Request for Proposals

Subject: Request for technical and economic proposal and supporting documents for the possible award of a fixed price Subcontract for "Conducting studies on the enabling environment for implementing zero deforestation cocoa production in Cameroon".

Funded by

The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

1.0 The Organization

The Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) (The Alliance) delivers research-based solutions that harness agricultural biodiversity and sustainably transform food systems to improve people's lives. Alliance solutions address the global crises of malnutrition, climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation. With novel partnerships, the Alliance generates evidence and mainstreams innovations to transform food systems and landscapes so that they sustain the planet, drive prosperity, and nourish people in a climate crisis. The Alliance is part of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future. https://alliancebioversityciat.org/ , www.cgiar.org.

2.0 Request for proposals (context)

The need to transform food systems into to low emissions production systems has become a pivotal theme in global climate discussions, focusing on addressing key challenges in sustainable development. The global food system plays a significant role in driving climate change, accounting for approximately one-third of total human-generated GHG emissions. Despite this significant impact, countries' pledges to mitigate climate change through instruments such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement (2016) fall short and do not necessarily consider food-system emissions. This is in part due to countries' concerns regarding the impact of interventions on key development priorities such as food and nutrition security.

Addressing this challenge requires more than just innovative technologies. It demands a transdisciplinary approach that integrates science, policy, and community engagement to develop an enabling environment for scaling innovations towards food system transformation. This transdisciplinary approach includes aspects such as (1) identifying direct and underlying drivers of food system GHG emissions and GHG emission sources; (2) identifying geographical areas where government development priorities overlap with food system GHG mitigation opportunities; (3) identifying farm-level drivers of adoption of innovations; (4) implementing value chain upgrading strategies to overcome adoption barriers; (5) promoting sustainable business models and financial mechanisms to scale innovations; (6) measuring climate action benefits, SDG co-benefits, and undesired effects.

Cameroon is a key player in the global cocoa industry, ranking as the third-largest producer in Africa. The country's cocoa sector supports the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people and plays a vital role in the national economy, contributing nearly two-thirds of export earnings. However, the sector faces a range of challenges—including deforestation, climate risks, limited access to financing, child labor, and low yields—that threaten its productivity and long-term sustainability.

Since 2000, cocoa cultivation has been responsible for over 60% of deforestation in Cameroon's cocoa-producing landscapes. This deforestation undermines ecological balance and reduces land productivity. Climate change compounds these problems, with studies indicating a 1.5°C rise in temperature and a 15–20% decrease in rainfall across major cocoa-growing regions. These changes have led to erratic weather, prolonged droughts, and more frequent pest and disease outbreaks, such as black pod disease and cocoa swollen shoot virus.

Average cocoa yields in Cameroon remain low—around 400 kg per hectare—well below the potential due to environmental and agronomic constraints. Declining productivity may drive further expansion into forested areas, exacerbating deforestation. In addition, cocoa farmers often lack bargaining power and are vulnerable to volatile and low market prices.

Socio-economic challenges also persist. The aging farmer population and low engagement of youth in cocoa farming contribute to the continued reliance on child labor. Limited access to agricultural extension services further hampers farmers' ability to adopt good agricultural practices, resulting in low yields and poor-quality cocoa. Land tenure insecurity is another critical issue: land disputes and unclear ownership rights discourage farmers from making long-term investments in productivity-enhancing practices.

This call for proposals aims to develop studies on the enabling environment for implementing zero deforestation cocoa production in Cameroon, using an integrated and multidisciplinary approach. The specific activities for these studies are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Main activity, sub activities and expected deliverables for developing studies on the enabling environment for implementing zero deforestation cocoa production in Cameroon.

Nº	Key Activity	Sub-Activities	Key outputs
1	**Analyzing the role of cocoa production as a direct and underlying driver of GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in Cameroon.**	Activity is about examining the contributions of cocoa production to deforestation and GHG emission in **Cameroon**. The following sub-activities shall be conducted under this deliverable. -Map cocoa producing regions in Cameroon and indicate the current area under cocoa cultivation in each region as well as national figures. - Produce high-resolution maps of trends of cocoa production in Cameroon. -Produce a high-resolution map that shows trends (between 2000 and 2024) of deforestation and forest degradation and associated carbon emissions in Cameroon. -Perform a quantitative study on socio-economic and political factors, including cacao production and child labor, affecting deforestation in Cameroon. Factors can be identified in the framework developed by Sylvester et al., (2024). - Conduct a literature review of the different cocoa production practices (including agroforestry) in different regions and GHG associated with the different practices.	**-A1: A** report that maps cocoa-producing regions in Cameroon, detailing current cocoa cultivation areas by region and nationally. The report shall include high-resolution maps of cocoa production in Cameroon and presents trends from 2000 to 2024 in deforestation and forest degradation as well as associated carbon emissions across key cocoa-producing regions. **-A1.1:** A quantitative report that analyzes socio-economic and political drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Cameroon. The report shall also present the result of the literature review on cocoa production practices and their

			associated greenhouse gas emissions in different regions.
2	**Understanding stakeholder's development priorities in cocoa value chain Cameroon.**	This activity aims to identify the thematic and geographical areas where development priorities of value chain stakeholders (including government priorities) overlap with GHG-mitigation opportunities in the cocoa value chain. The key activities shall be. -Organize one national level workshop involving stakeholders (including the government) in cocoa value chain in different cocoa producing regions to understand the development priorities of different stakeholders in the cocoa value chain. - Using data on socioeconomic and political factors driven deforestation from 1, perform spatial explicit analysis showing geographical overlaps at lowest scale possible between deforestation, cacao production and development priorities.	**A2:** A report that summarizes one national workshops held to identify development priorities of regional stakeholders and national actors in Cameroon 's cocoa value chain. The report shall also present the methodology and the results of the geospatial explicit analysis between deforestation, cocoa production and development priorities.
3	**Assessing farm-level potential for adoption of zero deforestation cocoa production in Cameroon .**	This activity aims to understand the factors that influence farmers' adoption behavior of agroforestry cocoa production, enabling the design of effective incentives to boost adoption. The key activities under this objective shall include. -Conduct review of existing literature in Cameroon on factors affecting farmer's adoption of zero deforestation and sustainable practices in the cocoa value chain such as agroforestry.	**-A3:** A report on the review of literature on factors influencing farmers' adoption of zero-deforestation and sustainable practices in Cameroon's cocoa value chain. The report shall contain suggested incentives for boosting the adoption of zero deforestation

		-Propose key variables to consider when designing scaling strategies for scaling agroforestry production in Ivory Coast.	and sustainable practices in Cameroon .
4	**Value-chain upgrading strategies to overcome adoption barriers of zero deforestation cocoa production.**	This activity shall focus on understanding the obstacles within the cocoa value chain that hinder both the adoption of sustainable practices and the processing of cacao. Based on that, craft strategies to effectively address these challenges. The sub activities shall be. -Perform a value chain analysis and provide a snapshot on the current state of the cocoa value chain in Cameroon (structure, key actors, regional characteristics, environmental factors, relationships between actors, and competitiveness levels). -Identify together with cacao value chain stakeholders the bottlenecks that hinder the implementation of a zero-deforestation strategy in cacao production, as well as its processing into cocoa.	**A4:** A report on Cameroon's cocoa value chain structure, key actors, and challenges, identifying bottlenecks hindering zero-deforestation strategy implementation in cocoa production.
5	**Inclusive business models and financial mechanisms to scale for implementing zero deforestation in the cocoa value chain.**	Inclusive business models and finance are crucial for facilitating the implementation of zero deforestation practices such as agroforestry, as well as to scale local processing in the cocoa value chain. Key activities under this deliverable includes. -Analize existing business models and financial mechanisms for implementing zero deforestation cacao production, as well as to scale cacao processing.	**A5:** A report that reviews business models and financial mechanisms for zero-deforestation cacao, identifying and describing three viable implementation options for Cameroon

		-Identify and describe three viable business models for implementing zero deforestation cacao production and cocoa processing.	
6	**Understanding climate action and development co-benefits for implementing zero deforestation cacao production in Cameroon.**	This deliverable shall focus on climate action and development co-benefit for implementing sustainable practices in the cocoa value chain such as GHG emission reduction, carbon sequestration, biodiversity protection and improved incomes among others. Key deliverables shall include the following. -Model GHG emission and carbon sequestration benefits under three different scenarios (15%, 30% and 50%) of increased adoption on zero deforestation practices such agroforestry in Cameroon . -Identify potential non-carbon benefits (such as socio-economic), and the required social and environmental safeguards to maximize non-carbon benefits -Evaluate the government progress and gaps for complying for EU Zero deforestation law in the cocoa value chain in Cameroon .	A6: A report on models on GHG emissions and carbon sequestration benefits under increased adoption of agroforestry and evaluation of Cameroon 's progress toward EU Zero Deforestation law compliance.

3.0 Request for Proposal Schedule

The following calendar summarizes the important dates of the bidding process. Proposers must strictly follow these deadlines.

- Publication of the request for proposals: **27/05/2025**
- Deadline for written questions: **10/06/2025**
- Responses to questions/clarifications: **12/06/2025**
- Closing date for submission of proposals: **16/06/2025**

The above dates may be modified at the discretion of the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT. Any changes will be published in an amendment to this RFP.

Questions and clarifications: Questions related to the technical or administrative requirements of this request for proposal can be sent no later than 5:00 p.m. local time in Bogotá, **10/06/2025** to the email g.amahnui@cgiar.org, m.vanegas@cgiar.org, augusto.Castro@cgiar.org and copy alliance-africa-tender@cgiar.org

Oral presentations: Interviews may consist of oral presentations of the activities and approaches proposed by the proponents. Proposers should be prepared to make presentations to the technical evaluation committee virtually upon receiving notification of the invitation to present the proposal.

4.0 Instructions for submitting proposals

The proposal must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. local time in Bogotá on June 16th, 2025 to g.amahnui@cgiar.org, m.vanegas@cgiar.org , augusto.Castro@cgiar.org and copy

alliance-africa-tender@cgiar.org with the email subject **"Request for technical and economic proposal 003"**. Technical and financial proposals must be submitted in separate files. The proposed budget for this activity should not exceed **USD 75,000.** The format of the files sent must be Word, Excel or PDF. Do not use sending platforms. (Google drive, Dropbox, etc.). The RFP number should be included in the subject line.

5.0 Requirements for the presentation of proposals.

The company(s), organization(s) or individual consultants that submit the proposal in response to this RFP must meet the following requirements:

- Be Cameroonian organizations, with at least seven (7) years of experience in the design and implementation of projects in the cacao sector in Cameroon. Non-Cameroonian organizations with at least seven years of presence in Cameroon are eligible to apply.
- Show proof of presence and activities in Cameroon.
- Demonstrate a minimum of five (5) years of experience in processes of strengthening knowledge, technical, organizational and operational capacities of local communities in the formulation and/or implementation of sustainable practices in the cocoa value chain.

6.0 Documents required for the proposal.

6.1 Presentation letter

The applicants must send with its proposal the duly completed cover letter, in addition to the following documents, which must be included as attachments to the cover letter:

- Certificate of existence and legal representation (in case of organization).
- Copy of the citizenship card of the legal representative. The legal representative must prove that he or she has the capacity to enter the subcontract offered.
- A list of past projects implemented. Applicants must send along with their application files a description of similar projects implemented past and its outcomes. This should not be more than 3 pages.

6.2 Technical proposal

The applicants must clearly explain how the activities described in the Terms of Reference, along with the technical and methodological considerations, will be implemented to achieve the scope of work and objectives. The work plan proposal should demonstrate a logical relationship between the proposed activities, timelines, and responsible parties. This section should not exceed 10 pages in length.

6.3 Financial proposal

The applicants must submit a detailed budget based on the budget, maintaining the budget categories. Each item must be presented in detail individually, for example, salary for each individual participating in the activity, materials, field work etc. Unit prices, quantities and total prices must be shown. The maximum amount of this fix price contract is USD 75,000.

6.4 Team members

Give a detailed list of team members participating in the project and their roles. Include their CV in the application file as an attachment.

6.5 Additional documents to be submitted alongside with the application

- **Certificate of Registration** – Proof of the partner's legal status and official recognition.
- **Institutional Bank Account Certification Letter** – A letter on bank official letterhead confirming the name of the implementing partner's institution as it appears on the bank account.
- **Audited Financial Statements** – The partner's audited institutional financial statements for the past two years, including the auditor's opinion. Additional financial documentation may be requested by the Alliance if needed.
- **Previous Grant Agreements or Contracts** – Copies of agreements or contracts with former funders or organizations, which will serve as part of the partner's reference documentation.
- **Completed Vendor Conflict Of Interest Declaration Form**

7.0 List of references for understanding the call

Below is a list of additional references that may be helpful for understanding the activities and for developing the technical proposal.

Amahnui, G. A., Sylvester, J. M., Vanegas Cubillos, M. C., & Castro Nunez, A. C. (2025). A Six-step Approach for scaling low-emission food systems: Evidence and guidelines.

Sylvester, J. M., Gutiérrez-Zapata, D. M., Pérez-Marulanda, L., Vanegas-Cubillos, M., Bruun, T. B., Mertz, O., & Castro-Nunez, A. (2024). Analysis of food system drivers of deforestation highlights foreign direct investments and urbanization as threats to tropical forests. *Scientific Reports*, *14*(1), 15179.

Amahnui, G. A., Vanegas, M., Verchot, L., & Castro-Nunez, A. (2025). Achieving the paris agreement goals by transitioning to low-emissions food systems: A comprehensive review of countries' actions. *Environmental Science & Policy*, *163*, 103968.