

Terms of Reference (ToR)
for
Ecosystem Valuation of Sonadia Ecologically Critical Area (ECA)

1. Background

Sonadia Island stands as a critical and unique ecological treasure along the southwestern coast of Bangladesh, designated as an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) since 1999. This island provides essential wintering grounds for a significant number of globally recognized wader species, including the endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper, underscoring its international importance for avian conservation. Furthermore, Sonadia serves as a vital nesting site for the Olive Ridley Turtle, with confirmed reports of Green Turtles, highlighting its crucial role in marine turtle conservation. The presence of at least three dolphin species further enriches the island's significant marine biodiversity. Notably, Sonadia represents the sole remaining area on the southwestern coast with extant mangrove ecosystems, offering indispensable habitat and ecological services. This exceptional biodiversity renders Sonadia invaluable for education and scientific research focused on coastal conservation. Recognizing this ecological significance, establishing and effectively managing a robust protection zone within representative habitat types is paramount for learning and implementing successful environmental conservation strategies based on natural ecosystems and species diversity. However, habitat degradation, overexploitation, and climate change impacts threaten its ecological integrity. To address this issue Government has taken a project namely "Strengthening capacity of MoEFCC, DoE and BFD for natural resource management and improved climate resilience." Under this project, there is a component for Sonadia ECA Management. This aims to conduct comprehensive assessments, carrying capacity assessment and develop sustainable management strategies for Sonadia ECA.

2. Objectives

The objective of this service will be:

1. Conduct ecosystem valuation of Sonadia ECA.
2. Perform ecological zoning and carrying capacity assessment.
3. Develop a biodiversity monitoring protocol.

3. Scope of Area: Sonadia Island Ecologically Critical Area (ECA)

4. Scope of Service

4.1 Ecosystem Valuation

- Conduct Economic Valuation of Sonadia ECA Ecosystem service (economic and ecological benefits).
- Develop ecological zoning maps (core, buffer, restoration, general use zones).

4.2 Carrying Capacity & Biodiversity Monitoring

- Assess tourism and resource use carrying capacity.
- Establish a long-term biodiversity monitoring protocol.

5. Output/Expected Deliverables

1. Economic Valuation of Sonadia ECA Ecosystem Report
2. Ecological Zoning Report.
3. Carrying Capacity Assessment Report.
4. Biodiversity Monitoring Protocol.

6. Implementation Modalities

The Consulting Firm shall closely work with the Department of Environment, MoEFCC and Stakeholders. The Team Leader shall time to time, share the progress of the planned activities with the relevant designated officials of the proponent. The relevant designated officer and her/his representative will supervise and assist in performing the activities.

7. Required Qualifications of the Consulting Firm

1. Minimum 15 years of general experience of the firm.
2. Proven experience of 10 years in conducting Baseline Assessment, Carrying Capacity Assessment, Ecosystem Valuation, including Stakeholder Consultations.
3. Proven experience of 10 years in working Sonadia/Coastal ECA
4. Having valid and updated legal documents including VAT and TAX Certificate
5. Financial capacity to be supported by three years Audit Reports by independent and enlisted Audit Firms and Bank Solvency Certificates.
6. Registration status of the Consulting Firm.

8. Required Expertise & Team Composition

Position	Qualification & Experience	Key Responsibilities
Team Leader (Ecologist/Conservation Expert)	PhD/MSc in Ecology/Environmental Science, 10+ years in coastal/marine conservation, ECA management experience.	Overall project coordination, technical oversight, and stakeholder engagement.

Position	Qualification & Experience	Key Responsibilities
Marine Biologist	MSc/PhD in Marine Biology, 7+ years in marine ecosystems, turtle conservation experience.	Marine biodiversity assessment, turtle hatchery setup.
GIS & Remote Sensing Specialist	MSc in GIS/Remote Sensing, 5+ years in habitat mapping, spatial analysis.	Degraded habitat mapping, ecological zoning.
Socio-Economist	MSc/PhD in Environmental Economics/Social Science, 5+ years in livelihood projects.	Ecosystem valuation, AIG program design.
Field Biologists (2)	BSc/MSc in Biology/Zoology, 3+ years in field surveys.	Biodiversity monitoring, data collection.

9. Duration & Reporting

- Duration: 08 months.
- Reporting: Monthly progress reports, final technical and financial reports.

10. Responsibilities of the Client

- (1) Facilitate and support data collection process for vulnerability and impact assessment.
- (2) Provide necessary documents to enable the Consultant to perform the services
- (3) Facilitate arrangement of meetings/interviews with Key Stakeholders if required.
- (4) Issue instructions to the officials, agents and representatives of the Government which may be necessary or appropriate for the prompt and effective implementation of the services.
- (5) Provide the Consultant with any such other assistance as and when required.

11. Payment Schedule: Payments linked to deliveries (20% after 1 month of the contract, 40% upon midterm, 40% after final approval).