

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Consultancy for a Strategic Review of the IUCN SIS Red List Project

1. Background

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is a key indicator of global biodiversity health, and the Species Information Service (SIS) is the core platform supporting its assessments. IUCN started a 2.5-year project in August 2024 to redesign and upgrade SIS to improve technical infrastructure, user experience, and operational efficiency. The project completed its 'Discovery Phase' in February 2025 and before moving to the next Phase, IUCN would like to conduct a rapid strategic review of the project progress and direction with a view to shaping future work.

2. Objectives

The consultancy will provide an independent review of the outcomes and conclusions of the "discovery phase" of SIS project, including a validation of the proposed project design, with a focus on:

- **Relevance:** The extent to which the project objectives and design respond to the needs of SIS users (e.g. Red List assessors at national and global levels, Red List assessment project managers).
- **Assessing the extent to which the project is on course to meet the overall objectives of delivering (i) core functions of SIS to enable the assessment process and (ii) totally new functions that will improve and speed-up Red List assessments.**
- **Validating project timelines, budgets and staffing arrangements against key deliverables and planned milestones.**
- **Analysing implementation strategies to verify their effectiveness. consideration of available technologies and adherence to best practices.**
- **Providing recommendations for optimization and risk mitigation.**

3. Scope of Work

The consultancy will undertake the following tasks:

- **Timeline Analysis:** Compare project progress against planned schedules, identify potential bottlenecks risks, and suggest adjustments to enhance efficiency.
- **Staffing Assessment:** Evaluate staff roles to confirm alignment with project needs.
- **Implementation Review:** Assess the methodologies applied in system development and UI/UX design to determine adherence to industry best practices and responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

- **Stakeholder Consultations:** Conduct interviews with key stakeholders, including the project team, Red List Unit, partners and external consultancies.
- **Final Report:** Provide a brief synthesis report with recommendations for the current project and future developments.

4. Deliverables

The consultancy is expected to produce the following outputs:

- **Final Report:** Including an executive summary, analysis and recommendations
- **Presentation to IUCN:** Summarizing key insights and proposed solutions.

5. Required Expertise

The consultancy firm or consultant should have:

- Experience in reviewing large-scale conservation software platforms.
- Expertise in software development and technical documentation.
- Knowledge of the IUCN Red List assessment process.
- Strong analytical and reporting skills.
- Experience working with not-for-profit international organizations and multi-stakeholder projects.

6. Timeline

- Level of effort estimated at 20 days (max. CHF20,000)
- Review period 2 weeks between 7th April and 25th April 2025.
- Delivery of final report by 8th May 2025

7. For interested Consultants:

- Please send a brief proposal to IUCN (**conservationinformatics@iucn.org**) including the following information before 31st March:
 - Demonstrated understanding of IUCN's Red List assessment process;
 - Relevant past work on conservation data platforms
 - Proposed approach (methodology)
 - Proposed timeline and resources
 - CVs