



Impact Evaluation

of Sweden's Support to

Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Centre and the Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET)

in Southeast Asia, 2005–2026

Call for Applications

Date of call: 6 March 2026

Deadline for application: 20 March 2026

By online submission ONLY:

[\[Access Link\]](#)

Key reference document:

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Impact Evaluation [\[Access Link\]](#)

THE PROGRAMME

The Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET) is a regional knowledge-for-policy initiative, implemented by **Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Centre** as the host of the network secretariat, with SEI as a consortium member. Sweden (Sida) has been a long-term strategic partner of SEI and SUMERNET since 2005, providing sustained support to strengthen research capacity, generate policy-relevant knowledge, foster regional cooperation, and promote inclusive and sustainable development across Southeast Asia.

Sweden's support has been channeled through several Swedish development cooperation and research strategies over time, most recently:

- The Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in Research for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development (2022–2028), and
- The Strategy for Sweden's Regional Development Cooperation with Asia and the Pacific Region (2022–2026).

As these strategies near completion, Sida has identified an opportunity to commission a formal, independent evaluation to capture the longer-term results, outcomes, and impacts of Sweden's support to SEI and SUMERNET in Southeast Asia, and to generate structured learning to inform future programming and final strategy reporting.

The total budget for the Impact Evaluation Service (excluding SUMERNET Secretariat management and coordination costs) is **500,000 SEK** (400,000 SEK for personnel costs and 100,000 SEK for direct costs including travel, interviews, and other related costs).

THE ASSIGNMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the results, outcomes, and longer-term contributions of SEI as a knowledge-to-policy actor in Southeast Asia, and to examine the role and added value of Sweden's support over the period 2005–2026. The evaluation focuses in particular on Sida-supported regional initiatives and activities relevant to research and development cooperation, including the development and maintenance of a home-grown regional research network that strengthens research capacity, science-based decision-making, and inclusive, rights-based, and locally led science–policy partnerships addressing transboundary water cooperation, climate adaptation, and environmental governance in Southeast Asia.

The evaluation places specific emphasis on behavioural and institutional outcomes enabled through Swedish support, including changes in how SEI develops itself and operates as a regional intermediary, how boundary and strategic partners engage in policy processes, and how these partnerships influence decision-making in policy and practices.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The evaluation will focus on three specific objectives:

1. **Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development for Research to Policy and Practice:** Examine how Sida's support to the SUMERNET programme has: 1) strengthened SEI's capacity and institutional position as a research institute based in the region, and 2) contributed to developing capacities of local and regional research institutions and researchers in Southeast Asia.
2. **Research-to-Policy-and-Practice Impact:** Evaluate how and to what extent SUMERNET-supported initiatives have contributed to effective translation of scientific evidence into usable knowledge, tools, and decision-making across Mekong countries.
3. **Future Direction and Sustainability of the Network Model:** Identify the niche and comparative advantages of SEI Asia and SUMERNET that can be used for fundraising and building new partnerships for sustainability and longer-term impacts of the network, including at global level, as well as from regional and national levels in the Mekong region.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The primary intended users of the evaluation include, but not limited to:

- SEI (Asia Centre and Global Management Team)
- Sida (Headquarters and Embassies in the Mekong region), and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Secondary intended users include, but not limited to:

- SUMERNET, Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) and other relevant programme and network partners
- Other development partners engaged in research-for-development and regional cooperation
- Current and potential funders, research/academic institutions, civil society organisations, and government authorities in Southeast Asia.

The conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation, to the extent deemed practical and useful, should:

- Comment on Terms of Reference, methodology and work plan
- Provide information and their views on progress and future perspectives

- Discuss and comment on preliminary findings of the evaluation
- Clearly articulate the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation

The evaluators and the main stakeholders will agree on who will be responsible for keeping the various stakeholders informed about the evaluation during the inception phase.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Thematic Scope: The evaluation will primarily cover SUMERNET partners and initiatives, and other Sida-supported initiatives where there are clear overlaps with SUMERNET that contribute to water, climate, and transboundary environmental governance; policy-relevant research and effective models of science–policy interface; and enhanced uptake of equity, inclusion, and youth engagement and leadership.

Geographic Scope: The evaluation covers Southeast Asia's Mekong Region, particularly Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar.

Temporal Scope: 2005–2026, reflecting the establishment of SUMERNET and the full duration of Sweden's support to the initiatives and activities under review.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

Indicative outputs include:

- Inception report
- Draft evaluation report
- Final evaluation report (including executive summary and recommendations)
- Presentation of findings to Sida and SEI
- Optional learning or synthesis brief (that may be useful for the public)

QUALIFICATION OF EVALUATING PARTNER

SEI welcomes proposals from qualified and independent evaluation teams consisting of a Team Leader and one to three additional team members. The evaluation team is expected to demonstrate strong regional experience, methodological expertise, and the ability to deliver a high-quality participatory evaluation process. The evaluation team could be either an independent organization (firm, institute, or consortium) or a team of individual experts who can collectively demonstrate the ability to perform the tasks assigned.

Details of team composition and skill requirements for the evaluation team is in the Service TOR: [[Access Link](#)]

Evaluating Partner (lead organization) is requested to fill in the Organizational Assessment Form, as part of requirement of the granting [[Access Link](#)], as part of partnership due diligence process.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS

All members in the evaluation team must be independent from SUMERNET PLUS Programme and the evaluated activities, and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

Technical Criteria

Delivery Plan (maximum 50 points)

The application, based on the requirements in the Terms of Reference, must describe the approach and method intended to be used, with an elaboration of how this will ensure that the deliverables are satisfied. The following criteria will be assessed:

- Whether the applicant has understood the assignment fully (15 points)

- Whether the applicant's methodology and delivery plan cover all aspects required for the evaluation in good quality, while considering the flexibility to travel for site visits/interviews (25 points)
- Whether the delivery plan for the assignment is clear, efficient, and flexible in relation to the Terms of Reference (10 points)

Qualifications and Competence (maximum 50 points)

The application must contain information regarding the qualifications and competence of the persons proposed. The key requirement at the applying phase is to demonstrate competency and experience of the proposed team, in relation to the assignment as specified in the Qualification of Evaluators section above.

- Expected qualifications (40 points)
- Preferable qualifications (10 points)

| Method of evaluation | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------|
| The number of points that can be awarded under each of the evaluation criteria under Technical Criteria | Scoring scale ⁽¹⁾ | |
| | 1. Poor | 0 % |
| | 2. Not entirely | 40 % |
| | 3. Satisfactory | 60 % |
| | 4. Good | 80 % |
| | 5. Very Good | 100 % |
| For example, if a maximum of 25 points can be awarded for a given criterion, “Good” will mean $0.8 \times 25 = 20$ points. | | |
| Minimum score to proceed to price-evaluation | | |
| The tender must achieve at least a satisfactory score for all criteria, and a minimum of 75 points as a condition for further price evaluation. | | |

Note: (1) Scoring scale:

| Score | Meaning |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Poor: Not addressed or not sufficient |
| 2 | Not entirely: Sufficient in some aspects but not as a whole |
| 3 | Satisfactory: Sufficient but lacks substantial advantages or has uneven quality |
| 4 | Good: Adequate and well suited to the purpose |
| 5 | Very Good: Gives added value and shows high quality on the whole |

Pricing Criteria

Applications that achieve at least the minimum score for the technical criteria will proceed to a price evaluation. The total price for the Evaluation Service must not be higher than 500,000 SEK (inclusive of all taxes).

Price will be assessed according to the following model:

- The applications that submitted the lowest price and met the minimum score for the technical criteria is awarded maximal price points. The others achieve points according

to percentage difference between the individual application and the application with the lowest price.

- Price point = (Lowest application price / Individual application price) * Max point price criterion.

| Criterion | Max point for price criterion |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cost of the assignment | 10 |

Decision Regarding Contract Award

The application receiving the most points (technical + price criteria) will be awarded the contract.

All applicants that have submitted an application will be informed of the decision regarding the contract award by email.

The SUMERNET PLUS Secretariat reserves the right to negotiate the price with the applicant considering the needs of assigned tasks and available budget before the contract is awarded.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

The applicants must submit applications by the deadline of **20 March 2026, close of business day (Bangkok time)**.

The application must contain an acknowledgement that the applicant has the technical, financial and other knowledge requirements for performing the assignment, within the timeframes specified in the Terms of Reference. The application documents must include the following:

Technical Proposal

The technical proposal (excluding appendixes) must describe how the assignment would be carried out and what competencies would be made available in such detail as to enable an assessment against the evaluation criteria specified in the Terms of Reference.

- It should include not more than 5,000 words.
- The CV of each member in the evaluation team (not more than 3 pages each) should be included as an appendix.
- Template for the technical proposal is available in the List of Documents below.

Financial Proposal

- Total price for the assignment must not be higher than 500,000 SEK (VAT and other taxes inclusive).
- All costs must be given in Swedish Kronor (SEK).

The application must include all costs for the assignment and state the total cost, specified as:

- Professional fee per day and person, and in total
- Travel and all travel-associated costs, including accommodation and per diem compensations (to be reimbursed based on actual expenditures)
- Other costs (please specify)
- Template for the financial proposal is available in the List of Documents below.

Application documents are ONLY accepted through the online submission platform: [Submission link – to be confirmed]. Application submission through other channels WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

IMPORTANT DATES

The following are important dates pertinent to this application process:

| Date | Activity |
|--|------------------------------|
| Open of Call | 6 March 2026 |
| Application Deadline | 20 March 2026 |
| Selection Process | 21-25 March 2026 |
| Informal Meeting to Discuss Proposal Refinement | 25-26 March 2026 |
| Contracting Process | 26-31 March 2026 |
| Start of Implementation | Week 1 April 2026 |
| Inception phase | Week 3 April 2026 |
| Inception report & meeting to discuss the inception report | Week 4 April 2026 |
| Data collection & analysis | Week 4 April-Week 3 May 2026 |
| Draft report | Week 3 May 2026 |
| Meeting to discuss draft report | Week 4 May 2026 |
| Final report | Week 1 May 2026 |
| Dissemination Seminar | Week 2 June 2026 |

CONTACT

For inquiries related to this call, please contact:

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SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

For Reference:

Terms of Reference for the Impact Evaluation: [\[Access Link\]](#)

For Required Submission:

- Template of Technical Proposal: [\[Access Link\]](#)

- Template of Financial Proposal: [\[Access Link\]](#)
- Organization Assessment Form: [\[Access Link\]](#)
- CVs of Consultants
- Copy of latest audit report
- Copy of lead organization's registration certificate

Note: All submission will be done online, via Submittable