



Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

Title: Consultancy services to elaborate a Regional multi-stakeholder situation analysis for mainstreaming the biodiversity-climate-gender nexus in national policies in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region

Objective of the Consultancy

The review will:

1. Conduct a desktop **situation analysis** for mainstreaming the biodiversity-climate-gender nexus in national policies in the WIO region
2. Develop a Great Blue Wall (**GBW**) **Policy Advocacy Strategy** aimed at influencing inclusive policy adoption at subnational and regional levels, aligned with the global and country impacts across the biodiversity-climate-gender nexus.
3. Design and produce targeted **biodiversity-climate-gender policy and knowledge products** to support policy advocacy implementation at subnational and national levels.

Background

Project Reference: P04216 - ReSea

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

Marine and coastal ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region are increasingly vulnerable due to urbanization, population growth, and climate change, among other factors. The ReSea project is a response to these threats, promoting sustainable seascapes that enhance climate resilience and stimulate the socio-economic development of coastal communities.

ReSea is a project run in partnership between IUCN and Mission Inclusion with the support of Global Affairs Canada. ReSea is an ambitious initiative aimed at strengthening the physical and socio-economic resilience of people living in coastal communities in the Western Indian Ocean region, including Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Comoros, and Madagascar. ReSea relies on nature-based solutions and gender-transformative and inclusive conservation practices to preserve, restore, and sustainably manage ecosystems. In addition, the project focuses on improving the livelihoods of local communities, with a particular emphasis on the empowerment of women and young people, and other marginalised groups through inclusive value chains, addressing structural barriers to their full and meaningful participation.

At the heart of ReSea is a commitment to inclusive approaches that center local leadership, equity and collaboration. The initiative is structured around three interlinked pillars: Blue Planet, which supports marine conservation and locally managed marine areas; Blue Nature, which strengthens the use of gender-responsive, nature-based solutions; and Blue People, which promotes economic empowerment through sustainable blue value chains. Together, these pillars form a holistic, gender-responsive model for regenerative seascapes that deliver lasting benefits for people, climate, and nature.

The project also prioritizes capacity strengthening of local and women-led organizations, ensuring they can shape, implement, and monitor NbSA and governance interventions that reflect community priorities and knowledge. However, there is a need to strengthen their efforts through knowledge exchange, application of innovative and context-relevant technologies, and learning from global best practices. This review will serve as a key resource to inform NbSA activities, capacity building, and knowledge transfer for local partners of the ReSea project.

Description of the Assignment

1. Regional multi-stakeholder situation analysis for mainstreaming the biodiversity-climate-gender nexus in national policies in the Western Indian Ocean Region

The consultant will lead the development of a comprehensive, publishable regional multi-stakeholder situation analysis and policy advocacy framework aimed at identifying opportunities for mainstreaming the biodiversity-climate-gender nexus in national and subnational policies across the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region.

This assignment supports the Great Blue Wall (GBW) initiative, which envisions a connected and regenerative blue corridor that restores ocean health, builds coastal community resilience, and enables inclusive blue economies across the WIO.

This consultancy is undertaken at a time when growing global consensus recognizes the urgent need to address the interlinkages crises between biodiversity loss, climate change, and gender inequality. These interconnected challenges disproportionately affect women and marginalized groups, particularly in coastal and climate-vulnerable areas, due to unequal access to resources, decision-making power, and opportunities for resilience. It draws on the findings of the 2023 IPBES Nexus Assessment, which emphasized that effective and equitable solutions must go beyond siloed interventions, and instead adopt integrated, gender-transformative, and inclusive approaches that advance environmental sustainability, climate adaptation, and social justice simultaneously. The assignment will also be aligned with national NBSAPs (National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), gender policies and action plans, and national and regional blue economy strategies, including the African Union Blue Economy Strategy and the Western Indian Ocean Regional Blue Economy Strategy, to support coherent, intersectional, and inclusive policy advocacy.

The outputs will include a ~25-page analytical report, a GBW Policy Advocacy Strategy, and targeted knowledge products (e.g. policy briefs and position papers). These deliverables are intended to equip GBW teams, local partners, and subnational governments with the tools needed to advocate for and implement policies that are biodiversity-positive, climate-smart, and gender-responsive.

The consultant will also ensure that these products support the implementation of GBW and ReSea Project which emphasizes working with subnational governments to operationalize regenerative blue economy approaches.

The consultant will undertake a thorough desk review, including but not limited to:

- National and subnational biodiversity and climate policies
- Country-specific NBSAPs and NDCs

- National and regional gender equality frameworks, including the SADC Gender Protocol, the African Union Gender Strategy, and country-level gender action plans
- The IPBES Nexus Assessment
- The Great Blue Wall regional and country strategies
- The African Union Blue Economy Strategy
- Relevant ReSea Project documentation and seascape assessments

In addition, the consultant will conduct at least 25 stakeholder online interviews (5 per country) and survey a minimum of 50 stakeholders from national governments, subnational authorities, civil society organizations, women's networks, conservation practitioners, local communities, and technical experts. These engagements will:

- Ground the analysis in the lived experiences, knowledge, and priorities of coastal communities, especially those of women and youth and other structurally marginalised groups, using gender and intersectional lens.
- Identify structural barriers (legal, institutional, cultural...) and enablers for mainstreaming the nexus in policy, including power dynamics and gaps that affect the ability of marginalised groups to influence decision-making
- Highlight locally relevant practices, governance models, and policy tools that support inclusive and transformative outcomes

The regional situation analysis and advocacy strategy will:

- Map and assess existing policy frameworks and cross-sectoral mechanisms relevant to biodiversity, climate, and gender at the national and regional levels
- Highlight successful examples of community-led, or women-led or locally driven policy innovations or governance models that have contributed to inclusive, climate-resilient, and biodiversity-positive outcomes
- Identify entry points for integrating the Biodiversity, Climate and Gender (BCG) nexus into current and upcoming policy revisions, including blue economy frameworks, NBSAP and NDC updates, and gender action plans
- Document successful case studies where biodiversity-climate-gender integration has resulted in positive socio-economic and ecological outcomes
- Analyse institutional arrangements, power dynamics, and opportunities for policy coherence, with a strong focus on the role of subnational governments and local leadership
- Develop knowledge products (e.g., policy briefs, position papers) tailored to decision-makers, based on local evidence and international best practices
- Deliver a GBW Policy Advocacy Strategy, outlining:
 - Key advocacy messages and priority policy entry points
 - Recommendations for influencing national and subnational policies

- Strategies for engaging gender institutions, blue economy platforms, and regional governance bodies
- A roadmap for alignment with GBW Pillar 1 and scaling advocacy across seascapes
- Support the design of training materials for policymakers, informed by the analysis and position papers

The final deliverables will be professionally edited, proofread, and formatted for publication, following the **IUCN Publishing Guidelines and Style Manual**.

2. Summary products and presentations

Based on the approved final text, the consultant will develop the following products to enhance uptake of findings by national stakeholders:

- GBW Advocacy Strategy (10 pages, designed)
- One full-page infographic
- One slide deck for public events

The consultant will also present the findings and a summary of the global review to ReSea partners and regional stakeholders.

Duration of the Assignment

From September 15th, 2025, to Nov 15th, 2025.

Deliverables and Activities

The consultant will meet on regular basis with the Climate Change & Energy Transition (CCET) and East and Southern Africa Region Office (ESARO) teams of IUCN to plan and follow up on the execution of the agreed tasks and deliverables.

The consultant will provide the following deliverables and carry out the following activities as per the timeline indicated below. **Noting that this timeline is sensitive, as Deliverable 3 and 4 will feed into ReSea outreach activities during IUCN WCC and COP30.**

Deliverable/ Activity	Description	Deadline	Indicative dates
Deliverable 1	D.1. Inception Report, including detailed workplan, methodology, stakeholder engagement plan (interviews, surveys)	Week 1	22 September
Deliverable 2	D.2 Interviews, survey and countries review	Week 2	29 September
Deliverable 3	D.3. Draft Regional Situation Analysis Report to be reviewed by IUCN and ReSea key partners as relevant	Week 5	13 October

Deliverable 4	D.4. Draft GBW Policy Advocacy Strategy Final version of Global Review of Best Practices and Technological Solutions (not designed)	Week 6	20 October
Deliverable 5	D.5. Knowledge Products (Draft Position Papers and Policy Briefs)	Week 6	20 October
Deliverable 6	D.6. Brief, infographic, slide deck	Week 7	27 October
Deliverable 7	D.7 Final Submission (All Consolidated and Designed Products) – Final and professionally edited Regional Situation Analysis (~25 pages) – Final GBW Policy Advocacy Strategy – Final knowledge products (policy briefs/position papers), ready for dissemination – High-quality designed and laid-out versions of all final documents, aligned with IUCN Style Manual – Summary report outlining stakeholder engagement and final results	Week 10	15 November

Beyond the specified tasks detailed in these Terms of Reference, the consultant is expected to demonstrate flexibility in accommodating unforeseen related tasks/activities as they arise.

All final decisions concerning the successful delivery and quality of deliverables will be made by CCETT. The consultant shall schedule time in the workplan for reviewing drafts and implementing feedback based on discussions with CCETT and ESARO.

Payment Schedule

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

Deliverable	Milestone payment
Deliverable 1	15%
Deliverable 2 - 4	50%
Deliverable 5-7	35%

Skills and Experience

The consultant, individual or a consultancy firm, must have the following skills, education and experience as a minimum: must have the following skills, education and experience as a minimum:

- At least 10 years of knowledge and experience in Governance, Coastal and Marine Policy, Nature-based Solutions and climate adaptation in coastal and marine ecosystems, including gender-responsive or socially responsive programming.
- Proven understanding of the structural barriers and drivers and root causes of gender and social inequalities, particularly as they relate to access to natural resources, participation in governance, and climate vulnerability in coastal and marine contexts.

- Track record of strong technical, research and analytical abilities, with a background in environmental science, climate adaptation, gender studies or related fields.
- Demonstrated ability to analyse and integrate the underlying drivers of social and gender disparities into policy and programmatic recommendations, including issues of access, power, and representation.
- Demonstrated experience conducting multi-stakeholder consultations, including with government actors, civil society organizations, and representatives of women's rights or marginalized groups.
- Preferred – direct experience working in or with countries in the WIO region (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Comoros, Madagascar) with knowledge or sensitivity to local political, cultural, and gender dynamics.
- Professional level of written and spoken English. French or Portuguese an asset.
- Prior experience working with IGOs or INGOs or regional policy bodies.
- Commitment to transparency, inclusion, local leadership, and gender-responsive or intersectional approaches to sustainability and governance.

Consultants are expected to work closely with the supervisor and be flexible to adapt to changes as needed.

Supervision and coordination

The consultant will work under the supervision IUCN Climate Change and Energy Transition and IUCN ESARO teams.

The supervisors will have the final decision concerning successful delivery and quality of all deliverables. The outline of all deliverables should be agreed with the IUCN-ESARO team ahead of the work. Consultants should build time for discussion before starting each deliverable and for review and sign-off feedback of the different deliverables.