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Commission

Contract for Individual Consultant

Request for written proposal

Reference: IOC/MPR/057/25

Request to submit a written proposal for a work assignment with UNESCO

UNESCO is inviting written proposals from Individual Consultants for the work assignment described in attachment A.

To enable you to prepare a proposal for this assignment, please find attached the following documents:

- (a) Terms of Reference (see attachment A);
- (b) UNESCO's template for contract for Individual Consultants, the contracting modality used for these assignments (attachment B);
- (c) For any further questions about the assignment please contact: Malek Ameri via m.ameri@unesco.org

Your written should comprise:

- (a) A Technical Proposal consisting of
 - an up-to-date personal curriculum vitae;
 - an indication of the approach and methodology you would adopt to carry out the assignment, a workplan and comments on the Terms of Reference if any (in brief).
- (b) The amount to be charged for the assignment, which should be quoted in US dollars or in euros only. Please show any travel costs separately.

Your proposal and any supporting documents must be in English.

Contract for Individual Consultant Request for written proposal

UNESCO places great emphasis on ensuring that the objectives of the work assignment, as described in the Terms of Reference, are met. Accordingly, in evaluating the proposals for the assignment, attention will focus first and foremost on the technical elements. From those proposals deemed suitable in terms of the criteria in the Terms of Reference, UNESCO shall select the proposal that offers the Organisation best value for money.

Your proposal should be submitted by e-mail no later than close of business (17:00 Paris time) on **07 September 2025**.

Email proposals should not exceed 5MB.

The e-mail address is: **m.ameri@unesco.org**

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that his/her proposal is received by the deadline.

Thank you for your interest in this UNESCO assignment; and we look forward to receiving your proposal.

Attachment A

Terms of Reference for Individual Consultant (IC)

Description of the assignment (Title of consultancy): *Consultant to develop a publication on “Conjunctive Water Management: Experiences and Lessons Learned from the GEF IW Portfolio”.*

Project/Section Title: *GEF IW:LEARN, IOC/MPR*

Modality and Period of assignment/services: *25 working days spread over a period of 6 months*

I. Background

Within the overall framework of the IOC Programme and Budget 2025, in particular the project IW:LEARN5, the Individual Consultant will work under the overall supervision of the Head of MPR/IOC and the direct supervision of GEF IW:LEARN Project Coordinator.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resources Network (GEF IW:LEARN)'s latest phase commenced in 2022, with the endorsement of a fifth phase of the project (IW:LEARN5). IW:LEARN5 will be implemented from July 2022 until mid-2026. The project represents a cooperative effort between the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), with the involvement of all GEF Agencies and project partners. The GEF is a global partnership among 183 countries, international institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. The GEF International Waters (IW) focal area targets transboundary water systems, such as river basins with water flowing from one country to another, groundwater resources shared by several countries, or marine ecosystems bounded by more than one nation.

GEF IW:LEARN5 continues to facilitate knowledge exchange to advance capacities on transboundary water management, including the conjunctive management of groundwater and surface water resources. This activity aims at strengthening the capacity of projects to implement effective management strategies. This will be achieved by the organization of three dialogues that will promote conjunctive management of surface water and groundwater, collecting and sharing lessons learned and best practices, and supporting major international water events where project outcomes will be showcased.

As part of its publication series, IW:LEARN will develop a publication on “Conjunctive Water Management: Experiences and Lessons Learned from the GEF Portfolio” with the aim to strengthen capacities on conjunctive water management, as a key strategy to enhance long-term resilience, sustainability and climate change adaptation. The publication also aims to raise awareness of conjunctive water management in the context of the proposed renewed focus on groundwater in GEF-9, which is expected to emphasize the importance of building cooperative

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governance by strengthening institutional, human, and regulatory capacities at the national level—both within foundational GEF projects and through continued efforts in Strategic Action Programme (SAP) implementation.

The objectives of the publication are to:

- Provide an overview of the state-of-play on conjunctive water management globally and in the GEF IW portfolio to date, highlighting the scope, scale, typologies of interventions undertaken and challenges faced by projects and partners to advance on the implementation of conjunctive water management on local, national, and regional levels;
- Synthesize lessons learned and best practices from GEF projects (including International Waters (IW), and selected Chemicals and Waste (CW), Land Degradation (LD), and Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) projects) that implement conjunctive water management, both in terms of water quantity and quality, including lessons learned from other projects and initiatives outside the GEF portfolio to illustrate aspects not yet addressed by GEF projects;
- Develop conclusions and strategic recommendations, summarizing the main findings and providing forward-looking recommendations to guide future GEF programming, project design, and capacity-building efforts.

II. Scope of work, purpose & responsibilities of the proposed work

The activity involves the following tasks:

Task 1: Develop the annotated outline of the publication

- Design a detailed outline, including main sections, sub-topics, and key messages.
- Annotate sections with notes on what data and/or case studies will support them.
- Identify content that can be extracted from existing resources.
- Plan the collection of any missing data, information and case studies, e.g. through targeted interviews, portfolio call, as needed.
- Draft the annotated outline.
- Share the advanced annotated outline for review, including possible consultation at the 7th SADC groundwater conference.
- Finalize annotated outline based on comments and feedback received.

The envisaged length of the publication is 20-30 pages, tentatively including the following sections:

- Introduction
- State of play
- Lessons analysis (incl. challenges, approaches, and experiences from successful implementation)
- Recommendations for GEF to support GEF-9 Programming

The advanced annotated outline of the publication is tentatively scheduled for consultation at the [7th SADC Groundwater Conference](#), taking place from 19–21 November in Johannesburg,

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South Africa. It will form part of a dialogue focused on lessons learned, challenges and next steps in implementing conjunctive water management across various regions. This second dialogue will build on the outcomes of the first dialogue that took place in October 2023 as part of the [Global workshop on Conjunctive Water Management of Surface Water and Groundwater: National to Transboundary level](#) (Geneva, 16-17 October, 2023), organized by UNECE in partnership with GEF and IW:LEARN, among others. This publication aims to complement the policy guidance document currently being developed by the UNECE Expert Group on Conjunctive Water Management in Transboundary Basins.

Task 2: Collect and analyse practical lessons learned from the application of conjunctive water management

- Draft a comprehensive template/request for practical lessons to be disseminated to the portfolio.
- Specify the type of information sought to collect experiential knowledge and replicable practices from GEF IW projects.
- Launch a call to the GEF portfolio via email to collect case studies, primarily from IW projects as well as up to 6 case studies from other focal areas, e.g. CW, LD.
- Analyze the responses received to facilitate integration into the publication.

Task 3: Identify gaps where further information from non-GEF projects is required to supplement the overview

- Review the initially collected data and information to identify aspects not yet addressed by GEF projects.
- Create a shortlist of non-GEF projects, initiatives, practices, experiences and examples from non-GEF regions, such as USA, Australia, European countries to analyze experiences and lessons learned in terms of water quantity and quality.
- Contact relevant focal points for access to reports or interviews to collect supplementary information described above.

Task 4: Liaise with UNECE to avoid duplication and making sure the two products are complementary

- Set up coordination meetings with UNECE focal points.
- Share outlines and drafts to ensure consistency and mutual goals, whilst highlighting complementary elements.
- Align language and timelines to enhance cross-promotion and uptake.

Task 5: Develop the draft and circulate it for consultation

- Compile content, case studies, and data into a coherent narrative.
- Propose draft graphics, visuals, and supporting materials e.g. photos images, maps and other audio-visuals, for the publication.
- Format the document in line with IW:LEARN publication standards.

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- Circulate the draft to external reviewers, including GEF agencies, project teams, and partner organizations. Incorporate feedback from the consultation phase.

Task 6: Develop the final draft, ready for publication by February 2026

- Develop the final draft.
- Conduct a final review for consistency, clarity, and accuracy.
- Format the document professionally and prepare for publication in digital form.

The consultant will work in close collaboration with the IW:LEARN team. All consultations as required will be set up by IW:LEARN and support will be provided to seek the required input and feedback.

III. Expected Outputs and deliverables

The below deliverables will be reviewed and approved by the IW:LEARN Project Coordinator.

Deliverables/ Outputs	Estimated Duration to Complete (working days)	Target Due Dates
Deliverable 1: 1.1 Submission of the Draft Annotated Outline 1.2 Submission of the Template/request for practical lessons learned 1.3 Launch of call for lessons learned	5 working days	7 weeks from contract signature: 1.1: 1 week from contract signature date 1.2: 4 weeks for data collection 1.3: 2 weeks for final annotated outline [Final Annotated Outline (tentatively presented for consultation at the 7th SADC Groundwater Conference, taking place from 19–21 November in Johannesburg, South Africa)].
Deliverable 2: 2 Submission of the Draft report including case studies, draft graphics, and visuals ready for circulation and consultation	10 working days	15 weeks from contract signature:

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Deliverable 3: 3 Submission of the Final draft report including graphics, visuals and supporting materials, formatted, and ready for publication in digital form	10 working days	24 weeks from contract signature date
TOTAL:	25 working days	24 weeks from contract signature date

IV. Proposed Methodology:

Please draft a methodology outlining your proposed approach for completing this assignment. This should include:

1. **Approach:** Describe your overall strategy or framework for addressing the assignment's objectives.
2. **Steps and Processes:** Provide a summary of the main steps you will follow, from initial research or analysis through to the final deliverables.
3. **Adaptability:** Explain any flexibility in your approach to allow for adjustments based on project needs or new findings.
4. **Justification:** Briefly justify why you believe this methodology is appropriate for achieving the desired outcomes of this assignment.

V. Supervisory arrangements

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Project Coordinator and the overall supervision of the Head of the Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section.

VI. Duration of work

25 working days spread over a period of 6 months.

Please note that one working day is defined as 7.5 hours of work.

VII. Duty station

The consultant is expected to work remotely.

UNESCO will provide the Consultant with all required access to working files, UNESCO network, knowledge-management systems (including institutional email and Microsoft TEAMS accounts), and temporary office space if needed for occasional presence at UNESCO Headquarters. Envisaged travel to the 7th SADC Groundwater Conference (19–21 November in Johannesburg, South Africa) will be covered separately by UNESCO.

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Personal Equipment: The consultant must supply their own laptop, software, or any specialized tools relevant to the assignment.

Workspace: As the work is remote, the consultant should have a reliable workspace and internet connection to meet the project's requirements.

VIII. Facilities to be provided by UNESCO (if any)

The consultant is expected to work remotely.

UNESCO will provide the Consultant with all required access to working files, UNESCO network, knowledge-management systems (including institutional email and Microsoft TEAMS accounts), and temporary office space if needed for occasional presence at UNESCO Headquarters. Envisaged travel to the 7th SADC Groundwater Conference (19–21 November in Johannesburg, South Africa) will be covered separately by UNESCO.

Personal Equipment: The consultant must supply their own laptop, software, or any specialized tools relevant to the assignment.

Workspace: As the work is remote, the consultant should have a reliable workspace and internet connection to meet the project's requirements.

IX. Requirements for experience and qualifications

1. Academic Qualifications:

Master's degree in hydrology, hydrogeology, integrated water resources management, environmental engineering, or related discipline.

2. Years of experience:

10 years of professional experience in integrated water resources management, with direct involvement in:

- Conjunctive use planning and implementation.
- Relevant tools and methodologies for conjunctive water management approaches.
- Data analysis, interpretation and assessment of surface and groundwater, including water quality.
- Assessment of water policies, governance frameworks, or institutional capacity for conjunctive water management.

3. Technical experience:

- Synthesizing complex information to prepare technical reports, policy briefs or other publications.
- Conducting analysis of case studies, synthesis experiences, lessons-learned or best practices reviews.
- Collaborating with donor agencies, NGOs, government or research institutions.

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- Thorough understanding of processes, especially surface-groundwater interactions, water allocation, water quality, climate variability and resilience strategies in water management.

4. Proposed Methodology:

Proposals will be evaluated on the clarity, relevance, and feasibility of the proposed approach and timeline.

5. Desired Competencies:

Competencies:

Ability to:

- Work independently and meet deadlines.
- Coordinate input from multiple contributors (e.g., co-authors, reviewers, editors).
- Engage with stakeholders for information gathering and validation.

Communication & Collaboration

- Strong interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills.
- Experience presenting findings in workshops, webinars, or conferences.
- Demonstrated experience and skills to present findings in accessible infographics, graphs, and other visual means for publication. Samples and references should be provided when applying.

X. Criteria for selection of the best offers

Combined Scoring method – where the qualifications and methodology will be weighted a max. of 70%, and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a max of 30%; using the following evaluation criteria. There may be an interview as part of the selection process.

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Max. Point</i>
<u><i>Technical Competence</i></u>	70%	700
• <i>Criteria A: Academic Qualifications</i>		100
• <i>Criteria B: Years of experience:</i>		100
• <i>Criteria C: Technical experience</i>		200
• <i>Criteria D: Proposed Methodology</i>		200
• <i>Criteria E: Competencies</i>		100
<u><i>Financial (Lower Offer/Offer*300)</i></u>	30%	300

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<u>Total Score /1000</u>	Technical Score + Financial Score
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<i>Weight per Technical Competence</i>	
Weak: below 70%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a WEAK capacity for the analyzed competence
Satisfactory: 70-75%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a SATISFACTORY capacity for the analyzed competence
Good: 76-85%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a GOOD capacity for the analyzed competence
Very Good: 86-95%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a VERY GOOD capacity for the analyzed competence
Outstanding: 96-100%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated an OUTSTANDING capacity for the analyzed competence.

XI. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

The payment will be issued based on a lump sum amount, tied to the completion of the following deliverables.

Deliverables/ Outputs	Payment Percentage	Target Due Dates
Deliverable 1: 1.1 Submission of the Draft Annotated Outline 1.2 Submission of the Template/request for practical lessons learned 1.3 Launch of call for lessons learned	20% of the total contract amount	7 weeks from contract signature date
Deliverable 2: 2 Submission of the Draft report including case studies, draft graphics, and visuals ready for circulation and consultation	40% of the total contract amount	15 weeks from contract signature date
Deliverable 3: 3 Submission of the Final draft report including graphics, visuals and supporting materials,	40% of the total contract amount	24 weeks from contract signature date

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formatted, and ready for publication in digital form		
TOTAL	100%	24 weeks from contract signature date

XII. Taxes

UNESCO will not reimburse any taxes, duties or other contributions for which individuals may be liable in respect of any payments made to them under the terms of their contract.

XIII. Insurance

Individuals issued with a contract for individual consultants or other specialists are covered by UNESCO's insurance policy for work-related illness, injury, accidents or death whilst performing their official duties or traveling on behalf of the Organization. The insurance premium for the coverage, as determined by Pension and Insurance Section (HRM/SPI), must be included in the financial commitment for the contract.

XIV. Social Benefits

Individual consultants and other specialists shall be responsible for arranging, at their own expense, any medical insurance that they consider necessary during the contract period. Unless they are affiliated by virtue of their status as former staff members, they cannot be enrolled in the UNESCO's Medical Benefit Fund or United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. Individual consultants and other specialists are not entitled to paid annual or sick leave.

XV. Data Retention Notice

Please note that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) may retain the contact details of interested consultants in its internal database for potential future opportunities.

If you have any concerns or objections to this, please indicate this clearly in your response to this call.