**Terms of Reference for Partnership with a Non-Profit Making Institution**

**Call for Proposals for**

**Trinidad and Tobago National Outlook**

**on Indigenous and Local Knowledge of Biodiversity Project**

1. **Background**

Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) hold invaluable knowledge, practices, and philosophies that contribute significantly to biodiversity conservation. The IPBES (2019) global assessment revealed that at least a quarter of the global land area is traditionally owned, managed, used or occupied by Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, the IPBES (2022) assessment on sustainable use highlighted that approximately 15% of global forests are managed as community resources by IPLCs. Areas with high biodiversity often coincide with IPLC-managed lands.

Despite this evidence, Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) is rarely incorporated into mainstream biodiversity policies and decision-making. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) stresses the importance of integrating scientific evidence and traditional knowledge to reverse biodiversity loss. It recognizes IPLCs as biodiversity custodians, key stakeholders, and right-holders essential for implementing the GBF. However, even in countries where ILK mainstreaming is a priority, challenges exist, such as a systematic approach to bridging between complex oral knowledge and necessary data, the limited availability of accurate ILK documentation as well as limited capacity and ILK expertise among national entities and policymakers.

The National Outlook on ILK of Biodiversity initiative, funded by the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, will contribute to addressing these challenges and contribute to implementing the GBF targets, primarily 9, 21 and 22, and tackling biodiversity threats engulfing target countries, including deforestation and sea-use change, that are in part exacerbated by the exclusion of ILK in formal policies. The first phase of the project will be implemented in Malawi, Namibia, Trinidad and Tobago.

Trinidad and Tobago, known for its tropical forests, island ecosystems and coral reefs, has several communities of diverse heritage, including Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant communities, with a deep connection to the islands’ ecosystems and a heritage of ILK related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. However, similar to global trends, ILK in the country remains under-documented and is at risk of being lost.

This project aims to:

1. Examine the state of ILK of biodiversity and ecosystem services in Trinidad and Tobago and highlight ILK documentation gaps.
2. Evaluate to what extent ILK is incorporated in the revised/latest Trinidad and Tobago’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and national targets in line with GBF and evaluate the degree of inclusion of ILK in Trinidad and Tobago’s biodiversity policies.
3. Based on identified capacity gaps, tailored capacity building workshops and ILK knowledge exchange forum will be organized between IPLCs and policymakers, to strengthen mainstreaming of ILK into NBSAP implementation and national reporting in Trinidad and Tobago.
4. **Work Assignments**

In line with the above needs, the UNESCO Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) Programme identified the need engage a non-profit making institution to partner with UNESCO and the government of Trinidad and Tobago to implement the outlook project in Trinidad and Tobago. The Implementing Partner will be expected to effectively execute the following tasks and deliverables in close collaboration with the project focal points from UNESCO and the Ministry of Planning and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. UNESCO LINKS and the Ministry shall provide technical expertise and backstopping on Indigenous and local knowledge.

1. **Develop a comprehensive assessment report on ILK outlook/status and policy inclusion:**
   1. Conduct desk research and review peer-reviewed and grey literature to assess the state of available, documented and utilized ILK of biodiversity within Trinidad and Tobago.
   2. Document elements of pertinent available ILK and highlight knowledge gaps in biodiversity documentation in Trinidad and Tobago.
   3. Organize national/sub-national ILK dialogue workshops with IPLCs to gather ILK and assess its utilization in biodiversity decision-making in Trinidad and Tobago.
   4. Review and analyse the revised/latest NBSAP, national biodiversity targets, and biodiversity policies to assess the ILK integration.
2. **Multistakeholder ILK Dialogue Workshop**
   1. Based on above activities, organize multi-stakeholder policy dialogue with policymakers and IPLCs to understand lessons learned, opportunities and barriers for ILK integration in Trinidad and Tobago.
3. **ILK Capacity Building Workshop**
4. Disseminate and promote the findings of the national ILK outlook and suggested policy options for ILK mainstreaming in policy, research and action.
5. Based on identified knowledge and capacity gaps identified in activity 1, convene an ILK capacity-building workshop for policymakers and stakeholders with focus on ILK mainstreaming in biodiversity policies, targets and reporting.
6. **Deliverables**
7. Concept note and workplan
8. Comprehensive report:
9. The assessment on status/outlook of ILK of biodiversity in Trinidad and Tobago and its usage and notable ILK data gaps.
10. An evaluation of ILK inclusion in NBSAP and related biodiversity policies
11. Key ILK policy recommendations
12. A short summary report on multi-stakeholder ILK dialogue and capacity building workshops.
13. **Reporting**

The Implementing Partner shall work closely with the UNESCO LINKS and the Environmental Policy and Planning Division of the Ministry of Planning and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The Implementing Partner shall report to the UNESCO and the Environmental Policy and Planning Division.

1. **Review**

All deliverables shall be in English and shall be reviewed and approved by to the UNESCO and the Ministry of Planning and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

1. **Qualifications and experience**

**Note:** Interested implementing partners should provide supporting documents and/or demonstrate how they meet these qualifications and experience requirements in the application dossier.

**MANDATORY**

1. **Expertise of entity**

* At least 5 years of experience working on biodiversity and natural resources management.
* At least 3 years of experience in researching and documenting traditional, Indigenous and local knowledge.
* At least 2 years’ experience working with local communities in Trinidad and Tobago.
* Proven 2 years of experience in working and collaborating with different stakeholders, such as policy makers and Indigenous/local and scientific communities.
* Proof of publications and/or designed reports in the field of biodiversity conservation and/or Indigenous and local knowledge. A minimum of one is required, additional publications or design reports will be an asset.

1. **Personnel: Team leader**

* Minimum requirement: a bachelor’s degree in ecological sciences or social sciences with preferred specialization in Indigenous Peoples issues and/or Indigenous and local knowledge or in a relevant field. Additional educational qualifications will be an asset.
* At least 2 years of experience in project management and coordination, including in multicultural and multidisciplinary settings.

1. **Personnel: Technical expert**

* Minimum requirement: a bachelor’s degree in ecological sciences or social sciences with preferred specialization in Indigenous Peoples issues and/or Indigenous and local knowledge or in a relevant field. Additional educational qualifications will be an asset.
* Experience in coordinating at least 2 projects in a similar field.

1. **Personnel: At least one team member**

* It is mandatory that one or more expert have good command of English proficiency (oral communication and report-writing) as demonstrated in the technical proposal for this evaluation
* Minimum 2 years of experience with stakeholders’ and community engagement.

1. **Financial capacity**

* It is mandatory for the entity to submit a financial proposal with a justifiable value of money.
* It is mandatory for the entity to have experienced staff responsible for financial management in all operations
* It is mandatory for the entity to have an accounting system for tracking expenditure and accountability.

**DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. **Personnel: at least one team member**

* Knowledge and understanding of the context of UNESCO and/or the United Nations system.
* A good understanding of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD.

1. **Financial capacity**

* It is desirable for the entity to have internal and external audits or regular financial reviews

**How to apply**

Interested organisation/NGO should submit a proposal for consideration to [sc.procurement@unesco.org](mailto:sc.procurement@unesco.org) by 31 March 2025. The proposal should contain:

1. Proposal documents (technical and financial, including project outline).
2. The technical proposal should contain an implementation plan and ILK approaches and methodologies that will be utilized in the project implementation.
3. The Financial proposal should outline expenditure plan with description of activities guided by the project activities. The earmarked budget is exactly USD 70,000 with an implementation plan of maximum 8 months. See Annex III for a budget template.
4. Partners’ Identification Form (duly filled in, with supporting documents)
5. Financial statements for past two years (including audit opinion for entities subject to audit in accordance with national regulations.
6. CVs/resumes of the team leader and technical expert designated to implement this project.
7. List of publications/or designed reports focusing on nature/biodiversity conservation and/or Indigenous/traditional/local knowledge.

**Note**: Inquiries about project and requirements should be sent to [links@unesco.org](mailto:links@unesco.org)