
EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

PROCUREMENT REFERENCE NUMBER 7-15.2-2020-EFITAP

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK INITIATIVE

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1. Background

In recent years, growing public concern over climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and human exploitation has elevated corporate responsibility to an urgent imperative. Hundreds of forward-thinking business leaders have pledged to transform their agriculture and forestry production systems and supply chains to protect ecosystems, people, and communities. These commitments support important global initiatives and targets, including the Paris Climate Agreement, the New York Declaration on Forests, UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Bonn Challenge for landscape restoration.

Yet companies seeking to honour their commitments and demonstrate progress are often unclear about the path forward, despite the recent proliferation of tools and initiatives intended to help. Several key obstacles have impeded progress to date:

- Misalignment of definitions, metrics, and requirements across different standards, tools, and initiatives makes it difficult for companies to know which tools to use to fulfil their commitments, as well as how context-specific tools relate to global commitments.
- The lack of broad-based consensus of environmental and social NGOs has created further ambiguity regarding expectations for responsible supply chains.
- Norms and good practices for numerous aspects of implementation – including supply chain management, respect for land rights, remediation, traceability, monitoring, reporting, and claims – have not been sufficiently well articulated.
- There has been no standard way to assess progress or outcomes.

Partly because of these challenges, action and progress toward supply chain commitments is generally lagging: many companies have not met interim milestones; they are reporting only on activities, not results; and they are facing large implementation challenges.

1.2. Introduction

In the context of these challenges, in late 2016, a diverse coalition came together for a common purpose: to accelerate progress and improve accountability on company commitments to protect forests, natural ecosystems, and human rights. Recognizing the need to close the gap between commitments and results, the members of this coalition launched the Accountability Framework initiative¹ (AFi).

From 2017 through early 2019, the AFi led a consultative process to develop the Accountability Framework – a set of common definitions, norms, and guidelines for delivering on companies' ethical supply chain commitments. With the release of version 1.0 of the Framework in June 2019, the AFi is now supporting and promoting the use of this Framework by companies and other users.

As the AFi enters its next phase (2020-2022), the focus shifts to promoting the Framework's widespread application by companies, producers, civil society, government, and the private sector. The ultimate goal is to mainstream ethical production and trade by aligning the efforts of diverse stakeholders, scaling and speeding up the implementation of commitments, improving environmental and social performance on the ground, and strengthening accountability.

¹ <https://accountability-framework.org/>

Priorities for the period 2020 – 2022 are to:

- Drive/support widespread application of the Framework to support faster progress, greater scale, and stronger accountability to protect people and ecosystems related to commodity supply chains
- Refine and adjust the Framework so that it continues to serve as the premier practical reference for ethical supply chains; refinements incorporate feedback & respond to needs of Framework users

During the 2020-2022 period, the AFI is continuing to advance through a diverse coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting forests, natural ecosystems, and human rights by making ethical production and trade the new normal. This coalition includes:

- Steering Group: governing body for all aspects of the initiative. Approves contents of the Framework.
- Regional Teams: promote application of the Framework in tropical countries to achieve ethical production and trade. Existing teams in Indonesia, West & Central Africa, and Colombia, plus a partner initiative in Brazil.
- Backbone Team: coordinates the AFI and provides technical support, process facilitation, and technology and communications support.
- Supporting Partners – (new for phase 2): additional organisations contributing to the AFI to support uptake, raise awareness, and communicate the value of managing commodity production and trade in accordance with the Accountability Framework. Can include NGOs, service providers, other sustainability initiatives, industry associations, and monitoring and reporting initiatives.

The Forest Governance, Markets and Climate (FGMC) programme is DFID's flagship forestry programme – a global initiative with the broad aim of bringing about governance and market reforms that reduce the illegal use of forest resources and benefit poor people who depend on forests for their livelihoods. Driving benefits for people and ecosystems at broader scale by helping companies and other key actors to overcome obstacles to ethical production and trade in the agriculture and forestry sectors, and to improve accountability fully aligns with the overarching objectives of FGMC.

This assignment will be carried out under the Rapid Response Technical Assistance Projects (EFITAP) of the European Forest Institute (EFI) funded under FGMC programme. The objective of EFITAP is to quickly mobilise technical assistance in response to specific needs identified to support forest governance reforms. The support provided through this assignment will contribute to:

- Aligning policies and supply chain management practices of companies in West and Central Africa with the Framework, and therefore with the global reporting and policy processes that AFI works with.
- Integrating – to the greatest extent possible – AFI's definitions and other key principles in regional and national policy processes, thereby strengthening the enabling environment for the implementation of ethical supply chains and aligning with importing country policy processes (e.g. UK Global Resources Initiative (GRI) recommendations, draft EU policy options on (non)-regulatory measures).
- Effectively advocating for the principles contained in the Accountability Framework by AFI regional teams and a coalition of partners, thereby reinforcing the alignment work of the AFI at the global level and strengthening connections between global and regional efforts.

1.3. Objective

The objectives of this assignment are to:

Advance, consolidate and reinforce the achievements with companies using the AFI in West and Central Africa, including with companies currently using the Framework as part of the AFI Uptake & Learning process in Liberia,

Ghana and Cameroon, as well as continued socialization for uptake of the Framework with companies throughout Central Africa who have expressed interest and requested additional engagement.

Continue to improve alignment of regional and national policy processes and initiatives and support to government processes, such as the Tree Crops Authority in Ghana² and the National Oil Palm Strategy in Liberia, and further socialization of the Framework in other sectoral initiatives, including the Sustainable Rubber Coalition in Cameroon and the Tropical Forest Alliance Africa Palm Oil Initiative national platforms in each country.

Furthermore, building on such policy processes, support government stakeholders in Ghana, Liberia and Cameroon in seizing opportunities to interpret and transfer AFi core elements in the legislative and regulatory framework of these countries, to strengthen national uptake and enforcement.

In complement, promote AFi alignment with initiatives that participate to the development of regulatory measures in consumer regions to address deforestation and sustainability in trade, the EU and UK in particular, bringing lessons from the operationalization of the AFi framework in producer regions including from West and Central Africa.

Improve the capacity of civil society organizations in West and Central Africa to understand and directly apply the Framework, leading to more aligned and accountable efforts towards achieving deforestation and conversion free commodity production and trade.

Continue expansion and growth of the AFi coalition in West and Central Africa, including engagement with local networks of AFi's supporting partners, with the aim of building the coalition as a regional resource for companies, civil society and government policy makers applying the Framework to tackle local supply chain considerations and issues and aligning efforts to this end. This will also include further socialization with companies and other stakeholders in other countries in Central Africa who have expressed interest through the Economic Commission for Central African States (ECCAS).

1.4. Tasks

1. Expand the AFi Uptake & Learning process with six additional key companies and producers associations across the region, including: Golden Veroleum Liberia and Rubber Planters Association of Liberia, key cocoa companies in Ghana (tentatively including Touton and Olam), and SAFACAM (Socfin Group) and HEVECAM (Halcyon) in Cameroon.
2. Additional socialization and engagement with companies in Central Africa including Olam (Gabon), CA AGRI s.a.s. & GTC sarl (RoC), Palme d'Or (Central African Republic) and Feronia (DRC) working towards direct uptake of the Framework, including their engagement and support for wider sectoral, policy and landscape initiatives.
3. Engage local civil society, policy makers and company representatives in capacity building workshops (virtual or in-person) on key topics from the Framework most relevant to their current key policy processes and initiatives, focusing on initiatives where AFi is already used in Liberia, Ghana and Cameroon.³

² A board is being inaugurated and a CEO assigned to lead the Tree Crops Authority in Ghana in the coming months; AFi coalition members are positioned to provide inputs and to positively influence alignment of the boards work with the Framework's Principles.

³ These include the APOI palm oil platforms and national strategy processes in each country, the Sustainable Rubber Council in Cameroon, the RSPO national interpretation processes in Liberia and Cameroon, and the Tree Crops Authority in Ghana.

4. With the ECCAS Secretariat, support the implementation of a workshop on AFi's definitions for ECCAS members with the aim of supporting adoption of common definitions on deforestation, conversion and other key concepts for the wider Central Africa region (11 member states).⁴
5. Support the alignment of local and regional policy initiatives with the Framework and with the global policy processes doing the same via direct participation of regional AFi coalition members and technical resources, including toolkits, workshops and other direct support as needed; these include the Tree Crops Authority and the Oil Palm Development Association (Ghana), the National Oil Palm Strategy (Liberia) and the RSPO national interpretation and National Sustainable Palm Oil Strategy (Cameroon).
6. Strengthen the local network of AFi's supporting partners and other collaborators, including Proforest, Rainforest Alliance, World Wildlife Fund, Rights and Resources Initiative, Forest Peoples Programme, NEPCo, Earthworm Foundation, FERN, ZSL-SPOTT and others into a regular community of practice based on the Framework as a common reference point and tool for aligning efforts.
7. Communicate the results of the company uptake of the Framework through joint communications, virtual information sessions (webinars or podcasts).
8. Increase collaborations with national government stakeholders in the 3 target countries (Liberia, Ghana and Cameroon) and seize opportunities to interpret and transfer AFi core elements in the legislative and regulatory framework of these countries, to strengthen wider uptake in national policies and better enforcement.
9. Strengthen the links between the AFi and its penetration at country level in producing regions with initiatives that participate to the development of (non-)regulatory measures in consumer regions to address deforestation and sustainability in trade, in particular the ongoing policy developments in the UK (I.e. Global Resources Initiative) and the EU.

Proposed partners: AFi will continue working with key Steering Group members and implementing partners in each country and sub-region (e.g. Proforest and Rainforest Alliance in West Africa, with advisory support from Steering Group member Silas Siakor in Liberia and Joseph Osei/Resource Trust in Ghana; WWF-Cameroon and Rainforest Alliance in Central Africa). Additional partners will include civil society groups in each country as well as key company and policy stakeholders working with and supportive of the AFi.

1.5. Timing and deliverables

The Contractor will perform the tasks over a period of up to 9 months ideally starting in November of 2020 with a closing no later than end of 2021.

An inception meeting with EFI and FGMC will take place at the start of the assignment. Further to the meeting, the contractor will submit an inception report, including a revised methodology (if required), a logframe and a list of expected products (operational guidance, technical briefings and communication products etc.) to be delivered during the assignment, and a work plan for the first 3 months of the assignment with a description of activities and an estimate of workdays required. EFI will approve the inception report (including expected products like operational guidance, technical briefings, communication products etc. to be annexed) and quarterly work plan prior to the start of any work.

⁴ The 11 members of ECCAS are: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

Deliverables	Nov 20 20	Dec 20 20	Jan 21 21	Feb 21 21	Mar 21 21	Apr 21 21	May 21 21	Jun 21 21	Jul 21 21
1. Inception report: (see above)	X								
2. 3-month progress report: Short description of progress (technical and financial) including problems encountered; planned work for the next 3 months ⁵				X			X		
3. Draft final report: Short description of achievements including problems encountered and recommendations.								X	
4. Final report: Short description of achievements including problems encountered and recommendations; a final invoice and the financial report. ⁶									X

All reports/deliverables are to be produced in English and the final reports will take into account comments provided by EFI on the draft reports. Following submission of the final reports EFI will arrange editing and the Contractor will need to respond where clarifications may be required during this editing process.

Final reports will be submitted in electronic version (MS Word and pdf format, with any data tables in Excel format to provide a clear understanding of the analyses done, and with all pictures, charts etc. from the report and annexes also provided separately in their original file format). When preparing graphs, charts and maps, attention should be paid to the colours and patterns selected so that they can be read in non-colour printouts. Where maps are included in reports, care should be taken to show internationally accepted borders between countries. Sources and references for information, data and statistics used should be properly cited. All tables, maps and graphs should include titles in English.

For implementation of the assignment a “work plan budget” of EUR 70,000 is made available by EFI, which is directly managed by the contractor. It is meant for travel costs (including per diems) and operational costs (engagement events, publications etc.). Use of the work plan budget needs a prior approval from EFI and is estimated in the quarterly work plans.

⁵ Being or not accompanied by an invoice following provisions of the contract

⁶ Within 1 month of receiving comments on the draft final report from EFI

2. TENDER DOCUMENTATION

2.1. Administrative Documentation

The tender shall include the following documentation, properly filled out and signed:

- Cover letter (Annex 1)
- Identification form (Annex 2) including supporting documentation
- Bank identification form (Annex 2a)
- Declaration on Exclusion Criteria and Absence of Conflict of Interest (Annex 3)
- Nomination of Experts form (Annex 4)
- Minimum criteria declaration (Annex 5)

The consortium agreement (Annex 6) shall be included, properly filled out and signed, if the tender is submitted jointly by a consortium of economic operators. The consortium agreement (Annex 6) shall not be included if the tender is submitted by a single Tenderer proposing subcontracting of tasks.

2.2. Technical Proposal

In order to evaluate the tender against the minimum criteria and the award criteria A.I. – A.II in section 3.1. and 3.2., the Tenderer shall submit a technical proposal consisting only of the following elements:

1) A nomination of the following Experts to carry out the tasks in the Terms of Reference:

- **one Team Leader/Chief Advisor (Expert)**
- **one or more Experts in value chain development and sustainable landscape management and/or livelihoods**

The Technical Proposal shall include CV's of the nominated Experts.

The Tenderer shall be able to certify the information contained in the CV's for the nominated Experts at EFI's request.

The CV shall have all the information as in the EuroPass CV

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae>

Optionally

- **one or more additional Experts relevant for the implementation of the service**

The Technical Proposal shall include CV's of the nominated Experts.

The Tenderer shall be able to certify the information contained in the CV's for the nominated Experts at EFI's request.

2) A description of no more than two pages, making reference to the Terms of Reference and the previous experience of the Experts showcasing understanding of the aims and the context of the tasks and addressing the following topics:

- Private sector policies and supply chain management practices towards ethical production and trade

- Development of regulatory measures in producing and consumer regions to address deforestation and sustainability in trade

3) A presentation of no more than five pages on the Tenderer’s methodology for the assignment – building upon the Terms of Reference and the experience of the Expert(s) – addressing the following elements under separate headings:

- Approach to advance, consolidate and reinforce the achievements with companies using the AFi
- Approach for improving alignment of regional and national policy processes and initiatives, and support to government processes
- Approach for improving the capacity of civil society organizations
- Approach for continuing the expansion and growth of the AFi coalition in the Central and West Africa region
- Timing and sequence of activities and deliverables, indicating the approximate allocation of time per nominated Expert for each task and analysis of risks and mitigation measures in relation to eventual COVID-19 impact on the implementation of the service.

2.3. Financial Proposal

The Tenderer shall submit a financial proposal, which shall be completed by using the form in annex 7 and by following the instructions therein.

The full general conditions applicable to the payment of fees and per diem as well as the reimbursement of costs can be found in annex 8 (model contract).

3. EVALUATION OF TENDERS AND AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

3.1. Minimum Criteria

The **Tenderer** nominated must meet the following criteria:

N°	Criteria description
M.I.	Demonstrated experience in supporting companies and other key actors to overcome obstacles to ethical production and trade in the agriculture and forestry sectors.
M.II.	Experience from last three (3) years of implementing one or several contracts with similar services with an overall budget of at least EUR 200,000.

The **Team Leader/Chief Advisor** nominated must meet the following criteria:

N°	Criteria description
M.III.	Master's degree or PhD in ecology, natural resources management, forestry, environmental policy or a relevant, directly related discipline
M. IV.	Ten (10) years' demonstrated experience leading and coordinating projects on value chain development and sustainable landscape management and/or livelihoods
M.V.	Experience in monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of certification and sustainable development projects in agriculture and forestry and in advising on the design of sustainability standards
M.VI.	Knowledge of global initiatives promoting accountability on company commitments to protect forests, natural ecosystems, and human rights
M.VII.	Understanding, speaking, and writing English as demanded with respect to all tasks covered by the Terms of Reference in this Tender.

The **Expert(s) in value chain development and sustainable landscape management and/or livelihoods** nominated must meet the following criteria:

N°	Criteria description
M.VIII.	Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in natural resources management, forestry, environmental policy or a relevant, directly related discipline.
M. IX.	Five (5) years' demonstrated experience in value chain development and sustainable landscape management and/or livelihoods
M.X.	Experience in implementing, monitoring, or researching conservation or sustainable development projects or strategies

M.XI.	Understanding, speaking, and writing English as demanded with respect to all tasks covered by the Terms of Reference in this Tender.
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Tenders not fulfilling the minimum criteria will be rejected.

3.2. Award Criteria

Tenders which fulfil the minimum criteria will be evaluated using the following award criteria:

A. Technical component (maximum 75 points)		
N°	Award criteria	Max points
A.I.	Understanding of:	30
i.	Private sector policies and supply chain management practices towards ethical production and trade	15
ii.	Development of regulatory measures in producing and consumer regions to address deforestation and sustainability in trade	15
A.II.	Proposed methodology for the implementation of the tasks	45
i.	Approach to advance, consolidate and reinforce the achievements with companies using the AFi	10
ii.	Approach for improving alignment of regional and national policy processes and initiatives, and support to government processes	10
iii.	Approach for improving the capacity of civil society organizations	10
iv.	Approach for continuing the expansion and growth of the AFi coalition in Central and West Africa region	10
v.	Timing and sequence of activities and deliverables, indicating the approximate allocation of time per nominated Expert for each task and analysis of risks and mitigation measures in relation to eventual COVID-19 impact on the implementation of the service.	5

The Technical component (TC) is calculated according to the following formula:

$$TC = A.I. + A.II.$$

Tenders must receive a score of more than half of the maximum Technical component to be considered qualitatively acceptable.

Tenders not considered qualitatively acceptable will not be considered further.

B. Financial component (maximum 25 points)

Tenders presenting a total financial proposal (Fo) superior to the maximum contract value of EUR 280,000 will not be considered further (including workplan budget).

For tenders being considered, the Financial component (F) is calculated according to the following formula:

$$F = (Fmin / Fo) \times 25$$

where

Fmin is total sum in the tender in the evaluation with the lowest total financial proposal; and

Fo is the total sum in the financial proposal being considered.

C. Most economically advantageous tender

A combined score (CS) will be calculated according to the following formula:

$$CS = TC + F$$

The Tenderer with the highest combined score (CS) for Technical component (TC) and Financial component (F) will be awarded the Contract.

Where two or more tenders have an equal combined score the contract will be awarded according to the highest score for the financial component (F).

ANNEXES

Annex 1	Cover letter
Annex 2	Identification form
Annex 2a	Bank identification form
Annex 3	Declaration on exclusion criteria and absence conflict of interest
Annex 4	Nomination of Experts form
Annex 5	Minimum criteria declaration
Annex 6	Consortium agreement
Annex 7	Financial Proposal form
Annex 8	Model contract
Annex 9	Per diem rates