TERMS OF REFERENCE

Biodiversity Assessment Study and Development of a Biodiversity Monitoring Plan

CSF Proof of Concept Program

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. Conservation International Suriname (CIS) was established as a foundation under the Surinamese law on December 29, 1992, and officially registered on January 18, 1993. In the last 20 years, CIS has worked to spur green development in the country and the region.

A) General Background

Forests — made up of trees which naturally pull carbon dioxide (CO2) out of the atmosphere and store it in their wood, leaves, and roots. Recognizing the importance of forests for solving climate change, people around the world are creating projects to protect, restore, and improve the world's forests. These projects, called forest carbon projects or just forest projects, involve planned activities to manage forest land over many decades or more to increase forest carbon storage over business-as-usual projections. Forest projects finance restoration and conservation by selling carbon credits that each represent one ton of CO2 captured or emissions avoided over expected baseline conditions. Organizations can purchase carbon credits to fund climate change solutions.

Conservation International (CI), in collaboration with the Government of Suriname and other stakeholders, has identified an opportunity for Suriname's forest to pay for its own protection via the implementation of a nationwide, sectoral Forest Carbon program, thereby protecting the forest and providing some much-needed economic relief to the country. The Forest Carbon program will enable Suriname to monetize forest carbon sustainably using Climate Smart Forestry to achieve its climate goals.

Climate-Smart Forestry (CSF) is a targeted approach or strategy to increase the climate benefits from forests and the forest sector, in a way that creates synergies with other needs related to forests.

The Climate Smart Forestry project will focus on building technical capabilities and monitoring these capabilities within communities and national institutions, implementing activities that lead to reduced impact in the forestry sector by applying the climate-friendly method 'Reduced Impact Logging for Climate Change Mitigation' (RIL-C) for responsible forest management. This methodology strengthens the link between good forest management and forest protection by clarifying the best practices for maximizing living carbon in forests and allowing forest managers to access incentives for climate mitigation.

B) Purpose

To carry out a Biodiversity Assessment Study and to develop a Biodiversity Monitoring Plan to monitor the progress of the project in pilot sites in maintaining and improving the conservation value of the project zone at the species, ecosystem, and landscape scale, and ensure that project activities are designed to create positive biodiversity impacts against the without project scenario. The procedures to achieve this work must follow requirements by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standard (CCBS)[1].

This Biodiversity Assessment Study aims to identify the potential impacts of the project on flora and fauna and provide recommendations on the relevant mitigation measures to protect/conserve biodiversity in the areas that can potentially be impacted by CSF project activities. This study will describe the biodiversity values present at the project sites and the impact of project activities on these values and also identify reasonable steps and strategies that can be taken to avoid and minimize impacts on biodiversity.

C) The character of the Consultancy

Type: Individual
Procurement Method: Temporary Help
Duration: 4 months

D) Responsibilities and activities

1. Propose the methods and steps to carry out this consultancy and the proposed structure to be used in the final report. Community & Biodiversity (CCBS) methodologies and tools and guidance from the social and environmental safeguards framework from CI must be integrated. CCBS Social and Biodiversity Impact Assessment Manual for REDD+ Projects and Tool Box[2]
2. Describe existing conditions and high conservation values in the forest belt (Without-Project Biodiversity Scenario according to CCBS). Includes the description of the biodiversity within the project zone, protected areas, and threats (human, natural, and climate) to that biodiversity including:
    - assessing potential impacts and risks (direct or indirect/caused) by logging activities and recommendations for mitigation measures, in collaboration with analysis in drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and barriers to adopt reduce impact logging practices.

[1] Access to CCBS requirement at: Guidance - Verra

3. Demonstrate that none of the HCVs related to community well-being will be negatively affected by the project. This activity must help to meet CCBS´ requirements on biodiversity of CCBS and CI safeguards.
4. **A**. Describe potential expected Biodiversity Changes, Mitigation Measures, Net Positive Biodiversity Impacts. The project aims to apply to CCBS Gold Level for climate change adaptation benefits, so this work includes demonstrate how the project activities will assist the biodiversity to adapt to the probable impacts of climate change.

   B. Develop a biodiversity monitoring plan and protocols to assess project activities' impact on species and ecosystems in project sites. This includes:
   - Identifies biodiversity variables and indicators to be monitored, which should be directly linked to the project's biodiversity objectives and predicted outputs, outcomes, and impacts identified in the project's causal model related to biodiversity.
   - Identifies the areas to be monitored.
   - Identifies the types of measurements, the sampling methods, and the frequency of monitoring and reporting to be used.
   - Assesses the effectiveness of measures taken to maintain or enhance all identified HCVs related to globally, regionally, or nationally significant biodiversity present in the project zone.
   - Propose a database designed that will store monitoring data allowing future analysis.
   - The project aims to apply to CCBS Gold Level for exceptional biodiversity benefits, so the monitoring plan must also include indicators of the population trend of each trigger species and/or the threats to such species.
   - Identify and describe the roles of each partner project in the implementation of the biodiversity monitoring plan. This includes community monitoring approaches, logging companies, and private concessions.
5. The consultant must follow a Theory of Change (ToC; CI manual[3] and CCBS Toolbox can be used as guidance[4]) approach in developing a monitoring protocol to assess biodiversity outcomes under the project activities. CCBS Social and Biodiversity Impact Assessment Manual for REDD+ Projects and Tool Box can guide this process too as well as CI safeguards requirements.
6. Assess key technical skills required by project partners to implement the biodiversity monitoring plans successfully, including biodiversity assessment, monitoring skills, and equipment needed.

[3] Constructing theories of change for ecosystem-based adaptation projects A guidance document. constructing-theories-of-change-for-ecosystem-based-adaptation.pdf (conservation.org)
[4] Guidance - Verra

7. List out methodologies, including operating procedures for each methodology, including a C-MRV methodology
8. Align biodiversity monitoring protocols to be developed that are also in compliance with national REDD+ safeguards and other national biodiversity standards including international agreements that Suriname is a signatory (eg., Convention on Biological Diversity) and CI's biodiversity standards.
9. Consult with communities and other stakeholders' groups to identify species of cultural, economic, and spiritual significance.
10. Organize technical meetings with project partners to collect information and get inputs to designing the biodiversity monitoring plan.
11. Design communication, training materials, and training session for the project stakeholders.

E) Deliverables

- A document describing the consultant's workplan and methods to carry out this consultancy and proposed structure to be used in the final comprehensive report.
- A draft report which includes the description of the existing condition and high conservation values, potential expected Biodiversity Changes, Mitigation Measures, Net Positive Biodiversity Impacts in the forest belt, and a draft of the monitoring plan.
- Submit a comprehensive report describing:
    - the biodiversity, existing conditions, threats, project impacts, and risks and mitigation measures to be taken into consideration in the project area (forest belt), including assessing potential (direct or indirect/caused) by logging activities and recommendations for mitigation measures.
    - the biodiversity monitoring plan to quantify biodiversity impacts aligned with CCBS, CI, and national REDD+ safeguards and other relevant frameworks.
    - description of how the monitoring plan, and any results of monitoring undertaken in accordance with the monitoring plan, will be disseminated and made publicly available on the internet. Describe the means by which summaries (at least) of the monitoring plan and results will be communicated to the communities and other stakeholders.
    - The final report must include:
        - Electronic copies of all documentation reviewed.
        - List of stakeholders contacted (name, institution, contact info, etc)
        - GIS data used and produced in .shp file formats.
        - Minute from meetings and interview results
        - Photos
        - Annex

- Present (virtually) the final report to the CI team.
- Facilitate a training with the local community describing the main results of the assignment and focus on the biodiversity monitoring plan in relation to the community.
- Deliver communication and training material in electronic format.

F) Qualifications

- At least a higher educational background in Environmental/Social Sciences;
- A relevant Bachelor's degree or higher in Natural or Social Sciences;
- At least 3 years of relevant work experience;
- Good communication skills;
- Highly organized and able to multitask and prioritize tasks;
- Flexible and adaptable to changing work environments;
- Ability to work and stay for longer periods in the project sites
- Experience to work with Indigenous & Maroon communities is highly recommended;
- Excellent Dutch and English proficiency, both in speaking and writing;
- Fluency in Sranang Tongo;
- Nature-conservation minded

G) Reporting

The consultant will report to Eunike Alexander – Misiekaba, Technical Manager of Conservation International Suriname. The consultant will be part of a major team that includes staff from CI (global and country office), SBB and other government agencies, and national and international consultants, so constant communication **and coordination with these partners will be part of the work dynamic.**

Interested? Please send your resume with a motivation letter no later than the 24th of September 2021 to CI Suriname, Kromme Elleboogstraat 20, Paramaribo, or via email to ci-suriname@conservation.org (subject "Applying for Biodiversity Assessment Consultant").