



Terms of Reference

Consultancy

For the Final Evaluation of the project:

Lao-Thai fisheries co-management: improving fish stocks and livelihoods in the middle Mekong (2016-2019)

Supervised by: WWF Laos Conservation Director
Work location: Vientiane, Laos and northern Thailand
Duration: 20 days

1 BACKGROUND OF CONSULTANCY ASSIGNMENT AND PROJECT

The Mekong supports fisheries in 4 countries, amounting to 2.6 million tons of fish each year and providing more than 75% of the animal, and 35% of the protein total, intake of the population. The people living along the Mekong are thus dependent on natural resource extraction. The Mekong is also globally irreplaceable for biodiversity conservation; second only to the Amazon in terms of fish biodiversity and supporting some of the world's largest freshwater species such as the endangered Mekong giant catfish and giant freshwater stingray.

However the Mekong main stem is becoming heavily impacted by regional economic development including infrastructure construction and sand/gravel extraction. These have significant impacts on the spawning grounds of many species of fish, which become more and more at risk due, in part, to the changes to the ecology of the deep pools.

The project “Lao-Thai fisheries co-management: improving fish stocks and livelihoods in the middle Mekong (2016-2019)” (Lao-Thai Fisheries or LTF) project focuses on a 200km-long portion of the middle Mekong main stem, which forms the Lao-Thai border, to increase and improve the stock of aquatic resources through the establishment of fisheries co-management structures, scientific research on flagship species, and support to local livelihoods. (Please see Annex 1 for full project background).

Activities included in the project design were:

- Identification of key habitats (e.g. feeding and spawning grounds, deep pools, migration channels) and potential sites for fish conservation zones (FCZs)
- Demarcation of FCZs and support for their official establishment, including transboundary agreements between Thailand and Laos
- Organization of community-based patrolling of FCZs
- Fish tagging and/or other suitable technologies to identify species-specific migration patterns
- Fish catch monitoring and other innovative technologies to provide baseline data to support WWF advocacy against mainstream dams and evidence for the value of FCZs
- Research into Mekong giant catfish spawning grounds through environmental DNA and ichthyoplankton surveys
- Support fish-dependent communities to improve the post-harvest processing of fish
- Support the poorest communities to diversify their income with new livelihoods (i.e. agricultural).

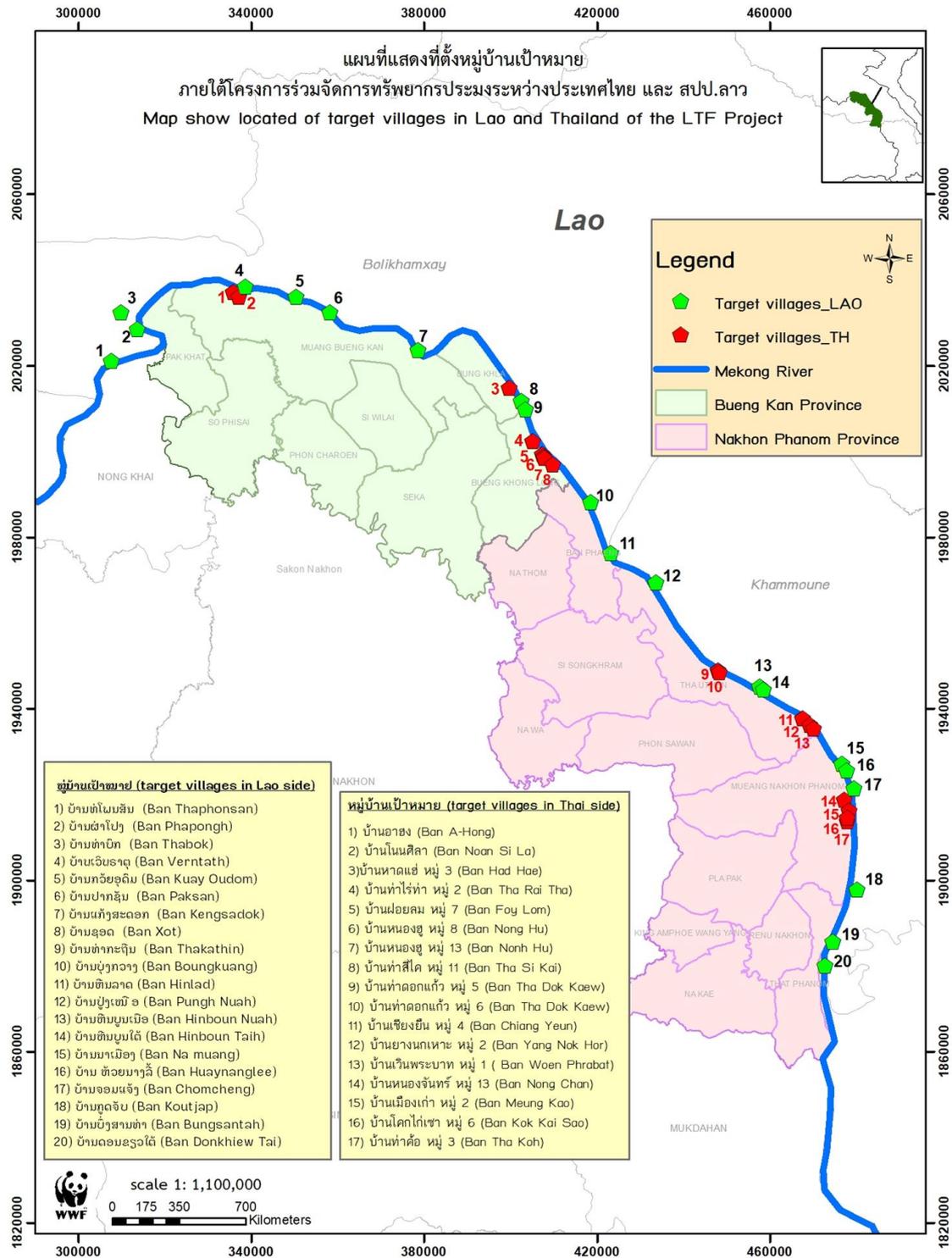
Impacts of the project include:

- Local communities empowered, with the capacity and understanding of regulations, to sustainably manage community fishery resources.
- Local communities have a better understanding of the need for fish conservation and the positive impact that fisheries management has on their livelihoods and have adapted their livelihood strategies accordingly.
- District and village authorities on both sides of the river have gained experience in co-managing their resources and hence overall capacity to

manage is built at both levels. As a consequence, there is more exchange of communication between the two sides of the river.

- Fish stocks have increased: in the fish conservation zones, an increase in biomass is observed and eDNA sampling reveals improved species richness.
- Improved status of globally threatened Mekong fish diversity as monitored through e-DNA sampling.

2 AREAS OF INTERVENTION



3 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

1/ Conduct a participatory end-of-project evaluation focusing on aspects identified in the evaluation criteria i.e. relevance and quality of design, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and adaptive management of the project and,

2/ Provide recommendations for the next phase of the project directing at maximizing impact to meet the needs of target communities.

4 SCOPE OF WORK

The external evaluation consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- Assess the implementation of Lao-Thai Fisheries project with emphasis on Relevance and Quality of Design, Effectiveness, Impacts & Sustainability and Adaptive Management; including seeking feedback from project beneficiaries and other stakeholders regarding the outcome, impact and sustainability of the project and changes that could be made to improve and apply to the project's next phase;
- Produce a report outlining findings of the evaluation and recommendations for the next phase.

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Evaluation methodology is opened to consultant to propose. Nevertheless, the selected methodology shall at least address the questions identified in section 6.

6 EVALUATION CRITERIA

This evaluation will primarily seek to answer the following key questions, organized below according to WWF's standard evaluation framework, with emphasis on Relevance and Quality of Design, Effectiveness, Impacts & Sustainability and Adaptive Management.

6.1 Relevance and Quality of Design

Assessments of relevance and quality of design must consider:

- how the project was originally planned;
- how the design has changed over time;
- And the validity of underpinning assumptions.

Final evaluation should make recommendations regarding the future design/approach, taking into account changes in key contextual factors or status of targeted biodiversity/footprint issues that have occurred since the project start. Also critical to assess is the rigor that was applied in designing the project, as this is a predictor of the extent to which the intervention has a strong foundation and will remain relevant over the course of its implementation.

6.2 Effectiveness

Evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention involves:

- Measuring for change in the observed outcome.
- Assessing the extent to which the change in the observed outcome can be attributed to the intervention.

This is measured through the following components of analysis:

- What have and have not been achieved (both intended and unintended) against planned outcomes?

- What lessons can be taken and applied to improve effectiveness in the next phase?
- What supporting or disrupting factors might affect successful implementation in the next planning phase?
- To what extent has coordination/communication been effective within and between the implementation team, stakeholders, partners and participants, as well as donor offices in the Network and external donors?
- What could be done differently to improve the coordination and communication?

6.3 Impact

Impact is a measure of the broader consequences of the intervention at local, regional, national levels. Impact can be measured through the following areas of question:

- What would have happened if the intervention had not taken place or if it were done differently?
- To what extent has the project attained its stated vision and goals, in terms of outcomes effecting positive change in increasing income generation, economic value of fish and aquatic animals, biodiversity quality, ecosystem services and, in turn, livelihood and human wellbeing ?
- Could anything have been done differently to repeat or avoid any unforeseen consequences (both positive and negative)?
- What is the likelihood that changes in fish stock, biodiversity quality, income generation, human well-being would have occurred in the absence of the project/programme?
- How might the programme increase its impact and what would be the associated human and financial capacity needs?

6.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is a measure of whether the benefits of an intervention are likely to continue after external support has ended.

These sustainability factors should be taken into account all along the design and implementation cycle in addition to being assessed in the evaluation, and include policy support measures, choice of technology, socio-cultural aspects, institutional aspects, economic and financial aspects, external factors, evidence for sustainability, risk and mitigation and exit-phase out plan.

6.5 Adaptive Management

Adaptive Management is a measure of the extent to which the project regularly assesses and adapts its work and thereby ensures continued relevance in changing contexts, strong performance, and learning and should take into account the following aspects but not limited to:

- Did the project establish a baseline status of conservation targets and key contextual factors? Is there ongoing systematic monitoring of these?
- Did the project articulate a theory of change and/or results chains that clearly lay out anticipated cause-effect relationships supported by relevant evidence base and enable definition of appropriate indicators?

- Is there ongoing, systematic, rigorous monitoring of output delivery, outcome attainment, and impact measurement, with plausible attribution to WWF's actions?
- Are adequate steps taken to ensure regular reflection on efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes/impact by the project team and partners?
- What percentage of overall staff time and funding is dedicated to project monitoring, adaptation, and learning?

7 DELIVERABLES AND TIME SCHEDULE

Tasks	No. of days
Literature review and work plan design	3
Briefing of work plan	1
Field assessment (Laos)	5
Field assessment (Thai)	5
Debriefing	1
Report drafting	4
Feedback	1
Total	20

Details of deliverables:

Output / deliverables	Tasks
1-Pre-field activities (3 days) Deliverable: work plan By date: TBD	Literature review (documents to be provided by WWF) Work plan design (detailed daily activity plan including consultant requirements, consultations and interviews, field visits, travels, etc.) Finalize design assessment methodology
2-Briefing in Vientiane (1 day)	Meeting with WWF Conservation team Meeting with central Government partners i.e. Department of Livestock and Fisheries (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) Meeting with WWF CH via Skype
3-Field assessment (Laos, 5 days)	<u>Review achievements against project logical framework through:</u>

	<p>Meeting with local fisheries stakeholders and government counterpart i.e. Livestock and Fisheries District Office, Department of Livestock and Fisheries</p> <p>Meeting with WWF field staff</p> <p>Meeting with village authorities and villagers in a selection of target villages, using focus group discussions, key informants interviews, analysis of focus group discussions</p>
4-Field assessment (Thailand, 5 days)	Same as above
5-Debriefing (1 day)	To be organized in Vientiane with Project Managers from Laos and Thailand as well as WWF Laos' Conservation Director
6-Reporting (4 days) Deliverable: draft report By date: TBD	<p>A report, in English language, to include, but not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cover page; - Table of contents; - An executive summary that can be used as a document in its own right; - A table based on the logical framework indicating the level of achievement of each activity, using a traffic light system (red, orange, yellow, green) - A table assessing evaluation criteria using a traffic light system (red, orange, yellow, green) - The objectives of the evaluation; - A justification of the methods and techniques; - Eventual limitations of the evaluation; - A presentation of the findings and the analysis thereof (including unexpected, relevant findings); - Conclusions, which have to be derived from findings and analysis thereof; - Recommendations, which should be clearly related to conclusions but presented separately. Recommendations should be practical and if necessary divided up for various actors or stakeholders. <p>Report appendices that include:</p>

- The Terms of Reference;
- The techniques used for data collection (including the people interviewed and locations visited; the list of questions used or 'interview guide' or topic list (also for possible group discussions);
- The programme adhered to (data and main features of the activities carried out);
- Concepts and list of abbreviations;
- List of documents and bibliography;
- Composition of the evaluation team (names, nationality, expertise).

The report should not exceed 20 pages in length. The reporting style should be clear and accessible. References to sources used, such as interviews, literature, reports, must be given. A draft report should be sent to WWF within 10 days following the debriefing in Vientiane.

7-Feedback (1 day)

Deliverable: final report

By date: TBD

WWF will provide feedback to the draft within two weeks. The final version is to be submitted to WWF within a week.

Debriefing with WWF CH after the final report is available

Total: 20 days

20 days within 45 days

The assignment shall start in March 2019

8 REQUIRED PROFILE:

- Master's degree in the field of fisheries, environmental and / or social science, or related fields;
- Minimum 3 years' experience in monitoring and evaluation;
- Experience in project management, project development, management consulting or related field;
- A proven track record of delivering similar assignments;
- Experience in programmes supporting fisheries in the Mekong desirable;
- Excellent skills in report writing;
- Excellent command of English language (written and spoken);
- Lao and/or Thai language skills necessary.

9 OFFER CONDITIONS:

9.1 Application package

- CV with signature and three references;
- Proposal letter identifying experiences in conducting similar assignment;
- Proposed work plan and methodology;
- Proposed budget including specification on daily fees and other costs;

9.2 Ownership

Consultant shall provide all materials that are created in the course of providing the consultancy services to WWF. Any disclosures to be made upon approval of the WWF.

9.3 Instalment payment

50% upon submission and approval of final evaluation plan

50% after approval of final report

Other expenditure in related to the mission (upon agreement) will be reimbursed by WWF upon presentation of invoice and other supporting documents.

9.4 Deadline for submission

Proposal to be submitted by 27 March 2019.