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SUBJECT: CALL FOR TENDER N°. 002/GR-081342/CBCS/DE/2025

PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR FACILITATORS TO DEVELOP A PROVINCIAL AGROECOLOGY STRATEGY IN MANIEMA AND SOUTH KIVU PROVINCES IN EASTERN DRC.

Publication date: Tuesday 30 July 2025

Closing date: 15 August 2025

I. Introduction

The Congo Basin Conservation Society-Network (CBCS-Network) has undertaken a project, "***aimed 'supporting movements to influence policies in favor of agroecology and reduce pressure on forests in the DRC'***, in accordance with contract no. GR-081342 from PORTICUS.
The CBCS-Network is therefore seeking a professional service provider with proven practical skills in agroecology, as well as expertise in agronomy, environmental science, or biodiversity conservation.
The service provider will be required to support the development of a provincial agroecology strategy and facilitate harmonization and validation meetings with stakeholders in the provinces of Maniema and South Kivu in the DRC.
To this end, we are launching this call for expressions of interest with the aim of selecting the bid that is most technically, practically and financially attractive.

II. CONTEXT OF THE PROVISION OF SERVICES

The Congo Basin provides enormous services in terms of biodiversity (fauna and flora, conservation areas), water resources (water supply for agriculture and water recycling) and climate regulation (carbon storage, rainfall regulation, absorption of greenhouse gases).
On the other hand, Congolese biodiversity is an essential pillar of national well-being and a lever for ecological, socio-cultural and economic stability for Africa and the world. Home to the majority of the Congo Basin's forests, thousands of emblematic species and a mosaic of unique ecosystems, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is one of the richest countries on the planet in terms of biological diversity. This natural heritage supports the daily lives of millions of Congolese. It provides food, drinking water, wood, medicinal plants and building materials, as well as cultural, spiritual and identity references. It also plays a role in regulating the climate on a continental and global scale.

However, the Congo Basin is currently facing major challenges. It is currently experiencing accelerating losses of flora and fauna.
The main causes are the expansion of slash-and-burn agriculture and agro-industry, industrial seeds, logging, mining, and urbanisation (CBFP, 2024).
Changes in dietary habits, the loss of local seeds (particularly by indigenous peoples and local communities) and the loss of thousands of hectares of forest every year at an average rate of 15 hectares per month in South Kivu alone are being caused by such pressures on these forests (Aruna, 2015).
This is in consideration of the main underlying factors, which are weak of local governance of natural resources and the ongoing need for land and resource use for the survival of indigenous peoples and local communities (Bérenger Tchatchou et al. 2015).
Despite the DRC's current ambitions on the 30x30 agenda, multiple challenges lie at the root of the above facts.
However, in the face of these challenges, agroecology, as a set of ancestral indigenous practices, is emerging as a lever for solutions in the DRC to limit deforestation, combat climate change, promote biodiversity conservation and boost food sovereignty for healthy food systems.
Certainly an integration of agroecological policies at the local level, will promote socially equitable and economically balanced food systems in which people can exercise choice over the food they eat and how it is produced in the different large landscapes of the Congo Basin in the DRC.
The overall aim of this project is to look at**: community/civil society movements influencing policy on agroecology as a viable solution for sustainable food systems and reduce the pressure on forests in two provinces of the DRC.**
To maintain this momentum with an indigenous vision, this project proposes to work with local governments in the two DRC provinces of Maniema and South Kivu around landscapes of high biological value, based on local specificities.

III**. IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVINCIAL AGRO-ECOLOGY STRATEGY.**

Sustainable management of agricultural, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry and pastoral systems is essential for food security, social stability and the preservation of biodiversity in the DRC. The country has exceptional natural resources: more than 80 million hectares of arable land, an annual fishing potential of 700,000 tons, and more than 145 million hectares of forest, representing 10% of the world's tropical forests. Yet this potential is under-exploited and threatened by unsustainable practices.
In the agricultural sector, family farming remains dominant, but suffers from limited access to innovation, organic inputs and markets, and the low value of local varieties of seed and soil erosion compromising productivity and biodiversity.
There is little community involvement in forest governance. Yet these forests play a strategic role in the fight against climate change and are home to biodiversity of global importance.

The sustainable transformation of food systems is therefore essential. This involves promoting sustainable agroecological and forestry practices, modernizing small-scale fishing, integrating biodiversity into agricultural and forestry policies, and recognizing local knowledge.
This transformation is also an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of provincial territories in the face of climate change, increase rural incomes, and contribute to the objectives of sustainable development and food sovereignty.
In the livestock sector, which is still predominantly extensive, contributes to deforestation through overgrazing and generates little added value due to a lack of genetic selection, veterinary services and appropriate infrastructure.
In the fishing sector, essential in many regions, is faced with over-exploitation of stocks, destruction of habitats and a lack of effective regulatory mechanisms. Fish farming, although promising, remains marginal in the absence of clear support policies.
As for the forestry sector, it is prey to massive deforestation, fuelled by illegal logging, weak law enforcement and a lack of community involvement in forest governance. Yet these forests play a strategic role in the fight against climate change and are home to biodiversity of global importance.

This call for expressions of interest is open to qualified organisations and firms or individuals based in the DRC who meet the pre-selection criteria set out below and taking into account the important considerations outlined above:
The selected experts or firm must be able to bring together stakeholders in workshops and other consultation forums to discuss the content of the agro-ecological strategy to be put in place, and to draft the strategy with the collaboration of the stakeholders (government technical services/provincial sectorial ministries, representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, farmers, fishermen, researchers from local universities with links to the field, civil society players, technical and financial partners, biodiversity conservation experts, women and young people and people with reduced mobility).
The strategy to be developed should promote the peasant seed system and food sovereignty, the development of territorial markets, propose their integration into the local development plans of the decentralized territorial entities (ETD) and should be an adaptation of the various reforms underway in the DRC, including land-use planning, biodiversity conservation and the protection of forests outside protected areas, community forestry, the revised national biodiversity strategy and plans (SNAB), nationally determined contributions (DRC's revised NDC), the 30x30 agenda of the global biodiversity framework in its target 10 and the COP 15 post-2020 objective, which aims to protect 30% of land and 30% of oceans by 2030 through protected areas or other effective conservation measures, etc.
The applicant must be able to integrate the following 12 agro-ecological principles into the strategy:
1. **Diversity**: Promote diversity of crops, animals and farming practices to improve the resilience of farming systems and soil health.
2. **Synergies:** Create positive interactions between ecosystem components (plants, animals, soils, etc.) to optimise production and ecosystem services.
3**. Efficiency:** Using resources efficiently, minimising losses and optimising the use of local inputs.

4. **Recycling:** Encouraging the recycling of organic matter and nutrients within the farm to reduce waste and improve soil fertility.
5. **Resilience:** Strengthening the capacity of farming systems to adapt to changes and disturbances, such as climate change.
6. **Human and social values**: Ensuring fair working conditions, fair incomes for farmers, and promoting the health and well-being of communities based on the consumption of locally produced food.
7. **Co-creation and sharing of knowledge**: Encouraging collaboration between farmers, researchers and other stakeholders to develop solutions adapted to local contexts.
8. **Responsible governance**: Establish participatory and inclusive governance systems to ensure equitable management of natural resources (forests, freshwater, agricultural land, biodiversity, etc.) and healthy, sovereign food systems.
9. **Equity:** Ensure equitable access to resources, markets and opportunities for all stakeholders in food systems, in particular small-scale producers and marginalized communities, by mobilizing local sources of finance;
10. **Participation:** Encourage the active participation of all stakeholders in the design and implementation of the provincial food systems strategy, in particular farmers, consumers and local communities.
11. **Connectivity:** Improve connectivity between producers and consumers, for example, by promoting short circuits and local territorial markets based on the value chain based on the promotion of a peasant seed system.
12**. Land and natural resource management**: Promote sustainable management of land, water and biodiversity to preserve ecosystems and ensure the sustainability of agriculture.

Only candidates with proven experience in this field, with references demonstrating performance, are encouraged to participate.
CBCS-Network will call on international or sub-regional expertise in Africa to read the strategy in order to find specific guidelines.

IV. **SUBMISSION OF THE MANIFESTATION OF INTEREST**

If you are interested in this opportunity, we kindly ask you to notify us, before midnight, Kinshasa time, on Monday, 15 August 2025, of your technical and financial offer not exceeding 5 pages, enclosing your CV and the letter of motivation to be sent to the following email address: drcinfocbcs@gmail.com

V. **DELIVERABLES EXPECTED FROM THE PROVISION OF SERVICES**

a. An inception report for meeting facilitation;
b. A draft of the content of the provincial agroecology strategy discussed with stakeholders and validated;

c. A draft of the strategy validated by the stakeholders before it's submission to the authorities for signature;
d. Photos and attendance lists of participants and their categories;

VI. **PERIOD FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES**

The selected service provider must submit the deliverables reports by 20 September 2025 at the latest.
For any further information, please contact us by:

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For CBCS-Network
Josue ARUNA
Executive Director

