Call for Proposals

Technical Assistance for Woodflow & Downstream Mapping and Project Priority Analysis in DRC

This document serves to provide an overview of the underlying project relevant to the consulting service, context and goals of the mandate, as well as the scope of work expected from the consultant. Detailed version of the work to be performed 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 concessionallity 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

Canopy Trust has allocated a Technical Assistance support to Criterion Africa Partners (CAP), who is engaged in the development of a Sustainable Charcoal Pilot Programme for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to identify, prioritize, and prepare a target of two high-potential sustainable charcoal and agroforestry projects in the DRC for investment by developing woodflow assessments, downstream processing strategies, partner frameworks and investment-readiness packages that support scalable, multi-rotation plantation outcomes and reduced deforestation.

3. Scope of Work

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

A. Objectives

1. Design a woodflow and downstream mapping as a consolidated source document to identify large scale woodflows and their timing, with concentrated attention to detail on the most promising project sites.
2. Rank the pipeline and project priorities to be considered as a “deal flow” for future engagement.
3. Create two readiness packages, including gap analyses, intended to move the two identified priority opportunities from concept to implementation-readiness.

B. Envisioned activities for achieving each objective

Objective 1 — Woodflow Mapping and Downstream Opportunity Assessment
(Plantations, Woodflows, and Hub Zones)

The focus is on strategic woodflow visibility, not detailed forest management planning. The objective is to understand where, when, and at what scale of harvest-readiness wood is likely to emerge at and around the priority sites to identify where and when sustainable charcoal investments can be commercially and environmentally viable.

This exercise can be performed mainly on the desktop with GIS expertise where it adds value with the use of updated satellite imagery or ground-truthing.

Activities include:

- Compile and validate plantation data, including planting locations, areas, establishment timelines, and projected yield profiles.
- Develop a GIS-supported woodflow assessment to estimate future harvest volumes and timing.
- Identify potential downstream processing hubs based on wood concentration, logistics, transport corridors, and market access.
- Assess constraints including transport economics, security considerations, and high-level ESG risks.
- Produce a consolidated woodflow and downstream mapping document highlighting priority opportunity areas and "Go / No-Go" zones.

Objective 2 — Pipeline Prioritization *(Site Screening and Ranking)*

Assess and rank candidates to establish a prioritized pipeline ("deal flow") and for advancement toward investment readiness. Candidates should be ranked and assessed according to a detailed methodology and screening KPI. The pipeline should comprise a minimum of 5 candidates.

Activities include:

- Develop and apply a transparent screening and scoring framework for candidate sites.
- Evaluate projects based on wood availability, market access, infrastructure, logistics, land tenure, community conditions, partner capacity, security, ESG considerations, and MRV feasibility.
- Rank candidate opportunities according to commercial viability, implementation readiness, and development impact.
- Prepare a prioritized pipeline of investment opportunities for future engagement**.**

Objective 3 — Pilot Readiness Packages (*Pilot Preparation)*

- **Prepare two pilot readiness packages to accelerate implementation for the two sites.** The study should prepare comprehensive Investment Readiness Packages for the two selected pilot projects, identifying technical, commercial, financial, operational, and ESG gaps and defining the actions required to advance each project from concept to implementation.

Activities include:

- Prepare site-specific concept designs and phased development plans, including downstream charcoal processing and optional cassava integration.
- Develop preliminary technical configurations, infrastructure and logistics plans, and working capital approaches.
- Identify implementation gaps and prepare action plans, including preliminary term sheets or memoranda of intent where feasible.

C. Deliverables & indicative timeline

C.1 - Inception Report

A brief document of five to ten pages presenting the understanding of the assignment, methodology, work plan, timeline and structure of final deliverables.

Due End of Week 2

C.2. – Woodflow and downstream Mapping Report

A consolidated source document to identify large scale woodflows and their timing, with concentrated attention to detail on the most promising project sites.

Due End of Month 1

C.3. - **Dealflow and scoring matrix**

A prioritized list of sites to be considered "deal flow" for future engagement, ranked and assessed according to a detailed methodology and screening KPI (the scoring matrix). The list should comprise a minimum of five (5) candidates, with a minimum of 2 (two) assessed as viable candidate projects

Due: End of Month 2

C.4 - Pilot readiness packages

Pilot readiness packages to accelerate implementation for the two sites, including gap analyses intended to move the two identified priority opportunities from concept to implementation-readiness. The package should also include a framework that specifies partner selection criteria, red-flag checks, verification steps, and contracting approaches aligned with donor and DFI expectations.

Due: End of Month 2

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 DRC, 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 forestry, GIS, investment analysis, engineering, ESG, and transaction advisory. 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.

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 instalments: e.g. one advance payment of 20% upon signature of the contract, one payment of 40% after delivery of the draft report, 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 RFP 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 E-Mail. Questions should be sent 2 hours in advance to project@catalyticfinance.org.

7. Submission

Please submit your proposal before 28/08/26 by sending it to **canopytrust@catalyticfinance.org**