

Call for Proposals

Terms of Reference for an agronomic & regenerative agroforestry design and biodiversity assessment and action plan in Nkong-Nkeni, Cameroon

Project: SCOOPS CECACAO Pilot Farm-School — Centre of Excellence for Cocoa Cultivation in Agroforestry and Regenerative Agriculture

Location: Nkong-Nkeni, Bondjock District, Nyong-et-Kellé Department, Centre Region, Cameroon

This document serves to provide an overview of the project that is relevant to the consultant, context on data availability and goals of the mandate, as well as an estimated scope of work requested from the consultant. Final details of the mandate should be covered by the subsequent proposal submitted by the consultant.

1. About Canopy Trust

Canopy Trust provides blended finance solutions to attract private sector investments towards impactful projects that address the drivers of deforestation and support socio-economic development in the Congo Basin in Central Africa. It supports sustainable agriculture and forestry, renewable energy and sustainable cooking along with other deforestation-free value chains, through technical assistance (TA) at project level and catalytic investments at both project and investment fund level. Canopy Trust is an initiative implemented by Catalytic with the funding support of multiple donors. Canopy Trust supports selected projects and businesses by providing grant-funded technical assistance convertible into investment), and investment instruments such as quasi equity, equity, and debt with concessionality servicing to enable impactful projects and businesses with a potential to reach the financial market in the future.

This procurement is conducted as an open competitive tender in accordance with the procurement rules applicable to Canopy Trust and its donors.

2. Context of the Project and Technical Assistance

Canopy Trust has allocated Technical Assistance support to SCOOPS CECACAO (Société Coopérative Simplifiée des Cultivateurs Engagés de cacao dans le Littoral), a Cameroonian cocoa cooperative developing an integrated, tree-to-bar agroforestry and regenerative agriculture initiative centred on a pilot farm-school in Nkong-Nkeni.

The project addresses systemic challenges in the Cameroonian cocoa sector—an aging orchard, heterogeneous post-harvest practices, and the export of raw beans capturing minimal value for producers—through local value capture, income diversification, and the agroecological transition of cooperative members' farms. The model is built around a living laboratory (12 ha), production parcels for the Club Chocolatiers Engagés (19 ha), an operational 50-tonne post-harvest centre (5 ha, already funded in kind by the Conseil Interprofessionnel du Café et du Cacao CICC), and a planned artisanal chocolate factory, with diversified revenue streams including premium beans, chocolate, biochar, honey, organic fertilisers, training, and energy recovery. At maturity, the cooperative aims to bring

some 200 hectares of members' and NEW GENERATION programme farms into deforestation-free, agroforestry production.

The project is at an advanced development stage. The cooperative is legally constituted with 50 active members; the post-harvest centre is operational; partnership agreements are in place with the Club Chocolatiers Engagés (market access and guaranteed minimum price); and the 12-ha and 19-ha sites are secured. Land tenure documentation exists for the project site.

This TA package consists of the design of an agronomic and regenerative agroforestry system and a biodiversity assessment, including a dedicated component on additional value streams, integrating beekeeping, vanilla cultivation and an integrated organic vegetable and spice garden for short-circuit marketing.

3. Scope of Work for Technical Assistance

The consultant is expected to deliver the following two assessments, ensuring consistency across components and avoiding duplication of fieldwork.

A. Objectives

A.1 Design the agronomic system and regenerative agroforestry transition pathway for the cooperative's production base, ensuring the shift to regenerative agroforestry is technically sound, costed, and sequenced.

A.2 Conduct a biodiversity assessment and additional value streams action plan, integrating beekeeping, vanilla cultivation and an integrated organic vegetable and spice garden, assessing associated productive and ecological benefits, integrating alternative production practices into the wider agroforestry system.

B. Envisioned activities for achieving each objective

Objective 1 — Agronomic design and regenerative agroforestry transition

Design the agronomic system underpinning the cooperative's regenerative agroforestry model and define the transition pathway for members' farms, aiming to optimise sustainability and productivity.

Activities include:

- Assess the current state of the orchard and member farms (density of forest cover, varieties, age, yields, practices, input use) across the production base.
- Assess the water resource baseline and requirements for site operations, considering climate risks, to provide the hydrological foundation for the biodiversity assessment and long-term viability of the project.
- Design the regenerative agroforestry system including species selection, repartition and proportion, shade and fertility-tree integration, intercropping, hydrological requirements and minimum biodiversity thresholds per hectare for:
 - 1) typical 3-5 hectares plots owned by smallholders;
 - 2) the 12-ha living laboratory
 - 3) the 19-ha production parcel

- Deliver trainings and capacity building to the Cooperative members and management.
- Design MRV protocols to be implemented by the cooperative to measure and report on socio-environmental impacts.

Objective 2 — Biodiversity assessment and additional value streams action plan

2.1. Biodiversity component

Provide a baseline biodiversity characterisation of the site sufficient to support the project's biodiversity objectives, identifying biodiversity values, potential risks and impacts, and practical measures to ensure that the project is aligned with biodiversity conservation, no-deforestation principles, and sustainable land-use practices.

Activities include:

- **Desk Review and Context Analysis:** The desk review should provide an initial understanding of the ecological context, including proximity to protected areas, forests, critical habitats, water bodies, wildlife corridors, community-managed areas, or other areas of conservation importance.
- **Conduct biodiversity baseline assessment:** the baseline should rely on a combination of desk-based analysis, field observations, stakeholder consultations, and available biodiversity databases, and include a review of the 50+ endemic species on the site.
- **Design concept to implement biodiversity practices at the cooperative level:** Based on the findings, the Consultant shall prepare a practical Biodiversity Management and Monitoring Plan, including:
 - Measures to avoid, minimise, restore, or offset biodiversity impacts
 - Measures to protect riparian zones, ecological corridors, native trees, and sensitive habitats;
 - Recommendations on pesticide and agrochemical management;
 - Practical biodiversity indicators and monitoring protocols;
 - Roles and responsibilities for implementation;
 - Recommendations for farmer training and contractual commitments;
 - Budgetary and operational considerations for implementation.
- Deliver trainings to the Cooperative members and management.

The study should also implement the WWF Framework for Articulating and Assessing Biodiversity Impact, providing a final BECS score for the project (Biodiversity Extent, Condition and Significance).

2.2 Additional value streams action plan

Design the additional value streams component as a productive and ecological asset, integrating support into the agroforestry system. The design and action plan should focus on:

- i) beekeeping
- ii) vanilla cultivation
- iii) integrated organic vegetable and spice garden

The study should expand on recent research indicating the significant yield and biodiversity benefits of such additional streams and design the integration plan to the overall agronomic design.

Activities include:

- Estimate costs, yields, revenue potential, and the cooperative-ownership / benefit-sharing structure for each additional activity.
- Design planting schemes, support structures, training needs, post-harvest processing, and quality standards.
- Estimate investment costs, production volumes, revenue potential, and market access pathways (premium certification).
- Design the beekeeping project: siting, hive numbers and types, equipment, management model, training needs, and integration with the cooperative's cooperative governance and revenue model
- Assess pollination benefits and recommend pollinator-friendly interventions (e.g. flowering zones) to enhance cocoa and associated fruit-tree yields.
- Assess the suitability of the agroforestry system for integrating vanilla as a shade-tolerant, high-value cash crop.

Design and integrate complementary production systems that are ecologically coherent and economically viable enabling the cooperative to diversify income sources for producers beyond cocoa and chocolate, enhance ecosystem services (pollination, shading, soil fertility, pest regulation), and create short-circuit marketing opportunities.

Activities include:

- Define cropping calendars, irrigation needs, organic pest management, composting and rotation plans
- Estimate establishment and operational costs, expected yields, revenue projections and marketing channels
- Propose training modules for members on organic horticulture, post-harvest handling and direct sales

C. Deliverables & indicative timeline

C.1 — Inception Report

A brief document (5–10 pages) outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, work plan, timeline, and proposed structure of the final deliverables.

Due: End of Week 2

C.2 — Agronomic Design & Agroforestry Transition Report

Agroforestry system design, transition plan, costed input/yield specifications, genetic-material recommendations, and phased roadmap.

Due: End of Month 6

C.3 — Biodiversity Assessment and Action Plan

Biodiversity baseline assessment, including:

- Initial review of available project documents, maps, biodiversity data, land-use information, and relevant standards
- Summary of field observations and stakeholder consultations
- Description of habitats, species, ecosystem services, land-use context, forest cover, biodiversity-sensitive areas, and conservation values within and around the project area.
- GIS-based maps showing plantation areas, surrounding land cover, forest areas, protected areas, watercourses, riparian zones, ecological corridors, and any identified biodiversity-sensitive features.
- Assessment of direct, indirect, and cumulative biodiversity risks linked to the cocoa plantations and broader value chain, including no-deforestation and leakage risks.
- Practical action plan including mitigation measures, no-deforestation safeguards, agroforestry recommendations, monitoring indicators, implementation responsibilities, and indicative budget considerations.

Due: End of Month 6

C.4 — Framework for implementing additional revenue streams

Consolidated report covering:

- Apiculture project design and pollinator-support recommendations.
- Vanilla integration design and market strategy.
- Organic vegetable and spice garden design, cropping plan, and short-circuit marketing strategy.
- Combined investment and revenue projections, governance model, and training plan..

Due: End of Month 6

4. Requirements

Applicants must provide evidence that they meet the following requirements:

- the firm is legally registered;
- the firm is registered for tax declaration and payment;
- the firm has no outstanding tax or social security liabilities.

Applicants must also confirm that none of the exclusion grounds below apply. The applicant, its owners and key personnel:

- are not bankrupt, insolvent or under administration;
- have not been convicted of corruption, fraud, bribery, money laundering, terrorist financing or any other serious offence;
- are not debarred or suspended by any multilateral development bank, the UN or the EU;
- have not engaged in serious professional misconduct in the last five years;
- are not in a situation of conflict of interest that would compromise the integrity of the assignment;
- have fulfilled all obligations relating to the payment of taxes and social security contributions.

A signed declaration confirming compliance with these requirements shall accompany the proposal.

Anti-Corruption and Ethical Conduct

Catalytic applies a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption. The consultant shall comply with all applicable anti-corruption laws and with Catalytic's ethical standards. The consultant shall not engage in corruption, fraud, collusion, coercion, bribery or any other prohibited practice. Any suspicion of misconduct shall be reported immediately to Catalytic. Catalytic reserves the right to terminate the contract with immediate effect in the event of a breach of these obligations.

5. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed on the basis of the criteria below. Each criterion will be scored and weighted as indicated, and the contract will be awarded to the highest-ranked eligible applicant.

- **Local presence and Relevant Experience** – 25%
Proven track record in similar assignments, particularly in Cameroon and in Central Africa or at least in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Technical Understanding** – 20%
Clear understanding of objectives and deliverables.
- **Methodological Approach** – 20%
Clarity, relevance, and feasibility of the proposed methodology, including integration of field and desktop research, and approach to stakeholder engagement.
- **Team Qualifications** – 20%
Relevant and appropriately allocated expertise including *agronomists, land-use and biodiversity experts with proven assessment and design track record, beekeeping expertise, and environmental experts*. Clear organogram and well-defined roles.
- **Work Plan and Timeline** – 5%
Realistic and efficient work plan aligned with the proposed scope and deadlines.
- **Value for Money** – 10%
Overall cost-effectiveness and justification of the proposed budget in relation to the scope of work.

6. Form of Proposal & Requirements

Please prepare a brief proposal for the performance of this work, including the scope of work, project team and qualifications, and estimated costs.

Please note that the proposal can cover all or parts of the Scope of Work detailed under Section 3. If proposing a partial scope, clearly specify which Objectives/Activities are covered and propose a revised deliverables list and timeline accordingly.

- 1) **Scope of Work:** The scope of work should include a description of the specific activities that will be performed in order to accomplish the required tasks listed in Section 3. This should include any proposed site visits, documents to be reviewed, interviews, etc. If the consultant feels that additional tasks or components within a required task are suggested or warranted, these should be stated and delineated as "Optional Tasks".
- 2) **Project team and qualifications:**

This should include the name of the principal staff members and any sub-contractors, and a brief description of their role within the project team. Qualifications of staff should include relevant

technical capabilities, full CVs, specific previous experience similar to this assignment, specific in-country experience and knowledge.

3) Estimated costs:

Provide total professional fees estimate not-to-exceed, in US dollars, excluding travel. A breakdown of the estimated costs by task must also be presented in tabular format and should include direct labour costs (number of hours or days per staff and their associated unit costs). If field visits are necessary, travel costs will be reimbursed by Catalytic separately (per diems are ineligible). Please also note that Catalytic is exempt from VAT. Your financial proposal should therefore not include VAT.

4) Contract & payments:

The contract will be based on Catalytic's standard terms of engagement, fixing a total consultancy fee on lump-sum basis in US dollars. Catalytic will pay the consultant in 2-3 installments: e.g. one advance payment of 20% upon signature of the contract, one payment of 40% after delivery of the draft report, and a final payment of 40% after delivery of the final report.

5) Conflicts of interest:

As part of the proposal, the Consultant shall also confirm that they do not have a conflict of interest and that they are in a position to provide an adequate, accurate and objective review. In addition, we will request an extract from the commercial registry and passport copy for a KYC / DD check for shortlisted candidates, as well as an audited financial report of the most recent year.

6) Q&A Session: Interested bidders will have the opportunity to ask questions in relation to this CFP during a 30-minute Q&A session to refine their proposals. Date and timing of the session remain to be determined and will be communicated to bidders by email. Questions should be sent two hours in advance to project@catalyticfinance.org.

8. Submission

Please submit your proposal before 31.07.26 by sending it to canopytrust@catalyticfinance.org.