

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

### **Enhancing Knowledge and Capacities of Local Stakeholders to Strengthen Policy Environments Enabling Agroecology in the Himalayas**

*Open from 6<sup>th</sup> September until 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

#### Objective

This request for proposals concerns the selection of Partners for the project entitled “Enhancing Knowledge and Capacities of Local Stakeholders to Strengthen Policy Environments Enabling Agroecology in the Himalayas”, which is financed from the Special Initiative “Transforming Agriculture and Food Systems” (TAFS) of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and which is coordinated by the World Future Council (WFC) and IFOAM-Organics International (IFOAM-OI). Started in May 2023, the project overall runs for 48 months. From December 2023 until December 2026 the WFC and IFOAM-OI intend to apply parts of the financing towards several agreements with Partners (in total of 500,000 EUR).

#### Project Background

##### Overall Goal

The project aims to empower local stakeholders in the Himalayas (India,<sup>1</sup> Nepal and Bhutan) to advance the development and co-creation of enabling policy frameworks for agroecology-based food systems, through knowledge enhancement, collaboration and engagement, while fostering support for agroecology at all levels.

##### Objectives

The three project objectives are:

1. *Scaling up Agroecology*: Generating knowledge on sustainable food systems and agroecology policy and other measures and encouraging decision-makers to take action.
2. *Empowering Local Stakeholders*: Empowering stakeholders in their engagement in food policy processes, enhancing agroecology policy environments through such engagement.
3. *Advancing Agroecology*: Increasing support towards agroecology and sustainable food systems in India, the regional and global arena.

The aforementioned objectives form component three of IFAD’s “Promotion of agroecological value chains in India and the Himalayan Region project”. In their implementation, synergies and complementarity will be sought by the WFC, IFOAM-OI and the selected Partners with the project’s other two components.

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<sup>1</sup> Geographically, project activities are to take place in India and in particular the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) with focus on Sikkim, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and/or Nagaland, as well as, on Nepal and Bhutan.

### Activities according to Project Objectives

The following activities are planned to be carried out by WFC, IFOAM-OI and Partners:

#### 1. *Scaling up Agroecology*

- Participatorily develop and finalize a roadmap for sustainable food systems based on agroecology together with key stakeholders, including offline and online participatory consultations and research
- Deliver a targeted roadmap with recommendations for different governance levels for India, Nepal and Bhutan (local, state, federal, Himalaya-wide), with a special attention to selected Indian Himalayan states (including Sikkim, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and/or Nagaland)
- Co-organize a high-level event for launching the roadmap in 2024
- Develop and implement a comprehensive media and communication strategy, collaborating with key stakeholders
- Undertake monitoring, evaluation and data analysis concerning the roadmap recommendations

#### 2. *Empowering Local Stakeholders*

- Conduct capacity development trainings on agroecology, policy, and media for local stakeholders and develop a training toolkit
- Accompany the implementation of policy roadmaps in India and Indian Himalayan states by working closely together with other partners, by developing, executing, monitoring and evaluating a medium-term strategy that comprises e.g. events, research, publications, policy advice, media and communication, monitoring, evaluation and data analysis, etc.
- WFC and IFOAM-OI to provide guidance and support in terms of strategy, coordination, expertise, finance and media to Partners and stakeholders
- WFC and IFOAM-OI to publish a stocktaking report on roadmap implementation in 2027 and host a virtual event in 2027 to share lessons with other Himalayan countries.

#### 3. *Advancing Agroecology*

- Improve agroecology policymaking through knowledge products
- Share knowledge on agroecology and sustainable food systems with stakeholders through media and events.

### Tasks and Timeline

Partners will work closely with WFC and IFOAM - OI to implement the project along a strategy and workplan, including media and communications work, which are to be agreed jointly. The timeline and tasks of Partners are as follows:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Activities (tasks)</b>
December 2023 – July 2024	<p>Development and finalization of roadmaps to strengthen policy environments enabling agroecology in the Himalayas.<sup>2</sup> The roadmaps will be a result of a broad and participatory stakeholder consultation processes, which encompasses activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing and facilitating expert groups,</li> <li>• online and offline workshops, roundtables and meetings,</li> <li>• bilateral talks, interviews, consultations with policy makers including the highest levels,</li> <li>• needs assessment, data analysis, report writing.</li> </ul> <p>In January-early March 2024, a mission, technical event and consultations with key stakeholders focused on roadmap development are planned to take place.</p>
Late August-beginning of October 2024	<p>Launch of final roadmaps at a jointly identified and organized high-level event, including (among others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• co-developing the programme,</li> <li>• hosting the event,</li> <li>• organizing technical support, translations, etc.</li> <li>• co-developing communications materials and managing media relations.</li> </ul>
From roadmap launch until December 2026	<p>Facilitation of the implementation of roadmaps in India and Indian Himalayan states. Activities might include (non-exhaustive list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consulting and advising policy makers,</li> <li>• stakeholder engagement,</li> <li>• organizing events,</li> <li>• research and data analysis,</li> <li>• publications,</li> <li>• media and communications,</li> <li>• monitoring and evaluation,</li> <li>• SSTC (Bhutan and Nepal).</li> </ul>
2024-2026	<p>Based on earlier needs assessment, co-organization of six capacity development trainings on jointly agreed topics such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agroecology and sustainable food system concepts,</li> <li>• evidence, benefits &amp; narratives,</li> <li>• policy design and implementation,</li> <li>• stakeholder engagement,</li> <li>• media, communications and campaigning.</li> </ul> <p>Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• co-developing curricula,</li> <li>• co-developing the programme,</li> <li>• selection of trainees,</li> <li>• hosting the event, organizing technical support, translations and catering,</li> <li>• co-developing a training toolkit and implementing a ToT approach.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Geographically, project activities are mainly focused on India, in particular the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) and therein Sikkim, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and/or Nagaland, as well as, on Nepal and Bhutan.



Regularly	<p>Close collaboration and work with WFC, IFOAM – OI and project partners to implement the project along a strategy and workplan. Frequent coordination meetings will be held. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• co-developing project strategy, including media and communications work,</li> <li>• co-developing workplan and budget,</li> <li>• providing project updates and feedback,</li> <li>• updates on political / strategic opportunities</li> <li>• in the case of consortia: coordination work.</li> </ul>
Regularly	<p>Accurate and well-organized monitoring and evaluation of project progress, financial and narrative reporting.</p>

### Who can apply?

The entrustment of the aforementioned tasks requires the designated Partners having proper financial and operational capacities, a demonstrated track record in managing resources from foreign donors as well as, ideally, an existing FCRA license. A proposal can be submitted by corporate bodies enjoying tax privileges (non-profit purposes) or public bodies with tax privileged objectives (e.g. associations, institutions, nonprofit organizations, think tanks, academic institutes, etc.) registered in India, Bhutan or Nepal, under the conditions defined in the Call. Proposals from individuals or businesses cannot be considered. Ideally relevant state and national governments or government agencies become affiliate partners. The latter are, however, not eligible for financial support.

If applying from India as a consortium of partners, there is a fixed budget of EUR 400,000, whilst for single Partners, the financial ceiling of the budget is EUR 100,000.

If applying from Nepal or Bhutan as a consortium of partners or as a single Partner, there is a fixed budget of EUR 50,000 EUR per country.

### Implementation period

For the period between 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026, we are seeking Partners for India and its Himalayan region, preferably - but not necessarily - in the form of a consortium.

For the period between 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024, we are seeking Partners for Nepal and/or Bhutan, preferably - but not necessarily - in the form of a consortium.

The expected results must be demonstrated within this period.

### Deadline and how to apply

The proposal should be submitted by 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 electronically to Ms Ingrid Fritsche via email [ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org](mailto:ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org), with copy to Ms Xhona Hysa, [himalayas@ifoam.bio](mailto:himalayas@ifoam.bio). Kindly note that we accept only proposals based on the “RFP\_Template” file.<sup>3</sup> The proposal must include the completed application document, technical plan and financial plan:

- 1) Application document to include the basic information about the organization, motivation and how your organizations’ experience, skills, qualifications, and professional networks fit with the required tasks, as well as a self-declaration on eligibility.
- 2) Technical Plan to include:
  - ❖ Proposed methods and approaches to be used, demonstrating feasibility, soundness, and practicability, and workplan
  - ❖ Curriculum vitae or resume with full details of experiences, achievements, qualifications, and contact details of project staff
  - ❖ Summaries and contact details of 3 reference projects (timeframe, budget, goals and outcomes, donor, etc.).
- 3) Financial Plan to include a proposed budget, inclusive of breakdown of costs for key activities.

If you plan to submit a proposal, kindly briefly inform thereof Ms Ingrid Fritsche (email [ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org](mailto:ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org)), with copy to Ms Xhona Hysa, [x.hysa@ifoam.bio](mailto:x.hysa@ifoam.bio).

### Selection and evaluation process

#### Selection

Following receipt of the proposals, the Evaluation Committee<sup>4</sup> will review and select the proposal that will be best evaluated, based on the following criteria:

- ❖ Institutional criterion

This dimension considers (i) the experience of the Partner and implementing partners in the priority area and in the specific theme, and in the states/countries, where the project would be implemented; (ii) implementation capacity, both technical and financial management, and quality control system; (iii) the connection of the Partner and implementing partners with relevant actors in the national/state government, and their track record of their cooperation and interaction with them; (iv) in case the proposal is submitted by a consortium, clear and well-defined implementation/governance arrangements between the consortium partners and, if available, evidence of previous positive collaboration between the partners.

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<sup>3</sup> Should you not have yet received it along with the Request for proposals, the file is also available at the World Future Council’s and IFOAM’s websites: [www.worldfuturecouncil.org](http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org) and [www.ifoam.bio](http://www.ifoam.bio)

<sup>4</sup> Constituted by members of WFC and IFOAM-OI, including a project manager, a finance expert and two technical experts, who have confirmed their absence of conflict of interest.

❖ Technical criterion

This dimension considers (i) the clarity, completeness, quality and relevance of the technical plan, the proposed workplan, implementation methods and approaches used in relation to the project's goal, components, activities, timeline and tasks described in this RFP for delivering the expected results, as well as (ii) the consideration of risks and mitigation measures. Attention will be also paid to (iii) the proposal's lasting impact on scaling up the agroecological paradigm in the country and/or state, and its links and synergies with ongoing projects and operations, including of IFAD and/or GIZ projects.

❖ Financial criterion

This dimension takes into account (i) the value for money of the proposal, which will not necessarily be the cheapest option, but which must ensure that WFC/IFOAM obtains the desired technical quality at the best price; (ii) budget, with a balance between categories/components and general costs within the limits set (see template, Appendix 4); (iii) co-financing mobilized.

❖ Interaction criterion

In the last week of October and the first two weeks of November, we plan to hold virtual meetings with shortlisted candidates, on the basis of their understanding of the terms of reference, the requirements and interaction with the team.

### Evaluation

Members of the Evaluation Committee will assign between 0 and 4 points to the above-mentioned criteria according to the scale below:

0 – missing or incomplete information

1 – low

2 – good

3 – very good

4 – excellent

A weighting factor is assigned to each pre-selection criterion as indicated here below. It will be applied to the score obtained for each criterion to determine the overall score and ranking of each proposal.

<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Weighting %</b>
Institutional	30
Technical	40
Financial	20
Interaction	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The minimum score to be selected is 70 %.



### Finalization

The time required for the examination of the proposals by the Committee is estimated at 5 weeks. It may be extended depending on the number of proposals received. A shortlist will be prepared after the technical examination of each proposal based on the first three evaluation criteria set out above. In the last week of October and the first two weeks of November, we plan to interact virtually with shortlisted candidates. Thereafter the Committee will select the most appropriate Partners, which must then receive no objection by IFAD. The date of communication of the results is: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

The finalization of the agreements will be done through online meetings with the WFC-IFOAM team, in which together we design a (multi-)annual budget and workplan. Representatives of the Partner as well as of any consortium or affiliate partners should be present at these meetings. A draft agreement will then be prepared and finalized in collaboration. Once the project design is finalized and satisfactory, the agreement will be circulated to WFC management board for approval. Once all authorizations and approvals have been received, an agreement / a framework agreement will be signed with the Partners for the duration of the project (see timeline above). In the case of multiannual collaboration, the agreements with these Partners will be renewed annually based on an assessment of performance. Disbursements will be programmed and made in accordance with the deadlines agreed upon during the finalization phase. The signature of agreements is envisioned to be concluded by beginning of December 2023.

### Further information

Moreover, we inform Third Parties of the IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations and IFAD Policy on Prevention and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; and that all Partners have to ensure that all bidding documents and contracts for procurement of goods, works and services financed by the project are in accordance with the above-mentioned Policies. For the avoidance of doubt, IFAD requires that all bidding documents and contracts for procurement of goods, works and services financed by the project include provisions requiring bidders, suppliers, contractors, sub-contractors and consultants to allow full inspection by IFAD of all bidding documentation and related records; and fully cooperate with agents or representatives of IFAD carrying out an audit or investigation.

For more information and questions, please email to Ms Ingrid Fritsche (email [ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org](mailto:ingrid.fritsche@worldfuturecouncil.org)), with copy to Ms Xhona Hysa, [x.hysa@ifoam.bio](mailto:x.hysa@ifoam.bio).