

National Environment & Planning Agency

Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using an integrated approach

Terms of Reference: Project Finance Officer

**Prepared by:
National Environment & Planning Agency
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Terms of Reference for Project Finance Officer

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is executing the “Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using an integrated approach” project. The project will be financed with resources from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Government of Jamaica. The executing entity is the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA).
- 1.2 The project agreement was signed in September 2020, (the Non-reimbursable Financing Agreement) herein referred to as “the Agreement”. This Agreement was signed between Jamaica and the United Nations Development Programme, in the capacity as the Administrator of the Global Environment Facility Fund (GEF) grants for this project.

Project Site and Importance

- 1.3 The project is being implemented within the Cockpit Country. Much of the islands biodiversity and endemism is centred round the Cockpit Country located in the northwest central part of the island.
- 1.4 The wet limestone forest of Cockpit Country is Jamaica’s largest remaining primary forest and a refuge for rare Jamaican species such as the Black-billed Parrot (*Amazona agilis*) and the Giant Swallowtail butterfly (*Pterourus homerus*). At least 66 plants are known to be endemic to the Cockpit Country. Its landscape of steep-sided hills and deep closed valleys eroded from the limestone bedrock is an outstanding example of karst topography.
- 1.5 A majority of the endemic plants in the Cockpit Country are known from single localities or have been collected only a few times and considered threatened or rare. Many of Jamaica’s threatened birds are found here, including the critically endangered Jamaican Blackbird (*Nesoposar nigerrimus*) and both species of Jamaica’s endemic parrots. Almost the entire population of the Black-billed Parrot (95 percent) is found in Cockpit Country.
- 1.6 New species of butterflies endemic to the Cockpit County are still being found. Four of Jamaica’s 14 endemic frogs occur only in the forests and caves of the Cockpit

Country, by far the most important area of habitat for Jamaica's amphibians and reptiles.

- 1.7 Cockpit Country endemic flora and fauna are threatened by a range of human activities, including illegal hunting of birds for food and for the pet trade, unregulated collecting of rare species of plants, extensive logging for yam sticks and timber, and the conversion of forest to agriculture. Clearing of the forest, are mostly along its edges and made accessible by roads, trails and paths and is among one of the greatest threats to the area's ecosystems.
- 1.8 Recognizing the challenge in managing the diverse threats to conservation of forests and their biodiversity in the biologically diverse Cockpit Country, the Government of Jamaica in November 2017 declared a ban on mining in the area to be protected within the Cockpit Country.
- 1.9 Other threats to the natural resources of the Cockpit Country are, forest fragmentation, deforestation and degradation attributed to factors such as poor agricultural practices such as slash and burn, hillside farming, and improper and overuse of fertilizers and pesticides; climate change; invasive alien species such as *Neprolepis multiflora*, grasses such as *Brachiaria decumbens*, Bamboo (*Bambusa vulgaris*), and shrubby trees such as Logwood (*Haematoxylum campechianum*) and *Calliandra calothyrsus* and the Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*).
- 1.10 The threats mentioned can be traced to many causes including poor land use and socio-economic planning, weak enforcement, limited political awareness, limited inter-agency collaboration and budget allocation for conservation-related work. Constraints such as limited scientific information, limited expertise in taxonomy and related fields, and limited public awareness on biodiversity could contribute to the threats.
- 1.11 Within the project site, activities will be implemented in target clusters that have been chosen mainly because of their critical importance as centers of endemism and biodiversity hotspot and economic significance. Other criteria include poverty incidence, vulnerability, extent of land use conversion and infrastructure development and land degradation. Project site with clusters attached in Appendix.

Project Objectives and Components

- 1.12 The project's objective is to enhance conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services through mainstreaming of biodiversity into policies and practices into Jamaica's productive landscapes and key sectors. The project will be implemented over a 6-year period between 2022 – 2028.
- 1.13 The project will achieve its objective through incremental activities under three components; Component 1: Systemic and institutional capacity for integrated

landscape management at national level; Component 2: Application of Integrated landscape planning and management in key biodiversity areas; and Component 3: Knowledge management, gender mainstreaming and monitoring and evaluation

- 1.14 The project thus comes at a time when increasing degradation of natural habitats from deforestation and conversion to agriculture and expanding infrastructure and housing development, mining, tourism, and the increase in invasive alien species are becoming increasing threats to critical habitats and ecosystems and their attendant biodiversity.
- 1.15 The project aims to address the negative impacts of unsustainable development practices by trying to establish and operationalize a comprehensive landscape approach in the Cockpit Country that harmonizes socio-economic development, sustainable management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity in this mixed-use landscape of Jamaica.
- 1.16 The project's interventions are aimed at addressing the linkages between the factors leading to land degradation and biodiversity loss in order to successfully reduce these threats and thereby support viable populations of globally threatened species and allow for the movement of wildlife, facilitate pollination and reproduction, and other processes that support improved natural resiliency to external development and climatic shocks. The experiences and learning from the Cockpit Country are expected to help facilitate replication of sustainable management approaches in other key biodiversity areas in the country.

Partnership for Project Implementation

- 1.17 The NEPA will be responsible for the overall coordination and management of the Project. The project is being implemented collaboratively with the Forestry Department, Rural Agricultural Development Authority, Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation along with the local authorities in the project site and community stakeholders with special focus on the Maroons.
- 1.18 The success of this project hinges on NEPA's ability to implement the planned environmental interventions coupled with the ability to bring about positive social changes in stakeholders' behaviour towards the environment and the long-term adoption of best practices for environmental stewardship. Carefully crafted communication strategy and public awareness campaigns will be utilized to increase public awareness and support the implementation of the overall programme.

2.0 DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The Project Finance Officer will be responsible for the accounting and financial management of the project activities and will assist in the preparation of quarterly and annual work plans and progress reports for review and monitoring by UNDP & NEPA.

Specific Duties

- 2.2 The Project Finance Officer will be responsible for the following tasks:
- a) Responsible for providing general financial support to the project;
 - b) Assist project management in performing budget cycle tasks including planning, preparation, revisions, and budget execution;
 - c) Assist partner agencies involved in project activities through the monitoring of financial aspects to ensure compliance with budgeted costs in line with UNDP, NEPA and GEF policies and procedures;
 - d) Monitor project expenditures, ensuring that no expenditure is incurred before it has been authorized;
 - e) Assist project team in drafting quarterly and yearly project progress reports with specific focus on financial issues;
 - f) Ensure that Government of Jamaica procurement rules are followed during procurement activities that are carried out by the project and maintain responsibility for the inventory of the project assets;
 - g) Perform preparatory work for mandatory and general budget revisions, annual physical inventory and auditing, and assist external evaluators in fulfilling their mission;
 - h) Prepare all outputs in accordance with the UNDP administrative and financial office guidance;
 - i) Ensure the project utilizes the available financial resources in an efficient and transparent manner;
 - j) Ensure that all project financial activities are carried out on schedule and within budget to achieve the project outputs;
 - k) Preparation and maintenance of files and records relevant to project finance and procurement;
 - l) Maintenance of records on assets management;
 - m) Perform all other financial related duties, upon request

3.0 PROJECT FINANCE OFFICER EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The Project Finance Officer will be responsible for the delivery of the following outputs:

- I. Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports presented to UNDP & NEPA (in the specified formats);
- II. Financial Inputs into the Annual Workplans and constituent project plans;
- III. Terms of Reference of technical consultants to support Financial & Procurement processes;
- IV. Financial Inputs to Yearly Project Implementation Report/Annual Project Report;
- V. Financial inputs into the Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Project Implementation Review Reports for NEPA;
- VI. Financial inputs into the Annual project Operation Plan for NEPA;
- VII. Financial inputs into end of project report for the UNDP;
- VIII. Monthly cash flow and expenditure reports to be submitted to parent ministry
- IX. Monthly bank reconciliation
- X. Schedule of GoJ subventions and Grant disbursements
- XI. Statement of expenditure
- XII. Statement of assets and equipment

4.0 CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGAGEMENT

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| Language of delivery: | English |
| Type of Contract: | Project Staff (Temporary) |
| Duration of Engagement: | Six years. Contract will be issued for an initial period of three years and is renewable upon satisfactory performance. |
| Engagement Modality: | Full Time (occasionally required to work beyond normal working hours) |
| NEPA's Support: | NEPA will provide office space, computer and office equipment, field equipment, and project documentation. |
| Appraisal: | The Project staff will be appraised semi-annually. |

5.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

a. Education

- I. Bachelor's degree or higher in Finance, Accounting, Business Management or related field or ACCA Level II certification.

b. Work Experience and Related Knowledge

- I. At least five years of relevant work experience leading the financial management of projects
- II. At least five years of relevant experience in budget cycle management for projects spanning planning, preparation, revisions, and budget execution;
- III. Demonstrated ability in the financial management of development projects and in liaising and cooperating with government officials, NGOs and other stakeholders;
- IV. Previous working experience with a GEF- supported project is an asset;
- V. Experience using standard accounting software.

c. Key Competencies

- I. High ethical standards;
- II. Strong analytical and financial management skills;
- III. Self-motivated and ability to work under the pressure;
- IV. Strong computer skills;
- V. Flexible and willing to travel as required;
- VI. Excellent communication and writing skills in English;
- VII. Effective communication skills using appropriate communication tools and techniques.
- VIII. Creativity and innovation to develop new and unique ways to improve operations of the organization and to create new opportunities.'

6.0 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY AND STANDARDS

The Project Finance Officer will report to the National Technical Coordinator who will be based in the Planning, Projects, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Division.

7.0 INSTITUTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

