



ECOWAS COMMISSION
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ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND AGRICULTURE

DIRECTORATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF THE FOUTA DJALLON
MOUNTAIN RANGE**

RECRUITMENT OF A CONSULTANT SPECIALISING IN THE PREPARATION OF PROJECTS TO BE
SUBMITTED TO THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF) IN SUPPORT OF THE
COORDINATION UNIT OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT
OF THE FOUTA DJALLON HIGHLAND (MASSIF)

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Reference:

October 2026

1. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

The Fouta Djallon Massif (FDM) comprises several high-altitude catchment areas situated in the centre of the Republic of Guinea and extending into Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. This highland is the source of several major international rivers in West Africa, including the Gambia river, the Niger river and the Senegal river, as well as numerous other rivers. The sub-region is characterised by a Guinean to Sudano-Guinean climate. Given its geographical and climatic diversity, this region is home to a wide variety of ecosystems. The MFD is a vast reservoir of biological diversity that must be protected and preserved, as it is home to numerous plant and animal species, some of which are considered endemic and require special protection. The Massif also harbours significant mineral resources. This cross-border area is experiencing accelerated degradation of its natural resources as a result of natural processes and human activities, notably: i) traditional practises of shifting cultivation involving slash-and-burn; ii) excessive deforestation; iii) accelerated soil erosion; iv) a decline in flora and fauna species; v) increased water runoff; and vi) the cumulative effects of climate change, etc.

Several projects aimed at safeguarding and preserving the MFD have been implemented under this programme (PRAFD, PGIRN, etc.). The evaluation of these projects highlighted a number of positive outcomes but also identified weaknesses that explain the persistence of environmental problems, notably i) the lack of an adequate and functional framework for the governance of the MFD's natural resources; (ii) the lack of monitoring, evaluation and decision-support tools for understanding, planning and governing the water resources and associated ecosystems of the Fouta Djallon massif; (iii) the limited understanding of the extent of degradation of water resources and associated ecosystems in the MFD due to human activities and the adverse effects of climate change; and (iv) the lack of initiatives aimed at strengthening the resilience of ecosystems, and the sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable communities in the Fouta Djallon Massif; (v) the absence of a sustainable funding mechanism for activities and the conservation framework for the Fouta Djallon Massif.

As part of its Regional Programme for the Integrated Management of the Fouta Djallon Massif, the Coordination Unit (UCP) is tasked with capitalising on the various experiences gained through this programme, and mobilising a regional coalition for the safeguarding of the Massif with a view to strengthening the sustainable management of natural resources and increasing the resilience of local communities.

To mobilise additional funding, the UCP wishes to submit eligible projects to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), via its thematic programmes (Biodiversity, Climate Change, Water, etc.), which offers funding opportunities for projects aligned with its strategic priorities.

However, developing projects that meet the GEF's eligibility criteria and requirements necessitates specific expertise in:

- Analysis of the GEF's priorities (2026–2030 strategy, selection criteria, submission process).
- Development of technical and financial proposals (logical framework, theory of change, stakeholder analysis, detailed budget, etc.).
- Coordination with stakeholders (governments, NGOs, local communities, donors).
- Compliance with GEF standards (environmental and social assessment, gender, inclusion, etc.).

In this context, the UCP is seeking an experienced consultant to assist it in developing 1 to 2 GEF-eligible projects, prioritising the following themes:

- Sustainable management of transboundary catchment areas (water, soil, forests).
- Climate change adaptation (community resilience, climate-smart agriculture).
- Biodiversity and ecosystems (wetland protection, ecological corridors).

- Environmental governance (institutional strengthening, advocacy).

2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Programme is to: ‘Ensure the protection and rational use of the natural resources of the mountain range and its areas of influence in order to help improve the living standards of the population living in the highlands and sub-basins of the Programme’s member countries by reversing the trend towards resource degradation.

Specifically, the Programme aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To establish a mechanism and a unifying regional framework for all initiatives that contribute to the preservation of the resources of the MDF and its dependencies;
- To establish a regional monitoring and evaluation framework through the operationalisation of the MFD Regional Observatory on Natural Resources and Climate (ORRNC-MFD).
- To establish a regulatory framework for data management and to strengthen institutional capacities for cooperation amongst all stakeholders (observatories, countries, NGOs, etc.);
- Improve the coordination of IWRM activities and the sustainable management of ecosystems and biodiversity at the transboundary river basin level.
- Establish a regional mechanism for the sustainable financing of the MFD’s natural resources and climate preservation framework and activities.

3. MISSION OBJECTIVES

1.1. Overall objective

The overall objective is to support the Programme Coordination Unit in designing and submitting projects eligible for GEF funding, in line with the priorities of the Fouta Djallon Regional Programme and the Fund’s guidelines.

1.2. Specific objectives

Specifically, this involves:

- a. Analysing the GEF’s priorities and eligibility criteria to identify relevant opportunities for Fouta Djallon.
- b. Develop 1 to 2 project proposals that comply with the GEF’s requirements, including:
 - An analysis of problems and solutions (theory of change).
 - A logical framework aligned with the GEF’s indicators.
 - A detailed budget and a financing plan.
 - An implementation strategy (partnerships, timetable, risks).
- c. Ensure that projects comply with GEF standards (environmental and social assessment, gender, inclusion, etc.).
- d. Support the UCP team with the submission and monitoring processes for GEF projects.
- e. Support the formal submission of projects to the GEF Secretariat or implementing agencies (UNDP, UNEP, FAO, etc.).

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Consultant is expected to provide support in the design of at least one bankable project, drawing on genuine expertise to produce a proposal that meets all the criteria of ^{the 9th} GEF. Upon completion of the consultancy assignment, the UCP will have:

- a report on the opportunities presented by the PRAI-MFD in relation to the GEF guidelines;
- at least one well-structured project proposal that meets all the GEF's technical requirements and conditions;
- a guide on the preparation and submission procedures for a GEF project
- a roadmap to support the UCP throughout the submission process.

5. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONSULTANT

The consultant will be responsible for the following activities, working closely with the UCP team:

Phase 1: Analysis and planning

- **Literature review:**
 - Analyse GEF strategic documents (Strategy 2026–2030, regional priorities, selection criteria).
 - Examine previous GEF-funded projects in the sub-region (Senegal, Guinea, Mali, etc.).
 - Examine reports from the Fouta Djallon Regional Programme (analysis of various community policies relating to the GEF, assessments, action plans, minutes of statutory meetings, project documents, evaluation reports, etc.).
- **Scoping workshops:**
 - Organise 1–2 meetings with the UCP to finalise the priorities and themes for the projects to be developed.
 - Identify the key stakeholders (ministries, focal points, NGOs, communities) to be involved.
- **GEF Opportunities Report:**
 - Present an analysis of GEF programmes eligible for the Fouta Djallon region.
 - Propose a shortlist of 2–3 priority projects to be developed.

Phase 2: Development of project proposals

- **Participatory assessment:**
 - Conduct interviews with stakeholders (governments, NGOs, communities) to refine the assessment.
 - Identify priority issues and potential solutions.
- **Drafting of proposals:**
 - Develop 1 to 2 project proposals (full concept notes), including:
 - Theory of change (link between activities, outcomes and impacts).
 - Logical framework with SMART indicators.
 - Detailed budget (direct/indirect costs, co-funding).
 - Implementation strategy (partnerships, timetable, risk management).
 - GEF compliance:

- Preliminary environmental and social assessment (ESA).
- Mainstreaming of gender and social inclusion.
- Alignment with GEF priorities (e.g. climate resilience, biodiversity).

Phase 3: Review, validation and support with submission

- **Analysis and validation of proposals**
 - Submission of proposals to the UCP for feedback and adjustments.
 - Sharing of proposals with the countries and various partners.
 - Virtual meeting with national focal points to share and validate the proposals
 - Incorporation of inputs and comments
 - Submission of the final version.
- **Support for the submission process:**
 - Finalising the proposals based on feedback from the GEF/implementing agency.
 - Assist the UCP in preparing supplementary documents (letters of support, assessments, etc.).
 - Monitor communications with the GEF and provide technical support where necessary.

Phase 4: Closure

- **Final report:**
 - Summary of deliverables produced.
 - Recommendations for future GEF project proposals.
- **Mission evaluation:**
 - Organise a debriefing with the UCP to gather feedback.

6. DELIVERABLES

The outputs and deliverables expected at the end of the Consultant's assignment must enable the Coordination Unit to have at least one project to submit to ^{the 9th} GEF. The deliverables are to be submitted by the deadlines indicated in the table below.

Table : presentation of deliverables and production deadlines

Work phase	Deliverables	Deadlines
Phase 1: Analysis and planning	A Preliminary Report: framework, validation of the terms of reference, refinement of the working methodology and the GEF Feasibility Report for the PRAI-MFD	10 hours/day (15 days)
Phase 2: Development of project proposals	An interim report , which assesses GEF opportunities, including a draft of one or two project concept notes to be submitted to the GEF (theory of change, logical framework, budget, etc.). An analysis of compliance with GEF requirements and consideration of inclusion, gender, and environmental and social dimensions.	30 hours/day (40 days)

Phase 3: Review, validation and support for submission	A draft final report , which takes into account the comments from the interim report and input from the national focal points, and incorporates all elements of the GEF checklist. A practical guide to developing and submitting a GEF project.	20 hours/day (20 days)
	A final report incorporating feedback on the final draft, accompanied by the project proposal to be submitted and all required annexes. An updated practical guide and a comprehensive checklist , including a support plan for monitoring and lobbying in relation to the application.	25 hours per day (60 days)

7. REQUIRED CONSULTANT PROFILE

Qualifications and Experience

Criterion	Minimum Requirements	Desirable Qualities
Education	At least a Master's degree (or equivalent) in: - Environment, Sustainable Development, Project Management. - Economics, or a related field.	BAC +5/Master's 2 with a specialisation in climate finance.
Professional experience	At least 10 years' experience in: - Project development for international donors (GEF, World Bank, EU, AFD, etc.), - Management of environmental or climate projects, - Coordination with GEF implementing agencies (UNDP, UNEP, FAO, etc.). Familiarity with key policy documents (Water Policy, Environmental Policy, Regional Climate Strategy)	Proven experience with the GEF (projects funded or submitted).
Technical expertise	Proficiency in GEF tools (logical framework, theory of change, detailed budget), - Knowledge of GEF eligibility criteria (thematic priorities, environmental and social assessment, gender), - Experience in environmental and social assessment (ESA).	Experience in the Fouta Djallon basin or in West Africa
Cross-cutting skills	Excellent writing and analytical skills in English, - Strong communication skills (French or Portuguese). - Ability to work in a multicultural team.	Experience in advocacy or mobilising co-financing.
IT skills	Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), - Knowledge of project management tools (e.g. MS Project, logframe software).	Experience with online submission platforms (e.g. GEF Project Management System).

Languages

- **English** (essential, business proficiency).
- **French /Portuguese** (a necessary asset, professional level).

8. DURATION AND TERMS OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment will run for a period of **5 months** from the date the contract is signed, with a workload of 85 hours per day. The consultant will work closely with the Coordination Unit and, where necessary, with

the national focal points and the GEF's technical and financial partners. The working hours are allocated as follows:

Phase	Estimated duration	Location
Phase 1: Analysis and planning	2 weeks	UCP office (Conakry or location to be confirmed) + remote working.
Phase 2: Development of proposals	4–6 weeks	Remote work + field visits (Fouta Djallon) if necessary.
Phase 3: Preparation and submission	8 weeks	UCP office + face-to-face training sessions.
Phase 4: Closure	1 week	UCP office.
Total	17 weeks	Mixed (face-to-face/remote).

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Fouta Djallon Programme Coordinator or a designated manager. Field missions may be organised in the Fouta Djallon region (transport and accommodation to be covered by the UCP). The consultant will be required to provide fortnightly and/or monthly progress reports.

9. SELECTION PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA:

The consultant will be selected in accordance with the selection procedure for individual consultants, as set out in the current ECOWAS Procurement Code.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

- **Intellectual property:** All deliverables produced as part of this assignment shall become the property of ECOWAS.
- **Confidentiality:** The consultant undertakes to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information.
- **Insurance:** The consultant must take out **professional indemnity insurance** covering the duration of the assignment.
- **Ethics:** Compliance with the principles of integrity, transparency and non-discrimination, in accordance with the ECOWAS Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.