



Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
Male', Republic of Maldives

Terms of reference
Economic Analysis and Market Study for Sea Cucumber

A. Background

On behalf of the Government of Maldives, The Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture (MOFA) is currently implementing one grant project titled ***“Mariculture Enterprises Development Project (MEDeP)”*** funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Government of Maldives.

The overall goal of **MEDeP** would be to expand livelihood opportunities and reduce vulnerability. The development objective of the project would be to enhance incomes and employment especially for youth and women from mariculture activities. The key outcomes expected from the project would include (i) enhanced capacity of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture to regulate and manage the mariculture industry (ii) strengthened capacity of the private sector including companies, small and medium enterprises and individual entrepreneurs to invest and participate in the mariculture value chain and (iii) increased capacity of poor households especially women and youth to realize productive gains from the mariculture sector.

In keeping with IFAD policy, the direct target group of MEDeP would be the rural poor, who tend to be concentrated at the lower end of the private-sector continuum. The target group for the MEDeP would include (i) young women and men interested in mariculture (ii) small entrepreneurs along the mariculture value chain and (iii) private sector firms willing to invest in mariculture.

The main benefit of the MEDeP would be the growth of an alternative source of livelihood, employment and incomes thereby reducing the vulnerability in the country which has a very limited resource base. The project is expected to lead to the development of the private Mariculture sector.

MEDeP is implement a sea cucumber grow-out pilot project as one of the key activities that contributes to the achievement of project goal and objectives. The objective of the pilot project is to conduct beneficiary based production of sea cucumber in suitable lagoons, aimed at providing an additional minimum average income of MVR 10,000 per beneficiary per month. The pilot project is carried in 3 islands in Laamu atoll, namely Dhanbidhoo, Kalaidhoo and Isdhoo. The overall objective is to increase the Mariculture farmers' income through increased productivity and farm management, while keeping production costs effective with the sales of high profit margin.

B. Scope of the Study

MEDEP is hiring a consultant to collect data from sea cucumber mariculture farmers and hatchery operators; and analyzing the existing and potential markets in national and international market, identifying the best and cost effective selling options with high profitability, test the proposed selling options for economic viability under the production system, discuss the options with farmers and buyers

and develop recommendations for the adoption. The consultant will be supported by the M & E Officer as well as other local experts and Project Director.

C. Consultancy Objective

The specific purpose of the task is to research, analyze, identify, test and present for adoption best practices in supply chain in sea cucumber mariculture production systems in Maldives, with special focus on its market; and to identify the market opportunities and market strategic plan for sea cucumber maricultural industry.

Specific Objectives

1. Conduct a market study on sea cucumber and its market, identify sea cucumber buyers and review sea cucumber out grower business model. This model should identify the opportunities to promote production and marketing of value added sea cucumber products nationally and Internationally
2. Undertake economic and financial analysis of the pilot project undertaken by the MEDEP.
3. Identify and analyze the entry barriers, requirements for the national, regional and international market.
4. Collect market data from farmers and processors and other players in the project areas.
5. Analyze the existing situation with farmers on their available resources (lagoon, feed, machinery, equipment, inputs, supply, finance, etc);
6. Map existing management practices and processes (harvesting, storage, feeding, , etc.), determine advantages and disadvantages in each practice and process;
7. Conduct market and field research to identify alternative, economically advantageous selling options;
8. Analyze the economics of proposed buying and selling options;
9. Together with the team and local consultants, test proposed buying options under the local conditions for the economic viability that would lead to the reduced cost and increased profitability;
10. Source alternative suppliers of inputs, equipment and machinery available in the market;
11. Monitor market process and undertake necessary actions to gain results;
12. Work with team and local consultants to coordinate research and recommendations;
13. Suggest improvements in the value chain system to ensure direct linkages of the maricultural farmers with the major markets and increased incomes from their produces

D. Key Deliverables:

The Consultant will report to, and will be managed by, PIU Project Director (MEDEP).

At the end of the consultancy the Consultant is expected to provide the following documents:

1. An inception report indicating the plan of implementation must be submitted in the first week of the assignment
2. An preliminary report describing the study objectives, scope , methodology, and status on the conduct of the data gathering, filed work
3. Economic analysis data on number of producers and buyers of sea cucumber (non-processed and processed)
 - i. Economic analysis data on buying and selling prices of sea cucumber (non-processed and processed)

- ii. High level evaluation of existing and potential markets for sea cucumber (non-processed and processed) , including national and international opportunities;
- iii. Identification of any existing gaps in production, processing and marketing etc
4. Final Reports and recommendations in English and Dhivehi languages on the work performed;
5. Power Point Presentations for meetings with Donors, MOFA, Clients and other stakeholders as required;
6. All digital data referenced and analysed during the study including spatial and non-spatial datasets

E. Qualification and Experience Requirements:

- MBA, or a degree in Economics, Financial Management, Data Analysis, or related field;
- A minimum of 5 years of experience in the field of financial and economic analysis in the production systems;
- Excellent analytical and communications skills;
- Knowledge and experience with fisheries economics or production economics is an advantage;
- A self – starter, self-motivated professional able to deliver strong results with a minimum of supervision;
- English and Dhivehi language knowledge (speaking and writing) is a must.
- Willingness to travel to project sites
- Computer skills: full command of Microsoft applications (word, excel, PowerPoint) and common internet applications

F. Duration of the Assignment

The expected total number of days to be allocated to the consultant for the deliverables is up to 30 days.

G. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals of successful consultant will be evaluated on the following criteria based on Quality and Cost Based Selection method;

Details	Marks
Relevant Experience in Economic and Data Analysis	40
Academic Background	15
Duration	10
Cost	25
Total	100

Quality and Cost Based Selection will be used in awarding the project. Hence, the quality of the proposal and the cost of the services will be given a high consideration in the selection of the successful consultant. The selection of the consultant shall be based foremost on the technical qualifications, as the consultant's expertise and skill will to a large extent determine the satisfactory completion of the tasks.

Details of the Marks allocation for each category are mentioned below.

1. Relevant Experience: Full Marks (40 Marks) will be given if the consultant has involved in FIVE or more similar related works.
2. Academic Background: Consultant teams with 2 experts (Specialized in Economics, Financial Management, and Data Analysis) will get full marks (15 Marks).
3. Duration: Full Marks (10 Marks) will be given to the teams who propose to complete the work in 30 days.
4. Cost: The project team submitting the lowest cost gets the Full Marks (25 Marks). 25% of the lowest price will be taken to give marks to other firms.