

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project

Project/Grant No.: P179988

Assignment Title: Consulting Services for the Engineering design of forest restoration works in Syunik region

Reference No.
(as per Procurement Plan): AM-EPIU-516214-CS-CQS

The Republic of Armenia has received financing from the World Bank (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (“IBRD”), acting as an Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility (“GEF”) and as administrator of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Supporting Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project and International Development Association (“IDA”), acting as administrator of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Supporting Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project) toward the cost of the RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

One of the major focuses of the “RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project” is forest restoration and the reduction of forest fragmentation. The restoration interventions aim to increase tree-cover density, reestablish ecological linkages between fragmented forest patches, and introduce sustainable management mechanisms that will enhance the long-term landscape resilience. The purpose of this assignment is to develop a restoration plan for degraded forest landscapes in the Kapan Forestry Branch of the “Hayantar” SNCO in the Syunik region, which will serve as the basis for implementing afforestation and reforestation activities. The assignment covers approximately 80 hectares of degraded forest land. A preliminary list of candidate sites will be provided by the EPIU at contract inception. The consultant is expected to validate, refine, or expand this list based on field assessment findings. In addition to the design, the Consultant shall provide author's (follow-on) supervision during the implementation of the forest restoration works, to confirm that works are carried out in accordance with the approved design and to provide technical clarifications as needed.

The duration of the assignment/contract is 6 months, calculated from the date of contract signing. Author's (follow-on) supervision will commence with the start of the restoration works and continue until their completion; its timeline will be defined in the separately signed time-based contract and will depend on the works implementation schedule.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment are attached to this request for expressions of interest in Annex A.

The Environmental Project Implementation Unit now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The consulting firm must demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

Experience Requirements for the Company

Proven track record of at least 5 years in managing and implementing forestry and forest restoration projects, particularly in regions with similar ecological and socio-economic contexts.

Experience working with local communities and stakeholders to facilitate consultations and incorporate feedback into project planning.

Familiarity with the legislative framework and environmental/social standards relevant to the Republic of Armenia and the World Bank’s requirements.

Previous involvement in GIS mapping and remote sensing applications for forest assessments.

Additional Requirements

To ensure smooth implementation of the tasks detailed in this TOR and the quality of delivered outputs, the Consultant is encouraged to demonstrate access to relevant local expertise and practical field experience, either through in-house capacity located in Armenia, subcontracting arrangements, or partnerships with local companies, organizations and/or individual experts that possess relevant expertise and practical local field experience.

Licensing Requirements (Applicable in Armenia)

The Consultant shall comply with the licensing requirements of the Republic of Armenia applicable to urban development activities, specifically the license authorizing the preparation of urban development documents (excluding structural and architectural parts).

To be eligible for contract award, the Consultant must either (i) hold the relevant license(s), or (ii) enter into an association (joint venture or sub-consultancy) with a duly licensed Armenian partner. Failure to demonstrate compliance before Contract award shall be grounds for rejection.

Key Experts, whose requirements are specified in the TOR, will not be evaluated at this stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” September 2023 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Consultant Qualification Selection method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (09:00-18:00).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below via e-mail NO later than by July 10, 2026, 18:00 (local time).

Environmental Project Implementation Unit
Attn: Armen Yesoyan (Acting Director of EPIU)
65A Tigran Mets Ave., 3rd fl.
Yerevan 0008, Armenia
Tel: +374 96 693 911
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ANNEX A

TERMS OF REFERENCE for CONSULTANCY FIRM RESILAND: ARMENIA RESILIENT LANDSCAPES PROJECT (P179988)

Consulting Services for the Engineering design of forest restoration works in Syunik region

1. INTRODUCTION

The Project Development Objectives (PDO) of the RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscape Project are to: (i) increase the area under sustainable landscape management in Selected Locations and (ii) promote sustainable economic activities to communities in Targeted Landscapes in Armenia. RESILAND Armenia follows an integrated landscapes approach to restoring forests and wetlands and will focus on four key aspects: (i) reducing of forest fragmentation and increase in density of tree cover by restoring the forest land degraded due to mining and by forest enrichment planting; (ii) improving management of neglected and abandoned wetlands, (iii) increasing community economic benefits, and (iv) strengthening the institutional foundation for the sustainable management of landscapes, creating green jobs, and increasing community benefits. Project activities are grouped into four interrelated components:

Component 1: Institutional Capacity and Policy Development.

Component 2: Landscape Restoration

Component 3: Promoting Communities' Benefits.

Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation, and Communication.

2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Environmental Project Implementation Unit (EPIU), a State agency under the Ministry of Environment, provides overall management of the Project implementation activities aimed at achieving the planned results.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

One of the major focuses of the “RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project” is forest restoration and the reduction of forest fragmentation. The restoration interventions aim to increase tree-cover density, reestablish ecological linkages between fragmented forest patches, and introduce sustainable management mechanisms that will enhance the long-term landscape resilience. The purpose of this assignment is to develop a restoration plan for degraded forest landscapes in the Kapan Forestry Branch of the “Hayantar” SNCO in the Syunik region, which will serve as the basis for implementing afforestation and reforestation activities. The assignment covers approximately 80 hectares of degraded forest land. A preliminary list of candidate sites will be provided by the EPIU at contract inception. The consultant is expected to validate, refine, or expand this list based on field assessment findings. In addition to the design, the Consultant shall provide author's (follow-on) supervision during the implementation of the forest restoration works, to confirm that works are carried out in accordance with the approved design and to provide technical clarifications as needed.

4. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

4.1 Area Identification and Assessment

- (i) Conduct a baseline study using a combination of remote sensing data analysis and field surveys.
- (ii) Prepare GIS maps to identify degraded forest areas and land impacted or degraded including as a result of mining activities. A preliminary list of areas will be provided by the EPIU. It is planned to restore approximately 80 hectares of land under the proposed reforestation design.
- (iii) Conduct soil investigations to analyze the physicochemical properties of the soils, assess the extent and development of erosion processes, evaluate their potential for restoration, and propose necessary measures for preparation of the soil for restoration.
- (iv) Assess hydrological conditions by examining available water resources, surface and subsurface water flows, and associated risks (flooding and drought). Evaluate the necessity and frequency of irrigation of the planted seedlings.
- (v) Conduct a vegetation assessment to determine species' composition, evaluate the degree of degradation, identify the ecosystem's restoration potential, and propose location-specific actions: planting, sowing, and other measures to support the natural regeneration.

4.2 Community and Land Use Assessment

- Assess community use of forests (formal and informal) in the selected areas, documenting practices such as fuelwood collection, grazing, and harvesting of non-timber forest products.
- Verify land ownership and land-use rights to prevent disputes and ensure inclusion of potential beneficiaries.
- Identify households or groups dependent on forest resources, analyzing how restoration activities and access restrictions may affect their livelihoods.
 - a) Identify vulnerable and disadvantaged groups who may be disproportionately affected by access restrictions or restoration activities, and assess how to ensure their inclusion in benefit-sharing.
 - b) Identify any cultural, religious, or community-valued sites within or adjacent to the restoration areas (e.g., cemeteries, sacred groves, heritage features) and propose measures to avoid or manage impacts on them.
- Conduct community consultations to gauge attitudes towards planned interventions and assess expectations for benefit-sharing.
- Collaborate with Syunik forestry enterprises and local authorities to understand management challenges, including illegal forest use.
- Prepare a list of areas to be restored, with georeferenced maps and location-specific activities.

4.3 Development of a Restoration Plan for the Proposed Sites

4.3.1 Selection of species and planting schemes

- (i) Propose pioneering species that are typical to the current region resilient to local climatic conditions and ecologically adapted to the site's altitude and slope. The species recommendation should take into consideration the biophysical aspects as assessed in section 4.1.
- (ii) Define the proportional composition of species to be used in the restoration activities, and the order of their planting.
- (iii) Develop detailed planting schemes, specifying species combinations and order, planting density, and spacing between individual plants.

4.3.2 Site preparation

- (i) Determine pit, and/ or trench planting, dimensions based on the biophysical aspects of the site, choice of species, natural processes of pioneering and succession, requirements of the root systems of the selected species.
- (ii) Assess the slope gradient in each restoration site using GIS analysis and field measurements.
- (iii) Specify the appropriate soil preparation method (pits or trenches) based on the slope gradient.
- (iv) Natural regeneration as an intervention to reduce fragmentation should be explored and included as restoration option, as relevant.

4.3.3 Fencing

- (i) Assess the need for fencing based on the species and planting schedule.
- (ii) Calculate the total length of the fence in the area to be restored, based on the perimeter of the access to the areas defined by the GIS data, considering the real damage to the seedlings, which can potentially be caused by the livestock.
- (iii) Describe the technical specifications of the fence and the gate.

4.3.4 Planting

- (i) Develop an organization scheme for planning and implementing planting activities.
- (ii) Develop logistical scheme for the safe and secure transportation of seedlings to the designated planting sites.
- (iii) Propose appropriate seedling planting and handling techniques that ensure proper root placement and seedling establishment.
- (iv) Prepare an appropriate reporting template.

4.3.5 Seedling requirements

Establish all relevant quality standards for seeds/ seedlings required for planting.

4.3.6 Care and maintenance

- (i) Develop a scheme for monitoring seedling viability, their appropriate planting and maintenance timelines.
- (ii) Develop a maintenance plan for seedlings, specifying required care measures, their timing, and frequency.
- (iii) Identify the requirements for inspecting and, when necessary, restoring the technical condition of the fence.
- (iv) Prepare cost estimates and Bills of Quantities for the restoration works to inform the workers' requirements to be set forth in the contract for forest restoration.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Based on the area assessment undertaken in the areas included in the preliminary list of locations for forest restoration provided by EPIU, identify environmental and social risks associated with forest restoration and maintenance and formulate positive and negative, short-term and long-term expected impacts.

Formulate measures for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating identified negative impacts in this order of priority.

Name parties responsible for the application of the proposed mitigation measures and for monitoring timeliness and adequacy of their application.

Based on the outcomes of the above analytical work, produce an Environmental and Social Management Plan comprising a narrative part on risks, impacts, and mitigation approach and an environmental and social management matrix in the table format (template attached to this TOR). Describe a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) accessible to affected communities, and a stakeholder engagement and feedback approach, including arrangements for documenting consultations during both design and implementation phases.

Identify occupational health and safety and labour-related considerations relevant to restoration and maintenance works, to be reflected in the works contract.

6. AUTHOR (FOLLOW-ON) SUPERVISION

The Consultancy Firm shall ensure continuous author's (follow-on) supervision throughout the implementation of all forest restoration activities. Author supervision includes the following obligations:

- Ensure the presence of relevant specialists at the restoration site area as required.
- Undertake site visits according to the schedule agreed with the Client, who will manage the works, and arrange out-of-schedule visits when requested by the Client.
- Monitor compliance of the implementation works with the approved restoration design, technical specifications, and planting schemes, and closely cooperate with the contractor in the management of running arrangements.
- With the written approval of the Client, promptly correct any design omissions, errors, or deviations detected during the works, in coordination with the Client and Hayantar SNCO.
- Verify the quality of works performed by the contractor and their conformity with the approved design, technical specifications, and applicable standards of the Republic of Armenia and the World Bank's environmental and social standards.
- Accurately register all discovered errors and deviations in the supervision journal/logs, documenting each site visit, observations, instructions issued, and actions taken; provide recommendations for improvement; and submit these logs to the Client as part of the reporting requirements.
- Immediately inform the contractor and advise the Client in writing of any shortcomings or works violating technical specifications and the approved design.
- Where the contractor is not performing in accordance with the approved design, notify the contractor in writing and recommend suspension of the affected works to the Client, particularly regarding any existing risks or significant or unacceptable deviations that may increase the anticipated cost or extend the term of the works.
- Co-sign the statement on completion of works, as well as any mid-term acts/statements as necessary, together with the contractor and the Client, certifying that the works meet all design and quality requirements.
- Coordinate with the contractor on design changes that do not result in any cost or volume modification to the restoration design, ensuring such changes are preliminarily agreed with the Client and that the Client is informed at least two days in advance before implementation. Any change affecting cost, volume, or timeline shall require prior written Client approval.

7. LEGAL FRAMEWORK APPLICABLE TO THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment shall be carried out in compliance with the applicable legislation of the Republic of Armenia, including but not limited to:

RA "Forest Code" /2005/

RA "Land Code" /2001/

RA "Water Code" /2002/

Law of RA "On Environmental Impact Assessment" /2014, edited 2023/

Law of RA "On Flora" /1999/

Law of RA "On Fauna" /2002/

Law of RA "On specially protected areas of nature" /2006/

The Consultant shall also align all outputs with the World Bank's applicable Environmental and Social Standards.

8. DELIVERABLES

Forest Restoration Plan is to be developed in compliance with the applicable legislative acts of the Republic of Armenia and shall be aligned with the World Bank's applicable environmental and social standards.

The task will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Hayantar SNCO and in collaboration with technical experts that Hayantar may engage in preparation of Forest Management Plans for Syunik.

#	Deliverable	Description and Key Contents	Delivery date, after Contract signing	Payment (%)
Lump-Sum Contract Portion				
1	Inception Report	Project understanding, methodology, refined work plan with milestones, risk register, preliminary site list confirmed with EPIU.	Month 1, Week 2	10%
2	Baseline Study Report	Remote sensing analysis, soil investigation results, hydrological assessment, vegetation assessment, GIS maps (all layers), field survey methodology and data.	Month 2, Week 4	15%
3	Community & Land Use Assessment Report	Land ownership verification, community consultation records (minutes, attendance), livelihood impact analysis, georeferenced social maps, gender analysis.	Month 3, Week 2	15%
4	Environmental & Social Management Plan	Regulatory framework, impact assessment matrix, mitigation matrix, monitoring matrix, OHS plan, grievance mechanism, labour standards section.	Month 4, Week 1	10%
5	Draft Restoration Plan	Full draft covering species selection, planting schemes, site preparation, fencing specs, seedling standards, planting logistics, maintenance schedule.	Month 4, Week 1	20%
6	Cost Estimates and BoQs	Detailed BoQs for site preparation, planting, fencing, and 3-year maintenance, with unit rates and total cost estimates, formatted for use in works procurement.	Month 4, Week 2	
7	Final Restoration Plan	Revised and consolidated document incorporating all stakeholder comments on Deliverables 2–6. Must include executive summary, all technical annexes, and ESMP.	Month 5, Week 3	20%
8	Monitoring & Maintenance Plan	Stand-alone post-planting monitoring protocol (3-year minimum), survival thresholds, replanting triggers, fencing inspection schedule, annual reporting template.	Month 5, Week 3	
9	Stakeholder Presentation	Presentation of final findings and plans to the Client (During the presentation the Hayantar SNCO, local authorities, and community representatives will be invited). Slides and presentation recording to be submitted.	Month 5, Week 4	10%

#	Deliverable	Description and Key Contents	Delivery date, after Contract signing	Payment (%)
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Time-based Contract Portion				
10	Author's (follow-on) Supervision Logs	Periodic site visit logs during implementation phase (if overlapping with contract period), documenting observations, instructions, and design adjustments. The Author's (follow-on) supervision should start with the restoration works and will be carried out till the end of the restoration works. The timeline will be defined separately in the separately signed time-based contract	TBD during impl.	0.5 % percent rate of the actual restoration works budget

The Consultant will be engaged under two contracts: a Lump-Sum contract for the preparation of the forest restoration design (Deliverables 1–9), and a Time-Based contract for author's (follow-on) supervision during implementation (Deliverable 10), to be signed separately. The author's supervision contract will be remunerated at 0.5% of the actual restoration works budget.

All deliverables shall be submitted in English and Armenian, in electronic format (MS Word + PDF). Reports shall contain an executive summary, introduction, main body, and conclusions with recommendations. The Client will review and approve interim outputs before final outputs are developed; 15 working days are allowed for review of each output. Comments from the Client and stakeholders shall be incorporated into final outputs, which will be endorsed by the Ministry of Environment.

9. QUALIFICATION CRITERIA FOR CONSULTANT TEAM

The consulting firm must demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

Experience Requirements for the Company

Proven track record of at least 5 years in managing and implementing forestry and forest restoration projects, particularly in regions with similar ecological and socio-economic contexts.

Experience working with local communities and stakeholders to facilitate consultations and incorporate feedback into project planning.

Familiarity with the legislative framework and environmental/social standards relevant to the Republic of Armenia and the World Bank's requirements.

Previous involvement in GIS mapping and remote sensing applications for forest assessments.

Technical Expertise

Forestry Specialist (Team Leader): Qualifications and experience in forest ecology, silviculture, afforestation and reforestation practices, and sustainable forest management, including species selection and planting scheme design in mountainous terrain. Serves as team leader.

Social Specialist: Required to have knowledge in community engagement, social assessments, and the socio-economic impacts of restoration projects.

Environmental Specialist: Must be qualified in environmental impact assessments, mitigation strategies, and compliance with environmental regulations and standards.

GIS Specialist: Must have demonstrated proficiency in GIS software (e.g. ArcGIS, QGIS) for spatial data analysis, preparation of georeferenced maps, remote sensing interpretation, and mapping of degraded land and restoration sites. Experience supporting forestry or land restoration projects is an advantage.

10. CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Client (EPIU) will be responsible for:

- Providing the preliminary list of candidate restoration sites and any existing data held by EPIU, Hayantar SNCO, or other public entities.
- Facilitating coordination with the Kapan Forestry Branch / Hayantar SNCO and local authorities.
- Facilitating site access for field surveys and assessments.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on deliverables in a timely manner, within 15 working days of submission.

11. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The duration of the design assignment will be six (6) months, expected to start in July 2026 with design deliverables completed by December 2026. The Consultant will develop a work schedule that aligns with and fully accounts for the implementation period. Author supervision (Deliverable 10) will be carried out separately during the forest restoration implementation phase and is not included within the six-month design period. The author's supervision will commence with the start of the restoration works and continue until their completion; its timeline will be defined in the separately signed time-based contract and will depend on the works implementation schedule.

ANNEX
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Environmental and Social Mitigation Plan

Activity	Expected Impact	Mitigation Measure	Mitigation Target	Success Indicator	Responsible Party
PLANTING PHASE					
1.					
2.					
n.					
MAINTENANCE PHASE					
1.					
2.					
n.					

Environmental and Social Monitoring Plan

Activity	Monitoring Parameter	Monitoring Location	Monitoring Method	Monitoring Time / Frequency	Responsible Party
PLANTING PHASE					
1.					
2.					
n.					
MAINTENANCE PHASE					
1.					
2.					
n.					