

Terms of Reference

Support to Viet Nam to strengthen information systems for tracking social and environmental outcomes in the forest sector

Position: National Consultant on Safeguards Information System (SIS)

Duty station: Home-based/Viet Nam

Anticipated duration: June 2021-September 2021

Due date for application: 14 June 2021

1. Background to the assignment

This assignment will support the implementation of one component of the **UN-REDD project 'Addressing Forest Crime through Improved Governance in the Lower Mekong Region'** (hereafter 'the LMR project'). The project is supported by the government of Norway and aims to reduce the likelihood of forest crime by strengthening forest and land use governance, thus contributing to reduced emissions from the forest sector. Beginning in 2020, it will run for an initial period of two years, and will be implemented in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, with additional engagement with China for some activities.

This assignment will specifically support **Output 3.3 of the LMR project in Viet Nam**. This output involves working with participating countries to strengthen systems for tracking environmental and social impacts in the forest sector. Each country is determining which priority themes/areas it will focus on for activities under Output 3.3.

There are a range of existing and emerging information systems and datasets in LMR countries that collect, analyse and share information that is relevant to social and environmental outcomes in the forest sector. These can include such varied systems and databases as: Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) reporting systems; inventories / censuses in the agriculture and forestry sectors; biodiversity monitoring systems; REDD+ Safeguards Information Systems; and datasets on specific aspects such as land/forest tenure, community forestry, forest products trade, forest values/ecosystem services, etc. Although a range of social and environmental data already exists in countries in the region, these are seldom integrated and updated in order to provide the complete information required to assess environment and social impacts in the forest and related sectors over time. In addition to allowing improved monitoring of social and environmental impacts, strengthening data integration and accessibility offers co-benefits, such as supporting interdisciplinary research and utilisation of data by multiple sectors and institutions to inform decision-making.

In Viet Nam, substantial progress has been made on a number of relevant aspects of REDD+, including: development of a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS); development of the country's phase 1 online Safeguards Information System (SIS); submission of a first Summary of Information; the start of implementation of REDD+ activities, including via a FCPF Emissions Reductions Partnership Agreement (ERPA); and ongoing development and refinement of forest and other relevant information systems (such as FORMIS, Forest Industry Database, etc). The **upgrade of Viet Nam's phase 1 SIS¹**, which is managed by the Viet Nam Forestry Administration (VNFORD), especially with a view to aligning with key international standards and initiatives, has been identified as a key priority.

¹ For more information on REDD+ safeguards and SIS: <https://unredd.net/knowledge/redd-plus-technical-issues/safeguards.html>

2. Overview of the assignment

This Terms of Reference (ToR) covers an assignment to **support Viet Nam in the strengthening of its phase 1 SIS**, comprising:

- a) A rapid needs assessment of Viet Nam's 'Phase 1' SIS
- b) Development of an action plan for further strengthening of the system
- c) Liaison and assistance in carrying out some initial upgrades of the SIS

More information on the expected tasks and deliverables is provided in Section 3 below.

The assignment is home-based, in Viet Nam, with minimal domestic travel anticipated. The expected duration of the assignment is June 2021 – September 2021; a total of approximately 30 days over 4 months. The languages of the assignment are Vietnamese and English.

The assignment is managed by **the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)**, which is coordinator for Output 3.3 of the LMR project. The consultant will report to UNEP-WCMC² and liaise closely with:

- Key national partners for Output 3.3. activities in Viet Nam (such as the REDD+ Office and Division of Information Development under VNFOREST)
- The LMR Project National Coordinator in Viet Nam, who will coordinate logistics and dispersal of funds within country (for meetings, workshops, translations, etc)
- International and regional partners relevant to project activities, including FAO and UNEP
- Other stakeholders in the country for the implementation of activities under Output 3.3 (to be determined at outset of assignment)

3. Key tasks and deliverables

Coordinating with key national partners working on SIS in Viet Nam, the consultant will carry out the following tasks:

1. Develop a **workplan for the assignment**, setting out expected timeline and deliverables, to be agreed with UNEP-WCMC and national partners.
2. Carry out a **rapid assessment** of Viet Nam's phase 1 SIS for key gaps and potential upgrades, considering emerging developments and needs domestically and internationally:
 - a) Develop a template for the assessment, and agree with UNEP-WCMC and national partners;
 - b) Hold discussions with national partners and the SIS webpage hosting organisations to identify any immediate technological needs and actions to restore the SIS webpage to working order;
 - c) Carry out the rapid assessment, which will include: identifying how to integrate emerging information from provincial level and improve linkages with FCPF/ERPA; reviewing the current SIS against requirements and information needs related to key international standards of interest to Viet Nam (e.g. Green Climate Fund, CORSIA, ART-TREES) (this task will involve integrating the findings from other assessments related to these standards, currently being undertaken by UNEP-WCMC, JICA and other organisations).³

² This is not a UN position. UNEP collaborates with WCMC as UNEP-WCMC. The successful candidate will be appointed by WCMC.

³ Information about the safeguards standards and requirements of GCF and ART-TREES can be found at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/safeguards>; and <https://www.artredd.org/stakeholder-consultation-for-trees-2-0/>

- d) Help to organise and facilitate a consultation meeting (e.g. with Safeguards Sub-Technical Working Group or other stakeholders grouping) to review/validate findings of the assessment and draft action plan (see task 3 below).
3. Develop a concise **action plan** for priority upgrades of the SIS:
 - a) Draft the proposed action plan, setting out key recommendations and next steps based on the assessment findings, and estimating resources needed to implement the action plan;
 - b) Present the draft action plan to stakeholders (see above) and revise and finalise the document based on comments received.

Deliverables: Workplan; Template for assessment; agreed actions for re-establishing SIS webpage; Draft assessment for review; Draft action plan for review; 1 x presentation/consultation meeting inputs; final assessment report and action plan.

4. Indicative timeline

Workplan drafted, reviewed by UNEP-WCMC & partners, and agreed	Late June 2021
Discussions held with hosting organisation/s for SIS webpage & next steps agreed	Late June 2021
Template/assessment methods drafted, reviewed by UNEP-WCMC & partners, and agreed	Late June 2021
Draft assessment submitted for review	Late July 2021
Draft action plan submitted for review	Early August 2021
Review period by partners & stakeholders	August 2021
Meeting/workshop to review draft assessment findings	August 2021
Final assessment report and action plan	September 2021

5. Consultant qualifications

The consultant will have the following sets of expertise:

Up-to-date knowledge of forestry, REDD+ and of broader climate change issues in Viet Nam
Experience in the development/application of environmental/social safeguards, standards, impact assessments, and/or monitoring and evaluation
Excellent written communication skills in Vietnamese and English
Experience in social and environmental data collection and analysis, and/or establishing/operating information systems and database management
Minimum Bachelor's degree in natural resource management, information management or related field
Minimum of five years' working experience in related field

6. Instructions for applications

Applicants shall submit the following documents to apply for this assignment in English:

- Cover letter introducing yourself and your interest in the assignment (no more than 1 page)
- Short technical proposal, describing your proposed approach to develop the assessment and the application, and providing a proposed workplan (including person days per task) (no more than 2 pages)

- Financial proposal, in an excel table, setting out your proposed number of person days per task and proposed fee per person day in USD
- Your CV (no more than 2 pages)

These documents shall be submitted in PDF form by email to charlotte.hicks@unep-wcmc.org and miriam.guth@unep-wcmc.org by **16:00 Bangkok/Hanoi time on 14 June 2021**.

Any questions about the ToR can be sent to Miriam Guth (miriam.guth@unep-wcmc.org) up until 11 June 2021.