



## Request for Proposals (RfP)

Consultancy Services supporting the development of the GEF-8 Full-sized Mesoamerica Forest IP child project for Mexico, “Securing benefits for the well-being of local communities and the ecosystems of the Maya Forest”

### Summary

IUCN seeks the services of a consultant or firm to lead the development of a full-sized GEF project, the **“Securing benefits for the well-being of local communities and the ecosystems of the Maya Forest” project** (hereafter the **Mexico Mesoamerica Forest child project**), including development and finalization of all reports and documentation including the finalized IUCN Project Document (ProDoc) and GEF CEO Endorsement Request with all required supporting annexes and documentation. The project is one of seven “child projects” that comprise the GEF-8 Mesoamerica Forest Integrated Program and that together seek to slow and reverse loss and degradation of critical remaining primary forest in the region.

The *Mexico Mesoamerica Forest child project*, described in more detail in the attached TORs will support the overall achievement of the objectives and benefits by ensuring alignment to the regional Program, ensuring a well-articulated, coordinated and adaptively managed project with harmonized monitoring, reporting and communications, as well as high-value exchanges and training events organized at multiple levels throughout the Program's implementation. The Project will also support engagement with key external initiatives, platforms and stakeholders in Mexico, creating additional opportunities for valuable partnerships, including with the private sector and international donor and finance communities, and supporting the elevation and advancement of the country's forest conservation agenda at global, regional and national levels..

Interested Firms/Applicants are hereby invited to submit a technical and financial proposal for the aforementioned Consultancy Services. Please read the information and instructions carefully because non-compliance with the instructions may result in disqualification of your Proposal from this Procurement.

### 1. ABOUT IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and some 18,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being.

### 2. REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1. A detailed description of the services to be provided can be found in Annex 1 (Terms of Reference)

### 3. CONTACT DETAILS

3.1. During the course of this RfP, from its publication to the award of a contract, you may not contact or discuss this procurement with any IUCN employee or representative other than the following contact. You must address all correspondence and questions to the contact, including your proposal.

IUCN Contact: Procurement Officer E-mail: [procurement.Ormacc@iucn.org](mailto:procurement.Ormacc@iucn.org)

### 4. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

4.1. This timetable is indicative and may be changed by IUCN at any time. If IUCN decides that changes to any of the deadlines are necessary, that will be informed.

DATE	ACTIVITY
24/07/2023	Publication of the Request for Proposals
20/08/2023	Deadline for submission of questions
24/08/2023	Deadline for submission of proposals to IUCN (" <b>Submission Deadline</b> ")
29/08/2023	Clarification and evaluation of proposals
05/09/2023	Planned date for contract award
15/09/2023	Expected contract start date

4.2. Send an email to the IUCN contact to register an email address to receive notifications or clarifications of this bidding process, bidders in turn will be able to confirm if they intend to submit a Proposal before the deadline indicated above.

4.3. IUCN reserves the right to issue responses to any question to all Bidders, unless the Bidder making the inquiry expressly requests, at the time of inquiry, that it be kept confidential. If IUCN considers the content of the question and/or the answer to be non-confidential, it will inform the Bidder, who will have the opportunity to withdraw the question.

4.4. At any time before the deadline for submitting Proposals, IUCN may amend the RFP and will send all Bidders who have notified their interest or, failing that, registered an email to receive notifications, and it will be disclosed in the media used. For this end.

4.5. If the amendment is substantial, IUCN may extend the deadline for submission of Proposals in order to allow Bidders a reasonable time to take the amendment into consideration in their proposals.

### 5. PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS

5.1. The Bidder interested in submitting a Proposal must submit the following documents, in the order listed, placing:

#### A. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- a. Copy of identification document or passport (in case of being a foreigner)
- b. Copy of legal invoice for fees collection.
- c. Copy of resume

- d. Letter of interest signed, indicating that the Consultant have read, understood and accept the content of these Terms of Reference. (Annex 2)
- e. Signed Declaration of Undertaking (Annex 3a)
- f. Human Resources Questionnaire filled and signed (Annex 4)

**FOR CONSULTANCY COMPANIES:**

- a. Copy of Certification of Incorporation
- b. Copy of identification document of the Legal Representative
- c. Copy of legal invoice for fees collection.
- d. Copy of resumes of the Consulting Team
- e. Letter of interest signed, indicating that the Consultant have read, understood and accept the content of these Terms of Reference. (Annex 2)
- f. Signed Declaration of Undertaking signed by the Representative of the Consulting Company or, in the case of a Consortium or group of Consultants, signed by each member indicating that they have read and understood the content of the Declaration (Annex 3b)
- g. Human Resources Questionnaire filled and signed (Annex 4)

**B. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL:**

- i. The technical proposal must address each of the criteria listed below explicitly and separately, citing the reference number of the relevant criterion (Description column).

	Description	Information to be presented	Relative importance (%)
1	<i>Methodology to be implemented and schedule with logical dimension of time</i>		15%
2	<i>Experience working in Mexico and knowledge of the national, regional, and local context (minimum 10 years).</i>	<i>Company Profile / CV / Responsible for the Consultancy</i>	10%
3	<i>Experience in GEF Project document elaboration</i>	<i>Company Profile / CV / Responsible for the Consultancy</i>	15%
4	<i>Experience in Environmental and Social safeguard and gender-sensitive project design (minimum 10 years)</i>	<i>Company Profile / CV / Responsible for the Consultancy</i>	20%
5	<i>Experience with tools and assessments identified in ToR.</i>	<i>Company Profile / CV / Responsible for the Consultancy</i>	30%
6	<i>Familiarity with project areas</i>		10%
TOTAL			100%

- i. IUCN will evaluate the technical proposals with respect to each of the criteria indicated in point i) and their relative importance.
- ii. Proposals in any other format will significantly increase the evaluation time and therefore such proposals may be rejected at the discretion of IUCN.
- iii. When resumes (CVs) are requested, these should be from the people who will perform the specified job. Persons submitted as part of the Proposal may only be replaced with the approval of IUCN.

- iv. In the event that a company or group of consultants applies, in addition to the above information, the following must be specified:
  - Responsible for consulting
  - Composition of the consulting team, specialty of each member.
  - Role and responsibility in the activities/products of each member in accordance with the TOR

**C. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL:**

**Signed by the Proposer, indicating the value of professional services (USD) in numbers and letters.**

- i. It will be considered that the prices presented include all the costs of fees, insurance, taxes, obligations and risks that must be considered for compliance with the Terms of Reference. IUCN will not accept charges beyond those clearly indicated in the Financial Proposal and that are eligible for the execution of the Contract.
- ii. The Bidder will have to assume the payments corresponding to taxes according to regulations in force in its country; You will have to have health and life insurance up to date; and will assume the bank charges by transfer.
- iii. If local or international trips must be made for the execution of this Contract, the costs will be paid by IUCN through reimbursement and will be governed by the IUCN per diem scale for food and lodging.
- iv. Travel expenses related to the execution of this Contract will not exceed the total amount of 10,000 USD broken down as follows:

<b>Expense type</b>	<b>Maximum amount</b>
Meals	6,000
Surface Transportation	3,000
Accommodation	6,000
Other expenses (detailed)	

- v. For reimbursement of travel expenses, the Proposer must submit a financial report with original invoices/receipts (e.g., transportation, lodging, food and incidentals) to the IUCN Contact Person, in the currency of the Contract, so that the corresponding reimbursement can be processed.
- vi. Expenses related to vehicle maintenance, purchase of electronic equipment, cell phone expenses, consumption expenses or purchase of alcoholic beverages will be considered ineligible expenses.
- vii. Breakdown of the Financial Proposal.

For information purposes, it is recommended that the details of the financial proposal be broken down as follows:

	Description	Quantity	Unit price*	Total price*
1				
2				
3				

\*USD currency

5.2. Additional information not requested by IUCN should not be included in the proposal and will not be subject to evaluation.

## 6. SENDING

6.1. The Proposal must be submitted by email to the IUCN Contact (see Section 2). The subject heading of the email shall be [RfP Reference – Proposer name]. The Proposer name is the name of the company/organisation on whose behalf the proposal is being submitted, or the surname of the Proposer in case is bidding as a self-employed consultant. The proposal must be submitted in PDF format. The Proposer may submit multiple emails suitably annotated, e.g., Email 1 of 3, if attached files are too large to suit a single email transmission. You may not submit your Proposal by uploading it to a file-sharing tool (e.g. Dropbox, Google Drive, etc)

## 7. ELIGIBILITY

7.1. Not applicable

## 8. VALIDITY

8.1. The proposal must remain valid and capable of acceptance by IUCN for a period of 60 calendar days following the submission deadline.

## 9. WITHDRAWALS AND CHANGES

9.1. Proposers may freely withdraw or change their proposal at any time prior to the submission deadline by written notice to the IUCN Contact. However, in order to reduce the risk of fraud, no changes or withdrawals will be accepted after the submission deadline.

## 10. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

10.1. Completeness

IUCN will firstly check your proposal for completeness. Incomplete proposals will not be considered further.

10.2. Technical Evaluation

IUCN will evaluate technical proposals with regards to each of the following criteria and their relative importance:

### 10.2.1. *Scoring Method*

Proposals will be assigned a score from 0 to 10 for each of the technical evaluation criteria, such that '0' is low and '10' is high. Proposals that receive a score of '0' for any of the criteria will not be considered further.

### 10.2.2. *Technical Score*

The score for each technical evaluation criterion will be multiplied with the respective relative weight and these weighted scores added together to give the proposal's overall technical score.

### 10.3. Financial Evaluation and Financial Scores

The financial evaluation will be based upon the full total price submitted. Financial proposals will receive a score calculated by dividing the lowest financial proposal that has passed the minimum quality thresholds by the total price of your financial proposal.

**The proposals total score will be calculated as the weighted sum of the technical score and financial score.**

The relative weights will be:

**Technical: 70%**  
**Financial: 30%**

Subject to the requirements in Sections 4 and 7, IUCN will award the contract to the Proposer whose proposal achieves the highest total score.

## 11. EXPLANATION OF PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

11.1. IUCN is using the Invitation Procedure for this procurement. This means that only invited bidders may submit a proposal. IUCN typically invites from four to six bidders to submit a proposal.

11.2. You are welcome to ask questions or seek clarification regarding this procurement. Please email the IUCN Contact (see Section 2), taking note of the deadline for submission of questions in Section 3.1. Late proposals will not be considered. All proposals received by the submission deadline will be evaluated by a team of three or more evaluators in accordance with the evaluation criteria stated in in this RfP. No other criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. The contract will be awarded to the Proposer whose proposal received the highest Total Score. IUCN does, however, reserve the right to cancel the procurement and not award a contract at all.

11.3. IUCN will contact all Proposers who submitted their proposal to inform them of the outcome of the evaluation. The timeline in Section 3.1 gives an estimate of when the contract award is expected to be completed, however this date may change depending on how long the evaluation of the proposals takes.

## 12. CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROCUREMENT

12.1. To participate in this procurement, the Proposers are required to submit a proposal, which fully complies with the instructions in this RfP and the Attachments.

12.1.1. It is responsibility of each Proposer to ensure the submission of a complete and fully compliant proposal.

12.1.2. Any incomplete or incorrectly completed proposal submission may be deemed non-compliant, and as a result will not be consider to proceed further in the procurement process.

12.1.3. IUCN will query any obvious clerical errors in a proposal and may, at IUCN's sole discretion, allow a Proposer to correct these, but only if doing so could not be perceived as giving an unfair advantage.

12.2. In order to participate in this procurement, the Proposer must meet the following conditions:

- Free of conflicts of interest
- Registered on the relevant professional or trade register of the country in which is established (or resident, if self-employed)
- In full compliance with its obligations relating to payment of social security contributions and of all applicable taxes

- Not been convicted of failing to comply with environmental regulatory requirements or other legal requirements relating to sustainability and environmental protection
  - Not bankrupt or being wound up
  - Never been guilty of an offence concerning professional conduct
  - Not involved in fraud, corruption, a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism, or any other illegal activity.
- 12.3. Each Proposer shall submit only one proposal, either individually or as a partner in a joint venture. In case of joint venture, one company shall not be allowed to participate in two different joint ventures in the same procurement nor shall a company be allowed to submit a proposal both on its behalf and as part of a joint venture for the same procurement. A Proposer who submits or participates in more than one proposal (other than as a subcontractor or in cases of alternatives that have been permitted or requested) shall cause all the proposals with the Proposer's participation to be disqualified.
- 12.4. By taking part in this procurement, the Proposer accept the conditions set out in this RfP, including the following:
- It is unacceptable to give or offer any gift or consideration to an employee or other representative of IUCN as a reward or inducement in relation to the awarding of a contract. Such action will give IUCN the right to exclude you from this and any future procurements, and to terminate any contract that may have been signed with you.
  - Any attempt to obtain information from an employee or other representative of IUCN concerning another bidder will result in disqualification.
  - Any price fixing or collusion with other Proposers in relation to this procurement shall give IUCN the right to exclude you and any other involved bidder(s) from this and any future procurements and may constitute a criminal offence.

### **13. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

- 13.1. IUCN follows the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The information a Proposer submits to IUCN as part of this procurement will be treated as confidential and shared only as required to evaluate the proposal in line with the procedure explained in this RfP, and for the maintenance of a clear audit trail. For audit purposes, IUCN is required to retain the proposals in its entirety for 10 years after the end of the resulting contract and make this available to internal and external auditors and donors as and when requested.
- 13.2. In the Declaration of Undertaking (Attachment 3) the Proposer needs to give IUCN express permission to use the information submitted in this way, including personal data that forms part of the proposal. Where a Proposer include personal data of employees (e.g. CVs) in the proposal, the Proposer needs to have written permission from those individuals to share this information with IUCN, and for IUCN to use this information as indicated in 8.1. Without these permissions, IUCN will not be able to consider the proposal.

### **14. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- 14.1. If a Proposer has a complaint or concern regarding the propriety of how a competitive process is or has been executed, then please contact [sofiamariela.madrigal@iucn.org](mailto:sofiamariela.madrigal@iucn.org). Such complaints or concerns will be treated as confidential and are not considered in breach of the above restrictions on communication (Section 2.1).

### **15. CONTRACT**

- 15.1. The contract will be based on IUCN's template which terms of which are not negotiable.

**16. ANNEXES**

**Annex 1**      *Specification of Requirements / Terms of Reference*

**Annex 2**      *Letter of Interest*

**Annex 3**      *Declaration of Undertaking (select 2a for companies or 2b for self-employed)*

**Annex 4**      *Results Framework, Mesoamerica Forest IP*

**Annex 5**      *Mexico Child Project Concept*



**ATTACHMENT 1  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**The Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean of the  
International Union for the Conservation of Nature**

**(IUCN-ORMACC)**

**REQUIRES**

**PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

**supporting the development of the**

**GEF-8 Full-sized Mesoamerica Forest IP child project for Mexico, “Securing benefits for the  
well-being of local communities and the ecosystems of the Maya Forest”**

<b>Type of Contract:</b>	Professional Consultancy Services
<b>Period:</b>	9 months
<b>Availability:</b>	September 2023
<b>Persons Responsible for Supervision:</b>	Tony Nello, Thematic expert; Josh Schneck, GEF GCF Portfolio Manager for Global Programs

**1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION**

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**Overview**

Programming for the eighth funding cycle of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF-8)<sup>1</sup> includes resources and programming for a so-called *Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program* that seeks “conservation of the last and globally important primary tropical forests”. This GEF Integrated Program (IP) is operationally divided into 5 separate regional IPs focused on the Amazon basin, Guinean forests, Indo-Malaya forests, Congo basin forests, and Mesoamerican forests.

IUCN has been selected to serve as the Lead GEF Agency for **the GEF-8 Mesoamerican Forest IP**. The program will be comprised of seven “child projects,” including national projects in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, and a *Regional Coordination, Knowledge Sharing and Support Project* (hereafter called *the Regional child project*). These terms of reference describe the objectives, responsibilities and key deliverables for an International Consultancy supporting IUCN in developing the Mexico child project, “Securing benefits for the well-being of local communities and the ecosystems of the Maya Forest” (hereafter the Mexico Mesoamerica Forest child project) for approval by GEF and IUCN.

**Background on Mesoamerican Forest IP**

Stretching from Central Mexico to the eastern Panamanian frontier, the forests of Mesoamerica are vital and irreplaceable. They are also among the world’s most threatened – nearly half of the region’s natural habitats have been converted to agriculture or urban areas, and out of the 5 remaining intact forests, 3 have lost nearly 25% of their area in just the past 15 years.

The GEF-8 **Mesoamerican Forest IP** seeks to slow and reverse loss and degradation of critical remaining primary forests in the region. In Mesoamerica, principle proximate threats to primary forests are deforestation and degradation from agriculture expansion largely for cattle ranching, logging (both legal and illegal), and fire, along with infrastructure development and wildlife trafficking. To address these drivers the program will apply a

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-04/GEF\\_R.08\\_29\\_Rev.01\\_GEF8\\_Programming\\_Directions.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-04/GEF_R.08_29_Rev.01_GEF8_Programming_Directions.pdf)

strategy of supporting strengthening and enhancement of national and regional enabling conditions for primary forest conservation through coordinated interventions supporting strengthened capacities, governance, protection, mobilization of funding, exchange and awareness raising.

The **Mexico Mesoamerica Forest child project** is designed to support transformational change towards the conservation of Mexico's Selva Maya forest through a set of targeted interventions that address the main drivers of deforestation and degradation. Consistent with the Program's Theory of Change, interventions will focus on strengthening multi-level governance and policy coherence, mobilizing new and additional funding for forest conservation, enhancing regional cooperation, knowledge sharing and awareness raising, and supporting conservation led by indigenous peoples and local communities. In line with the designed transformation envisioned for this Integrated Program, the Project will address the systemic challenges outlined below:

1. **Harmonization of state-level land use zoning, conservation, and development plans** informed by integrated spatial planning will be achieved through improved dialogue between key agencies at the federal and state levels, municipalities, and indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) (component 1), and will include a conservation-friendly Solutions Based on Nature (SbN) model that addresses social and environmental needs (component 2).
2. **Coordination of multiple initiatives led by government agencies, CSOs and private sectors to facilitate landscape-level partnerships and improve data and monitoring systems:** although a significant number of projects are promoting sustainable and biodiversity-friendly agriculture and supporting better management of National Protected Areas (NPA), there is little coordination among all stakeholders. The project and its partners will foster collaboration between donors, government agencies, CSOs and the private sector by strengthening the newly created multilevel coalition for the Yucatan Peninsula and the Yucatan Regional Climate Change Committee (component 4).
3. **Minimization/elimination of perverse subsidies that induce deforestation, and establishment of green social and agricultural incentives with consistent environmental safeguards,** facilitated by improved and connected monitoring systems (component 1) and innovative financial instruments such as biodiversity credits and payment for hydrological services at the watershed level (component 4).

Specific project outcomes and services in Mexico include:

- **C1. Adoption of enabling policies, reforms and planning:** This component will support high-level cross-sectoral dialogues and exchanges to facilitate the development of enabling policies and sound land use planning that recognizes the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including potentially through compensation schemes, elimination of perverse subsidies, and other means. Evidence will be generated on the multiple benefits generated by Selva Maya, as well as current conservation and restoration programs (e.g., Sembrando Vida, CONAFOR programs), through the assessment of ecosystem services (e.g., water quantity and quality) to build the case for conservation and sustainable forest management as an effective climate change adaptation strategy. Transformative change will be facilitated in part by increasing awareness among decision-makers (e.g., municipal councils) and private sector leaders of the irreplaceable value of forests in addressing social and development challenges. Local and national governance bodies will be strengthened or created to support indigenous peoples' and local communities' grievance mechanisms and their participation in the development of land use plans, thus ensuring strengthened tenure rights and access to land. Finally, this Component will support improved data sharing and collaboration with ministerial stakeholders (e.g. SEMARNAT, CONAFOR, SADER, Bienestar) and reporting to relevant global initiatives and treaties, including the Global Biodiversity Framework and Bonn Challenge restoration commitments.

- **C2. Accelerating the protection and restoration of the Selva Maya:** providing high-priority resources and capacity building to stakeholders at various levels, from national to indigenous peoples and local communities. Support will be provided to improve management of protected areas and OECMs, improve fire management, as well as improve connectivity between NPAs to support the overall health of the Selva Maya at scale. This component will strengthen the national PA monitoring system (SMART-CONANP), including support for biodiversity and ecosystem health monitoring. Based on existing Voluntary Conservation Areas (VCAs), the project will support participatory and multi-criteria analysis to identify high priority needs, FPIC-led conservation and restoration, as well as support to PA managers and local micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the region. In this regard, the project includes several proven NbS that contribute to reducing deforestation, increasing productivity and increasing incomes. Some of the NbS being evaluated are: sustainable and regenerative livestock (mainly silvopastoral practices), climate-smart agriculture, sustainable

forest management, integrated fire management, agroforestry systems, ecotourism, and protected area management as an integrated approach to address land degradation and loss of forests and fertility at the landscape level. Each of these solutions includes training key stakeholders, influencing public policy, and directing existing and new funding sources toward these activities. The project's restoration objectives also build on the results of previous work conducted in the region by IUCN. In 2018, eight technological packages were developed for functional landscape restoration actions in the Yucatan Peninsula, comparing the socioeconomic and environmental impact with respect to business-as-usual productive models. These technological packages and methodologies integrate agricultural and forestry components allowing measuring the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of functional landscape restoration models. The information developed will also serve and collaborate with the federal Sembrando Vida program seeking to forge synergies and incorporate biodiversity and environmental criteria into the program.

- **C3. Increased investment in positive forest landscapes:** The project will support the design of incentives and financial instruments that incentivize investment in conservation and restoration of forest landscapes and natural protected areas in the Yucatan Peninsula, with the active participation of indigenous peoples, women and youth. Key interventions include: 1) supporting bankable business solutions through the establishment and operation of a project preparation facility to translate sustainable strategies into green investment plans and projects for public and private sector financing; 2) the design of innovative financing models designed in collaboration with the public and private sectors to catalyze investment for conservation and restoration (i.e. debt-for-nature swaps, biodiversity/green bonds, payment for hydrological services schemes); and 3) the development of public-private partnerships and financial education campaigns to ejido owners to facilitate resource mobilization, including the use of market incentives such as carbon and biodiversity credits.

- **C4. Improved regional cooperation and coordination:** to raise awareness of the importance of Mesoamerica's forest biomes, including the Selva Maya, address gaps in adequate data and tools to support adaptive management, and demonstrate the global environmental benefits associated with forests. It will support the development of high priority knowledge products that capture project experiences and best practices. This component will provide capacity building and knowledge sharing between Belize, Mexico and Guatemala (e.g. Mesoamerican Virtual Center of Excellence in Forest Monitoring, CMICEF), support the implementation of the Selva Maya 2030 Integrated Strategy, including its regional governance bodies (Operational Coordination Group, Strategic Coordination Group) and participation in all IP-supported workshops and exchanges at regional and potentially global levels.

## Duties and Responsibilities

The selected International Consultancy firm or individual will support IUCN in developing the GEF-8 Mexico Mesoamerica Forest IP **Project CEO Endorsement Request**. Specific duties and responsibilities include the following:

1. Under the direction of the IUCN GEF/GCF Portfolio Manager for Global Programs and senior staff in IUCN regional and country offices in Mesoamerica, **lead in coordinating a consultative CEO Endorsement Request development process** with all relevant public agencies and local governments, GEF Secretariat, and key external partners including those from the private sector, civil society, and academia.
2. **Assessments and engagement work to identify highest-value opportunities** for improved protected areas management, community-led conservation, businesses and value chain investment in deforestation-free ventures, enabling policy and regulatory enhancement, and financing mechanisms to mobilize new and additional finance for forest conservation as part of the Project's supported interventions.
3. **Lead the organization and implementation of the Mexico Forest IP Project Development Inception Workshop**, with participation of country representatives, GEF Secretariat, GEF Agency, potential partners, and potential executing partners, to support design of the Project and ensure full support and ownership from project stakeholders.
4. **Lead the drafting of the Mexico Forest IP Project CEO Endorsement Request, IUCN Project Document, and all required annexes**, in accordance with the transformative vision defined by GEF-8 programming and IUCN, and with inputs from participating country representatives in close coordination with the NDA, participating GEF Agencies, and other stakeholders. The CEO Endorsement Request shall meet all requirements for approval by the GEF Secretariat, GEF Science and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), and GEF Council, and be informed by the best and latest

science and best practices on conservation and sustainable management of forests, and tailored to the context and drivers of degradation specific to Mexico and the selected landscapes.

5. **Lead the organization and implementation of a Mexico Forest IP Project Validation Workshop**, with participation of relevant public agencies and local governments, GEF Secretariat, and potential executing partners, for participants to validate the design of the fully developed Project document and annexes.
6. **Revise draft CEO Endorsement Request, IUCN Project document, and all Annexes** to respond to all GEF Secretariat, GEF STAP, and Country comments sufficient to achieve GEF approval of the CEO Endorsement Request.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

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### 2.1. General:

Support IUCN in developing the GEF-8 Mexico Mesoamerica Forest IP Project CEO Endorsement Request, Project document, and all required annexes.

### 2.2. Specific:

1. Lead in coordinating a consultative CEO Endorsement Request development process and the organization and implementation of a *Project Development Inception Workshop*
2. Develop assessments including ecological and socio-economic studies, required to identify highest-value opportunities and inform on activities and priority sites for intervention.
3. Carry out relevant assessments and consultations for identifying and assessing safeguard risks and prepare respective reports and tools to manage the identified safeguard risks.
4. Drafting of the Mexico Forest IP CEO Endorsement Request, IUCN Project Document (using IUCN template), and all required Annexes.
5. Lead the organization and implementation of Mexico Forest IP *Project Validation Workshop* and provide a Revised draft CEO Endorsement Request and project document, and all required Annexes.

## 3. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

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### Key deliverables to be developed by the International Consultancy and provided to IUCN:

No.	Deliverable	Description
1	Program Development Inception Workshop Terms of Reference (TORs) and summary report.	ToR of the inception workshop must include a detailed agenda, potential list of organizations/speakers involved, logistic needs and allow the dissemination of key information and orientation guidelines to the country and project stakeholder for the design of the project as well as gathering input from the stakeholders involved in target landscapes. A summary report should capture participants, events and findings obtained from the inception workshop.
2	<b>Engagement work and assessments</b> to identify and develop high value and priority interventions under <b>Component 1</b> , Adoption of Enabling Policies, Reforms and Planning, <b>Component 2</b> , Accelerated protection and restoration of the RTBF forest, <b>Component 3</b> , Scaled up Investment in Forest-Positive Landscapes and <b>Component 4</b> , Enhanced Regional Cooperation and Coordination.	Deliverables per component must include: <b>Component 1</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of minimum five national/subnational policies and regulations important for primary forest conservation and protection and where opportunities for strengthening through project-supported interventions exist, in line with regional policy framework (e.g. AFOLU 2040 strategy)</li> <li>2. Design of an effective policy-influencing plan together with country partners considering synergies with dialogues to be supported at regional level.</li> <li>3. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of local or national governance structures to be strengthened /created through the Project intervention.</li> </ol>

		<p>4. Plan for design and establishment/strengthening of a national multi-sectoral platform for the coordination of primary forest conservation.</p> <p><b>Component 2</b></p> <p>5. Analysis of the management effectiveness of NPAs using the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool, identification of priority PAs to be supported by the project intervention, including an additionality analysis of complementary tools such as the Green List for Conserved and Protected Areas, and a plan for strengthening NPAs.</p> <p>6. Identification of the baseline and potential sites for intervention for land restoration and improved landscape management (including though OECMs) based on a prioritization of the deforested/degraded forest landscape. Assessment will include a plan detailing investment and needs for restoration and improved landscape management considering the highest priority sites as agreed with project partners.</p> <p>7. Design of high-value capacity building interventions for community-led conservation initiatives including OECMs to address priority needs.</p> <p><b>Component 3:</b></p> <p>8. An assessment of investment opportunities and needs for deforestation free, Nature-positive value chains in the Project landscapes, including a list of possible ventures, businesses or community initiatives that could be strengthened to attract financing for forest conservation, detailing if there is a business plan, amounts and type of financial resources required and possible to leverage.</p> <p>9. An effective finance mobilization strategy to provide new/additional funding for forest conservation including potential use of innovative finance instruments such as PES, Green Bonds, Biodiversity Credits, and more at national level, in synergy with the regional finance mobilization strategy.</p> <p><b>Component 4:</b></p> <p>10. A report on the role of women, indigenous people, and local communities in forest conservation and identification of key project activities to be co-implemented with women and/or indigenous or local community through their relevant social organizations to promote inclusive governance in PAs and OECMs and enhance their access to funding.</p> <p>11. Design of an effective knowledge capture and dissemination strategy, including collaboration with the Program and key external partners and initiatives.</p> <p>12. Design of an effective Project monitoring system, building on existing platforms and tools</p> <p><b>Input for the ESMS Screening decision:</b>  A report on the socio-economic and -cultural context at landscape level and, most importantly, relevant features of the (potential) intervention sites: legal framework for land tenure and actual ownership and rights situation in each site, identification of main ethnic and social groups present in the sites (incl indigenous peoples and marginalized or vulnerable groups) and analysing their main features (language, livelihood, dependency on nature, territory, culture and</p>
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		spiritual traditions, social organization and customary institutions); gender-disaggregation of the above themes highlighting differences in roles, practices and knowledge, on rights and power (including influence on decision making) as well as access to and control over resources; security situation (organized crime) and framework for environmental law enforcement and actors involved
3	Relevant assessments and consultations for identifying and assessing safeguard risks and prepare respective reports and tools to manage the identified safeguard risks	<p>Deliverables must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Component 1: Strategic Environmental and Social assessment (SESA) report on social and environmental risks potentially triggered by a strengthening of national/ subnational policies and regulations important for primary forest conservation and protection;</li> <li>2. Component 2: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Report carried out in the sites supported under component 2.</li> <li>b. Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and any other relevant safeguard tools (e.g., Indigenous People Plan, Process Framework etc.), as appropriate and as instructed by ESMS Screening.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Component 3: procedures to guide the screening of the business and value chain investments to be identified during project implementation on environmental and social risks (before being selected and validated by the project)</li> <li>4. Project-level Grievance mechanism</li> <li>5. Indigenous Peoples consultation report documenting high-level agreement with the project</li> </ol>
4	Draft Mesoamerican Forest IP CEO Endorsement Request and IUCN Project Document and all required annexes	<p>The draft GEF CEO Request, prepared using the GEF8 template, must include all required annexes and sections including a stakeholder engagement plan, gender analysis and Action Plan, private sector engagement plan, Project Result Framework and Project Budget table.</p> <p>This product also includes a Project Document (using IUCN template), the evaluation of the suitability of potential executing partners, and of co-financing opportunities according to the GEF leverage requirement (1:7) to be delivered in a separate document. The CEO endorsement request should be generated in Spanish and English to facilitate the feedback process in Mexico and with the GEF. An annex will be included for the calculation of emission reduction potential using EX ACT, according to GEF guidelines.</p>
5	ToR for Validation workshop and Revised draft CEO Endorsement Request with all required annexes sufficient for approval by GEF and updated IUCN Project Document.	<p>The terms of reference for the validation workshop should include a detailed agenda, a possible list of organizations and speakers involved, logistical needs, and allow for the dissemination of key information and guidance guidelines to country and subnational government representatives and other participants, as well as the collection of input from the multiple types of stakeholders involved in the target landscapes. It also includes a summary that systematizes the results obtained. This product will include ppt presentations and photographic evidence.</p> <p>The revised CEO endorsement request shall respond to all comments from the GEF Secretariat, GEF STAP, partner</p>

		<p>agencies and countries sufficient to obtain GEF approval of the CEO endorsement request. In addition, this deliverable will include a summary of comments received from the validation workshop and an updated project document (using the IUCN template). The final endorsement request should be generated in Spanish and English to facilitate the socialization process in Mexico and consideration by the GEF. In addition, this product will include input on the need for activities to be supported at the regional level, including: High level events and communication, development of a project preparation service, regional web platform for regional knowledge sharing, need for a toolbox and associated services offered at the regional level. The revised draft CEO Endorsement Request shall respond to all GEF Secretariat, GEF STAP, Agency partner, and Country comments sufficient to achieve GEF approval of the CEO Endorsement Request. In addition, this product shall include a summary of feedback received from the validation workshop and updated project document (using IUCN template). The final endorsement request should be generated in Spanish and English to facilitate the socialization process in Mexico and consideration by the GEF. In addition, this product will include input on the need for activities to be supported at the regional level, including: high-level events and communication, development of a project preparation service, regional web platform for regional knowledge sharing, need for a toolbox and associated services offered at the regional level.</p>
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#### 4. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All Intellectual Property rights conceived or made by the Consultant / Consulting Firm in the course of providing the Services will belong to IUCN.

#### 5. SCHEDULING AND TIMETABLE FOR DELIVERING PRODUCTS

##### 5.1. Activities and programming

Specific objectives	Activities	Month								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Lead in coordinating a consultative CEO Endorsement Request development process and the organization and implementation of a regional <i>Program Development Inception Workshop</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review: including approved Mesoamerica Forest IP PFD and the child project concept note, associated documents, e.g., STAP and GEF Secretariat and GEF Council review comments, IUCN GEF Policy and guidance documents, GEF-8 Programming Directions, and other relevant studies carried out in the landscape<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>Review challenges and lessons learnt related to Mesoamerica and specifically Selva Maya Critical Forest Biome conservation.</li> <li>Prepare preliminary project risk analysis identification based on field studies,</li> <li>Conduct a stakeholder analysis at the national, departmental, municipal, territorial and site levels, with the participation of relevant government agencies related to the protection of natural resources and protected areas, local communities, civil society organizations, the private sector, and plan engagement of stakeholders for designing the project; Draft ToR of the Program Development Inception Workshop including detailed agenda, potential list of organizations/ speakers involved, logistic needs.</li> <li>Draft logical framework with expected disaggregated gender indicators, the theory of change and the baseline for the GEF Core indicators of the project (ref. IUCN Gender equality and women's empowerment policy);</li> <li>Prepare the communication plan for the launch and development of the Project Document, including required materials such as brochures, PowerPoint presentations.</li> </ul>									

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/region/cbmm/proyectos-internacionales/redd>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address feedback received from IUCN and political partners on ToR.</li> <li>• Lead the implementation of the Program Development Inception Workshop.</li> <li>• Write inception workshop report.</li> </ul>								
<p>2. Develop assessments including ecological and socio-economic studies required to identify highest-value opportunities and inform on activities and priority sites for intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the studies listed below, interviews, consultations, workshops when necessary, and field tours should be conducted to gather perspectives from multiple stakeholders (national, sub-national, private, civil society- as defined by the stakeholder analysis) on the activities to be implemented as part of the Project. Consultant will need to review and, as needed, contribute to the spatial analysis and assessment of threats and degradation to the tropical and subtropical lowland rainforests carried out by IUCN in parallel of this work.</li> <li>• Baseline study on improved protected areas management should include a review and comparison of management plans and effectiveness evaluations of all Protected Areas present in project areas of interest<sup>3</sup>, interview of PA managers in order to set the baseline for selected PA using GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool<sup>4</sup>. Based on the abovementioned analysis, develop a potential rationale for using additional tools such as IUCN Green List Standard for Protected and Conserved Areas (GL) to set targets under GL criteria, diagnose what investments are needed to ensure strong delivery and governance of conservation outcomes. .</li> <li>• Based on ongoing restoration and conservation initiatives, including Payment for Environmental Services programs, national restoration and forest monitoring information, identify <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. community-led forest conservation initiatives with potential for recognition as Other Effective Conservation Measures and describe potential strategies and activities to strengthen management effectiveness of selected initiatives.</li> <li>2. Baseline and priority sites for land restoration (GEF Core Indicator 3)</li> <li>3. Baseline and priority sites for landscapes under improved practices (GEF CI 4)</li> </ol> <p>For the three indicators mentioned above, priority sites shall be selected considering areas with the highest potential for restoration or improved</p> </li> </ul>								

<sup>3</sup> RB Calakmul, RE Balam Kin, RE Balam Ku, APFF Bala'an Kaax, RB Sian K'aan (terrestre), RE Sistema Lagunar Chichankanab, RE Biocultural Puuc.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.thegef.org/documents/gef-7-and-gef-8-biodiversity-protected-area-tracking-tool>

	<p>management and validated based on consultation with local stakeholders and the partner country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a portfolio of potential businesses and value chain investments in deforestation-free ventures for the Project by screening and exchanging with companies (small, medium, large) and other relevant organizations from multiple sectors such as agricultural, forestry, tourism, protected areas to identify financing needs, potential business plans and/or opportunities, considering local development plans. Listing of potential investments shall include corresponding multi-stakeholder engagement, potential for public-private partnerships, size and type of funding required<sup>5</sup> (equity, credit, grant...etc), type of support required from GEF-8.</li> <li>• Considering existing studies<sup>6</sup> and field trips, develop an analysis of the role of women and local communities in CFB conservation and identify key activities of GEF-8 Mexico Forest IP with potential to be co-implemented with women and/or local community through community, smallholder, or women-led organizations as well to promote inclusive governance in PA / OECMs and enhance their access to funding . When applicable, assess local organizations capacities to receive and manage funds from the Project based on their financial and administrative capacities.</li> <li>• Policy and regulatory instruments: through desk-review of legal and policy frameworks and consultation of key political institutions, including ministries of environment, agriculture and finance, and subnational governments, elaborate on potential policy instruments, including land-use plans, to be developed or enhanced as part of GEF-8 Forest IP. In particular, it should address needs for the development of national frameworks for OECM and cross-sectoral public policies. This analysis shall take into consideration regional</li> </ul>									
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<sup>5</sup> Funding size per investment may range from 200,000 USD to 20,000,000 USD.

<sup>6</sup> <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/ST-GFE-no.06.pdf> , UICN (Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza). (2013). The Environment and Gender Index. Disponible en línea: <http://genderandenvironment.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/The-Environment-and-Gender-Index-2013-Pilot.pdf> UICN. (2015). Lineamientos para transversalizar género en los esfuerzos por mitigar y adaptarse al cambio climático en la Península de Yucatán. Documento de trabajo. UICN. (2014a). Igualdad de género y REDD+: Análisis del marco jurídico y programático. México: USAID, UICN. UICN y MREDD+. (2014b). Plan de acción de género para REDD+ México (PAGeREDD+). México: USAID, UICN. <https://www.tncmx.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/mexico/M-REDD-PlanAccionGeneroPAGeREDD+.pdf>

	<p>policies to be supported by the program (see output 1.1.4 and 1.2.3 in annex 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design an effective policy influencing plan, considering efforts to be deployed at regional level (see output 1.3.2. in annex 5).</li> <li>• Considering existing and potential/emerging financing mechanisms for forest conservation at national level, design interventions (e.g., private sector roundtables, social-impact investing, deployment of innovative finance, etc.) to mobilize new and additional funding for forest conservation at scale, mapping potential partners and their role as part of an effective finance mobilization strategy. These mechanisms should respond to the needs of different stakeholders, including local communities/ indigenous groups, Protected Area management agencies, OECMs and identify synergies with regional efforts to mobilize finance (see output 3.1.4. and 3.2.4 in annex 5).</li> <li>• Additional studies shall inform the activities and resources needed for the establishment or strengthening of national multisectoral platforms and strengthening local and national governance structures to improve the effectiveness of primary forests protection and conservation.</li> <li>• Carry out review of literature and legal framework and conduct field visits to analyse the socio-economic and -cultural context at landscape level and, most importantly, relevant features of the (potential) intervention sites.</li> </ul>								
<p>3. Carry out relevant assessments and consultations for identifying and assessing safeguard risks and prepare respective reports and tools to manage the identified safeguard risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a Strategic Environmental and Social assessment (SESA) to identify social and environmental risks potentially triggered strengthening national/ subnational policies and regulations on primary forest conservation and protection (component 1);</li> <li>• Carry out an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) in the sites supported under component 2.</li> <li>• Develop mitigation measures together with relevant stakeholders, in particular project affected peoples/ indigenous communities, and consolidate them in form of safeguard tools (ESMP, Indigenous People Plan, Process Framework etc.) as appropriate and as instructed by ESMS Screening.</li> <li>• Develop procedures to guide the screening of the business and value chain investments to be identified during project implementation on environmental and social risks (component 3)</li> <li>• Develop a project-level Grievance Mechanism</li> </ul>								

<p>4. Draft Mesoamerican Forest IP CEO Endorsement Request, Project Document and ToR for validation workshop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on stakeholder mapping, identify and assess capacities of implementing partners and other partners in the field using the IUCN Implementing Partner Suitability Assessment Format.</li> <li>• Develop linkages and implementation arrangements with host government partners, executing partners and other potential partners on-the-ground.</li> <li>• Review the current system for training/capacity building of framework adopted by protected areas system, Protected areas located in the area of intervention, forest management governing bodies and other relevant organizations.</li> <li>• Update and further deepen stakeholder analysis at national, provincial, territorial and site level, including natural resource-based value chains, and financing institutions;</li> <li>• Evaluate in detail the baseline scenario through research, literature review, experts and stakeholders' consultations, related activities and initiatives, including co-financing options;</li> <li>• Carry out a detailed gap analysis to justify the GEF incremental cost reasoning;</li> <li>• Refine the theory of change and logical framework based on the above;</li> <li>• Based on stakeholder analysis and consultations carried out throughout the design phase, develop the stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) establishing how to continue to engage stakeholders during the implementation phase;</li> <li>• Design a detailed log frame and accompanying narrative proposal on the project components;</li> <li>• Develop the overall project budget and work plan, including a procurement plan;</li> <li>• Undertake a detailed project risk analysis and mitigation measures;</li> <li>• Draft CEO Endorsement Request including a gender analysis and action plan, private sector engagement plan, Project Result Framework and Project Budget table.</li> <li>• Design and develop indicators mapped to GEF core indicators taking into account gender responsiveness, establish baselines for the indicators and develop Monitoring &amp; valuation plan</li> <li>• Address IUCN comments to draft CEO Request prior to submission in GEF portal.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>								
<p>5. Lead the organization and implementation of Mexico Forest IP <i>Project Validation Workshop</i> and provide a Revised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft ToR and lead the validation workshop organized in coordination with IUCN and all participating partners and relevant organizations.</li> </ul>								

<p>draft CEO Endorsement Request and project document, and all required Annexes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address all GEF Secretariat, GEF STAP, IUCN and Country comments sufficient to achieve GEF approval of the CEO Endorsement Request.</li> <li>• In addition, this product shall include a summary of feedback received from the validation workshop and list of participants</li> <li>• Provide input for activities to be supported at regional level including: High-level events and communication, development of a project preparation facility, regional web platform for regional knowledge exchange, need for a toolbox and associated services offered at regional level.</li> </ul>									
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## 5.2. Timetable for delivery of products:

Products	Expected date of delivery	Percentage of pay
1. Program Development Inception Workshop Terms of Reference (TORs) and summary of findings.	Eight (8) weeks after the signing of the contract by both parties	20%
2. Engagement work and assessments to identify and develop high value and priority interventions under Component 1, Adoption of Enabling Policies, Reforms and Planning, Component 2, Accelerated protection and restoration of the RTBF forest, Component 3, Scaled up Investment in Forest-Positive Landscapes and Component 4, Enhanced Regional Cooperation and Coordination	Eighteen (16) weeks after the signing of the contract by both parties	30%
3. Relevant assessments and consultations for identifying and assessing safeguard risks and prepare respective reports and tools to manage the identified safeguard risks	Twenty (24) weeks after the signing of the contract by both parties	10%
4. Draft Mesoamerican Forest IP CEO Endorsement Request and ToR for validation workshop	Twenty (24) weeks after the signing of the contract by both parties	15%
5. Revised draft CEO Endorsement Request with all required annexes sufficient for approval by GEF	Twenty-eight (36) weeks after the signing of the contract by both parties	25%

- All products will be paid once delivered to IUCN's complete satisfaction.

-Disbursements will depend on the availability of funds from the donor.

-The consultant / consulting firm must consider in the technical proposal the modification of some deliverables during the execution of the contract, if it is necessary, to adapt some results, without affecting the amount of the original contract.

### 1. TECHNICAL PROFILE

For the development of this consultancy, a team should be proposed that meets the following profile requirements:

1. Experience in developing GEF or other international funds' ProDocs and related project documents, along with a good grasp on GEF guidelines and standards to be met for these (minimum 10 years).

2. Experience in structuring large forest conservation projects as well as protected area network management projects and initiatives, preferably including those funded by the GEF (minimum 10 years).
3. Experience and expertise in project design and implementation, including monitoring and evaluation, including gender-responsive project design (minimum 10 years).
4. Sustainable financing expertise with specific experience relevant to financing of protected area networks and natural resource-based value chains.
5. Local expertise with extensive knowledge on national conservation efforts, policies and strategies and the ability to position project activities in the local context effectively.
6. Knowledge of private sector and community-based approaches to natural resource management in Mexico.
7. Knowledge of environmental issues and complexities as they relate to Mexico and preferably Yucatan Peninsula.
8. Expertise in gender analysis and integrating gender empowerment aspects of gender in forest restoration and conservation.
9. Experience in dialogue and work with indigenous people and local communities, including obtaining FPIC.
10. Knowledge of social and livelihood systems in Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula,;
11. Experience in value chain development and identification of business investment opportunities at local level.
12. Understanding of the natural resources management and land use policy environment and the system to administer land rights (statutory and customary) as well as conditions and challenges specific to the selected landscape.
13. Expertise in Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and development of Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP) and other safeguard tools.
14. Financial Management, including procurement related expertise
15. Experience in conducting multilevel and multisectoral consultations with communities and stakeholders.
16. Fluency in English, and Spanish language is necessary.
17. Academic background required by the different members of the team: Forest engineer, agronomist, land-use policy experts, economist, GIS expert, biologist, anthropologist/sociologist or related careers.
18. Professional experience required: GIS specialist, specialist in land use policies, specialist in finance and/or trade related to agricultural production, forestry, livestock or bioeconomy value chains, low carbon agricultural development and gender specialist.

It is reiterated that the selected consulting firm must have personnel based in Mexico; it is considered a competitive advantage if at least one member of the team is a national consultant.

## **2. PERIOD AND COORDINATION**

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The period of the consultancy will be 9 months.

**Form of work (with Unit/Project):** in order to achieve the products, all activities will be closely coordinated under the direction of the IUCN GEF/GCF Portfolio Manager for Global Programs and

senior staff in IUCN regional and country office in Mexico and maintain close communication with project partners (SHCP, CONANP, Yucatan Peninsula States, GGGI, Pronatura PY).

## ANNEX 2: LETTER OF INTEREST

Fill in the information in blue

[Place and date]

TO: [IUCN]

The undersigned, [name of the professional], after having examined the Terms of Reference for the Contracting of the Professional Consulting Services for (name of the consultancy) and offers to perform these services in accordance with the call for date \_\_\_\_\_.

The attached Financial Proposal is for the total sum of [amount in letters and figures], which includes all taxes required by law.

The period of time in which the signatory of this document agrees to provide the services is from the date of signing the contract, until the date of termination thereof, without price variation, unless modifications are made resulting from contract negotiations.

The undersigned declares that all the information and statements made in the submitted proposals are true and that any misinterpretation contained in them may lead to disqualification.

Cordially,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of the proposer or legal representative \_\_\_\_\_



## ATTACHMENT 3a – SELF-EMPLOYED PROPOSER

### DECLARATION in relation to RfP < Consultancy Service >

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that I am self-employed and able to provide the service independent of any organisation or other legal entity.

Full name (as in passport):

Home or Office (please delete as appropriate) Address (incl. country):

I hereby authorise IUCN to store and use the information included in the attached Proposal for the purpose of evaluating Proposals and selecting the Proposal IUCN deems the most favourable. I acknowledge that IUCN is required to retain my Proposal in its entirety for 10 years after then end of the resulting contract and make this available to internal and external auditors and donors as and when requested.

I further confirm that the following statements are correct:

1. I am legally registered as self-employed in accordance with all applicable laws.
2. I am fully compliant with all my tax and social security obligations.
3. I am free of any real or perceived conflicts of interest with regards to IUCN and its Mission.
4. I agree to declare to IUCN any real or perceived emerging conflicts of interests I may have concerning IUCN. I acknowledge that IUCN may terminate any contracts with me that would, in IUCN sole discretion, be negatively affected by such conflicts of interests.
5. I have never been convicted of grave professional misconduct or any other offence concerning my professional conduct.
6. I have never been convicted of fraud, corruption, money laundering, supporting terrorism or involvement in a criminal organisation.
7. I acknowledge that engagement in fraud, corruption, money laundering, supporting terrorism or involvement in a criminal organisation will entitle IUCN to terminate any and all contracts with me with immediate effect.
8. I am not included in the UN Security Council Sanctions List, EU Sanctions Map, US Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions List, or the World Bank listing of ineligible firms and individuals. I agree that I will not provide direct or indirect support to firms and individuals included in these lists.
9. I have not been, am not, and will not be involved or implicated in any violations of Indigenous Peoples' rights, or injustice or abuse of human rights related to other groups or individuals, including forced evictions, violation of fundamental rights of workers as defined by the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, child labour, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

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<Date and Signature>

## ATTACHMENT 3b - For Consulting Companies

### DECLARATION in relation to RfP <name of the Consultancy Service>

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that I am an authorised representative of the following organisation:

Registered Name of Organisation (the "Organisation"): \_\_\_\_\_

Registered Address (incl. country): \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Registration: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorise IUCN to store and use the information included in the attached Proposal for the purpose of evaluating Proposals and selecting the Proposal IUCN deems the most favourable. I acknowledge that IUCN is required to retain the Proposal in its entirety for 10 years after then end of the resulting contract and make this available to internal and external auditors and donors as and when requested.

Where the Proposal includes Personal Data as defined by the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), I confirm that the Organisation has been authorised by each Data Subject to share this Data with IUCN for the purposes stated above.

I further confirm that the following statements are correct:

1. The Organisation is duly registered in accordance with all applicable laws.
2. The Organisation is fully compliant with all its tax and social security obligations.
3. The Organisation and its staff and representatives are free of any real or perceived conflicts of interest with regards to IUCN and its Mission.
4. The Organisation agrees to declare to IUCN any real or perceived emerging conflicts of interests it or any of its staff and representatives may have concerning IUCN. The Organisation acknowledges that IUCN may terminate any contracts with the Organisation that would, in IUCN sole discretion, be negatively affected by such conflicts of interests.
5. None of the Organisation's staff has ever been convicted of grave professional misconduct or any other offence concerning their professional conduct.
6. Neither the Organisation nor any of its staff and representatives have ever been convicted of fraud, corruption, money laundering, supporting terrorism or involvement in a criminal organisation.
7. The Organisation acknowledges that engagement by itself or any of its staff in fraud, corruption, money laundering, supporting terrorism or involvement in a criminal organisation will entitle IUCN to terminate any and all contracts with the Organisation with immediate effect.
8. The Organisation is a going concern and is not bankrupt or being wound up, is not having its affairs administered by the courts, has not suspended business activities, is not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
9. The Organisation complies with all applicable environmental regulatory requirements or other legal requirements relating to sustainability and environmental protection.
10. The Organisation is not included in the UN Security Council Sanctions List, EU Sanctions Map, US Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions List, or the World Bank listing of ineligible firms and individuals. The Organisation agrees that it will not provide direct or indirect support to firms and individuals included in these lists.
11. The Organisation has not been, is not, and will not be involved or implicated in any violations of Indigenous Peoples' rights, or injustice or abuse of human rights related to other groups or individuals, including forced evictions, violation of fundamental rights of workers as defined by the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, child labour, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
<Date and Signature of authorised representative of the Proposer>

< Name and position of authorised representative of the Proposer >

## Annex 4:

### Proposed Results Framework for the Mesoamerica Forest Regional IP in the Program Framework Document:

Outcomes	Outputs
<b>Component 1. Enabling conditions for the protection and conservation of primary forests.</b>	
<b>Outcome 1.1.</b> Strengthened local, national, and regional governance mechanisms in support of primary forests conservation.	<p>1.1.1. Awareness-raising and advocacy plan on primary forest protection and conservation targeted at policymakers, sectoral entities, and private sector.</p> <p>1.1.2. Local and national governance structures strengthened to improve the effectiveness of primary forests protection and conservation.</p> <p>1.1.3. Strengthened agreements for cross-border protected areas collaboration.</p> <p>1.1.4. A regional agreement to operationalize the Rural youth strategy of the SICA region 2022 – 2030 into the primary forest landscapes.</p>
<b>Outcome 1.2.</b> Key national and regional policy and regulatory instruments prioritize primary forest conservation.	<p>1.2.1. National and subnational Intersectoral updated policies, regulations and instruments that support primary forest protection and conservation.</p> <p>1.2.2. Information to support fact-based decision making on forest conservation interventions.</p> <p>1.2.3. Three key regional instruments integrate strategic actions for primary forest protection and conservation (PERFOR, ERAM and ERAS).</p>
<b>Outcome 1.3.</b> Improved multisectoral platforms for forest conservation and management.	<p>1.3.1. National multisectoral platforms established or strengthened.</p> <p>1.3.2. Regional multisectoral meetings of stakeholder groups and sectors to agree actions and goals for primary forest conservation.</p> <p>1.3.3. Affirmative actions to integrate IPLCs, women and rural youth into decision-making processes.</p>
<b>Component 2. Accelerated protection and restoration of primary forests.</b>	
<b>Outcome 2.1.</b> Improved protection of primary forests in protected areas.	<p>2.1.1. Strengthened protected area management instruments and tools.</p> <p>2.1.2. Regional assessment of the risk of collapse and extent of the Mesoamerican critical forest biomes.</p> <p>2.1.3. Information about the contribution of protected areas and indigenous peoples to conserve primary forests and advance the global biodiversity framework to support fact-based decision making.</p>
<b>Outcome 2.2.</b> Increased area of OECMs that protect primary forests integrity and expand functional connectivity.	<p>2.2.1. National frameworks or protocols for the implementation of OECMs.</p> <p>2.2.2. Established national networks of OECMs that support the conservation of primary forests.</p> <p>2.2.3. Collaboration agreements for transboundary OECMs within the framework of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.</p>
<b>Outcome 2.3.</b> Ongoing restoration of 65,000 ha to increase primary forest connectivity.	<p>2.3.1. Updated evaluation of priority areas for Mesoamerican forests landscape restoration.</p> <p>2.3.2. Key priority areas under community-based restoration.</p>
<b>Component 3. Innovative finance and investment.</b>	
<b>Outcome 3.1.</b> Increased financial resources for primary forest conservation.	<p>3.1.1. National analyses of funding gaps and barriers to invest in primary forest landscapes and forest linked livelihoods.</p> <p>3.1.2. Innovative financing instruments and tools to increase investments in primary forest protection, protected areas, OECMs, and forest linked livelihoods.</p> <p>3.1.3. High-level dialogue meetings to mobilise financial resources through bilateral, multilateral, private and philanthropy channels to sustain long-term critical forest biomes conservation.</p> <p>3.1.4. Regional coalition to mobilise funding to accelerate the conservation of primary forests and the development of viable forests linked livelihoods.</p>
<b>Outcome 3.2.</b> Increased number of forest-friendly endeavours.	<p>3.2.1. Innovative mechanisms to incentivise forest-friendly endeavours.</p> <p>3.2.2. Innovative business models to develop forest-friendly goods and services.</p> <p>3.2.3. Project preparation facility to enable access to private and development financing.</p> <p>3.2.4. High impact events and advocacy to accelerate the demand for products from sustainably managed secondary forests and deforestation-free commodities from Mesoamerica.</p>
<b>Component 4. Coordinated and improved learning and regional collaboration.</b>	
<b>Outcome 4.1.</b> Improved national and regional coordination for primary forest protection and conservation	<p>4.1.1. Regional coordination platform for primary forest protection and conservation.</p> <p>4.1.2. Regional long-term communication plan to mobilize support for the conservation of primary forests and critical forest biomes.</p>
<b>Outcome 4.2.</b> Lessons on primary forest protection and conservation models are available worldwide	<p>4.2.1. Mesoamerican knowledge platform on critical forest biomes (e.g., biodiversity and social information, models of forest management, regulations).</p> <p>4.2.2. Program lessons, forest management and governance models, and integration of IPLCs, women and rural youth into decision-making processes documented and disseminated at regional and global levels.</p> <p>4.2.3. South-south cooperation / knowledge exchange with the other critical forests biomes.</p> <p>4.2.4. Annual regional knowledge exchange workshops.</p> <p>4.2.5. Harmonized program annual planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation.</p>

## GEF-8 CHILD PROJECT CONCEPT

### Annex 5

#### GENERAL CHILD PROJECT INFORMATION

Child Project Title:	<b>Mexico Mesoamerica Forest IP Project: Securing benefits for the well-being of local communities and the ecosystems of the Maya Forest</b>		
Country(ies):	Mexico	GEF Child Project ID:	TBD
		Type of Child Project	Full-sized project
GEF Agency(ies):	IUCN	GEF Agency Child Project ID:	TBD
Anticipated Executing Entity(s) and Type:	Pronatura Peninsula de Yucatán	CSO	
	GGGI	CSO	
	Yucatan State	Government	
	Quintana Roo State	Government	
	Campeche State	Government	
	CONANP	Government	
GEF Focal Area(s):	Multi focal area: 1) Biological Diversity, 2) Climate Change and 3) Land Degradation	Submission Date:	
Type of Trust Fund:	<b>GEF Trust Fund</b>	Child Project Duration (Months)	60
GEF Child Project Grant: (a)	<b>11,932,416</b>	GEF Child Project Non-Grant (b)	0
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	<b>1,073,917</b>	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)	0
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	<b>13,006,333</b>	Total Co-financing:	92,750,000
PPG Amount (e):	<b>300,000</b>	PPG Agency Fee(s) (f):	<b>27,000</b>
Total GEF Resources (a+b+c+d+e+f)	<b>13,333,333</b>		
Project Sector (CCM only)	N/A		
Program	Mesoamerica Critical Forest Biome		

CHILD PROJECT FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing	Agency Fee	Total GEF Financing
IUCN	GEFTF	Mexico	BD	BD STAR Allocation	8,949,312	805,438	9,754,750
IUCN	GEFTF	Mexico	BD	BD IP Matching Incentives	2,983,104	268,479	3,251,583
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>11,932,416</b>	<b>1,073,917</b>	<b>13,006,333</b>

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?  Yes  No

If yes?: fill in PPG table (incl. PPG fee)

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG	Agency Fee	Total PPG Funding
IUCN	GEFTF	Mexico	BD	BD STAR Allocation	225,000	20,250	245,250
IUCN	GEFTF	Mexico	BD	BD IP Matching Incentives	75,000	6,750	81,750
<b>Total PPG Amount</b>					<b>300,000</b>	<b>27,000</b>	<b>327,000</b>

Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Source of Funds	Total
IUCN	GEFTF	Mexico	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	10,000,000
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>10,000,000</b>

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co- financing
IP Mesoamerica	GEFTF	11,932,416	92,750,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>11,932,416</b>	<b>92,750,000</b>

Indicative Co-financing

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
National Government	CONANP	In Kind - Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000
National Government	CONAFOR Program for sustainable forest development and welfare.	Grant - mobilized investment	1,000,000
Local Government	Campeche	In Kind - Recurrent expenditures	4,000,000
Local Government	Quintana Roo	In Kind - Recurrent expenditures	4,000,000
Local Government	Yucatan	In Kind - Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000
National Government	Secretary of Welfare (Sembrando Vida Program)	Grant - mobilized investment	10,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	IUCN-FINANP	Grant – investment mobilized	600,000
Bilateral aid-agency	IUCN – KfW (Selva Maya II):	Grant – investment mobilized	8,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	USAID SURGES Project - Paladium	Grant – investment mobilized	15,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	USAID Sustainable and Prosperous Communities - TNC	Grant – investment mobilized	5,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	Rainforest Alliance	Grant – investment mobilized	2,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	WCS-CCAD-CIAT-AMPB/European Union	Grant – investment mobilized	5,000,000
Bilateral aid-agency	WRI-IUCN / IKI	Grant – investment mobilized	1,500,000
NGO	GGGI	In Kind - Recurrent expenditures	500,000
		Grant - Investment mobilized	150,000
Private sector	Forestry and Climate Change Fund	Soft loans – Investment be mobilized	3,000,000
Multilateral agency / private sector	Subnational Climate Finance	Capital investment – Investment mobilized	5,000,000
Others	Financial institutions, Investment funds and/or subnational governments, through environmental bonds	Capital investment – Investment mobilized	20,000,000

Local government	CONAGUA, and Municipal Drinking Water and Sewerage Board and Commission in Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo	Unknown at this stage – Investment mobilized	5,000,000
<b>Total Co-financing</b>			<b>92,750,000</b>

## TABLE ON CORE INDICATORS

### Core Indicators

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PFD
1	<b>Terrestrial protected areas</b> created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)	1,887,646
3	Area of <b>land restored</b> (Hectares)	9,500
4	Area of <b>landscapes under improved practices</b> (excluding protected areas)(Hectares)	1,215,000
6	<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated</b> (metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e)	12,432,834
11	Number of <b>direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender</b> as co-benefit of GEF investment	109,697 (55,249 women; 54,448 men)

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (*max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page*)

Targets for Protected areas created or under improved management and landscape under improved practices were set based on consultation with federal and local authorities, as well as other complementary initiatives (for instance, Selva Maya II). The Project will focus on improving the management effectiveness of PAs and to a lesser extent on expanding protected areas through conservation easements with private owners (ADVC, for its acronym/official designation in Mexico). Large amounts of new land will be brought under improved practices through the formalization and strengthening of biological corridors of Balam Beh and Calakmul Sian Ka'an, which may be included under the new OECM status national authorities are presently developing. People benefiting from GEF-financed investment was estimated considering local census and knowledge of local communities and include people benefiting from the conservation, sustainable use or restoration of biodiversity and from sustainable land management and restoration investments. Restored ecosystems include both forest and degraded cropland and rangeland to allow a comprehensive approach that improve forest connectivity and land productivity at the same time. The majority of GHG emission mitigation target is achieved through reduced deforestation and forest degradation through the expansion of biological corridors and increased carbon sequestration in existing forest of PAs with improved management as well as, to a lesser extent, forest landscape brought under restoration/improved forest management. Estimates of GHG reductions are in line with Forest Reference Emissions Level and Mexico's level of ambition (updated NDC) and were made using EX-ACT.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Country Context (*maximum 500 words*)

*Describe the country's relevant environmental challenges and strategic positioning relative to the systems transformation proposed for the program, including relevant existing policies, commitments, and investment*



*frameworks. How are these aligned with the proposed approach to foster impactful outcomes with global environmental benefits?*

The Selva Maya forest, shared by Mexico, Guatemala and Belize, is the largest remaining intact forest block in Mesoamerica, covering some 3.1 million hectares, the largest portion of which is in Mexico. These are forests of critical importance for Mexico and the global community, harbouring unique and threatened wildlife including jaguars, Central American river turtles, monarch butterflies, white-lipped peccaries, scarlet macaws and flora including the ramon tree (*Brosimum alicastrum*) and Zapote (*Manilkara zapota*). They provide essential ecosystem services including climate regulation, clean water provision, and soil and nutrient cycling. They're also home to hundreds of thousands of peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds including Indigenous communities of Yucatecan Maya, Ch'ol, Tzeltal, and Tzotzil peoples, and thousands of archeological sites.

As with other large remaining intact forests and forest landscapes in neighbouring Mesoamerican countries, the Mexican Selva Maya Forest faces a number of persistent threats including conversion to agricultural land – principally for cattle ranching – illegal logging, infrastructure development, and forest wildfires, as well as climate change impacts. Together, these pressures have led to degradation and deforestation of the Mexican Selva Maya on the order of 0.5-1.5% per year over the past two decades – roughly 650,000 ha in total (Global Forest Watch).

Despite these challenges, Mexico is strongly committed to safeguarding and restoring its natural resources including forests, as demonstrated through a range of commitments and policies at all levels and investments. Mexico is a signatory to the CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD, supported ratification of the new Global Biodiversity Framework and ratified the Paris Agreement in 2016. Mexico has pledged to reduce GHG emissions by 30% by 2030, with forest conservation and restoration playing a significant role in meeting this target. In addition, Mexico's 2022 updated NDC seeks to expand coverage of protected areas by 2 million hectares, in part through voluntary conservation easement agreements and the continued implementation of its National REDD+ Strategy. Mexico also actively participates in the UN REDD+ programme.

Mexico has a well-developed set of national policies, institutions and initiatives supporting conservation and sustainable use of forests, including the *General Law of Sustainable Forest Development*, the *National Forestry Program* (PRONAFOR), and national *General Law on Climate Change*. The National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR), under the Ministry of Environment and established in 2001, is the national institution responsible for developing and implementing policies, programs and instruments promoting conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests. Key ongoing initiatives of CONAFOR aligned with this IP include the *Payment for Environmental Services Program*, the *National Restoration Program*, the REDD+ Strategy 2017-2030 as well as support for community-based forest management and agroforestry systems through capacity building, technical assistance and subsidies. CONAFOR also supports monitoring of Mexico's forests and evaluates the effectiveness of forest policies and programs using tools including the *National Forest Monitoring System* and *National Forest and Soil Inventory*. The National Commission on Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) is the lead entity for Protected Area management and day to day administration at federal level. Political support from the three States of Yucatán Peninsula for participating in this IP is also strong and was formalized in October 2022.

Taken together, these developments, initiatives and political will are well aligned with the goals of this IP to support transformational change conserving and safeguarding Mexico's Selva Maya forest and the broader Mesoamerica Forest biome. Many of the underlying threats affecting Mexico's forests, as well as potential solutions, are relevant to all Mesoamerican countries and potentially for countries in other regions of the world participating in the CFB IP, offering strong potential for exchange, partnership, and scaling up.

- Project Overview and Approach (*maximum 1250 words*)
  - a) Provide a brief description of the geographical target(s), including details of systemic challenges, and the specific environmental threats and associated drivers that must be addressed;



The project will take place in the three states of the Yucatan Peninsula where the Mexican Selva Maya forest is found, in Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan, with intervention areas shown in Map 1. This large expanse of forest is partially protected through a network of national parks, biosphere reserves and other protected areas, the most significant of which are:

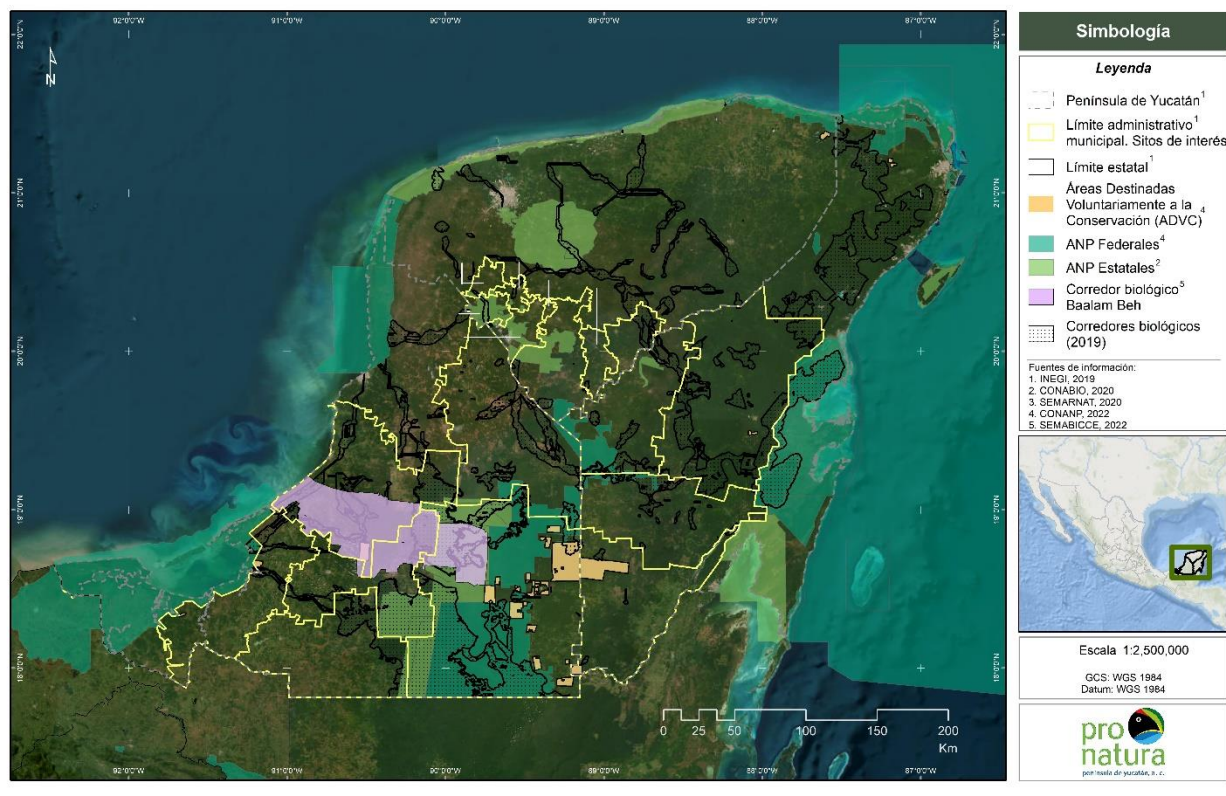
- *Calakmul Biosphere Reserve*, covering 723,185 ha and located in the state of Campeche. This important conservation area is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site
- *Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve*, covering 528,148 ha in the state of Quintana Roo, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- *Bala'an K'aax Flora and Fauna Protection Area*, covering 128,390 ha across the three states of the Yucatan Peninsula, under management of CONANP, at the northern edge of Selva Maya Forest.

As described above, the Mexican Selva Maya forest faces a number of persistent threats and challenges including agricultural expansion, illegal logging, infrastructure development, and forest fires as well as climate change impacts, with some 650,000 ha of forest lost over the past two decades (Global Forest Watch). While the majority of deforestation and degradation has taken place outside of protected areas, protected areas themselves have increasingly been sites of encroachment and illegal activities and deforestation and degradation, in part due to inadequate resources for monitoring and enforcement.

In addition, many of the communities including Indigenous communities living in and around the Selva Maya forest live in poverty and face challenges including limited economic opportunities and education, and rely heavily upon natural resources and subsistence agriculture, making them highly vulnerable to external factors including climate change. While Indigenous communities and local communities in Mexico generally have legal protections for their lands under the Mexican Constitution and national laws, implementation and enforcement of these legal protections is inconsistent. Land tenure conflicts, inadequate recognition of customary land rights, and a lack of capacity and resources to enforce protections can undermine the security of Indigenous peoples' land in the Selva Maya region, and these communities face challenges from external pressures including illegal logging and agricultural expansion.

Underlying drivers that must be addressed therefore include inadequate protections for many areas of the Selva Maya forest; limited resources and capacity for effective monitoring of forests and enforcement of forest laws; insufficient livelihood options for Indigenous and local communities; insufficient resource mobilization and investments in conservation and protection of forests; and insufficient awareness of the importance of these resources to national, regional and global stakeholders.

### **Map 1: Area of interest for GEF8 Mexico Critical Forest Biomes Child Project**



- b) Describe the existing or planned baseline investments, including current institutional framework and processes for stakeholder engagement and gender integration;
    - Regional cooperation between Mexico, Belize and Guatemala is important to the effective conservation and management of the transboundary Selva Maya forest. The *Strategic Coordination group* established in 2015, which unites key ministerial bodies of the three countries has served as an effective platform for developing the *Maya Forest Integrated Strategy 2030*.

Within Mexico, management of the Selva Maya forest involves stakeholders working at multiple levels and institutions, from national to local. The National Protected Areas Commission (CONANP), under the Ministry of Environment, manages Mexico’s protected areas network including 4 large protected areas<sup>8</sup> in the project landscapes totaling 1,061,575 hectares. The three States of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan, together with the 17 municipalities included in the project area share responsibility for administering an additional 667,647 hectares of conserved areas (State Reserves) found within the project landscapes. About 122,150 hectares of Voluntary Conservation Areas owned by local communities further complement the system of public protected areas within the areas of interest, and are linked with the National Protected Area system managed by CONANP.

The following list shows key relevant baseline investments in the States of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatán for the entire lifetime of the Project:

- CONANP investment in management of Protected areas: includes staff, equipment subsidies for National PAs management. (USD 1,000,000)

<sup>8</sup> In adherence with the national delimitation of Selva Maya in Mexico, inclusion of Protected Areas in the Chiapas state will be explored during PPG.

- Municipalities of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan: investment in staff, equipment subsidies for National PAs management (USD 10,000,000)
- Program for sustainable forest development and welfare (CONAFOR – Forestry National Commission): To promote sustainable forest management in priority area through payment for environmental services.
- Selva Maya II (IUCN-KfW): this project will support regional cooperation between Belize, Guatemala and Mexico, improve effectiveness of protected areas and forest connectivity in the three countries. (8,000,000 USD)
- The Five Great Forest Initiative (WCS – European Union): The goal of this project is to co-create a new model with a regional multi-actor partnership comprised of governments, civil society, and Indigenous Peoples that will transform agriculture and food systems, support Indigenous conservation solutions and forest-based income streams, protect intact ecosystems, and eliminate illegal cattle ranching in Mesoamerica’s Five Forests. (USD 2,000,000)
- Resilient and Biodiverse Landscapes of Northern Mesoamerica (UK DEFRA-WCS): The goal of this programme is to reduce poverty and create sustainable economic development for communities living in, and dependent upon, environmentally-critical landscapes in Mesoamerica’s Maya, Moskitia, and Trifinio Forests through delivering lasting landscape protection, sustainable management and restoration, safeguarding biodiversity, and maintaining and improving ecosystem quality. (USD 3,000,000)
- Sustainable Prosperous Communities (USAID, TNC): The Sustainable Prosperous Communities (SPC) project seeks to increase the number of hectares under sustainable and profitable productive systems with access to markets, contributing to reduce deforestation and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while improving livelihoods of smallholder producers. (USD 5,000,000)

Alongside initiatives and investments working towards conservation of the Selva Maya forest, it is important to note that the Forest could face threats from a number of planned infrastructure developments including the 1,500 km Maya train project and corresponding migration, which will require close coordination with indigenous people and local communities to ensure their access to natural resources and the integrity and health of the forest.

At present, Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) are not officially recognized in Mexico. The project will support and promote the establishment of OECMs as part of a national on-going effort led by CONANP to support community-led conservation. The biological corridors Balam Beh and Calakmul-Sian Ka’an may be formalized and recognized as OECMs as a result of this project.

- Engagement with stakeholders<sup>9</sup> in the design and implementation of the Project will be facilitated in part through utilization of existing platforms and alliances including the *Alliance for the Yucatan Peninsula*. A key focus of the project will be on supporting IPLC-led conservation, through for instance Areas Voluntarily Destined for Conservation, by, for instance, increasing their access to finance in recognition of their area-based commitment to protect forest and biodiversity. The Project will employ strict adherence to the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent throughout Project design and implementation. During the

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<sup>9</sup> Direct actors include but are not limited to, in terms of CSO: Biosakbé, Polea, The Nature Conservancy. **Indigenous People:** Consejo Regional Indígena Popular de Xpujil (CRIPX) Red de Productores de Servicios Ambientales “Ya’ax Sot’ Ot’ Yook’ol Kaab” (REPSEAM), JIBIOPUUC. **Private sector:** Sustentur (sustainable tourism), Ejido Nuevo Becal, Alianza Selva Maya, Chiczá Mexico, Asociación Regional de Agrosilvicultores del Sur de Yucatán Nukuch Ka ax.

Project's design phase local consultations will be used to identify relevant activities developed with local NGOs, IPLCs and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and validate formal interest and consent from local communities. Other key project stakeholders include the CONANP and CONAFOR, who will work in close collaboration with protected area managers and local park rangers, and private owners of forest land.

- Support for gender equality will be pursued throughout the Project, with regards to land tenure, access and resource management, access to finance and trainings, governance mechanisms and jobs creation through NbS interventions and benefit-sharing. In line with Mexico's REDD+ National Strategy, the project will promote integrated landscape management, supporting conservation and associated livelihood activities that mitigate land-use change while advancing gender equality. Since 2002, CONAFOR has been working to mainstream a gender equality in the forestry sector. In 2021, this led to the implementation of detailed criteria to support gender equality within the Commission's Support Program for Sustainable Forestry Development Operating Rules aimed at advancing gender equality within the forestry sector. These criteria are revised annually to ensure an adaptive gender-based approach.
- c) Describe how the integrated approach proposed for the child project responds to and reflects the Program's Theory of Change, and as such is an appropriate and suitable option for tackling the systemic challenges, and to achieve the desired transformation with multiple global environmental benefits; and
  - The Project will work to facilitate transformative change supporting conservation of the Mexican Selva Maya forest through a set of targeted interventions addressing key drivers of deforestation and degradation. In line with the Program's Theory of Change, interventions will focus on strengthening governance and policy coherence at multiple levels, mobilization of new and additional finance for forest conservation, enhanced regional cooperation, knowledge sharing and awareness raising, and support for IPLC-led conservation. In line with the designed transformation envisioned for this Integrated Programme, the Project will address the systemic challenges as follow:
    - Harmonization of development, conservation and land use-zoning plans at state level, informed by integrated spatial planning will be obtained by enhancing dialogue between key federal and state level agencies, municipalities and IPLCs (Component 1), and include conservation-friendly NbS model which address social and environmental needs (component 2).
    - Coordination of multiple initiatives led by government agencies, CSO and private sectors to facilitate partnership at landscape level and enhance data and monitoring systems: despite a significant number of projects are promoting sustainable, biodiversity friendly agriculture and supporting improved management of protected areas, there is little coordination between all stakeholder. Project and its allies will foment collaboration between donors, government agencies, CSO and private sector through strengthening the newly established multi-level coalition for the Yucatan Peninsula<sup>10</sup> and the Regional Yucatan Climate Change Committee (component 4).

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<sup>10</sup> Includes WWF, TNC, FMCN, Pronatura Peninsula Yucatan, Amigos de Sian Ka'an among other organizations.

- Minimization/elimination of perverse subsidies that induce deforestation, and establishment of social and agricultural green incentives with consistent environmental safeguards enabled by enhanced and connected monitoring systems (component 1) and innovative financing instruments such as biodiversity credits and payment for hydrological services at watershed level (Component 4). Indeed, Mexico flagship program Sembrando Vida, with adequate environmental criteria (i.e. no deforestation in past 10/20years), could convert in an inclusive, forest-positive subsidies scheme providing newly registered area-based conservation and productive restoration initiatives with accrued finance to contribute to improve forest integrity as part of the two biological corridors targeted by the project.
- d) Describe the project’s incremental reasoning for GEF financing under the program, including the results framework and components.
- The GEF financing will build upon baseline investments and initiatives, addressing key gaps in resources, knowledge, capacity building, and mobilization of new/additional resources for the conservation of the Mexican Selva Maya forest. Project-supported outputs and outcomes that would in all likelihood not be achieved in absence of the Project and IP include:
  - **C1. Adoption of Enabling Policies, Reforms and Planning:** This component will support high-level cross-sectorial dialogues and exchange to facilitate the development of enabling policies and rational land use planning that recognizes the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services including potentially through compensation schemes, removal of perverse subsidies, and other means. It will generate evidence on the multiple benefits generated by Selva Forest, as well as current conservation and restoration programs (e.g. Sembrando Vida, CONAFOR’s programs), through ecosystem services assessment (e.g. water quantity and quality) to build the case for conservation and sustainable forest management as an effective climate change adaptation strategy. Transformational change will be facilitated in part by increasing awareness among decision makers (e.g. municipal councils) and private sector leaders on the irreplaceable value of forests in addressing development and social challenges. Local governance bodies to support grievance mechanisms from and participation of IPLC when developing the land use plans will be designed, thus ensure land tenure and access rights are strengthened. Lastly, this Component will support enhanced data sharing and collaboration with Ministerial stakeholders (e.g. SEMARNAT, CONAFOR, SADER, Bienestar) and reporting to relevant global initiatives and treaties including the Global Biodiversity Framework and Bonn Challenge restoration commitments.
  - **C2. Accelerated protection and restoration of the Selva Maya Forest:** providing high-priority capacity-building and resources to stakeholders at a range of levels from national to IPLCs. Support will be provided for improved management of protected areas and OECMs, enhanced fire management, as well as improved connectivity between PAs to support the overall health of the Selva Maya forest at scale. This component will strengthen the national PA monitoring system (SMART-CONANP), including by providing support for monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem health. Building upon the existing Areas Voluntary Destined for Conservation, the project will support participatory and multi-criteria analysis to identify high-priority needs, IPLC-led conservation and restoration as well as support for PA managers, and local micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSME) in the region. In that sense, the project includes several proven NbS that contribute towards reducing deforestation, increase productivity and augment income. Some of the NbS being assessed are: sustainable and regenerative ranching (primarily silvopastoral practices), climate-smart agriculture, sustainable forest management, integrated fire management, agroforestry systems, ecotourism, and protected areas management as a comprehensive approach to address land

degradation and the loss of forests and fertility at landscape level. Each one of these solutions includes building capacity of key actors, influencing public policy, and orienting existing and new sources of finance toward these activities. The project's restoration goals are also based on results from previous work undertaken in the region by IUCN. In 2018, eight technological packages for functional landscape restoration actions in the Yucatan Peninsula were developed, comparing the socioeconomic and environmental impact with respect to business-as-usual productive models. These technological packages and methodologies integrate agricultural and forestry components making possible to measure the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of functional landscape restoration models. Information developed will also serve and collaborate with the federal program Sowing Life (*Sembrando Vida*) seeking to forge synergies and mainstream biodiversity and environmental criteria to the program.

- **C3. Scaled up Investment in Forest-Positive Landscapes:** Project will support the design of incentives and financial instruments that incentivize investment in conservation and restoration of forest landscapes and protected natural areas in the Yucatan Peninsula, with the active participation of IPLCs, women and young people. Principle interventions include: 1) the support of bankable business solutions through the establishment and operation of a project preparation facility to translate sustainable strategies into green investment plans and projects for public and private sector financing; 2) the design of innovative financing models designed in partnership with the private and public sector to catalyse investment for conservation and restoration (i.e. debt-for-nature swaps, biodiversity/green bonds, payment for hydrological services schemes); and 3) development of public-private partnerships and financial education campaigns to ejido owners to facilitate resource mobilization including using market incentives such as carbon and biodiversity credits.
- **C4. Enhanced Regional Cooperation and Coordination:** to raise awareness on the importance of the Mesoamerica Forest biomes including the Selva Maya, address gaps in data and adequate tools to support adaptive management and demonstrate global environmental benefits associated with forests. Support will be provided for development of high-priority knowledge products capturing project experiences and best practices. This component will provide capacity strengthening and knowledge exchange between Belize, Mexico and Guatemala (e.g. Mesoamerican Virtual Center of Excellence in forest monitoring, CMICEF), support the implementation of the Maya Forest integrated Strategy 2030, including its regional governance bodies (Coordination Operative Group, Strategic Coordination Group) and participation in all IP-supported workshops and exchanges at regional and potentially global levels.

- **Engagement with the Global / Regional Framework (*maximum 500 words*)**

Describe how the project will align with the global / regional framework for the program to foster knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences. How will the proposed approach scale-up from the local and national level to maximize engagement by all relevant stakeholders and/or actors?

The proposed Project will be designed from the ground up to align with the regional framework of the Program to support knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of experiences – both as a contributor and as a recipient of information and knowledge products and experiences – and to support scaling up to maximize impact and sustainability. Key elements of this aligned approach include the following:

- **Governance and regional-level policy coherence** – Component 1 of the Project includes support for efforts to strengthen and further align regional policies for conservation of

Mesoamerican forests, including efforts to control trade in illegal timber, cattle, and species. In addition, the Project team will participate in all meetings of the Program-level Steering committee and work to implement all adaptive management recommendations of the Program Steering Committee.

- ***Active participation of Project team and stakeholders in programmatic knowledge exchange workshops, trainings and exchanges*** – Project will include budgeted resources for participation of project team and key relevant stakeholders in all program-supported knowledge exchange workshops, trainings and exchanges designed for Mexico. A cost-sharing approach between the Regional IP Coordination and Support project and national child projects including this one will be agreed to during PPG-stage development of the Regional and national child projects.
- ***Contribution to Programmatic communications*** – Project will include budgeted resources, dedicated activities and related targets under Component 4 for contribution to programmatic communications and knowledge products including annual Mesoamerica Forest IP Year in Review, web stories, and high-priority knowledge products capturing experiences and contributing to the development and wider use of best practices and approaches for conservation of the Selva Maya. This support also includes support for coordinated efforts to raise awareness at global, regional and national levels, of the importance of the Mesoamerica Forest biome, to a level commensurate with that of the Amazon and Congo forest basins.
- ***Support for high-level participation in finance mobilization roundtables***, financial inclusion activities and other coordinated efforts to raise new and additional funding for the conservation and sustainable management of Mexico’s Maya Forest– Project will include budgeted resources and activities under Component 3 supporting coordinated work (led by GGGI) to secure new and additional funding for conservation of primary forests. Innovative sustainable finance mechanisms will be considered building up from GGGI’s vast experience in the design and implementation of a wide range of investment approaches and tools (standards, green bonds, blended finance, debt-for-nature swaps, water, carbon and biodiversity offsets, among others), Moreover, the project will promote bankable and inclusive green business through the implementation of GGGI’s Greenpreneurs program (an incubator targeting existing innovative early-stage MSMEs, including women-owned firms, with demonstrated growth potential that are still in pursuit of a scalable and replicable business models with relevant experience and entrepreneurial ambitions). Likewise, the project will scale public and private sector financing, support high-level engagement and dialogues with Mexico’s Finance Ministry, NDBs (e.g. FIRA and NAFIN), multilateral development banks, and other key stakeholders such as private sector leaders, commercial banks towards enhancing sustainable finance and supporting financial inclusion in the region. In this sense, under component 3 financial inclusion efforts will be developed in alliance with CNBV and CONDUSEF. The project will both align and enhance existing programs of support and develop new initiatives and partnerships that enable and incentivize ambitious targets, investments and reforms and action for conserving and restoring the region’s forests.
- ***Support for harmonized monitoring approaches*** – Project results framework and monitoring approaches will align with and utilize the key program-level indicators and MRV approaches defined in the Program Framework Document, to ensure apples-to-apples comparisons of national-level project performance and support development of consolidated Program-level reporting and adaptive management. Project-level progress across all results framework indicators will be shared with the Regional coordination project team on an annual basis, in advance of the July reporting schedule, to facilitate consolidated reporting at the Program-

level by the Regional coordination team through an annual Program Report submitted to GEF.

Lastly, the Project will promote synergy with the Wildlife Conservation for Development global platform given that the WCD national child project, to be led by WWF, will also target the same geographical area, with a strong focus on the jaguar corridor, which fully overlaps with the Selva Maya.