

Request for Proposal

Title: Verified Carbon Standards (VCS) and Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Standards (CCBS) Validation/Verification Services
RFP No: RFP-CI-PHILIPPINES FY24.01
Date of Issuance: 13 December 2024

1. Background

Conservation International (CI) is a global nonprofit organization working to protect nature and improve human well-being. The Mantaligahan Landscape Conservation Project in Southern Palawan, Philippines, aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), while enhancing biodiversity and benefiting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs).

The project spans [149,109] hectares and follows the VM0048 methodology under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate, Community, and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards. The project employs carbon conservation strategies, preventing deforestation in vulnerable areas of Southern Palawan.

2. Assignment Overview

Conservation International Philippines Foundation Inc. (CIPFI), and its partner Ancestral Domains in Southern Palawan, invite proposals from qualified Validation and Verification Bodies (VVB) to validate and verify the project for both the VCS and CCB standards. The VVB will evaluate the project's compliance with the selected methodologies and verify its carbon emission reductions and co-benefits during the monitoring period.

Currently, the plan is for the Project Description and Monitoring Report to be delivered in October 2025.

3. Terms of Reference, Deliverables, and Deliverables Schedule

Scope of Services:

1. **Document Review:** Review the Project Description Document (PDD), Monitoring Report, and supporting documentation. This includes assessing project compliance with the VM0048 (REDD+) methodology and the tools such as the VMD0055 for avoiding unplanned deforestation.
2. **Public comment period assessment:** Assess and if applicable verify in the field the comments submitted to Verra during the public comment period
3. **Field visit:** Perform a field visit by October 2025 to interview stakeholders and check for evidence of conformances (reports, documents, photos, etc.), to validate project boundaries, emissions reductions, and compliance with VM0048
4. **Verification of Emissions Reductions:** Assess the GHG emissions reductions that have occurred as a result of the project during the monitoring period, in accordance with the VCS rules including:
 1. Buffer discount due to the risk of non-permanence
 2. Leakage caused by the project due to activity shifting
 3. Ex-ante GHG emission reduction calculations (applicable to validation only)

5. **Final Report:** Submit a joint VCS-CCB validation and verification report.

Key Deliverables and expected timeline:

1. Detailed project plan identifying tasks, interdependencies, and milestones/ deliverables to complete project validation and verification, to be submitted by 3 weeks after receipt of Project Description and Monitoring Report
2. List of non-conformities (if applicable) to be addressed by the project
3. Joint VCS-CCB Validation draft and final reports
4. Joint VCS- CCB Verification draft and final reports
5. VCS Validation Statement
6. VCS and CCB Verification Representation

4. Submission Details

- a. Deadline. Proposals must be received no later than 11:59PM (PHT) on January 24, 2025. Late submissions will not be accepted. Proposals must be submitted via email to: cip-procurement@conservation.org. All proposals are to be submitted following the guidelines listed in this RFP.
- b. Validity of bid. 120 days from the submission deadline
- c. Clarifications. Questions may be submitted to cip-procurement@conservation.org by the specified date and time in the timeline below. The subject of the email must contain the RFP number and title of the RFP. CI will respond in writing to submitted clarifications by the date specified in the timeline below. Responses to questions that may be of common interest to all bidders will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.
- d. Amendments. At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, CI may, for any reason, modify the RFP documents by amendment which will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.

5. Minimum Requirements

This consultancy is open to firms that meet the following requirements:

- Accredited by competent bodies to perform validation and verification of VCS and CCB Standards
- Lead verifier(s) with expertise in forestry, environmental science, GIS/spatial modeling and remote sensing, carbon accounting, statistics, conservation/biodiversity, social sciences, and community safeguards.
- Proven track record of successfully validating and verifying REDD+ projects under the VCS and CCB Standards
- Demonstrated professional-level fluency in both oral and written English is required.
- Ability to perform field visits and interviews in the local language.

6. Proposal Documents to Include

- a. Signed cover page on bidder's letterhead with the bidder's contact information.

- b. Signed Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility (Attachment 1)
 - c. Technical Proposal.
 - i. Corporate Capabilities, Experience: Please include descriptions of similar projects or assignments and at least three client references.
 - ii. Qualifications of Key Personnel: Please attach CVs that demonstrate how the team proposed meets the minimum requirements listed in section 5 Minimum Requirements.
 - iii. Technical Approach, Methodology and Detailed Work Plan: The Technical Proposal should describe in detail how the bidder intends to carry out the requirements described in the Terms of Reference in Section 3.
 - d. Financial Proposal. Offerors shall use the cost proposal template (Attachment 2).
- 7. Evaluation Criteria** In evaluating proposals, CI will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and costs proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Score (out of 100)
Qualification of Lead verifier and team composition (30 points)	30 Max points
Experience with similar assignments (30 points)	30 Max points
Proposal, timeline, and cost (40 points)	40 Max points

8. Proposal Timeline

RFP Issued	December 13, 2024
Clarifications submitted to CI	December 31, 2024
Clarifications provided to known bidders	January 17, 2025
Complete proposals due to CI	January 24, 2025
Final selection	February 14, 2025

- 9. Resulting Award** CI anticipates entering into an agreement with the selected bidder by February 28, 2025. Any resulting agreement will be subject to the terms and conditions of CI's Services Agreement. A model form of agreement can be provided upon request.

This RFP does not obligate CI to execute a contract, nor does it commit CI to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the proposals. Furthermore, CI reserves the right to reject any and all offers, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of CI. CI will, in its sole discretion, select the winning proposal and is not obligated to share individual evaluation results.

10. Confidentiality All proprietary information provided by the bidder shall be treated as confidential and will not be shared with potential or actual applicants during the solicitation process. This includes but is not limited to price quotations, cost proposals and technical proposals. CI may, but is not obliged to, post procurement awards on its public website after the solicitation process has concluded, and the contract has been awarded. CI's evaluation results are confidential, and applicant scoring will not be shared among bidders.

11. Code of Ethics All Offerors are expected to exercise the highest standards of conduct in preparing, submitting and if selected, eventually carrying out the specified work in accordance with CI's Code of Ethics. Conservation International's reputation derives from our commitment to our values: Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Passion and Teamwork. CI's Code of Ethics (the "Code") provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI's core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to. Any violation of the Code of Ethics, as well as concerns regarding the integrity of the procurement process and documents should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at www.ci.ethicspoint.com.

12. Attachments:

Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility
Attachment 2: Cost Proposal Template

Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility

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CI relies on the personal integrity, good judgment and common sense of all third parties acting on behalf, or providing services to the organization, to deal with issues not expressly addressed by the Code or as noted below.

I. With respect to CI's Code of Ethics, we certify:

- a. We understand and accept that CI, its contractual partners, grantees and other parties with whom we work are expected to commit to the highest standards of Transparency, Fairness, and Integrity in procurement.

II. With respect to social and environmental standards, we certify:

- a. We are committed to high standards of ethics and integrity and compliance with all applicable laws across our operations, including prohibition of actions that facilitate trafficking in persons, child labor, forced labor, sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment. We respect internationally proclaimed human rights and take no action that contributes to the infringement of human rights. We protect those who are most vulnerable to infringements of their rights and the ecosystems that sustain them.
- b. We fully respect and enforce the environmental and social standards recognized by the international community, including the fundamental conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO) and international conventions for the protection of the environment, in line with the laws and regulations applicable to the country where the contract is to be performed.

III. With respect to our eligibility and professional conduct, we certify:

- a. We are not and none of our affiliates [members, employees, contractors, subcontractors, and consultants] are in a state of bankruptcy, liquidation, legal settlement, termination of activity, or guilty of grave professional misconduct as determined by a regulatory body responsible for licensing and/or regulating the offeror's business
- b. We have not and will not engage in criminal or fraudulent acts. By a final judgment, we were not convicted in the last five years for offenses such as fraud or corruption, money laundering or professional misconduct.
- c. We are/were not involved in writing or recommending the terms of reference for this solicitation document.
- d. We have not engaged in any collusion or price fixing with other offerors.
- e. We have not made promises, offers, or grants, directly or indirectly to any CI employees involved in this procurement, or to any government official in relation to the contract to be

performed, with the intention of unduly influencing a decision or receiving an improper advantage.

- f. We have taken no action, nor will we take any action to limit or restrict access of other companies, organizations or individuals to participate in the competitive bidding process launched by CI.
- g. We have fulfilled our obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where the contract is to be performed.
- h. We have not provided, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitate, or participated in terrorist acts, and we are compliant with all applicable Counter-Terrorist Financing and Anti-Money Laundering laws (including USA Patriot Act and U.S. Executive Order 13224).
- i. We certify that neither we nor our directors, officers, key employees or beneficial owners are included in any list of financial or economic sanctions, debarment or suspension adopted by the United States, United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, or General Services Administration's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Non-procurement programs in accordance with E.O.s 12549 and 12689, "Debarment and Suspension".

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment 2: Cost Proposal Template

The cost proposal must be all-inclusive of profit, fees or taxes. Additional costs cannot be included after the award, and revisions to proposed costs may not be made after submission unless expressly requested by CI should the offeror's proposal be accepted. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the proposal, Offerors must provide a detailed budget showing major expense line items. Offers must show unit prices, quantities, and total prices. All items, services, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total offered price. All cost information must be expressed in PHP.

If selected, the Offeror shall use its best efforts to minimize the financing of any taxes on goods and services, or the importation, manufacture, procurement or supply thereof. If the Offeror is eligible to apply for refunds on taxes paid, the Offeror shall do so. Any tax savings should be reflected in the total cost.

Cost Breakdown by Deliverable

Deliverable	Price (Lump Sum, All Inclusive)
1- Detailed project plan identifying tasks, interdependencies, and milestones/ deliverables to complete project validation and verification by 3 weeks after receipt of Project Description and Monitoring Report	
2- List of non-conformities (if applicable) to be addressed by the project	
3- Joint VCS-CCBS Validation draft and final reports	
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Cost Breakdown by Cost Component (example only)

Description	Unit of measure (day, month etc)	Total period of engagement	Unit cost/rate	Total Cost for the Period
Consultant 1				
Consultant 2				
Sub-total Personnel				
Travel Costs				
Other related Costs (please specify)				
Total Cost of Financial Proposal				

