

# TERMS OF REFERENCE – PART A

## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Aral Sea was the fourth largest lake in the world until the 1960s. The drying of the Aral Sea, a man-made disaster long in the making, is not only an environmental problem, but especially a catastrophe for communities and people living on its former shores. The Aral Sea disaster resulted in land degradation and desertification, shortage of drinking water, malnutrition, deteriorating health and high poverty rates of the affected population. The socio-economic and environmental consequences are further complicated by the speed of negative changes taking effect.

Significant population growth, the scale of urbanization and intensive use of lands, construction of large hydro-technical and irrigation facilities on the water-streams of the Aral Sea basin, without regards to the environmental consequences, were the main factors of the Aral Sea's drying out.

The loss of fisheries, compounded by the constant deterioration of land resources, has dealt a serious blow to the economic livelihoods of the residents of Karakalpakstan. Residents who were able to leave these areas, especially skilled professionals, did so early in the crisis, further depleting local capacity. Currently, working-age men, including a growing number of young people, are engaged in seasonal labour migration, leaving the burden of caring for the elderly and children to women, who often have to look for income opportunities in addition to family domestic work.

The vast areas of salt fields formed on the dried-up part of the sea turning into a new desert 'Aralkum' with an area of more than 5.5 million hectares, covering the territories of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Annually more than 75 million tons of dust and poisonous salts ascend from the Aral Sea.

The level of water salinity in the Aral Sea has increased by more than 13-25 times and exceeds the average level of mineralisation of oceans by 7-11 times. As a result of salt dispersion during dust storms, the mineralisation of irrigation water and groundwater increased, and the quality of land has sharply decreased.

Ensuring food security in the Republic of Karakalpakstan has its own specific features related to the state of land and water resources, environmental challenges, the level of socio-economic development, access to transport, and the capacity of food markets. In general, for 60% of the households, the affordability of food products is low.

The Water from the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers, the principal source of the Aral Sea, was used to irrigate cotton crops. From 1960 to 1990, Central Asia was the fourth cotton producer in the world. This fact has caused the fall of the water level in these rivers. Nowadays, the Aral Sea receives less than 1/10 of the water received in 1950. The fall of the amount of water supplied by the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers has caused the emergence of several kilometers of land which were covered by the sea in the past. This surface appears covered by tons of salt now. This is not the only consequence, northern and southern shores have been moved about 150 kilometers from its original shore and as a consequence, Moynaq and Aral have lost its fishing opportunities creating a very important economic and social problem. At the same time the fall of the water level, has also produced the emergence of some islands in the center of the Aral Sea, dividing the area in two seas (The small or northern sea and the large or southern sea). The rise of the salt level has killed several sorts of fish. Besides many mammals and birds have also disappeared/Scientists have also pointed out the climate change in the Aral Sea Basin.

Ensuring food security in the Republic of Karakalpakstan has its own specific features related to the state of land and water resources, environmental challenges, the level of socio-economic development, access to transport, and the capacity of food markets. In general, for 60% of the households, the affordability of food products is low.

To sum up, the residents of Aral Sea basin are confronting climate change, desertification, pollution and salinization of water and land resources, extinction of animals and plants, changes to the Aral Sea ecosystem, seasonal change and frequent dust and sand salt storms.

## **Current situation in the sector**

The European Union pays great importance to cooperation with Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries, evidenced by the adoption of the new EU Strategy for Central Asia on 17 June 2019. On November 11, 2019 during the visit of the delegation of Uzbekistan to Brussels, a Financial Agreement was signed with the European Union on contribution to the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea region (MPHSTF). In February of 2020 Contribution Agreement was signed between the European Union and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office on the contribution of the European Union to the MPHSTF.

This EU contribution aims to strengthen the health of populations, to reduce environmental degradation, to boost resilience of vulnerable populations affected by the Aral Sea disaster.

Government of Uzbekistan in partnership with international organisations plans to transform Aralkum desert and neighbouring settlements in Karkalpakstan into a lush forest that adapted to the climatic conditions of the region.

In his speech, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev put forward a number of important proposals on the introduction of innovative solutions and attracting foreign investment to the Aral Sea region, the development of a “green economy”, conducting research works. In this regard, a resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No.PP-3975 dated 16.10.2018, “On the creation of the International Innovation Center of the Aral Sea region” was adopted. Furthermore, with its Presidential Resolution #4597 dated 12/02/2020 “On additional measures to increase the efficiency of the International Innovation Centre for the Aral Sea basin under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan” it has been noted the allocation of 20.3 hectares of land for experimental site "Muynak" in the Muynak region and 20 hectares of land for experimental site "Samanbay" in the Nukus region of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Furthermore, under the same document it is envisaged implementation of the agro and ecotourism project "My Garden in the Aral Sea", aimed at attracting foreigners and local residents to eliminate the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis, to contribute to the greening of the Aral Sea region, thus, to improve the living standards of the population. As a result of these measures, for the first time in Uzbekistan, a landscaping project and a crowdfunding platform were created (<https://aralforest.org/>).

Taken into account above the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan, after consultation with and request from the government of Uzbekistan, has decided to channel part of the remaining funds<sup>1</sup> towards i) greening the Aral Sea region and contribute towards improvement of the environmental situation and ii) increase awareness among wider population, international community, EU Member States about the Aral Sea disaster, actions supported by the EU and perspectives for future investments.

---

<sup>1</sup> Under Financing Agreement № ACA/2019/042-168

## 2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

### 2.1. Global objective

The overall objective of the project of which this contract will be a part is to strengthen the health of populations, to reduce environmental degradation, to boost resilience of vulnerable populations affected by the Aral Sea disaster.

The primary assignment include:

- **Organize a study tour to the Aral Sea region for three days - tentatively end of April 2022.** Tentative itinerary includes but not limited to: Nukus – Takhtakupir – Nukus - Muynak – Sudochie Lake – Ustyurt Plateau - Urga village – Chinka Ustyurt (overview point for Aral Sea) – fishing village with Uchsay Lake – the open-air museum of ships in Muynak – Nukus. Number of participant of the tour is approximately 30 people. It is expected that participants will consist of representatives of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan, Heads of missions of EU Member States (resident and non-resident), representatives from the government institutions (such as the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection, Uzhydromet), mass media, translator/interpreter, professional guide and others. This assignment should cover all related expenses in Karakalpakstan (accommodation, meals, transportation for the whole duration of the tour, translator, photographer and cameraman, guide and others). Details of the tour, final list of participants and other matters will be discussed and agreed immediately after contract is signed.
- **Provide assistance in planting of 27.000 tress (symbolising 27 EU Member States) in Karakalpakstan – starting from April 2022.** Indicatively this assignment should include i) defining and allocating land in the experimental plots of “Samanbay” and “Muynak” for tree planting (as per Decree of the President #4597 dated 12.02.2020 - <https://lex.uz/docs/4733860>), ii) discuss and agree with Contracting Authority the variety and number of trees to be planted, iii) during the study tour, as described above, one of the elements of the programme will be a small tree planting ceremony with EU Delegation and EU Member States. Therefore, Contractors should envisage this event as well, iv) it should be also foreseen that trees are planted and taken care of by organisation/institution having sufficient experience in that. Further details will be agreed with the contractor.

### 2.2. Specific objective(s)

The specific objectives are:

- To raise awareness of EU's policies, principles and values in Uzbekistan, notably in relation to the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change in the Aral Sea basin. This is expected to be done through the organisation of a study visit to the Aral Sea region in order to:
  - Disseminate information about the works being done by the Government and MPHSTF in the Aral Sea region;
  - To showcase the successful sample where with limited funds it is possible to achieve significant and long-lasting results
  - Pave the way for future possible investments and assistance to the region
- Provide assistance to the government of Uzbekistan in its attempts to minimise negative effect of Aral Sea disaster to the environment and population of Karakalpakstan;

- Contribute to improvement of the ecosystem and sustainable life in the saline lands of the dried bottom of the Aral Sea by planting of 27.000 trees that are resistant to the climatic conditions of the region, such as ash, elm, catalpa, willow, saxaul, kandym and others

### **2.3. Requested services, including suggested methodology**

The expert team will draw up a detailed work plan at the beginning of the mission, for the approval of the EU Delegation. The work plan will be prioritised and timed, and be based on the below list of suggested activities with possible additions and/or modifications.

Following approval of the work plan, experts will be responsible for its implementation. The overall work plan can be updated/modified during the implementation of the assignment in agreement with the EU Delegation. All activities will be carried out under the supervision of the EU Delegation.

### **2.4. Required outputs**

The contractor will submit the following reports in English in one original electronic format:

- **Inception Report** of maximum 10 pages, excluding annexes if any, to be produced after a maximum of one month from the start of implementation. In the report the contractor shall describe e.g. initial findings, progress in collecting data, any difficulties encountered or expected in addition to the work programme and staff travel. The contractor should proceed with his/her work unless the contracting authority sends comments on the inception report.
- **Draft final report** of minimum 15 and maximum 20 pages (main text, excluding annexes). This report needs to be submitted within one month after the end of implementation of activities.
- **Final report** with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 14 days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The final report must be provided along with the corresponding invoice.

3. Language of the Specific Contract: English
4. Management team member presence not required for briefing and/or debriefing

## **3. LOGISTICS AND TIMING**

*Please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.*

## **4. REQUIREMENTS**

*Please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.*

## **5. REPORTS**

*Please refer to Part B of the Terms of Reference.*

## **6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Contract monitoring will take place through regular meetings, and at least monthly with the EU Delegation. The organization of meetings will comply with all the COVID-19 related measures and recommendations issued by the European Union, the Uzbek Government and the government of the expert's country of residence

## **7. PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

Please address any request for clarification and other communication to the following address(es):  
[DELEGATION-UZBEKISTAN-CRIS-FWC-OFFERS@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:DELEGATION-UZBEKISTAN-CRIS-FWC-OFFERS@eeas.europa.eu)

\* \* \*

# TERMS OF REFERENCE – PART B

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1. Benefitting Zone

Uzbekistan

### 2. Contracting authority

The European Union, represented by the European Commission, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium.

### 3. Contract language

English

## LOCATION AND DURATION

### 4. Location

- **Campaign manager:**
  - Normal place of posting of the specific assignment: Home based
  - Mission(s) outside the normal place of posting and duration(s): Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and Republic of Karakalpakstan (Aral Sea region), tentative duration of the mission is 7 days

### 5. Start date and period of implementation

The indicative start date is 16/04/2022 and the period of implementation of the contract will be 365 days from this date (indicative end date: 16/04/2023).

## REQUIREMENTS

### 6. Expertise

For this assignment, one individual expert must be proposed for each position.

The expertise required for the implementation of the specific contract is detailed below.

- **Campaign manager:**
  - General description of the position: Campaign manager will be responsible for overall coordination and implementation of the project outputs and co-ordination with specialists of EU-funded projects, partners and the EU Delegation staff. He/She shall be responsible for all deliverables of the contract, for the campaigns, all administrative and logistic arrangements of all outputs
  - Expert category: Cat. III (>3 years of experience)
  - Qualifications and skills required: Education at least at the level of Masters' Degree

in the areas of public relations and communication or relevant areas or in its absence, equivalent professional experience Strong competence in designing and implementing projects and campaigns for fund raising activities, awareness rising on environment and climate change, communication and visibility of development cooperation,

- General professional experience: At least 3 years of experience in the areas of climate change: resilience, adaptation and mitigation; Disaster Risk Reduction, including climate and environmental risks/disaster management; Sustainable management and protection of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems (soil erosion/salinization/fertility, national parks ecosystem protection, fight against desertification, etc.)
- Specific professional experience: Minimum 3 years of experience as a team leader/manager/project manager/project director/programme manager. Experience in designing and implementing study tours and other communication events. Extensive experience in communication on development projects and/or reforms Extensive experience in implementation of awareness rising activities; Proven experience in subcontracting and project management
- Language skills: C1 level of English (in writing, reading, listening and speaking) is a must. Excellent drafting skills in English is a must. Knowledge of Russian and/or Uzbek, including drafting skills, is a desirable asset
- Minimum number of working days: **30** days
- Additional information: The length of individual expert days in Uzbekistan and the distribution of working days allocated for specific activities are estimation. These will be further defined in the Work Plan to be approved by the EU Delegation

## **7. Incidental expenditure**

No incidental expenditure provided for in this contract.

## **8. Lump sums**

No lump sums provided for in this contract.

## **9. Expenditure verification**

No expenditure verification report is required.

## **10. Other details**

**1 - Assistance in planting of 27.000 trees (incl planting and caring fees) , that are resistant to the climatic conditions of the region, such as ash, elm, catalpa, willow, saxaul, kandym and others. The land allocation (in Muynak and Ships cemetery) will be done as per Presidential Resolution of PP-4597 dated 12/02/2020.**

Minimum quantity (if applicable): 1

**2 - Organisation of a trip to Nukus (Republic of Karakalpakstan) and Aral Sea shore for approx 30 people (incl travel, accommodation, meals, guides and transportation). it is planned to allocate 3 days and 2 nights for the trip (end of April). The details of the trip will be discussed and agreed once the contract is signed.**

Minimum quantity (if applicable): 1

## REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES

### 11. Reports and deliverables requirements

Title	Content	Language	Submission timing or deadline
Inception report	Inception Report of maximum 10 pages, excluding annexes if any, to be produced after a maximum of one month from the start of implementation. It should contain details of the implemented activities and remaining scope of the assignment;	English	Within 1 Month(s) After the project start
Draft final report	Draft final report of maximum 20 pages (main text, excluding annexes). This report needs to be submitted within one month after the end of implementation of activities. it will contain description and evaluation of outcomes, experienced problems, recommendations, lessons learnt	English	Within 1 Month(s) After the project end
Final report	Final report with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 14 days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The final report must be	English	Within 45 Day(s) After the project end

<b>Title</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Submission timing or deadline</b>
	provided along with the corresponding invoice.		