

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

## **WEFE Nexus Assessment Consultant**



ToR

## About ICIMOD

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region stretches 3,500km across Asia, spanning eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Encompassing high-altitude mountain ranges, mid-hills, and plains, the zone is vital for the food, water, and energy security of up to two billion people and is a habitat for countless irreplaceable species. It is also acutely fragile – and frontline to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, is an international organisation established in 1983, that is working to make this critical region greener, more inclusive and climate resilient. For more information, read our [Strategy 2030](#) and explore our [website](#).

## Scope of work

In support of efforts to enhance cooperation on shared water resource management and to strengthen the resilience of riparian communities to climate change in the transboundary Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna river basins, under the TROSA II project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), ICIMOD seeks to engage a Water-Ecosystem-Food-Energy (WEFE) Nexus consultant. The consultant will contribute to an action research study titled 'WEFE Nexus Assessment in the lower Mahakali River Basin.'

The ideal consultancy firm will be results-driven, proficient in the WEFE Nexus concept and operations, and knowledgeable about Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) in the designated research area. The role requires strong research skills and a track record of delivering results on time. Supported by ICIMOD's Intervention on River Basins, the consultant will be tasked with conducting the WEFE Nexus Assessment in the lower Mahakali Basin, in a selected geographical area, in discussion with the team covering the Bhimdatta Municipality and surrounding areas in Kanchanpur District, Sudurpashchim Province, Nepal, and neighbouring areas in India. The consultant will also actively engage with the river basin team in related consultations and meetings throughout the project.

## Objective

This consultancy aims to assess the sectoral and governance interdependencies through the WEFE Nexus assessment in selected study areas covering Bhimdatta Municipality and surrounding areas to identify key challenges and opportunities for sustainable water resource management. The study will generate evidence-based policy recommendations to support climate-resilient development in the lower Mahakali River Basin.

Specific objectives:

1. **To design a robust WEFE Nexus research framework**, including methodologies, data collection tools, and a detailed work plan, in consultation with ICIMOD and local stakeholders. *(Supports Deliverable 1)*
2. **To collect primary and secondary data** through field surveys, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs) to assess sectoral interdependencies and governance challenges in the project areas. *(Supports Deliverable 2)*
3. **To analyse interdependencies and trade-offs** using a WEFE Nexus approach, identifying key stressors (climate change, resource competition, and policy gaps) along with opportunities for integrated resource management. *(Supports Deliverables 3 and 4)*
4. **To develop policy-relevant scenarios** that evaluate the impacts of climate change, socio-economic trends, and governance interventions on water, energy, food, and ecosystems in the lower Mahakali River Basin. *(Supports Deliverable 4)*
5. **To synthesise evidence-based recommendations** for climate-resilient development, ensuring alignment with local and national policies, and present findings in a finalised WEFE Nexus assessment report. *(Supports Deliverables 5 and 6)*

## Major deliverables

The consultancy firm will accomplish the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Timeline
1. Finalised research design (including literature review, methodology, questionnaire, and timeline in consultation with the study team based on an existing framework provided by ICIMOD)	May – June 2025
2. Collected research data list (field surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews to collect research data)	June – August 2025
3. Initial analytical report, supplemented by field visits and consultation meetings to cross-check data (through preliminary data analysis using the WEFE nexus approach)	
4. Report on Scenario development and trade-off analysis (develop scenarios and trade-offs considering resource distribution, climate change impacts, socio-economic trends, and policy interventions)	
5. Draft reports on WEFE nexus analysis and policy-relevant scenarios	
6. Final WEFE nexus assessment study report	Sept 2025

## Reporting and coordination

The consultancy firm will be responsible for completing and submitting the deliverables. ICIMOD will provide the required relevant materials, project documents, and coordination support to the firm. Supported by ICIMOD's Intervention on Resilient River Basins under Action Area: Cryosphere and Water, the consultancy firm will prepare a detailed work plan and timeline for the assignment and execute the study in a satisfactory and timely manner.

## Duration and notice period

The contract duration will be 50 workdays. The exact start and end date of the consultancy will be mentioned in the consultancy service contract.

## Budget and terms of payment

The budget for this consultancy will be determined based on the scope of work and deliverables agreed upon.

## Qualification and experience

The proposed resources must be part of the project team for the time period specified. Additional resources must be included in the technical proposal with roles, responsibilities, and expertise.

Responsibilities	Qualification
Expert/ Consultant (1 Person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least a master's degree or PhD (preferred) in geography, ecology, environmental anthropology, spatial planning or other relevant scientific disciplines.</li> <li>At least 10 years of theoretical and practical experience in the field of IWRM, WEFE, and IRBM.</li> <li>Very strong research and analytical background.</li> <li>Proven record of experience in conducting similar assignments.</li> </ul>

## Submission of proposals

### **Technical proposal**

Applicants must include the following sections in the technical proposal:

#### 1. Technical approach and methodology:

In this section, applicants should explain their understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, and methodology to obtain the expected output.

#### 2. Work plan

Applicants should propose the main activities of the proposal, content and duration, milestones, and delivery date. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology.

#### 3. Organisation and experts

Applicants should propose the structure and composition of the team, mentioning the qualifications and skills of the team members. Applicants should list the main discipline of the assignment, the key expert responsible, and the proposed technical and support staff.

#### 4. Relevant past experience

Applicants must include the past experience of their organisation and experts relevant to this request for proposals.

#### **Financial proposal**

Applicants should provide the financial quote with the breakdown of all the costs and include the tax in the budget (refer to the table provided below):

- o Breakdown of the experts needed, number of days required, quantity, rate
- o Breakdown of other costs, unit, quantity, rate

### **ICIMOD's core values**

Our core values are integrity, neutrality, relevance, inclusiveness, openness, and ambition. These values are an expression of our culture and are central to the guiding beliefs and principles of our work and behaviour. Our core values will lie at the heart of ICIMOD operations and delivery. They will underpin everything we do and frame how we work with our partners. They reflect our founding intentions and the balances we seek to hold, while equipping ourselves for the future.

### **Ethical consideration**

The consultant will be required to take all the necessary actions to handle the collected data responsibly (see ICIMOD Responsible Data Policy) to ensure data privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. The consultant needs to adhere to the in-country regulations while executing the project.

### **Our commitment to the prevention of sexual harassment**

ICIMOD is committed to prevention and redressal of sexual harassment at the workplace and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults and expects all staff, consultants, volunteers to share this commitment. We will do everything possible to ensure that only those who are suitable to work within our values are selected to work for us.

### **Confidentiality/non-disclosure**

All material issued in connection with this ToR shall remain the property of ICIMOD and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement exercise. All information provided shall be either returned to ICIMOD or securely destroyed by unsuccessful applicants at the conclusion of the procurement exercise.

During the performance of the assignment or at any time after expiry or termination of the Agreement, the consultant shall not disclose to any person or otherwise make use of any

confidential information which s/he has obtained or may during this agreement relating to partner organisation/ICIMOD, the respondents or otherwise.

The consultant will be required to sign a non-disclosure / confidentiality agreement as part of their undertaking of this work.

## **Intellectual property, copyright, and ownership of all prepared information**

The consultant shall retain all rights to pre-existing (background) intellectual property or materials used by the consultant in the delivery of this study. All arising intellectual property, ideas, materials, processes, or processes formed in contemplation, course of, or as result of this study shall be passed to ICIMOD without restriction.

The consultant shall warrant that all arising intellectual property, materials and/or products produced in pursuit of this study shall be original and shall not infringe on any third party's claim. All technical or business information, in whatever medium or format, originated, collated, or prepared by or for the consultant in contemplation, course of, or as result of this assignment shall be transferred to ICIMOD without restriction on completion and shall not be used by the consultant for any other purpose without express written permission of ICIMOD.

Copyright of all arising documents, data, information, or reports produced by the consultant under this agreement shall belong to ICIMOD and will be passed to ICIMOD without restriction. Such documents, data, information, and reports shall not be used by the consultant for any other purpose other than in conjunction with this assignment, without the express written permission of ICIMOD's Head of Programme Funding.

## **Diversity, equity, inclusion, and safeguarding**

ICIMOD's human resource selection process is based on the qualifications and competence of the applicants. As an employer, ICIMOD is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and offers equal opportunities to applicants from all backgrounds and walks of life, including but not limited to gender, age, national origin, religion, race, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or social status. ICIMOD strongly encourages applications from all eligible applicants, especially women, from all parts of the HKH region.

ICIMOD is dedicated to establishing and upholding a safe and nurturing work environment, where all its employees can participate fully and meaningfully without fear of violence, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Any type of abuse or harassment, including sexual misconduct [including child abuse], by our staff, representatives, or stakeholders is not condoned or tolerated.

## Method of application

The completed proposal should be submitted through email to [Consultancy.int@icimod.org](mailto:Consultancy.int@icimod.org) by 6 PM (Nepal Standard Time), on 5 May 2025. Two separate files of technical and financial proposals should be submitted.

Proposals must be submitted along with the supporting documents as follows:

- Company registration certificate
- Tax registration certificate (i.e. VAT/PAN registration)
- Tax clearance of the last 3 years

## Evaluation criteria

The service provider will be selected based on the highest-ranked technical proposal (60% weightage) and the lowest-cost financial proposal (40% weightage).

The service provider will be selected based on the highest cumulative scores obtained in the technical and financial proposals using the following formula:

- Technical score = Score obtained based on technical proposal (total 100)
- Financial score = Score obtained based on financial proposal (total 100)
- Total score = 60% of technical proposal + 40% of financial proposal

The service provider scoring the maximum score based on the criteria will be awarded.  
For further inquiries, please contact:

[consultancy.int@icimod.org](mailto:consultancy.int@icimod.org)

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International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

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