



Terms of Reference

Consultant: expert to build capacity on development of Blue Carbon projects

Background of the consultancy

In the marine environment, the degradation and loss of coastal habitats particularly, blue carbon ecosystems, is resulting in an unprecedented loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services and there is a need to look for innovative approaches.

Blue carbon is the carbon stored in coastal and marine ecosystems. Coastal habitats composed of mangroves, tidal marshes and seagrass meadows, such as the *Posidonia oceanica* meadows in the Mediterranean, represent significant carbon sinks. Indeed, they sequester carbon in its organic form and store it for thousands of years. However, despite the importance of this important ecosystem service provided by this coastal vegetation, these habitats are disappearing at an alarming rate (i.e. four times faster than terrestrial forests).

For this reason, there is a need that a range of incentive measures are utilized to ensure both, reduction of impacts with more sustainable practices and achievement of conservation goals in these important ecosystems, having also private sector involvement.

IUCN in partnership with other international and national organisations are working on different projects to protect and restore these coastal ecosystems for their role in reducing impacts of global climate change. Among the current initiatives, is the BlueNatura Life Project (2015-2019), a European project whose main objective is to understand and quantify blue carbon sinks on seagrasses and coastal wetlands in Andalucía (Spain) and to assess their ecosystem services using the tools and policies associated with climate change. The project aims to explore already existing initiatives or mitigation and adaption policy incentives in order to finance conservation and restoration projects of blue carbon sink-habitats, with special attention to carbon emissions trading /carbon markets (inc. voluntary carbon markets). It will also work on the development of key regulations for Andalucía, such as standards for verifying carbon credits, drafting carbon offset projects, and creating a project catalogue.

Remaining gaps to make the project succeed are to begin capacity building for developing blue carbon projects: the capacity to participate in the process, frame the project, and implement and manage the project over time.

Objective of this consultancy

The objective of the present consultancy is to assist in the first training workshop for managers and technical experts in the development of Blue Carbon projects. This workshop aims to develop the

capacity of the participants to understand how blue carbon can be measured and utilized to promote conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems. Specifically, it will explore:

- Applications behind the Blue Carbon concept and its potential to promote the value for conservation and restoration of coastal wetlands and seagrasses in Europe.
- Overview on methods for assessing carbon stocks and emissions from blue carbon ecosystems
- Guidance for developing and implementing a blue carbon projects: understand the necessary documentation, monitoring, and verification costs for the development of these projects.

The session of measuring Blue Carbon ecosystems extend/variation, carbon sequestration and carbon stocks will be provided by project experts. The consultant will cover the aspects on development of Blue Carbon Projects, step-by-step guidance to prepare a blue carbon project and preliminary feasibility assessments (based on Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) or other applicable standards and methodologies).

The workshop is to be held in September 2019 and is aimed at European participants interested in the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems (particularly seagrass beds and wetlands) or in the area of climate change, including technicians and managers of natural resources and protected areas, environmental consultancies, researchers and associations.

Expected outputs

1. Preparation of a short manual with the main elements to be provided in the capacity building. Draft to be submitted to IUCN for consultation in June 2019.
2. Development the capacity building workshop. September 2019.
3. Report of the outcomes of the workshop. October 2019.

Selection criteria

- The consultant (s) must have a degree in socioeconomic sciences, environmental sciences, environmental economics, etc. with professional specialization in topics of mitigation to climate change.
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in environmental conservation / restoration financing programs through carbon markets: preparation of project documents, project proposals, feasibility studies or specific reports.
- Specific experience in the treatment of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) compensation problems that link mitigation and adaptation to climate change since this type of projects would offer multiple benefits of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in addition to the mitigation of climate change
- Languages. The working language of the workshop is Spanish and English, translation will be provided during the training.
- Economic offer.

Economic Offers up to 12.000 euros (inc. VAT) should be sent to: Maria del Mar Otero at mariadelmar.otero@iucn.org. Transportation costs should be included in the economic offer.

Date for sending CVs for this consultancy: 7 May 2019