

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Policy Assessment Consultancy

GEF-8 Congo Basin Integrated Program — UNEP Regional Coordination Project

Reference: GEFSEC ID: 11248 / Activity 4.2.4	Issuer: Forest Stewardship Africa Limited (FSA) on behalf of UNEP/FSC
Location: Congo Basin Region (Angola, Cameroon, CAR, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe)	Contract Duration: 4 Months
Publication Date: 5 May 2026	Submission Deadline: 4 Months

1. Introduction & Purpose

Forest Stewardship Council Africa Limited (FSC Africa), on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), invites qualified firms and individual consultants to submit proposals for a Policy Assessment Consultancy under the GEF-8 Congo Basin Integrated Program (Congo IP).

This consultancy will deliver a comprehensive legal and institutional gap analysis that serves as the foundational layer for all ecosystem services market development activities across the six participating countries. The outputs will define the regulatory boundaries within which conservation finance business models must operate.

2. Programme Background

The GEF-8 Congo Basin Integrated Program is designed to safeguard the world's second largest tropical rainforest. The Regional Coordination Project (RCP), executed by UNEP in partnership with FSC, serves as the central hub for knowledge sharing, capacity development, and policy coordination across six countries: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

Despite the existence of regional frameworks such as the COMIFAC Convergence Plan (2015–2025), significant governance barriers impede effective forest conservation, including:

- Inadequate policies and incentives that favour unsustainable land use
- Weak inter-sectoral collaboration resulting in fragmented governance
- Insufficient regulatory frameworks for carbon rights, land tenure, and benefit-sharing
- Limited institutional capacity to implement gender-responsive and IPLC-sensitive approaches

3. Objective & Scope of Work

The Consultant shall assess regional and national-level policy, institutional and regulatory contexts for the development of ecosystem services market frameworks, focusing on:

- Carbon Rights: Analyzing legislation governing ownership of carbon (State, landowner, or community) and identifying ambiguities between statutory and customary law
- Land Tenure: Reviewing legal frameworks governing land use and forest management, including gendered dimensions of access and control

- **Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms:** Assessing regulations for distribution of revenues from natural resources, with a focus on inclusivity for IPLCs and women
- **Market Readiness:** Evaluating existing frameworks for carbon credit validation/verification and environmental offsets
- **Regional Alignment:** Analyzing legal instruments from COMIFAC, ECCAS, and OFAC

3.1 Work Plan Phases

Phase 1 — Inception & Methodology (Weeks 1–2): Develop a standardized data collection methodology; map national legal focal points and regional bodies.

Phase 2 — National & Regional Analysis (Weeks 3–8): Conduct carbon rights, land tenure, benefit-sharing and market readiness analysis for all 6 countries; assess regional alignment.

Phase 3 — Drafting & Validation (Weeks 9–12): Prepare draft national and regional briefs; facilitate feedback session with the Regional Advisory Group; document and incorporate revisions.

Phase 4 — Finalization & Specialized Analysis (Weeks 13–16): Produce final consolidated policy assessment report and stand-alone Validated Analysis on Carbon Rights and IPLC Benefit-Sharing.

4. Deliverables

#	Deliverable	Description & Format	Deadline
1	Inception Report	Detailed methodology for legal data collection, stakeholder mapping matrix, interview protocols. Format: MS Word/PDF, 15–20 pages.	Week 2
2	Draft Policy Assessment Briefs	Draft versions of 6 national briefs and 1 consolidated regional brief. Format: PDF, 10–12 pages per brief.	Week 6
3	Feedback Session Report	Summary of formal feedback session with the Regional Advisory Group, including comment log and responses.	Week 10
4	Validated Analysis on Carbon Rights & IPLC Benefit-Sharing	Stand-alone, validated thematic report on carbon ownership and community benefit-sharing. Format: PDF, 20–25 pages.	Week 12
5	Final Consolidated Policy Assessment Report	Comprehensive final report detailing regulatory gaps, opportunities, and actionable recommendations. Format: Professionally designed PDF.	Week 14
6	Progress & Financial Reports	Monthly narrative and financial updates per UNEP/FSC reporting requirements.	Monthly

5. Eligibility & Technical Requirements

5.1 Experience

- Minimum 12 years of experience in environmental law and policy analysis
- Deep expertise in carbon markets governance, specifically carbon rights jurisprudence in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Proven experience conducting policy analysis for international organizations (UNEP, UNDP, World Bank) or bilateral donors (USAID, EU, AFD)
- Specific familiarity with the legal instruments of COMIFAC and ECCAS

5.2 Technical Skills

- Exceptional analytical writing and ability to synthesize complex legal texts

- Demonstrated experience facilitating high-level policy dialogues with government officials

5.3 Regional Presence Mandate

Bidders must demonstrate a physical presence or proven operational network in the Congo Basin. Evidence must include ONE of the following:

- A registered office in at least one of the six participating countries; OR
- Formal partnership agreements with local legal firms or universities in the region; OR
- Documentation of prior legal/policy projects executed in at least 4 of the 6 target countries within the last 5 years

5.4 Language Requirements

- Mandatory: Fluency in French and English (written and spoken)
- Advantageous: Proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese

6. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted in English or French and must comprise the following components:

A. Capability Statement (Max 5 pages)

A mapping table of previous projects matching the requirements of Activity 4.2.4. For each project, specify:

- Project Name & Donor
- Country (must include Congo Basin experience)
- Type of Analysis (e.g., Carbon Rights Assessment, Land Tenure Reform, Environmental Law Review)
- Outcome (e.g., informed national carbon registry law, adopted by COMIFAC)

B. Detailed Methodology

- A granular description of how data will be collected across six countries, including strategies for accessing government archives and engaging with customary law authorities
- A clear plan for structuring the Validated Analysis on Carbon Rights as a direct input for the Business Models Consultant (Activity 4.1.4)

C. Team Composition

- CVs of key personnel highlighting roles (Lead Legal Analyst, Regional Policy Specialist)
- Proof of linguistic capacity (certified translators or multilingual team members)
- Proof of regional presence as per Section 5.3

D. Financial Proposal

- Detailed budget broken down by deliverable and personnel
- Daily/monthly rates for key personnel

7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on a technical/financial split basis. The evaluation committee will score proposals as follows:

Criterion	Weight	Key Evidence Required
Technical qualifications of lead consultant/firm (experience, track record)	30%	CVs, capability statement with project mapping table
Quality and rigor of proposed methodology	25%	Detailed methodology section
Regional presence and demonstrated in-country knowledge	20%	Proof of registered office, partnerships, or prior projects
Team composition and language capacity	15%	CVs, language certifications
Value for money (financial proposal)	10%	Budget breakdown and justification

8. Key Dates

Publication of Call for Proposals: 5 May 2026

Deadline for Questions: 12 May 2026 (17:00 CET)

Responses to Questions Published: 15 May 2026

Submission Deadline: 19 May 2026, 17:00 CET

Evaluation Period: 20–26 May 2026

Expected Contract Start: June 2026

9. Submission Instructions

All proposals must be submitted electronically to Forest Stewardship Africa Limited via the contact below. Submissions must include all required components (Sections A–D) in a single PDF or ZIP archive.

Late submissions will not be accepted. FSA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without providing reasons.

Submission Email: fscafrica@fsc.org

Subject Line: CFP | Policy Assessment | GEFSEC 11248 | Activity 4.2.4

Questions to: fscafrica@fsc.org — Questions only; submissions to this address only.

10. General Conditions

- This Call for Proposals does not constitute a commitment to award a contract
- FSA/UNEP/FSC will not be responsible for any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals
- All submitted materials become the property of FSA and will be treated as confidential
- The successful consultant will be required to sign a contract in accordance with UNEP/FSC procurement procedures

- FSC and UNEP are committed to gender equality; proposals should clearly indicate how gender-responsive approaches will be mainstreamed throughout the work