

Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA US)
NICFI Midterm Review
Terms of Reference
2021-2025 civil society grant period
Submission Deadline: February 22 2024

Request for Proposals

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is seeking proposals from qualified independent professionals to conduct a mid-term review of its ongoing project entitled “Fight Corruption & Forest Crime, Support Defenders & Improve Governance.”

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia on September 8, 1989. Since 1989, EIA US has identified and campaigned for solutions to the world’s most pressing environmental problems. Our campaigns to protect endangered wildlife, forests, and the global climate operate at the intersection between global trade and the accelerating loss of natural resources and species.

1. Background

EIA’s Forest Campaign aims to secure a future in which forests around the world are governed equitably, transparently, and responsibly, and in which global sourcing and consumption practices shift from their current role in undermining this governance to supporting it. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) must have a leading role in managing their resources sustainably, and this strategy seeks to develop and implement a variety of innovative legal, scientific, and social mechanisms to force the international market to respect this role. In the last decade, we have shown that causing tangible negative consequences for illegal timber on the global market, combined with promoting reforms of more inclusive and transparent forest governance in producing countries, creates a virtuous cycle. We are further convinced by the evidence that the improved inclusion and empowerment of indigenous and other local communities is a central pillar to sustained reduction in deforestation writ large.

This Project expands on this methodology to further address commodities resulting from deforestation and amplify the effectiveness of the approach with strategically chosen “game-changers” – including biological and software technologies. These will be integrated into advocacy campaigns, driven by EIA and other movement-oriented Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), to achieve global impact via the core theory of change, which has proven its impact potential. The Project and activities are organized under four objectives designed to drive a positive feedback loop between incentives and deterrents in the global market and good forest governance locally: Investigations and Enforcement; Legal Reforms; Tools, Transparency and Traceability; and Engaging Movements and Amplifying Local Voices. Our theory of change builds on the fact that each objective complements another, with success in one area laying vital groundwork for the success of others and providing a check on backsliding (on producer country reforms for example).

The proposed projects and activities under this work focus on the connection between the global market and local governance in producer and consumer countries. The implementation regions include producer and forest regions in the Congo Basin (Gabon, RoC, DRC and Cameroon), Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Indonesia, and Myanmar (The Greater Mekong subregion) and demand-side markets such as the US, EU, UK, and China.

A key pillar supporting all of EIA’s strategy involves strategically assessing the most appropriate and effective levels of partnership engagement in countries where we work. EIA supports this work in project countries through the provision of grants, equipment, strategic advice, access to decision-makers, and innovative training programs and/or workshops with the proper due diligence platform

for continued monitoring and evaluation throughout each partnership engagement cycle.

2. Objectives of the review

The main objective of this mid-term project review is to provide a systematic independent assessment of the ongoing project entitled “Fight Corruption & Forest Crime, Support Defenders & Improve Governance.” The mid-term review shall focus on identifying and analyzing whether the Project objectives remain relevant and are likely to be achieved. The midterm review seeks to provide valuable input on project progress, potentially as a basis for steering the course towards greater Project achievement where applicable. The Funder would like to understand how the Agreement contributes to higher-level objectives, namely (1) NICFI Outcomes and (2) NICFI areas of Strategic Interest (defined further below).

The final mid-term report prepared by the Consultant will be shared by EIA with the Funding Agency (s) promptly. The mid-term review will also be available internally.

3. Review questions

The midterm review should cover the following questions:

1. Effectiveness - assessment of project progress

	Effectiveness
1	To what extent is the agreement successful in achieving desired results? Please provide a separate assessment according to each project-level outcome found in the results framework.
2	In terms of internal project adjustments, if any, what concrete recommendations do you propose to the organisation for the remainder of the project cycle?
3	What key successes have sprung from the agreement, and have these resulted in a momentum for greater project achievement?

2. Coherence - synergies with other interventions

	Coherence
1	<i>Internal coherence:</i> To what extent does the grant recipient work with or in coordination with other initiatives funded by NICFI? What are the learning points? ¹
2	<i>External coherence:</i> To what degree does the grant recipient seek to create alliances and foster synergies with civil society organisations and other partners, national or international, to ensure harmonisation of interventions in the given contexts?

¹ **Instructions to the reviewer:** A full mapping of NICFI initiatives is not necessary in answering this question. Rather, to do so, Norad suggests that the reviewer may engage in dialogue with the grant recipient as well as collaborating partners.

3. Specific questions I - contribution to NICFI Outcomes

I-VII	NICFI Outcomes
I	Approved and implemented policies for sustainable forest and land use in tropical forest countries and jurisdictions
A	How does the agreement contribute to protecting tropical forests and other carbon sequestration ecosystems through regulation, legislation, and area management?

II	Improved rights and livelihoods for indigenous peoples and local communities in tropical forest countries
B	How does the agreement lead to the protection of the forest and land rights of IPLCs? Relevant activities may include: (1) participation in relevant processes, (2) the exercise of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). Please provide concrete examples.

IV	Increased transparency in land management, land use, value chains and financing
C	How does the agreement make data about land rights, user rights or concessions in forest areas (1) more accessible to the public and key decision makers, companies and (2) more widely used to drive change e.g reforms in company policy and/or in law?

V	Commodity markets stimulate deforestation-free production in tropical forest countries
D	To what extent does the agreement contribute to campaigns affecting market dynamics within raw material trade?
E	How does the agreement contribute to the adoption or implementation of legal frameworks, regulations or other initiatives that do affect the market of raw materials/commodities with a view to reducing deforestation? Please provide concrete examples of how such instruments have affected the market.

Specific questions II - contribution to NICFI Areas of Strategic Interest

NICFI Areas of Strategic Interest	
F	How does the agreement spur or employ innovative working methods, context analyses, partnership models, or similar innovations? Please elaborate.

4. Scope of the review (Temporal, Geographic, and Activity)

Temporal: The midterm review is expected to cover the Project progress from the start of Agreement, March 2021 until the end of the review.

Geographic and Activity: The Project's activities focus on the connection between the global market and local governance in producer and consumer countries. The review shall cover activities in select representative implementation regions under the Project, such as Gabon, CEMAC, Colombia, Brazil, Myanmar (Burma) and demand-side markets such as US/EU/UK/China. The representative regions/countries will be discussed with the Consultant based on the articulation of the scope of work. The select activities will be informed based on the defined scope of the geographic reach of the Project.

5. Main users and stakeholders

The main users and stakeholders of the Project mid-term review are the EIA Management team, Programmatic team and the Funder (s) who support the Project. All of the identified stakeholders have a direct interest in the Project progress and findings of the review to use it for learning purposes for the remainder of the Project's period through 2025.

6. Method

The midterm review process is expected to meet the structure below and is to be carried out in a participatory manner to ensure involvement of key stakeholders. The review will involve desk review, in-person meetings in DC and interviews (virtual fieldwork) as a means to collect information. All meetings/evaluations with the pertinent stakeholders outside of D.C will be done virtually.

- Selected Consultant and EIA (identified points of contact for this mid-term review) will schedule, promptly upon signature of contract, an initial introductory meeting to discuss initial review process, timeline and methodology. The Consultant is expected to submit to EIA within 5 business days of the meeting a draft "Inception report" which outlines conceptual framework for the review, workplan, proposed methodology, evaluation tools, data analysis, desk review, teams, proposed interview scheduling, data interpretation approach and report structure.
- The review methodology, tools and techniques selected should be relevant, appropriate and of significance to the project evaluated.
- Data and information is expected to be gathered through analysis of documents, interviews with key staff working on the project (in-person meetings in DC or over the phone for remote staff and Project Partners staff i.e. Subgrantees and other Partners), meeting with the campaign head and Executive Director. This process will be scheduled upon approval of the mid-term review plan.
- During fieldwork (virtual), data gathered needs to be analyzed, interpreted and disaggregated.
- At the completion of the virtual fieldwork, an exit meeting will take place and the consultant will present to EIA key relevant aspects identified during the review, initial results and any recommendations or other feedback.
- The Consultant is expected to submit a final draft report for review to EIA.

Consultant and EIA may schedule a call to discuss the draft and some additional follow-up may be scheduled to allow for management response to any recommendations, if made. Once draft approved, Consultant will produce and submit to EIA a final mid-term project report per specific guidelines outlined in #7 below.

7. Deliverables and timeline

The review shall be done in line with the timeline below with a final report completed by May 30, 2024. The final report (Midterm Review Report) shall not exceed 30 pages excluding annexes.

The Review report should comprise at least the following chapters:

A. Title Page

B. Table of Contents

C. Executive Summary

D. Body of report i.e. project background, evaluation background, methodology, main findings

E. Conclusions/Lessons Learned

F. Recommendations.

G. Annexes

Timetable

Tasks	Deadline/Time Frame
Deadline to receive bids	February 22, 2024
Selection process and contract award	March 1, 2024
Contract signed with Consultant	March 8, 2024
Receipt of Inception report and initial meetings	March 14– March 21, 2024
Interviews, data analysis, review of requested documents and other relevant information on project, including presentation of results at end of virtual fieldwork	March 27 – April 24, 2024
Mid-term project review draft due to EIA	May 8, 2024
Review of draft and review comments and feedback	May 17, 2024
Final mid-term review report (Consultant is required to return all data and documents shared with him for the purpose of this review, including all lists of people/orgs interviewed – anonymized and other sources of data used,)	May 30, 2024

8. Consultant Competencies

Consultant shall have at minimum the following key qualifications:

- Experience in performing project review particularly for the specific project subject to the mid-term review,
- Skill with data analysis and interpretation
- Adheres to highest ethical and professional standards
- Excellent written and verbal skills
- Experience in evaluating cross-cutting issues and knowledge of project scope and geographic reach
- Have relevant expertise to perform the mid-term review (engagement/experience with not-for-profit organizations, resumes/experience of the team who will conduct the review). Expertise in supply chains, investigative journalism and IPLC issues preferred.

9. Selection Process

Interested Consultants are asked to submit a proposal for the mid-term review, which shall include the following:

- Statement of understanding of the scope of work
- Statement of expertise and experience conducting evaluations for similar projects
- Recent Curriculum Vitae of lead consultant and team member(s) that may be involved in the work
- Evaluation methodology, data analysis and quality assurance, evaluation conceptual framework
- Deliverables and timelines
- Copy of recent work products
- Fee Structure
- References of no less than 4 similar organizations to EIA for which similar reviews have been conducted. Include the name of the organization, contacts(s) at the organization, address and phone number, and the date and type of services provided

Consultants will be selected based on the criteria outlined in the following Consultant selection matrix:

Consultant Selection Matrix

Evaluation Criteria (4=Excellent; 3=Above average; 2=Average; 1=Below average; 0=Poor)	Consultant A	Consultant B	Consultant C	Consultant D
Quality of proposal				
Relevant experience and qualifications				
Availability and capacity				
Clarity and relevance of the proposed scope				
Budget				
Other relevant factors				
TOTAL				

Submit application to: info@eia-global.org.