

**Terms of Reference (TOR)**  
**Company to recruit a**  
**Wildlife Consulting Team for Tiger Surveys and Planning**  
**Department of Forest Resource Management (DFRM)**

**A. BACKGROUND**

1. Protected Areas and wildlife in Lao PDR face threats including habitat loss driven by encroachment for agriculture and shifting cultivation, illegal logging and selective off take of high value timber, and increasingly, by road construction, hydropower, and mines. Wildlife is additionally threatened by over hunting, largely driven by the domestic and international market for illegally sourced wildlife and wildlife products. Part of the threat has made change in land use within the declared protected areas and protection forests.

2. As to address the issue the Government of Lao PDR (GOL) and its partners to increase capacity of agencies and people to improve protected area management and address threat issues and ensure sustainable development, for the purposes of sustained economic growth, local livelihood retention, and nature conservation. More field surveys for species conservation such as tiger are strongly required. Key agencies related to sustainable use of natural resources include Departments under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), and the National University of Laos (NUOL), amongst others.

3. GOL has accessed \$6.83 million of GEF funding (from Biodiversity, Land Degradation, and Sustainable Forest Management focal areas) and \$17 million IDA funds (national and regional funding) to implement the Protected Areas and Wildlife Project (PAW). The PAW Project was approved on April 2, 2014 and became effective on July 5, 2014. The Project began in the Lao financial year 2014/15 (i.e. from October 1 2014) and to end on June 30, 2021. The project development objective (PDO) of PAW is: *to strengthen the management systems for national protected areas conservation and for enforcement of wildlife laws.*

4. The World Bank is currently processing additional financing (AF) to PAW, at \$15 million from national IDA. This was originally earmarked for the Lao Environment and Social Project 2 (LENS2). Under this AF, the PAW project is being restructured to: include the LENS2 scope, have a new project name, and have a new (PDO). Given the PAW was made effective around the same time as AF processing, PAW and the AF is now considered a single, consolidated project, named LENS2. The new PDO is: *to strengthen the country systems for managing protected areas<sup>1</sup>, enforcing wildlife law, and complying with environment and social standards.*

5. The LENS2 executing agency is the Environment Protection Fund Office (EPFO). The project will function as a financing mechanism for a suite of sub-projects implemented by various sub-project delivery agencies (SDAs), within the framework of three project components: Component 1: Institution development and capacity building; Component 2: Adaptive management of natural resources, environmental and social issues; and Component 3: Project administration and EPF

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1. National Protected Areas (NPA) is a generic term for National Conservation Forests as defined in the Forestry Law. In the original project, only NPAs are eligible for financing. With the AF increased scope, additionally Provincial, District and Village Conservation Forests as well as National, Provincial, District and Village Protection Forests are eligible for support. For the purpose of the LENS2, all these categories are bundled together under the generic term 'protected areas' (PAs). These forests are under the jurisdiction of DFRM.

capacity building. Around 40 sub-projects have been identified during preparation of PAW and LENS2. There is additional reserved funding for scaling up successful sub-projects or for new sub-projects.

6. The DFRM sub-project objective is: *to strengthen the policy and institutional framework and DFRM's capacity to sustainably manage protected areas*. This will be implemented through the following components:

- **Comp 1 - Institution development for NPA and PF system**, to investigate to recommend optimal institutional arrangements for protected area management nation-wide; feed into PA planning in development landscape, PA Status Report and external threat assessment; update of the list of Lao protected and management, develop national master plan for protected area management; economic evaluation of PAs in Laos; preparation and dissemination of a suite of guidelines and manuals for protected area and protection forest management;
- **Comp 2 - Operation of NPA and NPF System**, the protected area system will be improved by reviewing land use types in national protected areas and national protection forests, re-categorizing them, then to establish and implement a database of investment projects that impact nationally designated PAs and a system to monitor them; develop a matrix and a reporting system for DFRM monitoring of PA management activities; activate the MoUs with Vietnam on transfrontier PAs through annual meetings and joint monitoring of selected transfrontier PAs (at least NEPL and NNT); supervise implementation and safeguards compliance of the LENS2 sub-projects by the PA Management Units (WMPA, NEPL MU), project PONREs, and project DONREs, including provincial protection forest sub-projects. At the same time, tiger survey will be conducted for specific site conservation planning.
- **Comp 3 - Improved sub-project management and capacity building**, to support the improved protected area system is necessary to improve the national and provincial capacity building through a wide range of training including english and GIS starting from training needs assessment. With appropriate mechanism in place such as Advisory Technical Working Group and improved coordination with other including neighboring country. Of which, including improved DFRM capacity in project performance counting from preparing TORs of and managing consultants, prepare procurement plans with EPF; monitoring, evaluation, and associated reporting for the sub-project.

7. Under component 1, DFRM is committed to deliver a new national tiger survey. The tiger is a critically endangered species and legally designated in the list of Category I protected species in the National Wildlife Law. It is a top priority species in need of urgent conservation because it plays a key role in the natural forest ecosystem that contributes significantly to sustainable social, economic, and environmental benefits. A National Tiger Action Plan (2010-2020) was developed in 2010 according to national principles outlined in the National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, National Forestry Strategy to 2020, and National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy in order to identify appropriate management interventions that support integrated conservation and development to meet national development goals.

8. At least eight Tiger Conservation Landscapes (TCLs) were identified throughout the country in the National Tiger Action Plan, and classified into four different classes. Class 1 Sites comprise

- North-eastern Laos including areas within and adjoining the Nam Et-Phou Louey and Nam Xam NPAs, and extending into northern Vietnam.
- Southern Laos including the areas within and adjoining Dong Hua Sao, Xe Piene, Dong Ampham, Xe Sap and Dong Phou Vieng NPAs and the Xe Khampho, Bolavan Southwest

and Phou Khathong PPAs. This area adjoins contiguous habitat in central Vietnam and northeastern Cambodia.

It is anticipated that tiger populations in all these sites will be exceptionally low, and of borderline conservation merit.

9. It is further anticipated that the protected areas in which residual tiger populations persist, also protect tiger prey species as well as other rare and threatened species of both national and international conservation value. These include Asian elephant, dhole, other large and medium sized cat species, gibbons and langurs, muntjacs and wild cattle. Some ground dwelling pheasants are also of international conservation significance.

10. The National Tiger Action Plan identified seven objectives necessary toward achieving the goal, these include;

1. Increase public awareness and support for the recovery and conservation of wild tigers and their habitats
2. Identify and demarcate totally protected zones (TPZs) in protected areas and corridors for connectivity between TPZs in tiger conservation landscapes.
3. Increase and make effective the enforcement of national regulations and international conventions to stop killing of tigers and to regulate illegal harvest and trade of tiger prey.
4. Increase national cross-sectoral cooperation for the recovery and conservation of wild tigers and their habitats
5. Increase international cooperation to reduce the illegal trade of tiger and prey to neighboring countries
6. Monitor and reduce human-tiger conflict in tiger conservation landscapes
7. Strengthen Protected Area organization, capacity and sustainable financing to effectively implement management activities to reduce threats to tigers and prey at priority source sites in Class 1 and 2 tiger conservation landscapes.

11. A large number of these objectives apply not only for tiger conservation including tiger prey species but also other threatened biodiversity.

12. Under the subproject, DFRM implements some elements of the Lao P.D.R. National Tiger Action Plan (2010-2020) as specific actions through the NPA management system. One of the activities comprises tiger surveys as well as surveys of tiger prey species and other threatened biodiversity, involving field surveys to confirm and map the presence of tigers and tiger prey species as well as other rare biodiversity in Laos. In the northern region, the focus for the survey probably includes Xe Xap NPA; in the southern region, Dong Ampham NPA is a priority survey site. Site specific conservation action plans are required where tigers, their prey species and other significant biodiversity are detected. Knowledge exchange with regional tiger range countries will be conducted.

13. Therefore, DFRM seeks a consultant (private firm, NGO, Institute or faculty) to mobilize an international/national team of wildlife experts to conduct the tiger surveys as per the objective below.

#### **B. OBJECTIVE OF THE SERVICES**

14. The objective of the consultancy is for DFRM to hire a Consultant (a consulting firm, an NGO, a private institute, a private university faculty) to provide a qualified team to establish the distribution and estimate the population of tigers.

### C. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

15. The main tasks and responsibilities are as follows:

- To conduct a literature review followed by an tiger expert's workshop which identifies the tiger conservation landscape and the sites with the possible presence of tigers;
- To conduct field surveys on tiger presence, tiger prey species and other rare species involving (i) village interviews in potential sites, (ii) verification of presence with light survey effort and camera traps; (iii) more intensive surveys using camera trapping to confirm and map the tiger locations and other rare species in Lao P.D.R. according to the priority sites identified in the National Tiger Action Plan. Priority sites most likely comprise protected areas in Xieng Khouang (Phou Sabot Pong Chong NPA, and some national protection forests), and Houaphanh (e.g. Nam Xam NPA and some national protection forests), as well as protected areas in the southern region including Xe Xap NPA and Dong Ampham NPA;
- Prepare specific tasks/event/workshops and help arrangements to complete the tasks;
- To produce a technical report on the current distribution of tiger presence, tiger prey species and other rare species, as well as estimate the population of the tiger for the entire country, with practical recommendations for long-term tiger conservation;
- In the event that any specific location supports a notable tiger population (at least 2-3 tigers), a brief site specific tiger conservation action plan will be prepared outlining existing conservation practice in the area and recommendations; however, the design for action plan must take account of sustainability;
- The knowledge gained will be communicated and used for promoting tiger conservation as to put this work in the important agenda of the government; also to communicate with tiger range countries through any appropriate tiger conservation related events;
- Assist the Government to implement priority actions identified in the National Tiger Action Plan. Also, where possible to help find additional funding sources for tiger conservation in the country.

#### **Key Activities:**

- Conduct a literature review on the distribution of tigers in Lao P.D.R.
- Conducting training for survey team and government counterpart staff undertaking the tiger, tiger prey species and other threatened biodiversity survey;
- Conduct field missions comprising provincial and district meetings/workshops as well as involving village interviews and tiger field surveys in targeted potential tiger sites
- Conduct national level workshops as well as the target provinces on tiger conservation planning;
- Develop and make available site action plans for tiger and other biodiversity (by site);
- Develop materials for tiger and other threatened biodiversity conservation awareness raising e.g. call to action for tiger;
- Prepare a summary report on the current status of tigers for the government to disseminate to other tiger range countries;

### D. EXPECTED INPUTS

16. The consultant, through its team of ca. 3 persons, will provide a service comprising a total of an estimated 200 working days over a period of 24 months to complete the tasks. The team leader would provide inputs estimated at 80 working days of the total days for this work. The detailed scope of work, task, individual assignment, etc. will be described in the technical proposal and refined in the inception report. The team leader shall ensure quality of the work delivery including

reporting, planning and communication materials to be designed and use. Travel to provinces and sub-project sites should be anticipated.

17. DFRM will provide two counterpart staff at the national level, one project vehicle for field surveys, information and data, office space and associated office facilities.

#### **E. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

18. The Company (private firm, NGO, Institute or faculty), through its Consultant Team, will prepare and submit the following products:

##### **Reporting:**

- Inception Report on the methodology with a work-plan/ budget and timeframe;
- Workshop reports, training reports and field reports;
- Interim Report on the work progress after six months with enclosed materials e.g. technical/field reports, meeting reports etc.;
- Final Report
- At least two communication pieces for decision makers (PPT, film, posters, etc.)

Materials will be prepared in English but some materials are required both Lao and English such as the materials for workshops, training and any communications. The content of the Final report will be evaluated by an international tiger expert.

#### **F. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

19. The Consulting Team of the Company (private firm, NGO, Institute or faculty) shall meet with the requirements of qualifications and experience as follows:

- Running conservation programmes on threatened and endangered wildlife and their habitats
- Proven track record in conducting wildlife surveys; experience in tiger surveys an advantage
- Experience in running programmes in ecology, wildlife, or conservation biology; experience in protected area management an advantage.
- Experience in GIS/mapping and camera trapping;

The Tiger Survey team shall meet with the requirements of qualifications and experience as follows:

##### **Team Leader**

- Minimum of 10 years work experience in wildlife surveys;
- PhD Degree in ecology, wildlife, conservation biology or closely related field.
- Have experience in GIS/mapping and camera trapping;
- At least two similar assignments successfully completed of which one should be on tigers;
- Experience in supervising a team and working with Lao Government staff;
- Have excellent skills in technical reporting, presenting and communicating.
- Excellent speaking and writing skills in Lao and English;

**Team Members** (at least 3 members, e.g. GIS, camera trapping and conservation awareness Relations).

- Minimum of 3 years working experience in wildlife surveys including camera trapping, GIS work on forest land use and conservation planning;
- Bachelor Degree (or higher) in forestry, Biology, GIS, Geography , IT with good computer skills;
- At least one similar assignment successfully completed;
- Some command in Lao and English speaking and writing skills;

The process for consultant selection will be as follows: Interested companies (private firm, NGO, Institute or faculty) will prepare an Expression of Interest, including the CVs of the consultant team, the assignment specific experience (providing information demonstrating the ability, skills and experience of the consultant team to undertake the assignment and deliver inputs/ outputs required under the TOR) and timeframe (for prequalification). Based upon these results, a short list of qualified firms/NGOs/institutes/faculties will be drawn up. These teams will then be sent a Request for a Proposal, comprising technical and financial components. The provisional starting date will begin in July 2016.

Interested companies (private firm, NGO, Institute or faculty) should prepare an Expression of Interest to: **Department of Forest Resource Management (DFRM)**, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE).

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Attention: Mr. Lamphanh Kommadam, Project Coordinator.

Dateline for submission is due date on June 15, 2016.