

NATURE CONSERVANCY INDIA SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR: Agency/Consultant for conducting Comprehensive Assessment of the Satluj River Basin for Agroforestry, Freshwater Conservation and Landscape Restoration in Punjab

Date of Issue of RFP	29 Sep 2026
Last date for seeking clarifications	06 Oct 2026
Date of Pre-Proposal Meeting (Via VC)	07 Oct 2026
Last date for Submission of RFP	12 Oct 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a leading conservation organization working to make a positive impact around the world in 76 countries and territories. Founded in 1951, TNC's mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. With our core values of integrity beyond reproach, respect for people communities and culture, and commitment to diversity we aim at environmental conservation through lasting tangible results.

Nature Conservancy India Solutions Private Limited (NCIS) is a Private Limited Company incorporated under The Companies Act, 2013. It is a subsidiary of The Nature Conservancy, one of the largest not-for-profit conservation organisations in the world. NCIS was incorporated with the objective of providing research, consulting, technical support, and advisory services to various stakeholders in and outside India relating to conservation of nature, environment, biodiversity, and climate change.

TNC launched the PRANA (Promoting Regenerative and No-Burn Agriculture) initiative in 2021 to eliminate crop residue burning and advance regenerative agriculture in Punjab. Building on this work, the project is also focusing on climate-smart crop diversification and promoting agroforestry and tree based solutions, including areas along the Satluj River Basin, to strengthen climate resilience and improve environmental outcomes.

Given the importance of the Satluj River Basin for agriculture, freshwater resources and local communities, TNC proposes to undertake a comprehensive basin-level study to better understand its current status, key environmental challenges and restoration opportunities. The study will assess water resources, land use, flooding, erosion, groundwater stress and landscape health, and identify priority areas where agroforestry, riparian plantations and other nature-based solutions can support freshwater conservation, ecosystem restoration and climate resilience.

PURPOSE

NCIS invites proposals from qualified agencies or consultants to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the Satluj River Basin in Punjab to understand its current water, agricultural and environmental conditions, key risks, and opportunities for landscape restoration. The study will assess the potential of agroforestry, riparian plantations and other nature-based solutions to improve freshwater resources, strengthen climate resilience and deliver wider environmental and livelihood benefits. It will also identify and prioritize suitable locations for interventions and estimate their potential freshwater, carbon, biodiversity and soil conservation benefits. The findings will support NCIS in developing a strategic roadmap for future investments, partnerships and on-ground interventions across the Satluj River Basin.

CONTRACT TYPE AND CONTRACT SERVICES

NCIS will entertain under this, RFP Cost-Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF) completion type contract(s).

BIDS

We welcome bids from bidders for successfully achieving study objectives mentioned below:

1. To develop a comprehensive understanding of the current status of the Satluj River Basin, including water resources, land use, ecological health and key environmental challenges affecting the region
2. To identify major basin level risks such as flooding, riverbank erosion, groundwater stress, and landscape degradation and understand their implications for agriculture and local communities
3. To assess the potential of agroforestry, different agroforestry models, riparian plantations and other nature-based solutions in improving watershed health, enhancing climate resilience and reducing environmental risks across the basin.
4. To identify and prioritize locations where plantation and agroforestry interventions can deliver the maximum benefits for farmers, freshwater resources and ecosystem restoration.
5. To estimate the potential freshwater benefits that could be generated through large scale adoption of agroforestry and landscape restoration interventions, including improved water retention, recharge and reduced runoff.
6. To assess additional environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity enhancement, soil conservation and resilience to climate related risks.
7. To develop a strategic roadmap that can guide future investments, partnerships, and on-ground interventions while supporting freshwater stewardship and sustainability commitments.

NCIS reserves the right to postpone or cancel the bidding process with no prior notice.

PLACE AND PERIOD FOR PERFORMANCE

Place: Punjab, India

Period: 15 Oct 2026 till 15 Jan 2027

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected agency/consultant will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the Satluj River Basin in Punjab to understand key water, agricultural and environmental challenges and identify opportunities for agroforestry, tree plantation and other nature-based solutions. The study will combine secondary research, geospatial analysis, primary data collection and stakeholder consultations to identify priority interventions and develop a roadmap for future implementation and investment.

1. Desk Review and Basin Assessment

- Review existing literature, studies, government reports, policies and available datasets related to the Satluj River Basin.
- Assess key aspects including surface and groundwater resources, river flows, floods, riverbank erosion, groundwater stress, land use, cropping patterns, soil conditions, tree cover, biodiversity and landscape degradation.
- Review existing agroforestry/tree plantation practices and relevant government schemes and programmes in Punjab.
- Develop a baseline understanding of the basin and identify key conservation challenges in the basin.
- Future projections of climate calamities along the Satluj river basin and the impact on agriculture livelihood and farming communities' wellbeing.

2. GIS and Spatial Assessment

- Undertake GIS and remote-sensing analysis to understand the spatial characteristics of the basin and, where feasible, changes over time.

- Map key parameters such as land use/land cover, water resources, cropping systems, flood-prone areas, flood plains, erosion risk, groundwater stress, land degradation and existing tree/vegetation cover and changes over time.
- Identify major environmental hotspots and areas that have high potential for agroforestry, riparian plantations and landscape restoration.
- Assess spatial linkages between water stress, agriculture, flooding, land degradation and tree cover to support prioritization of interventions.

3. Corroborate findings with relevant Stakeholder Consultations

- Develop a qualitative survey to verify findings of GIS analysis and ground truthing.
- Conduct farmer surveys, FGDs and KIIIs with relevant stakeholders, including government departments, research institutions, universities, experts and farmer organizations.
- Assess farmers' experiences and perceptions related to flooding, groundwater availability, erosion, land degradation, climate risks, tree plantations and agroforestry.
- Assess exposure to climate change and adaptive capacities of local communities.

4. Agroforestry and Nature Based Solutions Assessment

- Assess existing agroforestry, plantation and landscape restoration practices in the study area.
- Identify suitable agroforestry models, riparian plantations and other nature-based solutions for different landscapes and farming systems.
- Assess the technical, environmental, economic and social feasibility of identified interventions, including farmer willingness and adoption potential.
- Identify opportunities to integrate proposed interventions with existing agricultural practices and relevant government programmes.
- Identify successful models/case studies that could potentially be replicated or scaled within the basin.

5. Hotspot Identification and Intervention Prioritization

- Develop a transparent framework for identifying and prioritizing locations for agroforestry, riparian plantations and landscape restoration.
- Prioritization should consider factors such as water stress, flood and erosion risk, land degradation, agricultural importance, ecological value, farmer willingness, economics and implementation feasibility.
- Develop maps identifying high-priority landscapes and recommend suitable interventions for different locations and identify areas where interventions can generate maximum combined benefits for farmers, freshwater resources and ecosystem restoration.

6. Freshwater and Environmental Benefits Assessment

- Assess and where scientifically feasible, quantify the potential freshwater benefits from large-scale adoption of agroforestry, landscape restoration interventions and suggest minimum area(ha) to be covered under agroforestry or nature based solutions to achieve sizable freshwater benefits.
- Assess potential improvements in water retention and infiltration, groundwater recharge, reduced surface runoff, soil erosion and overall watershed resilience.
- Estimate additional environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, soil conservation, biodiversity enhancement and resilience to floods, drought and other climate related risks.
- Document the methodology, assumptions, data sources and limitations used for estimating freshwater and environmental benefits.

7. Economic, Institutional and Scale up Assessment

- Assess the indicative economics of major agroforestry and restoration models, including establishment requirements, potential farmer benefits and key economic considerations.
- Identify major policy, institutional, market and implementation barriers that may affect large-scale adoption.
- Assess opportunities for convergence with relevant government schemes and existing public/private programmes.
- Identify potential implementation and knowledge partners, including government agencies, research institutions, farmer organizations and other stakeholders.

8. Strategic Roadmap and Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive MRV framework/model to quantify and assess the impacts of agroforestry interventions on water savings and groundwater recharge, soil health, livelihoods, and economic opportunities, and develop a roadmap for scaling agroforestry, riparian plantations, and landscape restoration interventions across priority areas of the basin
- Recommend priority geographies, suitable intervention models and indicative potential scale of interventions.
- Identify potential partnerships, investment opportunities and institutional arrangements required for implementation.
- Recommend key indicators for monitoring freshwater, environmental and farmer level outcomes.
- Identify opportunities for interventions that can demonstrate impact and subsequently be scaled across the basin.

DELIVERABLES

- **Inception Report** including detailed methodology, data sources, survey tools, GIS approach, stakeholder consultation plan and timelines.
- Basin Baseline and Spatial Assessment covering water resources, agriculture, land use, ecosystems, major environmental risks and GIS based hotspot identification.
- Primary Data Collection and Stakeholder Consultation Report summarizing farmer surveys, FGDs, KIs and key insights from relevant stakeholders.
- Agroforestry and Nature Based Solutions Assessment identifying suitable interventions, priority locations, adoption potential and associated freshwater, carbon, biodiversity, soil and climate-resilience benefits.
- **Draft Comprehensive Study Report** integrating secondary research, spatial analysis, primary research, priority intervention areas, benefit assessment and preliminary recommendations.
- **Strategic Roadmap and Policy Note** outlining priority geographies and interventions, potential scale, implementation pathways, partnerships, policy opportunities and short, medium and long-term actions.
- **Final High Quality, Publishable Report** and Presentation incorporating feedback and presenting key findings, priority maps, benefit estimates, case studies and actionable recommendations to the NCIS team.
- **Datasets and Supporting Documentation** including cleaned survey data, data collection tools, GIS layers/maps, underlying calculations, data sources and other relevant analytical files in editable formats.

ESTIMATED COSTS AND FIXED FEE

The costs allowable will be limited to reasonable, allocable, and necessary costs.

The financial bid should be prepared in accordance with the cost elements outlined below and Bidders should clearly identify their margin as part of their financial bids.

S. No.	Details	Amount
1	The estimated cost of project execution	INR X (please provide complete break-up of total cost)
2	The estimated fee for project execution	INR Y (please mention your fee or margin to manage the project)
3	Applicable Taxes (if any)	INR Z (bidder will be responsible for complying with all applicable tax laws e.g., income tax, GST, etc.)
	Total Cost-plus Fixed Fee (CPFF)	INR X+Y+Z (Price up to INR. 35,00,000)

Minimum Qualifications

The bidder is expected to put together a technical team of professionals to deliver the assignment. Below are the desirable experience, skills, and competencies of the team:

Minimum Qualifications

1. Proven experience in studies related to agriculture, water resources, environment and/or natural resource management.
2. Prior experience in river basin/watershed assessment, agroforestry, nature-based solutions or landscape restoration will be considered as an advantage.
3. Strong expertise in GIS, remote sensing and spatial analysis, including mapping and prioritization of intervention areas.
4. Demonstrated experience in quantitative and qualitative research, including farmer surveys, FGDs, KIs and stakeholder consultations.
5. Good understanding of Punjab's agricultural systems, water related challenges and local context, with ability to work across multiple districts.
6. Strong analytical, technical reporting and communication skills, including preparation of high quality reports, maps, presentations and recommendations.
7. The team should have relevant technical expertise across agriculture, water/hydrology, agroforestry/environment and GIS, with proficiency in English, Punjabi and Hindi.

PRE-BID QUERIES AND CLARIFICATIONS ON RFP

To clarify **technical queries** (excluding cost and fee) on RFP, Bidders must submit questions via email to samir.mirza@tnc.org and mruttika.basu@tnc.org, and any query relating to **cost, bid price, etc.** must be submitted to rajeeb.dash@tnc.org; praveen.thakur@tnc.org by no later than **11:59pm IST, 6 Oct 2026**. All the queries received through submitted questions will be addressed during scheduled pre-proposal meeting on **7 Oct 2026**.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

Last date for submission of proposal is 12 Oct 2026, by 11:59pm IST.

Technical and Financial Proposals are required in soft copy only. The subject line of the email submission should state "Technical/Financial bid against RFP on **Comprehensive Assessment of the Satluj River Basin for Agroforestry, Freshwater Conservation and Landscape Restoration in Punjab** and will be shared at:

- Financial Bid: rajeeb.dash@tnc.org; praveen.thakur@tnc.org
- Technical Bid: samir.mirza@tnc.org ; mruttika.basu@tnc.org

Technical Proposal Requirements

Bidders are required to submit a comprehensive Technical Proposal that demonstrates their understanding of the assignment, approach, methodology, and capacity to deliver the required services. The Technical Proposal should include the following components:

1. Understanding of Assignment
2. Proposed Methodology and Approach
3. Work Plan and Timeline
4. Team Composition, CVs of key team members and clearly specify the role and responsibilities of each team member, as well as their anticipated level of involvement throughout the assignment (e.g., percentage of time committed, specific phases of engagement).
5. Relevant Experience
 - List of similar projects executed, including client name, year of execution, and project value.
 - Evidence of ability to work across multiple districts in Punjab.
6. Quality Assurance and Risk Management
 - Description of quality assurance mechanisms for data collection, analysis, and reporting.
 - Identification of potential risks and mitigation strategies.
7. Deliverables

Financial Bid must accompany with the following documents:

- 1) **Copy of incorporation documents.**
- 2) **Copy of registration certificate under income tax and GST (If applicable).**
- 3) **Copy of last three years audited financial statements with audit report.**
- 4) **Copy of last three years income tax return.**
- 5) **Copy of last two GST returns.**
- 6) **Copy of address proof.**
- 7) **List of similar project executed with name of client, year of execution, and value.**
- 8) **In case the bidder is registered with MHA, please also share FCRA Registration number and validity.**
- 9) **Total number of staff (full time, part time and volunteer)**

Note: - You are requested to send all financial information in one go to avoid disqualification if any. **Bids with incomplete financial and other information as requested in this RFP will be rejected summarily.**

Submission of the proposal to any other individual will result in the disqualification of the proposal. Bidder can submit only one bid. Submitting multiple bids under different name will result in automatic disqualification.