REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTRY

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR FORESTRY

KENYA WATERSHED SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (KEWASIP)

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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT (ISLWM) TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

PROCUREMENT/CONTRACT REF NO.: MECCF-SDF-550814-CS-CQS

MAY, 2026

Client:

State Department for Forestry

Attn; National Project Coordination Unit

P.O. Box 30126-00100, Nairobi

Email: kewasipnpcu@gmail.com, kewasipprocurement@forestry.go.ke

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Government of Kenya (GoK), through the State Department for Forestry (SDF), with support from the World Bank, is implementing the Kenya Watershed Services Improvement Project (KEWASIP) for a period of five (5) years. The Project Development Objective (PDO) of KEWASIP is to expand the area under sustainable land and watershed management and to improve the livelihoods of communities in the project areas.

KEWASIP is anchored on the National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (NLERS), targeting to restore and conserve 10.6 million Ha of degraded landscapes and ecosystems by 2032 through the 15 billion tree growing initiative. The strategy lays out a national program to restore, sustain, enhance, protect, and increase the productivity of Kenya's landscapes and ecosystem services. These results will enhance biodiversity conservation, environmental sustainability, sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, and socioeconomic development.

The project will be implemented in 5 focal sites namely: Marsabit Hills (Site 1), Marmanet Hills (Site 2), Nyambene Hills (Site 3), Chyulu Hills (Site 4), and Shimba Hills and is expected to benefit 750,000 people.

The project has the following three components:

Component 1: Roots of Resilience: Policy, Legal, and Regulatory Framework.

Component 2: Green Horizons: Sustainable Landscape and Watershed Management.

Component 3: Project Management, Training & Capacity Building.

INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Kenya's agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods are fundamentally dependent on the health and resilience of its watersheds. However, many of the country's key watershed areas are increasingly degraded due to unsustainable land use practices, deforestation, soil erosion, overgrazing, and the growing pressures from climate variability and change. These challenges are particularly acute in ASAL (Arid and Semi-Arid Lands) and highland catchment areas, where declining soil fertility, reduced water availability, and erratic rainfall patterns are undermining food security and economic stability.

With increasing land degradation, unsustainable land use practices, and the growing impacts of climate change, it is critical to promote Integrated Sustainable

Land and Water Management (ISLWM) practices in order enhance agricultural productivity, improve rural livelihoods, and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. ISLWM comprises a suite of technologies and practices crucial in promoting land, water, biodiversity and environmental management in a manner that ensures their long-term productive potential while sustaining ecosystem services and livelihoods in the phase of climate change.

Currently, watershed management interventions across counties and institutions are often fragmented, inconsistently applied, and guided by multiple, and sometimes conflicting, technical approaches. This lack of standardization reduces the effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability of investments. This calls for clear, practical, and context-specific technical and operational guidelines that can inform policy makers, extension services agents, land users, and development practitioners. This assignment proposes to develop Integrated Watershed technical and operational guidelines to address this gap by providing a harmonized, technically robust, and context-specific framework for planning, implementing, measurement and monitoring of watershed interventions.

The technical guidelines will provide guidance to stakeholders to implement ISLWM technologies and approaches to scale up sustainable land and water management at the national, county and community levels. The guidelines will offer a custom-made methodological approach for task teams to implement watershed management project activities.

Operational guidelines on Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) will establish robust governance and institutional structures to effectively support the planning, coordination, and implementation of ISLWM activities. These structures should ensure adherence to key principles, including partnership, knowledge management, harmonized, aligned, and scaled-up investments.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Overall Objective

To develop a Kenya-specific, evidence-based and operational menu of Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management and ecosystem restoration methods, integrating global good practice, Kenya-specific biophysical degradation pathways, and local and indigenous good practice.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the assignment are to:

1. Systematically define and classify the major biophysical degradation typologies affecting watersheds in Kenya (including ASAL and non-ASAL contexts);
2. Identify, synthesize, and adapt global best-practice ISLWM and ecosystem restoration approaches relevant to Kenyan conditions;
3. Document and assess local good practice and indigenous knowledge, including lessons from past and ongoing Kenyan programmes and community-led initiatives;
4. Develop a standardized menu of restoration and management methods, explicitly linking:
5. degradation type;
    - ecological and socio-economic context;
    - implementation requirements;
    - environmental and social risks;
    - expected ecosystem, water, and livelihood outcomes;
6. Provide clear technical guidance that informs baseline interpretation and supports consistent, defensible selection of interventions during hydroshed and micro-hydroshed planning.

SCOPE

The Consultant shall undertake the following tasks.

Task 1: Inception and Scoping

- Review KEWASIP project documents, including the PAD, PIM, NLERS, and relevant Environmental and Social instruments;
- Review ongoing Baseline Assessment scope to ensure alignment and avoid duplication;
- Prepare an inception report detailing methodology, analytical framework, work plan, and stakeholder engagement approach.

Task 2: Desk Review – Global, Regional, and National Practice

- Review and synthesize **global good practice** in ISLWM, ecosystem restoration, and nature-based solutions (including FAO, WOCAT, GWP and similar sources);
- Review Kenyan strategies, sector guidelines, and technical manuals relevant to land, water, forestry, rangelands, agriculture, and watershed management;
- Identify strengths, gaps, and inconsistencies in existing national guidance.

Task 3: Definition of Kenya-Specific Degradation Typologies

- Define and describe the major **watershed and landscape degradation typologies** relevant to Kenya, including but not limited to:
  - severe soil erosion and gullying in highlands;
  - rangeland degradation, bare ground, and bush encroachment in ASALs;
  - riparian and wetland degradation;
  - forest degradation and agricultural encroachment;
  - invasive species-dominated systems;
- Describe the biophysical processes, drivers, and development implications associated with each typology.

Task 4: Local Good Practice and Indigenous Knowledge

- Document **local and indigenous land, water, and ecosystem management practices**, including pastoral, forest-adjacent, agro-ecological and coastal systems;
- Review lessons from **past and ongoing Kenyan projects and programmes** (government, community, NGO, conservancy-based, and donor-funded);
- Assess the conditions under which these practices are effective, scalable, and sustainable.

Task 5: Development of the ISLWM Methods Menu

The Consultant shall develop a structured **menu of ISLWM and ecosystem restoration methods**, organized primarily by degradation typology.

Each method shall be presented using a standardized method profile, including:

- degradation type(s) addressed;
- suitable ecological and socio-economic contexts (rainfall, slope, soils, tenure, institutions);
- description of the method and key variants;
- evidence base (global and Kenyan);
- implementation requirements (skills, inputs, timing);
- environmental and social risks and mitigation considerations;
- indicative cost ranges and maintenance needs;
- expected outcomes for ecosystem restoration, water services,

and livelihoods;
- indicative monitoring indicators.

Task 6: Operational and Institutional Guidance

- Define roles and responsibilities of national, county, and community actors in applying the guidelines;
- Provide standard operating procedures (SOPs) for planning, implementation support, and supervision;
- Outline linkages with Environmental and Social safeguards instruments and grievance redress mechanisms;
- Provide guidance on capacity-building and knowledge management.

Task 7: Stakeholder Validation

- Facilitate at least one national-level and selected sub-national validation workshop(s);
- Incorporate feedback from stakeholders into the final Guidelines.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

1. Inception report including methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement strategy.
2. Synopsis of global, regional and national good practice, definition of terms, local and indigenous knowledge report
3. Draft Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) Technical and Operational Guidelines
4. Stakeholder validation report
5. Final Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) Technical and Operational Guidelines presented and adopted by NPCU, Steering Committee and partners.

Table 1: Reporting requirements for the deliverables

S/No.	Deliverables/Reports	Timelines after Contract Commencement	Format of Submission

1.	Inception Report	10 days	2 hard copies and a soft copy in PDF
2.	Synopsis of global, regional and national good practice, definition of terms, local and indigenous knowledge report	20 days	2 hard copies and a soft copy in PDF
3.	Draft Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) Technical and Operational Guidelines	30 days	A draft ISLWM report - 2 hard copies and a soft copy in PDF
4.	Stakeholder validation report	10 days	2 hard copies and a soft copy in PDF
5.	Final Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) Technical and Operational Guidelines presented and adopted by NPCU, Steering Committee and partners.	20 days	2 hard copies and a soft copy in PDF

TARGET AUDIENCE

The primary target group for this document comprises key stakeholders in ISLWM programmes and projects. The guidelines are also intended to raise awareness and improve understanding among a broader audience interested in protection of the environment, mitigation of land degradation and poverty alleviation.

DURATION OF CONSULTANCY

The assignment shall be for a period of **4 months** from the date of contract signing.

REPORTING TEMPLATE FOR INTEGRATED Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The report will contain but not be limited to the following sections:

1. Executive summary.

2. Table of contents.
3. Project overview.
4. Introduction to the guidelines
5. Synopsis of global, regional and national good practice, definition of terms, local and indigenous knowledge report
6. Watersheds profile
7. ISLWM Planning and Institutional Arrangements
8. Implemented ISLWM Interventions and technical compliance
9. Operation and maintenance
10. Environmental and Social Safeguards
11. Capacity building and training
12. Sustainability and scaling potential
13. Monitoring and Evaluation
14. Challenges and mitigation measures
15. Lessons Learned and good practices
16. Conclusions and recommendations
17. References
18. Annexes

The reports shall be submitted in the prescribed format to the client at the following address:

The Principal Secretary
State Department of Forestry
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry
N.H.I.F Building, Ragati Road
P.O. Box 30126-00100 Nairobi
Email: kewasipnpcu@gmail.com Attn: Project Coordinator, Kenya Watershed Services Improvement Project (KEWASIP)

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The proposed payment schedules, based on satisfactory performance of the contract, will be negotiated with the successful consultant and are presented in Table 2 below. Upon submission of each report, the consultant is expected to make a presentation of the submitted report to the client in a scheduled meeting. The acceptance of the report shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Table 2: Proposed payment schedule

S/No.	**Deliverables/Reports**	**Timelines after Contract**	**Payment**

		Commencement	
1.	Inception Report	10 days	20%
2.	Synopsis of global, regional and national good practice, definition of terms, local and indigenous knowledge report	20 days	NIL
3.	Draft Integrated Sustainable Land and Water Management (ISLWM) Technical and Operational Guidelines	30 days	20%
4.	Stakeholder validation report	10 days	20%
5.	Final Integrated Watershed Operation and Technical Guidelines	20 days	40%

All reports shall be submitted in the prescribed format to the client at the following

address:

The Principal Secretary
State Department for Forestry
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry
N.H.I.F Building, Ragati Road
P.O. Box 30126-00100 Nairobi
Email: kewasipnpcu@gmail.com
Attn: Project Coordinator, Kenya Watershed Services Improvement Project

The proposed evaluation criteria for the consulting firm

- Firm experience – 10%
- Methodology and work plan – 20%
- Key experts qualifications – 50%
- Financial – 20%

Total Score: 100 Points

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSULTANCY FIRM

2. Required skills and experience of the consultancy firm

a) **Core business and years in business**: The firm shall be registered/incorporated as a consulting firm with a proven track record of minimum 10 years' experience in institutional development, governance, or policy design in the environmental, natural resource management, agriculture sectors, with emphasize related to ISLWM, Agro ecology, land policy, and climate change.
b) At least 5 years of experience in developing operational guidelines, governance frameworks, technical guidelines or manuals.
c) Expertise in Sustainable Land Management, environmental governance, or related areas.
d) Experience in stakeholder consultation and participatory approaches.
e) Strong analytical, writing, and facilitation skills.

Relevant experience:
The firm shall demonstrate having successfully executed and completed at least 3 assignments of a similar nature, complexity and in a similar operating environment in the last 5 years. Details of similar assignments (name and address of the client, scope, value, and period should be provided and submitted).
Expression of Interest should include an enumeration of these similar past assignments.

f) Experience working in the Arid and Semi-Arid regions of developing countries.
g) Technical and managerial capability of the firm: The firm shall demonstrate as having the requisite technical and managerial capacity to undertake the assignment in the submitted company profile(s).

Required Team Composition and minimum qualifications

1. Team Leader / Integrated SLM & Watershed Management Specialist

Role: Overall leadership, technical oversight, and quality assurance

Qualifications:

- Master's in **Forestry, Natural Resource Management, Watershed Management, Environmental Science, Climate Change, or related field** (PhD is an added advantage)

- At least 10 years of experience in integrated landscape restoration, watershed management, and sustainable land and water management (SLWM)
- Demonstrated experience in designing and developing operational and SLM technical guidelines, frameworks, or manuals for large-scale environmental or natural resource management programs
- Proven experience working on similar donor-funded projects, particularly those involving community-driven development.
- Strong experience in multi-level governance, including collaboration with national and county governments, as well as community institutions (CIGs, CFAs, WRUAs) in watershed-based planning approaches and participatory processes.
- Demonstrated understanding of Kenya's environmental policy frameworks.
- Experience with donor-funded and multi-stakeholder projects

Key experts

2. GIS and Watershed Planning Specialist

- Degree in **GIS, Survey, Remote sensing,** Environmental planning, or related field
- At least 8 years of experience in watershed mapping, landscape planning, and spatial analysis
- Demonstrated experience in land use/land cover analysis, watershed delineation, and spatial prioritization of restoration interventions
- Proficiency in GIS and remote sensing tools (e.g., ArcGIS, QGIS, Google Earth Engine)
- Proficiency in: Data visualization, map production and spatial modeling for land and water systems
- Ability to develop tools for planning, monitoring, and reporting restoration activities

3. Climate Change and Nature-Based Solutions Specialist

- Master's degree in Climate Change, Environmental Science, Natural Resource Management, Forestry, or related field

- At least 8 years of relevant experience in climate change adaptation and mitigation, particularly within land use, forestry, agriculture, or watershed management sectors
- Demonstrated experience in designing and implementing climate-resilient and low- nature-based solutions (NbS).
- Ability to integrate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience considerations into technical frameworks
- Experience in linking climate interventions with livelihoods and ecosystem services
- Proven experience in integrating climate considerations into development programs, policies, or technical guidelines

4. Land Management / Soil scientist

- Minimum MSc in Soil Science or land Management
- 8 + years of hands-on experience in soil and water conservation techniques (e.g., terracing, agroforestry, contour farming) and land degradation assessment methods

5. **Social Specialist**

- **Degree in Sociology, community development, Social work, and other related fields**
  - At least 8 years of relevant experience in community work, social surveys, household baseline surveys or resource surveys
  - Demonstrated experience in:
    - Developing knowledge products (guidelines, manuals, policy briefs, toolkits)
    - Knowledge capture and documentation in development projects
    - Managing knowledge-sharing platforms and systems
    - Core technical competencies in Knowledge management systems and frameworks and documentation and synthesis of technical information.

6. Agronomist

- Degree in agronomy, general agriculture, horticulture, agroforestry, and other related studies.

7. At least 8 years of experience in livelihood surveys, watershed studies, agricultural value chains or water resource management.

Forestry Specialist

- Degree in Forestry, agroforestry, Natural resources management, with atleast 8 years of experience in forestry inventory, forest assessments, watershed management, Participatory Forest management or soil and water conservation.

8. Hydrologist/ water resource specialist

Degree is hydrology, water resources management with at least 8 years of experience in general hydrology studies and assessments.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist

- At least **8** years of relevant experience in monitoring and evaluation of development programs
- Demonstrated experience in:
  - Designing M&E frameworks and results-based management systems
  - Developing indicators, baselines, and performance monitoring plans
  - Conducting evaluations (baseline, mid-term, end-line)
- Proficiency in data analysis tools (e.g., Excel, SPSS, STATA, or similar).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant will report to the KEWASIP Coordinator as per the agreed work plan and contract deliverables. All reports shall be made in English. The consulting firm shall present an Inception Report within 10 days of the start of services outlining an initial assessment of the tasks following consultations with project implementing institutions (KFS, KEFRI, WRA, NEMA, KWS) and proposed methodology and work plan. A report regarding the assignment's first phase is to be submitted for approval by the Consulting Firm within 2 months after the commencement of the assignment. On receipt of the formal approval of the recommendations made by the consultant under the first phase, the consultant will then have to finalize the assignment's second phase within 2 months, essentially including the production of a report on this second phase.

The consultant shall submit a brief monthly progress reports in English to the **National Project Coordination Unit**

OBLIGATIONS

The Client

The NPCU will make the following resources available to facilitate the work of the consulting firm:

1. Project Implementation Manual (PIM) and Project Appraisal Document (PAD);
2. Project Environmental and Social instruments.
3. Introduction letter for the firm to obtain necessary permissions for conducting field survey in the project sites.

The Consulting Firm

The Consulting firm assumes responsibility for the costs of transportation, accommodation, insurance, airtime, and any other related expenditures. The Consultant is expected to undertake activities that ensure the output is consistent with professional and legal requirements. Furthermore, the data must be generated through a consultative process that guarantees authenticity and ownership.

CONFIDENTIALITY, PROPRIETY RIGHTS OF CLIENTS IN REPORTS AND RECORDS

All the data, reports and information collected or received from the client or other institutions for the purposes of this assignment will be kept strictly confidential and will be used exclusively to execute the terms of reference and shall belong to the client. All the intellectual property rights stemming from the execution of the terms of reference belong to KEWASIP. The content of the written materials that are obtained and utilized during this task will not be shown to third parties without the written consent of KEWASIP. No use shall be made of them without prior written authorization from the client.

At the end of the Services, the consulting firm shall relinquish all data, manuals, reports, and information (including the database, codes, and related documentation) to the client and shall not use them in any other assignment without prior written authorization from the client.