

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

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscape Project

Grant No.: TF0C4647, TF0C4643

Assignment Title: Consulting services to produce wetland restoration design, carry out ESIA for integrated wetland management and restoration, and undertake Author's/follow-on supervision

Reference No. AM-EPIU-516063-CS-CQS
(as per Procurement Plan):

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 Landscape Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The objective of this assignment is to support the restoration of two priority wetland sites in Armenia—Gegharkunik area (Sevan), and the Lori Plateau Lakes—through the preparation of detailed restoration designs, environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs), and provision of author's (follow-on) supervision during the restoration works, to confirm that the works are implemented in accordance with the approved design, provide clarifications as needed, and support quality assurance from a design perspective. The assignment will aim to restore the ecological functions of these wetland areas while contributing to improved biodiversity, climate resilience, and community benefits.

To this end, the Consultant will be expected to analyze the ecological, hydrological, and social characteristics of each site, engage closely with relevant stakeholders and local communities, and propose practical and sustainable solutions tailored to the specific needs and potential of each wetland.

The duration of the assignment/contract is 15 months, calculated from the date of contract signing. **For Author's (follow-on) supervision** the assignment/contract will start with the restoration works and will be carried out till the end of the restoration works.

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 Consultant must have the technical expertise, resources, and experience necessary to successfully deliver the

services outlined in this assignment.

- At least four (4) years of experience in environmental and ecological design, for ecosystem restoration, wetland rehabilitation, or similar nature-based solutions;
 - Proven experience in wetland restoration, ecological engineering, or integrated water resource management will be considered a strong advantage;
 - Demonstrated capacity to provide author's (follow-on) supervision services for environmentally sensitive or complex landscape/ecosystem restoration projects;
 - A minimum of four (4) years of operational experience in ecological or environmental consulting;
 - Experience working on internationally funded development projects, including those financed by the World Bank, UN agencies, or other international donors, will be considered an asset;
 - Familiarity with Armenia's environmental, hydrological, and institutional landscape, including design norms, construction standards, and permitting processes, will be considered an advantage;
- Prior engagement with the Government of Armenia or regional/local authorities in environmental or natural resource projects will be considered an asset.

Additional Requirements

All consultants, whether local or foreign, must ensure compliance with the licensing requirements of the Republic of Armenia for Urban Development activities, in particular codes 01.07 (Hydrotechnical structures) and 01.08 (Water supply and sewerage).

To be eligible for contract award, the selected 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 November 3, 2025, 18:00.

Environmental Project Implementation Unit
Attn: Armen Yesoyan (Acting Director of EPIU)
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TERMS OF REFERENCE

for CONSULTANCY FIRM

RESILAND: ARMENIA RESILIENT LANDSCAPES PROJECT (P179988)

**Consulting services to produce wetland restoration design, carry out ESIA for
integrated wetland management and restoration, and undertake
Author's/follow-on supervision**

A. BACKGROUND

Forests and wetlands of Armenia are among its most valuable ecosystems. Despite its relatively small size, the country hosts 17,700 species of animals (including over 500 endemic species) and 3,500 species of vascular plants (including 144 endemic species) and is part of one of 35 global biodiversity hotspots. However, it is also notable for having some of the most threatened ecosystems in temperate biomes, with accelerating degradation largely attributable to overexploitation. Continued degradation and reduced productivity worsen rural livelihoods and aggravate the negative cycle of poverty, leading to further overexploitation of natural resources and land degradation. To address this issue, the Government of the Republic of Armenia is implementing the “RESILAND: Armenia Resilient Landscapes Project” in Lori, Gegharkunik, Ararat, and Syunik marzes (provinces) with financial support from the World Bank.

The Project objectives 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. The Environmental Project Implementation Unit (EPIU) within the Ministry of Environment is the key implementing agency. The project follows an integrated approach to restore and sustainably manage natural resources with active involvement of local communities and is arranged in four components which include both technical assistance and investment activities.

Component 1 focusses on institutional, policy, and capacity development has two subcomponents that will finance: (i) analysis and revisions of existing policy, legal, frameworks for forests, wetlands, and protected areas to help align these with national and international obligations including Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments; and (ii) capacity development to operational and technical staff as well as to community representatives, through on-the-job training, workshops, seminars on a range of topics related to integrated landscape management, forest conservation, wetland restoration and alternative livelihood models and the purchase and installation of necessary tools, software and equipment. Component 2 is on landscape restoration, conservation, and management has three subcomponents covering: (i) forest restoration and sustainable forest management; (ii) integrated wetland management and restoration; and (iii) mining site restoration. Component 3 will increase community economic benefits through creation of more green jobs and economic benefits from (i) agroforestry and non-timber forest products and (ii) ecotourism from restored forests and wetlands landscapes. Component 4 on project management and monitoring will finance the operating costs of the EPIU to carry out project management functions including social and environmental (S&E) risk management, grievance redress mechanism (GRM), gender aspects, and citizen engagement.

This TOR is limited to sub-component **2.2 Integrated wetland management and restoration**. The wetlands of Armenia cover 168,200 ha or 5.7% of the country's area and provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife species and deliver various ecosystem services such as protection and improvement of water quality, provision of habitat for fish and wildlife, attenuation of floodwaters, maintenance of surface water flow during dry periods, and carbon sequestration.

Despite their value, however, many wetlands have been subject to overuse and intentional drainage for over a century (particularly during the Soviet period). About 3,000 ha of the mountain grassy marshes have been reduced to 80 percent through increased water extraction. This has resulted in a strong decline in wetland biodiversity (including a number of endemic species, threatened species, and a variety of game birds), water retention capacity and carbon storage, and drying up of springs and other wetland areas that would serve as a habitat for many species of flora and fauna. Following the general principles of water-level and vegetation management and using lessons learned from a pilot project implemented in Khor Virap Sanctuary, this subcomponent will scale up the restoration of brackish marshes and wetlands, improving their ecological status in addition to supporting the expansion of eco-tourism and the numbers of game birds to support hunting. Two potential restoration sites are envisaged for restoration activities within this assignment - area of Lori Plateau Lakes (Lori marz); and the area of in Vardenis nearby the Sevan National Park (Gegharkunik marz).

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to support the restoration of two priority wetland sites in Armenia—Gegharkunik area (Sevan), and the Lori Plateau Lakes—through the preparation of detailed restoration designs, environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs), and provision of author's (follow-on) supervision during the restoration works, to confirm that the works are implemented in accordance with the approved design, provide clarifications as needed, and support quality assurance from a design perspective. The assignment will aim to restore the ecological functions of these wetland areas while contributing to improved biodiversity, climate resilience, and community benefits.

To this end, the Consultant will be expected to analyze the ecological, hydrological, and social characteristics of each site, engage closely with relevant stakeholders and local communities, and propose practical and sustainable solutions tailored to the specific needs and potential of each wetland.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The geographic scope of this TOR is focused on the following wetland sites: Gegharkunik area in Sevan (about 54,7 hectares (nearby Vardenis community), 52,4 hectares (nearby Masrik river)), Lori Plateau Lakes (about 1,100 hectares collectively). The scope of works will include site characterization, stakeholder engagement, and detailed design of the sites planned for restoration. The main tasks to be undertaken will include:

Task 1. Preparatory services

- Carry out stakeholder mapping, including development of stakeholder mapping matrix and consultation plan

- Conduct initial consultations with relevant stakeholders to discuss the goals, objectives and expected outcomes of the wetland restoration. Ensure inclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups.
- Undertake site delineation, including verification of land ownership and tenure arrangements, identification of third-party rights or claims, and assessment of any legacy issues related to land access or use.
- Conduct a desk study for obtaining and reviewing existing (secondary) data relevant to the project area to support its assessment and restoration planning.
- Compile information on general biophysical characteristics of the study areas through field visits.
- Formulate preliminary design concept
- Submit design concept to the EPIU for approval and deliver presentation on the concept. After the approval, share the design concept with, present it to, and solicit feedback on it from the Sevan National Park SNCO, as well as to the Stepanavan, Tashir, and Vardenis communities, within the administrative boundaries of which the wetlands targeted for restoration are located (Sevan National Park SNCO and Vardenis Enlarged community for Masrik river area, and Stepanavan and Tashir communities for Lori Plateau Lakes).

Task 2. Development of a Detailed Workplan

The workplan to be submitted to the EPIU for approval shall cover the following stages:

- Fieldwork and lab analyses necessary for primary data gathering on hydrology, geomorphology, topography, land-use current status and history, vegetation, and water and soil conditions.
- Identification and GIS mapping of the main, ancillary, and temporary infrastructure required for wetlands' reconstruction and maintenance.
- Identification of the reference composition of indigenous plant species.
- Identification of all types of ecosystem services provided by each of the two targeted wetland sites and ranking of these services by importance based on their estimated value (e.g., 1. sustaining biodiversity, 2. carbon sequestration, 3. flood control etc.).
- Identification of optimal methods for wetland restoration at each site based on the compiled biophysical information and feasibility of intervention (e.g., digging, grading, diverting the water supply, changing the speed of the water flow, etc.).
- Identification of the water flora planting needs and mapping of the planting areas.
- In consultation with the relevant stakeholders, identification of areas with ecotourism potential.
- Development of 3D models for each restoration site and testing the water flow in each model.
- In consultation with relevant state bodies, identification of water supply sources (water intake sources).
- Development of the detailed designs of wetland restoration for each site and their submission to the EPIU, Ministry of Environment, and the World Bank for approval.
- Inventory of local companies eligible and duly experienced to conduct the restoration works, drafting the timeframe, and estimating the budget for the restoration of each site.
- Development of a plan and methodology for monitoring and evaluation of the restoration success, including performance of the main wetland functions and biodiversity recovery.
- Conduct of follow-up stakeholder consultation meetings and introduction of necessary changes to the design, if required.

- Conduct ESIA of the wetland restoration plans of each site and submission of ESIA reports to the EPIU, and the World Bank for review.
- Submit ESIA reports to SNCO Centre of Expertise for Environmental Impact Assessment under the Ministry of Environment for expert review.
- Share the ESIA reports and the Conclusions issued by SNCO Centre of Expertise for Environmental Impact Assessment to the Ministry of Environment and the World Bank.

Task 3. Design of Wetland Restoration

3.1 The design and supporting documents must be prepared in accordance with the national standards, instructions and norms of the Republic of Armenia and shall include no less than the following:

- Description and estimated cost of works,
- Initial site plan at the beginning of reclamation (characteristic profile lines),
- Site plan after completion of the technical stage of reclamation (characteristic profile lines),
- Drawings including schemes of planned works for the objects included in the project (including those representing cultural value), a plan of the tachometric mine, including benchmarks with their coordinates, etc.,
- List of the machinery and mechanisms and the engineering and technical professional group required for the implementation of the planned works and the area where the construction works will be carried out,
- Engineering geological conclusion,
- Standard drawings (schemes of structures included in the project, planned works, etc.),
- Summaries of earthworks (according to the order of soils, their processing, transport mechanisms and type of work),
- Summaries of furnishing and safety elements (by type of work),
- Summaries of artificial structures (according to the type of work),
- A complete list of materials and products, including the types of other logistical resources required for installation,
- Technical characteristics, quantities,
- Detailed description of installation work, timing and cost estimates.

3.2 Requirements for the license, technical means, work resources and professional qualities required for the performance of the works.

3.3 Requirements for the warranty period of the object, its individual parts and used materials.

3.4 Calendar schedule for the implementation of the planned work.

3.5 Other documents as required by the national legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

Task 4. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

ESIA shall be carried out in alignment with the national legislation and the Environmental and Social Standards of the World Bank relevant for RESILAND Project and should result in the delivery of ESIA report comprising of the following sections:

- Non-technical Executive Summary

This section should provide summary of sections below, highlighting findings.

- Introduction

This section should outline RESILAND Project, its Component 2, and explain who and how is implementing it.

- Environmental and Social Baseline

This section should provide information on the biophysical environment in the intervention areas and around them (landscape, topology, soils, water, flora and fauna, pollution, local communities and vulnerable groups, existing infrastructure, etc.)

- Relevant Legal and Institutional Context

National laws and regulations relevant for wetland restoration; required permits, licenses and agreements; national authorities governing administrative units, protected areas, land and water use, etc. in the area of intervention. ESSs of the World Bank relevant to RESILAND project with explanation of requirements relevant for wetland restoration.

- Description of Design and Planned Restoration Works

This section should briefly describe nature of planned intervention – main infrastructural elements to be provided, main types of works to be undertaken.

- Expected Risks and Impacts – positive and negative

This section should cover only expected impacts and not ways of addressing them. It should cover direct and indirect E&S risks, positive and negative and residual E&S impacts.

Considered environmental risks and impacts of the construction stage and after it should include but not be limited to:

- Impact of moving construction vehicles and machinery
- Footprint of access roads
- Pollution with litter, machinery oil and lubricants, noise and dust, excavated material and construction waste
- Impacts on water balance of altered waterflow
- Anthropogenic disturbance of restored wetlands
- Positive ecologic impacts of restoration

Considered social risks and opportunities of construction stage and after its completion should include but not be limited to:

- Impacts of restricted access to resources and related impacts on livelihoods,
- Impacts on vulnerable and marginalized groups (e.g., women, youth, elderly, low-income households, and those dependent on wetland resources)
- Impacts of communities' perceived perceptions of land-use changes
- Opportunities related to improved ecosystem service, ecotourism

- Risk Management Approach and Impact Mitigation Hierarchy

This section should explain who and how will prevent, minimize, and mitigate expected risks and negative impacts at the restoration stage and beyond.

- Environmental and Social Impact Mitigation Plan (table format)

If restoration may restrict access to wetland resources for certain groups of population, propose proportionate mitigation or benefit-sharing measures. Incorporate mitigation measures into the design and management plan.

- Environmental and Social Monitoring Plan (table format)

Specify which institutions will oversee environmental and social aspects of restoration works, manage construction contractor's compliance with environmental and social mitigation plan, communicate emerging issues to the EPIU, propose remedial actions to the EPIU management and follow up on corrective actions. Explain who and how will track status of restored wetlands beyond RESILAND project intervention and address any issues should they emerge.

Task 5. Author's supervision

Conduct the author's supervision of the restoration work by tracking compliance with the restoration design.

The consultant is expected to conduct the author's/follow-on supervision of the restoration work:

- Ensure the compliance presence of relevant specialists on the site area;
- Undertake visits to the site area according to the schedule agreed with the EPIU which will manage the works;
- When necessary, arrange out-of-schedule visits as requested by the EPIU;
- Closely cooperate with the contractor in management of running arrangements;
- With written approval of the EPIU, immediately correct any design omissions and/or errors and deviations detected during the works;
- Verify the quality of the works performed by a contractor and whether they are in line with the design layouts and technical specifications;
- Accurately register all discovered errors and deviations in the supervision journal and, if required, give necessary recommendations for their improvement;
- Immediately inform the contractor and advise the EPIU in writing about existing shortcomings;
- Sign the statement on completion of works as well as any mid-term acts/statements as necessary along with the contractor and the EPIU, certifying that works meet all design and quality requirements;
- Promptly notify the contractor of any works violating technical specifications and the approved design layouts,
- If the contractor is not doing the work in accordance with the plans, notify the contractor in writing and suspend work on that respect, especially regarding any existing risks and any significant or unacceptable deviations from the design layout (that may increase the anticipated cost or extend the term of the works);

Coordinate with the contractor on design changes within the site area that do not result in any cost or volume modifications to the design/project, ensuring that such changes are preliminarily agreed with the EPIU, and that the EPIU is informed at least two days in advance before any changes are implemented.

D. SCHEDULE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The project will be completed within 21 months from the contract signing, following a detailed project schedule to be developed in consultation with the EPIU.

Considering time sensitivity, the consultant will be required to produce the deliverables in the following order:

1. Preliminary Design – **within 3 months**
2. Gegharkunik wetlands subproject design – **within 6 months**
3. Lori Plateau lakes subproject design– **within 9 months**
4. ESIA reports for both subprojects – **within 15 months**
5. Final report – **within 15 months**
6. Author's supervision – starting with the restoration works and carried out till the end of the restoration works. The timeline for this part of the consultant assignment will be defined separately in the contract and.

The selected consultant will be offered to sign two contracts: Lumpsum for the preparation of designs and time-based for author's supervision.

E. DELIVERABLES / SPECIFIC OUTPUTS EXPECTED FROM CONSULTANT

Deliverables must be clearly written and presented in Armenian and English. All reports shall have a clear structure containing executive summary, introduction, the main part, and conclusion with recommendations. All reports shall include the required findings, results of surveys, and/or data analysis and feedback from stakeholders as appropriate. The recommendations should be relevant to the findings. All products/deliverables must be developed according to the methodology agreed with the EPIU, who will review and approve interim outputs before final outputs are developed. 10 working days should be allowed for the review of the outputs. Comments and suggestions from the EPIU shall be incorporated into the final outputs. Final outputs will be reviewed by the EPIU, and the design documentation will be endorsed by the Ministry of Environment.

Design documentation must be submitted in four colored printed copies and one electronic version on a storage device. Design documentation must be prepared using appropriate computer software and be legible.

1. **Preliminary Restoration Design Concepts:** comprising introduction; site assessment summary; restoration goals and objectives; summary of stakeholder consultations and feedback, preliminary designs and restoration strategies; considerations and constraints; in PowerPoint and report format.

3 months after the contract signing – 14.5 %

2. **Gegharkunik Wetland Design:** 3D model, time frame, budget estimation, package of necessary (in accordance with Armenian legislation and other relevant standards), monitoring plan, conclusions of the stakeholder consultation meetings, approvals by the relevant bodies ("Sevan National Park" SNCO and Vardenis community).

6 months after commencement – 30%

3. **Lori Plateau Wetlands Design:** 3D model, time frame, budget estimation, package of necessary (in accordance with Armenian legislation and other relevant standards), monitoring plan, conclusions of the stakeholder consultation meetings, approvals by the relevant bodies (Stepanavan and Tashir communities).

9 months after commencement – 35 %

4. **Final Report on Completed Activities** describing the work undertaken by the Consultant, project findings, activities, summary of stakeholders' consultations and feedback, achievements, and monitoring results.
5. **ESIA reports for all subprojects** including environmental and social mitigation and monitoring plans and records of stakeholder consultations, with comments from EPIU and the World Bank incorporated.

15 months after commencement – 20%

Author's Supervision and monitoring

Upon commencement of subprojects implementation (to be defined additionally) – 0.5%

F. DELIVERABLES AND PAYMENTS

Deliverable	Approved (months after contract signing)	Payment release (percent)
1. Preliminary Restoration Design concepts	3	14.5
2. Gegharkunik Wetland Sub-Project Design	6	30
3. Lori Plateau Lakes Wetland Subproject Design	9	35
4. Final report on completed activities and ESIA report	15	20
6. Author's (follow-on) supervision – starting 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		0,5

G. CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

For the purposes of this Contract, the EPIU is in the role of a client, and is responsible for:

- Providing access to the selected wetland site and any relevant background information, including digital and hardcopy records.
- Facilitating communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders.
- Obtaining any necessary permits and clearances for field research and restoration activities.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on project deliverables.

H. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant must have the technical expertise, resources, and experience necessary to successfully deliver the services outlined in this assignment.

- At least four (4) years of experience in environmental and ecological design, for ecosystem restoration, wetland rehabilitation, or similar nature-based solutions;
- Proven experience in wetland restoration, ecological engineering, or integrated water resource management will be considered a strong advantage;
- Demonstrated capacity to provide author's (follow-on) supervision services for environmentally sensitive or complex landscape/ecosystem restoration projects;
- A minimum of four (4) years of operational experience in ecological or environmental consulting;
- Experience working on internationally funded development projects, including those financed by the World Bank, UN agencies, or other international donors, will be considered an asset;
- Familiarity with Armenia's environmental, hydrological, and institutional landscape, including design norms, construction standards, and permitting processes, will be considered an advantage;
- Prior engagement with the Government of Armenia or regional/local authorities in environmental or natural resource projects will be considered an asset.

I. PERSONNEL

The consultant team should include at least the following personnel:

- Project Manager: (MSc or PhD in Environmental Science, Ecology, or related field; minimum 5 years of experience in wetland ecology, preferably with wetland restoration projects)
- Wetland Restoration Specialist: (MSc or PhD in Wetland Ecology or related field; minimum 10 years of experience in wetland assessments and restoration planning)
- Wetland Engineer: (MSc or PhD in environmental engineering or related field; minimum 10 years of experience in wetland restoration)
- Hydrologist: (MSc or PhD in Hydrology or Water Resources Engineering; minimum 3 years of experience in wetland hydrology and restoration)
- Vegetation Specialist: (MSc or PhD in Botany or Plant Ecology; minimum 3 years of experience in Armenian wetland flora)
- Social Development Specialist: (MSc or PhD in Social Sciences or related field; minimum 3 years of experience in stakeholder engagement and community development)
- GIS Specialist: (MSc in Geographic Information Systems; minimum 5 years of experience in creating maps, spatial analyses, and 3D modelling for wetland restoration projects)

- Logistics Specialist (MSc in Logistics or related field; minimum 3 years of experience in environmental restoration logistics)
- Cost Estimator / Quantity Surveyor: Degree in Construction Economics, Civil Engineering, or related discipline. Minimum 3 years of experience in cost estimation and bill of quantities (BoQ) preparation for engineering or environmental projects
- Local Field Assistants (optional): Individuals with experience working in rural Armenian communities (number to be determined based on project needs)

Additional Requirements

All consultants, whether local or foreign, must ensure compliance with the licensing requirements of the Republic of Armenia for Urban Development activities, in particular codes 01.07 (Hydrotechnical structures) and 01.08 (Water supply and sewerage).

To be eligible for contract award, the selected 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.

The Consultant will report to the EPIU Director, to whom all written reports and other outputs shall be sent electronically.