

Terms of Reference for the Development of Georgia's National Tourism Strategy 2035

A. Introduction

The Government of Georgia has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of Project Readiness Financing for Livable Cities Investment Program (LCIP-PRF) (hereinafter the Project). The LEPL Spatial and Urban Development Agency (hereinafter SUDA) under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia is among the project implementing agencies (IA). Within the scope of the loan received, SUDA is planning implementation of various spatial and urban development projects, financed by the ADB within Livable Cities Investment Program PRF.

SUDA intends to engage an international consulting firm in accordance with Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017) and ADB's Guidance Notes on Procurement and to apply a portion of this loan to eligible payments under the consultancy services for Development of Georgia's National Tourism Strategy 2035.

B. Background

The "Tourism Strategy of Georgia 2025", formulated in 2015, has provided a critical framework for the structured and dynamic development of the nation's tourism sector. By establishing a clear vision and implementing an effective action plan, the strategy has significantly facilitated growth within the sector. As of 2024, Georgia recorded a historic maximum in revenue from international travel, reaching **\$4.4 billion (4,425,376,937 USD)**. Moreover, in 2024, tourism revenues surpassed the **2019 level by 35.4% (\$1,156,722,868 increase)** and exceeded the **2023 figures by 7.3% (\$300,047,994 increase)**.

As the current strategy nears its conclusion, there is an opportunity to respond to new challenges and trends by advancing sustainable tourism practices. Emerging issues such as post-pandemic shifts in visitor behaviors, the need for sustainable resource management, climate change impacts, workforce development gaps, and technological integration underscore the urgency for a forward-looking **10-year National Tourism Strategy (2035) and Action Plan**.

The implementation of this strategy, grounded in comprehensive initiatives and activities, will ensure the sector's continued development. By aligning with international best practices and fostering innovation, the strategy is expected to yield measurable economic and social benefits, solidifying Georgia's position as a leading global tourism destination.

The strategy will encompass key components such as Vision, Previous Strategy Analysis, In depth Situation Analysis, Key Tourism Products, Marketing and Action Plan. The development of the Tourism Strategy should adhere to the methodology outlined in government decree #629, dated December 20, 2019, which governs policy planning and evaluation processes. The final document should include all necessary annexes and forms as indicated in the decree. With a focus on addressing the needs of both international and domestic visitors, the strategy seeks to

capitalize on Georgia's tourism potential while mitigating challenges and maximizing opportunities. The strategy should be approved by the government, and the action plan should be accepted by relevant ministries as mandatory. Furthermore, the strategy should incorporate sustainable development principles, climate change effects, inclusivity and gender issues as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Due to the all-inclusive scope of the assignment, the consultancy company should work closely with the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) — the key government agency responsible for tourism policy development, strategic planning, and coordination across the sector. GNTA will serve as the ultimate owner of the national tourism strategy and will be responsible for its long-term implementation, monitoring, and stakeholder alignment. Therefore, strong collaboration with GNTA throughout all phases of the strategy development process is essential. Additionally, consultancy company should work with all other government agencies directly or indirectly involved in tourism, including regional DMOs. On the other hand, involvement of the private sector, primarily represented by associations, should have an equal or even larger stake in the process, as well as the academic sector bringing expertise on the market.

C. Objective

The objective is to develop a comprehensive tourism strategy and action plan for Georgia, aimed at addressing the evolving challenges and opportunities in the global tourism market. By engaging with relevant government agencies, civil society organizations including the private sector, and academic institutions, the consultancy will ensure broad stakeholder involvement and consensus-building, thereby fostering sustainable tourism development while enhancing economic growth and social welfare in Georgia.

This updated strategy will aim to:

- Diversify Georgia's tourism products and markets.
- Enhance international visibility and marketing efforts.
- Strengthen Georgia's competitive positioning as a sustainable and attractive destination.
- In line with: Embed sustainable development principles and climate change considerations.
- Foster inclusivity and gender-sensitive practices.
- Incorporate robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for adaptability.

D. Scope of Work

The Consultant will closely collaborate with the tourism strategy working group established by GNTA. Effective communication and coordination mechanisms, including a steering committee with thematic group leaders (experts), will be established in coordination with GNTA to ensure collaboration and accountability. The roles and responsibilities of the steering committees throughout the project implementation will be identified by the Consultants in coordination with

GNTA . The Consultant must provide a clear and detailed methodology for thematic group work, outlining roles, responsibilities, research methods, and the number of interviews and surveys to be conducted in coordination with GNTA. This methodology will guide research and analysis within each thematic area. In coordination with GNTA, the Consultant will identify key stakeholders, define their roles, develop thematic overviews, and identify actions for the action plan, working closely with GNTA to identify organization-led actions.

Phase 1: Inception (Define scope, method, and engagement process)

- **Key Activities:**
 - Stakeholder kickoff meetings and agreement on principles (e.g., sustainability, inclusivity)
 - Establish methodology for diagnostics and strategy development
 - Develop a detailed workplan and engagement roadmap
- **Output:** Inception report including methodology, stakeholder map, and timeline

Phase 2: Context (In-depth review and analysis)

a. *Situational and policy context analysis Understand Georgia's tourism governance and planning context.*

- **Key Activities:**
 - Review existing national and regional tourism strategies, policies, and development plans
 - Analyze coherence with SDGs, GSTC, CAREC, GMS Tourism Working Group, EU, and national goals
- **Output:** Policy alignment and strategic positioning report

b. *Market assessment and demand-supply analysis*

- **Key Activities:**
 - Analyze current and forecasted tourist arrivals, market segmentation, and seasonal patterns and positioning
 - Assess average spending, length of stay, and per capita impact
 - Identify emerging trends (e.g., digital nomads, wellness, diaspora tourism)
 - Evaluate accommodation and service capacity (hotels, beds, etc.) against projected demand
- **Output: Market trends and tourism demand-supply gap analysis**
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **Marketing and Intelligence**
 - **Development of Tourism Products**

c. *Infrastructure, climate risk, and environmental analysis Assess infrastructure quality and sustainability risks.*

- **Key Activities:**
 - Inventory of tourism-enabling infrastructure (transport, energy, water, waste, internet)

- Identify obsolescence risks and climate-vulnerable areas
 - Evaluate resilience of tourism infrastructure to climate events
- **Output:** Infrastructure condition and climate adaptation report
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **Development of Tourism Infrastructure and Investments**
 - **Sustainability (Climate Change) and Heritage Conservation**
- d. ***Cultural and natural heritage assessment Ensure protection and sustainable use of key assets.***
 - **Key Activities:**
 - Map and assess major cultural, spiritual, and natural heritage sites
 - Evaluate conservation status and visitor management systems
 - Assess potential for sustainable cultural tourism circuits
 - **Output:** Heritage asset sustainability and tourism integration report
 - **Involved Groups:**
 - **Sustainability (Climate Change) and Heritage Conservation**
- e. ***Community inclusion, employment, and skills development Promote inclusive and equitable tourism growth.***
 - **Key Activities:**
 - Conduct community satisfaction and benefit-sharing surveys
 - Assess tourism-related employment and income opportunities
 - Identify skill gaps and propose training frameworks (e.g., green jobs, service, guiding)
 - **Output:** Community inclusion and tourism skills development strategy
 - **Involved Groups:**
 - **Workforce Development**
- f. ***Carrying Capacity and Destination Health Analysis Protect destination integrity and avoid overuse.***
 - **Key Activities:**
 - Calculate physical and environmental carrying capacities at key sites
 - Monitor visitor density, environmental impact, and host community perceptions
 - **Output:** Carrying capacity thresholds and destination management recommendations
 - **Involved Groups:**
 - **Service Quality and Safety**
 - **Sustainability (Climate Change) and Heritage Conservation**
- g. ***Institutional and Governance Capacity Assessment Ensure effective policy delivery and coordination.***
 - **Key Activities:**
 - Map institutional roles (GNTA, DMOs, line ministries, local governments)

- Evaluate governance, data systems, and policy coordination mechanisms
- Identify capacity-building needs of decision-makers and tourism bodies
- **Output:** Institutional strengthening roadmap for sustainable tourism governance
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **Policy and Regulatory Framework and Partnerships**

Phase 3: SWOT Analysis

h. Identify internal and external strategic factors.

- **Key Activities:**
 - Conduct participatory SWOT workshops across government, private sector, and communities
- **Output:** National and regional-level sustainability-oriented SWOT matrix
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

Phase 4: Visioning and strategic framework

i. Co-develop Georgia's long-term tourism vision.

- **Key Activities:**
 - Facilitate stakeholder visioning sessions
 - Define strategic pillars (e.g., sustainable destination, digitalization, resilience, heritage, inclusion)
- **Output:** National vision, mission, and strategic objectives
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

*j. **Strategy formulation and prioritization** Define interventions and spatial priorities.*

- **Key Activities:**
 - Identify the best suited tourism institutional governance and management framework at national, regional, municipal and resort levels.
 - Identify Georgia market positioning, segment, spending, right number for the quality
 - Identify thematic and geographic priorities (e.g., wine routes, mountain hubs, heritage circuits etc.)
 - Align strategy with international standards (e.g., GSTC, ESG investment norms)
 - Identify bankable projects and enabling reforms
- **Output:** Strategic framework including strengthening tourism destinations governance and investment-ready intervention pipeline
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

Phase 5: Action plan and financing Roadmap (Translate strategy into implementable steps).

- **Key Activities:**
 - Develop detailed action plan with timelines and responsibilities
 - Identify financing sources (public, PPP, donor, impact investors)
- **Output:** Time-bound, costed action plan with financing strategy
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

Phase 6: Monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework Enable adaptive management and accountability.

- **Key Activities:**
 - Establish KPIs (e.g., GHG emissions per tourist, local jobs, visitor satisfaction)
 - Recommend data collection and feedback mechanisms
- **Output:** M&E framework aligned with SDGs and national development goals
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

Phase 7: Finalization and communication Deliver finalized strategy and promote uptake.

- **Key Activities:**
 - Consolidate inputs and finalize strategy documents
 - Prepare policy briefs and communication materials for dissemination
- **Output:** Final strategy, executive summary, and presentation pack
- **Involved Groups:**
 - **All Groups**

C. Timeframe

12. The overall duration for the development of the national tourism strategy shall not exceed eight 18 months from the date of the contract signing.

13. The Consultant shall submit a detailed Work Plan at the inception stage, which must include:

- A comprehensive project implementation schedule;
- Description of the methodology for executing each task;
- Clearly defined deliverables and timelines for all outputs;
- Identification of critical milestones and dependencies;
- A Gantt chart or similar visual tool for tracking progress.

15. The Consultant is expected to schedule regular coordination meetings with the Client and key stakeholder GNTA and ADB to ensure timely communication, alignment of activities, and progress monitoring.

16. Any potential delays or risks to the timeline must be communicated in writing, along with proposed mitigation measures, to avoid disruption in the overall project schedule.

17. All reports and outputs shall be submitted in English and Georgian, in both editable digital (e.g., Word/Excel) and PDF formats, and shall be subject to review and clearance by SUDA and, GNTA.

D. Team Organization

18. The Consultant shall assemble a multidisciplinary team of international experts with demonstrated experience as presented in the list of indicative experts below in table 1. The team must be capable of delivering a comprehensive and high-quality strategy documents in alignment with Government's strategies, Client's requirements and best international practices.

19. Consulting firms may also associate with other firms to provide the complete range of expertise required for the assignment. Position-specific requirements are provided in **Annex 1**. Consultants proposing for the assignment will be required to submit curricula vitae (CVs) for each of these key experts positions with their proposal.

20. An indicative consultant team composition and staff inputs are provided in Table 1 and 2 below. Consulting firms proposing for the assignment may adjust the composition to suit their approach to meeting the requirements set out in these TOR, subject to not significantly exceeding the total consultant person-month inputs.

**Table 1: Indicative Team Composition and Estimated Inputs
(International Key Experts)**

Expertise Required (Key Staff)	months
International Team Leader (Expertise in tourism)	8
National Tourism expert /Deputy Team Leader	8
International tourism expert (Product Development)	8
International Economist	5
National Environmental Expert	4
National Policy Expert	4
Stakeholder Engagement Expert	6
Total	43

**Table 2: Indicative Team Composition and Estimated Inputs
(National Non-key Experts)**

Non-Key Experts	
International Finance Expert	3
International Investment Expert (Private Sector Specialist)	5

International Marketing specialist	5
National Marketing Specialist	4
National Climate change expert	3
National Economist	3
International Cultural Heritage Expert	2
National Agriculture Expert	2
National Health Sector Specialist (spa. and balneology)	2
National Infrastructure engineer	2
National Education Expert	2
Total	33

21. Non-Key Experts and Support Staff

- The Consultant may propose non-key technical and support personnel (e.g., GIS specialists, legal advisors, administrative staff, data analysts) as required for efficient project execution.
- National Experts and Local Engagement: To strengthen local knowledge and facilitate effective engagement with Georgian stakeholders, the Consultant is encouraged to include qualified national experts as part of the team. National experts may contribute to technical, financial, legal, environmental, or stakeholder coordination areas. Their inclusion should enhance contextual relevance and improve cost-effectiveness without compromising the quality of deliverables.

E. Reporting and Communication

22. The Consultant shall be responsible for the timely preparation and submission of all reports and deliverables as outlined in the Work Plan. All reports must be prepared in English and Georgian and submitted in both editable formats (e. g., Word, Excel) and PDF, acceptable to the Client and GNTA. Consultant is expected to arrange English-Georgian and vice-versa translation (written, consecutive and simultaneous) on a need bases during project implementation.

F. Deliverables Required:

23. The assignment is to be completed within 18 months of the selected consultant being issued with a Notice to Proceed (NTP). When preparing their implementation schedules, consultants are to consider the effect of winter weather conditions on sensitive activities, for example field investigations and surveys and community consultations. The reports are to be delivered following the milestones in Table 2.

Table 2: Deliverables, Milestones and Payment Schedule

Report	Milestone	Payment Schedule
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		(% of contract amount)
Inception	Week 3	10%
First Interim	Month 2	10%
Second Interim Report	Month 5	10%
Third Interim Report	Month 8	15%
Fourth Interim Report	Month 11	15%
Fifth Interim Report	Month 14	20%
Final Strategy	Month 18	30%

Note: These Lump Sum payments do not include amounts allocated under the provisional and contingency cost categories.

Inception Report:

(Phase 1):

Inception report including methodology, stakeholder map, and timeline

1st Interim Report

(Phase 2):

- Policy alignment and strategic positioning report
- Market trends and tourism demand-supply gap analysis

2nd Interim Report

(Phase 2):

- Infrastructure condition and climate adaptation report
- Heritage asset sustainability and tourism integration report

3rd Interim Report

(Phase 2):

- Community inclusion and tourism skills development strategy
- Carrying capacity thresholds and destination management recommendations
- Institutional strengthening roadmap for sustainable tourism governance

4th Interim Report

(Phase 3 and 4)

- National and regional-level sustainability-oriented SWOT matrix
- National vision, mission, and strategic objectives
- Strategic framework including strengthening tourism destinations governance and investment-ready intervention pipeline

5th Interim Report

Phase 5 and 6

- Time-bound, costed action plan with financing strategy
- M&E framework aligned with SDGs and national development goals

Final Strategy Document

- Final strategy report with executive summary, and presentation pack

24. Quality and Format Requirements:

- All reports shall include a table of contents, executive summary, main body, annexes, and references.
- Visual tools such as maps, charts, and infographics shall be used where appropriate to clarify findings.
- Financial model shall be prepared in MS Excel, all interdependences between assumptions, drivers and outcomes or financial results must be shown explicitly. Model structure must be suitable to conduct sensitivity analysis by project phases and profit / cost centers.

25. Submission and Acceptance Process:

- All deliverables will be submitted electronically. Hard copies may be requested.
- All deliverables shall be subject to formal review and acceptance by the Client.
- Comments will be provided within two (2) weeks of submission; the Consultant shall revise and resubmit accordingly

26. Knowledge Transfer and Capacity Building: The Consultant may be requested to conduct a knowledge transfer session with the Client team to share technical tools, explain findings, and provide guidance on long-term application of results. Such capacity building initiatives may also include, but not limited to, certified training of staff and study tour programs tailored to client's needs to be financed under respective provisional sums.

G. Implementation Arrangements

27. The Consultant will work under the overall supervision of the Client (SUDA), operating under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia – Executing Agency under the project. SUDA will serve as an implementing agency and focal point for this assignment.

28. Coordination and Oversight:

- A Project Steering Committee (PSC) or designated Working Group may be established by the Client to oversee the assignment and provide strategic guidance as needed.
- SUDA will appoint a Project Coordinator to serve as the main liaison for the Consultant team. SUDA and GNTA will appoint the contact person who will facilitate access to

relevant data, arrange meetings with stakeholders, and ensure coordination throughout the assignment.

- The Consultant shall coordinate closely with both SUDA and GNTA, particularly during key milestones such as the inception, interim, draft, and final reporting stages.

29. Client Support and Obligations

GNTA/GNTA shall provide the following support to the Consultant:

- Letters of introduction or authorization to access data and consult with public institutions and government agencies;
- Relevant background materials, existing reports, plans, and strategy documents (if available);
- Logistical coordination for stakeholder consultations, workshops, and site visits;
- Timely review and written feedback on all deliverables, in accordance with agreed timelines.

30. Consultant Responsibilities

The Consultant is expected to:

- Maintain continuous coordination and professional communication with SUDA and GNTA throughout the assignment;
- Be self-sufficient in terms of office space, transportation, interpretation/translation, and technical resources;
- Proactively identify and communicate any risks, delays, or implementation challenges that could affect deliverables or timelines

H. Compliance

7.1 Compliance with International and National Standards

The Consultant shall ensure that the proposed strategy and action plan meets best international practices and is in line with government strategies in different sector streams. A gap analysis should be performed at the stage of inception report to avoid any non-compliance with ongoing strategy works across different ministries and stakeholders.

7.2 The Consultant shall carry out all services under this assignment in accordance with the relevant policies, guidelines, and principles of ADB. These include, but are not limited to:

- ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended);
- ADB Procurement Regulations for Borrowers – Goods, Works, Non-consulting and Consulting Services (2017, as amended);
- ADB Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2013, as amended);
- Safeguard Policy Statement (2009), including environmental, involuntary resettlement, and indigenous peoples safeguards;
- Gender and Development Policy (1998), ensuring gender integration throughout the assignment;

- Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities, particularly:
 - ⇒ OP1: Addressing Remaining Poverty and Reducing Inequalities;
 - ⇒ OP3: Tackling Climate Change, Building Climate and Disaster Resilience, and Enhancing Environmental Sustainability;
 - ⇒ OP4: Making Cities More Livable;
 - ⇒ OP7: Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration

7.3 Additional Compliance Areas

- Climate Change and Paris Agreement:

All assessments and recommendations must align with Georgia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement and reflect low-carbon, climate-resilient infrastructure planning principles.

- Anticorruption and Integrity:

The Consultant shall fully adhere to ADB's Anticorruption Policy (1998, as amended). Any corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive, or obstructive practices are strictly prohibited.

- Confidentiality and Disclosure:

All data, reports, and information collected or produced under this assignment shall be treated as confidential and used solely for the purposes of this assignment. Public disclosure shall follow ADB's Access to Information Policy (2018).

I. Minimum Qualification Requirements:

- **Experience of the Firm:** Preference shall be given to those firms with experience in conducting 10 years or more national tourism strategy and action plans; with experience of more than 10 years working in similar field of expertise
- **Qualification Requirements of the key and non-key experts will be provided at RFP stage as annex 1.**