

ALLANBLACKIA PROJECT - PHASE II

MID TERM REVIEW

Request for Proposals

24 October 2011

BACKGROUND

IUCN is seeking an independent evaluator to undertake the Mid Term Review of the Allanblackia Project - Phase II. This review aims to identify and help address issues related to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project. The Review results will be used to make key decisions about the future implementation of the Project.

THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Interested independent evaluators are invited to respond to this Request for Proposals in writing by 11 November 2011 to **programme@iucn.org**. Interested parties are encouraged to register their intention to submit a proposal by providing an email contact to **programme@iucn.org**. Clarification questions may be sent to the same address and resulting updates will be made available to all parties who have signaled their intention to respond to the Request for Proposals.

EACH PROPOSAL SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. A proposal to address the Terms of Reference (2-3 pages)

A brief technical proposal is expected. It should include details on how the evaluator intends to approach the Review. The proposal should also comment and expand on the methodology proposed in the TORs.

2. Details on the qualifications of the evaluator (2-3 pages)

A standard CV is expected. It should include details on the evaluator's experience in the area of evaluation of conservation and development projects. It should also include details on the evaluator's familiarity with developing markets for small scale enterprises (particularly forest based), participatory approaches to sustainable forest management and forest governance programmes.

3. Workplan, level of effort and budget (1-2 pages)

Based on the draft work plan provided in the TORs, a more detailed work plan including time investment to be made by the evaluator to perform each of the major tasks (document review, interviews, reporting, debriefing etc.) is expected. An overall proposed budget including costs associated with fees and other expenses should also be included. The range of available resources is 20,000 - 25,000 Swiss Francs to cover the independent evaluator fees and expenses.

4. Writing sample

Applicants to the Request will be required to submit a short writing sample, preferably of an evaluation conducted on a related topic.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS

Each proposal will be scores on a points system against the following criteria	
1. Quality of the proposal, including technical merit.	25
2. Qualifications of evaluator including relevant experience with developing markets for small scale enterprises (particularly forest based), participatory approaches to sustainable forest management and forest governance programmes.	25
3. Cost and budget preparation, including overall proposed cost and transparency of budget.	20
4. Quality of the review workplan, including level of effort, proposed missions, clarity on per unit time investments per data collection tool (e.g. per interview)	20
5. Quality of the writing sample, including degree to which the writing sample demonstrates strong evaluation practice	10
Total	100

ALLANBLACKIA PROJECT - PHASE II

MID TERM REVIEW

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION

From 2005 to 2008, as part of the Novella Africa partnership, IUCN implemented a project in Ghana aimed at economically viable, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable development of the Allanblackia supply chain - financially supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). This second phase of the Allanblackia project has been designed through integrating the outcomes of Phase I, related supply chain consultancies and partnership developments since the end of Phase I.

In line with the strategic vision of the Novella partners, Phase II of this project has been designed to support the scaling up of production for Allanblackia oil being undertaken by Novel Ghana. This involves putting the systems in place to ensure an enabling environment for economic, social and environmental sustainability. The key areas of focus includes; improving market access by developing a market differentiation system through an open and transparent multi-stakeholder development process following internationally recognised good ethical practices and ensuring buy-in at local level; assessing, developing and sharing appropriate business models for different crop systems; ensuring environmental sustainability through integration of key principles for Forest Landscape Restoration into different crop systems; and a continuation of the capacity building programme to improve the understanding and appropriate skills of key actors throughout the supply chain.

The Specific Objective of the project is that “Allanblackia farmers have improved access to markets for sustainably produced Allanblackia improving their livelihoods and the landscapes”. The expected benefits of the project include:

- Reduced poverty in target communities through new income generation possibilities;
- Increased export earnings and improved national-level economic development by mainstreaming Allanblackia into national level development priorities and programmes;
- Improved forest quality and sustainable supply of Allanblackia through restoration of forests and degraded lands with Allanblackia.

As part of the Agreement between IUCN and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) funds have been allocated for External Monitoring and Review during of the project. The three-year project is now half way through completion. IUCN’s Forest Conservation Programme is therefore commissioning a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of progress to inform future implementation.

2. AUDIENCES FOR THE EVALUATION

The primary audiences for the evaluation are the implementing parties of the Project, namely:

- The Global Forest Programme of IUCN - Responsible for overall project management and delivery, and global specific results;
- The IUCN regional office for West and Central Africa (Le Programme pour l’Afrique Centrale et Occidentale - PACO) – Responsible for delivery of programme results in Ghana
- Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) - Implementing partner for education awareness/sensitisation on all social, economic and environmental aspects of Allanblackia production;
- Technoserve (TNS) - Provides training in business development skills to collectors and focal persons within the project areas. Undertakes economic analysis and development of Allanblackia production models and supports the development of a strategic plan for the partnership and Allanblackia;
- Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG) - Research and Development on Allanblackia cultivation and domestication; and
- Union for Ethical BiTrade (UEBT) - Provides the framework for the market differentiation system and provides support to develop a standard for sustainable Allanblackia production. This support includes develop of an Allanblackia application guide, verification framework and local level training for verification processes.

Together these parties are accountable for the achievement of the results specifically defined at the outset of this initiative. Each of these parties is therefore expected to act on the results of the evaluation in terms of improving the effectiveness of their respective role.

In addition, other members of the Novella Partnerships could also have a significant interest in the outcome of this evaluation.

- ICRAF - Supports research and development on Allanblackia domestication and capacity building for rural communities on good agricultural practices.
- Unilever - Main purchaser of Allanblackia oil and has invested in ensuring Novel product approval of Allanblackia oil within the EU. Has developed patents for specific formulations for the use of Allanblackia within their food products.
- Novel Development Companies (Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania) - Companies purchasing the Allanblackia nuts from farmers for crude processing. They are responsible for the management of the Rural Resource Centres which provide support to farmers through training and material inputs to increase the supply of Allanblackia fruits.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The overall purpose of the mid-term review is to provide a basis for the sound implementation of the second half of the project and for an exit strategy to ensure sustainability of project results after project closure.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. To assess the continued relevance of the project (including the continued viability of the planned intervention logic);
2. To assess the effectiveness of project by analysing to which extent the project has delivered on its planned results;
3. To assess the project cost effectiveness (efficiency) of the project intervention by comparing the results delivered to the means and time used to achieve the results;
4. To determine the impacts likely to happen as a consequence of the project;
5. To assess the likeliness of the sustainability of the project results after project closure;
6. To make recommendations for enhancing the implementation of the second half of the project;
7. To formulate lessons applicable to future project design in this area of work.

4. METHODOLOGY

The IUCN Evaluation Policy sets out IUCN's institutional commitment to evaluation, and the criteria and standards for the evaluation and evaluation of its projects, programmes, organizational units. IUCN's evaluation standards and criteria are based on the widely accepted OECD DAC Evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

4.1 Documentation Identification and Preliminary Review

The MTR should begin with a preliminary review of documentation identified in partnership with the MTR manager and the appointed IUCN Global Forest Programme focal person. Initially, the evaluator will briefly look at documents, websites and other sources relevant to the mandate.

4.2 Development of an Inception Note

The inception note developed by the evaluator will contain the following:

- *A mapping of the Project intervention logic*
- *A refined methodology and a draft evaluation matrix*

The evaluator will develop a more detailed methodology and a draft evaluation matrix designed to guide the data gathering and analysis process. The matrix will detail the issues to be addressed and sub-questions to be covered, as well as performance indicators, sources of information and information-gathering methods for each issue.

- *A list of stakeholders to be consulted and draft questionnaires*

The evaluator will identify a list of stakeholders to be consulted in the context of the MTR including the following stakeholder groups i) IUCN Global Forest Programme staff and relevant IUCN staff in the regions, ii) project implementing partners identified in section 2 above, iii) Novella partners identified in section 2 above, iv) local verification bodies, v) relevant government departments, vi) local NGOs and vii) beneficiaries in communities identified as initial target group. Draft interview protocols for these stakeholder groups should be included in the inception note.

- *A detailed work plan*

The reviewers will propose a detailed work plan building on the draft work plan proposed in section 9 below.

4.3 Data Collection

Data collection methods will include face-to-face interviews during missions to IUCN HQ in Gland and the partners in Ghana, telephone interviews with various stakeholders and beneficiaries, and questionnaires circulated by email, when relevant.

4.4 Data Analysis and Reporting

At the data analysis stage, the evaluator will analyze all of the data collected. To the extent possible, data triangulation will be achieved by analyzing information from multiple sources. A draft report adhering to the evaluation terms of reference and highlighting the principal findings of the review will be presented and submitted to a peer review process before a final report is submitted.

All data collection tools are to be included as an Annex to the final report. The link between evaluation questions, data collection, analysis, findings and conclusions must be clearly made and set out in a transparent manner in the presentation of the review findings.

5. TRAVEL REQUIRED

The evaluator will be expected to make one inception visit to IUCN HQ in Gland and one trip to Ghana. Data required will also be collected by telephone interviews and through document review.

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

The IUCN Programme Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit will manage the evaluation, including overseeing the design and hiring of evaluators, the quality of the evaluation process, and the dissemination and use of results.

7. DELIVERABLES

Deliverables will be the following:

- An inception report including a detailed methodology, a strategic review matrix, a list of stakeholders to be interviewed and a detailed work plan;
- A presentation of preliminary finding;
- A draft report for peer review; and,
- A final report including comments from the peer review process.

A management response and an action plan will be developed in partnership with the project team.

8. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR

The evaluator must meet the following requirements:

- Relevant degrees at the Masters level or higher in development, environmental management, business or organizational development;
- Minimum 5 years experience in evaluation;
- Experience in developing markets for small scale enterprises (particularly forest based), participatory approaches to sustainable forest management and forest governance programmes;
- Ability to work and write in English;
- Ability to interact and communicate well with senior managers in IUCN and with technical experts and other relevant stakeholder groups; and,
- Excellent interview and quantitative/qualitative data analysis skills.

9. DRAFT WORK PLAN

Tasks	Indicative Timeline												
	Nov 2011			Dec 2011			Jan 2012						
Preliminary document review													
Development of methodology and inception report													
Inception meeting/interviews in Gland													
Interviews in Ghana													
Finalizing interviews, document review and preliminary analysis													
Debriefing session (conference call)													
Draft report finalized													
Peer review process													
Final report submitted													