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**Project Title:** Enabling the Implementation of Georgia's Forest Sector Reform (ECO.Georgia)

**Project/Activity Number:** 20.2275.4-001.00/0105

**Title of the assignment:** Description of the forest sites

## 1. Brief information on the project

Climate change impacts and the demand for fuelwood from rural population put significant pressure on Georgia's forests: up to 90% of rural households (1.43 million people) rely on fuelwood for their energy needs. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that households use obsolete technologies, such as traditional stoves with a lifetime of two years and an efficiency of 35% or less. Fuelwood demand exceeds sustainable harvesting levels, considering reduced productivity of many forests in the country because of extensive forest degradation. This forest degradation leads to a loss of carbon absorption capacity which is projected to decrease by five times between 1990 and 2030.

In order to address this negative development, the project "Enabling the Implementation of Georgia's Forest Sector Reform - ECO.Georgia" supports the Government of Georgia to implement its transformational forest sector reform agenda to put the entire nation's forests under the framework for sustainable forest management (SFM). It will do so by supporting the establishment of a nation-wide SFM system (Component 1) and in parallel promoting market development for energy efficient appliances and alternative fuels (Component 2) to address the main driver of forest degradation. The project will safeguard the reform implementation by diversifying livelihood opportunities and strengthening local self-governance in forest adjoining rural communities (Component 3).

The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) with GIZ being the project's accredited entity. The German contribution is part of the wider German support in the priority area "Environmental policy, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the South Caucasus", which aims at the sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation and climate protection, particularly for the benefit of the rural population. Similarly, both the share of renewables in the energy composition as well as the energy efficiency levels will increase.

Especially rural households using firewood as their source of heating energy will benefit from improved air quality and reduced fuelwood demand through eased access to energy efficient stoves. Forest-related small and medium-sized enterprises and their employees will receive support to improve economic efficiency and environmental sustainability of their business activities. Additionally, staff members of relevant public institutions (National Forestry Agency NFA, Department of Environmental Supervision DES, Environmental Information and Education Center EIEC, Rural Development Agency RDA, municipalities) will receive direct support through human capacity development measures and grant finance.

ECO.Georgia primarily contributes to achieving the SDG 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems) of the 2030 Agenda of the UN, but also to achieving SDG 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), SDG 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), and SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).

The duration of ECO.Georgia is from April 2021 until June 2028.

## 2. Description of the Assignment

### 2.1. Context

The GIZ has been supporting the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA), main implementing partners: its Biodiversity and Forestry Department (BFD), the National Forestry Agency (NFA), Department of the Environmental Supervision and Rural development Agency (RDA), as well as EIEC in different directions dealing with forest sector reform, with strong focus on introduction of close-to-nature Sustainable Forest Management into forestry practice.

As part of the commitment under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the government of Georgia ensures regular reporting of climate-change-related issues in the form of national communications and biennial update reports. Concerning Land Use, Land-Use Changes and Forestry (LULUCF), forests are considered to have a net carbon sequestration capacity, as the annual growth of aboveground biomass (mainly in form of wood) is considered to outweigh the loss due to timber and firewood harvesting.

At the moment, as a consequence of lacking data, Georgia is only able to report on a Tier 1 basis to UNFCCC, i.e. working with default values from similar European forest ecosystems, but The National Forest Inventory (NFI) and the Forest Management Inventories (FMI) of Georgia, carried out in the last years have generated the necessary basis of the existing aboveground forest biomass stocks and increments for a reporting scheme on a Tier 2 or even Tier 3 basis.

Only little data are available of the belowground biomass and the nutrient and carbon stocks of Georgian forests. A soil assessment of 17 natural forest ecosystems was conducted between 2019 and 2021 in the frame of GIZ ECOserve project and the process will be continued including additional sites and managed forest structures during the upcoming years.

A full site description is important for the existence of complete data, for comparison for other areas and their interpretation. Accordingly, forest assessments have to be carried out at those sites where only soil profiles were assessed so far.

### 2.2. Objective(s) of the assignment and work packages/tasks

The objectives of the assignment are to provide technical support of the project in terms of **assessing up to 33 forest sites/clusters** according to NFI methodology (**annex N5**) at those sites where only soil profiles were assessed so far. Each forest site has to be described by one cluster consisting of 3 sample plot. Forest sites located in different regions of Georgia mostly in: Kakheti, Guria, Adjara, Samtskje - Javakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti. Up to 17 sites/clusters location including GPS coordinates are known and defined. **Rest (up to 16 forest sites) of the forest sites will be identified at a later stage but not before January 2023.**

In particular, the consultants shall fulfil the following tasks:

1. Identify exact location of the sites for forests assessment with close cooperation of the relevant staff members of the Project and consultants contracted for carrying out

the soil inventory – which includes pre-classification of the forest and planning the field visits;

2. Assessing up to 33 forest sites according to NFI methodology and sending the data in the appropriate format (Open foris collect and Excel).

### 2.3. Outputs/deliverables

Expected outputs are:

1. Up to 17 forest sites have been assessed and submitted to relevant persons of the project
2. Up to 16 forest sites have been assessed and submitted to relevant persons of the project

#### a. Schedule and timeframe

	Deadline	Number of experts	Number of days per expert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Output 1 / Deliverable 1</li> <li>• Output 2 / Deliverable 2</li> </ul>	01.10.2022 01.10.2023	NA	NA
Manager		1	5
Forester		2	17
Assistant of the Forester		2	17
Travel cost for up to 33 fores sites assesment		2	33 (sites)

Travel arrangements should be covered by contractor.

### 3. Company and Experts' profile

#### Company - Required competences and experience

- At least 1 year experience in Forestry
- The company must have at least one manager and two field teams consisting of at least 2 people (one Forester and one assistant of the forester)
- The company must have the appropriate vehicles for the transportation in the forest

#### Title of expert - Required competences and experience

##### Manager

- At least a bachelor's degree
- Minimum 3 years working experience
- Minimum 1 years working experience in managerial position
- Language skills: sufficient level of written and oral English is required.

##### Forester

- At least a bachelor's degree in forestry
- Minimum 2 years working experience in NFI or FMI

- Language skills: minimum level of written and oral English is required.

#### **4. Timing and duration**

From 15.07.2022 to 01.11.2023

#### **5. Place of assignment**

Tbilisi, Georgia

#### **6. Reporting**

- The consultant shall report to Christian Goenner, Head of Forestry Component-ECO.Georgia.
- The consultants is expected to coordinate very closely with relevant staff members of the Project.

#### **7. Other provisions**

1. Relevant equipment (listed in field guid) for the forest assessment will be handed over to the winner company for temporary use by the project, based on delivery-acceptance act;
2. All the necessary tools will be prepared for the equipment by the project;
3. Consultants must agree with project representatives in advance on the exact location of the forest sites to be assessed
4. First payments will be effected after submission Output 1 / Deliverable 1;
5. Final payments will be effected after submission Output 2 / Deliverable 2.