1. **BACKGROUND/CONTEXT OF ASSIGNMENT**

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are model regions for sustainable development. They form part of UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB), an intergovernmental scientific initiative launched in 1970. The program aims to set a scientific basis for the improvement of the relationship between people and their environment at the global scale through three key functions:

- Conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity
- Economic development that is socio-culturally and environmentally sustainable
- Logistic support, underpinning development through research, monitoring, education and training

In the 32nd Session of the UNESCO International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere Programme, on 28 October 2020, Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah has been officially declared as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves. Following the designation, IUCN is assisting the Government of Maldives in developing the 2021-2030, ten-year action plans required for both Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserves.

2. **LINE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING STRUCTURE**

Ms. Najfa Shaheem Razee, Chief Technical Officer and Ms. Fathimath Shihany Habeeb, Senior Social Science Officer (Socio-Economic)

Reporting requirements

1. The Consultant is expected to lead the action plan development process and report issues on a case by case basis providing updates to Ms Razee and Ms. Habeeb no less than on a weekly basis.
2. The consultant shall create a schedule of work and report fortnightly to IUCN and Ministry of Environment (MoEnv). This schedule of work needs to be shared with and approved by IUCN and MoEnv.
3. Consultant shall work closely with the IUCN and MoEnv to prepare the action plans and ensure that all outputs are delivered on time.

3. **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Consultant who will be awarded this contract will be primarily responsible for preparing two separate comprehensive action plans for 1) Addu Atoll Biosphere Reserve, and 2) Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve. Working closely with IUCN, MoEnv, Addu City Council, Fuvahmulah City Council, Addu and Fuvahmulah Nature Parks, the consultant/s will also prepare materials and facilitate stakeholder engagement sessions required to formulate and validate the action plans.

The tasks to be undertaken by the consultant under the Terms of Reference include the following:
Inception Stage:

- Submit an inception report proposing a schedule of work, draft outline for the action plans and a way forward for drafting action plans for both Biosphere Reserves in line with international norms, standards and best practices and the stakeholders to be consulted at each stage of the process;
- In consultation with MoEnv, IUCN, Addu City Council, Fuvahmulah City Council, Addu and Fuvahmulah Nature Parks, develop a data repository with all the relevant documents required for the development of action plans;
- Translation of documents from Dhivehi to English and/or English to Dhivehi when required for the purpose of this consultancy and related activities

Drafting Stage:

- Organize and conduct targeted consultation meetings with key stakeholders including but not limited to relevant national and local government institutions, local communities, key resource user groups, private sector, civil society organizations, and key academic institutions to identify key objectives of the biosphere reserves, the challenges and opportunities to achieve the biosphere reserve objectives, the baseline of ongoing strategies, policies, initiatives within the biosphere reserves. Document the consultations in an appropriate format including means of communication, location, dates, participation list, and received input from the stakeholders;
- Based on initial consultation meetings, draft separate action plans for the two biosphere reserves. The action plans shall propose a detailed vision of activities for the period 2021-2030 with short term actions (2021-2023), medium term actions (2024-2027), and Long term actions (2028-2030) clearly outlined. The action plans shall cover the following components:
  - Mission and Vision of the biosphere reserves and objectives of the action plans,
  - Baseline scenario of the biosphere reserves and a SWOT analysis to identify key strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities for the biosphere reserves
  - Proposed plan to fulfil the three functions of UNESCO WNBR and Lima Action Plan
  - Proposed conservation and livelihood programmes with specific activities and expected outcomes to achieve vision of the biosphere reserves
  - Key stakeholders and their responsibility in implementing the action plan
  - Institutional and financial framework
  - Communication and outreach plan
  - Business and marketing for the biosphere reserves
  - Budget estimates for implementation of the action plans, including a resource mobilization plan
  - Research and monitoring plan
  - Technology and human resource need assessment and plan to mobilize the required technological innovations and human resource including capacity building plan
- In liaison with MoEnv, IUCN, Addu City Council, Fuvahmulah City Council, Addu and Fuvahmulah Nature Parks, with the draft action plans, conduct focus group discussions with key stakeholders of both Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserves separately.
- Revise the action plans based on comments and feedback from stakeholders, IUCN and MoEnv.

Validation and Final Stage:

- In liaison with MoEnv, IUCN, Addu City Council, Fuvahmulah City Council, Addu and Fuvahmulah Nature Parks, conduct a validation workshop for key stakeholders with the revised action plans.
• Incorporate any necessary changes and reviews identified in the validation workshop and finalise action plans.

4. **TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES:**

The consultancy is expected to commence on 05 March 2021 and follow the tentative schedule below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• Document review of all relevant documents</td>
<td>10 March 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Final inception report with timeline and detailed schedule of work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data repository with all the relevant documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• Initial consultation with key stakeholders (national and local level)</td>
<td>31 March 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consultation summaries, including participation lists, and input from stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Draft 1 of Action plans for the two biosphere reserves</td>
<td>15 April 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• Focus group discussions with the first draft</td>
<td>30 April 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consultation summaries, including participation lists, and input from stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Draft 2 of Action plans for the two biosphere reserves</td>
<td>15 May 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Validation workshop and final draft of the action plans for the Action plans for the two biosphere reserves</td>
<td>30 May 2021</td>
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</table>

The deliverables will have to be the result of extensive stakeholder consultations, which will have to be detailed in the consultants’ methodology and schedule of work.

5. **EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

Education and Professional Experience

- Minimum, master’s degree in sustainable development, environmental planning and management, marine conservation or other relevant fields;
- At least 5 years of proven professional and relevant experience in Maldives;
- Experience in relevant field of action plan development or developmental planning
- Familiarity with the biosphere reserve model, protected area design and management process in the Maldives;
- Demonstrated experience in developing official documents, specifically programs/action plan related to sustainable development, biodiversity conservation;
- Expertise in designing and conducting community and stakeholder consultations;
- Demonstrated high level oral and written communication and facilitation skills in English and Dhivehi
• Local expertise with extensive knowledge on national conservation efforts, policies and strategies and the ability to position action plan activities in the local context effectively;
• Knowledge of private sector and community based approaches to natural resource management in Maldives;
• Knowledge of environmental issues and complexities as they relate to the Maldives;
• Knowledge of social and livelihood systems in Maldives;
• Ability to operate in a highly fluid environment and in a virtual context

Language requirement
• Fluency in written and spoken English and Dhivehi is required

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications of the consultancy must include the following components:
• Detailed technical proposal clearly demonstrating a thorough understanding of this ToR and including the following:
  o Demonstrate previous experience in coordinating and administering activities of a similar nature;
  o Demonstrate knowledge of biosphere reserve model, protected area design and management process in the Maldives;
  o Demonstrate previous experience in developing official documents, specifically programs/action plan related to sustainable development, biodiversity conservation;
  o Expertise and demonstrated experience in designing and facilitating multi-stakeholder workshops, meetings and consultations;
  o Demonstrate knowledge on national conservation efforts, policies and strategies and the ability to position action plan activities in the local context effectively;
  o Demonstrate knowledge of private sector and community based approaches to natural resource management in Maldives;
  o Demonstrate knowledge of environmental issues and complexities as they relate to the Maldives;
  o Demonstrate knowledge of social and livelihood systems in Maldives;
  o Curriculum Vitae outlining relevant experience;
  o Names and contact information of two references who can be contacted regarding relevant experience.
• A financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs including chargeable daily rate and number of consultancy days against each deliverable.

The proposal will be scored on both technical (methodology) and financial (budget) aspects weighted at 70% and 30% respectively. Complete applications should be submitted electronically with the subject line of: ‘Application: National consultant to develop ten-year action plans for Addu Atoll and Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserves’ at following email address by 24 February 2021. The vacancy closes at midnight, Swiss time (GMT+1 / GMT+2 during Daylight Saving Time, DST).

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