**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

 **Consultancy services for**

**supporting the digitalization activities of the RAPID Project**

**IT Expert (Individual Consultant)**

1. Background

Romania has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to support the implementation of the Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project (RAPID Project).

The Romania Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project is an initiative aimed at addressing environmental challenges in the rural areas of Romania. Focused on mitigating pollution and promoting sustainable practices, this project seeks to safeguard the country's rural landscapes, preserve natural resources, and enhance the overall well-being of local communities.

The Loan 9505-RO for the Project and it was ratified by Romania by the Law no. 332/2023 on November 7th 2023 and it became effective on December 13th, 2023. The project closing date is June 30th, 2028.

The objectives of the project are to strengthen the institutional capacity of selected public entities, monitor pollution in agriculture, and transfer knowledge on agricultural pollution reduction to participating farmers. The project consists of three components:

1. **Modernization of Public Institutions:** Enhance the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests (MMAP) to monitor, evaluate, and report investments, including those related to environmental aspects of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). This involves increasing the national capacity for monitoring, prevention, and reduction of pollution from agricultural sources in rural areas, including the National Administration "Romanian Waters" (ANAR), the National Phytosanitary Authority (ANF), and the Directorate for Land Consolidation and Land Fund (DÎFFF) within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR).
2. **Knowledge Exchange and Awareness:** Facilitate knowledge exchange, awareness, and information/innovation transfer to participating farmers. This includes establishing model farms to promote best agricultural practices for pollution prevention and reduction. The project also involves creating national knowledge transfer networks and conducting information and awareness campaigns for the public regarding project activities, including other environmentally-focused interventions funded under NRRP.
3. **Project Management:** Ensure effective project management to oversee and coordinate the various components and activities outlined in the project.

The project aims to create a comprehensive framework for addressing agricultural pollution in Romania, involving institutional capacity building, knowledge dissemination, and active participation of farmers in adopting sustainable practices.

Both the funded Project activities and the Project Management activities are including consistent digitalization interventions, such as the development of an extensive Laboratory Information and Management System and modules for data modelling on water management for ANAR, an alert IT system for the application of plant protection products and an IT system for their traceability for ANF, various IT modules for the implementation and monitoring of the NRRP, IT databases for Project accountancy and implementation and the Project websites for the PMU, etc.

The Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, as implementing institution, through the Project Management Unit for the "Prevention and Reduction of Pollution in Rural Areas Project" (PMU "RAPID") (named hereafter **The Client**), intends to contract an Individual Consultant (IC) for consolidating the Project technical capacity on all the digitalization activities.

**Definitions of terms:**

The Project / RAPID – Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project

MEWF – Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests

PMU – Project Management Unit – represents the unit established within the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, that manages the implementation of the Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project

NRRP - National Recovery and Resilience Plan

ANAR - National Administration "Romanian Waters",

ANF - the National Phytosanitary Authority,

DÎFFF - Directorate for Land Consolidation and Land Fund

MADR - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

The Contract – represents the contract to be signed with the awarded Individual Consultant

The Client – is the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests through the PMU RAPID

The IT Expert – the Individual Consultant that will be selected, based on the present Terms of Reference, to support the PMU with the implementation of all the digitalization related activities under the RAPID Project.

1. Objectives of the assignment

Key objective of the consultancy services is to strengthen the PMU capacity on implementation the RAPID Project digitalization activities.

1. Scope of the Services

The IT Expert will closely coordinate his/her activity with the representatives of the PMU and the RAPID Project beneficiaries or contracted consultants, as instructed by the PMU, to implement, inter alia, the following Project digitalization activities:

1. Preparation of ToRs/Technical Specifications (or consolidation of ToRs/Technical Specifications as provided by the Project public beneficiaries) on IT software development / procurement of IT hardware and providing support to the PMU during development of bidding documents and tendering process (respond to requests for clarifications / questions from bidders, participation in pre-bid meetings etc.);
2. Participation in evaluation / reception commissions for IT software development / procurement of IT hardware;
3. Ensuring technical coordination of the Project IT activities / contracts, including of the other Individual Consultants on IT employed for the IT related activity of the Project beneficiaries and also with the MMAP / Government / Special Telecommunication Services IT departments, including development and update of implementation plans, monitoring and reporting on progress and flagging risks and delays of relevant activities;
4. Support software implementation activities such as providing inputs for relevant regulations, supporting user training and adoption of developed software by the relevant institutions and end-users.
5. Oversee and take part in development and updating the Project websites and databases (including business analysis and testing);
6. Ensuring participation at various meeting, workshops, conferences or exchange of experience events, for promoting the PMU activities on digitalization and further analyze various options for improving the IT architecture at PMU level;
7. Preparation of regular and ad-hoc reports for PMU on achieved progress and further needs on IT development, following the Project activities as included in the Procurement Plan, Aide-Memoires, contracts, etc.
8. Consultant’s Profile

In order to be able to charge the Client for the activities performed under these terms of reference, the expert must be either a person authorized under the Law **no. 300/2004 regarding the authorization of individual persons and family associations to carry out independent activities or to act under a limited liability company or another form of organization that enables him/her to issue invoices for the services provided. In any of the cases, the Consultant should be aware that the services will be provided only by the selected Individual Consultant and n**o substitution of any individual who was initially selected will be permitted**.**

**The qualifications and experience required:**

* At least the following qualifications: Bachelor degree/Master degree in a technical field / legal sciences or public administration.
* At least 5 years’ experience in the development of large-scale/enterprise-level IT systems and hardware infrastructure for private and/or public institutions, including among others, demonstrated experience in:
	+ - Preparation of technical specifications on development / updating of IT systems and databases,
		- Business analysis, software development and testing of large-scale/enterprise-level IT software;
		- Experience in preparation of technical specifications for IT hardware / procurement of IT hardware;
		- Previous software architecture experience would be an advantage.

Experience or at least familiarity with GIS systems, Internet of Things (IoT) devices would be a significant advantage.

Experience in providing technical project/program management, including monitoring and reporting for the implementation of projects/programs is an advantage.

Experience in the development of IT systems and/or hardware infrastructure for public institutions is an advantage.

In the case that the Contract for this assignment shall be awarded to a company that provides an individual for this assignment, only the qualification and experience of the individual shall be evaluated, not the company’s experience. All the services/activities provided/delivered under this Assignment shall be delivered exclusively by the proposed individual consultant himself/herself.

1. Duration of the assignment

The services under this Contract shall be provided until 31st of March, 2028, or any subsequent date, as agreed in writing by the Parties through a contract amendment.

The total input under the assignment is estimated at 800 working-days, equal to 6,400 working-hours (considering an average of 17 working days per month).

This total input will be finally agreed during contract negotiations subject to Consultant’s availability and the date of the commencement of services.

The contract will include a probationary period of 3 months, after which it may be terminated through a simple notification issued by the Client, without further details.

The input duration/working day may range between 0 – 12 working-hours, including during weekends or official holidays, as agreed between the Consultant and the Client, and depending on Consultant's availability and Client’s workload dictated by the projects’ activities.

The consultant is expected to commence performance of the services preferably within 5 working days after contract signing.

1. Reporting

During this Assignment, the Individual Consultant shall deliver monthly progress reports which shall include monthly time-sheets (time-sheet which will have to be further approved by the Contract coordinator).

All the Progress Reports shall be transmitted to the PMU in one copy, in Romanian language, signed by the Individual Consultant, together with the electronic versions (electronic mail/memory stick).

All the Progress Reports that need approval shall be submitted to the authorized representative of the Client, for analysis and approval by the Acceptance Committee nominated by the Client.

The Individual Consultant shall consolidate the Progress Reports as requested by the Client / Acceptance Committee, within maximum 2 working days as from receiving such requests or within a longer period as agreed by the Consultant and the Client’s authorized representative, if the circumstances require.

The Acceptance Committee shall decide upon the acceptance of the activities and deliverables provided by the Individual Consultant.

 Based on the acceptance document of the final version of the Progress Reports, issued by the Acceptance Committee, the Individual Consultant shall issue the invoice and the Client shall pay, according to the Contract provisions.

At each 6 months, in line with the PMU Progress reports for the World Bank, the Consultant shall prepare a half-year report which shall include the deliverables and an activity plan for the next 6 months. The half-year report is without payment, but is a pre-condition for the following payments under the contract.

1. Institutional arrangements, Data, Local Services, Personnel and Facilities to be provided by the Client

The IT Expert:

* Will work at the PMU premises (or any of the Project beneficiaries – as requested and needed) with office equipment as ensured by the PMU. However, the Expert is allowed to work from his/her office only after 3 months from the date of Contract signing and only with the permission of the PMU, for no more than 20% of the total monthly working hours;
* Will work under the direct supervision and daily technical coordination of the PMU, guided by the PMU Director and/or the PMU nominated staff;
* Will ensure exclusivity of his/her work for the PMU (he/she will not be allowed to accept other work / contracts / employment / assignments during the implementation of this contract);
* Will liaise with RAPID Project beneficiaries and contracted consultants, as needed;

All documentation prepared by the Consultant during the course of the assignment will remain the absolute property of the Client. The Consultant will deliver all such documentation to the Client.

The Client shall provide to the Individual Consultant all the information necessary, concerning the purpose of this Assignment and that will be reasonably requested by the Individual Consultant in order to complete this Assignment.

The Client will provide access to all relevant information, documents and stakeholders’ contact points to facilitate the implementation of the activities under this assignment, PMU server / network resources.