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Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources
Malé, Republic of Maldives

Transforming Fisheries Sector Management in South-West Indian Ocean Region and Maldives Project
(Transform, Swiofish5) - P179242

Terms of Reference

Fishery Observer Consultant

(Procurement Ref: MV-MOFMRA-487975-CS-INDV-2)

A. BACKGROUND

The Maldives is renowned for its rich marine biodiversity and thriving fisheries sector, which serves as a crucial pillar of the nation's economy and food security. Fisheries contribute significantly to employment, livelihoods, and foreign exchange earnings, particularly through the export of tuna products. As a nation with an economy heavily reliant on marine resources, the Maldives has a vested interest in ensuring the sustainable management of its fisheries to safeguard the well-being of its citizens and the integrity of its ecosystems.

The Maldivian Government has taken proactive steps towards sustainable fisheries management and is currently implementing the "Transforming Fisheries Sector Management in South-West Indian Ocean Region and Maldives" (TransFORM) project, financed by the World Bank and managed by the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources. The TransFORM project aims to strengthen regional, evidence-based fisheries management in the South-West Indian Ocean Region and the Maldives and to improve competitiveness in the fisheries sector in the Maldives.

Fisheries observers play an integral role in promoting fisheries management by providing reliable, on-the-ground data to promote understanding of the fisheries and promote compliance with national regulations and requirements from regional and international fishery management bodies. Observers serve as a bridge between policy and practice, ensuring that fishing operations align with national and international sustainability standards and requirements. Their presence and insights contribute to fisheries research, resource conservation, biodiversity protection, and the prevention of IUU fishing, helping the Maldives maintain its global reputation as a leader in sustainable fisheries



B. OBJECTIVES OF ASSIGNMENT

The TransFORM Project Management Unit (PMU) wishes to contract 1 Fishery Observer, whose primary objective will be to collect independent and accurate operational and scientific data from the Maldives pole-and-line and handline tuna fishing activities. The fisheries observers will play a critical role in supporting resource management and biodiversity conservation in the Maldives and the Indian Ocean region.

C. OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY

The overall responsibilities of the Fishery Observer include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Work with the Research Assistant and Research and Science Specialist to organize the observer deployments to selected landing sites.
2. Travel to identified tuna landing sites based on the observer deployment schedule and conduct observer trips.
3. Board the identified tuna fishing vessels and record fishery and scientific data and information based on the data collection protocols.
4. Obtain, preserve and fix specimens and tissue samples as and when required.
5. Prepare summary reports on the activities of the trip as trip and field deployment reports.
6. Record all the data into the observer database.
7. Prepare observer reports according to the format required by the IOTC Regional Observer Program.
8. Maintain the necessary equipment in working condition
9. Conduct port sampling at landing site as and when required by the Project.
10. Assist with the orientation and training of new observers.
11. Any other task assigned by the Project that may be necessary for the performance of the duties for the project.

D. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. Completion of Secondary School Education (GCE O'Level) or higher.
2. Basic computer literacy and ability to use Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
3. Ability to interact with multiple staff in the relevant agencies, respond and liaise with stakeholders from industry and private sector
4. Ability to perform the duties at sea, including during periods of rough weather and challenging conditions
5. Ability to handle interactions with fishers on potentially sensitive topics in a respectable manner and maintain a high level of situational awareness to ensure personal safety while at sea and in the field.
6. Must be able to work independently often with little oversight and make decisions, solve problems and adapt to changing conditions.
7. The successful individual must be willing to work for extended periods without direct supervision and travel to islands within the project area
8. Demonstrate openness to change and ability to manage complex situations.

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Velaanaage, 7th Floor, Ameeru Ahmed Magu, Male, Republic of Maldives

+960 3322625

admin@fisheries.gov.mv

@mformv



9. Should have strong and proactive interpersonal communicative skills, experience in team leadership and participatory management.

The short-listed candidate will be requested to participate in personal interviews, submit the names and contact details of personal referees who can attest to their ability.

The successful candidate must understand the objectives and delivery mechanisms of the project. S/he must be willing to work in a team, be able to travel to outer islands for field work, be comfortable in working on fishing vessels at sea and be flexible to emerging or changing conditions and undertake initiative to overcome challenges. S/he must be able to swim and snorkel as s/he will be travelling and be on sea going and fishing vessels for field work.

E. REPORTING REQUIREMENT

1. Report directly to the Research and Science Specialist on all aspects of Project Management throughout the duration of the contract unless otherwise advised by the Implementing Agency.
2. The Fishery Observer is expected to report to work on weekdays from 0800 – 1400 hours other than public holidays and provide services to the Client for an average of 30 hours a week except during days of field work. Remuneration for less than 6 hours work per day will be on a pro-rate basis.
3. The Fishery Observer shall provide all the necessary reports and updates to the Research and Science Specialist.
4. The Fishery Observer is required to report to work in official attire except in preparation and during field work and when handling and processing fish, tissue or other biological samples.

F. SCHEDULE FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Duration of the assignment is **12 months** from the commencement of the works with potential extension based on performance. The successful candidate is expected to commence the services in July/August 2025.

This position is based at the Project Office of the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources in Male' with travel to Islands, vessels or field visits as maybe required.

G. RENUMERATION AND OTHER BENEFITS

1. MVR 15,000/- per calendar month as remuneration for the services provided.
2. Training and travel expenses related to service under this contract will be covered by the project budget.

H. SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

1. Office space and other facilities such as computers will be provided as required.
2. Field equipment necessary to perform the duties of the Contract will be provided.



