



Annex 1. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROVISION OF DESIGN, OPTIMIZATION AND EXECUTION OF PLASTIC MATERIAL RECOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION SERVICES IN SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Objective of the Assignment

This assignment has the following objectives:

General:

Implement a comprehensive plastic materials recovery and transformation service in the following target locations: **São Tomé and Príncipe Island**, including the design and establishment of an effective and functionally optimized plastic materials recovery system.

Specific:

- 1) Develop a preliminary report on the current context of plastic waste management and plastic pollution, based on existing datasets (e.g. reports from the Ministry of Environment, Youth and Sustainable Tourism, Solid Waste Management in District Councils, Statistics São Tomé and Príncipe, Plastic waste quantity through data from the Customs Directorate, national strategic reports and NGO data , among others). The report should highlight the main actors involved in plastic waste management, align with national policies and regulatory frameworks, map the configuration of the informal and formal sectors, assess site-specific challenges, outline stakeholder and beneficiary expectations, and assess access to MRFs (Material Recovery Facilities) or other recycling/ upcycling facilities, current pricing structures (material prices) and opportunities for improvement.
- 2) Identify and engage critical stakeholders in the waste value chain and maintain effective relationships with all stakeholders for the sustainable implementation of project activities, using appropriate participatory tools. These stakeholders may include, but are not limited to, state agencies, the private sector, community-based organizations, universities and research institutions, local authorities, District Councils, formal and informal waste collectors, NGOs and other key actors involved in the recovery and transformation of plastic waste.
- 3) Design and operationalize an optimized and effective plastic materials recovery system, the **'PlastiNetwork'** composed of strategically located decentralized collection points for sourcing or collecting materials from informal waste sector actors and other sources, adaptable to changing waste generation patterns. Where applicable, integration with existing municipal collection infrastructure should be explored.
- 4) Facilitate the timely installation and securing of the infrastructure required for the operationalization of the PlastiNetwork. This includes, but is not limited to, the acquisition and placement of collectors, signage, scales, personal protective equipment (PPE) and other

necessary materials at collection points. Where applicable, explore integration with existing municipal collection systems.

- 5) Recruit, hire and onboard community members to oversee the effective management and implementation of activities at collection points across the PlastiNetwork, with a preference for women and youth.
- 6) Integrate and engage networks of informal and formal actors in the waste sector to participate in the regular collection, recovery and delivery of plastic materials to the PlastiNetwork.
- 7) Develop a protocol to monitor the number of beneficiaries whose livelihoods are sustained and improved (in line with country-specific outcomes) and the number of individuals sensitized or impacted through awareness-raising, capacity-building and related initiatives under the IslandPlas project in São Tomé and Príncipe.
- 8) Facilitate the integration of manual and digital tools into the PlastiNetwork to support the establishment of a transparent and verifiable system to track and monitor plastic waste flows and the involvement of beneficiaries in the system across the waste value chain.
- 9) Develop a standardized protocol to quantify the weight of plastic waste collected and track the volume/quantity of plastic recycled, upcycled, and if available reused, through circular approaches (in line with country-specific outcomes), ensuring accurate data recording, categorization, monitoring and transparent reporting.
- 10) Implement a time-efficient, environmentally sound and safe logistics system, including efficient transportation and routing, movement and storage of high-quality valuable recyclable plastic materials from mixed waste streams and other sources, including non-recyclable plastic materials.
- 11) Implement pre-treatment and transformation of recyclable plastic waste in a materials recovery unit (MRF), through the creation or modernization of a unit in São Tomé with organization of collected waste from Príncipe, preferably with technologies appropriate to the local context; or facilitate the preparation and shipment of recovered plastics to manufacturers or recyclers.
- 12) Liaise with competent authorities to identify and secure appropriate transitional physical spaces where specific activities can be implemented, such as decentralized and centralized waste collection centers, transfer stations, storage facilities and the location of the MRF facility. These locations should ensure easy access for relevant formal/informal waste sector actors. Where such spaces are made available by the service provider, full compliance with all applicable local standards, regulatory requirements and environmental laws should be ensured.
- 13) Develop and deploy a standardized method to quantify the number of informal actors whose livelihoods are sustained and improved (in alignment with national targets), while also tracking the number of individuals engaged under this initiative.
- 14) Pilot the development and implementation of standardized tariff cards for use across all waste purchase/sale categories to be displayed at collection points, MRF gate and facilities to assist informal sector actors (waste pickers/reclaimers), citizens and scrap metal traders seeking to sell their plastic waste materials.

- 15) Manage the environmentally sound storage or reuse of non-recyclable waste and by-products generated during the recovery process. Full compliance with all applicable local standards, regulatory requirements and environmental laws must be ensured, while ensuring alignment with existing disposal systems (e.g. appropriate disposal sites in São Tomé Príncipe).
- 16) Participate and contribute to local and national processes to develop or improve action plans for plastic waste management. This includes supporting discussions on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), circular economy and other policies aligned with the São Tomé Príncipe's priorities and the IslandPlas project.
- 17) During project implementation, identify relevant capacity gaps among stakeholders in the waste value chain and provide appropriate training to address such gaps, e.g. material identification, material quality, cleaning and sorting, etc. Where applicable, propose and recommend to IUCN priority areas for further capacity development and training.
- 18) Ensure alignment with safety, environmental, regulatory and compliance mechanisms stipulated by law for the effective functioning of operations and facilities, and in accordance with International Standards established by ISO/IEC Directives, including ISO 15270 or other relevant standards applicable to São Tomé and Príncipe.

Background

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 IslandPlas Project

The IslandPlas project targets seven African islands: Cape Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles and Zanzibar. Based on recent estimates, these

islands cumulatively generate around two million tonnes of municipal waste per year. Plastic material represents, on average, 11% of the waste, equivalent to 200,000 tonnes per year. Approximately 40% of plastic waste is recovered through selective collection, leaving 118,000 tonnes uncollected or inadequately managed, representing the largest source of plastic pollution in the marine environment. Once in the ocean, poorly managed waste negatively impacts the tourism sector, fisheries and aquaculture, maritime transport and overburdens the budgets of municipal and national authorities responsible for waste management.

The project, which runs until the end of 2026, envisions African islands being free of plastic waste in the environment and with circular measures implemented to ensure zero plastics in the ocean. The project actions are designed to reduce and prevent the leakage of plastic waste into the environment by demonstrating effective and quantifiable solutions to address plastic dispersion.

Among others, the project contributes to the achievement of the objectives set out in the Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference on the Blue and Circular Economy in the African and Indian Ocean Island States (September 2023), which advocates for a blue and circular economy, enabled by circular entrepreneurship, skills development, increased investment in science, research and development, and legal and policy reforms. The project aims to strengthen understanding of national plastic material flows and waste and pollution footprint, integrate and support informal waste sector stakeholders and local communities, support local innovation initiatives to reduce plastic pollution through locally appropriate solutions, strengthen institutional capacities (municipal and informal sector) to catalyze change, and explore the potential of an inter-regional recycling hub to support multiple islands.

The project aims to achieve three main results:

- i. Sustainable and improved livelihoods of informal waste sector actors involved in a circular plastics economy (9,600 beneficiaries);
- ii. Quantifiable regeneration of plastic waste through circular approaches, including plastic material recovery (14,000 tonnes), recycling (5,600 tonnes) and creative recycling; and
- iii. Strengthening sectoral innovation and business development with new growth opportunities through direct equity investments in locally appropriate solutions (US\$2 million).

Country specific outcomes under this activity:

1. Sustainable and **improved livelihoods** of informal waste sector actors involved in a circular plastics economy (500 beneficiaries);
2. Quantifiable **regeneration of plastic waste material** through circular approaches, including plastic material recovery (119 tonnes), recycling (48 tonnes) and upcycling in São Tomé and Príncipe;
3. Strengthened **sector innovation and enterprise development** with new growth opportunities through direct capital investments to locally-appropriate solutions.

The project's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be applied to this assignment are as follows, with the ones closely connected to this assignment highlighted in green:

Informal livelihoods	Circular innovation	Catalytic infrastructure investments	Circular systems	Resource leverage
Hrs of training	Start-up sustainability [%]	No. of projects supported	No. of plans created or strengthened	Co-financing leveraged
Changes in incomes [%]	Number of initiatives supported	Value of projects supported [\$]	Change in services per capita [%]	
Spend per worker [%]	Initiatives attracting funding	Value of projects completed [\$]		
Equipment support	Amount of funding attracted [\$]			

At the heart of the project is the engagement and collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including from government, private sector, informal sector and civil society interlinked in a vibrant collaborative network to co-generate and demonstrate demand-responsive solutions to plastic pollution. It is therefore important that the project integrates or fits into existing government or municipal sector management systems, working in coordination with the urban local authority bodies or municipalities in order to capture, understand and address systemic weaknesses and gaps and provide an opportunity to articulate intervention measures that are locally-appropriate and socially acceptable to ensure sustainability of project outcomes.

Duration of the Assignment

From **July 2025** to **November 2026**.

Key deliverables (Outputs)

The contractor will achieve the following deliverables:

No.	Available for delivery
1	A baseline report summarizing the prevailing or current context of plastic waste, pollution and its management in the target locations
2	An optimally designed, functional and operational PlastiNetwork that facilitates the recovery and flow of plastic material into a recycling system and further transformation and other value chain opportunities.
3	A disaggregated report documenting the total number of individual beneficiaries directly and indirectly supported by the project, categorized by age group, gender, location and type of support received (e.g. employment, training, awareness campaigns, etc.) in alignment with the country-specific outcomes of the project.
4	A cumulative report summarizing the quantifiable tonnage of plastic material collected during the implementation period (and, where available, the collection method) in alignment with the country-specific project outcomes.
5	A cumulative report detailing the tonnage of recyclable and non-recyclable plastic material transformed/converted, specifying the technologies used, the business/community actors involved, including the type, quality, market, expected income to be generated and uptake of the transformed material, in alignment with the country-specific outcomes of the project

6	A documented record of the tonnage of non-recyclable plastic waste collected, disaggregated by source and type, including the final management method (e.g. safe storage, safe disposal, reuse in other sectors, transformation, etc.) and innovative reuse strategies, together with environmental safety measures taken in alignment with the country-specific outcomes of the project.
7	Report on the characterization of plastic waste showing the composition, quality and potential for recycling and other management disaggregated by type of polymer.
8	Summary of processes and commitments involved in informing and influencing policies, legal frameworks and strategies and plans for the management of the plastics/waste sector
9	A final report highlighting results, challenges and lessons learned that demonstrates progress in reducing plastic waste and its leakage into the environment, practical opportunities for material transformation and impacts on human livelihoods. The final product should also include a standard Microsoft PowerPoint presentation (maximum 30 slides).

Reporting Schedule

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

No.	Available for delivery	Deadline
1	Baseline Report	End of week 2 (after signing the contract)
2	Quarterly progress reports highlighting achievement of key milestones and (narrative and expenditure)	Every 3 months
3	Final project report on project achievements and lessons learned	June 2026

Payment Schedule

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

Deliverable Date	Milestone payment
Baseline report - 25 July 2025	25%
Progress reports - 31 October 2025	10%
Progress reports - 31 January 2026	10%
Progress reports - 30 April 2025	10%
Progress reports - 31 July 2026	10%
Progress reports - 31 October 2026	10%
Final project report - 15 November 2026	25%

Skills and Experience

The firm must have within their staff or team, at least, the following skills, training and experience:

- Minimum 2 to 3 years of experience in plastic waste management, including material recovery, recycling and other transformations, circular economy.
- In-house organizational expertise across the team on plastic waste, pollution management, material transformation, such as through, recycling and upcycling.

- Proven track record in engaging relevant sector stakeholders, including state agencies and municipalities with mandate on the waste and pollution management sectors, and ability to engage and communicate effectively with such diverse stakeholders.
- Experience working with local stakeholders, the informal sector, local communities, and familiarity and experience with international funding models will be an advantage.
- Knowledgeable of different environmental standards and norms in respective country, including prevailing policy and regulatory framework.
- Basic proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methods, data collection, analysis, synthesis and interpretation.
- Skilled in preparing comprehensive technical reports, including situational assessments. Links to any such works and to other completed assignments is an asset.
- Equipped with equipment and infrastructure for plastic waste collection and transformation will be an added advantage.
- Fluency in English, French and/or the local native language relevant to the country is required, or as may be applicable in the target country

Supervision and coordination

The firm will report to and work under the direct supervision of the National Project Officer, IslandPlas Project, located in Sao Tomé and Príncipe.