

Terms of Reference

Assessment and Preparation of Action Plan for Wildlife Conservation and Management outside Protected Areas of Nepal

1. Background

Nepal embarked upon a modern era of wildlife conservation and management with the enactment of the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act (NPWC) 1973 that provided legal basis for the conservation and management of protected areas (PAs) in Nepal. The fourth amendment of NPWC recognizes six categories of protected areas in Nepal: National Park, Strict Nature Reserve, Wildlife Reserve, Hunting Reserve, Conservation Area and Buffer zone. As of 2017, the protected areas in Nepal include twelve national parks, one wildlife reserve, one hunting reserve and six conservation areas and thirteen buffer zones covering an area of 34,444km² with an estimated 23.4% of total land area of the country. Management of these PAs and wildlife conservation were shaped primarily by two aspects a) Reconciling the needs and aspirations of local people with wildlife conservation and b) harnessing the economic opportunities offered by tourism with its associated threats. Evolution of wildlife management and conservation in Nepal show that Nepal has progressively marched from a top-down management where local concerns were largely ignored to a more participatory and people centered approaches to conservation.

A marked shift in Nepal's wildlife conservation and management took place with the emergence of landscape based conservation. Nepal was one of the first countries to realize that the dispersal of mega fauna or large ranging animals require large tracts of varied habitat mosaics and this dialogue led to the declaration of two conservation landscapes in Nepal-the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) and the Sacred Himalayan Landscape (SHL). Later, Nepal also declared other conservation landscapes such as Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL), Kanchenjunga landscape and Chitwan Annapurna Landscape (ChAL). Several big wins in wildlife conservation have been achieved in these landscape with the implementation of respective strategic plans.

2. Rationale

As a result of continuous conservation efforts, Nepal has achieved countless successes in wildlife conservation and management. The increasing tiger and rhino population in PAs are slowly colonizing the available habitats outside PAs. Co-predators like common leopard are being pushed out in human dominated landscapes. Large ranging species like elephants are frequently coming into conflict with humans across Terai. In addition to the above-mentioned species, significant number of other wildlife, including that of many threatened and endangered species are found outside the protected area network such as national forests, community forests, private forests and farmlands. Such lands outside PAs not just facilitate the movement and dispersal of wildlife as corridors between the protected areas but also provide breeding grounds to the colonizing species. These areas however, are extremely vulnerable both from the perspective of high mortality of wildlife as a sink site and high human-wildlife conflict. However, unlike the PA network system, the areas outside PAs receive less attention on wildlife conservation and management issues with respect to building staff's capacity on wildlife ecology, wildlife conservation/management, ensuring green solutions in large infrastructures, hardware and software for wildlife protection etc. These are the setbacks leading to the hinderance and compromise of wildlife management and conservation outside PAs.

Never-the-less, it's been acknowledged that to achieve the larger goal of maintaining landscape integrity and viable populations of wildlife and to adequately address human-wildlife conflict due

importance should be given to the conservation and management of wildlife outside of PA systems too and action plans developed accordingly. In doing so, it is imperative to understand the challenges, existing knowledge and capacity and a detailed gap analysis within Department of Forests(DoF), Community based organizations (CBOs) and other stakeholders in the field of wildlife conservation and management outside PAs. This would aid in preparing a suitable plan of action most compatible with the best interest of both people and wildlife outside protected areas.

3. Objective

The overall objective of the proposed assignment is to undertake detailed assessment of wildlife conservation and management outside PAs in Nepal and prepare an action plan.

The specific objectives include:

- a. Assess status of wildlife conservation and management outside protected areas
- b. Identify and analyse challenges and gaps in wildlife conservation and management
- c. Assess existing and required capacity of government and community institutions for wildlife conservation and management outside PAs
- d. Develop action plan to address the gaps and challenges based on findings of the assessment

4. Methodology

The interested parties are requested to provide a detailed methodology/ approach for the proposed assignment but not limited to the following:

- **Literature review**

All relevant published and unpublished literatures will be reviewed and compiled for future references.

- **Consultation meetings/Focus group discussions/Key informant interviews**

Consulting team will carry out consultation meetings with all relevant stakeholders both from likeminded and unlike minded organizations, central, federal and local government bodies, concerned authorities of the DoF, DNPWC, wildlife conservation based NGOs/INGOs in all WWF working landscapes. The team should also conduct structured/semi-structured interviews with relevant personnel in wildlife conservation and management sector.

- **Any other relevant approach**

5. Study Duration

Three months from the date of signing contract.

6. Team Composition

This consultancy requires a multi-disciplinary team with extensive knowledge on forestry, wildlife conservation/biology/management and social science. The team should have good writing skills and the ability to analyze and present the issues critically. The team should comprise of the following members but not limited to:

- Conservation and Planning Expert: Preferably PhD and 15 years' experience (Team Leader)
- Forest and Biodiversity Expert: Master in Forestry and 10 years' experience
- Wildlife expert: Master in wildlife biology/conservation and 10 years' experience
- Socioeconomic Expert: Master in Social Science and 10 years' experience

7. Deliverables

A detailed assessment report highlighting challenges, existing and required capacity, gaps and way forward in wildlife conservation and management outside PAs, and a separate plan of action with budgets. The report should be supported by maps, raw data, photographs, reviewed literature and documents produced as a part of this consultancy.

8. Proposal submission details

Submit separate **technical** and **financial** proposals. The technical proposal should include details of methodology and tools, should include the applying organization/individual profile and current portfolio; organization/firm registration and latest renewal; tax clearance certificates; copy of citizenship certificate and PAN/VAT registration; signed and dated curriculum vitae of proposed study team.

The financial proposal needs to be in Nepali Rupees and should include a detailed breakdown of the total budget proposal including: fee, travel/accommodation cost, communication costs, consultative meeting cost, other relevant logistics, etc.

9. Mode of Payment and fund disbursement procedure

The payment will be made based on the existing norms of WWF Nepal. Fund disbursement will be done in two steps. Other expenses except consultancy fee will be provided as advance upon the signing of the contract. The second and final installment will be released after the final acceptance of the report by the core team.