#  Serbia Competitive Agriculture Project (SCAP) Terms of Reference

**SCAP as a National Measure: A New Financing Model as an Investment-Driving Tool of the Ministry of Agriculture**

# Background

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

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

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

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

# Rationale

Serbia’s agricultural sector is undergoing important transformations, which call for more effective, investment-oriented support models tailored to the evolving needs of small and medium-sized producers. While SCAP was not originally designed as a policy reform instrument, its implementation of an innovative co-financing model (50:40:10) offers practical insights that may inform future policy dialogue and guide the improvement of Serbia’s broader agricultural support system. These experiences may also contribute to aligning Serbia’s support mechanisms with EU accession objectives, international good practices, and the country’s long-term strategic priorities.

The effectiveness of SCAP’s 50:40:10 co-financing model will be assessed to determine its potential for broader application in Serbia’s rural development strategy, IPARD III Programme, and national agricultural policies. This approach provides a data-driven foundation for transitioning from direct subsidies to investment-driven support models, optimizing the use of public and private financing while enhancing competitiveness, sustainability, and institutional capacity.

By integrating global best practices, stakeholder feedback, and economic feasibility analyses, this initiative will provide actionable recommendations for strengthening Serbia’s agricultural sector. The findings will serve as a roadmap for policy improvements, ensuring that agricultural support measures effectively enhance market access, resource efficiency, and resilience in the face of evolving environmental and economic challenges.

# Objective of the Assignment

# General Objective

This initiative aims to refine and enhance Serbia’s agricultural support models, building on the lessons learned and successes of the Serbia Competitive Agriculture Project (SCAP). It will evaluate SCAP’s approaches, including its 50:40:10 co-financing model, and assess their potential integration into Serbia’s broader agricultural policy framework. This work will ensure alignment with national priorities, such as the Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy 2025–2034, and international frameworks, including the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), IPARD III Programme, OECD Competitiveness Outlook, the FAO Framework for Sustainable Agriculture, and the European Green Deal. By referencing these and other relevant policies, this initiative will emphasize compatibility with global trends and best practices.

By providing actionable recommendations and a roadmap, this initiative seeks to empower Serbia’s agricultural sector to achieve increased competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience while addressing the specific needs of small and medium-sized producers.

# Specific Objectives

 **Policy Framework and Strategic Alignment**

* Evaluate SCAP’s operational framework and its alignment with Serbia’s **Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy (2014–2024)** and its upcoming successor strategy for 2025–2034.
* Ensure compatibility with the **IPARD III Programme**, emphasizing integration with Serbia’s EU accession goals and alignment with the **EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) objectives**.
* Cross-reference findings with the **OECD Competitiveness Outlook**, focusing on rural development, agricultural support systems, and innovation trends in Serbia.

 **Scalability and Fiscal Sustainability**

* Analyze the fiscal sustainability of adopting SCAP’s 50:40:10 co-financing model as a national measure.
* Assess its ability to mobilize resources from EU pre-accession funds, national budgets, and private sector investments, ensuring cost-effectiveness and scalability.
* Provide insights on how this model can address challenges such as farm fragmentation, demographic shifts in rural areas, and limited access to modern agricultural technologies.

 **Stakeholder Engagement and Feasibility**

* Map key stakeholders, including public institutions, producer organizations, agribusinesses, and international donors, to identify synergies and potential roles in evaluating and potentially scaling SCAP principles — including the 50:40:10 model — within the national agricultural policy framework.
* Organize consultations and workshops to assess the feasibility of transitioning SCAP’s principles into broader agricultural policy frameworks.
* Engage local governments and rural communities to ensure policy relevance and inclusivity.

 **Strategic Recommendations and Implementation Pathway**

* Develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for integrating SCAP-inspired approaches into Serbia’s agricultural policies.
* Create an actionable roadmap outlining legal, institutional, and operational steps for adopting enhanced agricultural support models, including timelines, milestones, co-financing, blended advisory mechanisms, and digitalized support processes piloted through SCAP.

 **Economic, Social, and Environmental Impact Assessment**

* Project the anticipated economic benefits of scaling SCAP-inspired models, focusing on improved productivity, market access, and sector competitiveness.
* Assess social outcomes such as job creation, rural livelihoods, and community resilience.
* Evaluate environmental impacts, highlighting opportunities to incorporate climate-smart agriculture practices and enhance resource efficiency, following relevant ESMF/ESMP principles for potential future application.

 **Global Best Practices and Applicability to Serbia**

* Review successful agricultural support models from EU and OECD countries, particularly those that emphasize sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity.
* Identify lessons learned and adapt these practices to Serbia’s unique agricultural landscape, leveraging its climatic conditions, land resources, and strategic position in the Western Balkans.
* Ensure that all recommendations reflect global trends while respecting Serbia’s cultural and economic context.

# Scope of Services

The consultancy will focus on providing a comprehensive analysis and strategic recommendations for enhancing agricultural support models in Serbia. The services will be structured to ensure alignment with national strategies, international frameworks, and Serbia’s EU accession objectives. The scope includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

1. **Assessment of Current Agricultural Support Models**
	* Conduct a detailed analysis of SCAP’s operational framework, including its 50:40:10 co-financing model, governance structures, and its impact on small and medium-sized producers.
	* Evaluate how SCAP aligns with Serbia’s **Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy (2014–2024)**, **IPARD III Programme**, and relevant EU CAP objectives.
	* Identify challenges, gaps, and opportunities for scaling SCAP’s model into a broader agricultural policy framework.
2. **Alignment with Strategic and Policy Frameworks**
	* Review Serbia’s **Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy 2025–2034** draft document and assess how key SCAP design and implementation elements - including the co-financing model, targeting approach, and digital/advisory integration - can be reflected in the new strategy.
	* Ensure compatibility with the **OECD Competitiveness Outlook**, **European Green Deal**, **FAO Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture**, and similar frameworks.
	* Identify synergies with Serbia’s commitments under the **Western Balkans Green Agenda** and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement and Needs Assessment**
	* Organize and facilitate consultations with key stakeholders, including government bodies (e.g., MAFWM), local governments, producer organizations, agribusinesses, and international donors.
	* Conduct up to four workshops and targeted interviews to assess the needs, challenges, and perspectives of stakeholders at all levels, ensuring an inclusive approach (approx. 20–25 participants per workshop).
	* Map out institutional, financial, and operational roles of various stakeholders for successful policy implementation.
4. **Global Best Practices and Applicability to Serbia**
	* Conduct a review of successful agricultural support programs globally, with a focus on EU member states and pre-accession countries with comparable agricultural structures, such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, and the Western Balkans region - including investment grants (e.g. IPARD-like schemes), direct payments for smallholders, rural development measures, and public-private advisory models.
	* Extract lessons learned and analyze their applicability to Serbia’s agricultural context.
	* Highlight innovative solutions, including digital tools, climate-smart agriculture practices, and public-private partnership models that could enhance the effectiveness of Serbia’s agricultural support mechanisms.
5. **Development of Strategic Recommendations**
	* Formulate a detailed set of recommendations for integrating SCAP-derived elements - such as the 50:40:10 co-financing logic, transparent selection procedures, and digital/advisory components - into Serbia’s national investment support measures.
	* Provide guidance on aligning financial mechanisms with Serbia’s broader rural development goals and EU CAP requirements.
	* Address legal, institutional, and operational adjustments necessary for implementation, including potential revisions or development of rulebooks for relevant support instruments.
6. **Economic, Social, and Environmental Impact Analysis**
	* Evaluate the economic implications of scaling SCAP’s model, including its potential to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and market access.
	* Assess social impacts such as job creation, rural community development, and inclusivity.
	* Analyze environmental benefits, including the adoption of climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices, including the adoption of climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices, in line with relevant ESMF/ESMP principles.
	* To integrate environmental sustainability and social responsibility principles across all aspects of the project. This includes assessing the impact of climate change, sustainable energy use, circular economy, promoting eco-friendly farming practices, ensuring fair labor conditions, and identifying opportunities for green investments and certifications that enhance Serbia’s competitive position in international markets.
7. **Development of an Implementation Roadmap**
	* Design a practical roadmap for implementing recommended agricultural support models, outlining specific actions, timelines, and responsible entities.
	* Include milestones for monitoring progress and adjusting the strategy based on emerging challenges and opportunities. The Consultant is expected to propose two to three feasible monitoring approaches, to be reviewed and approved by the Client.
8. **Reporting and Capacity Building**
	* Prepare and deliver comprehensive reports, including interim and final deliverables, to communicate findings, recommendations, and strategic directions.
	* Conduct up to three workshops or training sessions to disseminate findings and build capacity among key stakeholders - including government institutions, local governments, and producer organizations - with approximately 20–25 participants per session. The final format and location of workshops will be determined during implementation, in agreement with the Client and based on the progression of the assignment.

# Institutional and Implementation Arrangements and key stakeholders

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

1. **Work Methodology**

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

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

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

1. **Deliverables**

The consultancy will produce a series of structured deliverables to ensure comprehensive analysis, strategic recommendations, and actionable outcomes. These deliverables will provide a roadmap for enhancing Serbia’s agricultural support models and integrating them into the national policy framework. The deliverables are as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverable | Report | Timeline | Form and language |
| Deliverable 1 | **Inception Report**: Initial report detailing the consultancy’s scope, methodology, and stakeholder engagement plan. Includes a preliminary review of SCAP and its alignment with relevant policy frameworks and global best practices. | Up to 1 month after signing the contract | * In Serbian and English language

Electronic version and in hard copy |
| Deliverable 2 | **Assessment Report on Current Agricultural Support Models**: A comprehensive analysis of SCAP’s framework, alignment with national and international policies (e.g., IPARD III, EU CAP, OECD Outlook), and identification of gaps and opportunities. **Stakeholder Engagement and Global Best Practices Review**: Summary of stakeholder consultations, global case studies, and applicability to Serbia. Identifies stakeholder needs and lessons learned from successful international agricultural models. | Up to 5 months after signing the contract | * In Serbian and English language

Electronic version and in hard copy |
| Deliverable 4 | **Strategic Recommendations Report**: Detailed recommendations for integrating SCAP-inspired models into Serbia’s national policies, including Economic, Social, and Environmental Impact Analysis, with actionable strategies for financial, legal, and institutional adjustments.**Implementation Roadmap**: A practical, step-by-step roadmap for integrating recommendations, with timelines, responsible entities, and milestones for monitoring progress. | Up to 7 months after signing the contract | * In Serbian and English language

Electronic version and in hard copy |
| Deliverable 5 | **Final Report**: Consolidated document including all findings, analyses, recommendations, implementation strategies, and a summary of reporting and capacity-building activities conducted during the assignment. | Up to 8 months after signing the contract | * In Serbian and English language

Electronic version and in hard copy |

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

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

**Bottom of Form**

1. **Engagement**
* **Type of Contract**: The contracting will be executed as a lump-sum consultancy contract, with payments tied to the successful delivery of agreed products.
* **Duration of Contract**: The duration of the contract will be up to 240 calendar days from its signing, ensuring sufficient time for thorough analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of comprehensive recommendations.
* **Functional Dependency**: The consultancy will operate under the supervision of the SCAP Project Manager. The Consultant/Firm will deliver progress reports and all finalized deliverables to the Project Manager, who will oversee coordination and alignment with the project's overall objectives.
1. **Acceptance criteria**

Deliverables submitted to and approved by the authorized person of Client (SCAP Project Coordinator). Approval of these deliverables will allow payment for each of the Deliverables.

1. **Other requirements**

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

 All activities and deliverables will be designed and executed in alignment with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESS).

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

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

# Experience and Qualifications Requirements

To be considered for the consultancy on SCAP as a National Measure: A New Financing Model as an Investment-Driving Tool of the Ministry of Agriculture, The assignment will require a qualified consulting company or a joint venture (Consultant )meet the following qualifications:

* Minimum 10 years of experience in research, policy analysis, and consulting within the fields of economic development, governance, institutional reform, or regulatory alignment.
* Experience in working with government institutions, international organizations, and donor-funded projects, particularly in policy and institutional strengthening.
* Experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating support programs focused on competitiveness, sustainability, and institutional capacity-building in economic and public policy domains.
* Experience in conducting regulatory and policy alignment assessments, including compliance with EU accession frameworks, OECD governance standards, and international best practices in public sector reforms, is an asset.
* Experience in financial and economic modeling, cost-benefit analysis, and structuring of investment programs, including co-financing mechanisms and fiscal sustainability assessments, is an asset.
* Experience in leading and managing multi-disciplinary teams, coordinating research in economics, law, governance, and institutional reform, is an asset.
* Experience in policy alignment in the Western Balkans and experience with governance reforms, institutional restructuring, and regulatory compliance in the region, is an asset.
* Strong background in stakeholder engagement, participatory policy development, and consultation processes with relevant institutional actors, including government bodies, donor agencies, and economic stakeholders, is an asset.
* Experience in environmental sustainability, climate policies, and governance frameworks related to sustainable development, is an asset.

The Consultant shall propose a team of experts with relevant qualifications and experience to successfully implement the assignment. All experts shall be independent and free from any conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on. Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage. The team shall include the following key experts:

**Key Expert 1: Team Leader (TL) ( 1 postion)**

1. Minimum Master’s University degree (PhD will be considered as an asset) in agriculture, economics, rural development, public policy, or a related field.
2. Minimum 15 years of post-graduated general work experience.
3. Minimum 10 years of experience in agriculture sector development, policy analysis, or rural development.
4. Experience in managing multi-stakeholder projects, including coordination with government institutions, international organizations, and private sector stakeholders.
5. Experience in working on World Bank-funded or other donor-funded agricultural projects is an asset.
6. Experience in agricultural policy framework, including IPARD, EU CAP, and rural development programs is an asset.
7. Experience in conducting impact assessments and feasibility studies for agricultural policy and support models is an asset.
8. Experience in agricultural investment planning and financial mechanisms (e.g. co-financing schemes, blended finance, or other public-private support instruments relevant to the agricultural sector, or related) is an asset.
9. Previous experience in Serbia would be an asset.
10. Fluency in English and Serbian.

**Key Expert 2: Legal Expert ( 1 postion)**

1. Minimum Bachelor’s University degree (Master’s or PhD will be consider as an asset) in law, preferably with a specialization in agricultural, environmental, or administrative law.
2. Minimum 10 years of post-graduated general work experience.
3. Minimum of 7 years of experience in legal analysis, regulatory frameworks, and policy alignment in agriculture or rural development.
4. Experience in drafting legal documents, policy recommendations, or regulatory reforms related to agriculture or EU integration processes.
5. Experience in legal framework in agriculture, including EU CAP, IPARD III, and rural development regulations is an asset.
6. Experience advising government institutions on legal harmonization with EU agricultural policies is an asset.
7. Experience in public-private partnership regulations in the agricultural sector is an asset.
8. Experience in developing institutional frameworks and governance structures for agricultural support programs is an asset.
9. Experience in legal risk assessment and compliance monitoring related to agricultural investments is an asset.
10. Previous experience in Serbia would be an asset.
11. Fluency in English and Serbian.

**Key Expert 3: Economics expert ( 1 postion)**

1. Minimum Bachelor’s University degree (Master’s or PhD will be consider as an asset) in economics, agricultural economics, finance, or a related field.
2. Minimum 10 years of post-graduated general work experience.
3. Minimum of 7 years of experience in economic analysis, financial modeling, or agricultural support programs.
4. Experience in cost-benefit analysis, fiscal sustainability assessments, and financial structuring of agricultural programs.
5. Experience in financial assessments of agricultural investment models, including SCAP or similar co-financing schemes is an asset.
6. Experience in economic policies affecting small and medium agricultural producers in Serbia and the EU is an asset.
7. Experience in agricultural competitiveness and market access strategies is an asset.
8. Experience in analyzing agricultural value chains and producer group financing is an asset.
9. Experience in global best practices in agricultural finance, including blended finance mechanisms and public-private funding models is an asset.
10. Experience in agricultural subsidies and incentive mechanisms within EU and OECD frameworks is an asset.
11. Previous experience in Serbia would be an asset.
12. Fluency in English and Serbian.

**Key Expert 4: Agricultural Engineer ( 1 postion)**

1. Minimum Bachelor’s University degree (Master’s or PhD will be consider as an asset) in agricultural sciences, agronomy, agricultural engineering, or a related field.
2. Minimum 10 years of post-graduated general work experience.
3. Minimum of 7 years of experience in agricultural advisory services, rural development programs, or technical assessments of agricultural practices.
4. Experience in sustainable farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, and innovative agricultural technologies.
5. Experience in EU standards and requirements for sustainable agriculture and rural development is an asset.
6. Experience in digital agriculture solutions, including precision farming and farm management systems is an asset.
7. Experience in Serbia’s agricultural extension services and institutional capacity-building programs is an asset.
8. Experience in integrating small and medium-sized farmers into market-driven agricultural models is an asset.
9. Experience in soil and water conservation strategies and their application in rural development is an asset.
10. Experience in developing technical guidelines and best practices for sustainable agricultural support programs is an asset.
11. Previous experience in Serbia would be an asset.
12. Fluency in English and Serbian.

**Key Expert 5: Policy/Institutional Expert ( 1 postion)**

1. Minimum Bachelor’s University degree (Master’s or PhD will be consider as an asset) in public policy, political science, governance, rural development, or a related field.
2. Minimum 10 years of post-graduated general work experience.
3. Minimum of 7 years of experience in policy analysis, institutional capacity building, and governance reform in the agriculture sector.
4. Experience in designing, implementing, or evaluating agricultural policies and institutional frameworks.
5. Experience in conducting institutional assessments and stakeholder engagement strategies is an asset.
6. Experience in governance structures in agriculture, including public administration reforms and inter-agency coordination is an asset.
7. Experience in aligning national agricultural policies with EU accession requirements is an asset.
8. Experience in international organizations’ approaches to agricultural policy support, including OECD, FAO, and the EU is an asset.
9. Experience in monitoring and evaluation of agricultural policy implementation and reform is an asset.
10. Experience in preparing policy recommendations and action plans for agricultural sector transformation is an asset.
11. Previous experience in Serbia would be an asset.
12. Fluency in English and Serbian.

# Confidentiality Statement

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

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

# Selection

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with Consultant’s Qualification Selection (CQS) method set out in the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – Procurement in Investment Project Financing Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016, revised November 2017, August 2018.

The Consultant will be evaluated applying the following evaluation:

Qualifications and General experience                      ( 40 Points)

Specific Experience relevant to the Assignment        ( 60 Points)

 TOTAL: 100 points

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