

## ANNEX 1

### REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

#### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A SENIOR FORESTRY EXPERT

#### MOLDOVA FOREST DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Moldova has one of the lowest forest coverages in Europe (11 %), significantly below the EU average (39 %), due to historical deforestation, unsustainable land use, and weak forest management. To address these issues, Government of Moldova launched the **National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP)** in 2023, aiming to afforest 110,000 ha of degraded land and rehabilitate 35,000 ha of degraded forests by 2032, with an estimated budget of EUR 749 million. The programme aligns with sustainable forest management principles, focusing on native species, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and public engagement. In 2024, the Government of Moldova received a loan of up to EUR 200 million from the European Investment Bank (EIB) - the **Forest Development Programme (FDP)**, a holistic approach to forestry sector modernisation that will also support the implementation of NFERP's first phase. The FDP seeks to improve governance, regulatory frameworks, and institutional capacities while expanding afforestation and landscape restoration efforts. It aims to integrate forestry with other sectors (e.g., agriculture, water resources) and promote economic incentives, public-private partnerships, and digitalisation. Ultimately, the FDP's goal is to enhance climate resilience, ecosystem health, and the supply of sustainable forest products while reducing vulnerabilities to climate change<sup>1</sup>.

**The project:** EIB is providing a loan of up to EUR 200 million to the Ministry of Environment to finance the “Moldova Forest Development Programme” or the “FDP Project”).

**The Client:** The Ministry of Environment, through IP National Office for Implementation Environment Projects (“NOIEP” or the “Client”) is the promoter of the Project, a public institution under which the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be set-up.

The FDP focuses on the following priorities:

- Improvement of forest governance and legal framework.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of local stakeholders.
- Improving the production capacity of forest reproductive material.
- Restoration and rehabilitation of approximately 63,200 ha of degraded forest land.

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<sup>1</sup> More information about the programme is available here: <https://www.eib.org/en/projects/all/20230445>

The NFERP will be co-financed in parallel through various funding sources (confirmed and potential), as follows:

- Moldova Government funds, contributing in kind approximately EUR 75 million to the FDP.
- The Agence Française de Développement (AFD), providing a budgetary support loan of EUR 40 million for developing and implementation of certain forestry reforms and a grant in the amount of 1.2 million EUR.
- A potential investment grant of EUR 49 million from Green Climate Fund (GCF) sought by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) on behalf of MENV.
- World Bank accessed the Green Environment Fund (GEF), providing an investment grant of USD 7.8 million sought by the MENV.
- A potential investment and technical assistance grant of EUR 15 million sought by the EIB from EU-Neighbourhood Investment Platform (DG ENEST).

A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be set up within NOIEP to implement the Project. The PIU will consist of several experts that will ensure the day-to-day coordination, management and implementation of the Project's activities, including the technical assistance components, coordination between the Project's stakeholders and EIB, and the required monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The PIU will be responsible to implement the Moldova Forest Development Programme, including all the activities defined in the Finance Contract between the Republic of Moldova (the Borrower), the NOIEP (the Promoter), and the European Investment Bank<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. SCOPE OF WORK

The **Senior Forestry Expert** will provide high-level technical leadership for all forestry activities financed under the FDP, ensuring that planning, design, execution and monitoring meet international best practice in sustainable forest management (SFM), ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation. He/she reports to the PIU Project Manager, works closely with line agencies (Moldsilva, ICAS), local authorities and private/NGO partners, and acts as the PIU's focal point for forestry matters vis-à-vis EIB and other co-financiers.

**Specific duties of the Senior Forestry Expert will include** (non-exhaustive list):

1. **Plan and coordinate** all forestry-related components of the FDP, ensuring consistency with EIB Finance Contract requirements, ESS, the Project Implementation Manual (PIM) and national legislation. This will include, *inter alia*, activities in:
  - 1.1 Assessment of legal compliance;
  - 1.2 Spatial planning, site selection, and identification of cardinal protection assets;
  - 1.3 Planning and construction of infrastructure (roads, building, production sites);
  - 1.4 Selection of reproductive and planting materials;
  - 1.5 Seed nursery and provenance development;
  - 1.6 Forest landscape and ecosystem restoration;
  - 1.7 Cross-disciplinary coordination (e.g. forest management, planting, harvesting,

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<sup>2</sup> [contract\\_299eng.pdf](#)

nature protection, hunting, etc).

2. **Supervise** execution of field operations, conduct regular site inspections, verify contractor(s) performance, and recommend corrective actions to maintain quality, timelines and budgets.
3. **Working on behalf of the PIU on all forest management**, afforestation, and nursery requirements under the Project, following the technical, environmental and social requirements of the EIB Finance Contract, and the Republic of Moldova Laws
4. **Monitoring** environmental and social safeguards, ensuring all environmental issues and management activities are conducted in accordance with EIB Environmental and Social Standards, and the Republic of Moldova legislation, but at the same time, aids with the timely implementation of the project.
5. **Ensure the contribution to the implementation** of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and actively support communication and capacity-building activities.
6. **Coordinate and engage** with implementing bodies such as MODSILVA and ICAS, as well as with territorial administrative units (municipalities), the corporate sector, private-led activities, and NGOs.
7. **Conduct a systematic assessment of forestry-related impacts and risks** throughout the FDP cycle; maintain the forestry component of the PIU's risk register, propose and monitor mitigation measures, and provide regular updates on residual impacts and risk status to the Senior Forestry Expert.
8. **Performance of regular due diligence, supervision and monitoring site visits** and regular project meetings during project implementation. The site visits objectives are (indicative list):
  - 8.1 To safeguard intensive coordination with implementing bodies and contractors;
  - 8.2 To conduct technical assessments and feasibility studies for site selection and technical implementation;
  - 8.3 To visit Project activities in real-time with the PIU technical team and feedback to the PIU for further planning and risk mitigation measures;
  - 8.4 To actively engage in capacity building activities to safeguard the sustainable management of forest areas, investment resources and infrastructure;
  - 8.5 To oversee the progress of activities with regard to timeliness and compliance with legal prescriptions and EIB standards;
9. **Monitor and supervise** all forest-related activities, responsibilities and requirements commissioned under the FDP to third parties.
10. **Serve as the PIU's focal point and lead expert for all forestry-related technical matters:**
  - 10.1 Reviewing PIU reports, data and procedures;
  - 10.2 Providing expert opinions, feasibility inputs and assessments;
  - 10.3 Supporting project implementation, supervision and monitoring across forest management, regeneration, multifunctional integration (wood production, subsistence firewood, biodiversity conservation, land restoration), remote sensing, due diligence and traceability systems, and any other tasks requested by the Project Manager.

11. **Support the coordination work with other international financing institutions** (e.g. AFD, ADA) under the scope of the FDP and in relation to forest sector-related activities.
12. **Undertake** any additional duties that the Project Manager may reasonably assign, provided they remain consistent with the Project's Investment Plan and the provisions of the Project Implementation Manual (PIM).

Guidance will be provided in accordance with the specifications set out in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), which will be made available by the Client following the start of the contract. The PIM documents all procedural and operational requirements for the implementation of FDP investment program. The PIM is a comprehensive document outlining clear procedures and processes for the PIU-FDP that will cover all aspects of project implementation, including, *inter alia*, the following:

- Project organization structure, roles and responsibilities of NOIEP, WG-NFERP, and the PIU-FDP staff;
- Project management procedures, incl. work planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting;
- Financial management guidelines/procedures for project funds, including disbursement procedures, financial reporting requirements, and internal controls;
- Procurement procedures for goods, works, and services, aligned with the Bank standards;
- Environmental and social safeguard implementation procedures, such as Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), ensuring compliance with the Bank's E&S Standards (ESS);
- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, including monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) plan for tracking project progress and achieving results;
- Grievance redress mechanism (GRM) for addressing stakeholder concerns related to project implementation.

### 3. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

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| <b>Qualifications</b>                  | <p>At least a Bachelor's degree (BSc or equivalent) in forestry, forest science, forest engineering, silviculture, natural-resource management, or a closely related discipline. Acceptable alternative: a relevant university diploma plus either (i) a recognised forestry-sector credential (e.g. Chartered Forester, European Forest Institute Certified Professional) or (ii) at least ten (10) additional years of senior technical experience.</p> <p>Preferred: Master's degree (MSc or equivalent), Doctoral degree (PhD) or postgraduate certificates in specialised areas such as remote sensing/GIS, biodiversity conservation, or forest economics; documented participation in international education or training programmes.</p> |
| <b>General professional experience</b> | <p>At least ten (10) years of experience in managing and/or implementing projects in forest-based bioeconomy, with a focus on sustainable forest management, forest landscape/ecosystem restoration and/or forest /biodiversity conservation, including e.g. forest regeneration and afforestation, planning and construction of forest infrastructure, application of afforestation techniques, and development or use of genetic resources and reproductive material.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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|                                         | A track record of senior-level achievements of comparable complexity and scope, such as leading national forestry programmes or supervising large-scale afforestation schemes may be accepted in lieu of the full 10-year requirement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Specific professional experience</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least eight (8) years of experience in the management of forestry, environmental, or comparable projects related to sustainable forest management (e.g. feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, due-diligence of forest investments, market studies, development of business plans, regulatory/legal/institutional assessments, project evaluations etc.), with proven ability in team leadership.</li> <li>• a minimum of two (2) forestry sector projects in the past 10 years, covering design and implementation of SFM projects (e.g. seedling production and/or nursery management; afforestation; reforestation; forest rehabilitation; multiple-use forestry; forest protection; forest engineering, infrastructure development and equipment; forest certification; biodiversity conservation /management of protected areas; economic/financial modelling of forest operations).</li> <li>• At least five (5) years of direct experience monitoring and supervising forestry project activities.</li> <li>• Practical application of international environmental and social safeguard standards, e.g. EIB, World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) or comparable organisations for a minimum of five (5) years.</li> <li>• Documented experience performing at least two (2) reference projects in relation to deployment of remote sensing, digital mapping and/or Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in forestry projects,</li> <li>• Experience working with International Financial Institutions or Multilateral Development Banks (e.g. EIB, AFD, EBRD, KfW, WB, ADB, etc.) on similar assignments, as demonstrated by the expert's CV.</li> <li>• Prior involvement in internationally financed forestry or environmental projects within the Central-Eastern European (CEE) countries is preferred. Experience in Moldova is preferable.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Language &amp; other skills</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English: CEFR B2.</li> <li>• Romanian: CEFR C1.</li> <li>• Russian: CEFR B1 (preferred).</li> <li>• IT: advanced command of standard MS Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook) and ability to work with collaborative online tools, as well as familiarity with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software such as ArcGIS or QGIS.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

***Note:** All experience requirements refer to full-time equivalents (FTE). Years of part-time engagement may be aggregated to meet the minimum thresholds.*

#### 4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The assignment is expected to start in Q3 2025. The contract will last for 3 years with the possibility of an extension of 1 year. The Senior Forestry Expert will be offered a **competitive remunerative package** benchmarked against senior expert roles in CEE Region and consistent with the principles of the EIB Remuneration Framework, which emphasises “attraction, motivation and retention of talented staff” and a pay-for-performance approach. Exact figures will be discussed with shortlisted candidates during the interview.

The **Senior Forestry Expert's performance** shall be assessed by the Client after six (6) months from the start of the contract, and then once every twelve (12) months against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and deliverable schedules set out in the Contract:

- a) **Notice of deficiencies.** If the evaluation identifies material under-performance, the Client will provide the Senior Forestry Expert written notice specifying the deficiencies and allowing a reasonable period to submit and implement a corrective-action plan.
- b) **Right to replace or terminate.** If the Senior Forestry Expert fails to remedy the identified deficiencies within a reasonable period, to the Client's satisfaction, the Client may, with appropriate written notice, terminate the contract on the grounds of non-performance.
- c) **Continuity of services.** Until replacement or termination takes effect, the Senior Forestry Expert shall continue to perform the assignment diligently to safeguard the Project schedule.
- d) **No prejudice to other remedies.** The rights above are without prejudice to any other contractual or legal remedies available to the Client.

#### **Level of effort and working-time parameters**

- The Senior Forestry Expert shall deliver the Services on a flexible, self-managed schedule averaging twenty-one (21) working days per calendar month. The Senior Forestry Expert may set its own timetable and work location, provided that about seventy percent (70 %) of the effort is carried out at the PIU office (Client's office, Chisinau, Moldova), and the remaining thirty percent (30 %) through field missions and site visits, as project needs dictate.
- For health-and-safety reasons, the Senior Forestry Expert will not ordinarily work more than forty (40) per week for the Client, in line with the working-time limits and rest-period principles set out in EIB Environmental & Social Standard 8 and legislation of the Republic of Moldova.

#### **Office facilities**

The Client shall provide the Senior Forestry Expert, free of charge, with fully serviced and maintained workspace within the PIU premises, including a desk, a project-dedicated laptop computer pre-loaded with the necessary licensed software, high-speed internet access, utilities, printing/photocopying, and reasonable use of meeting rooms and administrative support required for the Services.

#### **Field missions**

For authorised field trips inside Moldova (and any occasional international missions), the Client will either (i) arrange suitable transport and accommodation in advance or (ii) reimburse the Senior Forestry Expert's actual expenses in accordance with the Project's Travel & Expense Policy. Domestic travel will normally be organized by PIU vehicle/driver or hired vehicle at standard mileage rates; accommodation will be in mid-range hotels (three-star or equivalent) with daily subsistence allowances that follow EIB per-diem ceilings.

## Leave entitlement and approval procedure

- The Senior Forestry Expert is entitled to paid annual leave at least equal to the statutory minimum granted to employees in Moldova. Public holidays recognised in the Republic of Moldova are additional and do not count against this quota.
- The Senior Forestry Expert shall give the Client adequate advance notice of any proposed leave. In urgent circumstances – such as medical or family emergencies, shorter notice may be accepted. Upon receiving a leave request, the Client may ask, once only, to adjust the dates if the absence would demonstrably jeopardise a critical project milestone. In such case the Client will suggest alternative dates as close as practicable to the original request; the Parties will work in good faith to agree on revised dates. If the Client does not respond within a reasonable time, the leave request will be considered approved.
- **Statutory or medical leave.** Absences for illness, maternity/paternity, or other statutory reasons shall be notified as soon as practicable and cannot be refused; the Parties will agree on workload re-scheduling in line with EIB Environmental & Social Standard 8, which requires fair treatment of all project workers.
- **Independent-contractor status.** These leave provisions are contractual benefits extended to ensure decent working conditions and do not create an employment relationship; the Senior Forestry Expert remains an independent contractor responsible for organising their own work and deliverables.

## Reporting

The Senior Forestry Expert shall submit a concise **monthly activity report** to the PIU Project Manager promptly after the end of each calendar month, summarizing activities performed, deliverables produced, issues encountered, and the work plan for the next period.

## Ownership and use of deliverables

All documents, data, designs, digital files, and other materials generated in the course of the assignment (collectively, the “Project Materials”) **shall vest exclusively in the Client upon creation.** The Senior Forestry Expert may not reproduce, publish, distribute, or otherwise use any Project Materials for purposes outside this assignment without the Client’s prior written consent.

## TOR Review and Amendment

- Once every twelve (12) months, or sooner if both Parties deem it useful, the Client and the Senior Forestry Expert shall jointly review this TOR to confirm its continued consistency with the PIM.
- Any change that materially affects the scope, deliverables, level of effort, or remuneration of the Services shall take effect only if set out in a written addendum signed by both Parties. Minor administrative clarifications that do not alter the substance of the Services may be recorded in meeting minutes and appended to the TOR for reference.
- Where an agreed amendment materially increases or decreases the Senior Forestry Expert’s workload or responsibilities, the Parties shall negotiate in good faith an

equitable adjustment to the Senior Forestry Expert's fee, delivery timetable, and any other affected contractual terms.