Terms of Reference

***Expert consultant to support Rikolto in Vietnam in* SRP Verification for the Rice Programme in An Giang Province, Vietnam**

1. Context

Rikolto is an international NGO with over 50 years of experience partnering with farmer organizations and food chain actors across Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Rikolto operates programmes in 18 countries worldwide through 5 regional offices.

Rikolto envisions a world with a sustainable income for farmers and nutritious, affordable food for everyone. We reach our goals by building bridges between smallholder farmer organizations, companies, authorities, and other actors across rural and urban areas. Together, we create innovative ways of accessing, distributing, and producing nutritious, quality food so no one is left behind.

Since 2017, Rikolto has engaged in the rice sector of nine countries**:** Vietnam, Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal. Rikolto has been coaching farmers to change their practices in line with low-carbon and sustainable rice production practices, including Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD), following the Sustainable Rice Production (SRP) Standard, and promoting market linkages by connecting rice producers with market actors. In the area of enabling environment, through collaboration with other stakeholders, Rikolto promotes public and private stakeholders to adopt policies, programmes, and initiatives that promote a more sustainable and inclusively governed rice sector.

The Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation is the world's first voluntary sustainability standard for rice. Drawing on the experiences of other agri-food sustainability initiatives, the SRP Standard was developed over a two-year period with broad stakeholder participation. Recently farmers' livelihood has been unstable due to the impacts of the market and natural conditions such as climate change, floods, and drought. The SRP Standard is a stable practice which could generate higher income for farmers and a friendly environment by reducing the application of fertilizer and pesticides, henceforth generate fewer negative impacts on the environment, reducing risks, and being suitable for most farmers in MKD.

Building on the experiences with the model implemented in the Mekong Delta since 2018, Rikolto is now planning to support SRP verification for two rice farmer groups and one rice company in An Giang province. Rikolto is therefore seeking an experienced consultant or consulting firm with relevant SRP expertise to support the farmer groups and rice company in preparing for and undergoing third-party SRP verification.

Where relevant SRP-related training has already been conducted or is planned by the rice company (e.g. Angimex Kitoku) for its raw material areas, the consultant is expected to review the existing training and supporting evidence and make use of suitable existing materials and training activities. The consultant should focus on identifying and addressing gaps rather than duplicating activities that have already been adequately covered.

2. Objective

The main objective of the consulting package is to support the two rice farmer groups and the rice company in An Giang Province to establish and operate the systems, practices and documentation required for third-party SRP verification. The following specific objectives are:

1. The farmer groups and rice company have the knowledge, systems, documentation and operational capacity required to implement the applicable SRP Standard, Internal Management System (IMS), Assurance Scheme and Chain of Custody (CoC) requirements.
2. The farmer groups and rice company are adequately prepared for third-party verification by an SRP-approved Conformity Assessment Body (CAB), including through self-assessment, gap identification, trial audit and corrective action support.

The consultant's role is to support verification readiness and the verification process. The final verification decision remains the responsibility of the independent CAB.

3. Scope of work

Location: An Giang Province

Target organisations:

- Two rice farmer groups;
- Approximately 200 hectares of rice cultivation area in total;
- One rice company and its relevant raw material and processing operations.

The consultant will provide practical, hands-on technical guidance to Rikolto, the farmer groups and the rice company throughout the verification preparation and verification process. The scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks (see details in the table in the next chapter):

- Training for farmers on SRP standards requirements, SRP IMS and self-assessment for SRP standard;
- Support farmers and rice company to review and establish internal management system (IMS); develop documents and train related skills to operate self-assessment;
- Provide training to the rice company on SRP custody of chains (CoC); develop documents and train related skills to operate the internal management system;
- Assist in documents for factory form, procedures, production, processing, storage, farm plans and regulations related to SRP verification requirements;
- Provide specific guidance on compliance practices on farms, processing and storage facilities;
- Guidance on registration procedures with verification bodies (VBs);
- Support during verification audit and following up and instruction for corrective action(s) (if any).

4. Main activities, deliverables and schedule

The assignment is expected to require up to approximately 39 working days, depending on the findings of the initial baseline/gap assessment and the extent to which existing training and systems can be utilised.

The exact allocation of working days may be adjusted between activities in consultation with Rikolto, provided that the overall level of effort does not exceed the agreed contractual days.

#	Key activities	Expect deliverables/results	Estimated time (Days)

1	Baseline survey and risk assessment for two rice farmer groups and a rice company	Provide quality summary findings on the current practices and situation of farmer; identify key risks at field levels to address and improve to meet the SRP's IMS and Assurance Scheme requirements.	3
2	Baseline survey reports	Baseline survey report submitted	2
3	Review existing SRP-related training and materials, including training conducted/planned	SRP Training Material & Activity Review Report submitted	2
4	Training material preparations	Training materials developed and approved	3
5	Training on the SRP Standard, IMS, and self-assessment skills for the rice farmer groups and the rice company	Rice farmer groups and the rice company will be trained on related topics to meet the SRP standard verification requirement	2
6	Farmer training focused on SRP requirements and a consensus-based discussion on the group management plan for SRP implementation	Training completed & Group action plan agreed	4
7	Review the documents required and support to improve (give feedback, technical assistance) to meet the requirements (on the IMS and Assurance Scheme)	Set of required documents by the standard will be ready for third-party audit	5
8	Instruct and support rice farmer groups /rice company's IMS team on IMS self-assessment based SRP checklist	Self-assessments results/report will be submitted to rice farmer groups and project officers	3
9	Preparing document for factory, form, procedures and map of factory	Documents required by the standard for factory will be prepared and ready for verification audit.	3
10	Conduct Trial audit preparing for official audit	Trial audit report	2
11	Follow up and instruction corrective action	Follow up and report corrective action(s) have been done	2
12	Support the external audit by VB	Connect VB, support the external audit by VB	2
13	Error troubleshooting training (if applicable)	The issue has been resolved	3
14	Final report on the verification process	The report thoroughly presents the evaluation process, key lessons learned, and recommendations regarding the implementation of SRP verification in collaboration with relevant stakeholders	3
	Total (days)		39

Note: The above allocation is indicative. The consultant is expected to optimise the use of working days by building on existing systems, training and capacity within the farmer groups and rice company. Any significant adjustment to the agreed level of effort should be discussed and agreed with Rikolto in advance.

5. Requirements

- At least 5 years of relevant experience on consultations of different strict world standards in the field of agriculture (e.g. Global GAP, Organic), food safety (ISO 22000, FSSC 22000, BRC), and other sustainable programs;
- Demonstrated practical experience with the SRP Standard and its relevant tools and requirements, including the Standard, Performance Indicators, IMS, Assurance Scheme and CoC.
- Valid SRP Authorized Trainer status relevant to the training scope of this assignment;
- Being an SRP Authorized Training Provider will be an advantage.

6. Application

Interested consultants/consulting firms are invited to submit:

- Company/consultant profile;
- CV(s) of the proposed lead consultant(s);
- Cover letter;
- Technical proposal describing the proposed approach and methodology for delivering the full scope of the assignment, including key deliverables;
- Implementation roadmap.
- Financial Proposal, including:
  - ✓ Professional fees, with daily rates and estimated working days for each proposed expert;
  - ✓ Field travel, accommodation and meals/per diem;
  - ✓ Other assignment-related or incidental costs; and applicable taxes/VAT.

  Costs should be clearly broken down by component and, where relevant, by major activity. Applicants should distinguish between professional fees, research/field/laboratory costs, and other reimbursable costs, and state the total estimated cost.

Applications should be submitted by **October 31, 2026** to: vietnam@rikolto.org

Only qualified candidates (firms) will be invited for an interview.