Commonwealth Secretariat - International Solar Alliance Partnership

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Commonwealth Regional Climate Finance Adviser
(Indo-Pacific Region)

I. Background

The Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Solar Alliance (ISA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in June 2019 aimed at promoting the development and scaling-up of solar energy within member countries common to both organisations. With 72 countries having ratified the ISA Framework Agreement as of January 2021, of which 34 are Commonwealth Member countries, there exists a significant scope for cooperative efforts.

Recognizing the substantial solar energy potential in these Commonwealth countries, this partnership seeks to utilise the unique strengths of both organisations in mobilising climate finance, technical capacity and technologies for accelerating solar energy in developing Commonwealth countries, thus contributing to the attainment of SDG 7 on Affordable and Clean Energy and SDG 13 on Climate Action.

Renewable energy targets and policies are critical components of member countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and there is substantial scope for increasing their renewable energy implementation efforts to meet set targets. Through this partnership, both organisations utilising the delivery model of the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH), are well positioned to support the attainment of such energy targets in member countries through the provision of direct technical assistance and capacity building.

With CCFAH’s strong presence in the Pacific including Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, along with the request for CCFAH support from Asian member countries, this Commonwealth-ISA partnership is an ideal platform to facilitate climate finance access for renewable energy development through the placement of a Commonwealth Regional Climate Finance Adviser for the Indo-Pacific region.

Maximising the synergies between the relevant programmes of both organisations, including the Commonwealth Sustainable Energy Transition Agenda (CSET) and the CCFAH, will be critical to Commonwealth’s efforts to accelerate sustainable and inclusive solar energy deployment in member countries. Good coordination and strong cooperation is required to establish modalities for the partnership, including sharing of essential information on relevant data, activities, meetings, conferences, technical papers, and reports on energy transition undertaken or produced as a result of the collaboration between ISA and the Commonwealth Secretariat.
II. Objectives

The role of the Commonwealth Regional Climate Finance Adviser is to provide strategic and technical guidance to strengthen and support the establishment of regional institutional mechanisms and modalities for increased access to climate finance.

Furthermore, the Adviser shall devise and support the implementation of measures for mainstreaming renewable energy transition, particularly solar energy, along with climate resilient practices into regional and national plans along with the enhancement of skills and expertise of staff within key regional organisations.

This role will specifically cater to the needs of the Indo-Pacific region, supporting the advancement of government policies, projects; capacity building, readiness, accreditation and knowledge management, which facilitate enhanced climate action in member countries.

III. Scope of Work

Reporting to the General Manager (GM) of the CCFAH and working in close partnership with Commonwealth Climate Change Section and Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers and ISA Secretariat, the Commonwealth Regional Climate Finance Adviser will:

a. Support and coordinate climate finance mobilisation efforts:
   - Engagement with national, regional and international climate finance stakeholders, within the low carbon and climate resilient development including renewable energy sector, for the advancement of regional focused financing approaches.
   - Lead/support the development of funding proposals (project concept notes), to international funding agencies, through the provision of technical assistance to national/regional agencies;

b. Enhance capacity of local and regional stakeholders in the climate change space for accessing climate finance:
   - Deliver human and institutional capacity development for accreditation support, policy and climate finance readiness and project pipeline.
   - Deliver training and awareness sessions on climate finance for stakeholders in key sectorial departments as well as regulatory and financial authorities.
   - Access readiness finance to support countries in their climate finance readiness efforts.

c. Contribute to the knowledge management pillar of CCFAH:
   - Contribute to the strengthening of CCFAH’s knowledge base, including through the sharing of experiences and best practices with the Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers deployed in Commonwealth Member states.
   - Provide and access timely information to National Designated Authorities and regional organisations for monitoring and reporting purposes.

d. Contribute to the development of policy frameworks and projects for improving inclusive and sustainable energy access including sustainable land management practices:
• Supporting the development of government policy and programs to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer, as well innovation and entrepreneurship for the promotion of sustainable energy transition and the Commonwealth Living Lands Programme.

• Support the scaling up of existing government sustainable energy and sustainable land management initiatives within countries of operation, ensuring they are aligned with the NDCs.

• Support the establishment and implementation of the ISA-Commonwealth Solar Investment Platform.

• Support the sustainable energy transition in the Commonwealth Secretariat.

IV. Expected Deliverables

The expected deliverables of the Adviser include but are not limited to the following:

• Advance existing project concept notes and funding proposals whilst developing a robust pipeline of project proposals for low carbon and climate resilient development from climate finance sources in the region.

• Support the development of the necessary human and institutional capacities for facilitating increased access to climate finance including private sector investment and innovation in the sustainable energy space.

• Contribute/drive the creation of the ISA-Commonwealth Solar Investment Platform including feasibility of a Solar Fund, to finance and develop, solar off-grid projects in the Indo-Pacific region.

• Contribute/drive knowledge management and dissemination in the region that will facilitate better replication and up scaling of low carbon and climate resilient development projects in the member countries common to both the organisations.

V. Place of Posting

ISA Headquarters, Gurugram, India

VI. Experience and Qualifications

The successful candidate should possess the following qualifications and experience to be considered for this post:

• Minimum of a Master’s degree in a relevant field such as Natural Resource Management, Renewable Energy, Climate Finance or any other closely related field, along with at least 8 years relevant work experience in environment and climate change

• Demonstrated understanding of issues related to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Finance

• Proven record of accomplishment on policy dialogue and cross-institutional collaboration at the highest level, including with representatives of government and non-government partners

• Ability to interact with senior government officials and a wide range of stakeholders including the private sector, and to facilitate discovery and planning processes

• Experience in developing countries strongly desired, experience in Small Island Developing States and other climate vulnerable countries will be an advantage
• Strong conceptual, synthesis and strategic thinking skills, along with excellent stakeholder engagement and communication skills
• High degree of initiative and strong record of performance with low supervisory requirements to function effectively
• Experience in Human and Institutional capacity building for climate action
• Strong organizational skills, with the ability to deliver results on time;