



Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

Graphic Design Services for the Great Blue Wall 2025 Impact Report

Objective of the Consultancy

The objective of this consultancy is to design and produce a high-quality, visually compelling Impact Report that effectively communicates the achievements, lessons, and future vision of the Great Blue Wall (GBW) initiative, in line with IUCN's branding and strategic communication objectives. The final report will be launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 and must meet the highest standards of clarity, accessibility, and visual storytelling for a global audience of policymakers, donors, and conservation leaders.

The report will build upon and extend the visual identity developed for the 2024 IUCN ESARO Annual Report, ensuring stylistic continuity while creating a distinct and recognisable design for the Great Blue Wall.

To support this, the consultant is expected to:

- Develop a high-quality, visually consistent report within an agreed page limit
- Work alongside the IUCN GBW team and a consultant copywriter/editor.
- Propose an initial design direction for approval, with space for iterative refinement
- Incorporate visual elements such as infographics, illustrations, and stylistic accents to support key messages.
- Create engaging infographics/illustrations which help communicate complicated scientific information.

Deliver final outputs in formats suitable for both print and digital distribution. The selected consultant should have demonstrated experience designing flagship publications for international organisations, particularly in the fields of environment, sustainability, or development, and must be able to manage a collaborative, multi-round review process under a tight timeline.

Background

Project Reference: P04772

Donor reference: AVKE-00125

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.

www.iucn.org

<https://twitter.com/IUCN/>

About the Project

The Great Blue Wall (GBW) is a pioneering, Africa-led initiative launched by IUCN in 2021 to accelerate ocean conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable blue economic development across the Western Indian Ocean region.

At its heart, the GBW envisions a connected network of community-led marine and coastal conserved areas that protect biodiversity, regenerate ecosystems, and support inclusive, nature-based economies. The initiative brings together governments, communities, scientists, NGOs, and the private sector to unlock large-scale impact across countries and ecosystems.

The GBW is delivered through a diverse portfolio of projects that span ecological restoration, livelihoods, and policy engagement. These include:

- Plastic waste reduction and circular economy innovation (e.g. community-based recycling and waste profiling)
- Blue carbon restoration, including mangrove rehabilitation and seagrass mapping
- Community-led marine protected area development
- Sustainable fisheries and local food systems
- Youth and women-led enterprise development in the blue economy
- Regional cooperation for ocean governance and marine spatial planning
- Ocean literacy, education, and science-policy dialogues

IUCN is preparing the first GBW Impact Report to capture progress, share lessons, and communicate results to a global audience. The report will be launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (October 2025) and will serve as a key strategic product to showcase the scale and diversity of the initiative's achievements to donors, partners, and decision-makers.

Description of the Assignment

The consultant will lead the end-to-end design and visual production of the Great Blue Wall Impact Report. Tasks and responsibilities include:

1. Interpret and extend the visual style of the 2024 IUCN ESARO Annual Report to create a distinct yet consistent design for the Great Blue Wall Impact Report.
2. Design and layout a publication incorporating a mix of text, data, photography, and case studies.
3. Develop up to three custom hero illustrations or infographics, with additional smaller visual and decorative elements as needed throughout the report.
4. Conduct light copy editing of provided text, including section headlines, pull quotes, and brief introductions.
5. Source, select, edit, and retouch relevant photographs for inclusion in the report, ensuring alignment with the report's tone and branding.
6. Coordinate with a consultant copywriter/editor, and GBW internal team to ensure an integrated and well-managed design process.
7. Implement up to three rounds of revisions following feedback at different stages of the layout process.
8. Prepare and deliver final versions of the report in:
 - Print-ready high-resolution PDF (with bleed and crop marks)
 - Web-optimised PDF (for online viewing and download)
9. Complete all tasks within a 6-week timeline, with the final report delivered no later than 1 October 2025.

Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will run for a total of six (6) weeks, commencing upon contract signature in September 2025. The final, fully designed report must be submitted to IUCN by 1 October 2025, ahead of its launch at the IUCN World Conservation Congress.

The consultant is expected to adhere strictly to the agreed timeline, incorporating review rounds, feedback integration, and quality assurance within this period.

No extension of the deadline is anticipated.

Deliverables and Activities

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

Deliverable/Activity	Description	Deadline
1. Kick-off meeting	Virtual meeting with IUCN team to align on content, structure, and visual direction	Within 3 days of contract signature
2. Design concept submission	Submission of initial design concept, including proposed layout style,	End of Week 1

	typography, sample spread and cover concept	
3. Full draft layout (Version 1)	Delivery of the first full layout, including placeholder content, draft infographics, and selected imagery	End of Week 4
4. Revisions (up to 3 rounds)	Incorporation of IUCN feedback on draft layout, including layout adjustments, content tweaks, and visual refinements	Week 5–6 (rolling)
5. Final report delivery	Submission of the finalised report in all required formats: – Print-ready high-resolution PDF (with bleed) – Web-optimised PDF (small file size for sharing) – Packaged design files (InDesign or equivalent)	1 October

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: Kick-off meeting completed, with agreed content outline, structure, and visual direction documented	25%
Deliverable 2: Submission and IUCN approval of initial design concept (layout style, typography, sample spread, cover concept)	25%
Deliverable 3: Submission and IUCN approval of full draft layout (Version 1), including placeholder content, draft infographics, and selected imagery	25%
Deliverable 4: Submission and IUCN approval of finalised report in all required formats (print-ready PDF with bleed, web-optimised PDF, packaged design files)	25%

Skills and Experience

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

- At least 5–7 years of proven experience in high-level publication design for international organisations, NGOs, or development agencies.
- Strong portfolio showcasing visual storytelling, layout design, and use of infographics in reports related to environment, sustainability, or development sectors.
- Experience extending or adapting an existing visual identity system to new products.
- Demonstrated ability to translate technical and data-heavy content into visually engaging layouts.
- Advanced proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop) or equivalent professional design tools.
- Experience working with multi-stakeholder teams, including managing inputs from writers, editors, and producers, and incorporating iterative feedback efficiently.

- Proven ability to manage multiple rounds of revisions (minimum of 3) within tight timelines, while maintaining design consistency and quality.
- Ability to meet strict deadlines while ensuring high attention to detail and version control.
- Familiarity with IUCN branding and reporting standards is an advantage.

Supervision and coordination

The consultant will report to and work under the supervision of the Coastal and Ocean Resilience Team Impact Officer and Blue Science and Business Innovation Manager.