

## **Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN)**

### **Terms of Reference (ToR) for Terminal Evaluation**

**June, 2026**

### **Project: Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan**

Supported by:



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation  
and Nuclear Safety

**IKI**

INTERNATIONALE  
KLIMASCHUTZINITIATIVE



based on a decision of the German Bundestag

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Recruitment of National Consultant**

**Assignment:** Terminal Evaluation for the five-year project implemented on ‘Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan’.

#### **1. Background**

The project "Developing Ecosystem-based Solutions for Managing Biodiversity Landscapes in Bhutan" was implemented from July, 2021 and is scheduled to conclude in June, 2026. The International Climate Initiative (IKI) project aimed to establish approaches and tools for protecting and managing the habitats of the Critically Endangered White-bellied Heron (WBH) in Bhutan. The project is implemented by Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN).

The project is implemented in the Punatsangchhu and Mangdechhu river basins, working across six districts: Punakha, Wangdue, Tsirang, Dagana, Trongsa, and Zhemgang. Key political partners included are the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Tourism, Dzongkhag administrations, Local Government and the local communities.

#### **2. Objective of the Evaluation**

The primary objective is to conduct a comprehensive Terminal Evaluation to assess whether the project has successfully achieved its stated objectives, outputs, outcome, and overall impact. The evaluation will provide an evidence-based assessment of ESRAM report, document lessons learned, and provide recommendations for the sustainability of project interventions.

#### **3. Scope of Work**

The consultant will evaluate the project’s performance across its five core outputs:

- Output I: The design and application of the Ecosystem and Socio-economic Resilience Analysis and Mapping (ESRAM) approach for biodiversity conservation. An evaluation of achievements based on the ESRAM baseline study and current findings.
- Output II: Degraded and new potential WBH habitats rehabilitated and created (feeding, roosting and nesting) – (50 ha plantation & survival rates, 10 new WBH sites)
- Output III: Capacity of all stakeholders on planning and implementation of ESRAM study, ecosystem-based adaptation and livelihood options
- Output IV: The promotion of sustainable livelihood innovations, such as community-based ecotourism and climate-smart agriculture (organic farming, beekeeping, and fishery).
- Output V: The establishment of a robust knowledge base and dissemination of project results through national and international platforms

#### **4. Methodology**

The evaluation must be participatory and evidence-based. The consultant is required to:

- **Conduct Site Visits:** Travel to project sites within the Punatsangchu and Mangdechu (Six Dzongkhags) river basins to observe field interventions.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Engage with local communities and Local Conservation Support Groups (LCSGs) to gauge community ownership and livelihood benefits.
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Interview officials from DoFPS and DoT, Dzongkhag administrations, local government representatives, and stakeholders from the hydropower sector.
- **Desk Review:** Analyze project documents, including the technical proposal, ESRAM study reports, monitoring reports, IKI mid-term evaluation report interim and biannual reports.

## 5. Evaluation Criteria

The consultant will assess the project based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance:** Alignment with Bhutan’s Constitutional mandate for forest cover, the National REDD+ Strategy, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Effectiveness:** The extent to which targets were met, such as improving 10 WBH habitat sites and achieving a 10% increase in household income.
- **Efficiency:** The cost-effectiveness of project implementation and the mobilization of investments.
- **Impact:** Contribution to long-term climate mitigation (e.g., sequestering 346.9 tCO<sub>2</sub> eq.) and the stabilization of the WBH population.
- **Sustainability:** The likelihood of continued impact through the WBH Conservation, institutionalized ESRAM protocols, and community-led conservation.

## 6. Deliverables and Timeline

| <b>Deliverable</b>      | <b>Timeline</b>                    | <b>Description</b>   |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Inception Report        | Within 10 days of contract signing | Detailing the evaluation design, methodology, timeline, consultant’s approach, logical framework, work plan, list of documents to be reviewed, and stakeholders to be consulted. |
| Draft Evaluation Report | Within 20 days of contract signing | Presenting preliminary findings.   |
| Final Evaluation Report | Within 30 days of contract signing | A comprehensive document incorporating feedback, final ratings, and strategic recommendations.   |

## **7. Institutional Arrangements**

The consultant will work under the supervision and guidance of the Department of Program and Climate Change Coordination (DPCCC) of RSPN.

- All administrative and financial matters will adhere to the RSPN Financial Rules and Regulations (FRR) 2022.
- The DPCCC will review progress, provide feedback, and ensure quality control throughout the assignment.
- The consultant will liaise closely with the IKI project team and seek technical guidance when needed.

## **8. Duration and Timeline**

The consultancy is for a period of **45 days**, starting from **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026** and ending in **7<sup>th</sup> August 2026**.

## **8. Qualifications**

- Advanced degree in Environmental Science, Natural Resource Management, or a related field.
- Extensive experience in conducting project planning and terminal evaluations for international conservation projects (experience with **IKI** or **GCF** projects is an advantage).
- Deep understanding of Bhutan's environmental policies, project planning and management, and integrated approach like ESRAM.
- Proven track record in conducting FGDs and KIIs in rural areas in our contexts.

## **9. Application Procedure**

Qualified national consultant shall submit their proposal package addressed to the Executive Director, RSPN. The deadline for submission is 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2026, 5:00 PM.

**The submission package must include the following documents:**

### **1. Cover Letter**

A signed cover letter expressing interest in the assignment and confirming the firm/team's availability and commitment.

### **2. Technical Proposal**

All deliverables must be reflected properly and succinctly with methodology, implementation approach, and workplan/timeline for the assignment.

### **3. Financial Proposal\***

A comprehensive budget breakdown indicating all proposed costs related to the assignment.

### **4. Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

Detailed CVs of the Team Leader and all proposed team members, highlighting their qualifications, expertise, and relevant professional experience.

## **5. Company Profile**

A profile of the company/firm clearly outlining organizational background and previous experience in producing similar tasks/projects.

## **6. Sample Work / Portfolio**

Copies or links to similar assignment's completed in the past as references to demonstrate the quality and relevance of previous work.

## **11. Evaluation of Proposals**

All proposals will be evaluated in accordance with RSPN's Procurement Rules and Regulations.

Evaluation will be based on:

- Relevance and quality of the technical proposal
- Relevant qualifications and experience
- Cost-effectiveness and clarity of the financial proposal

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the offer which gives the best value for money based on the submitted lump-sum cost, will be selected for award. The Technical and the Financial Proposal submitted by the Consultant will be evaluated on the basis of the weightage 70:30 (70 for Technical and 30 for the financial proposal).

*IMPORTANT NOTE: Proposals submitted with incomplete documentation or missing required components shall be considered non-responsive and may be disqualified from the evaluation process. RSPN reserves the right to disqualify the proposals that do not meet the RSPN's policy requirements or safeguards.*