

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT

<b>POST TITLE:</b>	International Consultant/ International Ecotourism Development Expert for the National Ecotourism Master Plan Development, Bhutan
<b>AGENCY/PROJECT NAME:</b>	Tourism Council of Bhutan, “Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into the tourism sector in Bhutan”
<b>FUNDING AGENCY</b>	UNDP-GEF
<b>COUNTRY OF ASSIGNMENT:</b>	Thimphu, Bhutan

#### **1) GENERAL BACKGROUND**

Bhutan has adopted a unique cautious approach to tourism development guided by “High value, Low volume” since its inception in the early 1970s. This unique approach has consistently sought to ensure tourism growth consistent with the carrying capacity of our physical, socio-cultural, and natural environment and ensure that the benefits from tourism are maximized with minimal negative impacts while providing a rewarding experience for our visitors.

Bhutan’s tourism industry continued to grow, albeit the halt created by the COVID-19 pandemic, to become one of the major economic sectors contributing significantly toward socio-economic development of the country through revenue and foreign currency generation and employment creation amongst others. Prior to the pandemic, in 2019 a total of 315,599 foreign individuals visited Bhutan which is an increase of 15% over 2018 contributing in excess of US\$300million in tourism receipts and US\$23.42million in direct tourism revenue through the Sustainable Development Fees. This has created employment opportunities for over 52,000 individuals and business opportunities for over 6,500 tourism establishments in the country. The growth in tourism has also promoted growth in other sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, entertainment, transport and related services across the diverse tourism value chain.

The Tourism Council of Bhutan (TCB) is implementing the UNDP-supported and Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Ecotourism project on “Mainstreaming biodiversity Conservation into the tourism sector in Bhutan”. The project seeks to mainstream biodiversity conservation into tourism development in Bhutan as a long-term strategy for mitigation of threats to biodiversity and to generate sustainable conservation financing and livelihoods. The project intends to establish Bhutan as a **model ecotourism destination** to generate livelihood opportunities, sustainable financing for landscapes within and outside protected areas, facilitate human-wildlife coexistence, and mitigate the negative impacts of increasing tourism on Bhutan’s socio-cultural heritage and globally significant biodiversity. One of the major outputs of the project is to develop a National Ecotourism Master Plan. The master plan is expected to provide an overall direction and development framework for the national and local tourism stakeholders in developing and promoting sustainable tourism and enabling mainstreaming biodiversity into tourism.

The last tourism master plan was developed in 2012, “Tourism Strategy and Development Plans 2013-2018” in preparation for the 12 Five Year Plan (FYP). In this regard, TCB invites proposals from qualified and interested international individuals.

<p><b>Scope and Study area</b></p> <p>The Master Plan will be developed at the national level with a detailed focus on project landscape. The project landscape includes two protected areas of Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary and Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary in eastern Bhutan and five Dzongkhags (districts) of Lhuentse, Mongar, Trashigang, Trashy Yangtse and Zhemgang. Therefore, detailed assessments will be carried out in five dzongkhags and two protected areas, and additional assessments must cover priority ecotourism areas across the country.</p>
<p><b>2) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The main objective of the current assignment is to develop a comprehensive Ecotourism Master Plan and work for its adoption and implementation by the national and local government partners.</li> <li>2. The Ecotourism Master Plan will be developed to provide a strategic road map on sustainable tourism development with a focus on ecotourism development during and beyond the project period.</li> <li>3. It will identify and map national and landscape-level ecotourism development priority locations and provide clear actions for implementation and mainstreaming into sectoral development plans.</li> <li>4. The Master Plan will include an inventory of existing ecotourism sites and defining of priority zones.</li> <li>5. The Master Plan is expected to support defining tourism resilience and future in Bhutan based on ecotourism and consider the COVID-19 impacts and responses.</li> </ol>
<p><b>3) ROLES</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The <b>international ecotourism expert</b> will provide technical oversight and the guidance in addition to the specific tasks outlined.</li> <li>2. Working closely with the Ecotourism master plan lead from the Tourism Council of Bhutan, s/he will be responsible for providing technical guidance, quality assurance and mentoring of the team to support the development of master plan, review of relevant master plans, best practices in tourism / ecotourism development, completion of the needed revisions and improvements, and timely preparation of all reports and documentations including annexes.</li> <li>3. The International Consultant should advise the national lead team and provide technical and mentoring support to the team for planning and conduct of the validation workshop to present, discuss and validate the final document and related outputs.</li> <li>4. Provide technical guidance and support to the team on necessary revisions in response to the workshop.</li> <li>5. International Consultant should lead the inception and/or validation workshop.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4) SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY TASKS</b></p>
<p><u>1) Technical Guidance and coordination of the Team</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define and submit a detailed methodology and workplan in collaboration with the Planning and Research Section (project lead), Tourism Council of Bhutan (TCB) with clear delegation of responsibilities and identifying necessary documentations and annexes.</li> <li>2. Provide technical advice to the team through appropriate means during the planning and data collection stages</li> </ol>

## 2) Technical studies and reviews

1. Provide overall technical guidance and oversight for the review of content including packaging of reports/deliverables into the Master Plan.
2. Provide technical guidance, oversight and mentoring to the team to complete the required assessments, reports and revisions to the final Master plan and related annexes.
3. Review and timely validate technical studies and assessments to support the provision of needed content / information for the final plan.
4. Provide technical guidance and inputs on the scoping and review of any additional studies that are determined to be needed` for the preparation of the Plan and other final outputs.
5. Provide guidance to enhance livelihood supports and benefit sharing mechanisms.

## 3) Formulation of the Master plan

1. Conduct a review, assessment and consolidation of all the existing plans and programs, projects, activities, studies and previous plans. The review should also include sector plans and programs with tourism relevance.
2. Propose ecotourism vision and theory of change reflecting challenges, assumptions and solutions.
3. Develop a framework for an ecological capacity toolkit applicable to Bhutan context based on international best practices.
4. Develop frameworks for best practice ecologically sensitive tourism infrastructure development including design principles and standards and support standard/guidance on infrastructure development process.
5. Develop templates for product and site-specific management and business plans and support with quality assessment of other outputs.
6. Review tourism resource inventory, and provide guidance on priorities to develop tourism destinations and products that would include product diversification along designated destination routes, destination corridors etc. This should include recommendations on the establishments of tourism development zones and tourism growth corridors.
7. Review and analyze international best practices and models and approaches to ecotourism development to integrate approaches within Bhutanese context.
8. Recommend the development and/or enhancement of key visitor attractions and amenities.
9. Provide a comprehensive strategic approach to destination marketing to include target markets, marketing opportunities, trends, competitors, marketing and promotion methods (including digital or direct).
10. Recommend ecotourism product development and diversification with end-to-end interventions.
11. Provide technical inputs / recommendations related to ecotourism with links to eco-friendly projects. Propose ways and tools to encourage stakeholders to adopt environmentally friendly practices which can enhance visitor experiences.
12. Identify / develop appropriate ecotourism solutions for development.
13. Propose innovative and implementable modalities of tourism concessions aligned with the existing (expected / required) regulatory frameworks to provide a framework for private sector engagement and investments.

14. Develop / recommend mechanisms and modalities for promoting investments (national/ local investments and FDI) for tourism development within and outside the Protected Areas (PAs).
15. Map potential tourism investment financing options in terms of networking, collaboration and partnerships including existing mechanisms that would engage domestic financial institutions and banks.
16. Develop a tourism investment PPP framework to encourage joint tourism investment modalities of the government and tourism private operators.
17. Prepare an investment portfolio consisting of potential investment areas.
18. Provide evidence-based review of the high value tourism market. The review should define current and future growth trends and clearly define Bhutan's potential to attract investment and compete favorably in the marketplace. Project the demand based on estimated market penetration rates that will be created once development commences.
19. Develop promotion and marketing plans with clear linkages to tourism transformation Brand Bhutan.
20. Develop / propose mechanisms along with best practices in green tourism, recovery and resilience post COVID tourism, SDGs and other developments.
21. Develop an operational framework for implementation of the physical framework plan, and identify priorities for the corresponding projects and activities per phase of the development: short term, medium term and long term.
22. Prepare a monitoring and evaluation strategy / tool to ensure proper implementation of the development plan.

#### 5) DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT, DUTY STATION AND EXPECTED PLACES OF TRAVEL

The consultant will be recruited for 75 working days spread over the period 6 months (tentatively from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023). The work will mostly be home based with at least one trip to Bhutan with the TCB as required to conduct stakeholder consultation, expert input and finalization of the Master Plan. The consultant shall closely liaise with the PMU, Tourism Council of Bhutan and UNDP CO for the arrangement of missions, any stakeholder consultation meetings and logistic arrangements.

#### 6) FINAL PRODUCTS

- a. The key deliverable is the Overall National Ecotourism Master Plan. The consultant is to review and provide regional and global perspectives for the development of the National Ecotourism Master Plan. All deliverables will be in English.

At the minimum, the deliverables include:

- b. **An inception report**, provides inputs to the national lead team for the detailed description of the methodology on the development of National Ecotourism Master Plan. The inception report should also indicate the detailed schedule for the tasks to be undertaken (work plan), the activities to be implemented and the deliverables. The roles and responsibilities of each member of the team should be stated as well.
- c. Situational analysis report (profiling and analysis of existing conditions).
- d. Implementation plan.
- e. Monitoring and evaluation strategy / tool to ensure proper implementation of the development plan.

#### 7) DEGREE OF EXPERTISE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Master’s degree or higher in a relevant international tourism, ecotourism / tourism management or development (Attach academic certificate).
- Minimum 10 years of demonstrable experience in preparing ecotourism master plan or related projects (Submit evidence).
- Sound knowledge and understanding of global ecotourism best practices and trends.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English.
- Experience with participatory approaches to pro-poor sustainable tourism.
- Demonstrated experience in tourism destination development.
- Knowledge of national strategies for poverty alleviation, rural development and environment.
- Familiar with sector policies and national policies, functioning of government/public sector, private sector organizations, including public private partnerships.
- Knowledge of and experience with multi-stakeholder collaboration, participatory techniques, coaching, networking, learning, alliance building and team building.
- Knowledge of cross-cutting themes as environment, governance, gender equity and social inclusion.

**8) CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF THE BEST OFFER**

The criteria which shall serve as basis for evaluating offers will be:

- Combined Scoring method – where the qualifications and relevant work experience of the individual consultant will be weighted a maximum of 70% and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a max of 30%.
- Please note that the details of past works on similar assignments need to be submitted with the proposal.

Criteria	Weight	Max. Point
<b>Technical</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Academic background of consultant</li> </ul>		10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relevant work experience and knowledge in Ecotourism, Tourism, Ecotourism Master Plan development/Tourism Master Plan development and related projects</li> </ul>	70	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prior experience of working in Bhutan or similar countries or region</li> </ul>		10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quality of technical proposal</li> </ul>		30
<b>Sub-total A. (Technical)</b>		<b>70</b>
Financial	30	30
<b>Sub-Total B.(Financial)</b>		<b>30</b>
<b>Total (A+B)</b>		<b>100</b>

**9) PAYMENT TERMS**

Indicative timeline together with payment terms are reflected below:

Deliverables/ Outputs	Target Due Dates	Payment Schedule
Signing of contract	1 <sup>st</sup> week of October 2022	
Submission of Inception Report	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	15%
Completion of the validation workshops, report preparation and design of the Master Plan document	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	30%
Draft Master Plan	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	30%
Finalized Master Plan	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	25%

#### 10) AWARD OF CONTRACT

The consultants who fulfill the requirements will be assessed based on a combined scoring of:

- Technical evaluation comprising of 70%, and
- Financial evaluation of 30%

#### 11) FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Please indicate fee structure: All-inclusive lump-sum fee in the financial proposal.

**Note:** Payments will be made upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR and certification of acceptance by the UNDP/TCB. The consultant/organization must factor in all possible costs in the ***“All Inclusive Lump Sum Fee/Daily fee”*** financial proposal including consultancy and professional fee, DSA for field visits, honorarium, communication cost such as telephone/internet usage, printing cost, transportation, ad-hoc costs, stationery costs, and any other foreseeable costs in this exercise. No costs other than what has been indicated in the financial proposal will be paid or reimbursed to the consultant. UNDP/TCB will only pay for any unplanned travel outside of this TOR and Duty Station on actual basis and on submission of original bills/invoices and on prior agreement with UNDP/TCB officials.

#### 12) RECOMMENDED PRESENTATION OF OFFER

Please submit the below preferred documents with the presentation of offer:

- a) Cover letter with expression of interest;
- b) **Personal CV** indicating all experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) and at least three (3) professional references;
- c) **Technical proposal** with clear methodology and approaches;

The proposal should be submitted in electronic format by **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022** to [raju@tourism.gov.bt](mailto:raju@tourism.gov.bt)