Source to Sea Initiative

Wetlands International

ToR for Mid-Term Review (MTR)
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Source to Sea Initiative: ToR for Mid-Term Review (MTR)

Project duration: Three years (1st August 2021 to 30th June 2024)
Review period: 1st August 2021 to 31st December 2022
Implementing organization: Wetlands International
Project Location: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania

1. Project background and context

In August 2021, with support from Sida we set out to implement the Source to Sea Initiative (S2S). This regional initiative addresses the drivers to loss of wetlands and their biodiversity in Eastern Africa by putting in place enabling conditions for integrated wetland management solutions at landscape and ecoregional scales. Our approach recognises four indisputable facts:

a) In order to make significant and long-term impact that change pressures on wetlands and biodiversity, accurate and complete datasets on the environment and on the biodiversity impacted needs to be developed and disseminated in an easy to use format;
b) Empowered stakeholders at local, national and ecoregional level are essential to improving governance and management of wetlands and their biodiversity;
c) Taking an integrated and holistic approach to livelihood resilience (based on evidence, learning and innovation) is crucial for landscape regeneration and social resilience; and
d) An enabling environment is a key ingredient for the implementation of adaptive policies, plans and practices at all levels.

We work in two ecoregions:
- Rift Valley Lakes ecoregion (with field interventions in Ziway-Shalla and Omo-Turkana Basins)
- East African Mangrove ecoregion (with field interventions in Lamu and Rufiji Delta)

Wetlands International Eastern Africa (WIEA) is the lead implementer of the Source to Sea Initiative. For administrative purposes, Wetlands International Global Office (WIGO) is the contract holder with Sida, and WIEA is sub-contracted by WIGO to lead project implementation.

The long-term vision of the project is: by 2030 high value wetlands in the Rift valley and along the Eastern African coastline have an improved conservation status, benefiting freshwater, marine and terrestrial biodiversity, supporting livelihoods and a climate-resilient economy.

The overall objective of the project is: by 2024, government agencies, civil society and community groups jointly safeguard and restore wetlands of the Rift Valley and Mangrove ecoregions.

More specifically the project seeks to achieve the following regional outcomes:
1. Knowledge and data on trends in wetland status and distribution, biodiversity and socio-economic values is accessible and supports policies and practices;
2. Government institutions and civil society organisations have increased capacity to monitor wetlands and their values and to develop, resource and implement integrated strategies for wetland conservation and rehabilitation;
3. Integrated landscape regeneration and livelihood enhancement strategies developed, implemented and brought to scale through co-management arrangements between government, civil society and community groups; and
4. Ecoregion management plans and strategies for selected wetland landscapes in the Rift Valley (Ziway Shalla sub-basin and the Omo-Turkana Basin) and along the Eastern Africa Mangrove Coast (Lamu Seascape and Rufiji Delta) are developed, mainstreaming wetlands and biodiversity conservation.

2. Purpose and objectives of the Mid-Term Review

The primary purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to have an overview of the project’s progress to date while attaining a robust understanding of the successes and failures. It shall also be an exercise to gain an external view of the project in its current phase and at the same time relies on the project team to stimulate reflection within the project and to engage a learning process gathering the thinking of target groups, project team and the donor’s point of view. This will aim to improve the project performance (impact, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and relevance) and ensure the achievement of its vision and objective.

Specifically, the review is to:

• Undertake analysis of the project logframe, implemented measures and activities of the project and assess its progress and achievements against the log frame;
• Assess the progress of the project in relation to its vision, objective, purpose and outputs and analyze the large scale theory of change of the project;
• Identify the project strengths, weaknesses, constraints, enabling factors and bottlenecks and formulate recommendations accordingly;
• Advise on any adjustments that should be made to the project in order to better achieve the agreed outputs, purpose and goal; and
• Make the achievements of the project sustainable.

The review should aim to focus on the following aspects of the project:

• The performance of the project to date with respect to stated goals, purpose and objectives by identifying specific accomplishments and/or failures attributable to it;
• The activities that have taken place and the resulting outputs to date, and determine the quality and impact of these;
• The implementation modalities, notably the level of execution of the partnership strategy for the achievement of results i.e. the added value, as well as the arrangements made for the execution of activities and the resulting outputs to date and the quality and impact of these at regional, national and local level;
• The lessons learned from the experience to date and the key recommendations that can be used in the continuation or reorientation of the project;
• The recommendations are expected to be clear, practical and strategic in terms of the way forward (including which recommendations should be prioritized), increasing effectiveness of implementation, including institutional anchoring of the activities, the appropriation of the changes by the local communities and the strengthening of capacities by the target groups.

Thus, it should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the project and propose possible reorientations and suggest lines of thought with a view to achieving the objectives by June 2024. It should also ensure sustainability of the actions undertaken after the project ends and indicate how the project may have to be adapted for the next phase.
3. Mid-Term Review team

The MTR will be carried out by a firm or an independent consultant. The firm/independent consultant will put together a small MTR team consisting of a team leader (MTR team leader) who will be assisted by individuals who will cover one region each. This MTR team will be supported by one representative each from Wetlands International Eastern Africa and Wetlands International Global Office. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of Wetlands International Eastern Africa will support the team in the technical preparation and implementation of the midterm review.

The Mid-term Review will be done involving the project implementation team, beneficiaries and partners as far as possible.

The MTR should contribute to the adaptive management of the implementation for the remainder of the project. Besides, the results will be used to inform Wetlands International, its partners, stakeholders and Sida on progress so far, document lessons and make recommendation on future implementation. Moreover, this will serve to guide the design of similar projects in the future and generally contribute to organizational learning and form part of Wetlands International’s effort for transparency.

The results from the Mid-Term Review will be disseminated as follows:

- Organization of an internal meeting to share results (to be attended by Sida, S2S Steering Committee, Core team, Landscape team, Regional team, PMSUP team, Finance and Operations teams)
- Sharing of the draft and final MTR report with Sida, Wetlands International and its programmes/projects, partners.

4. The scope of the Mid-Term Review and methodology

The methodology proposed by the MTR team will be based on a participatory approach that includes project team and the different beneficiaries and actors (stakeholders) involved in the project, and incorporate:

1. Review and analysis of project documents;
2. Project sites observation for every landscape
3. Key informant interviews: Interviews and focus groups with key partners/stakeholders/target implementation partners of the project at all relevant levels (regional, national, ecoregion, landscape) within Wetlands International staff, representatives from Government, target Platforms, NGOs, Association/Foundations/CBOs, etc. The MTR team will select the interviewed entities/people through a sampling method, and consider the different genders. Key questions will be used during interviews and focus groups;
4. Beneficiary consultations: Consultations (focus group discussions and interviews) with groups of beneficiaries at all relevant levels (regional, national, ecoregion, landscape), i.e., grassroots community organizations (small-scale producers, women, youth, members of farmers’ organizations, BMUs, etc.);
5. Evaluation matrix to integrate the criteria and indicators for the evaluation, detailed methodologies and related tools.

The MTR team may propose other participatory methods. The MTR team will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis. There will be a clear emphasis on participatory methods for the qualitative assessment of the information provided by the project.
beneficiaries. It should be noted that a more detailed methodology, work plan and evaluation matrix will be developed and proposed by the MTR team in the technical proposal of the tender.

The data collection methods and the analysis of the results will be based on the five criteria below:

a) **Quality and relevance of design**: Assessment of the relevance and quality of the project design and strategy i.e. is the project design/logframe adequately addressing problems and needs? Is it consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements and national priorities and does it address the priorities of Wetlands International and Sida?

b) **Effectiveness**: Assess to what extent has the project activities reached the expected results i.e. progress towards results. It involves an assessment of the major achievements of the project to date in relation to its stated purpose, objectives and intended results. The MTR team should also assess the project design including whether the log frame is realistic, logical and coherent or whether adjustments should be considered. This includes the description of any major successes and failures of the project to date, and explain why they have occurred, some unforeseen impacts (whether positive or negative). Lessons learned should be highlighted.

c) **Efficiency of planning and implementation**: Have funds, capacity, time and other resources been efficiently used to achieve the project purpose and outputs, i.e. has the project provided value for money and effort? Review the project implementation and adaptive management of the project, identify challenges and propose additional measures to support more efficient and effective implementation. The following aspects of project implementation and adaptive management will be assessed: management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications.

d) **Impact**: Effects of achieved outputs/ outcomes to intended targets e.g. ecosystems/environment, beneficiaries among others and assessment of the impact of the project, whether positive, negative, primary or secondary, long-term or short-term, produced directly or indirectly as a result of project interventions, and whether intended or unintended.

e) **Potential for sustainability, replication and magnification**: Assess the key factors affecting sustainability and transference of the project lessons and/or activities, and make recommendations on the key strategic options for the future of the project i.e. exit strategy, scale down, replication, scale-up, continuation, major modifications to strategy.

5. **Profile of the MTR team leader and offer submission procedure**

The MTR team leader is responsible for conducting the evaluation mission. As such, he/she is responsible for meeting the deadlines and producing the results of the mission. He/she must organize the team and prepare the details, coordinate the mission, set the timetable and is responsible for the finalization of the reports (draft report and final report). The MTR team leader must demonstrate experience and skills in evaluation methodology and participatory research techniques (interviews, questionnaires, methodological selections, operationalization of indicators, etc.) and have competencies linked to the purpose and outputs of the review, namely:

- Minimum MSc in Biodiversity conservation and management, Socio-Economic development, Environmental development or related field;
- At least 7 years of experience in evaluating international and regional environment/natural resources/biodiversity projects in the Global South;
- Experience in design, participatory diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation and analysis of development projects executed through international NGOs and with donor support.
• Experience in biodiversity conservation projects focusing on participatory natural resource management and that take a participatory approach with communities, local development partners and governments
• Experience in integrated landscape management projects that address gender and social inclusion and conflict sensitivity
• Good communication in English and knowledge of Kiswahili and/or Amharic will be an added advantage. Good writing skills in English;
• Having already conducted a similar assignment (references required).

The MTR team leader’s offer shall include the following:
1. A letter of bid duly signed;
2. A technical proposal (maximum 6 pages) that details:
   • The applicant’s understanding of the TOR;
   • Suggested detailed methodology;
   • Work plan;
   • Experience with similar previous assignments indicating field of specialization and references;
   • In annex: at least two sample reports of similar assignment which will be treated confidentially;
   • In annex: CV of all members of the MTR team and possible track record
3. A financial proposal showing the total cost (in Euro), professional fees and reimbursable expenses (e.g., travel costs, field work, materials, etc.). The financial proposal must cover all costs associated with this evaluation; costs incurred outside the terms agreed in the financial proposal and final contract will not be reimbursed. The offer will also state the details of the amount not including taxes and including all taxes. Any special exemption should be clearly stated.

Proposals will be scored according to the following criteria and have to score at least 60 points on the technical proposal to be considered further:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Max. score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical proposal (80%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed methodology and approach</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing and presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial proposal (20%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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The offer must be submitted to: hreastafrica@wetlands-eafrica.org (Wetlands International East Africa in Nairobi, Kenya) on or before 30th June 2023 and bearing the subject in the email: S2S MTR 2023.

These are further details for the offer:
• Perusal and evaluation of offers: The offers will be sorted at the Wetlands International Eastern Africa Office. An evaluation committee will be tasked to assess the eligible offers. The choice will be based on technical capacity. The final choice will be made considering the budget available for this exercise.
• Reserve on cancelling the bid: The present invitation to bid can be cancelled due to the conditions below:
  o There has not been enough competition;
  o No offer meeting the requirements of the invitation to bid has been received;
The offers accepted at the time of the perusal by far exceeded the available budget.

- Conditions for carrying out the mandate:
  - The service will be subject to a contract and will be added as an appendix to the present ToR and the offer shall be validated.
  - The MTR team leader will take up all the tax obligations related to its status of consultancy.
  - The MTR team will comply with Wetlands International management procedures while performing the services, subject to this offer of consultancy.

6. Timetable and logistics

The MTR process will be carried out from 10th July 2023 to 31st August 2023. The consultancy period should not exceed 30 days.

The MTR team’s timetable will include the following activities:

- Meeting with the Wetlands International staff to discuss approach and methodology
- Review of project documents;
- Refining of the MTR methodology, development of MTR matrix, sampling strategy and MTR tools;
- Development of research instruments/tools (questionnaires, interview guidelines, etc.);
- Site visits, observations and meetings/focus groups and interviews with the stakeholders of the review (according to the sample strategy);
- Data analysis;
- Presentation of preliminary findings to representatives from Steering Committee, Core team, Landscape and ecoregion visioning team, Regional team, PMSUP team, Finance and Operations teams;
- Preparation of the draft review report;
- Incorporation of comments and finalization of the review report.

7. Outputs and deliverables

The MTR team leader is fully responsible for the development and submission of the following outputs/deliverables:

- A detailed and refined timetable of the intervention (for approval) to be submitted no later than 11th July 2023;
- A document detailing the MTR methodology i.e. the methods and tools for data collection and analysis to be submitted no later than 13th July 2023;
- The MTR draft report submitted no later than 14th August 2023 to Wetlands International for comments;
- Presentation of preliminary findings and initial conclusions (debriefing with a PowerPoint presentation) to Wetlands International and Sida on 23rd August 2023;
- The final MTR report (following the structure in Heading 9, not exceeding 25 pages with an executive summary of 3 pages, excluding annexes): three physical copies and 1 electronic copy should be submitted to Wetlands International Eastern Africa director no later than 31st August 2023.
The MTR team leader will be responsible for drafting the MTR report, which should include inputs from the review team as a whole, commentary on the stakeholder/partners/target groups meetings and a set of recommendations.

The draft report will be circulated within Wetlands International by the Eastern Africa director for comments. The comments will be sent to the MTR team leader by 19th August 2023.

The MTR team will have till 31st August 2023 to improve the final report.

The MTR report should follow the structure in Heading 9 ‘MTR report structure’, and will be produced in MS Word format. The draft and final review reports will be delivered in English by the MTR team leader.

8. Budget

During the implementation of the review, operational costs for the entire review team and Source to Sea Initiative team will be directly supported with the project budget, including meetings, travel, allowances and lodging.

The payment of the MTR team will be performed as follows:
- 20% of the fees upon signing the contract;
- 20% of the fees after submission of the preliminary (draft) report;
- 60% of the fees after submission of the final report to and approval by Wetlands International.

Payment is subject to prior submission of original invoice stating the following information:
- Reference of the bid;
- Bank details;
- The period of execution of the service.

Wetlands International will not make advance payments on the fees. However, any expenses for the mission, in compliance with Wetlands International procedures, are payable in advance once the contract is signed.

9. MTR report structure

The main output of this work is a final report, not exceeding 25 pages with an executive summary of 3 pages, excluding annexes. To this end, the report should include at least the following elements:

1. Cover page and initial page(s)
   - Name of the evaluation intervention
   - Timing of the evaluation and date of the report
   - Country of the evaluation intervention
   - Names of evaluators
   - Names of the organisation initiating the evaluation
   - Acknowledgements

2. Table of contents
   - Include boxes, diagrams, tables and annexes with page references

3. List of acronyms and abbreviations
4. Executive summary (max 3 p.) with main conclusions and recommendations

5. Introduction

6. Objectives and scope of the evaluation (very brief)

7. Methodological approach to evaluation

8. Data analysis

9. Results and conclusions
   - Overall results and conclusions by answering the evaluation questions or criteria
   - Results and conclusions by component
   - Overall conclusion

10. Recommendations
    - Relevant and acceptable recommendations
    - Concrete proposed actions and key partners to implement the actions
    - Responsible units and implementation timeframe
    - Prospects for the future

11. Best practices and lessons learned
    - What are the main lessons that can be learned from the experience and that may have generic application?
    - What are the best and worst practices in terms of design, engagement, monitoring and evaluation of outputs, activities and partnerships around the outcome?

12. Report Annexes
    - MTR TOR
    - Inception Report / Evaluation Matrix
    - List of people or groups interviewed or consulted, and sites visited
    - Summary of field visits
    - List of documents used

10. Annexes to the MTR ToR (separate documents)
    - Annex 1: Source to Sea project description and map
    - Annex 2: Project proposal
    - Annex 3: Source to Sea project management structure
    - Annex 4: Annual work plans
    - Annex 5: Progress reports including financial reports