Request for Proposals

Title: Consultancy to conduct Mid-Term Evaluation for the Blue Ocean Program (BOP)

RFP No: CIL-2023-CONSULTANCY-07

Date of Issuance: August 4, 2023

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 about 20 years, working closely with communities, the private sector, government, and civil society leaders to support conservation and sustainable development. Liberia is at a vital point in its development history with an enormous wealth of natural resources. It has an opportunity to encourage investors and promote development initiatives that 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 the Liberian people.

2. Project Overview

The Blue Oceans Programme (BOP) focuses on four key thematic areas (sustainable blue economy, sustainable fishing, climate change, and marine pollution) and three cross-cutting themes (Institutional capacity building, environmental and social management, and integrated knowledge management). Blue Oceans Programme (BOP) main goal is to improve the management of coastal and marine ecosystems for poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation. BOP is focused on promoting the resilience of fisheries and mangrove ecosystems to climate change and improving the livelihoods of Liberia’s coastal communities.

Project Theory of Change:

The Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) report will include a description of the project's theory of change including description of the project’s objective(s), outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental impacts of the project; the causal pathways for the long-term impacts; and implicit and explicit assumptions. Where appropriate, after consultations with the project stakeholders, the evaluators may refine this theory of change.

The assessment of the implementation and execution of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) BOP project will consider the performance of the BOP partners and collaborating agencies and in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The evaluator should assess the screening/ risk categorization of the project along with the implementation of the safeguard plans that were approved by SIDA.

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3. Terms of Reference, Deliverables and Deliverables Schedule

Project Theory of Change

The MTE report will include a description of the project’s theory of change including description of the project’s objective(s), outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental impacts of the project; the causal pathways for the long-term impacts; and implicit and explicit assumptions. Where appropriate, after consultations with the project stakeholders, the evaluators may refine this theory of change.

Assessment of Project Results

The MTE must assess achievement of project outputs and outcomes, and report on these. While assessing a project’s results, evaluators will determine and rate the extent to which the project objectives have been achieved, as stated in the documents submitted to SIDA through the Embassy of Sweden in Liberia. The evaluator(s) should also indicate if there were any changes in project design and/or expected results after start of implementation.

Outputs

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outputs were actually delivered. An identification and assessment of the factors that affected delivery of outputs should also be included.

Outcomes

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outcomes were achieved and the extent to which its achievement was dependent on delivery of project outputs.
They should also assess the factors that affected outcome, e.g. project design, project’s linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc.
Where the project was developed within the framework of a program, the assessment should also report on the extent the project contributed to the program outcomes.
The evaluator should assess and document examples of what has changed, who has changed attitude/behavior because of the intervention and related activities. The evaluator should document reason/s if any, why expected change is not taking place.

Sustainability

The assessment of sustainability will weigh risks to continuation of benefits from the project. The assessment should identify key risks and explain how these risks may affect continuation of benefits after the BOP project ends. The analysis should cover key risks, including financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks.
The evaluator should assess the level of involvement of national and local entities in the implementation of the intervention as well as probability that these national and location entities can eventually continue with the program beyond donor support.
Progress to Impact

It is often too early to assess the long-term impacts of the project at the point of project completion, and even more so in the middle of the life of the project. That said, some evidence on progress towards long-term impacts, and the extent to which the key assumptions of the project’s theory of change hold, may be available and it may be feasible to assess and report on the progress. The evaluators should also assess the extent to which the progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project, including changes of attitude or behavior, and capacity. Where applicable, the evaluators are encouraged to identify and describe the barriers and other risks that may prevent further progress towards long-term impacts.

Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation Systems

The evaluators will include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation.

Assessment of Implementation and Execution

The assessment of the implementation and execution of SIDA BOP project will consider the performance of the BOP partners and collaborating agencies and in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The evaluator should assess the screening/ risk categorization of the project along with the implementation of the safeguard plans that were approved by SIDA

Gender

The evaluator will determine the extent to which the gender considerations were consider in designing and implementing the project. The evaluator should report whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits and gender disaggregated data was gathered and reported on beneficiaries

Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

The evaluator(s) should review and assess the project’s Grievance Mechanism. The evaluator should analyze and assess whether project stakeholders were aware of the grievance mechanism and whether the mechanism was effective in addressing grievances.

Other Assessments

The MTE should assess the following topics:

- **Need for follow-up:** Where applicable, the evaluator(s) will indicate if there is any need to follow up on the evaluation findings, e.g. instances financial mismanagement, unintended negative impacts or risks, etc.
- **Knowledge Management:** the evaluator(s) should provide an assessment of whether the Knowledge Management Plan as included in the Project Document was implemented. If possible, the evaluators should also include the list of knowledge products developed throughout project implementation, including internet references if available, as well as evidence and opportunities for organizational learning and adaptation.
• **Lessons and Recommendations:** Evaluator(s) should provide a few well-formulated lessons that are based on the project experience and applicable to the type of project at hand. Wherever possible, MTE reports should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation that have led to effective stakeholder engagement, successful broader adoption of SIDA initiatives by stakeholders, and large-scale environmental impacts.

**Delivery Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Work Plan for Evaluation</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Draft Mid-Term Evaluation Inception Report outline</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Key Informant Questionnaires</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mid-Term Evaluation Inception Workshop Report</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mid-Term Evaluation Report (Draft)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Draft Final Report (with comments from the stakeholder validation meeting addressed)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Final Mid-Term Evaluation Report (word and PDF)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. **Submission Details**
   a. Submission address: Proposal submissions and queries should be sent to: [hrliberia@conservation.org](mailto: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 August 29, 2023.
   e. Currency: proposals should be budgeted in United States dollars. Payment will be made in United States dollars.
   f. 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.
   g. Resumes/CVs: proposals should include the resume of all named personnel.
   h. Timeline: proposals should include a work plan with detailed activities per deliverable for completing the consultancy.
   i. Financial Proposal. Offerors shall use the cost proposal template (Attachment 2).
   j. Validity of bid. 120 days from the submission deadline.
   k. Clarifications. Questions may be submitted to [hrliberia@conservation.org](mailto:hrliberia@conservation.org) by the specified date and time in the timeline below. The subject of the email must contain the RFP number and title of the RFP. CI will respond in writing to submitted clarifications by the date specified in the timeline below. Responses to questions that may be of common interest to all bidders will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.
   l. Amendments. At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, CI may, for any reason, modify the RFP documents by amendment which will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.
5. **Minimum Requirements**

The successful Consultancy firm or organization will have team members with the following minimum requirements:

a. Project evaluation theory and practice
b. At least 10 years’ experience in project management, preferably those related to the field of sustainable agriculture, fisheries, natural resources management or the environment
c. Knowledge of Liberia environmental sector
d. Experience working in the rural, local and coastal communities
e. Must possess a master’s degree in development studies, Environmental Studies, Natural Resources Management, Project Management, or related field
f. Knowledge of the operations and typical structure of technical cooperation operations financed by bilateral/multilateral funding institutions.
g. For this assignment fluency in written and spoken English is essential

6. **Proposal Documents to Include**

All expressions of interest should include:

   i. Cover Letter: A short (maximum one page) letter indicating an Expression of Interest.
   ii. 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.
   iii. References: Contact details of three organizations that the consultant/firm has had similar assignments with. These will be contacted during the proposal review process.

b. 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.

7. **Evaluation Criteria** In evaluating proposals, CI will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and costs proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Score (out of 100)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the proposed approach and methodology appropriate to the assignment and practical in the prevailing project circumstances?</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the bidder’s past performance demonstrate recent proven experience doing similar work?</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the bidder and the proposed personnel have specific expertise for the assignment?</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost: Costs proposed are reasonable and realistic and reflect a solid understanding of the assignment.</td>
<td>30</td>
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8. Proposal Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Issued</td>
<td>August 4, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifications submitted to CI</td>
<td>August 18, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifications provided to known bidders</td>
<td>August 23, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete proposals due to CI</td>
<td>August 29, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final selection</td>
<td>August 31, 2023</td>
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</table>

9. Resulting Award CI anticipates entering into an agreement with the selected bidder by September 5, 2023. Any resulting agreement will be subject to the terms and conditions of CI’s Services Agreement. A model form of agreement can be provided upon request.

This RFP does not obligate CI to execute a contract, nor does it commit CI to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the proposals. Furthermore, CI reserves the right to reject any and all offers, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of CI. CI will, in its sole discretion, select the winning proposal and is not obligated to share individual evaluation results.

10. Confidentiality All proprietary information provided by the bidder shall be treated as confidential and will not be shared with potential or actual applicants during the solicitation process. This includes but is not limited to price quotations, cost proposals and technical proposals. CI may, but is not obliged to, post procurement awards on its public website after the solicitation process has concluded, and the contract has been awarded. CI’s evaluation results are confidential and applicant scoring will not be shared among bidders.

11. Code of Ethics All Offerors are expected to exercise the highest standards of conduct in preparing, submitting and if selected, eventually carrying out the specified work in accordance with CI’s Code of Ethics and the Green Climate Fund’s Policy on Prohibited Practices. Conservation International’s reputation derives from our commitment to our values: Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Passion and Teamwork. CI’s Code of Ethics (the “Code”) provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI’s core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to. Any violation of the Code of Ethics, as well as concerns regarding the integrity of the procurement process and documents should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at www.ci.ethicspoint.com

12. Attachments:

Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility
Attachment 2: Cost Proposal Template
Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility

RFP No. XXXXXXX

UEI Number (if applicable): XXX-XXX-XXX

All Offerors are expected to exercise the highest standards of conduct in preparing, submitting and if selected, eventually carrying out the specified work in accordance with CI's Code of Ethics. CI's Code of Ethics provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI's core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to. Any violations of the Code of Ethics should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at www.ethicspoint.com.

CI relies on the personal integrity, good judgment and common sense of all third parties acting on behalf, or providing services to the organization, to deal with issues not expressly addressed by the Code or as noted below.

I. With respect to CI's Code of Ethics, we certify:
   a. We understand and accept that CI, its contractual partners, grantees and other parties with whom we work are expected to commit to the highest standards of Transparency, Fairness, and Integrity in procurement.

II. With respect to social and environmental standards, we certify:
   a. We are committed to high standards of ethics and integrity and compliance with all applicable laws across our operations, including prohibition of actions that facilitate trafficking in persons, child labor, forced labor, sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment. We respect internationally proclaimed human rights and take no action that contributes to the infringement of human rights. We protect those who are most vulnerable to infringements of their rights and the ecosystems that sustain them.

   b. We fully respect and enforce the environmental and social standards recognized by the international community, including the fundamental conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO) and international conventions for the protection of the environment, in line with the laws and regulations applicable to the country where the contract is to be performed.

III. With respect to our eligibility and professional conduct, we certify:
   a. We are not and none of our affiliates [members, employees, contractors, subcontractors, and consultants] are in a state of bankruptcy, liquidation, legal settlement, termination of activity, or guilty of grave professional misconduct as determined by a regulatory body responsible for licensing and/or regulating the offeror's business

   b. We have not and will not engage in criminal or fraudulent acts. By a final judgment, we were not convicted in the last five years for offenses such as fraud or corruption, money laundering or professional misconduct.

   c. We are/were not involved in writing or recommending the terms of reference for this solicitation document.

   d. We have not engaged in any collusion or price fixing with other offerors.
e. We have not made promises, offers, or grants, directly or indirectly to any CI employees involved in this procurement, or to any government official in relation to the contract to be performed, with the intention of unduly influencing a decision or receiving an improper advantage.

f. We have taken no action nor will we take any action to limit or restrict access of other companies, organizations or individuals to participate in the competitive bidding process launched by CI.

g. We have fulfilled our obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where the contract is to be performed.

h. We have not provided, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitate, or participated in terrorist acts, and we are compliant with all applicable Counter-Terrorist Financing and Anti-Money Laundering laws (including USA Patriot Act and U.S. Executive Order 13224).

i. We certify that neither we nor our directors, officers, key employees or beneficial owners are included in any list of financial or economic sanctions, debarment or suspension adopted by the United States, United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, or General Services Administration’s List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Non-procurement programs in accordance with E.O.s 12549 and 12689, “Debarment and Suspension”.

Name: 

Signature: 

Title: 

Date: 

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Template Date: July 2021
Owner: Finance, Grants and Contracts Unit
Attachment 2: Cost Proposal Template

The cost proposal must be all-inclusive of profit, fees or taxes. Additional costs cannot be included after award, and revisions to proposed costs may not be made after submission unless expressly requested by CI should the offeror’s proposal be accepted. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the proposal, Offerors must provide a detailed budget showing major expense line items. Offers must show unit prices, quantities, and total price. All items, services, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total offered price. All cost information must be expressed in USD.

If selected, Offeror shall use its best efforts to minimize the financing of any taxes on goods and services, or the importation, manufacture, procurement or supply thereof. If Offeror is eligible to apply for refunds on taxes paid, Offeror shall do so. Any tax savings should be reflected in the total cost.

Cost Breakdown by Deliverable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Price (Lump Sum, All Inclusive)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 1 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 2 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<td>Insert deliverable 3 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<td>Insert deliverable 4 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 5 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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Cost Breakdown by Cost Component (example only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unit of measure (day, month etc)</th>
<th>Total period of engagement</th>
<th>Unit cost/rate</th>
<th>Total Cost for the Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultant 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultant 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-total Personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Costs (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other related Costs (please specify)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cost of Financial Proposal</td>
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