Terms of Reference:
Support for streamlining the current operation of the National Ecological Fund of Moldova

Background

The European Union for Environment Action (EU4Environment), funded by the European Union and implemented jointly by the international organisations OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank, aims to help the Republic of Moldova in achieving an environmental level playing field, amongst other objectives.

Within the context of this objective under EU4Environment, the OECD is currently supporting the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of Moldova (MARDE) in reviewing and streamlining the current operation of the National Ecological Fund (NEF).

A local consultant (“the Consultant”) will be engaged to facilitate implementation of this component in Moldova. This engagement will be for nine months, starting from the signature of the contract.

Objective and scope of tasks

Under this contract, the Consultant will provide **support and facilitate** activities to strengthen management and operations of the National Ecological Fund in Moldova as listed above. More specifically the Consultant will:

* Prepare a draft of an Operational Manual for the NEF (hitherto referred to as Operational Manual), based on the new draft Regulation and proposed institutional set-up for the administration and daily management of the NEF[[1]](#footnote-1). This should include the development of the parts of the operational manual related to the appraisal methodology for funding applications, other templates and guidance.
* Develop evaluation sheets for proposed projects to be financed through the NEF as part of the Operational Manual.
* Assist in the revision of existing criteria for identifying and selecting investment projects; review the rules and procedures for project evaluation, management practices, spending plans and payment mechanisms[[2]](#footnote-2).
* Formulate sound assessments of the procedural quality of the assessment of funding proposals to improve them, taking into account best practice of project appraisal methodology with all its elements.
* Develop materials and tools based on comparative analysis, data and indicators that policy makers can use for improving the current operation of the NEF, in collaboration with relevant officials in MARDE and experts in Moldova and abroad.

In addition to the tangible deliverables, the work of the consultant may contribute to the whole component, more specifically to the following tasks:

* Develop a draft Regulation of the Division of the management of the Fund within MARDE (based on new regulation on the Fund and the Operational Manual).
* Develop proposals for functional responsibilities for the staff of the Division of the management of the Fund within the MARDE (10 units, according to the new Regulation).
* Develop a draft Order of the Minister of MARDE to approve the Operational Manual. Facilitate registration and official publishing of the Operational Manual.
* Organise and conduct the training of staff on procedures laid out in the Operational Manual.
* Provide legal support/assistance on legal issues of the fund as requested by the MARDE.
* Support the Head of Division at MARDE with the current/daily management of the Fund and contribute to the monthly/annual reporting process of the NEF.

The Consultant will also be expected to coordinate implementation with the National Action Coordinator of EU4Environment in Moldova, OECD and MARDE and engage relevant stakeholders (national administration, (international) experts, private sector, civil society, academic community), including assisting in and organising meetings of the Council of Administration of the NEF.

Tangible deliverables

The tangible deliverables of this assignment will include:

* Submission to the OECD of **a first draft of the Operational Manual** building on previous, related work on the Ecological Fund and its operations specifying administrative procedures, all aspects of the project cycle process in particular the review of funding applications, project monitoring and reporting, application forms, reporting forms, and evaluation and appraisal criteria amongst others. This will include in particular support with the development of evaluation sheets for proposed projects to be financed through the NEF. It will also include assistance in the revision of existing criteria for identifying and selecting investment projects and reviewing the rules and procedures for project evaluation, management practices, spending plans and payment mechanisms. **By 30th September 2020.**
* Conduct **a round of consultations on the Operational Manual with relevant experts and stakeholders in Moldova (and beyond)** in October 2020 and feed in their feedback into the second draft of the Operational Manual.
* Submission to the OECD of **a second draft of the Operational Manual** specifying administrative procedures, all aspects of the project cycle process in particular the review of funding applications, project monitoring and reporting, application forms, reporting forms, and evaluation and appraisal criteria amongst others. **By 15th November 2020.**
* Submission to the OECD of **the final version of the Operational Manual** specifying administrative procedures, all aspects of the project cycle process in particular the review of funding applications, project monitoring and reporting, application forms, reporting forms, and evaluation and appraisal criteria amongst others. **By 15th December 2020.**
* Submission of **draft training materials** to the OECD **by January 2021** on the use of the Operational Manual or other NEF-relevant procedures and best practice. In cooperation with OECD and the National Action Coordinator, identification of trainers and delivery of at least one **training workshop** on the use of the Operational Manual or other NEF-relevant procedures; generating buy-in amongst future staff working for the Fund on the procedures laid out in the Operational Manual as well as any other particular aspects of Fund-relevant activities **by March 2021**.
* **Identify and train a follow-up support** /mentor after the Operational Manual is in place in the final three to six months of the contract time period.
* Provide **regular progress updates** to the OECD, MARDE and the National Action Coordinator (a daily, weekly and monthly communication, coordination and reporting procedure to be established with all indicated bodies);
* A **final report** (up to ten pages) that evaluates the progress and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the Operational Manual as well as suggestions for practical steps to help the operation of the Fund, by **March 2021.**

Duration, remuneration and location

**Duration:** The expected duration of the assignment is nine months, starting from the signature of the contract by both parties.

**Remuneration:** A lump sum of EUR 10,000, subject to the approvals of deliverables by the OECD to the satisfactory standards according to a schedule presented below.

**Location:** It is expected that the Consultant will work at the premises of the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (office space and equipment will be provided as in-kind contribution by the Ministry, subject to the necessary requirements to ensure the successful execution of this assignment).

Payment condition

The payment will be done in five instalments:

* 10% upon signature of the contract;
* 20% upon submission of the first draft of the operational manual, to the satisfaction of the Organisation and upon receipt of relevant invoice;
* 20% upon submission of the second draft of the operational manual and completion of stakeholder consultation, to the satisfaction of the Organisation and upon receipt of relevant invoice;
* 30% upon submission of the final draft of the operational manual and delivery of training, to the satisfaction of the Organisation and upon receipt of relevant invoice;
* 20% upon full completion of the assignment to the satisfaction of the Organisation and upon receipt of relevant invoice.

**Application documents**

Interested applicants should submit the following documents by 27th July:

* CV
* Motivation letter
* Examples of previous work and references

Please send by email to Isabella.NEUWEG@oecd.org, cc: andrei.isac.environment@gmail.com; dianne.FOWLER@oecd.org not later than 17h00 (Central European time) on **Monday** **27th July 2020.** Please mention the contract title: “OECD Local consultant to support NEF” in the subject line.

Suitable applicants may be invited for an interview (video/skype).

Annex A. Suggested content of the Operational Manual (to be discussed)

Abbreviations

General information/introduction

Operational Manual

**1. Management of the Fund**

**1.1 Legal base**

1.1.1 Legislation, definitions

1.1.2 By-laws/Regulations

1.1.3 Funding policy and domains, conditions of eligibility and funding

**1.2. Administrative Council**

1.2.1 Composition

1.2.2 Attributions

1.2.3 Council meetings (organisation/transparency)

**1.3 Executive body of the Fund/ Division of the project management of the Fund within the MARDE**

**1.4 Evaluation experts/criteria for experts and for evaluation**

**1.5 BAP**

**2. Expenditure Strategy (for 3 years)**

**2.1 Priority domains for funding/short term and long term strategy**

**2.2 MTBF and specific expenditures included**

**2.3 Reserve Fund**

**2.4 Co-funding of the national and international projects**

**3. Annual Operational Plan**

**4. Project cycle management**

**4.1. Identification of the project; Project Identification Form, Project Application Form**

4.1.2 Receiving and registering of the project/registration form

**4.2. Project Evaluation procedures**

**4.3. Project selection procedures**

**4.4. Project contracting procedures/contract models**

**4.5. Project implementation and monitoring procedures**

**4.6. Project finalisation and evaluation procedures**

**4.7. Informational System/Software and format for the Project cycle management**

**5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Control of the Fund**

**5.1. Monitoring and evaluation procedures, indicators (monthly, annual)**

**5.2. Monthly and Annual Report (public)**

**5.3. External Audit**

**5.4. Internal Audit**

**5.5. Book-keeping/financial management of the Fund/account of the fund etc**

**5.6. Supervision and control at national and local level**

 **5.7 Fund Archive**

 **5.8 Income sources evidence**

**6. Communication and transparency**

**6.1 Communication channels and tools**

Website of the Fund/social page etc

**6.2 Public information and consultation**

Consultative groups/councils meetings

Workshops on project development/project cycle management

**6.3. Visibility and branding, design and corporate identity, communication and PR products**

6.3.1 Visibility of projects at national level

6.3.2 Visibility of projects at local level

**7. Environmental and Social Management**

**7.1 Environmental Management**

**7.2 Social Management**

**7.3 Sustainable/green public procurement**

**8. Management of disputes**

**9. Conclusions and recommendations**

Development opportunities

Operational Manual update

**Annexes**

**Annex 1: Procurement policies**

Annex 1.1. Procurements procedures within the projects funded by the Fund

Annex 1.2. Green procurement of goods, services and works

**Annex 2 Model/format of the Project Identification Form (PIF) - models for all project funding domain, according to the legislation provisions**

Annex 2.1: Model/format of the Project Identification Form for waste management (example)

Annex 2.2: Model/format of the evaluation form for the PIF

**Annex 3. Model of the Project Application Form (PAF) - model/format for all project funding domains, with identification of all annexes/documents/acts with have to accompany the specific project in a specific domain**

Annex 3.1: Model of the Project Application Form for waste management (example)

Annex 3.2: Model/format of the evaluation form for the PAF on waste (example)

Annex 3.3: Model of the Project Application Form for biodiversity conservation

Annex 3.4: Model/format of the evaluation form for the PAF on biodiversity

**Annex 4: Format/minimum requirements for the contracts/sub-contracts etc**

**Annex 5: Format/minimum requirements for the progress reports of the projects**

**Annex 6: Format/minimum requirements for the reports on the finalization of the project**

**Annex 7: Requirements in case of credits/loans/preferential/long term proposals etc**

**Annex 8: Recommendations for applicants/beneficiaries**

 Frequently Asked Questions

**Annex 9 Form/model of evaluation of the projects/criteria/for each financing domain (or in annexes 2 and 3)**

**Annex 10: Reporting forms for each domain (or in annex 6)**

 Financial (interim, final)

 Narrative

**Annex 11: Format/content of the announcements/calls for projects etc**

1. to be based on a coordinated draft content (provided as an Annex to the ToR) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As appropriate, this work might include risk assessment of financial instruments and other mechanisms that can be provided to scale up green financing; and may be linked to analysis of strengthening the normative framework on environmental pollution taxes and payments ("Polluter Pays" principle) by amending Law no. 1540/1998 on payment for pollution. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)