



For Soliciting proposals for:

COMDEKs and SGP 8th Operational Phase Country Programme Strategies Development

Background:

The **Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP)** implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides civil society and community-based organizations (CSOs/CBOs) in developing countries with grants to enable them to tackle global environmental challenges¹ while addressing local sustainable development needs. SGP Cambodia started financing projects in 2005. Since then, it has succeeded in funding and providing technical support for more than 268 grant projects.

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme builds on 30 years of successful experience in empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in designing and leading community driven initiatives that have enhanced household wellbeing, increased awareness and resilience regarding environmental threats, and generated global environmental benefits. With economic development pressures intensifying in many parts of the developing world and the associated rising inequalities, local communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are becoming more and more marginalized, unable to cope with threats associated with ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Lessons learned and experience gained in previous SGP operational phases have demonstrated that integrated, landscape-seascape approaches are effective in mobilizing multiple stakeholder collaboration, linking local CSOs/CBOs with enabling partners and achieving mutually supportive livelihood and environmental outcomes at scale.

The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) was launched in 2011 as a flagship program of the Satoyama Initiative, a global effort to promote sustainable use of natural resources in the landscapes and seascapes with local communities. COMDEKS is funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund and implemented by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, the CBD Secretariat, and the United Nations University's Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability. COMDEKS activities are delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), a decentralized funding mechanism with over 25 years of experience delivering small

¹ The GEF's focal areas include: biodiversity, climate change, sustainable land and forest management, international waters, and chemicals and waste.

grants to community organizations for community-based environmental projects. During the first three phases of the implementation of the programme, COMDEKS' lessons, models and tools have provided useful inputs to the development of the landscape and seascape approach, now being adopted by many of the SGP Country Programmes in 125 countries, particularly among the countries under the SGP Upgraded Country Programme (UCP) modality, under GEF-6 and GEF-7.

From 2011 to 2022, SGP Cambodia under COMDEKS phase I programme, provided small grants to 5 projects located inside Stung Siem Reap Watershed landscape of Siem Reap province. The vision for Stung Siem Reap Watershed Landscapes Programme Strategy is to “maintain and restore functional socio-ecological production landscapes to preserve biodiversity, improve local livelihood, and enhance ecological and institutional landscape connectivity.” Building on this experience, the primary focus of the proposed third phase of the COMDEKS has promoted sustainability and upscaling of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLs) conservation approach, including efforts to promote institutional and financial sustainability of these landscapes.

This call for proposals aims to solicit civil society organizations to put forward proposals that help SGP undertake a preparatory process to develop its strategy for OP8 and COMDEKS. This will involve multi-stakeholder consultations, development of baseline assessment(s) of priority identified landscape(s)/seascape(s), and elaboration of the Country Programme Strategy (CPS) for OP8 and COMDEKS in close coordination with the SGP National Coordinator, UNDP country office and National Steering Committee (NSC) in Cambodia. The key steps in this preparatory process and the key deliverables expected are described in detail below.

I. **Key steps in the OP8 Country Programme Strategy elaboration process**

Step 1. COMDEKS and OP8 Country Programme strategy consultations and scoping exercise

To initiate the development of the COMDEKS and SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy (OP8 CPS) an assessment and scoping exercise should be undertaken which will take stock of the results and achievements of the SGP Country Programme thus far and identify the priority directions for programming in OP8 in line the SGP OP8 project document and COMDEKS strategic direction, the country's national priorities, GEF-8 programming directions, and potential for synergy with UNDP CPD, GEF projects and other partner agencies.

These CPS consultation and scoping process will extend beyond the NSC to involve relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, UNDP country office, sector agencies and other partners. Its purpose is to identify the gaps and opportunities of SGP for programming in OP8 in order to focus the programme to deliver the strategic impact expected in terms of the COMDEKS and OP8 directions and initiatives.

This process will include the following broad elements:

- a) ***Communications, outreach and capacity development about COMDEKS and OP8 and its strategic initiatives.*** Such communications should serve to explain the need to focus SGP on landscape/seascape areas for achievement of greater strategic impact through clustering of projects and achievement of synergies.

- b) **Multi-stakeholder consultations.** This consultation process should include the NSC and other relevant partners from government, civil society, UNDP, partner agencies etc. in order to achieve a broad consensus on the Country Programme approach in OP8 and COMDEKS phase IV.
- c) **Selection of the landscape/seascape area(s) of focus,** with consideration given to SGP’s niche, opportunities, challenges, and potential for synergies, etc. The selected landscape for OP8 and COMDEKS phase IV will be Stung Siem Reap watershed area. This landscape is located in Northwestern Cambodia in the province of Siem Reap, home to the world-famous historic temple of Angkor Wat. It covers an area of 3,619 square kilometers and extends from the mountain range of Phnom Kulen to the Ton le Sap Lake. The area is selected for its severity of natural resource degradation but still restorable as well as the alignment of proposed activities to prioritized themes. The landscape is the same landscape that was used in previous COMDEKS phases as it aligns with national priorities such as National Strategic Action Plan on Green Growth 2013 to 2023, Circular Strategy on Environment 2023 to 2028, Local Community Development Strategy plan 2024-2028, revised NBSAP, Solid Waste Management strategy, UNDP CPD and UNDP GEF OP8 FSP projects. In such cases, there is a need to identify a thematic focus or niche to ensure that SGP grantmaking is strategic and achieves greater impact.
- d) **Grant-making outside the selected landscape/seascape area(s).** In OP8, up to 30% of grant resources could be allocated outside of the landscape/seascape areas, provided that these funds are utilized strategically. Criteria for prioritization of projects and typology of projects may be identified in the General Evaluation and Scoping Exercise. For example, priority may be given by the Country Programme to grants outside the landscape/seascape area(s) that:
- Promote innovation in relation to SGP OP8 strategic initiatives and directions
 - Provide new opportunities for partnerships and replication.
 - Help translate landscape lessons into policy or promote broader adoption
 - CSO-government dialogue platforms that promote civil society engagement with government in the context of multilateral environmental agreements

Key outputs to be produced at this stage would include: (a) a short report documenting the consultation and scoping process with key agreements on the CPS approach recorded, and (b) a draft outline of the CPS already developed to the extent possible with the landscape/seascape approach still to be fully elaborated in Step 2.

Step 2. Selected Landscape/Seascape Baseline Assessment

The Landscape/Seascape Baseline Assessment process will be guided by the CPS Consultation and Scoping Exercise in the country which lays out the consensus for the priorities and planning for delivering OP8 outcomes in the country.² The Landscape/Seascape Strategy developed for Cambodia’s Country

² For SGP Country Programmes with ongoing and new co-financing programmes which have developed detailed site/community level consultations such as the CBA, ICCA-GSI and the COMDEKS programme, the experience and results of these approaches will be drawn upon. In cases where the OP8 CPS will be targeting areas where these projects have been/are active, information will be drawn from existing documents and similar baselines assessment reports to the extent possible into the OP8 CPS document so as not to engage communities and local stakeholders in duplicative consultation processes. If

Programme will describe the landscape approach for supporting global environmental activities in line with the selected strategic initiatives in the SGP Country Programme Strategy that contribute to sustainable development at the community level.

The objective of the baseline assessment is to assist SGP National Coordinators and National Steering Committees a) to elaborate a landscape/seascape-wide baseline, b) to develop a landscape/seascape strategy that will guide grant-making with types of projects proposed and sets of indicators for selected SGP strategic initiatives identified and COMDEKS outcomes and resilience indicators. The baseline assessment provides information about the current state of the landscapes/seascapes, through consultations with local communities and stakeholders which can be used as a basis for setting goals and desired outcomes.

The Landscape/Seascape Baseline Assessment will study the key challenges, global environmental issues, and identify the opportunities for community and CSO actions. The baseline assessment process will include community consultations and ensure participation of the range of stakeholders in the landscape, including local authorities, civil society, community organizations, and other relevant partners. The resilience indicator set is a centerpiece of the community consultation process. The COMDEKS methodology relies on community consultation to drive a process of participatory landscape planning. As part of this process, community members and other stakeholders come together to conduct a baseline assessment of landscape resilience, forge a Landscape Strategy on the basis of this assessment, and identify potential community actions to carry out the Strategy. The resilience indicators figure prominently in all three of these steps. As a focus of discussion, analysis, and negotiation, they are integral to the community process of generating baseline information, reaching consensus on the primary challenges to local resilience, and developing a plan of action to address these challenges. Because of their central role enabling group discussion and interaction, they are also critical to the process of generating the social capital necessary to undertake community-driven landscape projects. The baseline assessment will include the following key elements:

- a) **Baseline analysis.** Identification of the landscape/seascape context and background, including threats to the global environment, sustainable development, and key actions and plans underway, and identification of relevant stakeholders within and outside the landscape who need to be involved and play a role. The boundaries of the landscape/seascape should be identified along with an analysis of the baseline activities that the SGP Country Programme can build on as well as the gaps that it can intervene to address.
- b) **Elaborating SGP OP8 Strategic initiatives and COMDEKS outcomes within the landscape/seascape context.** Based on results of the CPS Consultation and Scoping process, the country will have identified selective strategic priorities for grantmaking. Within the Baseline Assessment the implementation of the priority OP8 strategic initiatives selected by countries and COMDEKS strategic initiatives will be elaborated within the landscape/seascape context with (a) types of projects developed, (b) indicators and targets and results framework developed for OP8 SGP and COMDEKS phase IV.

necessary earlier consultation results could be built on, revisited and updated within the baseline assessment process foreseen for OP8 CPS development.

- c) ***Modalities for implementation will be proposed***, such as possibilities for linking and connecting projects within the landscape for learning and exchange, fostering engagement with local authorities, identifying policy influence and scaling up opportunities, promoting participatory M&E that enables community involvement, and facilitating knowledge management and capture and dissemination of results.

As a key output of the Landscape/Seascape Baseline Assessment process a report will be produced that will present the baseline analysis, the elaboration of the SGP strategy within the landscape and the modalities for implementation. The report will also present the consultative process followed and the results of community consultations held. This report will be presented to the NSC and NC and may be prepared in the national languages as appropriate (note it will not be required for review by the SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) at SGP headquarters).

Step 3. Country Programme Strategy Finalization

Based on the above steps and once the Baseline Assessment process for the selected Landscape/Seascape area(s) of focus has been completed and agreed, the COMDEKS and the SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategies (CPS) will be fully elaborated and finalized. A draft of the completed both CPS will be produced for review and comment by the NC and NSC. It will also be shared for review and approval by the CPMT. Any final comments from the NSC and CPMT will be taken into account and addressed in the final draft of the CPS which will then be widely shared and posted online for public information.

Scope of the assignment:

The Grantee's main responsibilities will include undertaking all (or some) of the key steps 1 through 3 outlined in II above, based on the needs and specific agreement with the SGP Cambodia Country Programme. The Grantee will be expected to produce the key deliverables foreseen under the various key steps in a professional and timely manner. The timely completion of all key deliverables will be critical for this project given that it will prepare the CPS which will be needed for further grant-making within the selected landscape/seascape area(s) of focus. It is foreseen that the entire project, if undertaking steps 1 through 3, be completed within a four-month period.

The grantee will design preparatory exercises and help prepare for and facilitate consultations throughout the key steps outlined above, including the preparation of necessary information and background documents as needed. The grantee will capture and document key points of discussion and agreement from stakeholder consultations at national and landscape/seascape level.

The grantee will work closely with the SGP National Coordinator (NC) and National Steering Committee (NSC) in completing steps 1 through 3.

Who may submit proposals:

The project may be undertaken by an appropriate, experienced national or subnational NGO/CSO or academic institution as an on-the-ground capacity building project and financed by a grant. The proposal will clearly present the experience of the applicant and its partner organizations in the issues to be addressed.

Competencies Required for the project:

- Demonstrated capacity for strategic thinking and analysis
- Proven experience in working with community-led initiatives as well as experience in community and stakeholder participatory processes
- Expertise on global environment and sustainable development issues
- Expertise in landscape/seascape management
- Proven capacity to produce high quality qualitative research and ability to absorb, analyze and synthesize large amounts of complex information within tight deadlines
- Strong presentation and facilitation skills
- Exceptional writing skills of policy and communication materials for a variety of audiences, including the civil society and policymakers
- Excellent writing, presentation, communication and facilitation skills in English, French or Spanish, as well as relevant national languages in the countries where SGP operates

Budget: The maximum amount per grant award for the entire project will be limited to \$25,000, with applicants required to provide a detailed budgetary estimate.

Period of services (if applicable): the entire process of engagement with the selected grantee, comprising the 3 key steps described above, is expected to be completed within a four-month time frame with the First Step completed within a month or shorter. Please provide a detailed timeline as part of your proposal.

For proposal submission and more information, contact:

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Completed proposals should be received by the SGP National Coordinator no later than 15 July 2024.