

Empanelment of Agencies by the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority for Implementation of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26

Expression of Interest

The East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority (EKWMA) under the administrative control of Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal invites Expressions of Interest from implementing institutions/ civil society organisations/ NGOs who are active in the area of the East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW) in terms of its study, research, protection, livelihood training, multi-stakeholder engagement and mustering a collective action for preservation of its unique environment and ecological balance and those who can provide hands-on training on issues of waste management and awareness generation to the panchayats and urban local bodies, for the implementation of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26.

Purpose of the assignment

EKW, extending over 12500 Ha, are situated on the eastern fringes of Kolkata City. These Ramsar site wetlands are a remnant of series of brackish wetlands connected to the freshwater as well as marine environments of the Gangetic Delta and the Bay of Bengal in a continuum with the Sundarbans.

There are several ecological and socio-economic benefits in preservation of these unique wetlands. EKW are the world's largest sewage-fed pisciculture system, which naturally recycles nearly 910 MLD of sewage water generated from the Kolkata city, besides providing more than 20,000 tons of annual fish produce and 150 tons of vegetables daily.

This extensive natural waste water purification system not only saves the river Ganga from being polluted with the city's sewage but also obviates the need for setting up of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) saving the exchequer from capital expenditure of approximately Rs. 460 Crore. For this natural filtration process, the East Kolkata wetlands deserve the description of being 'Kolkata's kidney'.

In addition, the EKW are also part of Kolkata's lungs system, since 60 percent of carbon found in the waste water is sequestered by the plant and animal life of the wetlands, thus acting as a carbon sink and saving the city's air from carbon.

Further, Kolkata is saved from flooding and inundation during heavy rains and storms as these wetlands provide a basin where the city's excess rain water drains naturally, thus saving a huge financial cost apart from the human misery of urban submergence being noticed in some of India's metropolitan cities. On top of these advantages, these wetlands also make for an excellent ground water recharge system assuring the burgeoning metropolis of a steady and sustainable source of drinking water.

Considering the above, the EKWMA, approved the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-2026 with a budget of Rs. 119.8 crore. The Plan is in alignment with the National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA) published by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in 2019. It is based on the new guidelines for management planning

for Ramsar sites adopted at the 8th Conference of Parties to the Ramsar Convention in Valencia, Spain, in 2002.

Further, for conservation and management of the EKW, the Government of West Bengal notified the East Kolkata Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Act, 2006 and East Kolkata Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2006.

Now, for implementation of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26, the EKWMA invites Expression of Interest (EoI) from eligible organisations with grassroots experience of community management for better conservation and management of EKW. The East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26 is available for your knowledge on our website www.ekwma.in.

Eligibility criteria

Any organisation that wants to qualify for being an implementing partner for the management action plan should have the following:

1. The organisation should be a registered institute, Civil society organisation/ Community-based organisation/ Central or State Government undertaking/ Non-government organisation/ corporate body etc.
2. It should have been active in EKW having at least 5 years of experiences on working in terms of study, research, protection, livelihood training, multi-stakeholder engagement, solid waste management and mustering a collective action for conservation and management of EKW.
3. It should have hands-on training expertise on issues of waste management, agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and awareness generation to the panchayats and urban local bodies.
4. It should have expertise and resources– preferably on Ecology, Sociology, Hydrology, waste management, Environmental Architecture, livelihood, researchers, and with GIS capabilities.
5. It should be skilled to conduct capacity-building exercises for various stakeholders.
6. It should have prior experience in working with government departments.

Documents required from the interested organisations

1. Copy of certificate of incorporation and statement of objectives as stated in the formation document of the organisation.
2. A bullet-point statement of work done mentioning project value over the past 5 years, not exceeding 5 pages.
3. Financial details (as per audited sheet) for last five financial year.

4. Brief statement of educational background, publications and skills of experts and resources with willingness to engage with the organisation for implementation of East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26.
5. Knowledge of East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26 is required. List of activities including study/training and innovative ideas that the organisation is willing to conduct to preserve the EKW. Suggestive activities shall be seen from the Table 18 of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26. However, this is not exhaustive list as new ideas/activities in support of the conservation/management mission of EKW shall be included.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

In deserving cases, the EKWMA reserves the right to relax any terms and conditions/eligibility criteria mentioned above.

Scope of work

The implementation of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-2026 has to be done to preserve its ecological character, its biological wealth and the community that preserves these wetlands through their livelihood work. Implementing organisations are therefore needed to ensure that the conservation activities planned will be translated into specific work along four components:

1. Institutions and governance – involves planning to preserve land use according to zones, research, setting up a wetlands inventory, assessment and monitoring system and GIS database centre, capacity development, training, communication and public awareness, developing resource material for public education.
2. Water management and pollution abatement–dredging of channels, solid waste management, plastic waste management within the Dhapa region.
3. Conservation of species and habitats – Asian waterbird census, bird health, culture of indigenous fish species, rehabilitation of vegetation, Bheri showcase.
4. Sustainable resource development– involves desiltation of bheries, water quality monitoring, agriculture and additional livelihood development, drinking water and health support.

Detailed activities mentioned in the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-2026 are given below:

1. Research and study – Carbon and GHG Flux assessment, Hydrological Assessment & Nutrient budget, Bioaccumulation studies, Multiple values assessment, Monitoring of waterbird population & bird health, Feasibility assessment of culture of indigenous fish species, Study on management and eradication of this invasive fish species, Rehabilitation of aquatic vegetation in EKW.

2. Capacity Development and training: Wetlands inventory assessment and monitoring, Land use planning for multiple wetlands use, Wetlands and climate change mitigation and adaptation, Integrating wetlands wise use in developmental planning, Conducting excursions, developing course module relating to wetland/environment management, Training on Asian waterbird census and waterbird disease management, Training for selective breeding for culture of indigenous fish species, Training of community members as guides for boat rides and boatmen, Training of SHG for O&M of Hatcheries, Training on water quality monitoring of bheries, Training on promoting RWH, Training on cultivation of crops for diversification of cropping pattern.
3. Surveillance and encroachment management.
4. Solid waste management.
5. Community consultations in a participatory format connected to dredging of channels and bheries and livelihood improvement through food production.
6. Ecological education and public awareness programmes for city dwellers and wetland schools.
7. Community infrastructure building in terms of drinking water management and health support – coordination with other government stakeholders.

Each implementing organisation will be engaged for a period of one year to begin with, and the services may be extended after monitoring the performance of the organisation.

Each organisation will be given tasks in accordance with their skills and the remuneration fixed in accordance with their task.

Any publication resulting out of this implementation of the East Kolkata Wetlands Management Action Plan 2021-26 shall be carried out jointly by EKWMA and implementing organisation subject to the approval of EKWMA.

INSTITUTIONAL, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH STANDARDS

Institutional standards

1. Every implementing organisation will report to a monitoring committee to be set up within the EKWMA, to be headed by the Chief Technical Officer, EKWMA.
2. The Monitoring Committee on wetlands is proposed to be formed by EKWMA to carry out the evaluation, specifically looking at the following elements:
 - Degree to which wetland ecological character is being maintained as a result of management being applied.
 - Implementation quality, timeliness and resourcing of activities.
 - Quality and comprehensiveness of wetlands monitoring.
 - Effectiveness of management being applied, in terms of design, activities, outcomes and impacts.

- Quality of stakeholder engagement in implementation of various activities and discharging wetland management functions.
 - Changes in external environment, requiring adaptation in management plan.
3. When dealing with any government department in the course of any task, the EKWMA committee has to be informed regarding the nature and outcome of the meeting through email.
 4. The meeting of the oversight committee may be held quarterly.
 5. The meeting will be followed by a summary to be written out by the implementing organisation and approved by the committee.

Environment and health standards

1. While carrying out any task assigned to it, the implementing organisation may follow all Covid19 protocols, involve the minimum people together at one go, and use virtual consultation means where possible for urban stakeholders who are virtually available, even in case of government stakeholders.
2. In case of consulting with rural stakeholders, the implementing organisation will have to adequately supply all its workers with Covid protection material and equipment and caution them about following Covid appropriate behavior.
3. In case of doing any repeat research on any environmental issue, it will be considered good practice to seek feedback from the organisation involved in the past study.
4. Before beginning any environment related work, it will be useful to publish a small note for stakeholders in both English and Bengali, clarifying the relevance of the research work, so that the cooperation of the research subjects is easily forthcoming.
5. Any potentially harmful environmental development on the ground, seen while doing any project work, will have to be reported immediately to the EKWMA.

Contact details:

East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority
 Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal
 Pranisampad Bhaban (5th floor), LB-2, Sector-III, Bidhannagar, Kolkata- 700 106
 Tel. No. (033) 23353003, Email i.d.: ctoekwma@gmail.com
 Mobile/Whatsapp: +91 9038707344 (Mr. Anirudha Paul, Scientific Officer, EKWMA)

All applications for EoI are required to be sent to ctoekwma@gmail.com

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