



Forest Carbon Technical Advisor

Terms of Reference

Location: Phnom Penh/TBD

Department, Division: Mekong Regional Program

Reports to: Regional Carbon Advisor

Coordinates with: Global NbS Team

Term: Ongoing

Background

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is a US non-profit, tax-exempt, private organization established in 1895 that saves wildlife and wild places by understanding critical issues, crafting science-based solutions, and taking conservation actions that benefit nature and humanity. WCS assists the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to conserve species and habitats in four landscapes across Cambodia, namely, the Eastern Plains, the Northern Plains, the Tonle Sap, and the Freshwater Rivers. Taken together these landscapes support all of the major habitat types in Cambodia, as well as vital populations of most of Cambodia's globally threatened species.

The Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (KSWS), in the Eastern Plains landscape, is an active REDD+ project under the requirements of the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards. The project was validated in 2015 and has been successfully validated three times. To date, the project has generated significant financial resources for conservation and community development by preventing deforestation caused by agricultural expansion, large-scale land concessions, and illegal logging.

Based on the success of KSWS, WCS Cambodia and the Ministry of Environment (MoE) are in the process of developing the Northern Plains Landscape – consisting of four interconnected wildlife sanctuaries – as a REDD+ project, also under the requirements of the VCS and CCB Standards. Joint project validation and verification is expected in 2023. WCS Cambodia is also conducting early assessments for Blue Carbon projects in coastal areas.

Concurrently, the RGC is developing its requirements for standalone REDD+ projects to nest within a national REDD+ system. WCS is an active participant in this national REDD+ policy dialogue to ensure REDD+ projects are adequately recognized and incentivized within this emerging system.

Position Overview

The Forest Carbon Technical Advisor's primary purpose is to manage WCS Cambodia's REDD+ portfolio. This includes: developing the necessary project documentation to ensure project registration and/or verification of credits from the Northern Plains Landscape, KSWs REDD+, and other new projects according to the requirements of the VCS and CCB Standards; monitoring and reporting on project progress; supporting landscape teams in the design of project interventions to ensure alignment with the project's theory of change; liaise with outside marketing partners for the sale of project credits; and engaging in the national REDD+ policy process.

The Forest Carbon Technical Advisor will collaborate with a range of internal and external stakeholders, including: landscape-based field teams and managers; technical support teams (e.g. GIS/Remote Sensing team); Senior WCS Cambodia Management Team; local to national government authorities; Validation and Verification Bodies (VVBs) and the Verra Secretariat; project investors and credit buyers.

The position will report to the Regional Carbon Advisor. He/she will oversee the national REDD+ Technical Advisor(s) and collaborate closely with the Country Director, the REDD+ Communications Advisor, Landscape Managers and field-based teams.

Position Responsibilities

Project Development and Monitoring

- Support the analysis and development of new AFOLU opportunities throughout the WCS portfolio of landscapes.
- Lead the design, collection and analysis of all data and information required to successfully achieve project validation and verification according to the requirements of the VCS and CCB Standards. Ensure data collection and analysis represents most up-to-date scientific findings and best-practice approaches.
- Engage with specialized consultant firms (when appropriate) to develop all necessary project documentation (PDs, MRs, etc.) to achieve validation and verification for WCS REDD+ projects.
- Ensure alignment of project activities and interventions with CCB safeguard requirements and VCS requirements.
- Act as the lead on project validation and verification audits, including engagement with VVBs and responding to VVB findings.
- Provide oversight and direction to the national REDD+ Technical Advisor(s) to ensure community benefits are delivered and safeguards adhered to as stipulated in project documents and according to CCB, WCS, and other safeguard requirements.
- Support standard procedures for data collection and reporting to facilitate project monitoring and reporting across all project interventions.
- Ensure WCS REDD+ projects successfully nest within the national REDD+ jurisdictional system according to national requirements and/or emerging guidance from Verra.

- Coordinate closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia REDD+ Secretariat and Taskforce.
- Support capacity building of government departments responsible for development and implementation of REDD+ processes

Policy Engagement

- Participate in national REDD+ policy processes and establish WCS as a part of REDD+ policy and technical excellence.
- Provide policy and technical advisory support to MOE as requested.
- Closely follow the development of the national REDD+ jurisdictional system to maximize potential value to WCS's REDD+ projects.

Project Marketing and Funding

- Support the development of project marketing and promotional materials for use by WCS and external REDD+ marketing firms.
- Act as principal liaison for REDD project information requests from WCS' external REDD+ marketing firm, as well as existing and potential credit buyers.
- Lead or contribute to client-specific reporting (as appropriate)
- Seek out and develop grant funding proposals supporting project outcomes.

Capacity Building

- Collaborate with and train, where necessary, REDD+ Technical Advisor(s) and landscape field teams to collect necessary project data/information and monitor key project indicators.
- Establish competencies of REDD+ Technical Advisor(s) and landscape managers to lead on the ongoing monitoring and verification of REDD+ project achievements.

Qualifications & Competencies

Required

- Master's degree in forestry, environmental science, geography, conservation or a related field.
- Prior experience and familiarity with the design and implementation of large, landscape-level forest conservation and rural development projects.
- 4+ years' experience in the assessment, development and implementation of forestry and land-use projects, preferably for the carbon markets under the VCS and CCB Standards.
- Strong analytical and writing skills; extreme attention to detail.
- Professional experience in project management and project reporting.
- Demonstrated professional-level fluency in both oral and written English is required.
- Ability to travel to project sites, as required, for extended periods.

Preferred

- Prior experience with the development, validation and verification of AFOLU projects under the VCS and CCBS.
- Experience in proposal development and grant reporting
- Communication skills in Khmer
- Demonstrated GIS and Remote Sensing competencies

To successfully satisfy the requirements of this position, you should:

- Have good personal organizational and priority setting skills, with the ability to work effectively under time pressure and manage multiple priorities.
- Be capable of working independently as well as being an effective team player, with initiative and creativity.
- Have a demonstrated ability to coordinate multiple stakeholders in a culturally diverse setting and build project alliances.
- Value information sharing and continuous improvement in a cooperative atmosphere of constructive evaluation and learning.