

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

for

Empanelment of Resource Management Units for Establishment and
Maintenance of
Certification-Ready Bamboo Plantation (1,000 ha) in Assam and Nagaland

Under the Project

“Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and
Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)”



सत्यमेव जयते

**North East Cane and Bamboo
Development Council (NECBDC)**

Under North Eastern Council, Ministry of DoNER, Government of India
Guwahati, Assam, India | An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Organization

Issued by

**NORTH EAST CANE AND BAMBOO DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
(NECBDC)**

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ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Full Form
CV	Curriculum Vitae
EoI	Expression of Interest
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FPC	Farmer Producer Company
FPO	Farmer Producer Organisation
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FY	Financial Year
GST	Goods and Services Tax
Ha	Hectares
IA	Industrial Area
IGC	Industrial Growth Centre
INR	Indian Rupee
IST	Indian Standard Time
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDoNER	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
MIS	Management Information System
MoA	Memorandum of Association
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NEC	North Eastern Council
NECBDC	North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council
NER	North Eastern Region
NIE	Notice Inviting Expression of Interest
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PM-DevINE	Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region
PSU	Public Sector Undertaking
SHG	Self-Help Group
SoR	Schedule of Rates
ToR	Terms of Reference

DISCLAIMER

This Expression of Interest (EoI) document has been issued by the North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC) solely for the purpose of inviting Expressions of Interest from eligible organisations for empanelment as Resource Management Units for the bamboo plantation component under the PM-DevINE project titled “*Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)*”.

The information contained in this EoI document, including the Terms of Reference (ToR), eligibility conditions, evaluation criteria, schedules, and annexures, is intended only to assist interested applicants in preparing their EoI submissions. This document does not purport to contain all information that an applicant may require and shall not be construed as a legally binding offer or commitment by NECBDC.

NECBDC does not make any representation or warranty, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, correctness, completeness, or reliability of the information contained in this EoI document. Applicants are advised to carry out their own independent assessment, investigations, and due diligence before submitting their EoI.

NECBDC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to amend, modify, supplement, or withdraw this EoI document, in whole or in part, at any time, without assigning any reason and without incurring any liability whatsoever. Any such amendment or modification shall be notified through official communication and shall form an integral part of this EoI.

Submission of an EoI pursuant to this document shall be deemed to be an unconditional acceptance by the applicant of all the terms, conditions, and requirements contained herein. No contractual obligation shall arise between NECBDC and any applicant unless and until a formal Work Order and/or Implementation Agreement is executed in writing by NECBDC.

NECBDC shall not be liable for any costs, expenses, or losses incurred by applicants in connection with the preparation or submission of their EoIs, including but not limited to costs relating to site visits, documentation, professional fees, or participation in presentations or discussions.

1. Introduction

1.1. About North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC)

NECBDC is an autonomous body under the administrative control of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), Government of India. NECBDC functions as the apex institutional agency for planning, promotion, coordination, and implementation of programmes relating to the integrated development of the bamboo and cane sector in the North Eastern Region (NER).

The Council undertakes interventions across the bamboo value chain, including resource assessment, plantation development, cluster strengthening, technology induction, skill development, industrial linkages, product diversification, and market access facilitation. NECBDC also works closely with State Governments, community institutions, industry partners, research organisations, and certification bodies to ensure that bamboo sector interventions in the NER are sustainable, market-oriented, and aligned with national and international standards.

1.2. Background and Context

Bamboo is a strategic natural resource for the North Eastern Region, offering significant potential for sustainable livelihoods, climate-resilient development, and green industrial growth. While the NER accounts for a substantial share of India's bamboo availability, the sector continues to face structural challenges, including fragmented resource management, lack of organised plantations, limited certification, and weak backward linkages between producers and industrial users.

In recent years, the Government of India has placed renewed emphasis on bamboo as a priority sector for the NER, particularly for promotion of engineered bamboo products, export-oriented manufacturing, and substitution of timber and carbon-intensive materials. However, the transition from traditional bamboo extraction and artisanal use to industrial-scale engineered bamboo production necessitates the creation of a reliable, traceable, and sustainably managed raw material base, capable of meeting quality, volume, and certification requirements of modern industries and global markets.

1.3. PM-DevINE Programme Framework

The present initiative is anchored under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE), a Central Sector Scheme of the Government of India aimed at funding high-impact, infrastructure-led, and value-chain-oriented development projects in the NER. PM-DevINE seeks to address critical development gaps through focused investments that catalyse private sector participation, strengthen regional value chains, and generate sustainable employment.

Within this framework, NECBDC has been entrusted with the implementation of a comprehensive bamboo sector project titled:

“Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)”

This project adopts a **value-chain-centric approach**, integrating upstream resource development with downstream industrial processing, certification, branding, and market access.

1.4. Positioning of the Bamboo Plantation Component

The proposed certification-ready bamboo plantation programme forms a critical upstream component of the PM-DevINE project. The plantation activity is not a standalone intervention, but a strategic backward-linkage designed to create a reliable, sustainable, and traceable bamboo resource base to support engineered bamboo manufacturing, value-added processing, and export-oriented value chains across the North Eastern Region, including Assam and Nagaland.

The plantation component aims to:

- a) Create a dedicated and scalable bamboo resource base aligned with the raw material requirements of engineered bamboo products.
- b) Ensure traceability, legality, and sustainability through adoption of internationally accepted forest management and social safeguard principles, including alignment with FSC Forest Management guidelines.
- c) Reduce dependence on unorganised extraction and pressure on natural forests.
- d) Support livelihood generation for participating farmers and communities through structured plantation development and assured downstream integration.
- e) Enable compliance with international environmental, sustainability, and due-diligence norms required for domestic and export markets.

Under the PM-DevINE project architecture, the plantation component complements downstream interventions such as cluster-level infrastructure development, technology induction, export facilitation, and buyer engagement for engineered bamboo products, while retaining flexibility in plantation site selection based on land availability and implementation feasibility.

1.5. Purpose of the Expression of Interest (EoI)

The present EoI is being issued by NECBDC to empanel competent Resource Management Units for execution of the bamboo plantation component, covering a total area of **1,000 ha** across the States of Assam and Nagaland during the project implementation period as per the EoI Schedule.

The empanelment is intended to identify agencies with demonstrated technical capability, field implementation experience, and community engagement strengths, who can undertake **cluster-based plantation development, long-term maintenance, and FSC compliance plantation practices**, in alignment with the project’s objectives and implementation framework.

Key features of the EoI include:

- a) Plantation implementation through aggregation of land parcels forming contiguous or near-contiguous clusters.
- b) Primary emphasis on land availability, suitability, and implementation readiness, with due consideration to logistical connectivity for downstream value-chain integration.
- c) Integration of plantation establishment, maintenance, and certification within a unified implementation framework.

Empanelment under this EoI shall enable NECBDC to issue cluster-specific work orders to selected agencies, based on project phasing, readiness of land parcels, and implementation priorities under the PM-DevINE project.

1.6. Structure of the EoI Document

This EoI document is structured to provide comprehensive information to prospective applicants and includes:

- a) Project background and design framework.
- b) Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) for plantation implementation.
- c) Eligibility and evaluation criteria.
- d) Cluster-wise empanelment approach.
- e) Instructions for submission.
- f) Prescribed annexures and formats.

Interested agencies are advised to carefully review all sections of the EoI, including the detailed ToR attached as an integral part of this document, before submitting their applications.

2. Project Rationale and Design Framework

2.1. Strategic Rationale for Engineered Bamboo Development in NER

The North Eastern Region possesses one of the largest concentrations of bamboo resources in the country, positioning the region as a natural hub for bamboo-based industrial development. In recent years, engineered bamboo products-including laminated boards, structural members, moulded furniture components, flooring, panels, and composites-have emerged as high-value, technology-intensive segments with strong domestic and export demand.

However, unlike traditional bamboo-based crafts and low-value uses, engineered bamboo manufacturing requires a **consistent, large-volume, quality-assured, and legally compliant supply of raw bamboo**. Industrial units operating in this segment are highly sensitive to variability in raw material quality, irregular supply cycles, and compliance risks associated with untraceable sourcing.

In the absence of an organised plantation-based supply system, industrial units are often compelled to rely on dispersed, unregulated, or opportunistic sourcing, which exposes them to supply disruptions, legal uncertainties, and sustainability-related trade barriers. These constraints significantly deter private investment and export-oriented growth in the engineered bamboo sector.

2.2. Policy and Programme Alignment under PM-DevINE

The present initiative is conceptualised and implemented under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE), which is designed to support **transformational, value-chain-oriented projects** that unlock the economic potential of the North Eastern Region.

The PM-DevINE project titled "**Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in NER**", being implemented by NECBDC, adopts an integrated approach encompassing:

- a) Strengthening of engineered bamboo manufacturing clusters.
- b) Technology induction and standardisation.
- c) Export facilitation and market access.
- d) Certification and compliance enablement.
- e) Backward linkage through sustainable raw material development.

Within this framework, the **bamboo plantation component** is envisaged as a foundational intervention to address the most critical bottleneck in the value chain-**availability of certified, industrial-grade bamboo**-thereby enabling downstream investments and long-term sectoral sustainability.

2.3. Rationale for Certified Bamboo Plantations Aligned with International Sustainability Standards

Global and domestic markets for engineered bamboo products increasingly require compliance with sustainability, legality, and due-diligence norms, including traceability of raw material,

environmental safeguards, and respect for social and land tenure rights. Certification frameworks such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), ISO14001, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) etc, provide widely accepted benchmarks for responsible plantation management.

Under the present initiative, the bamboo plantation programme is designed to align with FSC Forest Management principles from inception, including requirements related to land tenure clarity, community consent (FPIC), environmental safeguards, worker rights, and systematic record-keeping. This approach ensures that plantations are developed in a structured, legally compliant, and sustainability-oriented manner.

The project adopts a **certification-ready approach**, wherein all technical, social, and environmental practices are aligned with FSC guidelines, allowing flexibility to pursue formal certification at a later stage based on market requirements, cost-benefit considerations, and institutional readiness.

This phased approach enables:

- a) Early establishment of plantations without delaying implementation due to certification timelines;
- b) Progressive capacity building of Resource Management Units and communities;
- c) Reduction of compliance risks for downstream industrial users;
- d) Optional transition to formal certification in later years, if required for export or premium markets.

2.4. Land Availability–Led Plantation Design

The plantation design under the present project adopts a land availability–led and suitability-based approach, focusing on identification and conversion of underutilised land resources into productive bamboo plantations within the States of Assam and Nagaland.

Unlike conventional plantation models that are constrained by administrative or industrial zoning, this project prioritises **availability of suitable land parcels** that can be brought under bamboo cultivation without legal, ecological, or social constraints. The primary emphasis is on identification of **barren, fallow, degraded, unused, or low-productivity lands** that are presently not under intensive agricultural use and can be sustainably converted for bamboo plantation purposes.

This design approach is based on the following considerations:

- a) **Availability of Convertible Land:** Significant extents of land in both Assam and Nagaland remain underutilised due to soil degradation, declining productivity, abandonment of shifting cultivation cycles, or lack of viable crop alternatives. Bamboo, owing to its resilience and adaptability, is well suited for productive use of such lands.
- b) **Avoidance of Competing Land Use Conflicts:** The plantation framework explicitly avoids diversion of high-value agricultural land, forest land requiring statutory

clearances, ecologically sensitive zones, or areas under active livelihood dependence that may lead to displacement or conflict.

- c) **Flexibility Across Districts and Belts:** Plantation clusters may be identified across suitable districts within Assam and Nagaland, irrespective of rigid industrial belt demarcations, provided land parcels meet technical suitability, tenure clarity, and community consent requirements.
- d) **Restoration and Livelihood Orientation:** Establishment of bamboo plantations on degraded or unused lands contributes simultaneously to land restoration, erosion control, and creation of long-term livelihood assets for local communities.

While land availability and suitability form the primary criteria for site selection, **downstream industrial linkage remains an important secondary consideration**. Plantation clusters shall, as far as feasible, be planned in locations that allow reasonable logistical connectivity to existing or proposed bamboo processing units, industrial estates, or aggregation points. However, proximity to industrial belts shall be treated as an enabling factor rather than a mandatory condition.

Accordingly:

- I. Plantation clusters may be located within reasonable transport distance of industrial centres, rather than strictly within predefined industrial corridors.
- II. Aggregation of land parcels shall be driven by feasibility of plantation establishment, maintenance, and FSC compliance, rather than administrative zoning alone.
- III. NECBDC retains flexibility to realign plantation clusters over time based on land readiness, implementation feasibility, and evolving industrial demand.

This land availability-led design ensures that the plantation programme remains **scalable, inclusive, environmentally responsible, and operationally viable**, while still supporting the broader objective of creating a reliable and certified bamboo raw material base for the engineered bamboo value chain under the PM-DevINE framework.

2.5. Cluster-Based Plantation Model

Given landholding patterns and social structures in the NER, identification of large contiguous land parcels (40-60 ha or more) under single ownership is often impractical. The project therefore adopts a **cluster-based aggregation model**, whereby multiple smaller land parcels are brought together to form operational plantation blocks.

Key design principles of the cluster model include:

- a) **Aggregation of Small Parcels:** Individual land parcels proposed for inclusion in a plantation cluster shall have a **minimum area of 5 ha per parcel and a maximum area of 20 ha per parcel**. Eligible parcels shall be aggregated to form clusters of not less than **100 ha**, to ensure technical, financial, and certification viability.
- b) **Near-Contiguous Configuration:** While parcels may be under different ownerships, clusters are planned to be contiguous or near-contiguous within a defined geographic radius.
- c) **Community Participation:** Clusters may involve individual farmers, community lands, FPOs/FPCs, and customary institutions, particularly in Sixth Schedule and tribal areas.

- d) **Operational Viability:** Cluster size and configuration are designed to ensure financial and operational feasibility for plantation establishment, maintenance, and certification.

This approach balances the realities of land tenure in the region with the scale requirements of industrial supply chains and certification systems.

2.6. Land Tenure and Community Governance Considerations

The project design explicitly recognises the diversity of land tenure systems prevalent in Assam and Nagaland, including private landholdings, community lands, and customary ownership under traditional governance systems.

Rather than imposing rigid ownership requirements, the plantation framework is aligned with FSC principles that recognise:

- a) Customary land tenure.
- b) Community consent endorsed by recognised traditional institutions.
- c) Village-level resolutions or agreements authorising plantation activities.

By working through Village Councils, customary bodies, FPOs/FPCs, and community institutions, the project ensures legitimacy, local ownership, and long-term sustainability of plantation assets.

2.7. Integration with Downstream Industrial and Export Facilitation Components

The plantation component is designed to operate in close coordination with downstream interventions under the PM-DevINE project, including:

- a) Engineered bamboo manufacturing units in industrial estates.
- b) Export facilitation and buyer engagement initiatives.
- c) Product standardisation and compliance support.
- d) Market linkage platforms facilitated by NECBDC.

This integrated design ensures that plantation outputs are not stranded assets, but are embedded within a **functioning bamboo value chain** extending from farm to factory to market.

2.8. Design Philosophy and Expected Outcomes

The overarching design philosophy of the project is to move from **resource abundance to resource reliability**. By shifting from unorganised extraction to planned, certified plantation development aligned with industrial demand, the project seeks to:

- a) De-risk investments in engineered bamboo manufacturing.
- b) Create durable livelihood assets for farmers and communities.
- c) Enhance export competitiveness of NER bamboo products.
- d) Establish a replicable model for sustainable bamboo-based industrialisation.

The plantation activity, therefore, is not merely an afforestation or resource creation exercise, but a **strategic industrial-enabling intervention** under the PM-DevINE framework.

3. Scope of Empanelment

3.1. Nature and Purpose of Empanelment

The present Expression of Interest (EoI) is being issued for the **empanelment of competent agencies** for execution of the bamboo plantation component under the PM-DevINE project titled *“Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)”*.

Empanelment under this EoI shall constitute a **technical qualification and onboarding mechanism**, enabling NECBDC to engage suitable agencies for cluster-wise plantation implementation, maintenance, and compliance with sustainability and certification-readiness requirements aligned with FSC principles, in accordance with the approved ToR.

It is clarified that:

- a) Empanelment does **not** automatically confer a right to award of work.
- b) Empanelment is a prerequisite for issuance of **cluster-specific Work order / Implementation Agreements**.
- c) Work allocation shall be subject to project phasing, availability of land parcels, readiness of clusters, and performance considerations.

3.2. Scope of Empanelment under the Plantation Component

The scope of empanelment shall cover the following broad functional responsibilities, to be undertaken by empanelled agencies upon issuance of specific Work Order:

- a) Establishment of bamboo plantations in assigned clusters during FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28.
- b) Maintenance of plantations up to maturity (5 years), including survival management and protection.
- c) Implementation of plantation management systems aligned with FSC Forest Management principles and maintenance of certification-ready documentation.
- d) Community mobilisation and institutional coordination at cluster level.
- e) Reporting, documentation, and coordination with NECBDC and associated stakeholders.

The empanelment is intended to create a **pool of technically capable agencies** that can be deployed across multiple plantation clusters in Assam and Nagaland, based on implementation readiness and geographic suitability.

The empanelled agency shall not sell, transfer, or otherwise dispose of any bamboo or bamboo produce generated from the project plantations to any third party without the prior written approval of NECBDC.

3.3. Cluster-wise Empanelment through a Single EoI

The empanelment process under this EoI shall be conducted through a **single, unified EoI**, while the actual implementation shall be **cluster-wise**.

Accordingly:

- a) Each applicant shall submit only one EoI response. An applicant may indicate preference for more than one cluster in the EoI with required details for each cluster.
- b) Applicants may indicate **State-wise and proposed plantation cluster preferences** and their maximum implementation capacity (in ha and number of clusters).
- c) NECBDC shall empanel agencies based on technical merit and suitability for cluster-wise deployment.

The number of agencies to be empanelled shall be undertaken on a cluster-wise basis and shall depend upon:

- I. The quality and diversity of EoI responses received.
- II. Geographic spread of proposed clusters.
- III. Capacity of agencies to undertake concurrent implementation.
- IV. Overall project phasing and operational requirements.

3.4. Cluster Configuration and Implementation Units

For the purpose of empanelment and subsequent work allocation, the following implementation units shall apply:

3.4.1. Cluster (represented by the Executing Agency) as the Primary Implementation Unit

- a) A **cluster** shall be the primary unit of work allocation.
- b) Each cluster shall comprise a **minimum aggregated plantation area of 100 ha**.

3.4.2. Parcel Aggregation within Clusters

- a) Clusters shall be formed by aggregation of multiple smaller land parcels of minimum size of **5 ha per parcel** and maximum size of **20 ha per parcel**.
- b) Parcels may be privately owned, community-owned, or held under customary tenure, subject to valid consent and authorisation mechanisms.
- c) Empanelled agencies shall not be required to identify a single contiguous land parcel of large size; rather, operational feasibility through aggregation shall be the guiding principle.

3.4.3. Operational Norms for Empanelment

For the purposes of planning and capacity declaration under this EoI:

- a) Agencies shall demonstrate capacity to implement **at least one full cluster (≥100 ha)**.
- b) Agencies with demonstrated capability will be considered for the selected cluster, subject to performance and NECBDC's discretion.
- c) Cluster allocation shall be based on technical merit, declared cluster preference, and implementation readiness, with due consideration to risk mitigation and project timelines.

3.4.4. Land Identification and Disclosure at EoI Stage

At the EoI stage, applicants shall be required to indicate the indicative land parcels and cluster configuration proposed to be mobilised by them for plantation implementation. This disclosure is intended to assess the applicant's preparedness, field readiness, and understanding of the cluster-based plantation model.

Applicants shall furnish cluster-wise indicative details including total area proposed, number and size of parcels, village and district location, ownership or tenure pattern (private, community, customary, institutional, etc.), contiguity or near-contiguity of parcels, and status of landholder or community consent, in the prescribed format.

Such disclosure at the EoI stage shall be indicative and non-binding and shall not be construed as final land approval or legal commitment. Final verification of land records, formal agreements, and statutory or customary authorisations shall be undertaken post-empanelment and prior to issuance of cluster-specific Work Orders.

NECBDC reserves the right to modify, reconfigure, or reassign clusters based on final land verification, implementation readiness, or project requirements.

3.5. Indicative Geographic Coverage

The bamboo plantation component under this EoI shall cover a **total area of up to 1,000 ha** across the States of **Assam** and **Nagaland**. The geographic coverage of plantation clusters shall be determined based on **availability of suitable land parcels**, implementation readiness, and compliance with technical, social, and sustainability criteria prescribed under the project.

Indicative plantation clusters have been identified in the ToR; however, the final selection and configuration of clusters shall be undertaken by NECBDC based on land availability, industrial linkage considerations, and implementation readiness.

Empanelled agencies shall be required to demonstrate flexibility to operate within the finalised cluster locations.

3.6. Allocation of Clusters and Issuance of Work Orders

Upon completion of the empanelment process:

- a) Issuance of any Work Order shall be subject to prior execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) specifying the scope, responsibilities, timelines, and applicable compliance requirements.
- b) NECBDC shall issue **cluster-specific Work Orders / Implementation Agreements** to empanelled agencies.
- c) Each Work Order shall specify the cluster location, area, timelines, deliverables, and milestone-linked payment terms.
- d) However, allocation shall be undertaken at the cluster level, and once a cluster is allocated, plantation activities for the approved cluster area shall be completed within the same planting year.

NECBDC reserves the right to:

- I. Allocate cluster to an empanelled agency, selected from among the clusters indicated as preference in its EoI, or any other suitable cluster as determined by NECBDC based on project requirements.
- II. Reassign or reconfigure clusters in case of land-related or operational constraints.
- III. Withhold or defer allocation in case of non-readiness or non-performance.

3.7. Validity of Empanelment and Performance Review

Empanelment under this EoI shall be valid for a period of **five (5) years** from the date of issuance of empanelment letter, extendable at the discretion of NECBDC to cover maintenance and certification phases.

Performance of empanelled agencies shall be subject to periodic review based on:

- a) Timely achievement of plantation and maintenance milestones.
- b) Survival rates and quality of plantation.
- c) Compliance with FSC and other regulatory requirements.
- d) Quality of reporting and coordination.

NECBDC reserves the right to **suspend or de-panel** any empanelled agency in case of persistent non-performance, material breach of terms, or failure to comply with project requirements.

3.8. Non-Exclusivity of Empanelment

Empanelment under this EoI shall be **non-exclusive** in nature. NECBDC shall retain the right to:

- a) Engage additional agencies through other mechanisms if required
- b) Implement certain clusters directly or through State agencies
- c) Modify the empanelment framework in public interest

3.9. Relationship with Other Project Components

The scope of empanelment under this EoI is limited to the **plantation and upstream resource development component** of the PM-DevINE project. However, empanelled agencies shall be required to coordinate with downstream project components, including:

- a) Engineered bamboo manufacturing clusters.
- b) Certification and compliance support systems.
- c) Market linkage and export facilitation initiatives.

Such coordination shall be facilitative in nature and shall not dilute the defined scope of empanelment.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1. Background and Rationale

Bamboo is a strategic resource in the North Eastern Region, with Assam and Nagaland holding a substantial share of national bamboo reserves. However, existing bamboo supply is largely unorganised and insufficiently documented for organised industrial and export markets that increasingly require traceability, legality, and sustainability compliance.

Under the PM-DevINE scheme, NECBDC proposes establishment of up to **1,000 ha of certification-ready bamboo plantations** during FY 2026–27 and FY 2027–28 across the **States of Assam and Nagaland**. The plantation programme adopts a **cluster-based and land availability-led approach**, wherein plantation clusters shall be identified based on availability of suitable barren, fallow, degraded, unused, or low-productivity land that can be sustainably converted to bamboo cultivation without legal, ecological, or social constraints. Rather than being restricted to predefined industrial corridors, clusters shall be planned based on land readiness, tenure clarity, community consent, and feasibility of aggregation into viable plantation blocks. Due consideration shall, however, be given to logistical connectivity with existing or proposed bamboo processing units and aggregation points, so as to ensure downstream value chain integration. Each cluster shall comprise aggregated land parcels meeting the prescribed minimum parcel size (5 ha) not exceeding the maximum parcel size (20 ha) and minimum cluster size requirements (100 ha), and shall be implemented as a single operational unit and fully planted within one planting year, aligned with the applicable monsoon planting cycle and approved project timelines.

The initiative integrates plantation development with industrial demand, community participation, and international sustainability standards, thereby aligning economic development with environmental and social safeguards.

4.2. Objectives of the Assignment

The primary objectives of engaging empanelled agencies under this ToR are to:

- I. Establish 1,000 ha of sustainably managed bamboo plantations across suitable locations in Assam and Nagaland, based on land availability, suitability, and implementation feasibility.
- II. Implement plantation practices aligned with FSC Forest Management principles, ensuring traceability, legality, and social safeguards to develop plantations in a certification-ready manner, enabling optional formal certification in later years if required.
- III. Secure assured, long-term market access for growers and stable raw material supply for industries, thus integrating the plantation output with **PM-DevINE's cluster-based industrial development** goals.
- IV. Promote livelihood enhancement and community participation through sustainable bamboo cultivation.

4.3. Scope of Work for Empanelled Agencies

The empanelled implementation agencies will be responsible for end-to-end execution of the bamboo plantation project in their assigned cluster(s). The scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

4.3.1. Land Aggregation and Cluster Formation

- a. **Identification of Plantation Sites:** Identify and aggregate suitable land parcels to form plantation clusters in the eligible districts of Assam and Nagaland, in accordance with the project design. Each cluster shall comprise a **minimum aggregated area of 100 ha**, identified primarily based on land availability, suitability, and ease of implementation. The cluster approach shall involve aggregation of individual land parcels having a **minimum parcel size of 5 ha and maximum parcel size of 20 ha** each, owned by private farmers, community institutions, or other eligible entities, as applicable. Consideration shall be given to operational feasibility and logistical connectivity, without restricting site selection to predefined industrial estates or fixed distance criteria.
- b. **Cluster Locations:** Applications are invited for plantation clusters proposed within **preference districts** identified for implementation in **Assam and Nagaland**, based on an assessment of availability of convertible land (barren, fallow, degraded, unused, or low-productivity land) and forest condition indicators (open or degraded landscapes suitable for restoration), as reflected in the **Land Utilisation Statistics of Assam (2023–24)** and the **India State of Forest Report, 2023**.

Assam – Preference Districts: Plantation clusters located in **Karbi Anglong and its adjoining districts**, including **Karbi Anglong West, Hojai, Nagaon, Morigaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Sonitpur, and Dima Hasao**, shall be accorded preference. These districts exhibit comparatively higher availability of barren and unculturable land, culturable wasteland, fallow land, revenue land, and other under-utilised land categories. The region also includes significant extents of open or degraded forest areas suitable for restoration-oriented bamboo plantations, without diversion of productive agricultural land.

Nagaland – Preference Districts: Plantation clusters located in **Mokokchung and its adjoining districts**, including **Longleng, Wokha, Zunheboto, Tuensang, Mon, and Dimapur**, shall be accorded preference. These districts are characterised by long or abandoned shifting cultivation cycles and the presence of degraded or open forest landscapes, offering scope for sustainable bamboo plantation development while supporting land restoration objectives and avoiding pressure on intensively cultivated areas.

Applications proposing plantation clusters within the above-mentioned **preference districts** will be given priority under this EoI. The districts have been identified to facilitate plantation development on land that is available, suitable, and largely free from major legal, social, or environmental constraints, while retaining flexibility for

aggregation and phased implementation. Consideration shall be given to logistical connectivity to aggregation points or processing units; however, proximity to industrial estates shall not be treated as a mandatory criterion for cluster selection.

4.3.2. Landowner Mobilization and Agreements: Mobilize and organize landowners (farmers, community bodies, etc.) within the target cluster area to participate in the plantation. The agency will secure necessary agreements or MoUs with participating farmers/community institutions, ensuring their commitment of land for the project duration and compliance with FSC requirements. Special attention should be given to working within existing community frameworks - for example, leveraging Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), or Village Councils for group plantations and collective decision-making. In Nagaland, where land may be under customary ownership, coordination with Village Councils and tribal authorities is essential.

The Resource Management Units shall ensure that all land parcels included under the plantation clusters are secured through a **minimum land-use lock-in period of twenty (20) years**, dedicated exclusively for bamboo plantation purposes. This shall be supported by legally valid consent instruments executed by the landowner(s) or competent community/customary authority, affirming non-diversion of land for any other use during the lock-in period.

The Resource management units shall prepare and submit a **verified list of beneficiaries (landowners and participating households)** for each plantation cluster, along with complete identification and contact details, in a prescribed format. This information shall form part of the project records and shall be subject to verification by NECBDC.

4.3.3. Baseline Survey and Land Preparation Planning: Conduct a baseline survey of identified sites to document current land use and status, soil and site conditions, existing vegetation, land tenure and user rights, and to map individual parcels and cluster boundaries for plantation planning, monitoring, and FSC compliance. Prepare a cluster-wise land preparation and planting plan, including mapping of parcels, delineation of plantation boundaries, and scheduling of preparatory activities (site clearing, pit digging, etc.). The agency should ensure that site selection avoids ecologically sensitive areas and complies with social safeguard norms as per FSC standards.

4.3.4. Plantation Establishment

- a. Site Preparation:** Oversee **site preparation activities** prior to planting. This includes clearing or slashing of undergrowth (avoiding harm to existing valuable trees where possible), demarcation of plantation plots, digging of planting pits, soil enrichment with farmyard manure (FYM) or other additives, and installation of basic fencing or protection as required. Pits should be prepared in alignment with the project's technical specifications (spacing, depth, etc.) and completed ideally by the end of spring (April-May) in preparation for monsoon planting.

- b. Planting Operations:** Execute the planting of bamboo saplings during the monsoon season as per the implementation schedule (Section 4.4). The main planting window will be June–July (peak monsoon) for the majority of the area. The agency shall ensure timely procurement and availability of healthy bamboo planting material (saplings/rhizomes), in coordination with NECBDC, which shall fund and/or supply the approved planting stock as per project provisions. The agency shall deploy adequate field teams and community labour to complete planting in a timely manner, taking advantage of optimal soil moisture conditions during the monsoon. Plantation activities, including selection of species and planting material, spacing, pit preparation, planting techniques, and initial care, shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the technical guidelines and specifications issued or approved by NECBDC.
- c. Quality Assurance:** Throughout plantation operations, the agency must ensure quality control - correct species selection (as per guidelines provided by NECBDC, suitable to local climate and industrial usage), healthy and disease-free planting material, and adherence to best practices for hole spacing and planting methods. Any use of fertilizers, pesticides, or other inputs should follow sustainable and FSC-compliant guidelines (avoiding banned chemicals, etc.). The agency should document all planting activities, including the source of planting material, number of saplings planted, and geo-tagging of plantation sites for monitoring purposes.

4.3.5. Plantation Maintenance

- a. Maintenance Period:** The agency is responsible for maintaining the plantations for a duration of 5 years post planting, which covers the crucial establishment period until bamboo clumps reach maturity. (Bamboo typically reaches harvestable maturity in about 5 years; the project thus covers maintenance through this first growth cycle.) Intensive maintenance is expected particularly in the first 3 years, gradually reducing as the clumps become self-sustaining.
- b. Maintenance Activities:** Key maintenance activities include regular weeding and removal of invasive species around bamboo clumps, mulching to retain soil moisture, fertilizer application (as needed and in eco-friendly manner), pest/disease monitoring and control, and pruning or singling of bamboo culms if required for healthier clump development. The agency should schedule **weeding cycles** (e.g., quarterly in the first year, biannually in subsequent years or as needed) and ensure **mulching** with organic matter after planting to conserve moisture. **Pruning** and thinning may be done from year 2-3 onward to promote growth. Any maintenance inputs like tools, small equipment, or fertilizers may be supported by NECBDC funding, but the agency will coordinate procurement and use.
- c. Irrigation and Soil Care:** While bamboo generally thrives in monsoon conditions, the agency should arrange supplementary watering/irrigation during any prolonged dry spells especially in the establishment year to prevent mortality. Soil and nutrient

management should be done based on periodic soil tests, if possible, to address any deficiencies affecting bamboo growth.

- d. Protection Measures:** Implement comprehensive protective measures to safeguard young plantations from grazing, fire, pests, diseases, theft, and other biotic or abiotic threats. This may include arranging community-based or hired watch and ward personnel, installation of bamboo fencing around plantation plots or, where appropriate, individual culm protection through localized fencing or guards, and coordination with local village councils to prevent free grazing in plantation areas. Preventive and curative measures for pest and disease management shall be undertaken in accordance with recommended forestry and bamboo management practices. In fire-prone areas, clearly demarcated fire lines shall be created and maintained, supported by seasonal awareness campaigns and local vigilance during the dry season. The agency shall ensure regular supervision and continuous protection of plantation sites throughout the project period.

4.3.6. Certification-Readiness and Sustainability Compliance:

The Resource management units shall manage all plantation activities in alignment with FSC Forest Management principles, including documentation of land tenure and user rights, protection of high conservation values, prohibition of child or forced labour, stakeholder consultation, and adherence to environmental and social safeguards. Agencies shall ensure that plantation design, implementation, and record-keeping are maintained in a manner that allows future certification without structural or procedural gaps, should certification be pursued at a later stage. Resource Management Units shall maintain cluster-level management plans, records, and internal monitoring systems consistent with FSC-aligned best practices and shall participate in capacity-building activities organised by NECBDC to strengthen certification readiness.

The agency shall maintain complete and up-to-date certification documentation, including maps, planting and maintenance records, training logs, and audit responses, and shall address all Corrective Action Requests in a timely manner.

4.3.7. Community Mobilization and Training

- a. Community Engagement:** The agency shall actively engage local communities and farmer groups throughout the project using a participatory approach. Communities shall be involved in site selection, planning, and plantation management to ensure ownership and long-term commitment. Farmer Producer Companies/Organizations (FPCs/FPOs) shall be leveraged where available, along with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and cooperative societies, particularly to promote women's participation and inclusive benefits.
- b. Awareness and Consent:** The agency shall conduct village-level awareness meetings to explain project objectives, benefits, and obligations, including long-term land commitment, market linkages, and compliance with FSC standards. Informed consent shall be obtained from participating landholders. In areas with community or

customary land tenure, including parts of Nagaland and Assam, engagement with Village Councils and traditional institutions shall be mandatory.

- c. **Capacity Building:** Training shall be provided to farmers and community members on sustainable bamboo cultivation, plantation establishment, maintenance practices, and FSC-related record-keeping. Training shall also cover FSC principles, health and safety measures, and appropriate harvesting practices as plantations mature, with support from NECBDC and relevant technical agencies.
- d. **Community Benefit Mechanisms:** The agency shall ensure transparent and equitable distribution of project benefits, including fair wage payments and clarity on future benefit-sharing from bamboo harvests. Interim benefits such as employment and community infrastructure shall be managed equitably, with clear agreements on marketing and profit-sharing arrangements.

4.3.8. Reporting and Monitoring

- a. **Progress Reporting:** The empanelled agency is responsible for regular reporting to NECBDC on the progress of work. This includes **inception reports, monthly/quarterly progress reports** during the planting seasons, and **annual maintenance reports**. Each report should detail activities completed, area planted, survival rates, maintenance actions taken, expenditures, challenges encountered, and plans for the next period. The format and frequency of reports will be specified by NECBDC at the time of signing the agreement.
- b. **Milestone Reports:** In particular, the agency must submit comprehensive reports at key milestones:
 - **Cluster Preparation Report** - after completing land aggregation and site preparation in a cluster (before planting).
 - **Plantation Completion Report (per season)** – after plantation season documentation of the area planted, number of saplings, survival percentage after initial establishment, and gap-filling done.
 - **Mid-term Maintenance Report** - around the end of Year 2 or mid-project, summarizing survival status, growth performance, and maintenance activities carried out.
 - **FSC-Aligned Compliance and Certification-Readiness Report:** Submission of a report demonstrating alignment with FSC Forest Management principles, documentation systems, and preparedness for future certification, without claiming certification.
 - **Final Project Completion Report** - at the end of the engagement (Year 4 or 5), covering the entire 1,000 ha, with final survival rates, lessons learned, and recommendations.

- c. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** NECBDC will be undertaking **monitoring and evaluation**, including third-party audits and field inspections, to verify the progress and compliance. The agency must cooperate with all such M&E activities. This includes providing access to plantation sites, records, and staff for any verification visits or audits by NECBDC, funding agency representatives, or independent evaluators. The agency should also establish an internal monitoring mechanism for day-to-day supervision of field work and quality control. Geo-tagged photographs and use of remote sensing (e.g., periodic drone or satellite imagery of plantations) may be incorporated for monitoring; the agency should assist in facilitating such technology deployment if required.
- d. Issue Resolution:** If any issues or deviations are identified during monitoring (for example, low survival in a patch, delay in planting, non-compliance with FSC criteria, etc.), the agency will be promptly notified by NECBDC. It is the agency's responsibility to take corrective actions in a time-bound manner and report back on the resolution. Continued non-performance or major lapses may lead to review of the agency's empanelment status.

4.4. Plantation Implementation Schedule

The bamboo plantation programme under this EoI shall be implemented in alignment with the south-west monsoon planting season in the North Eastern Region. Plantation activities for any allocated cluster shall be undertaken during a single planting season within one financial year, corresponding to the preferred cultivation window of **June to September**.

Preparatory activities, including land aggregation, community mobilisation, baseline surveys, site preparation, pit digging, and input readiness, shall be carried out in the pre-monsoon period (April–May) preceding the planting season.

Each plantation cluster, once allocated to an empanelled agency, shall be fully planted within one planting year and one monsoon season. Plantation of a single cluster not to be split across multiple years or planting seasons. The overall project implementation may extend across more than one financial year solely due to staggered allocation of different clusters based on land readiness, implementation feasibility, and administrative sequencing. However, such staggering shall apply only across different clusters, and not within a cluster.

The Resource management units shall plan and execute all field activities for an allocated cluster in a manner that ensures completion of plantation establishment within the designated planting season, supported by timely mobilisation, site preparation, and deployment of resources, in accordance with approved cluster plans and technical guidelines issued by NECBDC.

A tentative timeline is as follows:

Land Preparation
 Planting
 Gap Filling & Survival Assessment
 Weeding & Protection



Months	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct Onwards
Activities:							

Note: The above timeline is aligned with typical monsoon patterns and project phasing assumptions. It may be adjusted based on actual project commencement date, weather variations, or other operational considerations. However, monsoon planting windows (June-Sept) are fixed critical periods each year for planting, and the agency must schedule all field activities accordingly. Moreover, plantation clusters are required to be established within a single planting year to maintain FSC management unit integrity and avoid operational and certification risks associated with staggered planting.

4.5. Plantation Maintenance Duration and Certification Readiness

4.5.1. Maintenance Duration and Survival Management (5 Years)

- a) The project shall provide for a 5 years maintenance and support period, corresponding to the time required for bamboo to reach harvestable maturity.
- b) During this period, the Resource management units, with community participation, shall undertake all required maintenance activities, including weeding, mulching, pruning, soil care, protection, and guarding, to ensure plantation establishment and resilience.
- c) The expected outcome is that each plantation cluster shall consist of healthy, well-established bamboo clumps suitable for sustainable harvesting.

4.5.2. Survival and Growth Monitoring

- a) Annual monitoring of survival and growth parameters (such as culm height and number of culms per clump) shall be undertaken.
- b) Survival benchmarks shall be maintained (for example, $\geq 80\%$ at one year).
- c) Where survival falls below prescribed levels, corrective gap filling shall be undertaken within the maintenance period, using approved planting material, to restore stocking levels, without treating such activities as fresh plantation or extension of the planting year.

4.5.3. Record Maintenance

- a) Detailed records of maintenance activities, inputs applied, survival assessments, and incidents such as pest attacks or fire shall be maintained and used for monitoring and adaptive management.

4.6.Roles and Responsibilities

This section delineates the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders involved in the project: the sponsoring/monitoring agency (NECBDC), the empanelled Resource management units, and the participating farmers/community.

4.6.1. NECBDC (Project Authority)

NECBDC as the project proponent under PM-DevINE, will provide overall facilitation, funding, and supervision. Key responsibilities of NECBDC include:

- a. **Project Funding and Support:** NECBDC will cover the approved costs for:
 - i) **Plantation Inputs:** Procurement or production of quality bamboo planting material (nursery-raised saplings or rhizomes) for the entire 1000 ha; supply of required fertilizers, soil amendments, and other inputs for plantation establishment and growth.
 - ii) **Infrastructure and Logistics:** Support for any necessary infrastructure such as temporary nurseries, irrigation equipment, tools and machinery for site preparation and maintenance, and some basic materials.
 - iii) **Certification Costs:** All costs related to obtaining certification for the plantations, including consultancy fees, audit fees, and capacity building for compliance. Costs related to sustainability compliance, FSC-aligned capacity building, documentation systems, and preparatory activities for future certification, if pursued.
 - iv) **Administrative and Overhead Costs:** Funds for project management expenses, training and capacity building workshops, related to the project, etc., as deemed appropriate.
 - v) **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Arrangement of third-party monitoring and evaluation (M&E) studies, and social audits to independently assess project progress and outcomes. NECBDC will bear costs of such M&E and will share findings with the Resource Management Units for improvement.
- b. **Technical Guidance and Standards:** Develop and disseminate technical guidelines for bamboo plantation (covering species selection, spacing, silvicultural practices, etc.) and ensure the Resource Management Units understand the quality standards expected. NECBDC may provide experts or resource persons for training sessions on bamboo cultivation and FSC requirements. Periodic review meetings will be convened by NECBDC to discuss technical issues and share best practices among all empanelled agencies.
- c. **Coordination and Facilitation:** Coordinate with state government departments (Forestry, Agriculture, Industries) and local authorities to facilitate necessary clearances, support, and convergence. For instance, if there are existing State bamboo missions or schemes, NECBDC will seek to dovetail resources or avoid duplication. NECBDC will

also help connect the plantation clusters with industrial consumers by organizing buyer-seller meets or signing MoUs with nearby industries for offtake commitments, thereby reinforcing the market linkage component.

- d. Supervision and Compliance Oversight:** Oversee the performance of empanelled agencies against their milestones. NECBDC will receive and review all reports, and conduct site inspections. If any shortcomings are observed (e.g., substandard field work, misuse of funds, non-compliance with FSC or environmental norms), NECBDC will issue instructions for corrective measures. NECBDC reserves the right to enforce penalties or replace an Resource management units in case of serious non-performance or breach of terms.
- e. Disbursement of Funds:** Administer the timely disbursement of funds to the agencies as per the agreed payment schedule. NECBDC will verify milestone achievements (including survival rates and certification status) before approving payments.

4.6.2. Empanelled Agency

The empanelled agency (which could be a government-affiliated organization, society, or any eligible entity selected via EoI) will be the primary executor on the ground. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Planning and Execution:** Plan the micro-implementation strategy for their allotted cluster(s) in line with this ToR. This includes scheduling activities, mobilizing manpower, and executing all components of work detailed in **Section 4.3 (Scope of Work)**, from land aggregation through planting to maintenance and certification. The agency must deploy a qualified project team (project manager, field coordinators, MIS/reporting staff, etc.) dedicated to the project.
- b. Community Interface and Mobilization:** Serve as the interface with the farmers and community. The agency will organize community meetings, form or strengthen local groups (FPOs, user groups, committees) as needed, and ensure active community participation. They will obtain necessary consents from landowners and facilitate agreements such as those between farmers and industries or farmers and the agency for plantation and future supply. Social inclusion is paramount, the agency should ensure small and marginal farmers are included and that there is no elite capture of project benefits (hence the minimum 5-ha cap on individual land parcel size).
- c. Field Implementation and Management:** Carry out all field operations: land prep, digging, planting, weeding, etc., by engaging local labour (with preference to the participating farmer families for wage employment). The agency will ensure work is done to technical specifications and timeframes. Day-to-day supervision of field crews and quality control is the agency's duty. It shall also ensure that safety protocols are followed during field work and that no child labour or forced labour is used (in compliance with FSC social criteria).

- d. **Resource Management:** Manage and utilize the funds and materials provided by NECBDC efficiently. The agency will handle the logistics of transporting saplings to sites, storing and distributing inputs like fertilizers, and maintaining any equipment given under the project. Transparent record-keeping of material usage and financial expenditure is mandatory. The agency should co-contribute in kind as expected - such as providing on-ground manpower and management resources - since many labour tasks are to be contributed by the community under agency guidance.
- e. **Monitoring, Reporting, and Documentation:** Monitor the progress of plantation growth continuously. The agency must maintain a management information system (MIS) or log of all activities and data (area covered, plants planted, survival, labour employed, etc.). Timely submission of reports (as detailed in Section 4.3.6 and Section 4.7) is required. The agency should document success stories, high-resolution photos, and other communication material which may be needed by NECBDC for showcasing the project's impact. They should also promptly inform NECBDC of any major issues or risks (pest outbreak, conflict with cattle grazers, etc.) so that solutions can be found collaboratively.
- f. **Compliance and Certification:** Implement the necessary measures to comply with FSC standards on the ground (Section 4.3.4). The agency will prepare the cluster for potential future certification, if required, which includes developing the forest management plan and setting up any internal monitoring team. The agency must ensure all conditions for certification are maintained. If any non-conformities are reported, the agency must address them to keep the plantation certification ready. Essentially, the agency is accountable for delivering a fully established, well-maintained, and FSC compliance bamboo plantation cluster at project end.
- g. **Coordination with NECBDC and Other Stakeholders:** Attend all meetings, reviews, and capacity-building workshops organized by NECBDC. Coordinate with other empanelled agencies if needed for knowledge exchange. Also, interface with local district authorities, forest department officers, and industrial stakeholders in the cluster's area as necessary to facilitate the plantation activities (e.g., permissions for transportation of saplings, resolving land issues, or setting up future bamboo procurement agreements with industries).

4.6.3. Farmers and Community Participants

The local farmers, landowners, and community institutions participating in the plantation clusters have the following roles and responsibilities under the project (supported by the agency and NECBDC):

a. Land Contribution

- i) Provide access to land parcels, minimum 5 ha per participant not exceeding 20 ha per participant, for bamboo plantation during the project and maintenance period.

- ii) Land shall remain dedicated to plantation use and shall not be diverted to other purposes.
- iii) In community or customary land areas (notably in Nagaland), Village Councils or traditional institutions shall facilitate allocation of common or individual land parcels as part of the plantation cluster.

b. Labour Participation

- i) Contribute labour for plantation activities including site preparation, planting, weeding, mulching, manure application, and guarding.
- ii) Participate actively in maintenance activities over the 5-year establishment period, with labour compensated through project wages or benefit-sharing arrangements.
- iii) Promptly report issues such as pest attacks, grazing damage, fire risks, or other threats to the Resource management units.

c. Adherence to Good Practices

- i) Follow technical guidance and training provided for sustainable bamboo cultivation.
- ii) Avoid practices harmful to plantation success, including jhum/slash-and-burn and uncontrolled grazing.
- iii) Comply with FSC certification requirements, including restrictions on chemical use and protection of designated areas.
- iv) Use established grievance redressal channels to raise concerns or suggestions.

d. Protection and Ownership

- i) Treat plantations as shared community assets and support protection measures such as community watch and ward systems.
- ii) Assist in preventing theft, fire, grazing damage, and encroachment.
- iii) Support local conflict resolution related to plantation boundaries or protection.
Feedback and Local Knowledge.
- iv) Provide feedback to the Resource management units and NECBDC on project implementation.
- v) Share traditional knowledge on bamboo cultivation, local pests, and site conditions to improve plantation performance and sustainability.

4.7. Reporting Framework

The plantation programme shall operate under a structured Performance Monitoring and Reporting Framework to ensure systematic documentation, traceability, and certification-readiness of all plantation clusters. Given that the objective is to establish FSC-aligned, certification-ready bamboo plantations, timely and evidence-based reporting at defined implementation stages is critical. All plantation, maintenance, survival, and sustainability compliance activities shall be supported by geo-tagged documentation, field verification, and structured reporting to enable transparent monitoring, regulatory compliance, and future certification preparedness.

Sl. No.	Reporting Output	Description	Timeline
1	Inception Report and Cluster wise Development Plan	Submission of detailed inception report covering final cluster locations with maps, identified participating farmers and area committed, baseline survey findings, planting material sourcing plan, Year-1 action plan, and risk mitigation measures. Approval of NECBDC shall be mandatory prior to commencement of large-scale field implementation.	Within 4–6 weeks from signing of Agreement
2	Land Preparation Completion Report	Certification of completion of site preparation activities including land demarcation, pit digging, input readiness, and execution of community agreements for the identified plantation areas. NECBDC may undertake field/site verification as deemed necessary.	By respective pre-monsoon deadlines (May 2026)
3	Plantation Progress Reports	Documentation of plantation progress against approved cluster-wise targets, confirming completion of plantation for the entire allocated cluster within the relevant planting year, including area planted, species and planting density, source of planting material, initial survival rates, gap-filling undertaken, expenditure details, and extent of community participation. Acceptance of the report shall signify completion of annual plantation targets.	By September of planting year
4	Interim Survival and Maintenance, Assessment Report	Reporting on survival percentage, maintenance activities undertaken, corrective measures applied, and indicative growth performance. Achievement of prescribed survival benchmarks shall constitute a key performance condition.	Approximately 12 months after plantation season

5	Sustainability (FSC_Aligned) Compliance and Certification-Readiness Review	Submission of a consolidated report demonstrating compliance with FSC Forest Management principles and guidelines, including plantation management records, social and environmental safeguards, stakeholder engagement, and internal monitoring systems. The report shall assess certification readiness and outline any gaps or corrective actions, without claiming or representing formal FSC certification.	Year 3–4 (or as specified by NECBDC)
6	Final Project Completion Report	Comprehensive report covering plantation establishment over approximately 1,000 ha , survival and stocking status, socio-economic impacts, lessons learnt, and an audited statement of accounts for the entire engagement period.	At the end of engagement period (approximately Year 5)

Approval of all the reports and reviews by NECBDC shall be mandatory, and delays or deficiencies may affect in payments terms.

4.8.Payment Structure

All payments shall be released to the empanelled Resource management units only after **achievement and verification of prescribed conditions**, subject to submission of requisite documents, inspection reports, and certification of satisfactory performance by NECBDC or its authorised representatives.

The indicative payment structure shall be as follows:

Tranche(s)	Timeline	Condition (Amendable)	Ammoulement for the activities
1 st Tranche	Pre Planting and Land Preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of mobilisation, pre-plantation preparatory activities (Jungle clearing, demarcation, Land preparation, Pit Digging etc) for the allocated cluster(s) within the approved planting season, in accordance with the approved cluster plan. 2. Submission of geo-tagged photographic evidence. 3. Verification of physical progress by NECBDC / authorised agency. 	Funds disbursed for the procurement of saplings, bamboo for fencing, equipment needed for plantation and first aid kits, materials for bamboo store house construction for storage of planting materials, manure, soil mix, fertilizers etc, materials for bamboo labour shed house construction and procurement of manure and fertilizer.
2 nd Tranche	Post Plantation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of plantation for the whole approved cluster 	Funds disbursed for the procurement of

Tranche(s)	Timeline	Condition (Amendable)	Amoulement for the activities
	and Initial Establishment	<p>within the approved planting season in compliance with the FSC guidelines, in accordance with the approved cluster plan.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Completion of construction of storage and labour shed. 3. Purchase proof and evidence of all the materials 4. Physical verification and validation by NECBDC or its authorised agency. 	Pesticides, Fungicides, for Supervision, Monitoring and Protection of the planted bamboo saplings.
3 rd Tranche	Post Plantation Care and Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievement of prescribed initial survival benchmarks for the plantation cluster(s), as specified in the ToR. 2. Submission of survival assessment reports, geo-tagged evidence, and records of gap filling and corrective measures undertaken. 3. Confirmation that protection, weeding, soil care, and other maintenance/intercultural activities are being carried out in accordance with approved standards. 4. Demonstrated compliance with FSC-aligned sustainability and certification-readiness requirements, including documentation, internal monitoring systems, and corrective actions, without claiming formal certification. 	Funds disbursed for the subsequent procurement of manure and fertilizers, bamboo (for fencing repair and maintenance), Storage and labour shades (for maintenance and repairment), planting equipment (purchase/repairment of damaged equipment).
4 th Tranche	Early Development and Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued maintenance of prescribed survival and plantation health benchmarks across the plantation sites. 2. Submission of cluster-wise maintenance and survival reports, duly supported by field evidence. 3. Confirmation that protection, weeding, soil care, and other maintenance/intercultural activities are being carried out 	Funds disbursed for the subsequent procurement of Pesticides and Fungicides, for Supervision, Monitoring and Protection of the bamboo saplings.

Tranche(s)	Timeline	Condition (Amendable)	Amoulement for the activities
		<p>in accordance with approved standards.</p> <p>4. Submission of survival assessment reports, geo-tagged evidence, and records of corrective measures undertaken.</p>	
5 th Tranche	Intermediate management	<p>1. Confirmation that protection, weeding, soil care, and other maintenance/intercultural activities are being carried out in accordance with approved standards for all the plantation sites.</p> <p>2. Submission of survival assessment reports, geo-tagged evidence, and records of gap filling and corrective measures undertaken.</p> <p>3. Submission of cluster-wise maintenance and survival reports, duly supported by field evidence.</p>	Funds disbursed for the subsequent procurement of manure and fertilizers, bamboo (for fencing repair and maintenance), Storage and labour shades (for maintenance and repairment), planting equipment (purchase/repairment of damaged equipment).
6 th Tranche	Culm management and Thinning	<p>1. Confirmation that protection, weeding, soil care, and other maintenance/intercultural activities are being carried out in accordance with approved standards for all the plantation sites.</p> <p>2. Confirmation of compliance with all contractual, technical, and certification requirements.</p> <p>3. Purchase proof and evidence of all the materials</p> <p>4. Physical verification and validation by NECBDC or its authorised agency.</p>	Funds disbursed for the subsequent procurement of Pesticides and Fungicides, for Supervision, Monitoring and Protection of the bamboo saplings.

All payments shall be subject to availability of funds under PM-DevINE, deduction of applicable statutory taxes, and compliance with reporting, audit, and monitoring requirements.

NECBDC reserves the right to **withhold, reduce, or defer any payment tranche** in case of non-achievement of milestones, sub-standard performance, non-compliance with FSC requirements, or breach of contractual conditions.

All payments shall be subject to NECBDC approval and applicable audit requirements. In cases of non-performance or early termination, payments shall be restricted to verified work completed, with recoveries made as applicable.

5. Eligibility Criteria

This section lays down the **minimum eligibility conditions** that shall be satisfied by agencies intending to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) for empanelment under this project. Only those applicants who meet **all mandatory eligibility criteria** and submit the requisite supporting documents shall be considered for technical evaluation.

The eligibility criteria are framed to ensure that empanelled agencies possess **adequate institutional capacity, field implementation experience, financial soundness, and technical competence** to undertake cluster-based bamboo plantation, long-term maintenance, and FSC compliance under the PM-DevINE framework.

5.1. Eligible Entity Types

The following categories of entities shall be eligible to apply, subject to fulfilment of other eligibility conditions:

- a) Government of India Departments / Organisations / Autonomous Bodies.
- b) State Government Departments / Agencies / Boards / Corporations.
- c) Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- d) Registered Societies under the Societies Registration Act.
- e) Registered Trusts.
- f) Cooperatives and Federations.
- g) Section 8 Companies.
- h) Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) / Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs).
- i) Statutory bodies or development agencies with mandate in agriculture, forestry, bamboo, or rural livelihoods.

Consortiums or joint ventures shall **not be permitted**, unless explicitly allowed through corrigendum.

5.2. Legal Status and Registration

- 5.2.1. The applicant must be a **legally registered entity in India** and must have been in continuous existence for a **minimum period of five (5) years** as on 31 March 2025.
- 5.2.2. The applicant shall submit copies of valid registration/incorporation certificates, along with constitutional documents such as Memorandum of Association, Bye-laws, Trust Deed, or equivalent, as applicable.
- 5.2.3. The applicant must possess a valid Permanent Account Number (PAN). GST registration shall be furnished wherever applicable.

5.3. Minimum Mandatory Relevant Experience

5.3.1. The applicant must have **demonstrated experience in field-level implementation** of plantation, agro-forestry, bamboo, horticulture, forestry, or natural resource management (NRM) projects.

5.3.2. The applicant should have **successfully completed at least two (2) assignments** in NER during the last **five (5) years** (FY 2020-21 onwards), meeting **any one** of the following criteria:

- At least **one assignment involving plantation or agro-forestry covering a minimum area of 25 ha in a single project,**

OR

- Cumulative plantation/agro-forestry area of **not less than 60 ha** across multiple projects.

OR

- Two or more projects involving community-based plantation, bamboo, or NRM interventions, where the combined area and scope demonstrate comparable field-level execution capacity.

5.3.3. Experience must relate to **on-ground execution**, including land preparation, planting, survival management, maintenance, and community engagement. Purely advisory or desk-based studies shall **not be considered adequate** for meeting this criterion.

5.3.4. Documentary evidence such as work orders, completion certificates, third-party evaluation reports, or certificates from funding agencies shall be submitted.

5.4. Experience in Community-Based / Institution-Led Projects

Given the cluster-based and community-centric design of the plantation programme, the applicant must demonstrate **prior experience of working with one or more of the following:**

- a) Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) / Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs);
- b) Cooperatives or federations.
- c) Self-Help Group (SHG) federations.
- d) Village Councils, customary institutions, or community-owned land management systems.
- e) Panchayati Raj Institutions or equivalent local governance bodies.

Such experience should include mobilisation, coordination, benefit-sharing arrangements, or implementation through community institutions, and must be supported by documentary proof.

5.5. Experience in North Eastern Region (NER)

Applicants should be having mandatory **prior operational experience in NRM or community development work in one or more States of the North Eastern Region**, preferably in Assam and/or Nagaland.

5.6.Sustainability Compliance Readiness

5.6.1. Prior experience in certification, group certification, or other recognised sustainability standards (such as PEFC, organic, or similar) shall be treated as a **desirable qualification**.

5.6.2. Applicants without experience must submit an undertaking confirming their willingness and preparedness to:

- a) Adopt sustainability principles and criteria aligned with FSC.
- b) Maintain required documentation and records.
- c) Facilitate audits and corrective actions.
- d) Participate in capacity-building programmes organised by NECBDC or its designated agencies.

5.7.Technical and Human Resource Capacity

The applicant must demonstrate availability of a **dedicated technical team** for plantation implementation, comprising, at a minimum:

- a) One Project Manager / Team Leader with qualifications in forestry, agriculture, agro-forestry, bamboo, or allied disciplines and at least **five (5) years of relevant experience**.
- b) Field Coordinators / Supervisors for cluster-level implementation.
- c) Community mobilisation personnel.
- d) Documentation / MIS support staff.

The following table provides an indicative human resource framework and desirable qualifications for plantation implementation. Applicants may propose alternative or equivalent team structures, provided adequate technical supervision, field presence, and reporting capacity are ensured.

Sl. No.	Position / Role	Minimum Deployment (Indicative)	Desirable Minimum Qualification	Desirable Experience
1	Project Manager / Team Leader	1 (Overall project / cluster-level coordination)	Postgraduate or Graduate degree in Forestry, Agriculture, Agro-Forestry, Bamboo Technology, Environmental Science, Rural Development, or allied disciplines	Minimum 5 years of experience in plantation, Agro-forestry, bamboo, NRM, or similar field-based projects, including team coordination
2	Field Supervisor(s)/ Coordinators	As required (cluster/site-wise)	Diploma or Graduate in Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Technology, or relevant field; experienced practitioners may also be considered	Minimum 2–3 years of field experience in plantation, nursery, or rural development projects
3	Community Mobiliser /	At least 1 per cluster	Graduate in Social Work, Rural Development,	Minimum 2–3 years of experience in

Sl. No.	Position / Role	Minimum Deployment (Indicative)	Desirable Minimum Qualification	Desirable Experience
	Social Facilitator		Sociology, or allied disciplines; local language proficiency preferred	community mobilisation, SHGs/FPOs, village institutions, or participatory projects
4	MIS/ Documentation Officer	1 (project or multi-cluster level)	Graduate in any discipline with computer proficiency	Minimum 2 years of experience in MIS, documentation, reporting, GIS/basic mapping, or project monitoring

The applicant shall submit CVs of key personnel proposed to be deployed, along with role descriptions.

5.8. Financial Capacity

- 5.8.1. The applicant must demonstrate adequate financial capacity to undertake plantation activities at scale.
- 5.8.2. Non-government applicants must have a **minimum average annual turnover of INR 30 Lakhs** during the last **three (3) financial years** (FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24, FY 2024-25).
- 5.8.3. Government agencies and PSUs may be exempted from turnover criteria, subject to submission of audited accounts, budgetary allocations, or other evidence of financial capability.
- 5.8.4. Audited financial statements or CA-certified turnover certificates shall be submitted.

5.9. Integrity, Non-Blacklisting and Conflict of Interest

- 5.9.1. The applicant must not have been blacklisted, debarred, or declared ineligible by any Central/State Government Department, PSU, or autonomous body during the last **five (5) years**.
- 5.9.2. The applicant shall submit a self-declaration confirming:
 - a. Absence of any conflict of interest.
 - b. No pending litigation that would materially affect performance under this project.
 - c. Commitment to ethical conduct and transparency.

False declarations shall result in rejection and may attract depanelment or blacklisting as per applicable rules.

5.10. Compliance with Labour, Environmental and Statutory Norms

- 5.10.1. The applicant shall comply with all applicable labour laws, safety norms, environmental regulations, and statutory requirements during implementation.

5.10.2. Responsibility for compliance with local laws and community protocols shall rest with the empanelled agency.

5.11. Submission of Documentary Evidence

Applicants must submit **all supporting documents** in the prescribed formats and annexures. Failure to submit mandatory documents or to meet minimum eligibility requirements shall result in **summary rejection** at the preliminary scrutiny stage.

6. Evaluation and Selection Process

6.1. Constitution of Evaluation Committee

- 6.1.1.** The EoIs received in response to this EoI shall be examined and evaluated by a **duly constituted Evaluation Committee** of NECBDC.
- 6.1.2.** NECBDC may, if considered necessary, co-opt subject-matter experts or representatives of other Government agencies in an advisory capacity for technical assessment.

6.2. Stages of Evaluation

The evaluation of EoIs shall be carried out in the following sequential stages:

Stage I - Preliminary Scrutiny (Eligibility and Responsiveness)

- 6.2.1.** At this stage, EoI submissions shall be examined for completeness and compliance with the eligibility criteria specified in Section 5 of this EoI. The following aspects shall be verified:
- a) Submission within the stipulated deadline and in the prescribed manner.
 - b) Submission of all mandatory documents, declarations, and annexures.
 - c) Fulfilment of minimum eligibility requirements relating to legal status, experience, financial capacity, and integrity.
- 6.2.2.** EoIs found to be **incomplete, non-responsive, or not meeting the mandatory eligibility criteria** shall be summarily rejected and shall not be considered for further evaluation.
- 6.2.3.** NECBDC reserves the right to seek clarifications from applicants during this stage; however, no new documents materially altering eligibility shall be permitted to be submitted after the closing date.

Stage II - Technical Evaluation

- 6.2.4.** Only those applicants qualifying in Stage I shall be taken up for **detailed technical evaluation**.
- 6.2.5.** The technical evaluation shall be based on information furnished by the applicants in their EoI submissions, including organisational profile, relevant experience, methodology, proposed team, and demonstrated capacity to undertake cluster-based bamboo plantation and FSC compliance.
- 6.2.6.** The technical evaluation shall be carried out using a **weighted scoring system of 100 marks**, as detailed in Clause 6.3.

Stage III - Presentations / Clarifications (If required)

- 6.2.7.** NECBDC may, at its discretion, invite shortlisted applicants to make **presentations and/or provide clarifications** on their EoI submissions.
- 6.2.8.** Such presentations may focus on:

- a) Understanding of the project objectives and ToR.
- b) Proposed implementation strategy and cluster-level approach.
- c) Readiness for plantation execution within monsoon timelines.
- d) Sustainability compliance strategy aligned with FSC Forest Management guidelines, including documentation systems for future certification.
- e) Community mobilisation and land aggregation approach.

6.2.9. Participation in presentations or clarification meetings shall not automatically guarantee empanelment.

Stage IV - Empanelment Decision

6.2.10. Based on the combined assessment of technical scores and clarifications, the Evaluation Committee shall recommend a list of agencies for empanelment.

6.2.11. The number of agencies to be empanelled shall be undertaken on a **cluster-wise basis**, and shall depend upon:

- a) Number and quality of technically qualified applicants.
- b) Geographic spread and cluster requirements.
- c) Demonstrated implementation capacity of agencies.
- d) Overall project phasing and operational considerations.

6.2.12. The final decision regarding empanelment shall rest with the Competent Authority of NECBDC.

6.3. Technical Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Matrix

The technical proposals shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Sl. No.	Evaluation Criterion	Description and scoring pattern	Maximum Marks	Proof of evidence / Supporting document
A	Relevant Experience in Plantation / Agro-Forestry / Bamboo	Agency should show scale, similarity, complexity, and outcomes of past assignments <i>7 marks for each assignment</i>	35	Work Order / Sanction Order / LoA / MoU along with Annexure F
B	Community Mobilisation & Institutional Engagement	Experience with FPOs/FPCs, community institutions, FPIC processes <i>5 marks for each assignment</i>	15	Work Order / Sanction Order / LoA / MoU along with Annexure F

Sl. No.	Evaluation Criterion	Description and scoring pattern	Maximum Marks	Proof of evidence / Supporting document
C	Technical Team & Field Deployment Capacity	Qualifications, experience, adequacy of proposed personnel as specified in Section 5.7 Project Manager / Team Leader – 6 marks Field Supervisor(s)/ Coordinators – 3 marks Community Mobiliser / Social Facilitator – 3 marks MIS/ Documentation Officer – 3 marks	15	CVs to be submitted as prescribed in Annexure H
D	Sustainability Compliance Readiness	Prior experience or preparedness for certification	10	Work Order / Sanction Order / LoA / MoU along with Annexure I
E	Cluster-Based Implementation Approach and Workplan	Understanding of cluster model, land aggregation, operational feasibility	20	As prescribed in Annexure J & Annexure K
F	Presence / Experience in NER	Prior operational experience in NRM or community development work in one or more States of the North Eastern Region, preferably in Assam and/or Nagaland.	5	Work Order / Sanction Order / LoA / MoU
Total			100	

6.4. Minimum Qualifying Score

- 6.4.1. Applicants must secure a **minimum of 60 marks out of 100** in the technical evaluation to be considered technically qualified.
- 6.4.2. Only technically qualified applicants shall be considered for empanelment.
- 6.4.3. NECBDC reserves the right to revise the qualifying threshold based on the quality of responses received, with due approval of the Competent Authority.

6.5. Cluster-Wise Empanelment and Allocation Logic

- 6.5.1. Empanelment shall be **cluster-wise**, though conducted through a single EoI.

- 6.5.2. While submitting the EoI, applicants may indicate:
- Preferred State(s) (Assam and/or Nagaland);
 - Preferred identified plantation clusters;
 - Maximum number of ha they are capable of implementing concurrently.
- 6.5.3. NECBDC shall allocate clusters to empanelled agencies based on:
- Technical merit and score obtained;
 - Demonstrated capacity and past performance;
 - Geographic suitability and logistical considerations;
 - Project phasing and readiness of land parcels.
- 6.5.4. Each cluster shall be evaluated and empanelled independently. Applicants are eligible to apply for cluster preference through a single EoI application.

6.6. Right to Accept, Reject or Modify the Process

- 6.6.1. NECBDC reserves the absolute right to:
- Accept or reject any or all EoIs without assigning any reason.
 - Annul the empanelment process or modify the scope, clusters, or timelines.
 - Empanel additional agencies at a later stage, if required in public interest.
- 6.6.2. Decisions of NECBDC in respect of evaluation, empanelment, and allocation shall be final and binding on all applicants.

6.7. Post-Empanelment Process

- 6.7.1. Empanelled agencies shall be required to execute an **Empanelment Acceptance / Undertaking** with NECBDC.
- 6.7.2. Cluster-specific **Work Orders / Implementation Agreements** shall be issued subsequently, detailing scope, area, milestones, payment terms, and reporting requirements.
- 6.7.3. Performance of empanelled agencies shall be monitored on an ongoing basis, and continuation of empanelment shall be subject to satisfactory performance.

7. Instructions to Applicants

7.1. General Instructions

- 7.1.1. This EoI is issued by the **NECBDC** for empanelment of agencies for cluster-wise implementation of the bamboo plantation component under the PM-DevINE project.
- 7.1.2. Interested applicants are advised to carefully read and examine all instructions, eligibility conditions, ToR, evaluation criteria, formats, and annexures contained in this EoI document before preparing and submitting their applications.
- 7.1.3. Submission of an EoI shall be deemed to be an unconditional acceptance by the applicant of all the terms and conditions contained in this EoI document, including any corrigendum/addendum issued by **NECBDC**.
- 7.1.4. No claim for alteration, amendment, or relaxation of any condition of the EoI shall be entertained after submission.

7.2. Pre-EoI Queries and Clarifications

- 7.2.1. Applicants may seek clarifications on the EoI, if any, by submitting their queries in writing (by email or official communication) to **NECBDC** on or before the date specified in the EoI schedule.
- 7.2.2. Queries received after the stipulated date shall not be considered.
- 7.2.3. **NECBDC** may, at its discretion, issue clarifications, addenda, or corrigenda in response to queries received. Such clarifications/addenda shall form an integral part of the EoI document and shall be binding on all applicants.
- 7.2.4. No individual communication shall be made to applicants regarding clarifications. Applicants are advised to regularly visit the **NECBDC** website or official communication channel for updates.

7.3. Preparation of EoI Proposal

- 7.3.1. The EoI proposal shall be prepared in **English language** only.
- 7.3.2. The proposal shall be **typed or printed**, duly signed by the authorised signatory of the applicant, and stamped with the official seal.
- 7.3.3. The proposal shall be **clear, concise, and strictly in the prescribed formats**. Conditional, ambiguous, or incomplete submissions are liable to be rejected.
- 7.3.4. Any overwriting, erasure, or correction must be initialled by the authorised signatory.

7.4. Structure of the EoI Submission

- 7.4.1. The EoI submission shall comprise **only a Technical Proposal** (no financial quotation is to be submitted at this stage).
- 7.4.2. The Technical Proposal shall include the following components, arranged in the order given below:

Part A - Covering Documents

- i) Covering Letter (as per Annexure A)
- ii) Authorisation Letter / Power of Attorney for signatory
- iii) Organisation Profile (Annexure B)

Part B - Eligibility and Compliance Documents

- i) Eligibility & Document Submission Checklist (Annexure C)
- ii) Copies of registration certificates, constitutional documents, PAN, GST (if applicable)
- iii) Audited financial statements / CA certificate (Annexure G)
- iv) Declarations and undertakings (Annexure H)

Part C - Experience and Technical Capacity

- i) Details of relevant experience and past assignments (Annexure D)
- ii) Experience with FPOs/FPCs / community institutions (where applicable)
- iii) Details of experience in NER

Part D - Technical Proposal

- i) Proposed methodology and implementation approach (Annexure I)
- ii) Cluster-wise implementation capacity and State/cluster preference (Annexure E)
- iii) Proposed work plan and milestone schedule (Annexure J)
- iv) Team composition and CVs of key personnel (Annexure F)
- v) Indicative Cluster Land & Parcel Details, including cluster-wise area proposed, parcel configuration, ownership / tenure pattern, consent status, and mapping availability, to be submitted in the prescribed format (Annexure N).
- vi) Documentary evidence of land-use consent indicating a minimum 20-year lock-in for bamboo plantation shall be submitted in the prescribed format. (Annexure O)
- vii) Beneficiary List and KYC Details (Annexure P)

Any submission not conforming to the above structure may be treated as non-responsive.

7.5. Cluster Preference and Capacity Declaration

Applicants may indicate, in the prescribed format, their preference for:

- i) State(s): Assam and/or Nagaland;
- ii) Maximum number area (in ha) they are capable of implementing concurrently.

Such indication shall be treated as **indicative and non-binding**. NECBDC shall retain full discretion in allocation of clusters irrespective of preferences expressed.

7.6. Mode of Submission

7.6.1. The EoI shall be submitted in **sealed envelope(s)** clearly superscribed with:

“Expression of Interest (EoI) for Empanelment of Resource Management Units for Certification-Ready Bamboo Plantation under PM-DevINE”

7.6.2. The submission shall be made as follows:

Hard Copy Submission: The complete EoI (one original and one copy) shall be submitted to:

The Managing Director,

**North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council,
13th Mile, G.S. Road, Burnihat,
Guwahati, Assam - 793101**

Soft Copy Submission: A soft copy of the complete EoI proposal in searchable PDF format shall also be submitted through the official email address: necbdcmarketing@gmail.com

Failure to submit both hard copy and soft copy (where mandated) may render the application liable to rejection.

7.7. Deadline for Submission

- 7.7.1. The EoI must reach the above address **on or before the date and time specified** in the EoI schedule.
- 7.7.2. EoIs received after the stipulated deadline, for any reason whatsoever (including postal delay), shall be summarily rejected.
- 7.7.3. NECBDC shall not be responsible for any delay or loss in transit.

7.8. EoI Validity

- 7.8.1. The EoI proposal submitted by the applicant shall remain valid for a period of **180 (one hundred and eighty) days** from the last date of submission.
- 7.8.2. During this period, the applicant shall not withdraw or modify its proposal.

7.9. No Financial Offer

- 7.9.1. Applicants shall **not submit any financial quotation, cost estimates, or commercial terms** as part of this EoI.
- 7.9.2. Any EoI containing financial information may be rejected.
- 7.9.3. Financial terms, where applicable, shall be finalised at the stage of cluster-specific Work Orders / Implementation Agreements, in accordance with NECBDC norms and approvals.

7.10. Right to Accept or Reject

- 7.10.1. NECBDC reserves the absolute right to accept or reject any or all EoIs, annul the empanelment process, or modify the scope, timelines, or conditions of the EoI without assigning any reason.
- 7.10.2. No compensation or claim shall be entertained from applicants on account of rejection or modification of the EoI.

7.11. Costs Associated with EoI Preparation

- 7.11.1. All costs associated with preparation and submission of the EoI shall be borne solely by the applicant.
- 7.11.2. NECBDC shall not be liable for any costs, expenses, or losses incurred by applicants in connection with this EoI.

8. General Terms and Conditions

8.1. Nature of Empanelment and Non-Exclusivity

- 8.1.1.** Empanelment under this EoI shall be **non-exclusive** in nature. Empanelment shall only qualify the applicant for consideration for cluster-wise allocation of work and shall not, by itself, confer any right to claim work or guaranteed allocation.
- 8.1.2.** NECBDC reserves the right to empanel one or more agencies for the same or different clusters if only required, and to engage additional agencies through other mechanisms, if required in public interest.
- 8.1.3.** NECBDC may, at its discretion, allocate one or more clusters to an empanelled agency based on project requirements, performance, geographic suitability, and implementation readiness, if required.

8.2. Issuance of Work Orders and Agreement

- 8.2.1.** Cluster-wise implementation shall be undertaken only upon issuance of a **formal Work Order / Implementation Agreement** by NECBDC.
- 8.2.2.** The Work Order / Agreement shall specify, inter alia, the cluster location, area, timelines, deliverables, milestone-linked payment terms, reporting requirements, and any special conditions.
- 8.2.3.** No activity shall be commenced by an empanelled agency prior to receipt of a valid Work Order / Agreement.

8.3. Performance Monitoring and Review

- 8.3.1.** Performance of empanelled agencies shall be monitored by NECBDC on a continuous basis against agreed milestones and deliverables mentioned in the work order.
- 8.3.2.** NECBDC may conduct field inspections, third-party evaluations, audits, and reviews to assess quality of plantation, survival rates, maintenance practices, FSC compliance, and community engagement.
- 8.3.3.** Unsatisfactory performance, persistent delays, or deviation from approved plans may result in issuance of warnings, suspension of work, withholding of payments, or termination of the Work Order, as deemed appropriate by NECBDC.

8.4. Depanelment and Termination

NECBDC reserves the right to **depanel** an empanelled agency, in whole or in part, under the following circumstances:

- i) Failure to meet eligibility conditions at any stage.
- ii) Submission of false or misleading information.
- iii) Persistent non-performance or breach of contractual obligations
- iv) Failure to comply with sustainability and plantation management standards aligned with FSC principles, statutory requirements, or community safeguards.
- v) Engagement in unethical practices or conflict of interest.

- vi) Depanelment may be affected with or without prior notice, depending on the gravity of the breach, and shall be without prejudice to any other rights or remedies available to NECBDC.
- vii) In the event of suspension, termination, or de-panelment of an empanelled agency due to non-performance, material breach of contractual obligations, misrepresentation, or failure to achieve prescribed milestones, NECBDC shall have the right to recover and/or require refund of all amounts disbursed to the agency against unexecuted, unverified, or non-compliant works. Such recovery shall be without prejudice to NECBDC's right to adjust dues, invoke any applicable guarantees, or initiate further legal or contractual remedies, as deemed appropriate.

8.5. Sub-contracting

- 8.5.1.** Sub-contracting of the whole or any substantial part of the assignment shall **not be permitted** without prior written approval of NECBDC.
- 8.5.2.** Any approved sub-contracting shall not absolve the empanelled agency of its responsibilities and liabilities under the Work Order / Agreement.

8.6. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

- 8.6.1.** Empanelled agencies shall comply with all applicable Central, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines, including those relating to labour, wages, occupational safety, environment, and forest/land governance.
- 8.6.2.** Compliance with local customary laws, community protocols, and traditional governance systems shall be the responsibility of the empanelled agency.

8.7. Confidentiality and Data Ownership

- 8.7.1.** All documents, data, reports, maps, photographs, and information generated under this assignment shall be treated as confidential and shall not be disclosed to any third party without prior written consent of NECBDC.
- 8.7.2.** All intellectual property, data, and outputs generated under the assignment shall vest with NECBDC, unless otherwise specified in the Work Order / Agreement.

8.8. Conflict of Interest

- 8.8.1.** Applicants shall disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest that may arise during the empanelment or implementation process.
- 8.8.2.** NECBDC reserves the right to disqualify or de-panel any agency where a conflict of interest is found to compromise the integrity of the process.

8.9. Force Majeure

- 8.9.1.** Neither party shall be liable for failure to perform its obligations under the Work Order / Agreement if such failure is due to events beyond reasonable control, including but not limited to natural calamities, acts of God, epidemics, war, civil unrest, or Government actions.
- 8.9.2.** The affected party shall promptly notify the other party and take reasonable steps to mitigate the impact of such events.

8.10. Governing Law and Jurisdiction

8.10.1. The empanelment process and subsequent Work Orders / Agreements shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of India.

8.10.2. The courts at **Guwahati, Assam**, shall have exclusive jurisdiction in all matters arising out of or relating to this EoI and subsequent agreements.

8.11. Amendment of EoI

8.11.1. NECBDC reserves the right to amend, modify, or withdraw this EoI, in whole or in part, at any stage, without assigning any reason.

8.11.2. Any amendment or corrigendum shall be notified through official channels and shall form an integral part of this EoI.

8.12. Disclaimer

8.12.1. This EoI is not an offer and does not constitute a binding commitment on the part of NECBDC.

8.12.2. No contractual obligation shall arise unless and until a formal Work Order / Agreement is executed.

9. Annexures (Prescribed Formats)

Applicants are required to submit their EoI strictly in the formats prescribed in the Annexures below. All annexures shall be duly filled, signed by the authorised signatory, and stamped with the official seal of the applicant organisation. Failure to submit any mandatory annexure may result in rejection of the EoI at the preliminary scrutiny stage.

9.1. Annexure A: Eligibility & Document Submission Checklist

Sl. No.	Document / Requirement	Enclosed (Yes/No)	Page No.
1.	Covering Letter (Annexure B)		
2.	Non-Blacklisting (Annexure C)		
3.	Organisation Profile (Annexure D)		
4.	Audited Financial Statements / CA Certificate (Annexure E)		
5.	Relevant Experience Details (Annexure F)		
6.	Cluster Preference & Implementation Capacity Declaration (Annexure G)		
7.	Team & CVs (Annexure H)		
8.	Sustainability and Certification-Readiness Undertaking (Annexure I)		
9.	Methodology & Workplan (Annexure J & Annexure K)		
10.	Land Use Lock-in and Consent Undertaking for Bamboo Plantation (Annexure L)		
11.	Beneficiary and Landholder Details (Annexure M)		

9.2. Annexure B: Covering Letter

(On Applicant's Letterhead)

Ref. No.: _____

Date: _____

To

The Managing Director
North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC)
13th Mile, G.S. Road
Burnihat, Guwahati, Assam - 793101

Subject: Submission of Expression of Interest (EoI) for Empanelment of Resource Management Units for Certification-Ready Bamboo Plantation under PM-DevINE

Sir,

We, the undersigned, hereby submit our Expression of Interest (EoI) for empanelment as an Resource management units for cluster-wise execution of certification-ready bamboo plantation under the PM-DevINE project titled "Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)".

We confirm that:

- a. We have examined and understood the EoI document and the Terms of Reference (ToR)
- b. We meet all the eligibility criteria specified therein.
- c. The information furnished by us is true and correct.
- d. We agree to abide by all terms and conditions of the EoI.

We express our interest to be considered for implementation in the following:

State(s): <<State name 1>> , <<State name 2>>

Preferred Plantation cluster: <<Cluster name 1>>, <<Cluster name 2>>, <<Cluster name 3>>, <<Cluster name 4>>, <<Cluster name 5>>, <<Cluster name 6>>

Yours faithfully,

(Signature)

Name of Authorised Signatory:

Designation:

Organisation Name:

Official Seal:

9.3. Annexure C: Non-Blacklisting Declaration

Note: Government Agency / Government Department / PSU applicants are exempted from submission of the declaration

(On non-judicial stamp paper of INR 100/- or such equivalent document duly attested by a notary public)

I/We, Partner(s)/Director(s)/Authorized Person(s) of _____, having registered office at _____, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

- 1. That our entity/society/trust, namely M/s _____, has not been blacklisted or debarred in the past by any Central Government / State Government / Public Sector Undertaking / Autonomous Body / Multilateral Agency (including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc.).

OR

- 2. That our entity/society/trust, namely _____, was blacklisted/debarred by _____ (Name of Department/Agency) for a period of _____ years with effect from //. ***The said debarment period has since expired on //***, and the entity/society/trust, is now eligible to participate in Government/PSU tenders and procurements.
- 3. That in case any of the above declarations are found to be false or misleading, we are fully aware that our proposal under this EoI may be rejected, and if already awarded, the contract with North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC) may be terminated, without prejudice to any other action as per applicable laws and EoI provisions.

Declared this ___ day of _____, 2026 at _____.

Yours faithfully,

Name & Designation of Authorized Signatory: _____

Seal/Stamp of Entity / Society / Trust: _____

Signature: _____

Attested by Notary Public

(Seal & Signature)

9.4. Annexure D: Applicant Information Sheet (Organisation Profile)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of Organisation	
2	Legal Status (Govt./Society/Trust/Section 8/FPO/etc.)	
3	Year of Registration / Incorporation	
4	Registration No. & Authority	
5	PAN	
6	GST No.	
7	Registered Office Address (Provide address proof in the form of Incorporation Certificate / Registration Certificate)	
8	Branch / Field Offices (Assam/Nagaland/NER) (Provide address proof in the form of valid rental agreement / Trade License / GST certificate)	
9	Contact Person (Name, Designation)	
10	Contact Details (Phone, Email)	
11	Core Areas of Expertise	
12	Brief Organisational Profile (max 300 words)	

9.5. Annexure E: Financial Capacity Details

(To be submitted in CA letterhead)

#	Financial Year	Annual Turnover (INR)
a	FY 2022-23	
b	FY 2023-24	
c	FY 2024-25	
d	Average Annual Turn Over $\{(a+b+c)/3\}$	

Certified by Chartered Accountant(CA)

(Name, Signature, Membership No., Seal)

9.6. Annexure F: Format for Relevant Experience / Past Assignments

(Separate sheet for each assignment)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of Project / Assignment	
2	Client / Funding Agency	
3	Location (State/District)	
4	Nature of Work (Plantation / Agro-forestry / Bamboo / NRM)	
5	Area Covered (in ha)	
6	Duration (From - To)	
7	Role of Applicant	
8	Community Institutions Involved (FPO/SHG/Village Council etc.)	
9	Key Outputs / Results	
10	Supporting Documents Enclosed (Work Order/Completion Certificate etc.)	

9.7. Annexure G: Cluster Preference & Implementation Capacity Declaration

(To be submitted in applicant letter head)

#	State	District name / Cluster name	Total area proposed to be covered (in Ha)
1	<<State name>>	<<District name / Cluster name>> Ha
2	<<State name>>	<<District name / Cluster name>> Ha
3	<<State name>>	<<District name / Cluster name>> Ha

Add more rows if required

9.8. Annexure H: Key Personnel & Deployment Plan

A. Team Structure

Position	Name	Qualification	Years of Experience
Project Manager			
Field Coordinator(s)			
Community Mobiliser(s)			
MIS / Documentation Officer			

B. CVs of Key Personnel

(Attach CVs, max 3 pages each)

9.9. Annexure I: Sustainability and Certification-Readiness Undertaking

(To be submitted by the Applicant on official letterhead)

Ref. No.: _____

Date: _____

To

The Managing Director

North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC)

13th Mile, G.S. Road

Burnihat, Guwahati, Assam - 793101

Subject: Sustainability and Certification-Readiness Undertaking

Dear Sir,

We, the undersigned, hereby undertake to implement plantation activities under the PM-DevINE project titled “Promotion of Engineered Bamboo Products through Cluster Strengthening and Export Facilitation in the North Eastern Region (NER)” in alignment with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Management principles and sustainability guidelines, as per the requirements specified in the Expression of Interest (EoI).

- 1. Implementation in Alignment with FSC Principles:** We affirm our commitment to undertake plantation activities that adhere to the FSC Forest Management principles, which include maintaining environmental, social, and governance standards, as well as ensuring the sustainability of the bamboo plantations.
- 2. Maintenance of Certification-Ready Documentation:** We confirm that all plantation activities, including land preparation, planting, maintenance, and documentation, will be carried out in compliance with FSC guidelines. We will maintain records that are aligned with certification-ready documentation standards, which will enable the plantation to be certified at a later stage.
- 3. No Claim of FSC Certification:** We further undertake that we will not claim or represent the plantation as FSC-certified unless formal certification is granted in the future. We will strictly adhere to the procedures and guidelines necessary for certification and will ensure that the plantation meets all criteria set forth by FSC.
- 4. Commitment to Capacity Building:** We acknowledge our responsibility to participate in any required capacity-building activities organized by NECBDC or its designated agencies to further enhance our understanding of FSC compliance and ensure readiness for formal certification.
- 5. Continuous Compliance:** We are aware that failure to comply with the FSC standards and maintain certification-readiness could result in the termination of our empanelment, the withholding of payments, or other consequences as per the provisions outlined in the EoI.

This undertaking is provided in good faith, with the understanding that the successful implementation of plantation activities in compliance with FSC standards will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the project and the bamboo sector in the North Eastern Region.

Yours faithfully,

Name & Designation of Authorized Signatory: _____

Seal/Stamp of Entity / Society / Trust: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

9.10. Annexure J: Approach & Methodology

Applicants shall submit a detailed technical note (not more than 20 pages) covering:

1. Understanding of the Project and ToR
2. Proposed Cluster Formation and Land Aggregation Strategy
3. Plantation Establishment Methodology (species, spacing, quality control)
4. Implementation Plan (Monsoon-linked)
5. Maintenance Strategy (Years 1-5)
6. FSC-Aligned Sustainability Compliance and Documentation Approach
7. Community Mobilisation & FPIC Strategy
8. Monitoring, Reporting and Risk Mitigation

9.11. Annexure K: Indicative Workplan Schedule

#	Activity / Deliverable	M1	M2	M3	M4	Mn th
Activity 1	Land Identification & Cluster Finalisation						
<i>Sub activity a</i>							
<i>Sub activity b</i>							
Activity 2	Site Preparation						
<i>Sub activity a</i>							
<i>Sub activity b</i>							
Activity 3	Plantation (Main Monsoon)						
<i>Sub activity a</i>							
<i>Sub activity b</i>							
Activity 4	Survival Assessment & Gap Filling						
<i>Sub activity a</i>							
<i>Sub activity b</i>							
Activity 5	Maintenance & Protection						
<i>Sub activity a</i>							
<i>Sub activity b</i>							

9.12. Annexure L: Land Use Lock-in and Consent Undertaking for Bamboo Plantation

(To be printed in Rs.100 Non-Judicial Stamp paper and notarized)

(To be submitted by the Applicant for each land parcel / cluster)

This Undertaking is executed on this ___ day of _____ 2026.

I/We, the undersigned, hereby declare that the land parcel(s) detailed below are being voluntarily committed for bamboo plantation under the project implemented by the North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC), and that the same shall be governed by the following terms:

1. I/We am/are the lawful owner(s) / authorised representative(s) of the land parcel(s) described herein, with clear and undisputed rights over the said land.
2. I/We hereby give free, prior, and informed consent to use the said land exclusively for bamboo plantation purposes under the project.
3. I/We agree to a minimum land-use lock-in period of twenty (20) years, commencing from the date of plantation, during which the land shall not be diverted for any other agricultural, commercial, residential, or industrial use.
4. I/We further undertake that no encumbrance, sale, lease, mortgage, or transfer affecting the said land shall be created during the lock-in period without prior written approval of NECBDC.
5. I/We understand that this undertaking forms a mandatory condition of participation in the project and may be relied upon by NECBDC for project implementation, monitoring, certification, and audit purposes.
6. I/We confirm that the land is free from legal disputes, statutory restrictions, and is not classified as forest land requiring statutory diversion approvals.

Sl. No.	Name of Landowner / Community	Village / Location	Block	District	State	Area (ha)	Ownership Type (Individual / Community / Customary)

Sl. No.	Name of Landowner / Community	Village / Location	Block	District	State	Area (ha)	Ownership Type (Individual / Community / Customary)

Note: The 20-year land-use lock-in is intended to secure long-term resource sustainability and does not imply financial or operational support beyond the approved maintenance period.

Declaration

I/We certify that the information furnished above is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Signature / Thumb Impression of Landowner(s):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Mobile No.: _____

Witness (Village Authority / Panchayat / Community Institution):

Name & Designation: _____

Signature & Seal: _____

9.13. Annexure M: Beneficiary and Landholder Details

(To be submitted by the Applicant – Cluster-wise)

The Applicant shall provide verified details of all beneficiaries / landholders participating in the proposed bamboo plantation clusters.

Sl. No.	Name of Beneficiary	Father's / Spouse's Name	Aadhaar No. (Last 4)	PAN No.	Mobile No.	Email ID	Full Address	Block	District	State	Area Contributed (ha)	Ownership Type

Declaration by Applicant

I/We hereby certify that:

1. The above list represents the complete and verified list of beneficiaries and landholders proposed under the application.
2. All beneficiaries have provided informed consent for participation in the bamboo plantation project.
3. Aadhaar and PAN details (where available) have been collected solely for identification and verification purposes and shall be handled in accordance with applicable data protection norms.
4. Any change in beneficiary composition shall be promptly intimated to NECBDC.

Authorised Signatory (Applicant):

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Organisation: _____

Signature & Seal: _____