



Request for Proposals (RfP)

Short-term Consultancy - GEF CEO ENDORSEMENT: Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for increased climate resilience in vulnerable rural communities of Lesotho:

IUCN Eastern and Southern African Regional Office (ESARO), South Africa Country Office

RfP Reference: IUCN-24-02-P2

Welcome to this Procurement by IUCN. You are hereby invited to submit a Proposal. Please read the information and instructions carefully because non-compliance with the instructions may result in disqualification of your Proposal from this Procurement.

1. REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1. A detailed description of the services and/or goods to be provided can be found in Attachment 1.

2. CONTACT DETAILS

- 2.1. During the course of this procurement, i.e. from the publication of this RfP to the award of a contract, you may not discuss this procurement with any IUCN employee or representative other than the following contact. You must address all correspondence and questions to the contact, including your proposal.

IUCN Contact: tenders.sa@iucn.org

3. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

- 3.1. This timetable is indicative and may be changed by IUCN at any time. If IUCN decides that changes to any of the deadlines are necessary, we will contact you.

DATE	ACTIVITY
27 February 2024	Publication of the Request for Proposals
5 March 2024	Deadline for expressions of interest
8 March 2024	Deadline for submission of questions
13 March 2024	Planned publication of responses to questions

DATE	ACTIVITY
26 March 2024	Deadline for submission of Proposals to IUCN (“ Submission Deadline ”)
5 April 2024	Clarification of Proposals
15 April 2024	Planned date for contract award
1 May 2024	Expected contract start date

- 3.2. Please email the IUCN contact to confirm whether or not you are intending to submit a proposal by the deadline stated above.

4. COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

- 4.1. Your Proposal must consist of the following three documents:

- Signed Declaration of Undertaking (see Attachment 2)
- Technical Proposal (see Section 4.4 below)
- Financial Proposal (see Section 4.5 below)

Proposals must be prepared in English.

- 4.2. Your Proposal must be submitted by email to the IUCN Contact (see Section 2). The subject heading of the email shall be [IUCN – GEF 8 ProDoc LESOTHO – bidder name]. The bidder name is the name of the company/organisation on whose behalf you are submitting the proposal, or your own surname if you are bidding as a self-employed consultant. Your proposal must be submitted in PDF format. You may submit multiple emails suitably annotated, e.g. Email 1 of 3, if attached files are too large to suit a single email transmission. You may not submit your Proposal by uploading it to a file-sharing tool.

IMPORTANT: Submitted documents must be password-protected so that they cannot be opened and read before the submission deadline. Please use the same password for all submitted documents. After the deadline has passed and within 12 hours, please send the password to the IUCN Contact. This will ensure a secure bid submission and opening process. Please DO NOT email the password before the deadline for Proposal submission.

- 4.3. *Eligibility*

- Master’s degree on Natural Sciences and/or Biodiversity Conservation, environmental sciences/management, climate change, or other related fields; other post-graduate/specialization degree will be acceptable in combination with equivalent relevant experience;
- Minimum of 10 years’ experience working with developing projects on sustainable land management ecosystems and biodiversity issues, climate resilience and related fields;
- Proven experience with GEF project development;
- Knowledge of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) policies and procedures, and GEF projects requirements, especially for the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area;
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills; commitment to teamwork and to working across disciplines/with complex issues of climate change and biodiversity;
- Proven experience in successful preparation of GEF multi-focal area PIF and projects;
- Experience working with IUCN, or any other UN agency considered an asset;
- Previous experience working with the government of Lesotho is considered an asset;

- Proven experience in the policy development processes associated with environment and sustainable development issues.

4.4. *Technical Proposal*

The technical proposal must address each of the criteria stated below explicitly and separately, quoting the relevant criteria reference number (left-hand column).

Proposals in any other format will significantly increase the time it takes to evaluate, and such Proposals may therefore be rejected at IUCN’s discretion. Where CVs are requested, these must be of the individuals who will actually carry out the work specified and meet the eligibility criteria stated above in Section 4.3. The individuals you put forward may only be substituted with IUCN’s approval.

IUCN will evaluate technical proposals with regards to each of the following criteria and their relative importance:

	Description	Information to provide	Relative weight
1	Technical approach, methodology and workplan (Understanding of the scope of work)	Description in adequate detail of how the Consultant intends to approach the assignment, the methodology for preparing the deliverables and a justification for the approach described (max 5 pages). Work plan/Gantt chart setting out the activities and tasks identified in the Technical Approach by week and/or month for the duration of the assignment, and showing timing and duration of inputs by subcontractors, if any are used.	40%
2	Demonstrated experience (government agencies, CBOs, and regional governance bodies, etc), and expertise in similar assignments.	Portfolios, reports, websites (GEF/GCF approved projects/programmes)	30%
3	Team and personnel qualifications	Short summary of the Consultant’s academic qualifications and professional experience relevant to the assignment (maximum 2 pages). Short summary of the relevant qualifications and professional experience of any subcontractors who will be engaged by the Consultant (maximum 2 pages per subcontractor). CVs of the Consultant and the subcontractor(s) (if any). All consultants and subcontractors should meet the eligibility criteria	30%
TOTAL			100%

4.5. *Financial Proposal*

4.5.1. The financial proposal must be a fixed and firm price for the provision of the goods/services stated in the RfP in their entirety.

4.5.2. *Prices include all costs*

Submitted rates and prices are deemed to include all costs, insurances, taxes (except VAT, see below), fees, expenses, liabilities, obligations, risk and other things necessary for the performance of the Terms of Reference or Specification of Requirements. IUCN will not accept charges beyond those clearly stated in the Financial Proposal. This includes applicable withholding taxes and similar. It is your responsibility to determine whether such taxes apply to your organisation and to include them in your financial offer.

4.5.3. *Applicable Goods and Services Taxes*

Proposal rates and prices shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax.

4.5.4. *Currency of proposed rates and prices*

All rates and prices submitted by Proposers shall be in [USD currency].

4.5.5. *Breakdown of rates and prices*

4.6. Additional information not requested by IUCN should not be included in your Proposal and will not be considered in the evaluation.

4.7. Your proposal must remain valid and capable of acceptance by IUCN for a period of 90 calendar days following the submission deadline.

4.8. *Withdrawals and Changes*

You may freely withdraw or change your proposal at any time prior to the submission deadline by written notice to the IUCN Contact. However, in order to reduce the risk of fraud, no changes or withdrawals will be accepted after the submission deadline.

5. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

5.1. *Completeness*

IUCN will firstly check your proposal for completeness. Incomplete proposals will not be considered further.

5.2. *Technical Evaluation*

5.2.1. *Scoring Method*

Your proposal will be assigned a score from 0 to 10 for each of the technical evaluation criteria, such that '0' is low and '10' is high.

5.2.2. *Minimum Quality Thresholds*

Proposals that receive a score of '0' for any of the criteria will not be considered further.

5.2.3. *Technical Score*

Your score for each technical evaluation criterion will be multiplied with the respective relative weight (see Section 4.4) and these weighted scores added together to give your proposal's overall technical score.

5.3. *Financial Evaluation and Financial Scores*

The financial evaluation will be based upon the full total price you submit. Your financial proposal will receive a score calculated by dividing the lowest financial proposal that has passed the minimum quality thresholds (see Section 5.2.2) by the total price of your financial proposal.

Thus, for example, if your financial proposal is for a total of CHF 100 and the lowest financial proposal is CHF 80, you will receive a financial score of $80/100 = 80\%$.

5.4. Total Score

Your proposal's total score will be calculated as the weighted sum of your technical score and your financial score.

The relative weights will be:

Technical:	70%
Financial:	30%

Thus, for example, if your technical score is 83% and your financial score is 77%, you will receive a total score of $83 * 70\% + 77 * 30\% = 58.1\% + 23.1\% = 81.2\%$.

Subject to the requirements in Sections 4 and 7, IUCN will award the contract to the bidder whose proposal achieves the highest total score.

6. EXPLANATION OF PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

6.1. **IUCN is using the Invitation Procedure for this procurement. This means that only invited bidders may submit a proposal. IUCN typically invites from four to six bidders to submit a proposal.**

6.2. You are welcome to ask questions or seek clarification regarding this procurement. Please email the IUCN Contact (see Section 2), taking note of the deadline for submission of questions in Section 3.1.

6.3. All proposals must be received by the submission deadline in Section 3.1 above. Late proposals will not be considered. All proposals received by the submission deadline will be evaluated by a team of two or more evaluators in accordance with the evaluation criteria stated in this RfP. No other criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. The contract will be awarded to the bidder whose proposal received the highest Total Score. IUCN does, however, reserve the right to cancel the procurement and not award a contract at all.

6.4. IUCN will contact the bidder with the highest-scoring proposal to finalise the contract. We will contact unsuccessful bidders after the contract has been awarded and provide detailed feedback. The timetable in Section 3.1 gives an estimate of when we expect to have completed the contract award, but this date may change depending on how long the evaluation of proposals takes.

7. CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROCUREMENT

7.1. To participate in this procurement, you are required to submit a proposal, which fully complies with the instructions in this RfP and the Attachments.

7.1.1. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have submitted a complete and fully compliant proposal.

7.1.2. Any incomplete or incorrectly completed proposal submission may be deemed non-compliant, and as a result you may be unable to proceed further in the procurement process.

7.1.3. IUCN will query any obvious clerical errors in your proposal and may, at IUCN's sole discretion, allow you to correct these, but only if doing so could not be perceived as giving you an unfair advantage.

7.2. In order to participate in this procurement, you must meet the following conditions:

- Free of conflicts of interest
- Registered on the relevant professional or trade register of the country in which you are established (or resident, if self-employed)
- In full compliance with your obligations relating to payment of social security contributions and of all applicable taxes
- Not been convicted of failing to comply with environmental regulatory requirements or other legal requirements relating to sustainability and environmental protection
- Not bankrupt or being wound up
- Never been guilty of an offence concerning your professional conduct
- Not involved in fraud, corruption, a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism, or any other illegal activity.

- 7.3. You must complete and sign the Declaration of Undertaking (see Attachment 2)
- 7.4. If you are participating in this procurement as a member of a joint venture, or are using sub-contractors, submit a separate Declaration of Undertaking for each member of the joint venture and sub-contractor, and be clear in your proposal which parts of the goods/services are provided by each partner or sub-contractor.
- 7.5. Each bidder shall submit only one proposal, either individually or as a partner in a joint venture. In case of joint venture, one company shall not be allowed to participate in two different joint ventures in the same procurement nor shall a company be allowed to submit a proposal both on its behalf and as part of a joint venture for the same procurement. A bidder who submits or participates in more than one proposal (other than as a subcontractor or in cases of alternatives that have been permitted or requested) shall cause all the proposals with the bidder's participation to be disqualified.
- 7.6. By taking part in this procurement, you accept the conditions set out in this RfP, including the following:
- It is unacceptable to give or offer any gift or consideration to an employee or other representative of IUCN as a reward or inducement in relation to the awarding of a contract. Such action will give IUCN the right to exclude you from this and any future procurements, and to terminate any contract that may have been signed with you.
 - Any attempt to obtain information from an employee or other representative of IUCN concerning another bidder will result in disqualification.
 - Any price fixing or collusion with other bidders in relation to this procurement shall give IUCN the right to exclude you and any other involved bidder(s) from this and any future procurements and may constitute a criminal offence.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

- 8.1. IUCN follows the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The information you submit to IUCN as part of this procurement will be treated as confidential and shared only as required to evaluate your proposal in line with the procedure explained in this RfP, and for the maintenance of a clear audit trail. For audit purposes, IUCN is required to retain your proposal in its entirety for 10 years after the end of the resulting contract and make this available to internal and external auditors and donors as and when requested.
- 8.2. In the Declaration of Undertaking (Attachment 2) you need to give IUCN express permission to use the information you submit in this way, including personal data that forms part of your proposal. Where you include personal data of your employees (e.g. CVs) in your proposal, you need to have written permission from those individuals to share this information with IUCN, and for IUCN to use this information as indicated in 8.1. Without these permissions, IUCN will not be able to consider your proposal.

9. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint or concern regarding the propriety of how a competitive process is or has been executed, then please contact procurement@iucn.org. Such complaints or concerns will be treated as confidential and are not considered in breach of the above restrictions on communication (Section 2.1).

10. CONTRACT

The contract will be based on IUCN's template in Attachment 3, the terms of which are not negotiable. They may, however, be amended by IUCN to reflect particular requirements from the donor funding this particular procurement.

11. 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.

Headquartered in Switzerland, IUCN Secretariat comprises around 1,000 staff with offices in more than 50 countries.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,300 Member organisations and some 10,000 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/>

12. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 *Specification of Requirements / Terms of Reference*

**ATTACHMENT 1
CONSULTANT TERMS OF REFERENCE
GEF CEO ENDORSEMENT**

Project: Nature-based Solutions for increased climate resilience in vulnerable rural communities of Lesotho

Background

The three year, GEF-funded project proposal (PIF), was approved by the GEF Council in February 2024. The project supports the Government of Lesotho's efforts to increase climate resilience in vulnerable rural communities of Lesotho through Nature Based Solutions. The project will support mainstreaming of NbS into policy and institutions for systemic and transformative uptake in national and community adaptation, mitigation and management of climate change impacts, biodiversity loss and land management. At the community level, the project will also support the application of co-designed NbS and related integrated approaches for climate resilience, ecosystems and livelihoods development and sustainable land management. The project is being led Ministry of Defense, National Security, and Environment also the as Executing Agency and IUCN as GEF Agency.

The project has 3 key components: 1) Enabling environment for Nature-based Solutions that support climate resilience, sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation 2) Build community resilience, sustainable land management and adaptative responses through Nature-based Solutions 3) Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Knowledge Management.

Objectives of the consultancy

To lead the development of the project design and the associated project documents for the "NbS for increased climate resilience in vulnerable rural communities of Lesotho" project, working closely with stakeholders and the Project Development Team (PDT) made up of technical staff from Ministry of Defense, National Security, and Environment and IUCN as GEF Agency. The consultant will be responsible for developing a comprehensive project design in support of government priorities and in accordance with IUCN and GEF standards. The consultant may assemble a team with other local consultants but will ultimately be responsible for reporting to the PDT and for ensuring the quality of the consultancy deliverables. The consultant will ensure timely delivery of the full IUCN GEF Project Document package, including: the IUCN GEF Project Document, GEF Request for CEO Endorsement document, GEF core indicators, Letters of cofinancing.

Main responsibilities

- Coordinate with relevant stakeholders, including the Project Development Team (PDT), the IUCN GEF Agency, the ESARO Portfolio Manager for GEF/GCF and other consultants

(e.g. local technical consultants, safeguards and gender consultants) for overall planning and development of the project design and associated documentation needed for GEF CEO Endorsement, including participation in team meetings, preparation of meeting minutes (iterative updates to workplans) and workshops (including validation workshop).

- Contribute and adhere to the project preparation workplan, prepared with the PDT, including specific deliverables and deadlines.
 - Undertake a review of relevant literature and documents, e.g. national development plans, Policies, Strategies and Plans such as NBSAP, baseline studies, current/previous relevant GEF and non-GEF projects, terminal evaluations, technical studies/reports, etc.
 - Lead project design, including defining the situational context (environmental problem, threat analysis and prioritization, and barriers to be tackled by project), identifying project activities, site selection criteria and identification, documenting the baseline and incremental cost reasoning, developing the Results Framework, integrating safeguards and gender inputs, and support budget development, and co-financing letters process, based on the PIF and project design consultations.
 - Lead drafting of the IUCN GEF Project Document and accompanying documentation (Request for CEO Endorsement document, GEF core indicators, Letters of Co-financing, and other requested materials) and deliver the full Project Document package to the PDT in accordance with the approved work plan.
 - Organization of workshops that will provide inputs for the development and closure of the project document: a. Coordinate the PPG inception workshop to present the project to all stakeholders and participating entities. b. Coordinate 3 intermediate workshops in prioritized intervention areas, to gather inputs for ProDoc development. c. Lead a validation workshop to present, discuss and validate the final draft ProDoc and mandatory and project specific annexes.
 - Ensure virtual and in-person (to be discussed with government, and IUCN) meaningful stakeholder consultations, from local to national level, to inform project design, and in compliance with IUCN, GEF and Government of Lesotho.
 - Guide and coordinate the work with national consultants, review their outputs to ascertain their completeness, address the identified gaps, and incorporate into the project development.
 - Design, in coordination with local consultants and PDT, the Stakeholder Analysis and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (for both the preparation and the project implementation phase).
 - Support, as appropriate, the interaction with relevant government departments and other stakeholders, working closely with the PDT. Document these interactions and prepare meeting minutes.
 - Draft and finalize gender assessment and gender action plan as well as environmental and social safeguards documentation, according to the IUCN, GEF and government policies, and incorporate main outcomes into project design.
 - Ensure compliance with IUCN, GEF, and government policies and best practices for quality project development, including social and environmental safeguards, financial management, public involvement, gender and social inclusion mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation, and incorporating lessons learned from past projects.
- As requested, prepare documentation for and participate in PDT and other relevant meetings (e.g. by Skype/Teams).
- Assist IUCN GEF Agency with Financial & Administrative and Capacity Assessments to inform implementation arrangements and project implementation risk mitigation measures, if necessary;

- Lead organization of project design workshops with the PDT and IUCN GEF Agency, national consultant(s) including a kick-off meeting, and other key workshops to inform project design as needed and defined in the work plan.
- Prepare the response matrix to the GEF Secretariat, Council and STAP comments until CEO Endorsement is acquired.
- Draft and revise other documentation as needed to demonstrate full due diligence throughout project development. and,
- Ensure completion of any additional studies that are determined to be needed for the preparation of the ProDoc and all other final outputs.

Deliverables and Schedule of Payment:

Expected deliverables	Due Date (within the month mentioned from contract commencement)	Payment
Detailed work plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickoff workshop report • Analysis of best practices and lessons learned from previous projects • Outline of key ProDoc sections (barriers, baseline, risks/threats, Results Framework/Theory of Change) • Draft of Stakeholder Engagement Plan • Response matrix to Review #1 	1st month	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc (draft 0), including draft of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1: Project Background and Situation Analysis Section 2: Theory of Change, Project Strategy (to activity level), Governance Structure (with diagram of reporting and fund flow) Section 3: Incremental Cost • Appendix on site selection and site descriptions • Appendix on Results Framework/Theory of Change, with indicators • Response matrix to Review #2 (on draft 0) • Monitoring and Evaluation Plan • Budget and any Financial & Administrative and Capacity Assessments needed • Prepare an indicative Procurement Plan to be confirmed by the IUCN; • Work with the IUCN Country Office to select an indicator for one of the outcomes of the UNDP Strategic Plan Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) • Draft inputs required for project's final documentation: a) socioeconomic benefits of the proposed interventions at the national and local levels; b) environmental, social, financial, and institutional sustainability of proposed project activities; c) cost-effectiveness analysis of the project strategy and suite of activities compared with the alternatives; d) replicability strategy for project activities; 	3rd month	25%

e) risk analysis of the proposed project activities and measures to mitigate risks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full draft of ProDoc (draft 1), including final Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Safeguards Plan and Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan ● Response matrix to Review #3 (on draft 1) ProDoc (draft 2) and CEO Endorsement Request document, incorporating feedback from validation workshop ● Draft letters of co-financing ● Revised submission package (draft 3) based on formal internal review, if required June 30th 2 ● Support revisions to package by GEF Secretariat until CEO Endorsement ● Response matrix to GEF Secretariat comments as needed 	6 th month	25%
ProDoc (draft 2) and CEO Endorsement Request document, incorporating feedback from validation workshop. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalised letters of co-financing ● Revised submission package (draft 4) based on formal internal review from IUCN, if required 	8 th month	25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support revisions to package by GEF Secretariat until CEO Endorsement is acquired ● Response matrix to GEF Secretariat comments, as needed 	9 th month	5%

Duration

9 months (plus up to 10 days during the 6-month review period with the GEF Secretariat)
 Estimated timeline: 10 March 2024 – 10 January 2025

Team, collaboration and supervision

A Project Development Team (PDT) will be established as a decision-making body and will ensure participation and buy-in from key parties for project development, including government partners. The PDT includes Ministry of Defense, National Security, and Environment and IUCN as GEF Agency. The PDT will review the consultant's deliverables and provide feedback as required. The consultant will be contracted and supervised by IUCN South Africa in collaboration with the PDT and will administratively report to the IUCN project focal points, which will include the ESARO GEF/GCF Portfolio Manager. The ESARO GEF/GCF Portfolio Manager will be providing Quality Assurance/Technical Review of submissions as well. IUCN focal points will provide guidance on IUCN GEF project development process and requirements, and will approve deliverables for payment based on PDT clearance.

Qualifications and Experience:

Required experience and expertise of the consultant:

- Master's degree on Natural Sciences/Biodiversity Conservation, climate change, or other related fields; other post-graduate/specialization degree will be acceptable in combination with equivalent relevant experience.

- Minimum of 7 years' experience working with developing projects on sustainable land management ecosystems and biodiversity issues, climate resilience and related fields
- Proven experience with GEF project development
- Knowledge of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) policies and procedures, and GEF projects requirements, especially for the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area;
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills; commitment to team - work and to working across disciplines.
- Proven experience in successful preparation of GEF multi-focal area PIF and projects
- Experience working with IUCN, or any other UN agency considered an asset.
- Previous experience working with the government of Lesotho is considered an asset.
- Proven experience in the policy development processes associated with environment and sustainable development issues.

Preferred qualifications:

- Experience with Open Standards/Project and Program Management Standards (PPMS) in the GEF context.
- Experience working with and managing multi-disciplinary teams and in delegating tasks remotely;
- Demonstrated expertise in gender responsive project design.
- Excellent facilitation, negotiation, analytical, research and presentation skills.
- Experience writing proposals and reports.

Budget and Logistics:

Through regular meetings defined in a mutually agreed workplan, the PDT will provide support to the consultant, including strategic guidance, facilitating dialogue with key stakeholders, facilitating cofinancing inputs, and assisting addressing project issues. When necessary, IUCN may provide logistical support to the consultant, including the hosting of meeting space and facilitating dialogue with the government. Any necessary mission travel must be approved in advance and through written form by the Supervisor.

Consultancy Proposal Requirements:

Applicants will be requested to present the following documents in order to be considered for the consultancy:

- a. Curriculum Vitae and three letters of reference/recommendation.
- b. Letter of Presentation, detailing relevant experience and suitability for the post.
- c. Technical and financial proposal, specifying means through which the proponent will deliver products, based on IUCN guidance presented in this RfP. It should include methodological approach and basic work plan and should clearly demonstrate steps to secure local authority/stakeholder involvement in the process.