



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultant for a Transboundary Water and Land Management Study in the GGW Sahel Region

Consultancy reference number: CCD/23/C/30

Background

The objective of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is to combat desertification and land degradation, and to mitigate the effects of drought (DLDD) in affected countries around the world, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels. Established in 1994, the UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.

The Global Mechanism (GM) is an institution of the UNCCD, mandated to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sector for activities that prevent, control or reverse desertification, land degradation and drought.

The Global Mechanism is currently steering several activities related to the Green Great Wall Initiative, notably a project entitled “Strengthening Coordination and Implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative”, funded by ADA, the Austrian Development Agency

In order to fully comply with ADA’s objectives, for this project, a transboundary land and water resource management strategy must be developed involving civil society organizations and/or the private sector in link SDG indicator 6.5.2 and the Austrian Development Agency regional Strategy.

The Great Green Wall (GGW) was launched in 2007 under the leadership of the African Union and Pan-African Agency of the GGW. It aims to restore Africa’s degraded landscapes and transform millions of lives in one of the world’s poorest regions, the Sahel.

In recent years, the GGW vision has evolved into an integrated ecosystem management approach, striving for a mosaic of different land use and production systems. Hence the GGW should be understood as a strategic comprehensive national and regional development plan focusing not only on environmental protection but also combining economic and social dimensions and ensuring synergies among the various existing policies and programs that contribute to its strategy and goals.

Delivering water, energy, food and ecosystems functions for all in a sustainable and equitable way is one of the major challenges faced by GGW countries and all efforts undertaken in the context of the GGW should consider these interactions and connections in an integrative way.

The UNCCD is seeking to hire a GGW Consultant for a transboundary water and land management study in the Sahel region. The study aims to support the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) in its efforts to combat desertification, land degradation, and drought while strengthening regional cooperation and ensuring security and prosperity in the region. The consultant will provide technical expertise and support to the study team, which will consist of both UNCCD and GGWI staff, as well as relevant stakeholders in the region.

The Sahel rests upon one of the largest aquifers in Africa but there are still several knowledge gaps that limit it from being used to its full potential. New technologies such as remotely sensed satellite data may prove to be an opportunity for an advanced understanding of groundwater resources.



It is important to note that when discussing transboundary water management, it is crucial to take vulnerable communities, such as youth, women, and persons of concern, into consideration. This will contribute to ensuring gender equity and societal inclusivity, which are key factors in the management process.

Rural areas are the primary hosts of the most vulnerable communities of the Sahel Region and special care should be taken at the local level to ensure that their voices are heard. There are several ongoing initiatives which aim to manage the water resources in the Sahel. However, funding partners for transboundary water management still need to be identified given the inevitable role that funding plays in the successful implementation of transboundary water management.

Objective of consultancy

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct a transboundary Land and Water Management Strategy, to fully comply with ADA's required standards including:

A comprehensive technical report and Strategy on transboundary water and land management challenges and opportunities in the GGWI area and beyond, including best practices, lessons learned, and success stories and decision making tools;

Recommendations for improving transboundary water and land management practices in the GGWI area and beyond, including policy, institutional, and technical measures, potential funding avenues;

Technical briefings and presentations to relevant stakeholders in the region, including governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector;

Regular progress reports to the study team and UNCCD management.

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the UNCCD Global Mechanism, and the direct supervision of the Senior Project Officer, the consultant will research, write, and produce a strategy based on the standards listed below:

1. Overview of main needs in term of water in the GGW and Sahel region for its different uses (drinking water, farming system, mining activities, ecosystems, domestic use (including health system), agriculture (including livestock), industrial use (mining, processing) etc.)
2. Extensive review of the scientific and institutional literature on integrated water resources management (IWRM) and its implementation in the Sahel and targeted consultations with International, regional, and national actors, with a focus on
 - a. issues related to governance and the implementation of planning tools (Land and water planning tools including planning surface water and ground water use, dynamic balance of the water demand and supply)
 - b. innovative solutions for this integrated water resources management and in with different nexuses (land restoration-water- energy; water-energy-food, water-drought-energy)
 - c. main gaps in scientific and technical knowledge on water resource (surface and groundwater), water scarcity (including physical and economic scarcity), and water stress and its management.
 - d. different types of capacities to be strengthened.



- e. emergent issues related to water resources (quality and quantity, recycle, and reuse) and water uses (access, cooperation and conflicts/competition) water diplomacy, transboundary aspects, drought vulnerability and risk assessment.
3. Presentation of the specificity of the main transboundary aquifer system and basin in the GGW regional and if necessary, their interactions
4. Identification of the main interactions between national/regional farming policy with Water and energy access policies, especially in term of integrated land and water use planning and economic and energy goals
5. Synthesis on how existing results from ongoing and past research projects and development initiatives addressing transboundary trade-offs and externalities could be valuable for the GGW institutions and other adjacent initiatives.
6. Recommendations on how to operationalize these interactions / nexus at the regional/transboundary, national and local level for the benefit of the populations and how these dynamics (water-energy-land-food nexus) could be steered towards restoration goals.
7. Drafting of concept and proposals on research and development projects at the region level or main transboundary systems

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of transboundary water and land management challenges and opportunities in the Sahel region, with a focus on the GGWI area.

Identify best practices, lessons learned, and success stories in transboundary water and land management in the Sahel region and beyond;

Provide technical guidance and support to the study team on transboundary water and land management issues, including but not limited to water management, soil conservation, and sustainable land management, crop species diversification;

Work with the study team to develop recommendations for improving transboundary water and land management practices in the GGWI area and beyond;

Ensure that the issues related to vulnerable communities and gender including youth, women are mainstreamed in analysis and recommendations;

Collaborate with relevant stakeholders in the region, including governments, civil society organizations, river basin organizations, and the private sector, to ensure the study's findings are relevant, practical, and actionable including stakeholders/communities' participation through engagement of citizen science.

The GGW Consultant's primary responsibilities will include, but not be limited to:

Conducting a comprehensive review of existing scientific and grey literature, key papers, reports, digital data and tools and data on transboundary water and land management in the Sahel region and in other transboundary water affected regions deemed in commonality.

Providing technical expertise and support to the study team on transboundary water and land management issues;

Conducting virtual consultations with relevant regional bodies to collect data and engage with relevant stakeholders;

Leading the development of the study's technical reports and recommendations.

Collaborating with the study team to ensure the study's findings are relevant, practical, and actionable.

Representing the UNCCD at relevant meetings, conferences, and workshops related to the study.



Coordinate with UNCCD team on the relevant thematic issues such as gender, private sector, land-security-peace nexus as required.

Providing regular progress reports to the study team and UNCCD management.

Deliverables

1. A clear Great Green Wall Transboundary Land and Water Management strategy with a clear set of recommendations.
2. Once finalized, organize a consultation bringing together various projects stakeholders to review and validate the recommendations.
3. Updated strategy and workplan/action plan including realistic propositions for activities and performance and impact indicators.

Contractual terms

The service of the selected consultant is estimated for the period of 6 months within period of 01 June 2023 and to be concluded by 30 November 2023). This contract is based on deliverables and payment is defined by output. The consultancy is home based and part time.

All products resulting from this contractual arrangement are the exclusive property of the UNCCD.

Requirements

- Advanced degree (Master's or PhD) in a relevant field such as water resources management, environmental science, or sustainable development;
- At least 10 years of professional experience in transboundary water and land management in the Sahel region or other arid and semi-arid regions;
- Demonstrated expertise in water management, soil conservation, and sustainable land management in arid and semi-arid regions;
- Experience working with relevant stakeholders in the region, including governments, river basin organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector;
- Strong analytical and writing skills;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- Extensive knowledge on Integrated water resources management, transboundary issues, nexus approaches and strategy development
- Proven experience of working in the Sahel countries and regional partner agencies,
- Excellent demonstration of the workings of international conventions, preferably the UNCCD. Experience in working with UNCCD stakeholders in the country would be an asset.

Special notice

Only individuals who can act as independent, individual economical operators are qualified to apply. Individuals who can provide their services only on account of an institution or enterprise not in their individual capacity are not eligible under this procedure.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Secretariat and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultant and individual contractor is responsible for determining tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

Submission of application



The following documents should be sent to staffing@unccd.int as **one document**: UNCCD Personal History Form¹ /CV and cover letter, specifying the following in the email subject line: **CCD/23/C/30**.

The deadline for applications is **21 May 2023**. Only applications submitted by the deadline and with complete documentation will be taken into consideration.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 08 May 2023

¹ UNCCD P-11 form in electronic fill-in .pdf OR .docx format available: <https://www.unccd.int/about-us/secretariat/vacancies/applying-unccd>