**The State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government**

**of the Kyrgyz Republic**

**Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Project Implementation Unit**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

For consulting services:

**«Social mobilization and supporting the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans (INRMPs) development in Pilot Leskhozes»**

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the World Bank agreed on the allocation of funding (Loan No. 5743-KG and Grant No. D095-KG) for the implementation of the project "Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Project of the Kyrgyz Republic" (hereinafter IFEMP or “the Project”). State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (SAEPF) is the recipient of Loan and Grant.

**BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT**

The main Implementing Agency (IA) of the IFEMP is SAEPF. The Project is supervised by the Central office of the SAEPF, which is responsible for the implementation of activities related to the institutional reform of the forestry sector in terms of developing the appropriate strategic reform document, its coordination and approval at the appropriate level of public administration and its implementation at national level. At the national level, the Project will be implemented by all units of SAEPF

The Project seeks to provide benefits to a range of beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries are people (including women and children) living and working in and around the target leskhozes (with each leskhoz having approximately 10,000 people) to be selected at the outset of the Project. Indirect beneficiaries of the Project include 120 rural municipalities that are located adjacent to forests. Government institutions, namely SAEPF (with seven oblast-level branches), will be provided with capacity building support to improve management of forest resources.

The project development objective (PDO) and Global Environmental Objectives (GEO) are to strengthen the capacity of government institutions and communities to improve sustainable forest ecosystem management through investments in management planning, ecosystem restoration, and infrastructure.

The Project aims to support an ecosystem-based approach to the improved management of the area controlled by the leskhozes including forested lands, pasture, and unproductive or marginal lands. This will be done through support for institutional reform and capacity building, the introduction of integrated natural resource management planning at the leskhoz level and support for the implementation of these plans in pilot areas.

**The Project has four main components:**

* **Component I**: Forest Sector Institutional Reform
* **Component II**: Strategic Investments and Piloting of Sustainable Management Approaches
* **Component III**: Information and Monitoring and Evaluation
* **Component IV:** Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

# **DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTING SERVICES**

**COMPONENT II: STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS AND PILOTING OF SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES**

This component aims to improve forest resource use and management through integrated planning and provision of priority investments to implement integrated plans and increase leskhoz income and long-term sustainability. The management planning will be based on integrated ecosystem approaches that manage multiple objectives of ecological services including biodiversity, maintaining tree cover and sustainable economic use. The Project will finance the implementation of the integrated plans, improvement of land use management practices and provide resource users with alternative livelihood opportunities.

The Component 2 will be implemented in three main stages:

* 2.1. Community mobilization
* 2.2. Development and implementation of Integrated Natural Recourses Management Plans (INRMPs)
* 2.3. Strategic investments for implementation of INRMP

***Stage 2.1: Social Mobilization***

Under this project, support will be provided for a comprehensive national public information campaign. The campaign will be conducted on a broad basis and highlight the importance of forest resources for local and national sustainable development, sustainable forest management, the piloting of the forest sector reform, and the role of local communities and civil society. The campaign will use traditional methods of informing the public at the national, regional and local levels.

Within an important role of the leskhoz in forest co-management, there is a need to build and strengthen the cooperation mechanisms with local stakeholders via strengthening Joint Forest Management Councils (JFMCs), development and implementation of clear and transparent mechanisms for gradual transfer of economic functions to the private sector and communities, introducing participatory management of integrated forest ecosystems supported by Project investments. Social mobilization will be aimed at achieving these objectives and other priorities of local communities with full transparency and accountability involving all community groups, interested public and community-based organizations and groups, such as pasture users’ unions, water users’ associations, cooperatives, etc.

***Stage 2.2. Development and Implementation of the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans:***

INRMPs will cover all natural resources (i.e., forest timber and non-timber products, pasture, water, tourism opportunities, carbon sequestration, etc.) and will identify the needs and inputs required to implement these plans. The Project will support (i) drafting of guidelines for the preparation of INRMPs that provide for integrated and sustainable management and use of all natural resources (forest, pastures, water, agriculture land, etc.) within the leskhoz boundaries; (ii) preparation of INRMPs for 14 leskhozes[[1]](#footnote-1); and (iii) preparation of annual operational plans.

The INRMPs will be based on the assessment of the available natural resources and sustainable levels of production and will be developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The INRMPs will be developed in accordance with the guidelines and through an increased consultation of all relevant stakeholders and involvement of women and other vulnerable groups. The plans will be valid for a 5-year period.

The preparation process will be monitored by Joint Forest Management Councils (JFMCs) that will be established to monitor and coordinate the implementation of various management approaches. The JFMCs will serve as platforms for dialogue and conflict resolution. It is envisaged that the INRMPs will also identify opportunities for public-private partnerships, and where possible and appropriate the outsourcing of some of the current leskhoz responsibilities (such as seedling production) to the private sector through transparent competition-based procedures will be supported.

INRMPs should be adopted by JFMCs in pilot leskhozes, agreed with Coordination-Consultative Council (CCC) and approved by SAEPF. Management plans are to be based on participatory mapping, zoning, defining objectives and functions and elaborating concrete actions and corresponding indicators. The INRMPs will form the basis for the Project’s investments. A strong capacity building and community mobilization element will be necessary in the pilot leskhozes in order to prepare stakeholders in planning, implementing and monitoring in a participatory way, including trainings of Safeguards and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). Special attention will be given to engaging women in order to actively encourage women’s participation in the planning and decision making process.

The component 2 will be implemented in selected fourteen pilot leskhozes, approved by the SAEPF Order #01-9/291 from 28 December 2017 “On the approval of the list of pilot leskhozes". The mobilization will be conducted in two batches: in the first batch, mobilization will be carried out in five[[2]](#footnote-2) leskhozes: Balykchy, Batken, Frunze, Chui leskhozes and Aksuu independent forestry; in the second batch At-Bashy, Naryn, Aksy, Talas, Kochkor-Ata, Toktogul, Uch-Korgon,Kara-Kuldzha and Karakol leskhozes.

**SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE CONSULTANT**

Consultant objective is to conduct social mobilization and to support the Integrated Natural Recourses Management Plans (INRMPs) development in the first batch of pilot leskhozes on the basis of the approved Guidelines for Social Mobilization and INRMP development.

**Pilot leskhozes of the first batch of social mobilization**

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| **#** | **Location** | **Name of leskhoz (forestry unit)** |
| 1 | Issyk Kul oblast | Balykchi leskhoz |
| 2 | Issyk Kul oblast | Aksuu lesnichestvo |
| 3 | Batken oblast | Batken leskhoz |
| 4 | Chui oblast | Frunze leskhoz |
| 5 | Chui oblast | Chui leskhoz |

**THE CONSULTANT'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

**Informational campaign:**

* to inform local stakeholders of the pilot LHs on the IFEMP;
* to inform local stakeholders and communities about reform piloting in particular area, including the vision of the pilot LH’s;
* to identify new roles and responsibilities for local stakeholders in sustainable management of natural resources (i.e., participation in pasture and forest management plans, integrated land use planning, development of local added value chains);

**Needs assessment and prioritization and scoping investments:**

* to identify technical and soft skills training needs for local stakeholders;
* to identify bottlenecks in local forest management and investment needs (according to established criteria such as the number of beneficiaries, technical priorities, sustainability aspects, economic analysis, local benefits etc.);
* to conduct an assessment of existing resources through participatory mapping and analysis of existing information, including zoning of the existing resources (landscape), current land use, status, future functions, management options;

**Establishment of JFMCs\working groups;**

* involvement of relevant local stakeholders (users, local authorities, the private sector, local NGOs, others) into the JFMC\working group at the pilot leskhoz level and promotion of integrated natural resource management approach with other resource users such as pasture committees, water user associations, hunters, beekeepers and others;

**Capacity Building**

* Training of Leskhoz staff and JFMCs\working groups on developing the INRMPs;
* Training of leskhoz staff and JFMCs\working groups on monitoring and evaluation of INRMP’s implementation.

**Supporting the INRMPs development:**

* Elaboration of a management plan with a definition of goals, management description per zone, timeframe, responsibility, budget required, investment needs, indicators and monitoring procedures; the management plans are to be kept simple and understandable. Maps drawn on site can be digitized into GIS-based maps for further processing, but should remain in local possession in order to achieve a high level of ownership of stakeholders like forest and pasture users, JFMC, leskhoz staff, local authorities, NGOs, participating women, the private sector, and other stakeholders.
* to assist in developing a matrix of strategic investment needs (strategic investment plans) and annual operational plans as annex of the INRMPs;
* to assist LH (Directors?) and JFMCs in organizing consultations on developed INRMPs in CCC meetings, leading to their approval by the SAEPF;
* to support pilot leskhozes and JFMCs in implementation of INRMPs by involving their own and project resources;
* to assist to LHs and JFMCs in organization and conducting annual reporting meetings devoted to the results of the implementation of INRMPs with all local stakeholder groups, and presentations at CCC.

In order to implement INRMPs, JFMCs will be supported through capacity building, and JFMC structures will be strengthened. JFMCs will be the responsible bodies to implement the monitoring of the INRMPs and the investments at local level. The Project’s focal point in each oblast (PIU oblast representatives) will liaise between JFMCs and PIU and be a permanent resource to support and engage JFMCs.

**EXPECTED RESULTS:**

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| **№** | **Expected outcomes** | **Expected output** | **Timing** | **Verification \ Indicators** |
| 1. | Pilot LHs and local stakeholders are informed on IFEMP and forestry sector reforms | Signed Framework Agreement between SAEPF and pilot leskhozes | Will be provided | Signed Framework Agreement |
| Information seminar\*\* with participation of at least 20 people at the oblast level | Not later than 15 days from the date of signing the contract | Protocol, photo report |
| Round table\*\* at the level of leskhoz with participation of at least XXX | Not later than 15 days from the date of signing the contract | List of participants, minutes of the round table |
| An information seminar\*\* at the village level located on LH territory and adjacent territories with participation of at least 20 people, 30% of them being women | Not later than 25 days from the date of signing the contract | Protocol of seminar, lists of participants |
| 2. | Needs are identified | Completed profiles for each pilot LH in accordance with the template | Not later than 50 days from the date of signing the contract | Leskhoz profile |
| The matrix of needs for capacity strengthening | Matrix of training needs |
| 3. | Capacity of LH staff and JFMCs and working groups are built | Established\updated JFMC\working group at the pilot leskhoz level by involvement of relevant local stakeholders | Not later than 80 days from the date of signing the contract | LH order, Protocols, LoP |
| 2 trainings\*\* on development of INRMP conducted with the participation of at least 20 people in each, 30% of them are women | Training program, LoP, training report |
| 1 training\*\* on INRMP implementation monitoring and evaluation for LH and JFMCs\working groups | Training program, LoP, training report |
| 4. | Developed and approved INRMPs | Conducted 8 focus groups involving at least 8 people in each for collecting necessary information for the development of INRMP and produced participatory maps of local resources use and needs | Not later than 100 days from the date of signing the contract | Reports, photos, LoP, minutes Participatory resource use maps (zoning) |
| The INRMPs were developed in accordance with the approved template | Not later than 105 days from the date of signing the contract | Draft INRMP |
| Developed a matrix of strategic investment needs (strategic investment plans) and annual operational plans as annexes of INRMPs | Draft matrix of strategic investment needs |
| Meetings\*\* to discuss INRMPs were held in all villages located on the territory of leskhozes and adjacent territories with participation of at least 20 people in each of which 30% are women | Not later than 120 days from the date of signing the contract | Minutes of meetings, LoP, Photo report, JFMC support letter |
| INRMP agreed with CCC and approved by the SAEPF | Not later than 140 days from the date of signing the contract | Protocol of CCC meeting; SAEPF Order approved INRMP |

***Note \**** *The contract realization timeline can be preliminary discussed and agreed with the PIU WB.*

*\*\* Agenda and other materials of public meetings\seminars\round tables should be agreed with PIU in advance.*

**REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING AND PAYMENT**

The PIU conducts the payment to the Consultant after the after approval of submitted reports by the Implementation Agency and the World Bank.

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| **№** | **Reporting** | **Document submission date** | **Type of report** |
| 1 | Updates contract implementation schedule | Not later than 7 days from the date of signing the contract | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |
| 2 | Report on informational campaign for pilot LH and local stakeholders | Not later than 30 days from the date of signing the contract | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |
| 3 | Report on need identification | Not later than 55 days from the date of signing the contract | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |
| 4 | Report on Capacity building of LH staff and JFMCs\working groups | Not later than 90 days from the date of signing the contract | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |
| 5 | Report on INRMP development with approved INRMP as annex | Not later than 150 days from the date of signing the contract | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |
| 6 | Final report with lessons learned and recommendations\* | 1 hard and electronic copy in Russian and English |

***Note \* - in accordance with format provided by PIU.***

**DURATION OF THE CONTRACT**

Approximate time of the contract: **5 months** from the date of signing the contract.

**KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULTANT:**

* Public awareness materials, developed and delivered by the Consultant should be preliminary agreed with the PIU and IA. ;
* Using various tools and approaches for the community mobilization such as desk assessment, rapid field assessment, mapping of natural resources, analysis of stakeholders etc. to ensure the achievement of community mobilization objectives;
* Ensuring actual participation of all target groups and stakeholders at all stages. At the same time, participation for participation’s sake is not acceptable;
* At least one general meeting should be conducted at each village level, open to the entire community;
* At least 30% of mobilized local stakeholders should be represented by women, 10% poor households and 10% youth and vulnerable groups (based on consultations with a local government).
* Each meeting should be documented and recorded appropriately in accordance with the templates (SM Guidelines’ annexes) including lists of participants, minutes\protocols, photo materials etc.
* Ensuring the visibility of the IFEM Project and the WB\GEF and SAEPF contribution during the contract implementation and abiding the rules of using their logos.

**QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

* Experience in social mobilization of local communities and work with the population for at least 5 years;
* experience in the field of environmental protection, forestry and agrarian sectors, management of natural resources for at least 3 years;
* experience in organizing and developing natural resource management plans for at least 3 years;
* experience in conducting trainings, preparation and management of micro-projects / grants and other programs for at least 3 years;
* availability of qualified experts (international and local) with experience in social mobilization, community development, agricultural management and rural infrastructure development, rational use of natural resources; in the field of social development, including gender issues, as well as working with vulnerable groups; experience in conducting trainings;
* availability of own resources (computer equipment, vehicles) for the successful implementation of the contract.

**PARTNER'S CONTRIBUTION**

* Provide an approved Guideline on Social mobilization and developing INRMPs with forms of protocols, templates of profiles etc.;
* Provide necessary materials for informing communities about the Project (i.e. digital information on IFEMP, printed leaflets on IFEMP, safeguards, GRM).
* Reports of development partners GIZ, FAO, etc.;
* Provision of cartographic materials of pilot leskhozes for use in joint mapping and zoning;
* Letters of assistance to the Consultant in the implementation of this contract (if necessary).

1. The present assignment covers 5 leskhozes (Balykchy, Batken, Frunze, Chui leskhozes and Aksuu independent forestry) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. These 5 leskhozes are the focus of the present assignment [↑](#footnote-ref-2)