# Serbia Competitive Agriculture Project (SCAP) Terms of Reference

**Study on Innovative Farming and Climate Smart Agriculture Practices in Serbia**

# Background

The Serbia Competitive Agriculture Project (SCAP), a US$50 million investment, was approved by the World Bank in December 2019 and ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in February 2020. The objective of the Project is to improve access to markets and information systems for agricultural producers in Serbia. This will be achieved through a) improving productivity of small and medium scale farmers by strengthening advisory and technical support; b) supporting market access of small and medium scale farmers (including finance and business planning capacity); c) improving government systems to strengthen the enabling environment for all agricultural producers (including capacity building for the Ministry, information systems, and data platform).

The Project will provide financial and technical support to all productive investments in agriculture in Serbia through the national rural development program[[1]](#footnote-1) and will not finance direct payments (subsidies). This delimits the scope of Project interventions outside of all IPARD measures that the country has been accredited for or plans to be accredited for and puts it in the center of national rural development program.

Beneficiaries: Small and medium scale agricultural production units (including producers, producer groups, agribusinesses/agro-processors that can provide direct link to smallholder farmers) that has or can have commercial focus and are not covered by accredited IPARD measures. Although large producers will not be directly targeted, the project will also benefit them with the enabling environment it will create through the improvements in information systems and the financial services provided. Small and medium size producers are defined by the economic size of holding expressed in euros of standard output. For the purposes of this project and the context of Serbia, small producers are those with an economic size of up to EUR 8,000; medium producers are those with an economic size between EUR 8,000 and 25,000.

Project Description: The Project activities are structured into three Components. Component 1) will focus on improving the productive and entrepreneurial capacity of small and medium farmers by supporting business and financial planning for productive investments, as well as supporting market access and strengthening sector competitiveness. Component 2) will focus on improving the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) to provide core public goods for improving sector performance. This includes establishing and information system aligned with EU CAP requirements to enable evidence- based policy making and monitoring of results, enhance market information for stakeholders and build capacity for regulatory roles aligned with EU CAP. Component 3) will focus on project management.

By addressing sector needs at the level of producers (Component 1) and the MAFWM (Component 2), the Project will support a broader policy reform process in the agriculture sector through: i) improved targeting of policy instruments to different typologies of producers, ii) strengthened enabling environment for investment for small and medium agricultural producers, by improving the delivery of services to these productive segments (advisory, financial, information, etc.), iii) improving the monitoring of public resources and their utilization, as well as sector performance. It is expected that this will bring about a significant shift in the utilization of public resources in agriculture from subsidies (direct payments) to rural development investments.

The proposed consultancy is integral to advancing the SCAP's objectives of enhancing market access and information systems for agricultural producers in Serbia. By focusing on innovative farming and climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices, this study will provide critical insights into improving the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium-sized farmers. The consultancy aligns with SCAP’s goal of supporting productive investments and strengthening the advisory and technical support system. Additionally, the study will aid in establishing a robust information system aligned with EU CAP requirements, thereby enhancing the enabling environment for agricultural producers and facilitating evidence-based policy making. The findings will contribute significantly to the shift from subsidies to rural development investments, promoting sustainable agricultural growth in Serbia.

# 2. Objective of the Assignment

# General Objective

To conduct a comprehensive study on innovative farming and climate smart agriculture (CSA) practices. This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the sector's historical development, current status, future potential, comparative advantages within Serbia, and applicable global best practices. The study will serve as a foundational document to inform policymakers, agricultural stakeholders, and investors about the opportunities and challenges in adopting innovative and sustainable agricultural technologies in Serbia.

By exploring innovative farming techniques, this study directly supports the SCAP objectives of enhancing the productivity and market access of small and medium-sized farmers. The insights gained will serve as a foundational document to inform policymakers, agricultural stakeholders, and investors about the opportunities and challenges in adopting innovative and sustainable agricultural technologies in Serbia, ultimately fostering a resilient and competitive agricultural sector.

The proposed consultancy is timely due to the growing impacts of climate change and the need for sustainable agricultural practices. By focusing on innovative farming and climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices, the study aligns with the SCAP’s objectives of enhancing market access and information systems for small and medium-sized agricultural producers. This focus addresses the need for productivity improvements and resilience building in the agricultural sector, enabling farmers to adopt cutting-edge technologies and practices. The consultancy will provide vital insights and strategic guidance, contributing to the broader policy reform process and ensuring sustainable development in Serbia’s agricultural sector.

# Specific Objectives

# Present Situation Analysis: To assess the current state of innovative farming, CSA, and vertical farming practices in Serbia. This includes examining the existing infrastructure, technologies in use, the level of adoption among farmers, and the integration of these practices within the broader agricultural sector.

# Future Outlook and Potential: To forecast the growth potential of innovative farming and CSA practices in Serbia, considering factors such as technological advancements, market demands, environmental sustainability, and government policies. This objective aims to identify future opportunities for scaling up and expanding the adoption of these practices.

# Comparative Advantages of Serbia: To analyze Serbia's unique advantages in adopting and advancing innovative farming and CSA practices. This will involve evaluating Serbia's climatic conditions, land resources, agricultural heritage, and technological capabilities, identifying how these factors position Serbia as a potential leader in sustainable agriculture.

# Global Best Practices and Applicability: To review global case studies of successful innovative farming and CSA implementations, with a focus on vertical farming. This objective seeks to extract lessons learned and best practices that could be adapted and applied within the Serbian context.

# Policy Recommendations and Strategic Directions: Based on the study's findings, to propose a set of policy recommendations and strategic directions for stakeholders. These recommendations will aim to support the development and adoption of innovative farming and CSA practices in Serbia, enhancing the sector's sustainability, productivity, and resilience to climate change.

# Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration Opportunities: To identify potential collaboration opportunities among government, private sector, academic institutions, and international organizations. This will support the creation of a conducive ecosystem for the adoption and scaling of innovative farming practices in Serbia.

# Implementation Roadmap: To develop a practical roadmap for the implementation of recommended practices and policies, outlining key actions, timelines, and responsible parties. This roadmap will guide stakeholders in advancing the innovative farming and CSA agenda in Serbia.

# The consultant will be expected to employ a multi-disciplinary approach, integrating insights from agricultural sciences, environmental sustainability, economic analysis, and policy studies. The study will contribute significantly to shaping the future of agriculture in Serbia, positioning it as a sustainable and innovative sector capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

# 3. Scope of Services

The consultancy will focus on conducting a comprehensive study to evaluate innovative farming and climate smart agriculture (CSA) practices in Serbia, emphasizing vertical farming. This involves a multifaceted analysis covering historical evolution, current practices, future prospects, comparative advantages, global best practices, policy recommendations, stakeholder engagement, and the development of an implementation roadmap. The study aims to provide actionable insights and strategic guidance to stakeholders for enhancing the sustainability, productivity, and resilience of Serbia's agricultural sector to climate change.

The consultancy's responsibilities for this study include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

* **Conduct a thorough Present Situation Analysis:** Examine the current state of innovative farming, CSA, and vertical farming in Serbia, including infrastructure, technologies, adoption rates, and integration within the agricultural sector.
* **Assess Future Outlook and Potential:** Analyze the growth potential of innovative and climate-smart practices in Serbia, considering technological advancements, market demands, environmental sustainability, and policy frameworks.
* **Analyze Comparative Advantages of Serbia:** Evaluate Serbia's climatic, land, and technological resources to identify unique opportunities for advancing sustainable agriculture.
* **Review Global Best Practices and Applicability:** Identify and assess global case studies of successful innovative farming and CSA implementations, focusing on their applicability to the Serbian context.
* **Develop Policy Recommendations and Strategic Directions:** Formulate policy recommendations and strategic directions based on the study's findings to support the adoption of innovative farming and CSA practices in Serbia.
* **Facilitate Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration Opportunities:** Map out potential collaboration opportunities among government, private sector, academic institutions, and international organizations to foster a supportive ecosystem for innovative farming.
* **Create an Implementation Roadmap:** Design a detailed roadmap for the implementation of recommended practices and policies, including timelines, key actions, and responsible parties.
* **Multidisciplinary Approach:** Employ a multidisciplinary approach integrating agricultural sciences, environmental sustainability, economic analysis, and policy studies to ensure a comprehensive study.
* **Prepare Comprehensive Reports:** Compile detailed reports and analyses to inform stakeholders about the study's findings, recommendations, and proposed strategies.
* **Offer Expert Guidance and Workshops:** Provide expert guidance and conduct workshops for stakeholders to disseminate the study's findings and foster capacity building in innovative and climate-smart agriculture practices.
* **Continuous Support and Evaluation:** Offer ongoing support to stakeholders for the implementation of the study's recommendations and evaluate the progress of adopted practices and policies.

This comprehensive approach will ensure the study not only analyzes the current state and potential of innovative farming and CSA practices in Serbia but also offers a practical and strategic framework for sustainable agricultural development.

# 4. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements and key stakeholders

The Consultant will report to the SCAP Project Coordinator, who oversees the Project Management Team (PMT) that has been established to support project implementation. The Consultant shall be responsible for providing information (inputs) and advice as requested by the SCAP Project Coordinator for the satisfactory implementation of project activities related to this Consultancy.

**5. Work Methodology**

The Consultant should execute their work, taking into account the following methodological guidelines for the Serbia Competitive Agriculture Project (SCAP):

* Review of the Project documents (legal, technical, financial, and available methodological).
* The activities to be developed in the consultancy should be scheduled and agreed upon with the SCAP PMT.
* Meetings with the PMT and technical team to receive, define, and jointly agree on the requirements that will be considered in the system engineering design.
* Presentation of the schemes of the services that the system will provide, in terms of data reception and prepared reports.

This methodological approach should encapsulate the entire process from the initial scoping phase through to the final delivery of the study, ensuring that all findings are robust, relevant, and ready for implementation.

**6. Deliverables**

The consultancy for the Study on Innovative Farming and Climate Smart Agriculture Practices in Serbia will produce the following three key deliverables within a span of three months to effectively map out the current landscape and future potential of Serbia's agricultural sector:

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| DELIVERABLE NUMBER | DESCRIPTION | DUE DATES |
| Deliverable 1 | First Progress Report:  Initial report detailing the study's scope, methodology, and stakeholder engagement plan, with an outline of the sector's historical context and preliminary data collection. | Up to 1 month after signing the contract |
| Deliverable 2 | Second Progress Report:  A comprehensive analysis of current innovative farming, CSA in Serbia, including early findings and identification of comparative advantages. | Up to 3 months after signing the contract |
| Deliverable 3 | Third Progress Report:  A complete report with in-depth findings, future outlook, global best practices, policy recommendations, stakeholder engagement, and an actionable implementation roadmap. | Up to 4 months after signing the contract |

Each product will be presented in electronic version as well as in one original and two copies.

During the term of the contract, the SCAP Project coordinator or SCAP Team may request modifications or additions to the products and the documents submitted. If the modules tested do not conform to the Contract, the SCAP may reject them, and the consultant will be required to replace them or make the necessary modifications to meet the requirements established in the Contract, at no additional cost to the SCAP. Top of Form**Bottom of Form**

**7. Engagement**

* Type of Contract: The contracting will be done through a lump-sum consultancy contract with product delivery.
* Duration of Contract: The duration of the contract will be up to 120 calendar days from its signing.
* Functional Dependency: The supervision and coordination of the consultancy will be in charge of the SCAP Project manager, to whom the consultant will deliver their progress reports.

**8. Acceptance criteria**

Draft deliverables will also be reviewed and discussed with the World Bank as needed. Approval of these deliverables will allow payment for each of the Deliverables.

**7. Other requirements**

The Consultant is obliged to perform consulting services in accordance with the applicable Serbian legislation and wide-known technical norms and rules of the profession and in accordance with the requirements defined in this ToR.

Intellectual property rights policy will be applied in accordance to the proper sections of the Contract.

The submission of complete documentation in the electronic form (via e-mail) is mandatory.

# 9. Experience and Qualifications Requirements

To be considered for the consultancy on the Study of Innovative Farming and Climate Smart Agriculture Practices in Serbia, Consultant must meet the following qualifications:

* At least 2 years of experience in advancing innovative agriculture practices, utilizing modern technologies to improve farming efficiency and productivity.
* Experience in utilizing technology to enhance agricultural efficiency and productivity, such as automated irrigation systems, drone technology for crop monitoring, and/or data-driven farming decisions.
* Experience in climate-smart agriculture project/s with practical application and measurable outcomes, is an asset.
* Experience in implementing agricultural practices that integrate sustainability, focusing on resource conservation, ecosystem management, and sustainable production cycles, is an asset.
* Experience in projects implementing local and EU agricultural policies, subsidies, and regulations impacting the adoption of innovative and climate-smart practices, is an asset.
* Experience working effectively with public institutions and/or experience with grant and funding programs, ensuring clear communication and actionable insights, is an asset.
* Experience in producing comprehensive, well-documented reports that align with international standards and project objectives, is an asset.

All experts shall be independent and free from any conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage.

The Consultant must provide a team that covers the following requirements:

**Key expert no. 1 – Team Leader**

* Minimum of a Bachelor’s degree.
* Over 10 years of experience in leadership positions in business, including the field of agriculture.
* Proven track record in implementing agricultural development projects and/or initiatives
* Participated in at least one research or development project focused on new innovative and climate-smart agricultural practices.
* Participated in at least one research project or study, and contributed to the formulation of research objectives, methodologies, and implementation strategies.

**Key expert no. 2 – Climate Smart Agriculture Expert**

* Over 5 years of experience in applying climate-smart agriculture practices, including roles such as a horticultural expert in implementing new climate-smart technologies.
* Minimum of a Bachelor’s degree in Agriculture or a related field, advanced degree is a plus
* Participated in multiple projects focused on innovative and climate-smart agricultural practices.
* Proven experience in working with research institutions.

**Key expert no. 3 – Agricultural Analyst**

* Over 5 years of research experience, in academia preferred.
* Minimum of a Bachelor’s degree, advanced degree is a plus, in Agriculture or a related field.
* Participated in multiple research and development projects focused on innovative and climate-smart agricultural practices.
* Preferably participated in published scientific and/or research papers.

# 10. Confidentiality Statement

# All data and information received from MAFWM/DAP/PMT/WB for the purpose of this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference.

# All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to MAFWM/DAP. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of MAFWM/DAP.

# 11. Selection

The Consultant firm will be selected in accordance with CQS method set out in the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018).

All submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Specific Experience of the Firm Related to the Assignment: 70 points

General Experience of the Firm: 30 points

1. In 2018, the program received 8,000 applications from small and medium scale producers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)