



GOVERNMENT OF KIRIBATI
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND OCEAN RESOURCES

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File ref:

Date: 13/03/2026

Job Title: Policy consultant - BBNJ (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Domestication Support
Location: Bairiki, Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources (with possibility of remote work)
Duration: 12 months
Reporting to: Director, Geoscience Division, Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources
Application Deadline: 29th May 2026

1. Background:

The Republic of Kiribati ratified the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on 9 December 2025. The Agreement entered into force on 17 January 2026 and establishes a comprehensive international legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

In preparation for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1) in 2027, and to ensure a coherent national approach to implementation, the Government of Kiribati intends to develop a stand-alone National BBNJ Policy Framework. The policy will articulate national vision, strategic objectives, guiding principles, and priority actions, and will establish mechanisms for coordination, implementation, monitoring, and periodic review.

The Government, therefore, seeks to engage a qualified Consultant to lead the development of this Policy Framework.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a comprehensive and results-oriented National BBNJ Policy Framework that:

- Defines Kiribati's national vision and policy objectives under the BBNJ Agreement;
- Establishes strategic principles and priority areas for action;
- Provides a structured implementation framework with clearly assigned institutional responsibilities; and

- Sets out monitoring, reporting, and review mechanisms aligned with national processes and COP requirements.

3. Scope of Work

Under the overall guidance of the BBNJ subcommittee, the Consultant shall undertake the following tasks:

3.1. Policy Context and Alignment Review

- Conduct an assessment of the country situation with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ and potential impact thereon and the main challenges associated with ratification, approval, acceptance or accession and implementation, including priority capacity building needs.
- Conduct baseline biodiversity assessments, including relevant scientific, technical, spatial, fisheries, and environmental studies necessary to support evidence-based implementation of the BBNJ Agreement in Kiribati.
- Identify policy gaps or governance, institutional, and administrative capacity gap assessment or scientific, technical, infrastructure and technology gap assessment for implementation of BBNJ Agreement and with strategic considerations relevant to national interests.
- Review relevant national ocean, biodiversity, fisheries, traditional knowledge and intellectual property right, environmental, and development policies as well as existing procedures governing marine research and related authorization processes;
- Assess alignment with the four thematic pillars of the BBNJ Agreement

3.2. Institutional Coordination and Governance Design

- Analyse statutory mandates and jurisdiction of relevant ministries and agencies to domesticate and implement BBNJ Agreement
- Propose clear institutional roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms (e.g., inter-ministerial committee, lead agency model) and draft Terms of reference for relevant bodies to implement the now-in-force BBNJ Agreement effectively within Kiribati's government structure.
- Develop frameworks for inter-agency collaboration to prevent overlaps and ensure cohesive governance from the Agreement's entry into force.
- Develop a National strategy and action plan of the policy, core and supporting legislative reforms

3.3. Development of the National BBNJ Policy Framework

Prepare a draft National BBNJ Policy including:

- Vision statement;
- Policy objectives;
- Strategic and guiding principles;

- Strategic priorities aligned with the four thematic areas of the BBNJ Agreement;
- Cross-cutting governance, coordination mechanisms and institutional arrangements.

3.4. Implementation Action Plan

Develop a structured, results-based Implementation Action Plan, including:

- Clearly defined actions under each strategic priority;
- Designation of lead and supporting institutions;
- Phased timelines (short-, medium-, and long-term);
- Measurable performance indicators;
- Risk analysis and mitigation measures; and
- Indicative resource considerations.

3.5. Monitoring, Reporting and Reviewed Framework

Propose a framework that includes:

- Institutional oversight arrangement;
- Monitoring and reporting mechanisms; and
- Periodic review cycle aligned with COP processes.

3.6. Facilitate Stakeholder Consultation and Validation

- Conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders;
- Support a national validation workshop; and
- Finalize the Policy and Action Plan incorporating feedback.

4. Expected Outputs and Deliverables and timeline

The Consultant is expected to deliver the following output:

- 1) Inception Report (methodology, workshop, and policy outline) – Month 1
- 2) Policy Context, Gap and Alignment Analysis Report – Month 2-4
- 3) Draft Institutional Coordination Framework - 2-4
- 4) Draft National BBNJ Policy – Month 4-7
- 5) Draft Implementation Action Plan and Monitoring – Month 8-9
- 6) Stakeholder Consultation Summary Report – Month 10
- 7) Presentation to Secretary – Month 11
- 8) Final National BBJ Policy Framework and Action Plan (including cabinet paper – ready submission) - Month 12

5. Duration

The assignment shall be undertaken over a period of twelve (12) months from the date of contract signature.

6. Reporting and Coordination

The consultant shall report to the BBNJ Committee or its designated representative and shall provide periodic progress updates as agreed.

7. Qualifications and Competencies

- An advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in international law, ocean governance, environmental law, ocean policy, public policy, or a related discipline;
- At least five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in ocean governance, environmental policy development, or multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs);
- Demonstrated knowledge of UNCLOS and the BBNJ Agreement;
- Proven experience in drafting national policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Experience working with governments or intergovernmental process, preferably in small island developing States (SIDS);
- Strong analytical, drafting, and facilitation skills; and
- Fluency in English.

8. Application Procedure

Interested candidates are invited to submit:

1. Qualification certificates
2. An updated Curriculum Vitae (CV);
3. Cover letter outlining suitability and proposed approach;
4. A sample of a relevant policy document; and
5. Three professional references.

Application must be submitted to HR Eberaim Tamoaieta at eberaimt@mfor.gov.ki or you can submit your hard copies to the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources before 10th April, 2026

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.

9. Other Provisions

- Authorized travel, if required, shall be arranged in accordance with applicable procedures.
- All outputs remain the property of the Government of Kiribati.
- The Consultant shall maintain strict confidentiality and disclose any conflict of interest.
- Payments will be milestone-based upon approval of deliverables

Note

The Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources of Kiribati, in partnership with FAO, is an equal-opportunity employer and encourages applications from qualified women, minorities, and individuals with diverse backgrounds. This position is a critical and time-sensitive component of a strategic GEF-supported project, designed to ensure Kiribati meets its obligations and capitalizes on the opportunities of the now-in-force BBNJ Agreement, reinforcing its leadership in global ocean governance.