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## Terms of Reference

### **Expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to the Hospitality and Travel Services Sectors**

Plan International Laos (PIL) is currently seeking a service provider to expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to include the hospitality and travel services sectors, focusing on improving single-use plastics (SUPs) waste management practices of MSMEs in support of the **Plastic Smart Laos Project**.

#### **1. About Plan International Laos**

Working in over 50 developing countries globally, Plan International strives for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls. Plan International has been working in Laos since 2007, and is delivering programs in 10 provinces in Laos, including Bokeo, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang, Vientiane and Salavan Provinces. We support children and youth to access their rights through our Public Health, Education, Livelihoods, Adolescent and Youth Economic Empowerment programmes. In all contexts, together with partners, we strive for lasting impact in norms, attitudes and behaviors, social and economic safety nets, and policy frameworks. Our work includes community-based action, partner strengthening, and policy advocacy, all focused on gender transformative programming. Visit [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org) and [www.lastinglaos.com](http://www.lastinglaos.com) for more information.

#### **2. Project Background**

***The Plastic-Smart Laos project***, funded by the Global Environment Fund with co-funding from France and the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM), and implemented in cooperation between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Swisscontact and Plan International Laos, will support Laos in its efforts to become a plastic-smart country with the objective of reducing the production and use of SUP, in particular those used for the consumption of food and beverage. By aiming to reduce food and plastic SUPs in Laos, the programme will indirectly help to tackle a key source of plastic pollution in the country (45% is SUP waste), and therefore reduce the leakage of plastic waste into the environment.

The programme will adopt a systemic and integrated approach, taking account of all the links in the value chain. In particular, it will involve deploying upstream interventions to reduce the production and use of problematic and unnecessary food and beverage SUP. The private sector will be empowered to be part of the solution both as drivers of change and innovators of concrete solutions. Across the programme's 5 components, LNCCI will work with Plan to ensure the quality implementation of the following:

- **Support Component 1:** facilitating the adoption of a regulatory framework enabling the reduction of problematic food and beverage SUPs, and incentivize the production and use of eco-friendly substitutes.
- **Lead on Component 3:** supporting the transition of the tourism/hospitality sectors towards less SUP and better waste management practices through the Lasting Laos certification programme.

Central to PIL and LNCCI's role in the project is the ***Lasting Laos Certification Programme*** which is a local sustainability programme for MSMEs in the Lao tourism industry that have demonstrated sustainable environmental, social and economic practices. The programme has been developed previously as part of the SUSTOUR Laos project (implemented by PIL and funded by the European Union) and administered locally by the LNCCI. The goal of the programme is to improve the overall sustainability of the tourism value chain by providing benchmarks and guidance for local MSMEs to measure and improve their sustainability. The certification is based on a set of sustainability criteria developed for four key sectors of the tourism industry (transportation, handicrafts, food & beverage, cultural excursions) with waste management as a priority cross-cutting issue across all sectors. These criteria have been developed in consultation with relevant private and public sector stakeholders and is based on the internationally recognized Travelife certification. MSMEs must demonstrate compliance with the criteria in order to become a Lasting Laos certified business. MSMEs report their compliance of the checklist through an online platform and compliance is verified by LNCCI with technical support provided by Plan. MSMEs who have proven compliance with the certification criteria are awarded and recognized as leading sustainable MSMEs in the Lao tourism industry.

### 3. Objective

The overall objective is to expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to two new sectors: **(1) hospitality sector** (e.g. hotels, guesthouses); and **(2) travel services sector** (e.g. travel agents, tour operators). This will include conducting stakeholder consultations and develop new sector-specific criteria, processes, and training materials, as well as providing capacity building to PIL and LNCCI staff to effectively implement the expanded certification programme. By expanding the certification to these tourism related sectors, the PSL project will be better enabled to reach key target groups (i.e., MSMEs in those sectors) and effect greater change in SUP waste management practices for the Lao tourism sector. The selected service provider will work closely with the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) throughout the assignment.

The service provider will support PIL and LNCCI by:

- Developing sector-specific sustainability criteria aligned with national regulations, ASEAN standards, and global schemes (e.g., GSTC, ISO, Travelife), informed by prior research and consultation conducted by the project.
- Integrating SUP reduction, waste management, circular economy principles, as well as gender, inclusion, and child safeguarding into the new certification components.
- Designing or adapting verification processes, scoring systems, and implementation guidance.
- Preparing new training materials for LNCCI assessors and MSMEs in the two new sectors.
- Leading four consultation workshops with project partners, government, private sector, and tourism associations to validate the criteria and processes.
- Facilitate training and capacity building for PIL and LNCCI staff.

### 4. Scope of Work

The consultant will work under the supervision of PIL and LNCCI, in close coordination with the CTA and other relevant stakeholders. The tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

### **1. Inception and Review**

- Review existing Lasting Laos certification criteria, processes, and materials.
- Review previously conducted research on relevant local, regional and international policies and certifications (national regulations, ASEAN standards, GSTC, ISO, UNEP guidance, etc.) and recommendations for improvements to the certification.
- Hold initial meetings with PIL and LNCCI to agree on a methodological approach.
- Develop a concise work plan.

### **2. Development of Criteria and Processes for the Two New Sectors**

- Draft sustainability criteria based on previous research and recommendations, tailored to local MSME capacity and alignment with project priorities (i.e. SUP waste management) and
- Include specific criteria related to SUP reduction, waste management, substitute products, and circular economy, gender equality, inclusion, and child safeguarding.
- Develop verification methods, compliance indicators, evidence requirements, and scoring systems.
- Prepare MSME-friendly guidance materials explaining expectations and good practices.

### **3. Stakeholder Consultation Workshops (4 workshops)**

- Organize and facilitate four stakeholder workshops in Vientiane Capital (or remote/hybrid):
  - Workshop 1 – Initial consultation for hospitality sector (including representatives of local hotels/guesthouses, relevant government departments, hotel associations, etc.)
  - Workshop 2 – Initial consultation for travel services sector (including representatives of local travel agents, tour operators, relevant government departments, travel associations, etc.)
  - Workshop 3 – Validation workshop for hospitality sector criteria, processes, materials, etc.
  - Workshop 4 – Validation workshop for travel services sector criteria, processes, materials, etc.
- Specific tasks include:
  - Preparing agendas, discussion materials and presentations
  - Facilitating the workshop, encouraging participation and discussion and ensuring feedback is received from all stakeholders
  - Documenting feedback and recommendations in meeting minutes

*(Workshop costs to be covered by PIL; consultant provides preparation support and facilitation.)*

### **4. Development of Training Materials**

- Prepare user-friendly training materials on (but not limited to):
  - Revised certification processes for the new sectors
  - Assessment/verification procedures
  - SUP reduction and waste management components
  - Gender, inclusion, and safeguarding elements

### **5. Finalization of Certification Materials**

- Revise criteria, processes, and guidance based on workshop inputs.
- Submit final versions of all materials for final approval and integration into the Lasting Laos system.

## 6. Capacity Building for PIL and LNCCI staff

- Deliver one training session for PIL, LNCCI and other relevant stakeholders on the revised certification standards, processes, and materials to ensure effective implementation.

## 5. Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected from the service provider:

#	Deliverable	Description
1	Research and Draft Criteria and Processes for 2 New Sectors	Desk review and analysis of existing certification materials, develop initial draft criteria, verification mechanisms, scoring systems, and guidance materials for hotels/guesthouses and travel agents/tour operators.
2	Facilitate Consultation Workshops (4)*	Design and facilitation of four stakeholder consultation workshops (in-person or remotely); submission of workshop reports summarising key feedback and agreed areas of revision.
3	Revision and Finalization of Expand Certification Criteria and Processes with Relevant Materials	Fully revised and validated certification criteria, processes, verification guidelines, and MSME guidance materials for both new sectors.
4	Training Session for PIL and LNCCI*	Facilitate one training session delivered for PIL and LNCCI on the expanded certification criteria, processes and materials.

*\*The costs of the workshops/training will be covered by PIL. The consultant is only responsible for supporting the planning and leading the facilitation of these workshops/training session.*

## 6. Timeline & Working Days

The contract is expected to commence on 09 March 2026 and end on 30 June 2026 for an estimated 20 working days. The working location can be remote or on-site.

#	Deliverables	Timeframe	Estimated Working Days
1	Research and Draft Criteria and Processes for 2 New Sectors	March - April, 2026	8
2	Facilitate Consultation Workshops (4)*	March - April, 2026	4
3	Revision and Finalization of Expand Certification Criteria and Processes with Relevant Materials	April - May, 2026	6
4	Training Session for PIL and LNCCI*	May - June, 2026	2
Total No. of Working Days			20

*\*The costs related to the workshops and trainings (e.g. venue, food & beverage, etc.) will be covered by PIL. The service provider is only responsible to prepare and facilitate the workshops and training session.*

## 7. Payment Details

There will be a total of 4 equal payment installments (25% each) provided upon the satisfactory completion and approval of each deliverable (1 through 4) based on the value of the budget submitted by the awarded service provider.

## 8. Qualifications

- Advanced degree in sustainable tourism, environmental management, certification systems, or related field.
- Minimum 7 years of experience in sustainability certification development or auditing (e.g., Travelife, GSTC, ISO).
- Demonstrated expertise in SUP reduction, waste management, and circular economy practices.
- Proven experience developing sector-specific sustainability criteria.
- Strong facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills; experience conducting participatory workshops with government and private sector.
- Experience working in Southeast Asia; knowledge of Lao context is a significant asset.
- Experience working with development organizations or donor-funded projects is an asset.
- Excellent English communication and report-writing skills; Lao language an advantage.
- Commitment to Plan International's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and ethical standards.

**Child Protection:** *Plan or its partners does not tolerate child abuse. All staff and consultants are selected and employed in line with the conditions of Plan's Child Protection Policy. These include appropriate reference and background checks.*

## 9. Application Process

Plan invites interested applicants to submit their application to [Laos.procurement@plan-international.org](mailto:Laos.procurement@plan-international.org), and copy to [Chindavone.Keomanykhod@plan-international.org](mailto:Chindavone.Keomanykhod@plan-international.org). The application deadline is **February 22<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. For any technical inquiries please contact [connor.bedard@plan-international.org](mailto:connor.bedard@plan-international.org). Please note that only the successful applicant will be contacted.

Please include the text **"Expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to the Hospitality and Travel Services Sectors"** in the email subject line and kindly include support documents as outlined below:

1. An expression of interest (1-page maximum).
2. An indicative work plan with timeframe (1-page maximum).
3. An indicative budget with a daily rate, any travel and other costs (must be inclusive of per diem, travel costs and other related government charge (Tax, VAT)).
4. Curriculum Vitae of any persons mentioned in the work plan (*If a consulting firm or company, a company profile with: a company name, registered office address, physical address, telephone*

*numbers, date of registration, registration number, copy of registration certificate, names of directors/proprietors and name of contact person).*

**Note:** *All applications received after the time of the deadline will not be accepted without exception. Only the successful tender will be contacted.*