

The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA)

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Individual consultant to assist develop regional approach and building related capacity for sustainable aquaculture in Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

Under the Project

Sustainable Fishery Development in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (SFSH)

Program/Project Number:	P178143
Activity Code:	PERSGA-2249-CS-INDV
Contract type and payment method	Lump-sum, deliverables-linked installments
Estimated working days and assignment duration	60, distributed over around 6 months during May-November 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 Background on PERSGA and the SFISH project

The Regional Organization for Conservation of the Marine Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) is an intergovernmental organization established since 1995. PERSGA institutional framework is based on the Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention 1982), which joins seven member states, including Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen. Rational use of marine resources and the protection of coastal marine environment from pollution and overexploitation are central objectives of Jeddah Convention (1982) and its derived Regional Protocols and Action Plan. PERSGA runs regional programs and projects that support regional capacities and coordination to achieve these objectives.

The announced consultancy is needed for implementation of the regional project “Sustainable Fisheries Development in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden”, referred to hereafter as the Project or SFISH, which is supported by the World Bank and executed by PERSGA in the region. The project development objective is to strengthen capacities and regional collaboration in management of marine fisheries and aquaculture in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region. The regional SFISH project subcomponents focus specifically on: i) promoting PERSGA regional data center and integrated information system for monitoring and assessment, and sharing knowledge to support science-based policy and management of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in PERSGA region; ii) strengthening PERSGA platforms for capacity development and regional coordination mechanisms for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture; iii) enhancing citizens, private sector and development partners engagements in sustainable fishery through effective communication and awareness strategies.

The framework for the project activities is based on the Jeddah Convention (1982) and associated protocols, particularly the Protocol Concerning the Conservation of Biological Diversity and the Establishment of Network of Protected Areas in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (2005), and the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Management of Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture, which provide the regional framework for data sharing, joint assessments and coordination of management efforts through regionwide strategies and action plans. PERSGA Regional Program for Management of Living Marine Resources (LMR) also provides operational base that undertakes long term capacity building and regional coordination.

Based on the above framework, PERSGA member states are joining efforts to collaborate in the establishment and implementation of sustainability principles, aiming to achieve responsible fisheries and aquaculture activities in the region. In this regard, the SFISH project activities coherently address priority regional issues, including those related to sustainable fisheries, such as controlling IUU fishing, improving fisheries statistics and their use in stock assessment and management; adopting sustainable aquaculture practices; addressing potential risks to living marine resources by marine pollution incidents, and resilience to climate change for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

1.2 Scope of the consultancy

Aquaculture is a developing industry in PERSGA region, expected to be increasingly growing as projected in national perspectives and plans of PERSGA countries. At current, the extent of aquaculture development varies greatly in the region, e.g. in most member states (excluding Saudi Arabia and Egypt), aquaculture is at infancy or restricted schemes.

Worldwide, various aquaculture assessment tools (AATs) have been developed to support planning, management and assessment for sustainable aquaculture. Although some of these tools have been introduced at national levels in PERSGA member countries with established aquaculture industry, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt, a regional strategic approach is needed to facilitate collaboration for achieving sustainability objectives in the wider PERSGA region, which will also assist other member states to develop their intended projects sustainably. The regional approach will enable setting up assessment tools that are tailored to the characteristics of the region, and to catalyze sharing information and experience, and systematic application of best practices in the entire Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region through the regional mechanism coordinated by PERSGA. In this context, regional collaboration and approach are essential to assist principles and measures be harmonizingly adopted and implemented in policies, legislation, assessment tools and management e.g. for environmental impacts assessment, quality and assurance, biosecurity, etc.

Furthermore, there is also need for having standard training packages and technical guidelines in order to build capacities in the region for effective and sensible implementation in all member states. In addition to the positive impacts on the productivity, value chain, sustainability, market accessibility etc., strategic regional collaboration is also crucial for success of management efforts aiming to safeguard environment, natural fish stocks, and unique biodiversity of the region from risks of introducing pathogens or alien species, or pollution and other impacts from growing aquaculture operations that may have local or transboundary scale.

Recognizing all of the above, Article 10 of the PERSGA “*Regional Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture*” (see Annex 1), which was recently adopted by PERSGA member states in 2025 has put forth several collaborative actions to ensure sustainable aquaculture in the region. However, the protocol recognizes the regional needs to address gaps in institutional and technical capacities for most PERSGA member states to enable effective mainstreaming and implementation. In this context, this consultancy is aimed to provide technical assistance to build regional capacities for priority areas, focusing on best environmental practice and biosecurity in sustainable aquaculture.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

In this framework, this consultancy will provide technical assistance to tailor regional guidelines, training program, and deliver training to support adoption and implementation of relevant sustainable aquaculture measures and Assessment Tools in Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region, in particular for best environmental practices and biosecurity systems, including.

- (i) Proposing a set of Aquaculture Assessment Tools (AATs) that can be standardized and adopted for use in the region
- (ii) Providing guidelines for legal and policy framework, and to support building related capacities, considering regional needs for training and background knowledge to achieve objectives adopting best environmental practices and biosecurity measures in aquaculture actions and measures at regional and national levels and adopted assessment tools.

3. Tasks and Responsibilities of the Consultant

In this context, the consultant will work directly with the Project Coordination Unit “PCU”, and in consultation with stakeholders and national planners and experts in charge of aquaculture from PERSGA member states to undertake the following tasks and responsibilities:

Task 1: Undertake desk review in close consultations with key stakeholders, including national government specialists from member countries, PERSGA regional specialists, other key informants e.g. representatives from private sector, researchers in order to:

- Propose regional guidelines for adoption and implementing aquaculture best environmental practices and biosecurity measures in the region, and relevant standard Aquaculture Assessment Tools (AATs).
- Identify training needs to build necessary capacity for applying above indicated technical guidelines, proposed measures and AATs.

The consultant will develop and agree on detailed approach and plan to undertake the above review, including available literature, questionnaires and field mission to the region, where the consultant would have access to supplement information and conduct necessary consultations with stakeholders and regional experts. The consultant is expected to provide orientation and technical advice during consultation, including through facilitating meetings and dialogues.

The consultant will prepare a comprehensive report with particular emphasis on the aspects outlined above. This report would include findings and recommendations covering the proposed regional guidelines for measures and related AATs to be adopted considering the region

characteristics, particularities level of aquaculture development and operations, countries' national experience and priorities, in addition to principles, and assisting background knowledge materials.

Task 2: Develop guidelines and training packages, and deliver TOT workshops with particular focus on:

- i. Providing background knowledge concept and principles with emphasis on the proposed measures and tools of the Best Environmental Practices and Biosecurity measures and AATs recommended for the regional approach, environmental, economic and food safety objectives and related subjects.
- ii. Methodological aspects of application, practical skills, implementation tools, issues and constraints in application, implementation policy legal and management frameworks and related application issues.

The technical guidelines should be simple and tailored to orient management in addressing existing gaps, and implementing recommended priority measures, particularly those indicated by the training packages/ modules will consider capturing background concept, principles, application methods to enable implementation of the selected tools.

Finally, the consultant will facilitate regional training course (program will depend on the training needs identified, and the relevant regional guidelines and training modules to be covered). The workshop will be designed to provide Training of Trainers for around 21 national specialists from PERSGA member states, and will be conducted at PERSGA HQ in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

4. Key Deliverables and Tentative Timing

Deliverable	Period after contract signing	Payment Installment
1) Inception report including work plan, scope methodology and tools to be used considering different stakeholders, and the consultant's comments on the TOR	2 weeks	20%
2) Undertake desk review, including fieldwork, questionnaire survey, stakeholders' consultation, regional consultation workshop and submit draft assessment report	8 weeks	Not linked to payment
3) Final assessment report, including findings, recommendations, proposed BEPs and biosecurity measures and related AATs to be adopted, in addition to identified training needs to build necessary capacity for application in the region, and recommendations for legal, policy and management framework	12 weeks	40%
4) Draft technical guidelines and training modules on recommended BEPs and biosecurity measure and aquaculture assessment tools (AATs) and related capacity building needs identified through above report	18 weeks	Not linked to payment

5) Final technical guidelines/ training modules and facilitating regional Training of Trainers' course, and consultancy completion report	20 weeks	40%
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5. Duty station and duration

Duty station: Home based with in-situ field visits to the region for consultation and provision of technical training and advice. The consultancy will be completed in around six months, during which the consultant is expected to utilize approximately 60 actual working days to achieve the deliverables required.

6. Qualification, Skills and Experience

The following qualifications and experience are required to be met by the consultant:

- A post graduate qualification (MSc, PhD) in aquaculture, fisheries management, marine biology/ecology or other relevant discipline
- Advanced knowledge of tools and approaches for sustainable aquaculture management and assessment.
- Good knowledge of the concept and practice methodologies of responsible aquaculture/ ecosystem approach to aquaculture management.
- Proven experience in similar assessments and capacity development interventions in sustainable aquaculture policies, strategies planning, preferable at both national and regional/ international levels.
- Excellent background knowledge on international and regional legislations, framework policies, technical guidelines, agreements and initiatives addressing sustainable aquaculture.
- Proven experience in similar consultancy works at the international and regional organizations level, and ability to produce outputs at international standards.
- Familiarity with/ knowledge of the status of living marine resources and aquaculture issues and concerns in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, preferably background experience in relevant works in the region;
- Fluency in English is mandatory, adequate proficiency of Arabic and French would be an advantage
- Highly self-motivated and able to work independently, as well as good interaction with the regional/ national teams and counterparts.

7. Application procedure and closing date

- Interested applicant should submit Expression of Interest (EoI) letter and CV to the following email address: **sourcing@persga.org**
- Applications should be received no later than **17 May 2025 (23:59 Riyadh time zone)**
- EoI letter should indicate the consultancy title and Activity Code mentioned above.

Annex (1) PERSGA Regional Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

Article 10: Aquaculture management and technical measures

1. Contracting Parties shall develop an appropriate legal administrative and technical framework for development and management of responsible and sustainable aquaculture, including an advance evaluation of the effects of aquaculture development on genetic diversity and ecosystem integrity, and ensuring that aquaculture development is ecologically sustainable and allow the rational use of resources shared by aquaculture and other activities;
2. The Organization in collaboration with Member States shall establish regional procedures specific to aquaculture to undertake appropriate environmental assessment and monitoring, and observe applications of biosecurity programs in aquaculture, with the aim of minimizing adverse ecological impacts and related economic and social consequences. Such procedures shall *inter alia* assist to:
 - a. Minimize risks of disease transfer and other adverse effects on wild and cultured stocks;
 - b. Ensure that the livelihoods of local communities, and their access to fishing grounds, are not negatively affected by aquaculture developments;
 - c. Promote aquaculture practices that support sustainable development of rural communities
 - d. Protect trans-boundary aquatic ecosystems;
 - e. Ensure responsible choice of species, location and management of aquaculture activities
 - f. Minimize risks of disease transfer and other adverse effects on wild and cultured stocks
 - g. Ensure appropriate practices in the genetic improvement of brood stocks, the introduction of non-native species, and in the production, sale and transport of eggs, larvae or fry, brood stocks or other live materials;
 - h. Subjecting non-native species used in aquaculture to experiments, in order to ensure that they have no negative impact on native species;
 - i. Encourage universities and research centers, to develop culture techniques for endangered species to protect, rehabilitate and enhance their stocks, taking into account the critical need to conserve genetic diversity of endangered species, as appropriate;
 - j. Require that the disposal of wastes such as offal, sludge, dead or diseased fish, excess veterinary drugs and other hazardous chemical inputs does not constitute a hazard to human health and the environment, and establish appropriate monitoring programs
 - k. Regulate the use of chemical inputs in aquaculture, particularly those hazardous to human health and the environment;
 - l. Ensure application of best environmental practices and the food safety of aquaculture products and the product quality at all stages of aquaculture development, such as establishment, production, harvesting postharvest processing, storage and transport, ensuring application of appropriate rules and regulations, especially biosecurity programs and their application;
3. Contracting Parties shall adopt a bio-security system in aquaculture practices.