, 2024, and terminating on September 15, 2024. The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following website: [sacep.org/consultancy-opportunities](https://sacep.org/consultancy-opportunities).

The SACEP/PLEASE now invites eligible consulting firms to indicate their interest in providing the requested Services. Interested Consultants should provide the information that was requested in the proposal that demonstrates that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience and qualification to perform the Services as indicated below;

#### **Recruitment Qualifications and Experience:**

The experience and expertise required for the consulting firm are listed below:

In addition to the qualification requirements of individual consultants indicated in TOR, the Consulting Firm shall have general consulting experience of a minimum of 10 years.

A consulting firm shall indicate a minimum of 2 reference projects/contracts of similar services carried out in the past 5 years with activities included in the TOR. PLEASE project reserves the right to contact the companies provided as references by bidders (proposed consultants).

References will be requested by PIU/SACEP to provide feedback on the following aspects of service delivery similar to services expected in the TOR on the reference 2 projects listed by the consultants: (i) Management capabilities of the firm, (ii) Accuracy and quality assurance of the administrative processes, (iii) Efficiency and cost-effectiveness in terms of delivery of services and timeliness, and (iv) responsiveness to the client services,

The Consulting Firm shall provide a detailed approach and methodology for capacity assessment of SACEP to cover the proposed scope of work including task description and how such tasks will be performed on the given timeline in their submissions

#### **Required Team Composition**

The consulting team should have experienced consultants in the disciplines as requested in the TOR. The REOI submissions will be evaluated in two stages: The first stage will evaluate functionality according to the criteria of;

- i. **Experience:** Consulting Firm shall have at least 10 years of general consulting experience with at least two traceable references relating to consulting services **similar** to this scope in the past five years. Provide a brief description of the scope and scale of the work undertaken for each and indicate the value of each contract.

Points will be awarded to affirmative compliance to the Experience and qualification requirements of the firm indicated in the Recruitment Qualifications and experience listed in the TOR.

(50 points- (Compliance general Experience-15, two qualified projects- 35 ( 17.5 marks each)

- ii. **Team capacity:18 Positions:** The Consulting Firm should demonstrate the capacity of the project team recommended to be engaged and to be utilized in the execution of the contract. Their skills, qualifications, experience, (the individual consultant's qualification and experience), etc. The CVs of staff should not be longer than 2 pages for each position and should be structured as follows: - (i) Professional qualification/s, (ii) Brief description of individuals' experience of similar work in the last five years. (iii) Name of previous employer/s and position. (iv) Role in the services to be provided in this bid. (50 points distributed as follows: (i) Team leader (5 marks); (ii)Institutional Reform Specialist (3.0 marks); Legal and Regulatory Adviser (3.0 marks); Environmental Policy and Governance Expert (2.5 marks); (iii)Financial Management Specialist (3.0 marks); (iv) Plastic Waste Management Expert (3.0 marks); (v) Environmental Policy and Governance Expert (2.5 marks);(vi) Air quality Specialist (2.5 marks); (vii) Biodiversity Conservation Specialist (2.5 marks); (viii) Climate Change Specialist (2.5 marks); (ix) Natural Resource Management Expert (2.5 marks); (x) Ocean Scientist (2.5 marks); (xi) Data Analyst and Researcher (2.5 marks); (xii) Technology and Information Systems Expert (2.5 marks); (xiii) Environmental Economics Analyst (2.5 marks); (xiv) Legal and Regulatory Advisor (3.0 marks); (xv) Procurement Specialist (2.5 marks);(xvi) Gender specialist (2.5 marks); (xvii) HR specialist (2.5 marks) and (xviii) Organizational governance specialist (2.5 marks).

**Submissions:** The closing date for submission of EOI/ or technical proposal is April 22, 2023, at 2 pm, Colombo time.

The consulting firm **shall not** submit any financial bid submissions along with the requested technical submissions in response to the EOI. Tender submissions should be emailed to the email: [pleaseproject@sacep.org](mailto:pleaseproject@sacep.org).

### **Financial Bid**

At the time PIU/SACEP requests the Consulting firm to submit the financial bid which shall include:

- i. All costs for hiring individual consultants to carry out detailed tasks should be indicated in the scope of work;
- ii. All professional and Overheard costs should be indicated separately in financial bid;
- iii. Financial bid shall include VAT, as applicable.

**The consulting firm shall not submit any financial bid submissions along with the requested technical submissions in response to the EOI.** Tender submissions should be emailed to the email: [pleaseproject@sacep.org](mailto:pleaseproject@sacep.org).

The highest ranks Consulting Firm scored on technical grounds of the EOI shall be called up to submit an RFP mainly with a financial bid along with the technical information for contract negotiation. The successful Consulting Firm will be requested to enter into a Contract to compete for scope activities in the TOR.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraph, 3.17 of the World Bank's 'Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers' (*Procurement in Investment Project Financing- Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016 Revised November 2017 and August 2018*), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:

*3.17 Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of being unable to carry out the assignment in the best interests of the Borrower. Without limitation on the generality of the foregoing, Consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:*

*d. Consultants (including their experts and other personnel, and sub-consultants), that have a close business or family relationship with a professional staff of the Borrower, or of the project implementing agency, or of a recipient of a part of the Bank's financing, or any other party representing or acting on behalf of the Borrower, that is directly or indirectly involved in any part of:*

*i. the preparation of the TOR for the assignment;*

*ii. the selection process for the contract; or*

*iii. the supervision of the contract, may not be awarded a contract unless the conflict stemming from this relationship has been resolved in a manner acceptable to the Bank throughout the selection process and the execution of the contract.*

The Firm will be selected based on the qualification and experience (**CQS basis**) , in accordance with the procedures set out in the 'The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers Procurement in Investment Project Financing- Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016, Revised November 2017' and August 2018' and as per the Financing Agreement of the project.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 08.30 to 16.30 (Sri Lanka Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, by mail, or by e-mail) by no later than 14.00, Sri Lanka time **on 22 April 2024**. Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) Project

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