



Request for Proposals (Re-advertised)

Consultancy to conduct blue carbon feasibility assessment.

Opening Date: 6th August 2021 (First published 2nd July 2021 to 25th July 2021)

Closing Date: 20th August 2021

Location: Liberia

Cost of the consultancy: The budget range is USD 30,000 to USD 33,000 inclusive of travel costs to the counties and income tax (10% for national consultants and 15% for international consultants).

1. Background

Conservation International (CI) has been protecting nature for the benefit of all for over 30 years. Through science, policy, and partnerships, CI is helping build a healthier, more prosperous, and more productive planet. CI is a global organization that has been active in Liberia for nearly 17 years working closely with communities, private sector, government, and civil society leaders to support conservation and sustainable development. With enormous wealth of natural resources, Liberia is at a vital point in its development history and has an opportunity to encourage investors and promote development initiatives that both support economic growth and development while maintaining Liberia's critical natural capital for future generations. Proper stewardship of Liberia's resources may prove to be the key to the future well-being of Liberian people.

To this end, CI Liberia in collaboration with Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is implementing a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project on conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital.

The main objective of this project is to *“Improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory.”*

The project has three components including:

- i. **Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in coastal ecosystems:** This component aims to build the foundation for Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Liberia to ensure that the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly for coastal areas, is incorporated into national decision-making.
- ii. **Component 2: Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital.** This component aims at increasing and diversifying resource flows for the sustainable management and restoration of mangrove and coastal ecosystems; and

- iii. **Component 3: Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems.** This seeks to establish a locally appropriate delivery mechanism that can channel payment for ecosystem services (PES) to communities providing the services.

Conservation International is seeking the service of a consultant to support implementation of the GEF NCA Liberia Component 2 for the specific objectives scope and task below.

2. Purpose of the consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to assess the blue carbon potential (emission reductions and removals) of mangroves along the coast of Liberia, including desktop review of the characteristics of two sites – Marshall Proposed Protected Area and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve.

3. Scope of Work

For a period of three months, the consultant will conduct blue carbon feasibility in two sites along the coast of Liberia i.e., Marshall Proposed Protected Area in Margibi County and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve in Grand Cape Mount County.

4. Key tasks

The Consultant will:

- i. Conduct desktop study to:
 - Identify potential or existing blue carbon project proponents and key partners in consultation with the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Determine composition of coastal ecosystem coverage in Marshall Proposed Protected Area and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve, (including mangroves, seagrasses, tidal marshes) and develop a list of species and ecosystem characteristics (the main species and, where are they located within the sites), biomass estimates, and soil/sediment characteristics, and agents and drivers of ecosystem loss and degradation.
 - Analyze available spatial data to help identify potential reference sites/levels and estimate baseline rates of mangrove deforestation and emission reductions /removals and the potential of mangrove conservation and restoration activities.
 - Assess national and subnational policy context, governance structure, profile of communities and key stakeholders, and the expected level of project support
- ii. Conduct field site visits with to better assess key criteria and update the desktop study with new findings, including increasing understanding regarding:
 - Agents and drivers of mangrove deforestation and degradation, additionality, leakage, non-permanence risk
 - National policy and legal context to define the desired enabling conditions (social, regulatory, and political) for blue carbon projects and carbon financing in Liberia.

- Baseline scenarios
 - Project intervention activities, stakeholder support, partner roles, and the approximate resource and funding needs for project development and implementation
 - Estimates of emissions reductions and removals.
 - Risk analysis
- iii. Broadly define the co-benefits and ecosystem services associated with the selected site(s), as well as the beneficiaries of those benefits / services.
 - iv. Produce estimates of the emission reduction potential of the proposed conservation activities considering likely baseline and with project scenarios and carbon stocks based on best available data.
 - v. Develop estimates of the potential carbon project revenues and costs, and net carbon cash flows that could be generated to help fund conservation activities over a 30-year project crediting period as well as other periods for nested projects under the Liberia's national REDD+ programme.
 - vi. Define the desired enabling conditions (social, regulatory, and political) for blue carbon projects and carbon financing in Liberia.
 - vii. Describe the possible financing mechanisms to execute blue carbon projects in Liberia.
 - viii. Describe required team capacities / competencies to develop and deliver blue carbon projects from design, development to execution.

5. Deliverables

- **Inception Report:** an inception report shall be produced and submitted to CI Liberia. The inception should include methodologies, approaches and tools to conduct the feasibility assessment; and a detailed work plan and schedule (due two weeks after contract signing)
- Preliminary report reviewing possible sites, key findings, and any identified informational gaps or challenges sourced from the initial desk review (due within two months after the award of the contract).
- Field sites visit report summarizing the places visited, interviews held, key findings and any remaining informational gaps identified (due within two months after the award of the contract).
- Updated blue carbon feasibility assessment report submitted to project team for review and comment (due three weeks post field visit).
- Second draft comprehensive feasibility assessment report incorporating all feedback and comments from the project team (Due within three weeks after the first draft).
- Final comprehensive blue carbon feasibility assessment report. (due within two weeks after the second draft)

6. Contract Type

Conservation International will issue a fixed-price contract for this work. As per the consultant's proposal and subsequent negotiations, the contract will include a set of fixed payments based on submission and acceptance of deliverables indicated in 5 above.

CI Liberia will accept proposals from individuals, consulting firms or organizations. CI Liberia anticipates that the work will be completed by a single person. If a team of people is proposed, CI Liberia intends to execute a consulting contract with a single individual, firm, or organization, which will serve as the lead entity and be responsible for contractual and financial arrangements with all others.

7. Location of Work

The consultant shall work from their base of operations and will be required to conduct field survey/assessments in Marshall Proposed Protected Area in Margibi County and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve in Grand Cape Mount County.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation of Consultant Performance

A team of CI experts including the NCA Project Manager, Africa Regional Climate Change Director, Africa Regional Carbon Technical Director, Africa Regional Senior Director for Carbon; Senior Director, Blue Climate Program, will provide input into the consultant performance. The Project Manager, Technical Director, and The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be responsible for review and approval of all the deliverables.

9. Key Personnel

The completion of this work is dependent on personnel. As such, applicants must name every individual expected to work on the contract, as well as their individual CV's. CI will not accept any proposal that lists an expert as "to be determined." CI considers all personnel named in the proposal as "key," and must provide express, written authorization for replacement of named personnel.

10. Minimum Qualification and experience of consultants

- a. Master's degree in environmental sciences, Natural Resource management, forestry Economics, or related fields with proven experience in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.
- b. Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional job experience in performing blue carbon feasibility studies.
- c. Proven track record of performing REDD+/ Blue carbon project feasibilities or Project development under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) standards or other applicable standards and methodologies).
- d. Familiarity with the Verified Carbon Standard's methodology (VM0007 wetland modules) "REDD+ Methodology Framework
- e. Ability to proactively engage with a range of relevant stakeholders to ensure inclusion of all necessary partners.
- f. Solid understanding of UNFCCC architecture on REDD+, and of the possible pathways to nesting site-level REDD+ activities (which could include mangroves) into national strategies and approaches.
- g. Fluency in English
- h. Strong analytical skills

- i. Proactive and able to work with minimal supervision and high degree of initiative, reliability, flexibility, and self-motivation.
- j. Professionalism: flexibility to make ad-hoc changes as and when the need arises; ability to perform under stress; willingness to keep flexible working hours and willingness to travel locally and/or internationally

11. Instructions for preparation of Budget (Cost Proposal)

- I. **Format:** budgets must be prepared and submitted in Microsoft Excel and explicitly show all units (e.g., labour days), unit costs (e.g., loaded daily rates), and total costs. Excel files should be “unlocked” and show all calculations.
- II. **Included costs:** budgets should include lines for:
 - **Labour**, by individual expert, in person-days, multiplied by either a base daily pay (in US dollars) or a “loaded” daily pay (e.g., inclusive of fringe benefits, other indirect costs, or fee). Proposed daily rates must be in accordance with the qualifications represented in the resumes of the named individuals.
 - **Other direct costs**, including costs for items like telephone, internet, photocopying, small office supplies, travel etc. (if required).
- III. **Budget Justification:** a budget narrative must accompany the budget spreadsheet, justifying proposed costs.

12. Evaluation Criteria

CI will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

Criterion	Points
Demonstrated experience in blue carbon feasibility studies	40
Relevant technical expertise - Methodology and approach, key staff	30
Appropriate budget , demonstrating appropriate allocation of labour days in relation to tasks and deliverables; appropriate consultant daily rates in relation to qualifications; appropriate other direct costs in relation to the scope of work; and overall cost effectiveness.	30
Total	100

13. Instructions for Submission of Technical Proposals

- a. **Submission address:** Proposal submissions and queries should be sent to: hrliberia@conservation.org
- b. **Right of award:** CI may reject any or all bids that are not responsive to the scope of work.
- c. **Language:** Proposals must be submitted in English.
- d. **Deadline for Submission:** The deadline for submission of full RFP is **20th August, 2021**
- e. **Currency:** proposals should be budgeted in United States dollars. Payment will be made in United States dollars.

- f. **Cover and signature:** Applicants should submit their proposals with a cover letter signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.
- g. **Expert table:** Proposals should include a table with the name, position title, and level of effort (in person-days) of all individuals proposed to work on the project.
- h. **Resumes/CVs:** proposals should include the resume of all named personnel.
- i. **Timeline:** proposals should include a work plan with detailed activities per deliverable for completing the consultancy.

N.B. All expressions of interest should include:

- **Cover letter:** A short (maximum one page) letter indicating an Expression of Interest.
- **Technical Proposal** (maximum eight pages) highlighting: brief explanation about the Consultant/s with emphasis on previous experience in this kind of work; profile of the Consultant/s to be involved in undertaking the blue carbon feasibility studies; understanding of the ToRs, methodology approach and timeline.
- **Financial Proposal:** The financial proposal should provide cost estimates for services rendered including daily consultancy fees, accommodation, per-diems, transport cost, stationeries, supplies needed for data collection, and other costs related to data collection and data processing.
- **Reference:** Contact details of three organizations that the consultant/firm has had similar assignments. These will be contacted during the proposal review process.