

## UNDP-GEF MIDTERM REVIEW

**LEAD EVALUATOR**

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

**BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION**

**Location:** Home-based

**Application Deadline:** 30 June 2021

**Additional Category:** Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction

**Type of Contract:** Individual Contract

**Post Level:** International Consultant (GPN Roster)

**Languages Required:** English

**Starting Date:** 15 July 2021

**Duration of Initial Contract:** 6 months (15 July – 31 December 2021)

**Expected Duration of Assignment:** 40 working days

1. **Introduction**

This is the Terms of Reference for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized project titled *Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscapes (IC-CFS)* (PIMS#4594) implemented by the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia, which is to be undertaken in June – December 2021. The project started on 18 March 2014 and is in its sixth year of implementation. The project is scheduled to end on 31 December 2021 after granted a nineteenth month extension. In December 2017, an Independent Rapid Review was commissioned to address the lack of progress to project outputs. Following to the review, an adaptive management plan was developed in consultation with implementing agencies, resulting in adjustments applied to the Strategic Results Framework.

Under the conditional approval received from UNDP in May 2020, the project may be extended until 31 December 2022 (subject to meeting the key milestones in 2021) and a final twelve-month extension until 31 December 2023 (subject to meeting the key milestones in 2022). The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (see <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf>

**2. Project Background and Information**

*The Project “Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscape” (PIMS#4594)* is a US$ 10.86 million GEF-funded project initiated in 2014 that is designed to address the fragmentation of Peninsular Malaysia’s Central Forest Spine (CFS) – valued for its megadiversity of species, including the only remaining population of Malayan tigers, and supplies of water for 90% of the state’s population. Recognising that Malaysia’s rapidly growing economy and illegal trade in forest and wildlife resources are eroding the country’s natural capital and in response to forest fragmentation being identified in the 2005 National Physical Plan as a major threat to the conservation and maintenance of biodiversity, the Government of Malaysia formulated the CFS Master Plan (MP) in 2008 to restore ecological connectivity between forest fragments.

This project contributes to implementing the Master Plan by focusing specifically on conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services in three key forest landscapes, identified to be both critical for tiger conservation in the National Tiger Conservation Action Plan as well as priority linkages in the CFS Master Plan: Belum-Temenggor Forest Complex, Taman Negara Forest Complex and Endau-Rompin Forest Complex. In addition to restoring connectivity between these forest complexes, the project will strengthen the national and local institutional frameworks for CFS management and law enforcement, support sustainable forest landscape management and secure sustainability of funding for conservation through the diversification of funding sources and mainstreaming of ecosystem service values into land use planning.

The project objective is to increase federal and state level capacity to execute the CFS Master Plan through the implementation of sustainable forest landscape management plans in three pilot sites, financed sustainably through the diversification and increased allocation of funds for conservation. It is designed to remove the barriers to the establishment of a landscape approach to biodiversity management. The project comprises of three components:

**Component 1.** Planning, compliance monitoring and enforcement framework for integrated forest landscape management;

**Component 2.** Sustainable forest landscape management of three priority forest landscapes within the CFS; and

**Component 3.** Diversification of financing sources for conservation.

See the signed project document at

<https://www.my.undp.org/content/dam/malaysia/docs/Central%20Forest%20Spine%20Final%20Pro%20Doc.pdf>

Table 1 shows the project basic information:

Table 1: Basic information for the “Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscape” Project

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Project Title | Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscape (PIMS#4594) | |
| ATLAS ID | 00077143 | |
| Country, Region | Malaysia, Asia Pacific | |
| Date Project Document Signed | 18 March 2014 | |
| Project date | Start | Planned end |
|  | 18 March 2014 | 31 December 2021 (pending conditional approval up to 31 December 2022) |
| Project budget | $10.86 million | |
| Funding source | Global Environment Facility (GEF) | |
| Implementing partner | Forest Department Peninsular Malaysia | |

The project started on 18 March 2014 and is currently in its sixth year of implementation. Due to a mix of implementation challenges including capacity issues, federal-state relations on forest protection, as well as various phases of COVID-19 movement restrictions imposed since early 2020. The project is scheduled to end on 31 December 2021. Under the conditional approval received from GEF in May 2020, the project may be extended until 31 December 2022, and a final twelve-month extension until 31 December 2023, subjected to project meeting the key milestones in 2022.

Since 4 January 2020 until 6 May 2021, Malaysia has recorded 424,376 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 1,591 deaths. On 18 March 2020, Government of Malaysia officially enforced the Movement Control Order (MCO) under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 and the Police Act 1967. The order prohibited mass movements, gatherings and restrictions on the entry of all tourists and foreign visitors into the country. Although restrictions were relaxed when cases subsided, Government of Malaysia have again announced the enforcement of MCO across several states from 6 May until 17 May 2021 following the rise of cases nationwide. Although the prolonged movement restrictions have extensively hindered the progress of the project’s implementation, the delays had been addressed by having more virtual meetings and discussions and localizing the activities at State and districts level to ensure the implementation can progress with minimum disruption.

**3. The MTR Purpose**

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and programme outcomes as stipulated in the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2016 – 2020 between UNDP and the Government of Malaysia, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the purpose of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability. The MTR is also one of the key milestones under the project’s conditional approval for its extension before another 12-month extension can be considered and approved.

**4. MTR Approach & Methodology**

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP), the Project Document, the revised Strategic Results Framework[[1]](#footnote-1), Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy (ESSP), project reports including Independent Rapid Review (IRR), Annual Project Review/PIRs, Quarterly Progress Reports, Adaptive Management Action Plan, extension request and approval package, adaptive management update reports, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, list of relevant stakeholders and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach[[2]](#footnote-2) ensuring close engagement with the project team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point, Project Board Chairperson, National Project Director, etc.), the UNDP Country Office, the Nature, Climate and Energy (NCE) Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.[[3]](#footnote-3) Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to executing agencies, senior officials, project team consists of project manager, state project coordinators, monitoring & evaluation officer, communications officer; key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board/Steering Committee, Adaptive Management Advisory Panel (AMAP), project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team (only for national team members) may be required to conduct field missions to project sites in Perak, Pahang and Johor.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time, data, movement restrictions and safety guidance in view of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. The MTR team must, however, use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the MTR team.

Given the travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the MTR team should adopt methodologies to ensure consultations and meetings are conducted virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. These virtual techniques should be detailed in the MTR Inception Report, agreed with the Commissioning Unit, as well as incorporated into the Final MTR Report. Any limitations faced during the virtual consultations must be reflected in the final MTR report.

In the event travels restrictions are lifted, international consultant will work remotely with national evaluators’ support in the field, provided it is safe for the national evaluators to operate and travel in compliance with the local Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for COVID.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken, limitations faced and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

The MTR Lead Evaluator will perform the key tasks as follows:

* Lead and assign division of work for a team of two other independent experts remotely including National Evaluator, and Gender and Community Development Specialist who will conduct the MTR field mission in Malaysia.
* Conduct a document review of project related documents i.e. Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2016 – 2020 between UNDP and Government of Malaysia, Project Identification Form (PIF), UNDP Initiation Plan, Project Document, Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP), Project Inception Report, Independent Rapid Review report, Adaptive Management Action Plan, Revised Strategic Results Framework, Project Implementation Reviews, Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools, Project Steering Committee meeting minutes, Key Performance Indicators, Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team, project operational guidelines, manuals and systems, etc.; provided by UNDP Malaysia Country Office and Project Team.
* Plan and facilitate MTR Inception Workshop to clarify stakeholders’ understanding of the objectives and methods of the MTR, producing the MTR inception report thereafter.
* Assess the following four categories of project progress based on the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for requirements on ratings. No overall rating is required.
* Produce a draft and final MTR report with MTR team members.
* Plan and present the final MTR findings and recommendations at the MTR Concluding Workshop.

**5. Detailed Scope of the MTR**

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

**a. Project Strategy**

*Project Design:*

* Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
* Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results stipulated in the project document/inception report/revised strategic results framework and the CPAP 2016 – 2020.
* Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national and sector development priorities and plans in Malaysia?
* Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
* Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
  + Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women’s groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
* If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement[[4]](#footnote-4) on:

*Results Framework/Log frame:*

* Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s revised logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
* Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
* Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc.) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
* Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively.

**b. Progress Towards Results**

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

* Review the revised log frame indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix (Table 2)and following the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table 2. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Strategy** | **Indicator[[5]](#footnote-5)** | **Baseline Level[[6]](#footnote-6)** | **Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)** | **Midterm Target[[7]](#footnote-7)** | **End-of-project Target** | **Midterm Level & Assessment[[8]](#footnote-8)** | **Achievement Rating[[9]](#footnote-9)** | **Justification for Rating** |
| **Objective:** | Indicator (if applicable): |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 1:** | Indicator 1: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Indicator 2: |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 2:** | Indicator 3: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Indicator 4: |  |  |  |  |  |
| Etc. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Etc.** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Indicator Assessment Key**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Green= Achieved | Yellow= On target to be achieved | Red= Not on target to be achieved |

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

* Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool/Core Indicators at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
* Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project under two different scenarios, namely a no-extension scenario and a 12-month extension scenario.
* By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.
* Identify actual or potential complementarity and/or duplication between the results of this project and two projects ie the completed “Enhancing Effectiveness and financial sustainability of Protected Areas in Malaysia” Project (ATLAS ID 00066114/ PIMS 3967) and the new Malaysia’s Global Wildlife Programme national project (ATLAS ID 00127658/ UNDP PIMS 6458).

**c. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

Using the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; assess the following categories of project progress:

Management Arrangements:

* Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document and the Adaptive Management Action Plan. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
* Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
* Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
* Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
* What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?
* What is the gender balance of the Project Board/Steering Committee? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board/Steering Committee?

Work Planning:

* Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
* Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
* Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ log frame as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

* Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
* Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
* Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
* Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the UNDP Malaysia Country Office Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sources of Co-financing** | **Name of Co-financer** | **Type of Co-financing** | **Co-financing amount confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US$)** | **Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US$)** | **Actual % of Expected Amount** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **TOTAL** |  |  |  |

* Include the separate GEF Co-financing template (filled out by the UNDP Malaysia Country Office and project team) which categorizes each co-financing amount as ‘investment mobilized’ or ‘recurrent expenditures’. (This template will be annexed as a separate file.)

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

* Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
* Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
* Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. See Annex 9 of *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.

Stakeholder Engagement:

* Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
* Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
* Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?
* How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women’s participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?

Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

* Validate the risks identified in the project’s most current SESP, and those risks’ ratings; are any revisions needed?
* Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to:
  + - The project’s overall safeguards risk categorization.
    - The identified types of risks[[10]](#footnote-10) (in the SESP).
    - The individual risk ratings (in the SESP).
* Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project’s social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project’s design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.

A given project should be assessed against the version of UNDP’s safeguards policy that wasin effect at the time of the project’s approval.

Reporting:

* Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board/Steering Committee.
* Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
* Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications & Knowledge Management:

* Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
* Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public? Is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?
* For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project’s progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.
* List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

**d. Sustainability**

* Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Register are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
* Assess whether the project is likely to achieve its expected results under two different scenarios, namely a no-extension scenario and a 12-month extension scenario.
* In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

* What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

* Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

* Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

**e. Conclusions & Recommendations**

The MTR team will include a section in the MTR report for evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the MTR Team is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report’s executive summary. See the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations in total.

**f. Ratings**

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project’s results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table (Table 3)* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table 3. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscapes (IC-CFS)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **MTR Rating** | **Achievement Description** |
| **Project Strategy** | N/A |  |
| **Progress Towards Results** | Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Etc. |  |
| **Project Implementation & Adaptive Management** | (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| **Sustainability** | (rate 4 pt. scale) |  |

**6. Duration of the Work**

The total duration of the MTR will be 40 working days starting 15 July 2021 and shall not exceed six months from when the Lead Evaluator is hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

* 30 June 2021: Application closes
* 1 – 10 July 2021: Selection of MTR Lead Evaluator and team members
* 15 – 30 July 2021: Prep the MTR Team (handover of project documents)
* 1 – 7 August 2021 (5 days): Document review and preparation of MTR Inception Report
* 8 – 15 August 2021 (3 days): Finalization and validation of MTR Inception Report – latest start of MTR mission
* 15 – 31 August 2021 (11 days): MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, virtual interviews, field visits (if the travel is permitted)
* 1 – 8 September 2021 (1 day): Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
* 9 September – 24 September 2021 (12 days): Preparing draft report and consolidating stakeholders’ feedback and comments to the draft report
* 27 September – 8 October 2021 (3 days): Incorporating audit trail on draft report and finalization of MTR report
* 11 – 15 October 2021 (3 days): Preparation for management response
* 15 – 31 October 2021 (2 days): Planning and present the final MTR findings and recommendations at the Concluding Stakeholder Workshop
* 30 November 2021: Expected date of full MTR completion

The start date of contract is 15 July 2021.

**7. MTR Outputs and Deliverables**

The MTR Lead Evaluator shall prepare and submit:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Deliverable** | **Description** | **Timing** | **Responsibilities** |
| **1** | **MTR Inception Report** | MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review | Approximate date: 15 August 2021 (or  no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission) | MTR team submits to the UNDP Malaysia Country Office and project management |
| **2** | **Presentation** | Initial Findings to project management and UNDP Malaysia Country Office | Approximate date: 8 September 2021 | MTR Team presents to UNDP Malaysia Country Office and project management |
| **3** | **Draft MTR Report** | Full draft report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes | Approximate date: 24 September 2021 | Sent to the UNDP Malaysia Country Office, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP |
| **4** | **Final Report and PPT slides\*** | Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report | Approximate date: 31 October 2021 | Sent to the Commissioning Unit |

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, UNDP Malaysia may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into Malay language – the official language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

**8. MTR Arrangement**

The Commissioning Unit for this project’s MTR is UNDP Country Office in Malaysia. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

The Commissioning Unit and Project Team will provide logistic support in the implementation of remote/virtual meetings if travel to project site is restricted. An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the Commissioning Unit to the MTR team.

**9. Required Skills and Experience**

**Qualifications of the Successful Applicants**

A team of three independent experts will conduct the MTR - one international team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally), one national expert from the country of the project and one Gender and Community Development Specialist.

The selection of Lead Evaluator will be aimed at maximising the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

**Corporate Competencies:**

* Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
* Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
* Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
* Treats all people fairly without favouritism;
* Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment;
* Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards.

**Functional Competencies:**

* Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis;
* Excellent communication and analytical skills;
* Experience with Implementing evaluations remotely will be considered an asset

**Qualifications**

Education**:**

* A Master’s degree or higher in conservation/environmental science, conservation finance, environmental or natural resource economics, environmental planning/management, or other closely related field (10 points)

Experience:

* Relevant experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies for at least 10 years (20 points);
* Experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios (10 points);
* Competency in adaptive management, as applied to biodiversity focal area (10 points);
* Experience working with UNDP or GEF evaluations for at least 5 years (10 points);
* Experience working in Malaysia, South-East Asian or Asia-Pacific region (5 points);
* Work experience in sustainable forest landscape management, environment and/or conservation finance for at least 10 years (5 points);

Language:

* Language: fluency in written and spoken English

**Consultant Independence:**

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

**10. Ethics**

The MTR team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The MTR team must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The MTR team must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

**11. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments**

***Financial Proposal:***

* Financial proposal must be “all inclusive” and expressed in a lump-sum for the total duration of the contract. The term “all inclusive” implies all cost (professional fees, international travel costs, living allowances etc.);
* For duty travels, the UN’s Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) rates should provide indication of the cost of living in a duty station/destination.
* The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

***Schedule of Payments:***

20% payment upon satisfactory delivery and acceptance of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the UNDP Malaysia Country Office

40% payment upon satisfactory delivery and acceptance of the draft MTR report to the UNDP Malaysia Country Office

40% payment upon satisfactory delivery and acceptance of the final MTR report and approval by the UNDP Malaysia Country Office and delivery of completed Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%:

* The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
* The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
* The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

**12. Recommended Presentation of Offer**

1. Completed **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** (Annex 1) provided by UNDP;
2. **Personal CV or a** [**P11 Personal History form**](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc), indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references;
3. **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
4. **Financial Proposal** (Annex 2) that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

**Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer**

The award of the contract will be made to the Individual Consultant who has obtained the highest Combined Score and has accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions. Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. The offers will be evaluated using the “Combined Scoring method” where:

1. The educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted a max. of 70%. Only applicants who score a minimum of 50% will be qualified to undertake financial evaluation;
2. The price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring.

The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

1. **Annexes to the MTR TOR**

Annexes include: (reference ToR Annexes in Annex 3 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects)

• List of documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team

• Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report

• Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template

• UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants

• MTR Required Ratings Table and Ratings Scales

• MTR Report Clearance Form

• Audit Trail Template

• Progress Towards Results Matrix)

• GEF Co-Financing Template

Please find the annexes in the separate attachment.

1. The original SRF was revised and endorsed by Project Steering Committee in 2019 following the Independent Rapid Review’s recommendations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/discussion-paper--innovations-in-monitoring---evaluating-results/), 05 Nov 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](http://www.undg.org/docs/11653/UNDP-PME-Handbook-(2009).pdf), Chapter 3, pg. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Consider that the findings and recommendations of this MTR will inform the rating -or not- of a twelve-month conditional extension for this project. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Populate with data from the Log frame and scorecards [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Populate with data from the Project Document [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. If available [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Colour code this column only [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Use the 6-point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Risks are to be labelled with both the UNDP SES Principles and Standards, and the GEF’s “types of risks and potential impacts”: Climate Change and Disaster; Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups; Disability Inclusion; Adverse Gender-Related impact, including Gender-based Violence and Sexual Exploitation; Biodiversity Conservation and the Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources; Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement; Indigenous Peoples; Cultural Heritage; Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention; Labor and Working Conditions; Community Health, Safety and Security. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)