

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### *Managing Water Scarcity in the Mekong Region – Water Scarcity Profiles*

The Australian Water Partnership (AWP) is seeking to appoint partners to prepare five water scarcity country profiles that will feed into the design of a regional Water Scarcity Program being developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

#### **Activity Background**

The FAO Regional Office for Asia Pacific is developing a Water Scarcity Program for the Indo-Pacific region which seeks to emphasise water allocations, environmental water, and policy dialogue and reform. FAO is currently assessing water scarcity in the agricultural sector across the Indo-Pacific region and is already examining policies and practice in five representative countries – Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Fiji.

AWP is seeking to engage partners to support the expansion of these assessments to an additional four countries in the Mekong Region (Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR and Myanmar) and to the Murray-Darling Basin in Australia.

The water scarcity profiles will be developed using an established methodology. Separately from this activity, they will be integrated into a water scarcity regional publication. The outputs of the activity will be used by FAO in the preparation and development of their upcoming regional Water Scarcity Program, and to strengthen the emerging FAO-Australia partnerships to assist with the management of scarcity in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### **Activity Description**

FAO is preparing a regional Water Scarcity Program for the Indo-Pacific, with the broad objective to prepare the region's agriculture sector for a future of increasing water scarcity by improving how government and non-government actors manage water and its implications for food production and rural prosperity.

As part of the scoping phase, FAO is assessing the nature and extent of water scarcity across the region, the policy environment in place to manage it and the use of models to inform policy and action. Work also includes the development of models and tools to assist in agricultural adaptation to water scarcity and to determine where real water savings can be made in a river basin.

The Water Scarcity Program design includes two key targets which are areas of overlap with the Australian experience of managing agricultural water scarcity, and opportunities for cooperation and strengthening of the Australia-FAO Memorandum of Understanding on water:

- Strengthened water accounting and water allocation frameworks;
- Utilisation of water scarcity as an entry point to water policy dialogue and the introduction of effective policy instruments and a strengthened enabling environment for equitable management of water resources.

Further details on the activity can be found in the Terms of Reference provided at Annex 1.

### **Activity Objectives**

The objective of this activity is to leverage the Australian expertise in water policy reform for water scarcity management to strengthen the analysis and recommendations that will inform the design of the FAO's future US\$10–15 million Water Scarcity Program for the Indo-Pacific region.

Specifically, this activity will support and strengthen the preparatory work currently being done by the FAO on the design of the Water Scarcity Program by extending it to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia in order to better reflect the range of water scarcity conditions and management environments facing our region, and provide an analysis of the linkages between COVID-19 and water scarcity.

The partner/s appointed by AWP will be tasked with developing a total of five water scarcity profiles:

- One each for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand; and
- One for Australia (Murray-Darling).

The five water scarcity profiles will be developed following the methodology already being used in the development of water scarcity profiles for Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Fiji. Separate to this activity, all ten water scarcity profiles will form the basis for an upcoming regional Australia-FAO publication on water scarcity.

### **Application Procedure**

Interested AWP Partner/s should submit a proposal via the following online form by Monday 2 November 2020 (revised date) at 5:30 pm AEDT (late applications will not be accepted):

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/AustralianWaterPartnership/awpsubmissionform>

Note, please **do not** use the AWP Tender Submission Template provided on the online form. Instead, this proposal should use the [AMWF Proposal template](#), and should include a description of the relevant experience of the partner/s, as well as proposed daily

remuneration rates based on the [AWP Partners Remuneration Framework](#). Proposals should be a maximum of ten pages, plus annexes for Curriculum Vitae (CV). Appendices and CVs should be included within your application document (max 1 file upload allowed).

The formation of consortiums of partners is encouraged.

### **Selection Criteria**

Proposals will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

- Expertise in IWRM, agriculture and food security issues.
- Experience in water accounting and allocation, water policy and governance analysis.
- Experience working in the Mekong region.
- Incorporation of Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion approaches and outcomes.
- Robust methods for achieving the objectives and tasks outlined in the Terms of Reference.
- Involvement of multiple Australian Partners.
- Demonstrated Value for Money.
- Team capability to deliver the activity.

### **Contact**

For any questions, please contact Ingrid Carlier, AWP Senior Program Officer ([ingrid.carlier@waterpartnership.org.au](mailto:ingrid.carlier@waterpartnership.org.au)) by Wednesday 21 October 2020 at 12.00 pm AEDT. All questions received will be compiled and presented with answers on the Partner Portal at <https://waterpartnership.org.au/partner-portal/programs-activities/>.

*Note that AWP reserves the right to not proceed with the outlined activity and is not liable for any costs incurred by Partners in preparing proposals.*

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Activity Title	Managing Water Scarcity in the Mekong Region – Water Scarcity Profiles
<b>Activity summary</b>	<p>The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is developing a Water Scarcity Program which seeks to emphasise water allocations, environmental water, and policy dialogue and reform. The FAO is currently assessing water scarcity in the agricultural sector across the Indo-Pacific region and is already examining policies and practice in five representative countries – Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Fiji.</p> <p>The Australian Water Partnership (AWP) is engaging Partners to support the expansion of these assessments to an additional four focal countries in the Mekong Region (Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Myanmar) and for the Murray-Darling Basin in Australia. The water scarcity profiles will be developed using an established methodology and separate to this activity they will be integrated into a water scarcity regional publication. The outputs of the activity will be used in FAO’s preparation and development of the regional Water Scarcity Program; and to strengthen the emerging FAO-Australia partnerships to assist with the management of scarcity in the Indo-Pacific region.</p>
<b>International partners</b>	<p>FAO</p> <p>ASEAN; Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI Bangkok – assessing modelling capacities); Global Water Partnership (Indonesia water scarcity profile)</p>
<b>In-country partners</b>	<p>The work will be carried out under the leadership of relevant government ministries in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand.</p> <p>In-country partners will be well-connected and established organisations working in water resources management and trusted by governments – likely candidates include the Cambodian Development Resource Institute (CDRI), the Thai Water Partnership, the Water Resources Faculty of National University of Lao, and Proximity Designs in Myanmar.</p>
<b>Background and context</b>	<p>The FAO Regional Office for Asia Pacific is preparing a regional Water Scarcity Program, with the broad objective to prepare the region’s agriculture sector for a future of increasing water scarcity by improving how government and non-government actors manage water and its implications for food production and rural prosperity. The scoping phase (to end 2020) is assessing the nature and extent of water scarcity across this diverse region, the policy environment in place to manage it and the use of models to inform policy and action in five representative countries – Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Fiji. The work also includes the development of models and tools to assist in agricultural adaptation to water scarcity and to determine where real water savings can be made in a river basin.</p> <p>The design of the Water Scarcity Program includes two key targets which are areas of overlap with the Australian experience of managing agricultural water scarcity, and opportunities for cooperation and strengthening of the Memorandum of Understanding on water signed between the Government of Australia and FAO in 2018:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Strengthened water accounting and water allocation frameworks:</b> The Water Scarcity Program intends to support national units in embedding water accounting and developing water allocation frameworks and processes at a high level in national planning processes and provide strong national capacity to: drive sustainable water resources management; manage water scarcity; improve agricultural productivity; balance trade-offs between agriculture as the dominant water consumer and other high priority sectors; develop fair and effective water re-allocation practices and safeguard the aquatic environment.</li> <li>2. <b>Utilising of water scarcity as an entry point to water policy dialogue and the introduction of effective policy instruments and a strengthened enabling environment for equitable management of water resources:</b> The Water</li> </ol>

	<p>Scarcity Program seeks to improve the national policy environment for water scarcity management by consolidating regional experience with effective instruments and utilising modalities and products that allow countries to share and learn from the collective Asia Pacific experience in managing this growing issue.</p>
<b>Expected start &amp; end dates</b>	November 2020 – July 2021 (8 months)
<b>Objectives/ aims of the Activity</b>	<p>The objective of the proposed FAO-Australia collaboration is to leverage the Australian expertise in water policy reform for water scarcity management to strengthen the analysis and recommendations that inform the design of the FAO's future US\$10–15 million Regional Water Scarcity Program.</p> <p>Specifically, this activity will support and strengthen the preparatory work currently being done by the FAO on the design of the Water Scarcity Program by extending it to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia to allow the case study approach (covering 10 countries in total) to better reflect the range of water scarcity conditions and management environments facing the Asia-Pacific region and to cover the entire Lower Mekong Region. This includes an analysis of the linkages between COVID-19 and water scarcity as it applies in each country.</p> <p>The national profiles will feed into a regional knowledge product (being developed by the Regional Policy Lead, separately appointed by AWP and FAO) to be launched at an Australia-FAO-ASEAN Ministerial Forum scheduled for when travel is permitted post-COVID-19.</p>
<b>Main tasks</b>	<p>The main tasks focus on developing water scarcity profiles for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Task 1:</b> Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand</li> <li>• <b>Task 2:</b> Murray-Darling, Australia</li> </ul> <p>A Regional Policy Lead has been engaged separately by FAO and AWP to provide technical oversight and guidance on the approach/methodology currently being used to develop the profiles in Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Fiji.</p> <p>A description of the tasks required to complete the profiles, together with a tentative timeframe is shown in Annex A. The interaction between the tasks in this activity, the development of a regional publication (Task 3 – separate to this ToR), and coordination with the Regional Policy Lead is described in Annex B.</p> <p>The Regional Policy Lead and FAO will assist in the overall coordination of this activity.</p> <p><b><u>Task 1. Mekong Country water scarcity profiles</u></b></p> <p>Four additional water scarcity profiles covering Mekong countries will be added to the existing five profiles. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand were chosen to strengthen the presence of Mekong countries in the case studies.</p> <p>The country profiles are a stock-taking exercise designed to understand what water scarcity challenges exist in the country and what is the current approach of government in managing water scarcity. The focus is on understanding the policy instruments available and how effective planning and management measures have been in addressing water scarcity issues. These case studies should also include an analysis of the relevant links between COVID-19 and water scarcity.</p> <p>Completion of the assignment is based primarily on desktop review and some stakeholder interviews preferably undertaken in each country by a sub-contracted national specialist working in conjunction with FAO officers in the resident mission.</p> <p><b><u>Task 2. Australia (Murray-Darling) water scarcity profile</u></b></p> <p>The Australian profile will strengthen the dissemination of the Australian experience managing water scarcity into the regional knowledge product. The Murray-Darling water scarcity profile will document the approach and lessons learnt from the Australian</p>

	water reform journey with a particular emphasis on managing water scarcity, competition for water use, allocations for the environment and drought conditions.
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Develop five water scarcity country profiles (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia) to facilitate more comprehensive coverage of the Indo-Pacific region and increase the number of stakeholders engaged in future programming. This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completed policy summary templates for key plans, policies, and regulations;</li> <li>2. Completed questionnaires from stakeholder interviews;</li> <li>3. Summary of national water scarcity management approach, successes and failures, and inclusion of the links between the COVID-19 pandemic and water scarcity (max 10 pages); and</li> <li>4. Presentation of the national water scarcity profile at the FAO Water Scarcity Program Regional Workshop.</li> </ol>
<b>Resources &amp; expertise required</b>	<p>Water resource management expert/s with in-depth knowledge of agriculture, food security and IWRM issues. The AWP Partner/s will have a comprehensive understanding of the Australian water reform journey including lessons learned and applicability to the Indo-Pacific context.</p> <p>The AWP Partner/s selected for this activity will need to include national specialists to support the development of the water scarcity country profiles in the Mekong countries. The national specialists will have experience in water management, water reform and water governance in the Mekong region. The ToR for the national consultants and methodology for developing the case studies is included in Annex A.</p> <p>AWP, DFAT, FAO and the Regional Policy Lead can assist in selecting national specialists to support the development of water scarcity country profiles in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand.</p>
<b>Budget</b>	<p>Up to AU\$120,000 (excl. GST) for Tasks 1 and 2.</p> <p>The budget should cover remuneration and expenses, including for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• domestic travel in Australia (if required) for Task 2;</li> <li>• domestic travel in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand (if required) for Task 1; and</li> <li>• international travel to regional workshop.</li> </ul> <p>The Australian Partner/s is/are required to identify national experts to assist in the completion of Task 1 (case studies in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand).</p>
<b>Activity location</b>	<p>This is primarily a desk-based analytical and literature review work.</p> <p>The Australian Partner/s will oversee national teams working on the profiles for Australia, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Lao PDR. The national teams will conduct interviews with policy-makers remotely where required.</p>
<b>Implementation arrangements</b>	<p>The selected Australian Partner/s will be contracted by AWP, coordinate with FAO, and report to AWP and FAO.</p> <p>The selected Partner/s will be expected to sub-contract any consultants needed in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand.</p> <p>The selected Partner/s will work with the Regional Policy Lead in developing the country profiles and providing information to be integrated into a regional publication.</p>
<b>Peer-review process</b>	<p>The outputs will be reviewed by the AWP Expert Review Panel (ERP), AWP, DFAT Greater Mekong Water Resources Program, FAO and the Regional Policy Lead.</p>

<b>Method of engagement</b>	Open tender.
<b>Australian partner(s) capability requirements</b>	The Partner/s should have demonstrated experience in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water accounting and allocation;</li><li>• Water policy and governance analysis;</li><li>• Excellent analytical and written skills; and</li><li>• Experience working in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and/or Thailand is desirable.</li></ul>

## Annex A – Detailed ToRs for the Country Profiles

### Overview of the assignment:

The Mekong Country Profiles are a stock-taking exercise designed to understand what water scarcity challenges exist in the country and what is the current approach of government to managing water scarcity. The focus is on understanding the policy instruments available and how effective have planning and management measured been in addressing water scarcity issues. Completion of the assignment is based primarily on desktop review and some stakeholder interviews undertaken by a contracted national specialist working in conjunction with FAO officers in the resident mission.

### Assignment objectives:

The objectives of the assignment are:

- (i) **Characterise the nature and extent of water scarcity** experienced by the country and describe trends over time in the severity and impact of water scarcity on agricultural and rural systems and the implications for food and water security.
- (ii) **Document the existing policy instruments and government approach** to managing water scarcity, including policies, plans, regulations, projects and initiatives.
- (iii) **Assess the performance and effectiveness of water scarcity management** in the target country.

### Assignment tasks:

In order to achieve the objectives, the national consultant will utilise desk-based literature reviews and stakeholder interviews to complete the following tasks:

- Step 1.** Develop a general **baseline description of rural development and the agricultural sector** for the focal country, including a broad understanding of water demand by sector and geography.
- Step 2.** **Review the existing literature** on water scarcity and characterise:
  - What is the nature of water scarcity experienced?
  - Where are water scarcity issues most prevalent?
  - What is the seasonal and inter-annual variation in water scarcity?
  - What are the long-term trends in water scarcity over time, and are trends improving or worsening?
  - Is there a regional/transboundary context that exacerbates water scarcity in the focal country?
- Step 3.** **Develop an institutional map** that describes the agencies responsible for water scarcity management, including: their structure and mandate, roles functions as well as any existing/planned modalities that service cooperation between sectors or between national and sub-national levels.
- Step 4.** Review existing data, information, studies on water management and policy-documentation to **characterise the approach and priorities used to manage water scarcity** in the focal country; as well as the effectiveness of these measures.
- Step 5.** Based on the institutional map (Step 3), **identify a short-list of 4 – 6 government stakeholders** to be interviewed as part of the RCP.
- Step 6.** Utilising the generic template provided by FAO, **undertake one-to-one interviews** with short-listed stakeholders to collect experience-based information on the approach and effectiveness of water scarcity management in the focal country.



<b>Step 7.</b>	<p>Critically review and evaluate the information generated from steps 1–6 and <b>develop a concise, strategic summary</b> with three parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The nature of water scarcity and the strategic implications of scarcity to national prosperity;</li> <li>– The organisational approach and architecture to managing water scarcity; and</li> <li>– Critical description of successful and unsuccessful water scarcity management measures.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 8.</b>	Present the findings of the country analysis at the <b>Water Scarcity Program Regional Workshop</b> .
<b><u>Working arrangements:</u></b>	
<p>The activities outlined in this TOR will be led by a national water policy specialist, who will retain full responsibility for the delivery of the expected outputs. Provision is made for the National water policy specialist to travel for completion of stakeholder meetings and for the presentation of the study findings at the regional workshop.</p> <p>The national water policy specialist will be supported by the in-country FAO officers for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Organisation of meetings and discussions with government counterparts and other relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>– Identifying and accessing policy and technical documents of relevance to the literature review.</li> <li>– Providing guidance and advice to the national water policy specialist as needed.</li> </ul> <p>The Regional Policy Lead will provide guidance in the development of water scarcity profiles to ensure consistency across countries.</p>	
<b>Key Performance indicators</b>	
<b><u>Expected Outputs:</u></b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completed policy summary templates for key plans, policies, and regulations.</li> <li>2. Completed questionnaires from stakeholder interviews.</li> <li>3. Summary of national water scarcity management approach, successes and failures (max 10 pages).</li> <li>4. Presentation of the national water scarcity profile at the WDP Regional Workshop.</li> </ol>	
<b>Position requirements</b>	
<b>Qualifications:</b>	A university degree in agronomy, economics, engineering or other field related to water resource management, agriculture, or public policy. An advanced degree (Master or PhD) is desirable.
<b>Years' experience:</b>	Minimum 5 years of professional working experience.
<b>Key skills:</b>	Strong research skills and the capacity to synthesise material into succinct, strategic summaries. Deep experience working on agriculture, food security and/or IWRM issues.

## Annex B – Coordination of Tasks for Managing Water Scarcity in the Mekong Region

The diagram below explains how the different components of Managing Water Scarcity in the Mekong Region will interact. These include:

- 1 - Mekong Country water scarcity profiles (4)
- 2 - Australia (Murray-Darling) water scarcity profile
- 3 - Regional Water Scarcity Publication

