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## Request For Proposals

*EU Project: the Local Actors for Change in the Hinterland (LACH)*

### External Evaluation for the LACH project 2021 - 2024

Conservation International Suriname (CIS) is looking for a consultant to conduct an External Evaluation of the LACH Project (2021 – 2024) for 2 months ideally starting on September 17, 2024, and ending on November 20, 2024.

#### 1. Background

The **Local Actors for Change in the Hinterland (LACH)** project, funded by the European Commission and implemented in Suriname from September 9, 2021, until June 9, 2024, by Conservation International Suriname (CI-S) and Amazon Conservation Team-Suriname (ACT), aimed to mitigate climate change through effective, community-managed forests in Suriname's hinterland. The project was based on the theory that 1) by sustainably managing these forests and working to prevent illegal exploitation, vast amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> will continue to be sequestered, and 2) that local communities, when organized through local organizations and leadership groups, have greater leverage and incentive to conserve their forests.

Since 2019, CIS has been actively engaged with the community of Brownsweeg, and for more than five years, CIS and ACT-S have been working in the Matawai region. The forests and ecosystems in these areas face significant threats from logging and mining activities, largely driven by a lack of alternative economic opportunities for men and insufficient income sources for women, who are essential to household management and local economic growth. To address these challenges, the LACH project focused on empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and conducting critical research to identify the most profitable business ventures. Additionally, the project aimed to provide community members with access to alternative and sustainable livelihoods, leveraging their traditional knowledge of sustainable agriculture and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

#### The project outcomes were as follows:

**Outcome 1:** CSOs and community members have improved technical, management, and advocacy capacities to support community development and women empowerment.

**Outcome 2:** A community-driven forest and environmental management program is established.

**Outcome 3:** Community-driven forest management program is safeguarded through sustainable economic development.

#### 1. Objectives of the Review

The objective of the review is to conduct an external evaluation of the project; "**Local Actors for Change in the Hinterland (LACH)**". The evaluation's main goals are to:

- i. Determine the extent to which the project objectives as defined in the logical framework have been met as of the end of the project.
- ii. Assess CI-Suriname's role and performance as an executing agency identifying institutional strengths and weaknesses and recommendations for improvement.



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## 2. Review Questions

The external evaluation will take into account the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence, and lessons learned and will provide recommended actions, delivery and performance for future CIS's projects. Specifically, the evaluation will examine the following aspects:

### *Changes in context and review of assumptions (relevance):*

- i. Was the project's design adequate to address the problem (s) at hand?
- ii. What internal and external factors have influenced the ability of beneficiary groups and CI-Suriname to meet project targets?

### *Results in terms of outputs achieved (efficiency and effectiveness)*

- i. Has the project reached the expected number of beneficiaries (individuals, CSOs, organizations, firms, industries, etc.) within the expected timeframe?
- ii. Are the beneficiaries satisfied with the quality and delivery of services? If not, in what way did the services not meet beneficiary expectations and why?
- iii. Were the program's activities in line with the schedule of activities as defined by the project team and annual action plans?
- iv. Were the disbursements and project expenditures in line with expected budgetary plans?

### *Achievement of projected performance indicators and targets (effectiveness):*

- i. Did the CI-Suriname's performance indicate the probability of achieving the project purpose (specific objective)? Have there been any unplanned effects?
- ii. Provide information on the difficulties faced by CI-Suriname and actions taken to overcome them (administrative, operational, financial, political, or macroeconomic, etc.). Recommendations for improving future project executions should be provided.

### *Synergies with other interventions (coherence):*

- i. To what extent did CI-Suriname work with or in coordination with other initiatives within the project area? What are the learning points?
- ii. To what degree did CI-Suriname seek to create alliances and foster synergies with civil society organizations and other partners, national or international, to ensure harmonization of interventions in the given contexts?

### *Assessment of outcomes/impact (Effectiveness):*

- i. Has the project generated any results that could indicate that the assistance has had an impact (intended as unintended) on the project's target beneficiary groups?
- ii. If there have been changes in relation to enabling conditions, to what extent has the organization adjusted its approach to meet these?
- iii. To what extent can the project experience be meaningfully replicated and scaled up in a similar context? If so, what would be the added value? Please elaborate.

### *European Union priority areas:*

- i. What are the impacts of the project, positive or negative, on women's rights and empowerment, including issues such as gender-based violence (GbV)?
- ii. What are the lessons learned?



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### 3. Methodology

**3.1. Review of project documentation:** Review, as necessary, of archived material related to the overall project, as well as background material used in project preparation, and implementation including but not limited to: the project document and logical framework that details the project design including the targeted results and measurable outputs; the agreement executed by the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana and CI-Suriname; project status reports; annual reports, other progress reports, action plans, and other information available.

**3.2. Field visits and interviews:** (i) On-site visits in Suriname to Brownsweg, Brownsberg (STINASU), and Matawai to carry out in-depth interviews; (ii) interviews with CI-Suriname, Amazon Conservation Team Guianas (ACT), and the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana staff who participated in the project design and execution; (iii) interviews with local stakeholders and actual direct beneficiaries; and (iv) interviews with a sample of consultants/and or technical assistance providers who were hired by CI-Suriname to provide technical assistance under the project. For each of these interviews, the consultant should first develop and present their ideas for the content and format of the survey/interview forms that will be applied to capture the information required, as well as the method to be used in administering them and tabulating results.

**3.3. Collection of data:** Data generated from the CI-Suriname's project monitoring system should be another source of information. Information from national statistics institutes could also be considered.

**Note: The consultant may propose additional methods of conducting the evaluation.**

### 4. Deliverables and Schedule

#	Tasks	Deliverables	Acceptance Criteria	Due dates
1	Development of an inception report.	<b>Inception report</b>	The inception report must contain the following: a) A workplan for conducting the assignment b) An agenda for visits and interviews c) Timelines d) Draft travel itineraries if relevant e) Persons to be interviewed f) A detailed budget for the assignment	<b>September 27, 2024</b>
2	Submit draft of evaluation report to CI-Suriname for review	<b>1<sup>st</sup> draft Evaluation Report</b>	The 1 <sup>st</sup> draft evaluation report must contain the following: a) Methodology used to conduct the assignment b) A list of interviews conducted with a brief summary of each interview	<b>October 25, 2024</b>
3	Submit Final evaluation report	<b>Final Evaluation Report</b>	The final evaluation report should contain the following a) Methods used b) Findings c) Lessons learned d) Recommendations e) Photos of field visits and interviews	<b>November 12, 2024</b>



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## 5. Location of Task

Desk studies and interviews will be primarily conducted in Paramaribo, while field visits will be conducted in Brownsweg, Brownsberg, and Matawai. For the Matawai area, the assistance of ACT will be requested to coordinate the on-site visit

## 6. Required Skills and Experience

The consultancy will be conducted by an independent consultant with the requisite skill set to conduct his/her mission. Specifically, the consultant is based in Suriname and has the following expertise:

- Project evaluation theory and practice.
- At least 5 years experience in project management
- Knowledge of development issues and understanding of Maroon cultures is an asset
- Must possess a master's degree in development studies, Environmental Studies, Natural Resource Management, Project Management, or related field.
- Knowledge of the operations and typical structure of technical cooperation operations financed by the European Union.
- Dutch and English proficiency, both in speaking and writing.
- Sranang Tongo, Sarnaka, and/or local dialects: speaking is a pre.

## 7. Evaluation Criteria

In evaluating proposals, CI will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and financial proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria: *Proposals will be evaluated ONLY against the Evaluation Criteria in the RFP (no other evaluation criteria may be considered for selection).*

Evaluation Criteria	Score (out of 100)
Is the proposed approach and methodology appropriate to the assignment and practical in the prevailing project circumstances?	25
Is the presentation clear and is the sequence of activities and the planning logical, realistic and promise efficient implementation to the project?	25
Does the bidder's past performance demonstrate recent proven experience doing similar work?	25
Does the bidder and the proposed personnel have the specific technical expertise for the assignment?	15
Cost: Costs proposed are reasonable and realistic, reflect a solid understanding of the assignment.	10

## Interested?

Applications must be submitted by **September 10, at 11:59 PM** to [procurementsr@conservation.org](mailto:procurementsr@conservation.org) in English. Please include "External Evaluation LACH project + Your Name" in the subject line.

Applications should include the following:

- i. A cover letter (including the CVs of proposed personnel) with detailed information aligned with the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFP. Comparable work previously completed by the applicant will be beneficial for the evaluation process.



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- ii. A technical proposal outlining the approach to achieving the assignment's objectives (including a plan of action, estimated timeline, and potential activities).
- iii. A financial proposal (budget) for executing the technical proposal.

Only complete applications that demonstrate all essential skills and competencies will be considered for selection and shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview. Please do not submit any information that has not been requested. Any questions or requests for clarification regarding the consultancy can be sent to the procurement email address of CI Suriname via [procurementsr@conservation.org](mailto:procurementsr@conservation.org) no later than September 6, 2024.