



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy – Business for Land Initiative Implementation Strategy

Consultancy reference number: CCD/22/ERPA/C/59

Background

Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is a novel approach to address land degradation, that encourages adaptive management during planning, implementation and monitoring of activities and seeks to balance between anticipated positive and negative changes to land. By applying a response hierarchy, interventions for LDN can be devised to Avoid > Reduce > Reverse land degradation. Every and each stakeholder needs to play roles in delivering LDN, collectively and effectively, including government, NGO, private sector, among others.

Tremendous financial resources are needed in order to achieve the goal of SDG 15.3 “A land degradation neutral world by 2030”, along with political commitment. For instance, according to UNEP, global terrestrial restoration costs are estimated to be at least USD 200 billion per year by 2030. However, there is a huge funding gap with most funds for combating desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) and achieving LDN being sourced from the public sector. The involvement of the business sector is a crucial factor for broader and effective implementation of the Convention.

Production and consumption can have a significant impact on land at all points along the value chain from sourcing of materials, cultivation, transportation, production, operations etc. The engagement and strategic partnership with the business sector, beyond financial support, in UNCCD implementation is therefore essential for the world to deliver on its commitment to protect land, prevent further degradation, restore degraded land and scale up actions for combating DLDD and achieving LDN.

The growing awareness of consumers and businesses of the importance of elements such as corporate social responsibility has led to an increasing trend in the active participation of the business sector in addressing global environmental issues, and investors increasingly taking Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards into consideration with investment decisions. In this context, it is important to boost the momentum and attract business sector support and collaboration for land degradation neutrality.

A concept for business sector engagement and commitment called Business for Land was launched in May 2022 at UNCCD COP 15 in Abidjan and welcomed by the UNCCD Parties. In recognition of its potential contribution to the implementation of the Convention under decision 6/COP15, approaches are being explored to facilitate, in collaboration with partners, the development of the Business for Land (B4L) initiative, bringing visibility to the commitments made by participating companies towards the objectives of the Convention and ensuring that the initiative is self-sustained in the future.

The B4L Initiative aims to facilitate business sector engagement in the implementation of the Convention and LDN, through strategic partnerships and networking among interested stakeholders including local communities working on the ground. It will provide opportunities for peer learning and information exchange on innovative and sustainable solutions for combating DLDD, as well as sustainable business models for enterprises contributing to achieving LDN.



Moving forward, it is envisaged that consolidated commitments and pledges through this program could leverage greater engagement of the business sector in LDN, accelerating a major shift from business-as-usual to innovative approaches supporting sustainable land management

Objective of consultancy

The consultant will produce *Internal Report: B4L Initiative Implementation Strategy*.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Under the overall supervision of the Deputy Executive Secretary, and the direct supervision of the Chief of External Relations, Policy and Advocacy (ERPA) Unit, the consultant will assist in compiling an analysis report and recommendations on the B4L Initiative. Specifically, the consultant will perform the following activities:

1. Review the original B4L Initiative concept note
2. Research and analysis of existing business sector engagement initiatives related to the environment, including those under the climate change and biodiversity areas to
 - identify how to make LDN and the B4L Initiative relevant for the business sector and how it relates to existing business sector commitments such as UN Global Compact, Global Goals, SDGs.
 - explore the range of commitments/pledge systems established to support those existing initiatives and the benefits or advantages to the business sector in joining as well as the efforts required to by the organizers to implement the commitment systems (pledges, development of criteria, standards and guidelines, certification schemes, reporting requirements etc)
3. Identify options and recommendations for commitment/pledge systems under the B4L Initiative, keeping in mind balancing a robust system that provides benefits to the business sector with UNCCD capacities for implementation
 - Define exactly what the B4L initiative will offer to participating organizations, how to bring visibility to the commitments made by participants, and how best this can be promoted
 - Ensure a two-tier system with dedicated targets at the CSR level, and dedicated targets working on ensuring soil friendly supply chains within companies willing to participate in the B4L
 - Define principles, roles and responsibilities for participants, and how would organisations be expected to report or show progress on their commitments under B4L and if this would be measured or verified
 - Identify the best option for the commitment/pledge system to be operational in self-sustained manner
 - Define due diligence process based on the UNSDG common approach to due diligence for the private sector.
2. Refine clear definition of concepts, goals and vision for the B4L Initiative in the context of the UNCCD business sector engagement and private sector strategy, broader global goals and other available guidance such as relevant COP decisions
3. Reach out to key business sector organizations or partners to engage their support and feedback on the initiative
4. Identify a small list of companies to target to join as founding members of the B4L
5. Compile these deliverables into a B4L Initiative Implementation Strategy.
6. Perform other duties as required

Deliverables

Key deliverables:

- Presentation to UNCCD of findings and recommendations under tasks 1-3
- Draft of B4L Initiative Implementation Strategy report ready for design and layout



- Organization of relevant meetings and workshops

Contractual terms

This contract shall run for 3 months starting as soon as possible but no later than 31st October 2022. This consultancy is homebased. All products resulting from this contractual arrangement are the exclusive property of the UNCCD.

Requirements

- Advanced university degree in the field relevant to assignment, for example natural resource management, environmental policy, development economics in the national/regional context.
- At least 5 years of experience working on business sector engagement regionally or globally
- Familiarity with major business sector organizations, institutions and agencies
- At least five years of experience in private sector sustainability initiatives or sustainability within supply chains
- Knowledge and experience in global environment issues including on land degradation, desertification, and drought.
- Solid knowledge of the UNCCD, related UN and intergovernmental processes, would be an asset.
- Experience in writing high-quality reports is required
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, work under pressure and deliver assignments on time.
- Excellent writing, presentation, and analytical skills.
- Proven excellent communication and writing skills in English language is required.

Special notice

Only individuals who can act as independent, individual economical operators are qualified to apply. Individuals who can provide their services only on account of an institution or enterprise not in their individual capacity are not eligible under this procedure.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Secretariat and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultant and individual contractor is responsible for determining tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

Submission of application

Applications should be submitted by e-mail to staffing@unccd.int with a UNCCD Personal History Form¹, CV and cover letter, specifying the reference number: [CCD/22/ERPA/C/59](#).

The deadline for applications is **02 November 2022**. Only applications submitted by the deadline and with complete documentation will be taken into consideration.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat or Global Mechanism. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 20 October 2022

¹ UNCCD P-11 form in electronic fill-in .pdf OR .docx format available: <https://www.unccd.int/about-us/secretariat/vacancies/applying-unccd>