

**VIETNAM FORESTS AND DELTAS PROGRAM**  
**TERM OF REFERENCE**

**Position: Sustainable Forest Management (Individual Consultant - National)**

**1.0 Background and Rationale**

The USAID *Vietnam Forest and Deltas Program* is embarking upon a five-year effort that will support four provinces to accelerate their transition to climate resilient, low emissions development through investments in reducing net emissions from forests, and enhancing resiliency of people, places, and livelihoods in the delta regions to short and long-term climate impacts. In collaboration with MARD, the Program will support sustainable forests management and strategies to increase sustainability and climate change resilience, improve livelihoods, and reduced pressure upon forest ecosystems, or to manage them in a more equitable and sustainable manner.

Sustainable Forest Management, through sustainable harvesting of natural species and methodologies for reduced impact logging, is seen as a key step towards maintaining natural forest stocks, reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (and inefficient logging), improving forest management and in maximising sustainable income from harvesting of forest products. The improved management should have positive impact on co-benefits including maintaining and enhancing carbon stocks, water resources, biodiversity and services of nature. MARD have set out new directives for sustainable forest management, including the long-term aim to focus harvesting only on a small number of forest areas that meet the government's criteria for sustainable forests management plans. In addition, there have been calls for these areas to be certified under Forest Stewardship Council approved certification schemes, as a means to ensure that management falls under approved criteria, and also for enhanced premiums for timber sales.

**2.0 Objectives**

The consultancy will undertake a feasibility assessment of implementing sustainable forest management (according to MARD regulation xxx) in Tuong Duong Enterprise, Nghe An provinces and for gaining, and maintaining, FSC accreditation. The assessment will also explore the necessary steps needed to gain enhanced premiums by examining the needs and requirements for Chain of Custody, and explore linkages with other NGO's or organisations who may have capacity to certify through Chain of Custody timber processing plants.

Specifically the tasks will look at Tuong Duong Forest Enterprise to (1) to undertake a critical feasibility assessment of the potential for sustainable forest management & certification; (2) to propose next steps and make recommendations of data and activities required; (3) to discuss with stakeholders the feasibility and inputs required for sustainable forest management

### 3.0 Tasks

The assignment is to analyse the sustainable forest management potential and feasibility of Tuong Duong Forest Company, Nghe An province, through undertaking the following tasks:

- To identify, list and collate all relevant documents pertaining to sustainable forests management, including management plans, inventories, harvesting quotas, data collection system
- To undertake an analysis of the steps that are required to gain approval of a Sustainable Forest Management and steps that are required to gain FSC certification, including Forest Management, Controlled Wood and Chain of Custody
- Identify timber merchants, companies in the areas, especially those that are Chain of Custody Certified;
- To undertake a critical feasibility assessment of the benefits received from sustainable harvesting and the costs, time, technical and human resources needed to achieve the following:
  - Approval from MARD for Sustainable Forest Management accreditation in Vietnam;
  - Approval and maintaining a FSC certificate, and to analyse the options of Forest Management, Controlled Wood certificates;
  - Analyse the feasibility and steps that would be needed to sell FSC timber at a price premium, through examining Chain of Custody process, and existing approved Chain of Custody<sup>1</sup> certified merchants.
- To assess and document the benefits and constraints of Sustainable Forest Management as perceived by major stakeholders, particular attention should be paid to its role in stabilising unproductive land cultivation systems, and identify any negative impacts on communities, or disadvantaged groups (this has particular relevance to the process that is needed for FSC certification);
- To provide an overview of the steps taken so far by the authorities regarding Sustainable Forest Management in Con Cuong Forest Enterprise;
- To identify, according to defined criteria, "lessons learned" (technical as well as institutional) and jointly elaborate recommendations to further develop promising approaches and/or overcome experienced constraints.
- To undertake a basic assessment of financial streams for the Management Board.
- To draw on lessons learned from other areas in Vietnam, for example, Quang Binh and Kon Tum in implementing sustainable forest management; this may involve organising a study tour to visit these areas<sup>2</sup>;
- To hold consultation and final review workshop on Sustainable Forest Management, to review next steps;

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<sup>1</sup> NB. It is our understanding that price premiums can only be added to FSC timber if the whole chain from forest to buyer (in final country) is FSC Chain of Custody certified.

<sup>2</sup> NB Additional budget provided for the study tour.

- To jointly identify with decision-makers next steps for forest land allocation, needs, government contributions, and preferred means of information exchange and appropriate information products;
- To prepare and conduct presentations of findings and recommendations for provincial and district groups.

#### **4. Deliverables**

- Inception report on key issues, work plan, agreed deliverables to be submitted at the start of the contract (3-4 pages);
- Report on Feasibility of Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Certification in Tuong Duong Forest Enterprise;
- Data, reports and maps collected;
- Study Tour to Kon Tum or Quang Binh to review Sustainable Forest Management lessons learned with other stakeholders;
- Workshop with stakeholders to present results, gain feedback, and discuss next steps;

#### **5. Qualifications, Experiences of Consultant**

- 5.1 Master or Doctorate degree in forestry, natural resource management or related field;
- 5.2 Experience on sustainable forests management including design of sustainable harvesting plans is essential;
- 5.3 Demonstrated experience in Forest Stewardship Council certification schemes;
- 5.4 Expertise in community involvement and stakeholder negotiation is required;
- 5.5 Skills in analysis of forests inventory data to estimate sustainable harvesting is required;
- 5.6 Evidence of contributions to reports on sustainable forests management, management plans, harvesting and certification is necessary;
- 5.7 Proficient in English.

#### **6. Duration**

Duration is expected to be initially for a period of one to two months.

#### **7. How to apply**

Interested candidates should send application to the following address: [winrockvfd@gmail.com](mailto:winrockvfd@gmail.com) no later than xxx with the subject line "Application for Consultant on Sustainable Forest Management" including cover letter, CV and three reference contacts.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interview.