

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy Firm – Commonwealth Living Lands Charter Implementation Plan: Thematic Areas and Implementation Strategies

Background

Land resources comprising soil, water and biodiversity, which serve dual roles as key resources and sinks of greenhouse gases, are fundamental components for the survival of life on this planet. Extreme and rapidly changing global climatic conditions continue to threaten infrastructure, livelihoods of people, and the survival of ecosystems. The sustainable use of land resources is essential for the attainment of growth and can contribute substantially to climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience, including through the promotion of sustainable forest and oceans management, and the protection of other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems.

A lack of action to address land degradation and biodiversity loss would lead to increases in greenhouse gas emissions and reductions in carbon sinks resulting in the failure to lower emissions required to limit global warming to 1.5°C or 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

The Commonwealth Secretariat recognises the need to coordinate urgent action to boost biodiversity conservation, reduce land degradation and enhance land-based climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts through sustainable development. The Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands (CALL) engenders the 54 member countries to synergise the implementation of the commitments agreed to under the three Rio Conventions – United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – through the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter.

The Commonwealth Living Lands Charter will be implemented around five thematic areas, and will be facilitated by Action Groups, unlocking the power of 54 nations and guiding the roll out of five implementation strategies. The action groups will have “Thematic Lead” countries championing the implementation strategies for the five thematic areas in consortium mode with national, regional and international entities to address identified priority land issues.

The implementation of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter will be supported by the established platforms, mechanisms and initiatives of the Commonwealth Secretariat, particularly The Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH). Commonwealth Accredited Organisations, including intergovernmental, parliamentary, professional and civil society bodies, will also be consulted to provide support and technical expertise on climate resilient natural resource management.

Following a 5X5 approach, the five levels of implementation strategies, aimed at enhanced action in the five land and climate change thematic areas are:

1. Evidence based analysis and policy influence
2. Financing for Implementation
3. Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
4. Institutional Structure and Governance and
5. Knowledge Sharing and Management.

The five land and climate change thematic areas are:

1. Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security
2. Soil and Water Conservation and Management
3. Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity
4. Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry
5. Indigenous People and Climate Resilient Development

Objectives

The Consultancy Firm will work closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat Climate Change Section to further develop and finalise the 5x5 approach of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter in accordance with the targets of the three Rio Conventions: UNFCCC (Nationally Determined Contributions), UNCCD (Land Degradation Neutrality targets), and UNCBD (Aichi targets). Thus, the Consultancy Firm will develop a scheme of how the Living Lands Charter can be enacted in the 54 member countries under five overarching and interrelated themes via five levels of implementation, where relevant and appropriate.

The Consultancy Firm will delve into regional contexts and national priorities to identify baselines of the thematic areas, distinguishing the sectoral implications of the combined effects of biodiversity loss, land degradation and climate change. The Firm will explore the social and economic benefits of enhancing action on land through nature-based solutions (NbS) and climate resilient infrastructure to advance green recovery.

The objective of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter Implementation Plan is to propel the work of the Secretariat to provide member countries with trusted development pathways to climate resilience and ecosystem restoration. As such, the Consultancy Firm will adopt a country-driven approach in the design and development of the plan as well as in outreach and consultation thereby fostering partnerships, collaborations and cooperation among stakeholders.

It is expected for the Consultancy Firm to bring their own perspective, experience and expertise to finalise the development of this Implementation Plan in time for 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) and in anticipation of the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) where the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter will be submitted for endorsement and approval.



Scope of Work

The scope of work for this consultancy centres around desk research and literature review; international, regional and national context assessment; as well as stakeholder outreach and engagement. The Consultancy Firm is expected to undertake the following workstreams:

1. Development of Implementation Plan: 5x5 approach

Under the guidance of the Climate Change Section:

- a. Draft an annotated outline of the implementation plan clearly explaining how each thematic area will be developed with the necessary and appropriate implementation strategies;
- b. Examine the principles, programmes and targets of the 3 Rio Conventions. Review the list of (signed) parties among the 54 members, noting their national focal points and their status of contributions;
- c. Perform a literature review and analysis of relevant thematic and member country documents, including but not limited to the NDCs, NAPs, NBSAPs, etc., to identify the parameters of climate change mitigation and adaptation needs relevant to country context. Supplementary documents will be provided for review upon commencement of the assignment;
- d. With agreement on the outline structure of the 5x5 approach, provide technical inputs and elaborate on the thematic areas as well as sectoral implications and key performance indicators;
- e. Adopt a gender responsive approach to the development of the plan and incorporate youth perspectives and technology and data inputs throughout;
- f. Deep dive into cross-cutting themes of each thematic area based on IPCC emission reports and adaptation gap reports, providing climate rationale of sustainable land management; and
- g. Develop supporting documents (annexes) containing a compilation of the financial mechanisms of the Commonwealth Secretariat which can drive Strategy II “Financing for Implementation”.

2. Steering Stakeholder Consultations and Outreach (Virtual)¹

In partnership with the Climate Change Section:

- a. Engage with High Commissions of the Commonwealth member countries and respective governments, and Commonwealth Accredited Organisations working on land-related activities²;
- b. Conduct bilateral consultations and maintain correspondence with representatives from the 3 Rio Conventions, relevant intergovernmental entities, and civil society organisations and vulnerable groups who are dependent on land-based activities;

¹ Stakeholder engagements and consultations will be carried out throughout the entire assignment.

² High-level consultations will be coordinated by the Climate Change Section.



- c. Initiate dialogue with financial agencies within the regions of operations: Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Pacific and Europe, including but not limited to the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), African Development Bank (AfDB), etc. to explore opportunities to co-finance CALL projects and programmes in-country;
- d. Involve the input and expertise of the Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers (CNFCAs) who may support by identifying key stakeholders and assisting consultations nationally and regionally, and providing inputs into climate finance priorities related to sustainable land management for the respective countries;
- e. Participate and contribute where necessary in the CALL 2021 Regional Consultation events for Africa (September 2021), Pacific (October 2021) and Europe (December 2021)³;
- f. Participate in events and contribute to Secretariat activities associated with 2021 UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) and 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26); and
- g. Lead a final technical review session of the Living Lands Charter and Implementation Plan with all relevant stakeholders to finalise the documents.

3. Development of operational framework for the Action Groups

Based on the outcomes of workstreams 1 and 2 above:

- a. Develop a management structure, specifying the roles and responsibilities of each Action Group heading each of the five thematic areas;
- b. As informed by bilateral consultations and literature review and analysis of NDCs/NAPs/country action plans and targets of the 3 Rio Conventions, indicate which member countries may be best suited to drive each Action Group; and
- c. Recommend, and provide rationale for selection, the Commonwealth Accredited Organisations, regional partners, and civil society organisations which may support the work of each Action Group; and
- d. Develop a results framework for the short- and medium-term of the expected outcomes for the Action Groups, defining a successful execution of the Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands (CALL).

Relevant documents, recordings of bilateral consultations, and outlines of the five thematic areas and implementation strategies shall be provided by the Climate Change Section.

Location, Management and Reporting

The consultancy will be remotely based, and the appointment Firm is responsible for their own computer equipment, computer applications and internet connection.

The overall project will be led and managed by the Climate Change Section, Economic, Youth and Sustainable Development Directorate of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The Firm will report to and work under the guidance of the Head of the Climate Change Section. Upon commencement of the assignment, the Firm is expected to provide regular feedback on work progress.

³ The CALL Regional Consultation for the Caribbean, "[Enhancing a Coordinated Approach on Financing for Climate Action on Land in the Caribbean](#)" was held on 27 April 2021.

Deliverables, Timeline and Payment Schedule

This assignment is expected to begin in September 2021 and be completed in December 2021 over a fourteen week period. The total payable amount for this assignment is £30,000. The deliverables and payment schedule are set out below:

| Deliverable | Due Date | Payment |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Inception Report demonstrating assignment understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inception meeting with Climate Change Section and Firm A detailed work plan with timeline encompassing steps to achieve the given scope of work. The Firm should provide approach and methodology, work plan of detailed tasks, and time schedule for the deliverables. | Week 2 after signing of contract | 20% payment |
| 2. Draft Implementation Plan <i>Establishing the strategic approach of the charter for adoption by member countries. The plan will consist of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Extrapolation on the 5x5 approach: thematic areas and implementation strategies</i> <i>Annexes: Commonwealth Finance Mechanisms, list of supporting regional institutions and Commonwealth Accredited Organisations to CALL;</i> <i>Annotated outline of an Operational Framework for Action Groups</i> | Weeks 6 | 30% payment |
| 3. Consolidated Stakeholder Engagement Report including Technical Review Session | Week 10 | 20% payment |
| 4. Final Implementation Plan <i>Thematic Areas and Implementation Strategies; Annexes: Commonwealth Finance Mechanisms and list of supporting regional institutions to CALL; and Operational Framework for Action Groups</i> | Week 14 | 30% payment |

Required Skills and Experience

- Proven minimum 7 years of relevant environment and climate change adaptation, mitigation and policy, climate finance, natural resource management, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use management, and sustainable development experience for leader of consultancy firm;
- Technical proficiency in research, development and implementation in the international development context, climate change assessment, review and analysis of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs);
- Extensive knowledge of land issues and in depth understanding of the integration of gender and youth considerations, indigenous perspectives, and technology in policy;
- Ability to interact with senior government officials and a wide range of stakeholders including the UN agencies, NDAs, and to organise consultation sessions; and
- Experience in producing other similar high-quality analysis and reports under tight deadline.