



Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

Develop a Carbon Credits Selling Project from Community Biodiversity and Forest Landscape Restoration Actions in Eastern Province of Rwanda, and Train Key Stakeholders in the development of Carbon Credits Projects.

Objective of the Assignment

Develop a market-based approach for selling carbon credits from landscape restoration actions in the Eastern Province, and capacity building for technical staff from districts and other stakeholder for the registration and selling of carbon credits.

Background

Project Reference: P04127

Donor reference: N/A

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 around 15,000 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.

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About the Project

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Rwanda, as part of a consortium led by the Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA), is implementing a six-year project, titled "*Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change through Enhanced Community-Based Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Province of Rwanda*."- COMBIO. This initiative is generously supported by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The primary objective of COMBIO is to enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation for ecosystems and communities in Rwanda’s Eastern Province by restoring and conserving biodiversity across both protected and productive landscapes, while contributing to green economy development. The project focuses on restoring biodiversity within protected forests, establishing new biodiversity sanctuaries, and integrating diversified native species into production landscapes. It also supports farmer groups in developing nature-based enterprises (such as ecotourism, nurseries, native fruit trees, and essential oils), strengthens local ownership of biodiversity and nature-based solutions, and helps district authorities integrate and monitor biodiversity indicators in development planning. An important component of COMBIO is the establishment of mechanisms to register and sell carbon credits generated through community-led biodiversity and forest landscape restoration activities, thus providing an additional financial resource to complement the Community-Based Biodiversity Fund.

Description of the Assignment

The Consultant/Project proponent will lead the Project Design Document (PDD) development process for selling carbon credits, including the collection and analysis of all required quantitative and qualitative data and information required to successfully achieve project validation according to the latest requirements of the international standards. The project targets to generate carbon credits from forest landscapes in Rwanda’s Eastern Province. The Consultant/project proponent is expected to undertake the following activities:

1. Identify and validate potential sites for carbon credit generation within selected landscapes.
2. Conduct carbon stock assessments and estimate potential carbon credit yields.
3. Develop a participatory stakeholder engagement methodology ensuring free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC).
4. Undertake stakeholder engagements for buy-in and site identification.
5. Conduct targeted training and capacity-building sessions for district officials, cooperatives, and other local stakeholders on carbon credit development and trading processes.
6. Develop operational structures for carbon credit registration, certification (aligned with a recognized standard selected in close consultation with IUCN and other partners), and benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Duration of the Assignment

From July 28th, 2025- December 14th, 2025

Deliverables and Activities

The consultant will provide the following deliverables and carry out the following activities:

Deliverable/Activity	Description	Deadline
Inception Report	a. Co-planning of site visits and consultations with landowners b. Design of baseline survey tools and stakeholder analysis instruments c. Confirmation of site visits and sensitization sessions with landowners, including notifications to relevant Agencies and Districts	14 August 2025

Deliverables (Field Engagement and Data Collection Phase)	a. Completion of site visits and sensitization of landowners b. Signing of commitment agreements (FPIC) by landowners and cooperative presidents c. Compilation of land management plans, historical land use data, and synthesis of baseline analyses d. Quantification of estimated carbon sequestration potential on pilot sites e. Submission of external auditor opinion and pre-approval by Standard f. Develop stakeholder training materials and deliver the trainings to select stakeholders.	14th October 2025
Deliverables (Documentation and Submission Phase)	a. Completion of Project Idea Note (PIN) and associated compliance documents (including risk assessments, environmental risk assessment, and benefit-sharing mechanism options) b. Selection and justification of carbon credits standard c. Submission of Notification of Intent (NOI) and PIN to REMA/Ministry of Environment d. Submission of full Feasibility Report to IUCN Rwanda e. Outline and advanced content of PDD for selected standard.	14 December

Note: With the final deliverable, the Consultant will provide all supporting documentation to demonstrate compliance with the standards' requirement, national regulations and frameworks, including but not limited to:

- Stakeholder consultations/FPIC.
- Emission reductions calculation/methodology workbooks,
- Biodiversity and community monitoring plans,
- Risk mitigation plans including AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk assessment,
- Health and Safety Plan,
- Equal opportunity policy,
- Grievance resolution mechanism,
- Benefit sharing mechanism options, including in Kinyarwanda language.

Payment Schedule

The Timetable below summarises the chronological order of deliverables and indicates milestones at which IUCN will pay the Consultant.

Deliverable	Milestone payment
Inception Phase (Preparation Phase)	30%
Deliverables (Field Engagement and Data Collection)	40%
Deliverables (Documentation and Submission Phase)	30%

Skills and Experience

The consultant/proponent must have the following skills, education and experience as a minimum:

- Team members must have at least Master's Degree(s) in climate change related field, business development, and/or environment management.
- Demonstrated experience in designing, developing carbon credits selling projects, particularly on the voluntary carbon market (VCM) and in afforestation/reforestation sectors.
- Experience with community-based conservation, biodiversity restoration, and sustainable livelihoods programming.
- Understanding of the Rwanda Forest and biodiversity sector, including Private Forest Management Units.
- Knowledge of recognized carbon certification standards operational procedures and requirements.
- Demonstrated experience working in Rwanda or similar contexts is a strong asset.
- Strong training and capacity-building skills.
- Knowledge of Rwanda's carbon credits and regulatory frameworks
- Demonstrated experience with implementing climate finance and carbon projects
- Experience with the development of new business lines, especially for the environmental sector.

Supervision and coordination

The consultant/firm will report directly to the IUCN Rwanda Country Office Project Manager and also work closely with other project partners.