

## USAID Climate Resilient Agriculture in the Mekong Delta

### SCOPE OF WORK

#### Ecosystem Management Specialist

##### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Ecosystem Management Specialist (EMS) will serve as a key technical staff responsible for design, delivery, monitoring, and reporting of key ecosystem management and restoration activities under Objective 2 of the USAID Climate Resilient Agriculture in the Mekong Delta (CRM) project.

CRM is a five-year project working to enhance the resilience of the Mekong Delta's communities, ecosystems, and livelihoods. Working across five provinces of Dong Thap, Kien Giang, Ca Mau, Soc Trang, and Tra Vinh, CRM will further strengthen the effective partnership between USAID and the Government of Vietnam (GVN) to support Vietnam's development goals and contribute to U.S. government strategies and targets.

CRM activities are organized within three interconnected objectives and one cross-cutting theme:

- **Objective 1: Strengthen climate change resilience of the most vulnerable populations.** CRM will engage stakeholders to assess and address vulnerability through enhanced climate information services, resilient livelihood and safety net models, improved provincial plans, and increased access to finance.
- **Objective 2: Strengthen management and restoration of natural ecosystems to provide ecosystem goods and services.** CRM will take an inclusive participatory approach to identify entry points to support evidence-based transformation of legal and governance frameworks, improve management capacity, and incentivize natural resource conservation.
- **Objective 3: Reduce methane emissions through low-emission and sustainable agriculture practices.** CRM will work with GVN and stakeholders across value chains to assess gaps and opportunities and harness payment for environmental services schemes and other results-based finance mechanisms to reduce intensive rice farming and GHG emissions and drive transformation through a market systems approach.
- **Cross-cutting focus: Develop and implement policies to advance climate actions and biodiversity conservation.** CRM will also work with GVN and stakeholders to enhance development, harmonization, and implementation of policies, as well as to strengthen national and sub-national coordination. CRM will engage key stakeholders to influence and incentivize policy, practice, and behavior in favor of transformation.

CRM will be implemented during the period of 2023-2028 by Winrock International with a consortium of Vietnamese and international partners. GVN counterparts are the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Management Board of Forest Projects.

Under Objective 2, CRM collaborates with provincial government partners to enhance the management and restoration of critical ecosystems both inside and outside protected areas (PAs). With PAs covering only 7% of Vietnam's land area (and just 3% of the delta), strengthening conservation efforts outside PAs is essential for achieving effective ecosystem protection and management. This approach also supports Vietnam's contribution to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Target 3, aiming to protect 30% of terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas by 2030.

## **2. POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The Ecosystem Management Specialist (EMS) will be responsible for the project's field implementation of ecosystem management and restoration activities falling under CRM's Objective 2: "**Management and Restoration of Natural Ecosystems.**" Basing upon findings and recommendations of the Biodiversity Assessment the EMS will work with the Objective 2 team and local partners to design appropriate interventions/ activities to address identified challenges/priorities and achieve the goals and expected outcomes of the project. The EMS will not only provide technical assistance on ecosystem management and restoration, but also ensure effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of relevant interventions on management and restoration of critical natural ecosystems within and outside PAs, and related topics.

Together with the Objective 2 Team Leader and other team members and partners, the EMS is expected to contribute to the key outcome of increased area and quality of critical ecosystems inside and outside of protected areas. The Objective's targets will be related to indicators including, but not limited to:

- 250,000 hectares of natural ecosystems in the delta are conserved, restored, and managed
- 100,000 people receiving livelihood co-benefits (monetary or non-monetary)
- 10,000 people trained in sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation
- 2,100,00 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> reduced, sequestered, and stored

## **3. POSITION LOCATION**

Given CRM's organizational structure, it is expected that the EMS position will be based in Can Tho, with regular travel to the project's target provinces and Hanoi.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Technical design, delivery, and monitoring**

- Lead the design and implementation of ecosystem management and restoration activities both inside and outside protected areas, including the development of management and restoration strategies and monitoring of ecosystem health.
- Design and support target provinces in expanding and implementing ecosystem services programs and mechanisms to advance sustainable ecosystem management, such as payment for ecosystem services and ecotourism.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to leverage investment for managing and restoring critical ecosystems within target provinces.
- Participate in the annual work planning process, providing technical inputs to finalize the project's annual work plan.
- Develop scopes of work, recruit, mobilize technical consultants as needed and supervise these consultants to execute project activities within designated technical areas.
- Collaborate closely with GVN counterparts and local communities to identify opportunities for ecosystem and biodiversity conservation outside protected areas.
- Foster strategic partnerships with government agencies, other organizations, and local communities to support natural ecosystem protection and management.
- Coordinate across CRM teams to ensure integrated and cross-sectoral approaches, especially in areas such as policy development, GESI, environmental mitigation, and monitoring plans.

- Oversee the delivery of key activities related to critical ecosystem management and restoration, monitoring timelines, resource allocation, and implementing adaptive management to address delays.
- Lead the design of training sessions and events to enhance ecosystem management and restoration outcomes, working with partner organizations, local actors, communities, and GVN partners.
- Monitor outputs and milestones to ensure the achievement of relevant Objective 2 targets and indicators for critical ecosystem management and restoration.

#### **Project representation and communication**

- Contribute to external communication materials by assisting in the production of press releases, communication content, and technical documents.
- Identify local champions, lessons learned, and success stories to feature in project communication materials.
- Represent the project at external meetings and events focused on ecosystem management, restoration, protected area management, and related topics.
- Provide input on critical ecosystem management and restoration activities for project quarterly reports, annual reports, and final documentation.

#### **Other**

- Travel regularly to project provinces to engage with local partners and monitor project activities.
- Provide additional project support as needed.

### **5. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

#### **Education:**

University degree in natural resource management, forestry, biology, environmental science, environmental economics, climate change, sustainable development, or related field.

#### **Experience:**

- Minimum of 7 years of professional experience in implementing conservation, ecosystem services, and natural resource management (NRM) initiatives for international development projects, with a preference for experience on USAID-funded projects in Vietnam.
- Proven experience in ecological restoration of mangroves, wetlands, and forests.
- Strong understanding of freshwater hydrology and the restoration of disrupted hydrological systems.
- Experience in capacity building, training, and mentoring government officials.
- Background in private sector engagement and/or resource mobilization for climate adaptation, mitigation, and ecosystem management.
- Experience in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly related to gender and marginalized or vulnerable populations and communities.

#### **Knowledge and Skills:**

- Knowledge of environmental and agricultural policies in Vietnam, with a particular focus on PFES, REDD+, and green, eco, and sustainable certification processes.
- Demonstrated effective interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving, conflict mitigation, ethical management skills, and excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Experience developing practical applications of scientific concepts and technical innovations for nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration and NRM

- Excellent organizational and management skills Excellent organizational and management skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and Vietnamese required.

## **6. SUPERVISOR**

The Ecosystem Management Specialist directly reports to the Team Leader of Objective 2 – Management and Restoration of Natural Ecosystems.

## **7. HOW TO APPLY**

Interested candidates with the required qualifications and experience are invited to send a letter of interest and a full CV in English to [vietnamjobs@winrock.org](mailto:vietnamjobs@winrock.org) with subject line of “Your full name – Ecosystem Management Specialist” no later than November 17, 2024.

Only candidates who meet requisite criteria and are shortlisted will be contacted.