

Ecosystem Conservation and Management Project (ESCAMP)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

International (Lead) Consultant – Nature Based Tourism Planning

LK-ESCAMP-PMU-10881-CS-INDV

RATIONALE AND THE SCOPE OF THE WORK:

The World Bank has extended a credit to the Government of Sri Lanka for the Ecosystem Conservation and Management Project (ESCAMP) with the view of improving the management of sensitive ecosystems in selected locations for conservation and community benefits. The Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (MoMDE) in collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife (MoSDW) will execute the project through a Project Management Unit (PMU). The Forest Department (FD) and the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) will implement the project activities.

Sub-component 3 (b) of ESCAMP aims at enhancing the quality of nature-based tourism opportunities in priority Protect Areas (PAs) under the jurisdiction of the DWC and FD, including marine PAs. The sub-component aims to support the development of nature-based tourism strategies and plans for the DWC and FD, the two lead project implementing agencies (IAs), including marketing strategies and plans. It is expected that the DWC and FD will closely collaborate with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority to ensure the proposed strategies and plans are incorporated into the overall country tourism strategies. A key specific activity to be supported by the project is the preparation of plans for enhancing nature-based tourism in selected PAs. Select interventions from these plans will be financed by the project as well. Nature Based Tourism planning is a recognized tool to guide the development of tourism in a protected area by synthesizing and representing the vision of all the stakeholders while fulfilling the conservation objectives for the site. It is expected to result in a clear time bound blueprint on how nature based tourism is to be carried out and managed over time in a particular protected area.

OBJECTIVE: To develop model Nature Based Tourism plans to establish and enhance the quality of environmentally sustainable nature based tourism and visitor services in prioritized PAs, based on needs and carrying capacity assessments.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The main responsibilities will include, but are not limited to the following: the international consultant will lead the preparation of 4 Nature Based Tourism Plans (NBTPs), 2 for the FD and 2 for the DWC.

Preparation of Nature Based Tourism Plans (NBTPs)

- Lead in the preparation of NBTPs for the Sinharaja Forest Reserve Complex, Knuckles Forest Reserve Complex, Bundala National Park and Udawalawe National Park.
- Undertake tourism carrying capacity assessment of the Yala National Park complex and review the existing NBTP prepared by the DWC for the complex and action plan of the Yala sub-committee and provide feedback on their adequacy and any needs for improvement.
- The Nature Based Tourism planning process will be done jointly with the department staff as a training exercise and the staff are expected to provide relevant information and participate in the planning process.
- If specialized consultancy inputs are needed, the consultant is expected to identify the need and inform the PMU as part of the inception report. Such expertise has to come from the local market.
- While the ownership of the 4 NBTPs¹ will be with the two IAs, the consultant will be responsible for the drafting and timely completion of the NBTPs and providing guidance to the IAs during the planning process.
- As a part of the NBTP preparation the consultant is required to conduct the following key sub-activities
 - Assess the current NBT activities within the PAs, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
 - Assess the tourism carrying capacity of the Protected Area at the level of effective/permmissible carrying capacity of visitors and vehicles to achieve the following;
 - Set ceiling levels for each PA on the number of visitors allowed to enter a PAs at any given time
 - Identify areas open to tourism as nature based tourism zones with the PAs
 - Provide recommendations on managing/maintaining and where applicable reducing visitor levels to permmissible ones.
 - Plan out nature based tourism activities looking at enhancing the strengths and opportunities identified while overcoming weak areas and mitigating potential threats.
 - The plan should set a vision, goal, objectives, strategies and actions for nature based development and management in the respective protected Area.

¹ The NBTP should:

- Be consistent and integrated with the Protected Area Management Plan for the respective protected area
- Be structured and written in a way that protected area personnel will be able to take the plan and implement it with minimum effort and maximum understanding;
- Contain a level of detail consistent with the types of recommendations that are made and with the technical expertise of protected area personnel and others who will be carrying out the plan.

- The plan should identify means and measures of managing/enhancing existing tourism assets and activities within set visitation thresholds.
 - All new activities should explore innovative, low impact, income generating, economically viable and sustainable activities suitable to the respective PAs.
 - Specific opportunities for collaboration with local communities and private sector, to ensure long-term benefit-sharing and sustainable operations should also be explored.
- Develop codes and standards for privately-operated tourist facilities located in the vicinity of or within PAs where applicable.
 - Develop generic guidelines for environmentally acceptable and culturally appropriate practices for all new tourism activities
 - Develop guidelines for visitor codes of practice, such as recommended Do's and Don'ts for visitors.
 - Develop monitoring mechanisms to assess the long term impact and quality of tourism activities that will feed back in to operational maintenance
 - Develop communication and marketing strategies and a marketing plan for each respective PA as a component of the NBTP.
 - Liaise closely with field based teams of the two lead implementing agencies, conducting field verification and data collection where required to complete the fore mentioned tasks in the preparation of NBTPs
 - Ensure thematic synchronization of Individual NBTPs with National and Regional Tourism Strategies and Plans as well as in line with Protect Area Management Plans for the respective PA.
 - Review the NBTPs that will be done by the two departments.
 - FD: Kanneliya Forest Reserve, Hurulu Eco Park, Galwila Eco Park, Galgamuwa-Gatadivula Forest Reserve.
 - DWC: Minneriya and Wasgamuwa

Training on Nature Based Tourism

- Provide capacity building on the processes involved with conducting tourism carrying capacity assessments and NBT planning to central and field based staff of the IAs.
- Facilitate/conduct capacity building programs to introduce new international best practices in nature based tourism and management appropriate for PAs to boost innovative thinking within the IAs and sharing of best international practices on NBT to wider groups of stakeholders.

COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

CORE VALUES & COMPETENCIES

- Commitment
- Diversity and inclusion
- Integrity
- Communication
- Drive for result
- Working with people
- Team player

FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES

- A high level of technical knowledge and the experience of proven ability to apply this knowledge to practical problems;
- Team player with the ability to maintain good work relations with individuals of different backgrounds, and to work under pressure.
- Leading and supervising
- Strong IT and analytical skills with ability to write and review technical reports;
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Ability to follow instructions and procedures
- Understanding on government financial regulation, administrative regulation and procurement guidelines
- Willingness to travel within Sri Lanka
- Planning and organizing relating and networking & deciding and initiating action
- Strong cross-cultural communication and resilience skills are very important

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- At minimum, a Master's Degree in a field related to Ecotourism, Tourism Management, Forestry, Conservation, Natural Resource Management, Ecology or a related field
- Minimum of 10 years professional international experience in nature based tourism/ecotourism development planning, planning and design of nature based tourism activities, facilities, and business plans, environmental and natural resource management, including extensive field experience.
- At least 5 years proven experience working with various government and private sector agencies and community organizations, especially at the field level.

- Specific proven experience working in the fore mentioned field within the context of Protected Areas will be a benefit.
- Previous work experience in Sri Lanka and South Asia Region will be a benefit

On Applications Requirements

When applying for the position as per the tasks identified in this TOR, the consultant is required to submit the following in the form of a conceptual proposal for the assignment.

- A Conceptual Proposal-
 - The assignment expects a minimum of 100 days within a 1-year period with 40 days in the field with three trips to Sri Lanka.
 - Please provide a brief conceptual proposal including a plan for the assignment based on the total number of days and the ToR provided with a lumpsum amount for the entire assignment which includes consultancy fee, travel cost (airfares and local travel including field visits), hotel cost and per diem.
 - The PMU will assist in making arrangement for local travel on request from the consultant, but all payment should be directly borne by the consultant.
 - The PMU will also organize with the two departments proposed site visits, planning events, training, etc. and logistics for local staff and venue related costs.
 - An estimated rough lump sum fee for the completion of the assignment, inclusive of travel, per diems and other miscellaneous fee.