

Supporting Sustainable Inclusive Blue Economy Transformation in African SIDS Project



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to support the implementation of the African Blue Economy Strategy through review and piloting of the Blue Economy Dashboard in African SIDS

Financing Agency: Global Environment Facility (GEF)

GEF Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP Executing Agency: Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA)

Duty Station: Remote (with possibility for travel as required)

Tenure: 90 days over 5-month period

Contract Type: Deliverable based Consultancy

1. BACKGROUND

African Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face distinct development challenges linked to their small size, geographic isolation, narrow economic bases, and high dependence on marine and coastal ecosystems. These vulnerabilities are further intensified by climate change, environmental degradation, and capacity constraints in data collection, coordination, and policy implementation. For African SIDS, the Blue Economy represents a critical pathway for sustainable development, livelihoods, food security, and resilience.

To address these challenges, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is financing the project “Supporting Sustainable Inclusive Blue Economy Transformation in African Small Island Developing States (SIDS)” which aims to support six African SIDS, namely Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Comoros, Mauritius, and Seychelles, in their aspirations to move towards sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient blue socio-economic development. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC), and executed by the Global Water Partnership-Southern Africa (GWP-SA). The project aims to enhance the implementation of the African Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) in African SIDS by strengthening enabling policies, institutions, data systems, and stakeholder capacities. The project is implemented under three technical components. Component 1 focuses on strengthening sustainable Blue Economy and Land Degradation Neutrality enabling conditions through improved governance

frameworks, while Component 2 supports on-the-ground national demonstration projects that address unsustainable ocean and coastal use, unlock new and additional sustainable Blue Economy opportunities, and promote integrated land management and restoration of degraded production landscapes with positive impacts on Blue Economy assets. Component 3 centres on knowledge management and upscaling, ensuring that lessons learned, best practices and innovative solutions from national demonstrations are documented, shared and scaled across the region.

At the continental level, the AUC has developed a Blue Economy dashboard as a harmonised monitoring tool to track progress on ABES implementation through a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) covering environmental, economic, social, and governance dimensions. While the dashboard provides a robust and comparable framework, its effective use in African SIDS requires review and contextualisation of KPIs, practical data collection tools, and targeted capacity support to reflect island-specific contexts and constraints.

This consultancy is commissioned under the above-mentioned project to support the AUC and African SIDS in reviewing and contextualising the KPIs captured in the existing Blue Economy dashboard and in piloting the dashboard across selected SIDS. The assignment will strengthen the relevance, usability, and sustainability of the dashboard as a tool for evidence-based policymaking, planning, and investment at national and regional levels.

In this context, and in line with project component 1 (Enabling Environment for Sustainable Blue Economy Transformation), GWP-SA, as the Executing Entity for the African SIDS Project, is commissioning an assignment to review and contextualise the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the existing Blue Economy dashboard and to support African SIDS in piloting the dashboard as a practical tool.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The overall objective of this is to review, contextualise the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the Blue Economy dashboard, and to support African SIDS in piloting the dashboard as a practical tool to enhance implementation and monitoring of the African Blue Economy Strategy by the AUC and African SIDS. This will also support African SIDS to develop & update gender responsive Blue Economy baselines, instruments and frameworks to ensure harmonization of data collection, analysis and reporting.

Specific Objectives

The assignment will:

- Review and contextualise the existing Blue Economy dashboard KPIs to reflect the diverse environmental, economic, and institutional contexts of African SIDS, while maintaining alignment with the African Blue Economy Strategy.
- Design harmonised and adaptable data collection templates to support consistent reporting across SIDS and facilitate comparability.

- Develop and validate a set of gender-responsive indicators for monitoring Blue Economy performance, aligned with AU Agenda 2063 and SDGs 5, 8, 13, and 14.
- Support the piloting of the Blue Economy dashboard in selected African SIDS and document lessons learned.
- Strengthen national and regional capacity for gender-responsive data collection, analysis, and use in Blue Economy policies, programmes, and partnerships.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY TASKS

This will be implemented using a participatory and context-sensitive approach, combining technical review, stakeholder consultation, piloting, and capacity building. The assignment will require close consultation with national statistical offices, line ministries, regional organisations, and other relevant stakeholders in African SIDS.

Task 1: Inception phase

- Conduct a desk review of relevant project documents, the Blue Economy Dashboard methodology, KPI framework, and baseline activity requirements.
- Map key stakeholders at national and regional levels relevant to Blue Economy data, gender, and statistics.
- Refine the methodological approach for KPI contextualisation, data template design, piloting, and capacity building.
- Prepare an inception report outlining the workplan, methodology, stakeholder engagement approach, and indicative timeline.

Task 2: Review and contextualisation of Blue Economy Dashboard KPIs

- Review the existing Blue Economy Dashboard KPIs, definitions, thresholds, and scoring logic.
- Assess the relevance, feasibility, and applicability of KPIs across different African SIDS contexts.
- Identify context-specific considerations, including data availability constraints, proxy indicators, and differentiated benchmarks where appropriate.
- Propose refinements or guidance notes to improve the interpretation and use of KPIs in SIDS contexts, while preserving continental comparability.

Task 3: Design of harmonised data collection templates

- Design harmonised data collection templates adaptable across African SIDS and scalable to other African member states.
- Ensure templates capture:
 - KPI definitions, units, sources, and periodicity;
 - Gender-disaggregated data where relevant;
 - Metadata on data quality, assumptions, and proxies.
- Align templates with existing national and regional data collection and reporting systems to minimise duplication.
- Prepare concise user guidance for national data custodians and focal points.

Task 4: Development and validation of gender-responsive indicators

- Review existing KPIs to identify opportunities for strengthened gender integration.
- Develop a set of gender-responsive indicators for monitoring Blue Economy performance, aligned with:
 - African Blue Economy Strategy,
 - AU Agenda 2063,
 - SDGs 5, 8, 13, and 14.
- Validate proposed indicators through consultations with:
 - National statistical offices,
 - Relevant line ministries,
 - Regional organisations and technical partners.
- Document validation outcomes and agreed refinements.

Task 5: Piloting and capacity building

- Support all 6 participating African SIDS to pilot the Blue Economy Dashboard using the harmonised data templates.
- Provide technical guidance to national focal points and data custodians on data compilation, validation, and dashboard use.
- Design and conduct training workshops (virtual and/or in-person) for government officials, private sector actors, and civil society representatives on:
 - Gender mainstreaming in Blue Economy policies and programmes;
 - Use of harmonised data templates and indicators;
 - Interpretation and use of dashboard outputs for planning and investment;
 - Strategies for private sector engagement and partnerships.
- Document challenges, good practices, and lessons learned from piloting.

Task 6: Synthesis and recommendations

- Synthesize findings from KPI review, piloting, validation, and capacity-building activities.
- Identify gaps, capacity needs, and opportunities for scaling the dashboard across African SIDS.
- Provide practical recommendations for refinement of KPIs, data systems, and capacity support under Activity 1.1.1.

4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, TIMELINE AND AMOUNT

Deliverable	Description	Timeline	Amount (USD) To be provided by consultant
Inception report	Refined methodology, workplan, and stakeholder engagement approach	Within 3 weeks of contract start	
KPI contextualisation technical note and revised Blue Economy Dashboard KPIs for SIDS	Review and contextualisation of Blue Economy Dashboard KPIs for African SIDS	End of Month 2	
Harmonised data collection templates and user guidance	Adaptable templates and guidance for KPI data collection	End of Month 3	
Piloting and capacity building report	Country Dashboard KPI findings status report including summary of key takeaways and country recommendations for strengthening Blue Economy in each SID. Summary of piloting activities, training workshops, and lessons learned	Mid-Month 4	
Final consultancy report	Consolidated findings, recommendations, and roadmap for scale-up	End of Month 5	
Total			

5. INDICATIVE LEVEL OF EFFORT

The assignment is expected to require approximately 90 professional working days over a period of five (5) months.

The level of effort reflects:

- The technical complexity of reviewing and contextualising KPIs across diverse African SIDS contexts;
- The design of harmonised data collection templates and gender-responsive indicators;
- The need for stakeholder consultations at national and regional levels;
- The delivery of capacity building workshops and piloting support.

The awardee of the consultancy will be responsible for the overall delivery of all tasks and outputs and will coordinate inputs from national counterparts and regional partners as required.

Indicative allocation of level of effort (to be refined during inception phase)

Task	Estimated Days
Task 1: Inception phase	5 days
Task 2: KPI review and contextualisation for African SIDS	18 days
Task 3: Design of harmonised data collection templates	5 days
Task 4: Development and validation of gender-responsive indicators	15 days
Task 5: Piloting and capacity building (including training design and delivery)	35 days
Task 6: Synthesis and final reporting	12 days
Total	90 days

6. REQUIRED EXPERTISE AND QUALIFICATIONS

6.1. Qualifications

Interested candidates should possess:

- An advanced university degree (Master’s or higher) in one or more of the following fields:
Blue Economy, environmental economics, marine and coastal management, sustainable development, natural resource management, statistics, data analysis, or a related discipline.

6.2. Experience

Interested candidates should demonstrate:

- At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in blue economy policies, environmental and natural resource management, sustainable development, or related analytical and advisory work.
- Proven experience in the design or application of indicators, dashboards, or monitoring frameworks, preferably in multi-sector or cross-cutting contexts.
- Demonstrated experience working with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and/or island, coastal, or marine-dependent economies, particularly in Africa.
- Strong experience in gender mainstreaming, including the development of gender-responsive indicators, integration of gender considerations into sector policies, and alignment with SDGs and regional strategies.
- Experience engaging with national statistical offices, line ministries, and regional organisations, including validation of indicators or data systems.
- Proven experience in capacity building and trainings, including the design and facilitation of workshops for government officials, private sector actors, and civil society organisations.

- Familiarity with the African Union policy landscape, including the African Blue Economy Strategy and AU Agenda 2063, is a strong asset.
- Experience working with AU Member States, international development partners and or regional institutions

7. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Weight of Technical Proposal: 80%

Minimum Technical Threshold to Qualify for Financial Evaluation: 70%

Evaluation criteria	Criteria description	Max weight (%)	Points
1. Education background	At least Master’s in one or more of the following fields: Blue Economy, environmental economics, marine and coastal management, sustainable development, natural resource management, statistics, data analysis, or a related discipline.	10	10
Subtotal			10
2. Professional experience		30	30
Demonstrated professional experience in similar assignment and regional context	At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in blue economy policies, environmental and natural resource management, sustainable development, or related analytical and advisory work.	5	5
	Proven experience in the design or application of indicators, dashboards, or monitoring frameworks, preferably in multi-sector or cross-cutting contexts.	5	5
	Demonstrated experience working with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and/or island, coastal, or marine-dependent economies, particularly in Africa.	5	5
	Strong experience in gender mainstreaming, including the development of gender-responsive indicators, integration of gender considerations into sector policies, and alignment with SDGs and regional strategies.	5	5
	Experience engaging with national statistical offices, line ministries, and regional	3	3

	organisations, including validation of indicators or data systems.		
	Proven experience in capacity building and trainings, including the design and facilitation of workshops for government officials, private sector actors, and civil society organisations.	3	3
	Familiarity with the African Union policy landscape, including the African Blue Economy Strategy and AU Agenda 2063, is a strong asset.	2	2
	Experience working with AU Member States, international development partners and or regional institutions	2	2
Subtotal			30
3. Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan		50	50
3.1. Understanding of the ToR and Methodological Soundness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear demonstration of understanding of the ToR - Relevance and suitability of the proposed data collection and analysis approaches, methodology for capacity building, suggested data collection tools, etc 	35	35
3.2. Implementation Plan and Feasibility	Coherent workplan, realistic timeframe, clear outputs aligned with deliverables in ToRs.	15	15
Subtotal			50
TOTAL TECHNICAL SCORE		100	100

8. REPORTING AND COORDINATION

The consulting firm will work under the direct supervision of the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWP-SA), in close coordination with AUC, African SIDS line ministries and Project Technical Advisory Group. GWP-SA will provide overall technical and administrative oversight, review and approve all deliverables, and serve as the primary liaison with the firm. The consultant will maintain regular communication with GWP-SA, submit progress reports in line with the agreed work plan, and ensure the quality and timeliness of all outputs.

9. HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications by email to gwpsaprocurement@gwp.org, with a copy to Shamiso.Kumbirai@gwpsaf.org and immaculee.uwimana@gwpsaf.org, no later than **2 April 2026**. The application should include the following documents:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Cover Letter
- Proposed Methodology (3 pages maximum) and proposed pricing of each identified deliverables under section 4

GWPSA will evaluate the proposals or CV's received against each other based on the criteria stated above. GWPSA reserves the right to negotiate any aspect of your proposal before conclusion of a Contract for the Assignment. GWPSA furthermore reserves the right to reject all proposals or CV's submitted without giving any reason. GWPSA may discontinue or suspend without responsibility or liability to any Bidder including (without limitation) any liability for any costs or expenditure incurred by, or inconvenience caused to, any Bidder. The proposal shall be prepared in the English language.

The financial proposal should be expressed in US Dollar and payment for the Services will be made in the same currency.

10. TAXES

A withholding tax will be deducted from the Consultant's invoices at the default rate of 15%, or 10% where a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) is applicable for the respective country. GWPSA will provide the corresponding tax certificates and shall not be liable for any additional taxes payable to the tax authority/authorities in the Consultant's country of origin