



**GEF/UNDP/ASEAN PROJECT ON REDUCING POLLUTION AND PRESERVING ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS
IN THE EAST ASIAN SEAS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED RIVER BASIN
MANAGEMENT (IRBM) IN ASEAN COUNTRIES**

VA/SES-IRBM/2024/005

Title	ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS IN IRBM PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN ASEAN COUNTRIES
Type	Regional
Duration	July 2024 – December 2024
Closing Date	30 June 2024

BACKGROUND

The GEF/UNDP/ASEAN Project on Reducing Pollution and Preserving Environmental Flows in the East Asian Seas through the Implementation of Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) in the ASEAN Countries is a 5-year project (2023-2027) with the goal of establishing functional IRBM mechanisms in priority river basins/sub-basins in the six ASEAN Member States (AMS), i.e., Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines and Viet Nam, to reduce pollution, sustain freshwater environmental flows and adapt to climate change vulnerabilities.

The PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF), which serves as the Project Implementing Partner hosts the Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU), works in collaboration with National and Local Government Partners and River Basin Organizations in the six AMS with UNDP providing a three-tier project assurance function. The project is governed by the Regional Steering Committee, comprising of members of the ASEAN Working Group on Water Resources Management, UNDP, the ASEAN Secretariat, and East Asian Seas Executive Committee.

The Project is designed to improve governance and management arrangements in IRBM and accelerate the required changes in the six AMS in support of national priorities, objectives and commitments to global sustainable development targets using the Source to Sea (S2S) framework. The project strategy is to apply a solution-oriented approach by improving understanding of various S2S governance, socioeconomic, ecological conditions, gaps and needs in seven priority river basins and associated coastal areas; implement pilot projects aimed at providing on-the-ground solutions to key issues and utilizing the proven templates or solutions for upscaling and replication; and facilitating hands-on training, experience building and information sharing in participatory planning, development and implementation of IRBM governance and management solutions across the six AMS.

The Project satisfies the requirements set out in GEF’s Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards as well as UNDP’s Social and Environmental Standards ensuring that the project impacts on people and the environment throughout the project cycle are avoided, prevented, minimized or mitigated, thereby enhancing the environmental and social outcomes. A screening process using UNDP’s Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) was completed in 2018 and updated in 2022 based on UNDP’s

revised SES policy which took effect on 01 January 2021. The SESP was conducted on the basis of the broad scope of project activities and identified the project as having potentially substantial impact. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared which provides a preliminary analysis of the range of potential social and environmental risks and impacts of project activities. It set out the principles, rules, guidelines and procedures, including the roles and responsibilities for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to the project activities. It has been recommended that the RPMU follows the ESMF from the project inception phase to implementation

This Terms of Reference require a Social and Environmental Safeguards Specialist to lead the completion of the following:

- a) Comprehensive review of the Project-wide ESMF and its requirements and providing guidance to the RPMU for its implementation, monitoring and reporting;
- b) Conduct of Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) at the project (regional) level, and
- c) Develop a Terms of Reference for the conduct of basin level Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) and preparation of basin level Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) in the seven priority river basins.

SCOPE OF WORK, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Scope of Work

Under the guidance of the RPMU represented by the Regional Project Manager in close coordination with the Technical Officer and National Coordinators, and in collaboration with the National Implementing Partners and local governments from the six participating AMS, the Specialist will be responsible in undertaking the necessary tasks, as identified in a-c above and deliver the corresponding outputs within the agreed timeline.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Scope of Work A: Review of the Project-wide ESMF and its requirements

The SESP which has been applied twice during the project development phase identified nineteen (19) potential social and environmental risks associated with the project activities. Twelve (12) of the risks were assessed as Substantial and subsequently reduced to eleven (11) with the removal of Covid-19-related risks in line with WHO's declaration of the end of the Covid-19 as a global health emergency in 2023. Seven (7) of the risks were assessed as Moderate. The eighteen (18) risks were updated in 2023 bringing the total number of risks to twenty-eight (28) with equal numbers of risks rated as substantial and moderate (14 each).

As some specific on-the-ground activities and exact locations in the seven river basins are yet to be confirmed and three out of the six participating countries have not fully started project implementation, the potential social and environmental risks and impacts of project activities cannot be fully assessed. The project is on its second year of implementation, thus a review of the ESMF and the Project Risk Register is necessary, which will entail the following tasks:

- 1) Review the relevance of the twenty-eight (28) risks and their risk categorizations vis-à-vis ongoing and planned project activities, prevailing conditions in the seven river basins and developments related to IRBM and integrated water resources management (IWRM) in the six AMS.
- 2) Based on the results of Step 1 and in view of the project's Substantial Risk Rating and available resources, timeline and knowledge on key issues, determine the relevance of the required procedures and additional assessments to be undertaken, including the sub-plans to be developed for the identification of appropriate risk measures and their implementation and monitoring.
- 3) Based on the results of Steps 1 and 2, develop a phased approach or strategy in implementing the ESMF based on the level of project implementation in the seven river basins.
- 4) Consider the results of SESA (Scope of Work B) that may influence the scope and effective implementation of the ESMF.
- 5) Update and refine the ESMF to reflect the results and recommendations derived from this review to guide the RPMU for its implementation and monitoring.
- 6) Prepare and submit to RPMU the review report consolidating the results of Steps 1 to 5.

Scope of Work 2: Project Level SESA

The ESMF includes a preliminary review of the policy, legal and institutional frameworks related to the potential risks and benefits of the project, which underpins how social and environmental safeguards will be addressed and implemented. The ESMF recommended the conduct of a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) to ensure that the potential social and environmental impacts from the project are assessed and strategies are identified for upstream policy-level project activities.

- 1) Conduct a SESA based on the generally established stages (e.g., establishing the context; undertaking the needed analysis and implementing the SESA in dialogue with appropriate stakeholders, including assessing the potential risks and impacts; informing and influencing decision making through recommendations to decision makers, and monitoring decisions taken and evaluation of monitoring results) utilizing available SESA guidelines, procedures and tools, as applicable and relevant to the IRBM project's scope and objectives.
- 2) The SESA process may take into consideration the following:
 - i. Information in the Project Document indicating the level of implementation of policies and strategies on IRBM and IWRM and the main barriers and obstacles to their implementation.
 - ii. Impacts of specific project outcomes and outputs to evaluate the effect of policy changes, the opportunities to integrate environmental and social considerations into project supported policies, plans and programs and their linkages with economic and sustainability considerations.

- iii. Policy frameworks (i.e., national laws, regulations, guidelines, standards and institutional arrangements), strategies (national, regional, large marine ecosystems), plans and programs in the six AMS related to IRBM/IWRM, including commitments to relevant regional and international agreements and UNDPs SES Policy, as applicable to the project activities.
 - iv. Social and environmental priorities that should be included in planning and policy processes for the project, which may include: i) involvement of vulnerable groups, including women and minorities in the decision making processes; ii) involvement of all affected indigenous peoples and local communities in program and upstream activities; iii) climate change vulnerability and resilience of local communities; iv) sustainable water management, among others.
 - v. Weaknesses and gaps in policy, legal frameworks and operational capacities to address the abovementioned issues and potential adverse social and environmental impacts associated with the policy options, including their impacts at the river basin level.
 - vi. Cascading the information and strategies identified through the SESA process down through tiers of decision-making and providing guidance for the subsequent assessment of downstream activities of the project. Moreover, the project's governance and management structure based on the 4-tiered approach will also be taken into consideration.
- 3) Prepare and submit the draft SESA report with recommendations to RPMU for review.
 - 4) In coordination with RPMU, facilitate the review of the SESA report by the six AMS, UNDP and other relevant partners and entities and prepare the final report based on the feedback received.
 - 5) Submit the revised SESA report to RPMU.

Scope of Work 3: Terms of Reference for the conduct of basin level ESIA and development of ESMPs

In consideration of the project's Substantial risk rating, the ESMF recommended the conduct of ESIA at the basin level, particularly for each pilot IRBM sites within the river basins. The identified adverse impacts through the SESA and ESIA will be subject to further study and stakeholder consultation to identify and where possible quantify the magnitude and severity of such impact on the individuals and communities affected.

A Terms of Reference detailing the conduct of ESIA and their respective ESMPs is necessary in anticipation of start-up of on-the-ground activities with the selection of pilot sites and pilot projects to be established and implemented in the 7 river basins.

Building on the results of Scope of Work A and B with the Project Document as reference, develop a generic TOR incorporating the necessary elements of ESIA and ESMP in line with UNDP's SES policy and standards and applicable national legislations.

Expected Outputs and Deliverables

- Report on the review of ESMF and Risk Register; updated ESMF
- SESA Report and recommendations; report on the consultation process
- TOR for ESIA and ESMP

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Institutional Arrangement

The organization/consultant will be coordinating regularly with the Regional Project Manager with support from the Technical Officer and National Coordinators to report on progress, address emerging challenges and in seeking approval and acceptance of the above-mentioned outputs.

Duration of the Work

Expected duration of work is from July – December 2024 spread over ____ working days. The detailed work plan shall be developed by the consultant as part of the proposal.

Duty Station

The organization/consultant will be home based with regular coordination with the RPMU.

Travel Plan

In the event that the organization/consultant is required to travel to render services, as required under the TOR, associated travel costs will be covered by the RPMU.

Qualifications of the Organization/consultant

- Post Graduate Degree in relevant discipline (e.g., social sciences, agriculture, forestry, environmental science, engineering, development management and related field of study).
- Relevant work experience and good working knowledge of international, regional, national best practices in integrated river basin management (IRBM), integrated water resources management (IWRM), integrated coastal management (ICM) and other area-based management approaches that complement the Source-to Sea approach.
- Sound understanding of sustainable development, environmental management issues, monitoring and reporting on Multilateral Environmental Agreements and regional agreements and instruments.
- Professional working experience related to safeguards with technical knowledge on various safeguards related laws, policies and processes in Southeast Asian countries; experience working with development projects requiring environmental and social impact assessments, negotiation and conflict resolution processes; experience working with regional and international organizations, and knowledge on GEF and UNDPs safeguards policies.
- Relevant experience in leading multidisciplinary teams and dialoguing with a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Fluency in written and spoken English is an advantage.

Financial Proposal

Bidders/applicants should detail the budget plan based on expected outputs, clearly showing logical framework or activity plan to achieve the outputs.

Submission of Tender/Application

Applicants are requested to submit:

1. Duly accomplished **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability**;
2. **Detailed Curriculum Vitae**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the team leader and members.
3. **Brief description** of why the organization/consultant is considered as the most suitable for the assignment.
4. A description of the **methodology**, on how they will approach and complete the assignment.
5. **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs.

Applicants are requested to submit the tender and requirements via email to recruitment@pemsea.org. Kindly indicate the vacancy reference number and title of requirement when applying (in the subject line) by email.

Additional Considerations

Bid applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only those candidates that are shortlisted will be notified.

For more information on IRBM, please visit www.pemsea.org
