

Participatory Assessment of Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management in Grassland and Pastoral Areas

Terms of Reference

Rangeland assessment data management

Background

Grasslands and rangelands cover approximately 30% of the earth's land surface and 70% of its agricultural lands. Grasslands and rangelands provide essential ecosystem services important to the local communities, particularly, as a significant source of livestock feed and source of livelihoods for livestock producers. However, an estimated 40% and 58% of pastoral and agro-pastoral lands are respectively degraded. On global scale, Land Degradation (LD) costs about USD40 billion annually and has disproportionate consequence on grasslands and rangelands. Degraded land is costly to reclaim and, if severely degraded, may no longer provide the range of ecosystem services traditionally offered. This leads to a loss of the goods and many other potential environmental, social, economic and non-material benefits that are critical for society and economic development.

Multiple systems have been developed in the past to monitor and assess the health of grassland and rangelands. However, despite the high importance placed on evaluating the drivers, current state, trends and impacts of land degradation, there is yet to be a global standard protocol defined for monitoring and assessing land degradation in grasslands and rangelands to upscale Sustainable Land Management (SLM). Existing tools do not deal in particular with the link between pastoralism and land degradation in grasslands and rangelands, and no global participatory and holistic method and process is available yet to monitor land degradation and sustainable land management practices and related benefits to make informed decisions.

Project Context

The "participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral areas" is a global project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and executed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through the government partners in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Uruguay. The project aims to produce and test a methodology for the participatory assessment and monitoring of land degradation in pastoral areas. The project has two overall objective, i) to strengthen the capacity of local and national stakeholders in pastoral areas comprising of grasslands and rangelands to assess land degradation and ii) to inform decisions to promote Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in a way that preserves the diverse ecosystem goods and services provided by rangelands and grasslands.

The project has three inter-related components:

1. Development of a participatory assessment and monitoring system for pastoral areas, comprising of grassland and rangeland.
2. Inform international and national pastoral decision-making processes based on the results and best practices from the participatory pastoral areas assessments.
3. Knowledge management, communications, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Central to the first and the second project component is the importance of consolidating secondary baseline data and landscape-scale assessment through remote sensing imagery to support rangeland and grassland assessment with communities.

Purpose of the consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to establish an online platform for data management and access and to populate with data from the Kenya baseline studies and field assessment, conducted in 2018-19.

1. All project data is to be stored and publically available in an online database, which will include a mechanism to provide permission or registration so that IUCN can monitor downloads
2. Key project analyses will be visible through a website, with an independent domain-name, which may be a static visualization of key findings, but which will be useable by government decision-makers and others to inform landscape planning
3. The website will include some functionality that could later allow a more interactive use of data, and the consultant should provide advice on how such interaction will work
4. The database and website will allow for the addition of data from the other 4 countries when the data is available, which means the site must be accessible and useable by project partners from other countries

Deliverables

- Short (2-4 page) inception report outlining the approach that will be followed and describing the final products
- A mock-up of the proposed website/data-platform presented to IUCN and partners for comment
- A finished and fully-operational online website/data-platform handed over to IUCN
- A brief final report on the task, including recommendations on improving interactive functionality and on incorporating additional data sets

Timeframe

This is a one month consultancy expected to start once the consultant is identified but not later than 1st July and end by 30th July 2019

Consultant

The consultant will be an experienced database designer who can demonstrate experience in developing data management applications from the ground up.

How to apply

When applying for the assignment, interested consultants should submit the following documents: (i) a brief write-up on the interpretation of the ToRs, (ii) a work plan for the activity (iii) a sample of previous work, (iv) letter of interest, v) CV, and (vi) financial proposal to claire.ogali@iucn.org