

Terms of Reference (ToR)-Consultant to Develop Landscape Strategy for Eighth Operational Phase GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP-OP8) in India

1. Background

The Eighth Operational Phase GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in India (SGP-OP8) is adopting a landscape-based approach to support global environmental objectives while promoting sustainable development at the community level.

This approach is guided by the Country Programme Strategy (CPS) consultation and scoping process, which establishes national priorities and identifies strategic areas for grant-making.

SGP OP8 will focus on five key landscape regions across India:

- i. **Aravallis** – Delhi; Haryana; Rajasthan; Gujarat
- ii. **Western Ghats** – Goa (North and South Goa); Karnataka (Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada) and **Coastal Region** – Odisha (Balasore, Bhadrak); West Bengal (Sundarbans – South 24 Parganas)
- iii. **North-East India** – Meghalaya (South and West Garo Hills); Arunachal Pradesh (West Kameng); Assam (Sonitpur-Biswanath, Dhemaji-Lakhimpur, Chirang, Tamulpur)

The Landscape Strategy will form the foundation of SGP's interventions within these region and demonstration landscapes. It will assess site-specific needs, capacities, and opportunities, while defining project targets, thematic interventions, and stakeholder engagement processes.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of the Landscape Baseline Assessment and Strategy Development is to:

- Develop detailed landscape-wide baselines for each demonstration site, capturing environmental, socio-economic, and institutional characteristics to inform project design and decision-making.
- Formulate a comprehensive Landscape Strategy to guide SGP grant-making under OP8, defining project typologies, intervention themes, indicators, and measurable targets aligned with SGP's strategic priorities.

- Facilitate participatory stakeholder consultations involving local authorities, CSOs, community representatives, and technical partners to ensure inclusive inputs—particularly on disaster and climate risks—and to integrate risk reduction and climate resilience measures into the strategy.
- Conduct participatory landscape–seascape baseline assessments in target geographies, integrating gender analysis to identify gender-differentiated vulnerabilities, roles, and opportunities.
- Identify potential social and environmental risks within each landscape through secondary research and field assessments and propose concrete mitigation measures consistent with UNDP’s Social and Environmental Standards (SES).
- Document critical ecosystems and biodiversity assets across the target landscapes, including globally significant species, land-use patterns, local livelihood systems, and climate change-related challenges to support the design of individual grant projects.
- Highlight tangible and intangible cultural heritage elements within the landscapes and provide guidance on their conservation in line with national regulations and UNDP safeguard principles.
- Map the presence and context of tribal peoples and marginalized communities within each target landscape, identifying key socio-cultural and livelihood characteristics, existing institutions, and potential areas for engagement. Provide strategic guidance to ensure their meaningful inclusion and participation in subsequent project-level assessments and implementation processes.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for:

a) Baseline Analysis

- Identify the landscape context and background, including threats to biodiversity, global environment, and sustainable development.
- Map existing initiatives and investments (GEF, government, non-GEF) within the landscape.
- Identify key NGOs working in the areas of agriculture, natural resource management, energy, restoration, livelihood development, skill enhancement, etc. active in the landscapes.

- Define landscape boundaries and analyze baseline activities and gaps that SGP interventions can address.
- Integrate assessments of climate vulnerabilities, gender dimensions, and social inclusion aspects within the baseline.

b) Strategic Priorities

- Elaborate the OP7/OP8 strategic initiatives within the landscape context.
- Develop typologies of projects aligned with CPS priorities.
- Define results frameworks, indicators, and targets.
- Highlight cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, resilience, innovation, and local governance.

c) Implementation Modalities

- Propose mechanisms for linking and clustering projects for learning and scaling.
- Identify opportunities for policy influence and partnerships.
- Recommend participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches.
- Outline knowledge management and dissemination modalities.

d) Reporting

- Produce a comprehensive Landscape Profile Report, including baseline analysis, NGO list, etc.
- Develop landscape wide strategies aligned with SGP OP8 objectives and national, as well as regional priorities, implementation modalities, and expected results.

The consultant must develop the strategy through consultative processes ensuring that the perspectives of key stakeholders in the government, MoEF&CC, UNDP, TERI, local communities including representative women, tribal groups, and other marginalized stakeholders. The minutes of such meeting must be recorded in a structured manner and shared with the report.

4. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

Deliverables	Timeline	% of payment
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Inception report with detailed methodology, work plan, and technical study outline	7 days of signing agreement	10% of the contract value
First draft of landscape profile for targeted areas based on secondary research, landscape profile, including stakeholder consultation and draft strategy	30 days of signing agreement	20% of the contract value
Final Comprehensive Landscape Profile Report incorporating feedback received from the stakeholders.	45 days of signing agreement	40% of the contract value
Approval of UNDP of Draft Report	75 days of signing agreement	10% of the contract value

5. Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will be carried out over 30 working days (including field visits/travel) during the period May-June 2026.

6. Institutional Arrangements

The consultant will work in consultation with the SGP National Coordinator, TERI, with guidance from UNDP.

7. Duty Station and Travel

The consultant will be home-based with travel to landscapes as required. Travel costs will be covered as per policies and agreed work plan.

8. Required Qualifications and Experience

Academic Qualifications:

- Advanced degree in conservation biology, natural resource management, environmental sciences, or related field.

Experience:

- Minimum 15 years of relevant experience in design, planning, implementation and monitoring of biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, environment management and livelihood projects and programs.
- Implemented at least 5 projects in areas of NRM, eco-restoration projects, skill enhancement, livelihood development, NGO and community-based projects.

Competencies and Skills:

- Understanding of relevant thematic areas such as biodiversity conservation, land degradation, climate change, chemical and plastic pollution and urban resilience.
- Experience of working with various stakeholders such as government agencies, civil society, private sector, and community-based organizations.
- Proven ability in independent research and facilitation of group consultations.
- Excellent analytical, presentation, and report writing skills.
- Demonstrated capacity in participatory approaches and stakeholder engagement.
- Fluency in English (written and spoken) required; knowledge of local languages is an asset.

9. Evaluation Criteria

- Relevant academic qualifications (30%).
- Demonstrated professional experience in design, planning, implementation and monitoring of biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, environment management and livelihood projects and programs (30%).
- Implemented 5 projects in areas of NRM, eco-restoration projects, skill enhancement, livelihood development, NGO and community-based projects (20%).
- Quality of methodology and work plan proposed (20%).

10. Application Procedure

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Technical proposal outlining methodology and work plan.
- Financial proposal specifying daily fee and travel costs.

Proposed Outline – Landscape Profile Report*

1. Executive Summary

- Key findings and highlights of the baseline assessment.
- Summary of landscape challenges, opportunities, and proposed strategy.
- Main recommendations and priority interventions.

2. Introduction

- Background of the UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in India.
- Rationale for adopting a landscape approach in OP8.
- Objectives and scope of the baseline assessment.

3. Methodology

- Approach and tools used for data collection (desk review, stakeholder consultations, field assessments).
- Stakeholder consultation process and validation steps.
- Limitations of the assessment.

4. Landscape Context and Baseline Analysis

- **Geographical Profile:** location, boundaries, ecological features.
- **Environmental Profile:** biodiversity, ecosystems, ecosystem services, climate vulnerabilities.
- **Socio-Economic Profile:** communities, livelihoods, cultural context, demographic features.
- **Institutional and Policy Context:** relevant policies, institutions, and governance structures.
- **Threats and Pressures:** drivers of environmental degradation, climate change, unsustainable practices.

- **Existing Initiatives and Investments:** GEF-funded, government, CSO, and private sector activities in the landscape.
- **Gaps and Opportunities:** areas where SGP can add value and leverage resources.

5. Strategic Priorities for the Landscape (aligned with CPS/ OP8)

- Identification of priority global environmental issues (biodiversity, land degradation, climate change, etc.).
- Elaboration of SGP strategic initiatives within the landscape context.
- Proposed typologies of projects to be supported by SGP.
- Results framework with indicators and targets.

6. Modalities for Implementation

- Mechanisms for clustering and linking projects across the landscape.
- Opportunities for policy engagement and scaling up.
- Stakeholder engagement plan (roles of CSOs, local authorities, communities).
- Participatory monitoring & evaluation framework.
- Knowledge management and dissemination plan.

7. Community Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement

- Description of the consultative process undertaken.
- Summary of stakeholder inputs and feedback.
- Mechanisms for ensuring inclusive participation (women, marginalized groups, indigenous peoples, etc.).

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Synthesis of key findings.
- Recommended strategic direction for SGP interventions in the landscape.
- Practical next steps for implementation.

9. Annexes

- Maps of the landscape (boundaries, ecosystems, project sites).
- List of stakeholders consulted (with designation and organization).
- References and bibliography.
- Workshop/consultation reports (if any).
- Data tables, survey tools, or questionnaires used.

*the structure is indicative only which may change as per the requirement of the committee.

Applicants should select the landscape in which they want to work. One consultant will be eligible to apply for only one landscape.