



## **Terms of Reference: Hiring an NGO Partner to assist in implementing Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) in selected landscapes for the State of Maharashtra**

### **1. Project background**

IUCN is part of the consortium that is implementing the Restore, Conserve and Protect Forest and Tree Cover for NDC Implementation in India (RECAP4NDC) project spread in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttarakhand. The project will be led by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), who is also responsible for anchoring FLR in existing policy and planning processes, and executed by five other consortium partners, including IUCN towards implementing FLR approaches; Forest Survey of India (FSI) towards monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) of climate, ecological and socio-economic benefits; the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) towards financing FLR from private, public, and international sources; and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) towards transferring knowledge and capacitating local, national and international stakeholder groups.

IUCN will plan, design and implement forest landscape restoration (FLR) measures in selected landscapes, ensuring that ecological, socio-economic, governance and climate change related benefits from FLR flow to stakeholders.

### **2. Overall Project Objectives**

The project will achieve the following specific objectives:

- Select model sites for developing FLR approaches
- Develop Detailed Project Reports (DPR) for 12 model sites and operational plans for 6 pilot sites through participatory processes
- Develop and implement FLR measures to contribute to restoration of degraded and deforested areas
- Develop Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) for each of the model sites
- Provide support in building capacities of relevant stakeholders towards FLR planning and implementation
- Document the lessons learnt from FLR planning and implementation.

Overall work for IUCN is spread across three work packages:

#### **Work Package 1: Scoping**

This work package involves identification of 12 model sites in the four project states where the work will be undertaken. This will require identification of relevant stakeholders, determination of entry points and barriers (SWOT analysis), baseline assessment (socio-economic, ecosystem service review, biophysical assessment) for the identified model sites.

#### **Work Package 2: Planning**

This entails development of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), one each for the identified model sites. The DPRs for each model site will include baseline information related to model sites, FLR strategies, funding, monitoring, implementation plans, Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP), among other elements. Further, six pilot sites will be identified from within the 12 model sites where demonstration of FLR measures will take place. With respect to the pilot sites, operational plans will be developed.

#### **Work Package 3: Implementation**

This work package involves a multi-faceted approach to implement FLR measures in pilot sites. It also includes assessing livelihood training needs, conducting livelihood training, implementing FLR measures in pilot sites, monitoring and assessing results, and documenting

approaches and lessons learned. The emphasis will also be on engaging stakeholders, including local communities, institutions, line departments, and any relevant CSOs, to ensure effective implementation and sustainability of FLR interventions in the model sites.

### 3. Project Terminologies

<b>Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) approach</b>	A holistic and integrated approach that aims to restore degraded forest landscapes to their original state and regain ecological functionality. For instance, agroforestry and assisted natural regeneration (ANR) are among the common FLR approaches.
<b>FLR measure</b>	An FLR measure refers to specific actions taken to achieve the goal of forest landscape restoration. For instance, within the ANR FLR approach, removing disturbances (say through removal of invasive species, prevention of fire, etc.) are specific FLR measures.
<b>Detailed Project Report (DPR)</b>	It is a comprehensive outline of all the steps and resources that a project needs. It is essentially a blueprint of the project plan.
<b>Operational plan</b>	It is a detail-oriented plan that clearly defines the goals, objectives, activities to be undertaken, and how to achieve them.
<b>Model site</b>	These are potential landscapes where restoration work can be taken up. They are identified from the long list of landscapes through application of an evaluation matrix. The model sites would cover at least 150,000 ha in total with benefits flowing to much larger area. For each of the model site, a DPR will be prepared.
<b>Pilot site</b>	These are the sites where restoration work will be undertaken. They will be smaller sub-units identified from some of the selected model sites. For each of the pilot site, an operational plan will be developed.

**4. Geographic Scope for this assignment:** A total of four landscapes (Model Sites) have been identified using spatial and non-spatial criteria in the state of Maharashtra, wherein this assignment needs to be carried out. The four Model Sites are located in Pune, Ahmednagar, Chandrapur and Jalgaon districts spanning to an overall area of approximately 50,000 hectares (details in Annexure 1).

### 5. Scope of work for the state of Maharashtra

The overall scope of work for the selected agency towards planning and implementing FLR measures in the identified landscapes in the state of Maharashtra has been encapsulated under the following three work packages:

Work Package 1: Scoping

Work Package 2: Planning

Work Package 3: Implementation

#### 5.1. Work Package 1: Scoping

Under this work package, the selected agency will be required to undertake the following activities in all the four model sites mentioned above:

- Support IUCN's work on MS-specific context, including, but not limited to the drivers of degradation, existing FLR initiatives, Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, and stakeholder mapping.
- Undertake the baseline assessment:



- IUCN will provide all the translated questionnaires. Selected NGO is expected to conduct field testing of the translated questionnaires to understand the scope of changes in it.
- Finalize the translated questionnaires in consultation with IUCN.
- Administer the questionnaire with respect to the following three components:

**A. Socio-Economic Assessment:**

- ✓ Provide inputs to the questionnaires developed by IUCN
- ✓ Translate the finalized questionnaires
- ✓ Administer the socio-economic questionnaires with different category of community members, relevant line departments, and other stakeholders, in the model sites (as per Annexure 2). Adopt participatory approaches of engaging the stakeholders, such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), village resource mapping, and others.

**B. Ecosystem Services Review:**

- ✓ Provide inputs to the questionnaires developed by IUCN
- ✓ Translate the finalized questionnaires
- ✓ Document, prioritize, analyse the ecosystem services (Provisioning, Regulating, Cultural, Supporting) present and their current state in the landscapes through stakeholder consultations (Annexure 3).
- ✓ Establish historical trends in the flow of ecosystem services, interaction between humans (individuals and community) and ecosystem services.
- ✓ Determine the threats affecting ecosystem services and their impacts.
- ✓ Explore the area of influence of ecosystem services
- ✓ Refer to any relevant secondary literature to bolster the findings

**C. Biophysical assessment:**

Assess both biotic (flora and fauna) and abiotic (soil and water) factors through primary and secondary means to help determine the outcome of forest landscape restoration efforts (Annexure 4).

- ✓ **Floral Assessment**
  - Identify and assess biodiversity of trees, herbs, shrubs, climbers, and regeneration status in various ecosystems.
  - Record qualitative information with respect to the sampling site (land use, topography, invasive species, grazing, crop composition, etc.)
  - Adhere to the National Working Plan Code for laying out plots for floral assessment and recording qualitative information.
- ✓ **Faunal Assessment**
  - Use secondary methods, including documents/ reports available with relevant line departments, local institutions and online literature, to assess faunal diversity (mammals, amphibians, reptiles, insects, birds, and fishes) in the model sites.
  - Incorporate traditional knowledge of local communities wrt faunal diversity
- ✓ **Soil and Water profile**
  - On the above plots, collect primary samples, wherever possible, to assess soil and water parameters, such as:

- soil type (colour/ texture), micro- and macro-nutrients, organic carbon content, pH, and electrical conductivity, and
  - Availability and quality of surface and groundwater (such as water table, no. of water sources, DO/BOD/COD in water, nutrients, contaminants)
  - Collect secondary data available through relevant line departments and their websites, interviews with community members and other experts in the landscape, other published literature for the landscape.
- The team members for data collection should have relevant experience, be proficient in local language and conditions, and include both male and female members.
  - Submit an inception report describing refined survey design, refined tools, survey villages, team composition, data analysis plan, landscape details, and any other relevant details.
  - Finalized survey plan with date-wise travel details should be submitted.
  - Systematically transcribe all the qualitative responses in English in form of word documents and prepare a synthesis.
  - Review relevant secondary sources to bolster primary findings.
  - Clean, analyse, and synthesize the data obtained during the above baseline assessments.
  - Develop baseline report specific to the model site and presentations specific to the model sites. If required, present it to relevant line departments in tandem with IUCN.
  - Facilitate community involvement by coordinating and arranging for logistical support, transportation, venue arrangements, resource availability, where essential.

Additional details and documents, including questionnaires, data recording formats, LULC maps, with respect to the four model sites will be provided once the agency is selected.

**Timeline of WP 1:** January 2025 – April 2025

**Deliverables:** (a) One inception report for all the model sites; (b) Baseline reports and presentations for each of the model site (b) All data gathered in word and excel formats (translated in English).

## 5.2. Work Package 2: Planning

Under this work package, development of four Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), one each for the four model sites, in the state, is required. Further, two pilot sites of 50-200 hectares or more each will be identified from within the four model sites, where demonstration of FLR measures will take place. The selected agency will be required to undertake the following specific activities:

- In consultation with IUCN and the DPR consultant, provide inputs to finalize the structure of the DPR
- Draft the chapters for the DPR pertaining to:
  - potential suitable FLR measures in consultation with local communities and relevant line departments based on baseline assessment and other available information. The FLR measures are to be developed for both forest and non-forest areas (considering the overall landscape).
  - fund requirements for implementing the above measures,
  - potential sites for implementing FLR measures in consultation with relevant stakeholders
  - livelihood value chain development and capacity building needs.

- Provide inputs to the overall DPR developed by the DPR consultant.
- Provide support to other consultants engaged by IUCN by offering relevant information, documents and facilitating field-level discussions
- Propose at least two pilot sites (about 50-200 ha each or more) from each model site based on criteria such as high degradation, institutional leverage, stakeholders' willingness. Finalize at least two pilot sites for the state in consultation with IUCN and the relevant line department(s) for FLR implementation.
- Using the DPR as the guiding document, prepare annual workable Operational Plans for the finalized pilot sites starting April 2025 till March 2028 encompassing detailed methods for implementing suitable FLR measures, timeframe of activities, resourcing and financial requirements, infrastructure to be created and how it will be done, assignment of responsibilities, timelines, monitoring plan, implementation mechanism, carbon sequestration potential for the proposed FLR measures for the next 10 years, among other necessary details important for executing FLR measures on the ground.
- Get the necessary permissions from relevant stakeholders for the pilots.

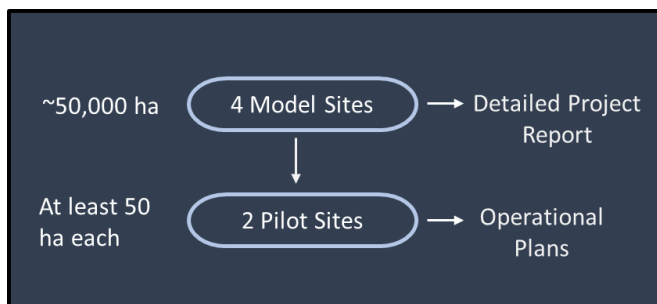


Figure 1: Model Site and Pilot Site requirements as part of this ToR

- Propose an exit plan for the FLR implementation in pilot sites
- Prepare presentations wrt each operational plan and present it to relevant line departments in tandem with IUCN, when required.

**Timeline of WP 2:** January 2025 – April 2025

**Deliverables:** (a) Specific chapters of the DPR; (b) Operational plans for selected pilot sites and presentations

### 5.3. Work Package 3: Implementation

Under this work package, the selected agency will be required to undertake the following activities in the pilot sites and the model sites:

#### **Field implementation**

- Implement the operational plans in the selected pilot sites (50-200 ha each) developed in work package 2 towards implementing the FLR measures through community participation and involvement of relevant line departments and other stakeholders,
- Scale up broader initiatives, including, but not limited to,
  - awareness generation/campaigns,
  - community mobilization,
  - convergence efforts,
  - value chain development,
  - trainings/ exposure visits,
  - strengthening local institutions,
  - nursery development, etc.

in an attempt to cover the entire model sites (approximately 50,000 ha).



- Propose what initiatives would potentially be taken up and the implementation mechanism, to cover the entire model sites in order to contribute to effective FLR implementation.

### ***Monitoring, learning, and reporting***

- Develop in consultation with IUCN and implement a monitoring plan to track the progress of interventions effectively,
- Develop and share quarterly progress reports, also reporting on monitoring framework, while actively gathering feedback from the field and stakeholders.
- Estimate the number of people and extent of area being impacted directly and indirectly,
- Determine the benefits/co-benefits (quantitatively and qualitatively) generated from the interventions, including, in terms of carbon sequestration, livelihoods (income), biodiversity, land improvement, etc.
- Document and share approaches and lessons learned through FLR implementation in the pilot sites in relevant meetings, workshops or forums, as required, to promote knowledge sharing and dissemination.

### **Timeline of WP 3: April 2025 – March 2028**

**Deliverables:** (a) Quarterly progress reports, including activities undertaken in pilot and model sites; (b) Develop pilot site specific monitoring plan; (c) Two pilot site specific case studies wrt implementation experience

- Throughout the assignment, you are expected to work closely with IUCN, its consultants, and other stakeholders through IUCN. IUCN should be consulted and informed of all project-related decisions beforehand.
- IUCN should be consulted and informed about the field movements for data collection, members that will visit the field, number of days for field visit, and any other crucial information related to field visits.
- You will have to submit all the raw data generated, including the responses to the questionnaires administered with stakeholders.
- The agency is expected to support IUCN's work across the landscape in integrating FLR measures in line department's developmental planning.

**6. Period of assignment** is from January 2025 to March 2028.

The selected NGO will be evaluated annually based on performance.

### **7. Experience and qualifications**

- Registered as a national or a local India-based organization or entity
- Sufficient organizational capacity, including skilled personnel, equipment, and technology, to effectively carry out the assignment
- Proven ability to engage with local communities, stakeholders, and institutions in a participatory and culturally sensitive manner
- Prior engagement in relevant projects within the State and in selected landscapes with FLR focus
- Proficiency in English, Hindi, and the local language

### Annexure 1: Geography details

District	Division	Range	Block (Panchayat Samiti)	Villages
Pune	1 - Junnar	3 - Ghodegaon, Junnar, Manchar	2 - Junnar, Ambegaon	42
Ahmednagar	2 - Sangamner, West Nashik	2 - Sangamner_2, Sinnar	1 - Sangamner	16
Chandrapur	3 - Central Chanda, Chandrapur, West Chanda	8 - Balharshah, Chichpalli, Dhaba, Junona, Kothari, Rajura, Wirur, Zaran	3 - Ballarpur, Rajura, Gondpipri	43
Jalgaon	2 – Jalgaon, Buldhana	6 – Chalisgaon, Jalgaon Jamod, Muktainagar, Pachora, Parola, Vadoda	4 – Bhadgaon, Chalisgaon, Muktainagar (Edlabad), Parola	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>150</b>

District	Landscape area within forest (ha)	Landscape area outside forest (ha)	Total Area (ha)
Pune	5339	9626	14965
Ahmednagar	4585	5691	10276
Chandrapur	5051	6109	11160
Jalgaon	14959	0	14959

Land Degradation Class by LULC Shrub / Scrub Land	Land Status	Pune	Ahmednagar	Chandrapur	Jalgaon
		Area Statistics (ha)			
Barren Land	Inside Forest	12	46	1597	1458
Degraded Forest Land	Inside Forest	382	734	2510	640
Low Land Productivity	Inside Forest	1889	NA	297	6860
Shrub / Scrub Land	Inside Forest	3056	3805	646	6003
<b>Total</b>		<b>5339</b>	<b>4585</b>	<b>5051</b>	<b>14959</b>
Barren Land	Outside Forest	39	112	147	NA



Land Degradation Class by LULC Shrub / Scrub Land	Land Status	Pune	Ahmednagar	Chandrapur	Jalgaon
		Area Statistics (ha)			
Degraded Forest Land	Outside Forest	1147	1322	402	NA
Low Land Productivity	Outside Forest	6039	1826	4833	NA
Shrub / Scrub Land	Outside Forest	2401	2431	727	NA
<b>Total</b>		<b>9626</b>	<b>5691</b>	<b>6109</b>	<b>NA</b>

**Note:** There may be changes in the selected geographies above.



**Annexure 2: Details of socio-economic discussions to be held in the four Model Sites in Maharashtra**

Theme of baseline study	Tool	Sample size	Description	Logic for selection	Category of respondents	Area of Enquiry	Secondary sources
Socio Economic Study	FGDs	75	FGD to be conducted in about 50% or more (till satisfactory data is obtained from the landscape) of all the villages in each landscape  (150 X 50% = 75)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Each village to ideally represent a distinct GP.</li> <li>* Villages should be in proportion to inside and outside forest areas.</li> <li>* Villages should also capture variety, e.g., FRA areas, upstream/ downstream.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* FGD must include farmers and forest dependent communities among other local community members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Livelihood sources</li> <li>* Income estimates</li> <li>* Other demographic characteristics</li> <li>* Crops grown and NTFP collected: commodities, seasonality</li> <li>* Value chains of key commodities</li> <li>* Presence and functionality of local institutions and gaps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* District Handbook</li> <li>* District + Block + GP Development Plans</li> <li>* Micro plans (Revenue, forest, Watershed)</li> <li>* Contingency Plans (Agri)</li> <li>* Working plans (forest)</li> <li>* Other relevant planning documents for DPR preparation</li> </ul>
	FGDs	15	FGDs with women to be conducted in 10% of all villages in each landscape (150 X 10% = 15)	Separate FGDs for women to capture their perspectives, roles and responsibilities, influence, aspirations on livelihoods, FLR, and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Women (including individuals and from SHG/ farmer groups/ other committees)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Livelihood status, opportunities and gaps</li> <li>* Income estimates</li> <li>* Other demographic characteristics</li> <li>* Role of women in NRM and FLR specifically</li> <li>* Institutional structure &amp; functioning &amp; gaps</li> <li>* Financial inclusion</li> <li>* Role and responsibilities of women in FLR specifically</li> </ul>	
	IDIs	75	One IDI at each selected village above	Capture community perspectives and gather village/ GP-wise information	Sarpanch/ Secretary/ Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Village level demographic data,</li> <li>* Livelihood status in village and income estimates</li> <li>* Other demographic characteristics</li> <li>* GP level schemes</li> <li>* Various relevant committees</li> </ul>	

Theme of baseline study	Tool	Sample size	Description	Logic for selection	Category of respondents	Area of Enquiry	Secondary sources
						* Institutional structure & functioning & gaps	
	IDIs	10	One IDI with every Block Development Office Include all blocks in each landscape	Capture perspectives and gather information wrt the block	Block Development Officer	* Block level statistics (HH, area, infrastructure) * Livelihood Opportunities and migration * Flagship schemes in the block * Community led initiatives * Institutional structure & functioning & gaps	
	IDIs	19	One IDI with every Range Forest Office Include all forest ranges in the landscape	Capture perspectives and gather information from the forest department	Range Forest Officer	* Range level infrastructure data * Community interactions/relationship * JFMC/BMC/ Van Panchayat status * Key NTFPs and livelihood status * Skilling/livelihood initiatives of the forest department * Institutional structure & functioning & gaps	

**Note:** The above sampling details are tentative and could change once the agencies are on the field. With appropriate justification, you could propose changes to it.

The agency must exhibit relevant expertise and capacity to undertake the above assessment.

**Annexure 3:** Details of discussions to be held corresponding to ecosystem services review for the four Model Sites in Maharashtra

Theme of baseline study	Tool	Sample size	Logic for sample selection	Theme/ category of respondents	Area of Enquiry	Secondary sources
Ecosystem Services	FGDs	75	One FGD in each selected village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* FGD must be conducted with Farmers and forest dependent communities among other local community members separately</li> <li>* At least 20% participants should be women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Key ecosystem services</li> <li>* Historical changes in quality and quantity of ecosystem services</li> <li>* Environmental changes and conservation practices</li> <li>* Potential for sustainable livelihoods through ecosystem service management (ecotourism, sustainable fisheries, agroforestry)</li> <li>* Key NTFP/ agri value chains</li> </ul>	Relevant information can flow from above documents
	IDIs	75	At each village selected for FGD a concurrent IDI will be conducted	Village elder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Historical perspective on ecosystem services</li> <li>* Community knowledge and perceptions on Ecosystem Services</li> <li>* Status of ecosystem services in the village (Irrigation, Drinking Water etc)</li> <li>* Key environmental challenges and local adaptation/ mitigation efforts</li> <li>* Effectiveness of local governance in protecting and enhancing ecosystem services</li> <li>* Role of GP/village in management of ecosystems</li> </ul>	
	IDIs	50	All blocks covering the landscape.  Assumed five line departments at each block for interview	Block Development Officer and Other departments (Agriculture, Horticulture, irrigation etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Status of degradation of ecosystems (Land, water, others) outside forest areas</li> <li>* Understanding of key ecosystem services in the landscape</li> <li>* Effectiveness of local governance in protecting and enhancing ecosystem services</li> <li>* Government schemes focusing on ecosystem services</li> <li>* Collaboration between communities and government on ecosystem service restoration and management</li> </ul>	

Theme of baseline study	Tool	Sample size	Logic for sample selection	Theme/ category of respondents	Area of Enquiry	Secondary sources
	IDIs	19	All forest range offices coinciding with model site landscape	Range Forest Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Status of degradation of ecosystems (Land, water, others) in forest areas</li> <li>* Role of protected areas in providing ecosystem services</li> <li>* Relation of community with ecosystems, and their role in managing ecosystem services</li> <li>* Impact of conservation efforts on local ecosystem services</li> <li>* Role of various Committees (JFMC, Biodiversity committees) in conserving ecosystem services</li> <li>* Challenges in maintaining ecosystem services</li> </ul>	

**Note:** The above sampling details are tentative and could change once the agencies are on the field. With appropriate justification, you could propose changes to it.

The agency must exhibit relevant expertise and capacity to undertake the above assessment.

**Annexure 4:** Details corresponding to biophysical assessment to be carried out in the four Model Sites in Maharashtra

Theme of baseline study	Theme	Tool	Sample size	Description	Area of Enquiry	Secondary sources
Biophysical Assessment	Flora	Field survey	30-40 plots	* Plots to be distributed by LULC classes representing different ecosystems	* Species identification (trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses) * Density and abundance of native species * Presence of invasive species * Endemic and rare species * Vegetation structure and composition * IUCN Red List and WPA schedule status of species	* Peoples Biodiversity Registers * Working plans * Micro-plans
	Flora and fauna	Secondary sources	NA	* Attempt to capture GP/ village-wise information		
	Flora and fauna	IDIs with village elders	75	* One IDI at each village	* Species identification * Presence of keystone species * Habitat preferences and distribution	NA
	Soil and water	Field survey	30-40 plots	* Use the same plots laid out for flora assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soil parameters (type (color/ texture), Micro- and macro-nutrients, Soil organic carbon content, pH, Electrical conductivity)</li> <li>Parameters related to quantity and quality of surface and groundwater (such as water table, no. of sources, oxygen levels -DO, BOD, COD; nutrients; contaminants- chemical/ biological)</li> </ul>	* IARI, State Space Application Center, Agriculture office, KVKs, Agricultural Universities, forest department * Soil Health Cards from villagers for farm-level soil data * Central and State-level Ground Water Board, Pollution Control Board
	Soil and water	Secondary sources	NA	* Attempt to capture village-wise information		

**Note:** The agency must exhibit relevant expertise and capacity to undertake the above assessment.