Guyana Forestry Commission/ Conversation International

**Advancing a Market Based Mechanism for Forest Carbon Services in Guyana through implementation of the National MRVS and REDD+ Enabling Activities
(MRVS Phase 3)**

Terms of Reference - Specialist in Forest Area Assessment

1. Background/Context

Guyana's long-term vision is for the payments for forest services to be funded through a market-based or other mechanism agreed within the UNFCCC. Until then, Guyana may enter into voluntary agreements with bilateral partners or voluntary markets that are compatible with REDD+. The precursor to such a mechanism, was an agreement with the Government of Norway; the two countries signed an MOU in 2009 where Norway committed to paying Guyana up to US$250 million in payments-for-performance, and the two countries agreed to work together on issues 'related to the fights against climate change, the protection of biodiversity and the enhancement of sustainable development'.

In anticipation of a REDD+ mechanism or equivalent, Guyana, in its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC has committed to unconditionally continue to pursue sustainable forest management (SFM), in compliance with applicable Forest Codes of Practice governing timber operations, including continuous efforts on forest monitoring to ensure high levels of timber legality. Similarly, Guyana is preparing and will commence to implement the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) under EU-Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) aiming to provide independent accreditation of forest legality and management practices in the timber industry.

Guyana's Monitoring Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) for REDD+ was developed as the primary mechanism to measure Guyana's performance against the agreed indicators as set out in the Guyana-Norway Agreement. It is a combined GIS-based and field-based monitoring system developed to track national-level forest change of deforestation and forest degradation. The goal is for the MRVS to provide the basis for measuring verifiable changes in Guyana's forest cover and resultant carbon emissions from Guyana's forests, which will underpin results-based REDD+ compensation in the long-term, based on international guidance and best practice.

Following 10 years of developing and operationalizing an MRVS mechanism for REDD+, Guyana is ready to access voluntary (or compliance) markets for forest carbon services. The GFC seeks to position the MRVS to support Guyana's meeting of its domestic commitments such as the implementation of aspects of the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, and Guyana's climate change agenda; as well as to meet Guyana's international obligation such as reporting to the UNFCCC, reporting on progress in implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and REDD+ Safeguards as well as voluntary market requirements as set out in ART Trees.

As implementation of the third phase of the MRVS commences, the Guyana Forestry Commission is seeking the services of a Specialist in Forest Area Change Assessment to support the development of Guyana's MRVS and its annual reporting on forest change.

2. Scope of work

The Specialist will be required to provide support to the Guyana Forestry Commission in the continued development of the Monitoring Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) for REDD+ in the area of forest change monitoring.

The Consultant will be expected to support Guyana in meeting its obligations under the ART Framework, including meeting reporting requirements and undergoing annual validation and verification exercises over the contract period; fulfilling other international commitments in support of Guyana's REDD+ and Climate Change Agenda; and supporting the Guyana Forestry Commission in fulfilling its requirements under the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.

More specifically, the Consultant will be required to:

2.1 Conduct reporting on forest carbon emissions and removals for years 2021, 2022, and 2023
2.1.1   Mapping of activity data for years 2021, 2022, and 2023
2.1.2   Expand data sharing across government agencies to expand or broaden functioning of the MRVS across sectors
2.1.3   Implement the near real time monitoring system that will be custom designed to the natural resources sector of Guyana.

Products:
- *3 Reports on forest carbon emissions and removals, one for each of the assessment periods.*
- *Satellite imagery and land use data available for forest cover and change mapping.*
- *Data sharing platform operationalised for data sharing between the GFC and natural resources management agencies.*
- *SOPs developed on near real time monitoring system.*

2.2 Support the implementation of independent verification of MRVS activities for years 2021, 2022, and 2023
2.2.1   Support engagement with independent verifier identified by market-based mechanism
2.2.2   Review verification plan
2.2.3   Facilitate verification activity
2.2.4   Support and review finalization of verification report

Products:
- *Technical support provided for verification activities.*

2.3 Execute capacity building and institutional strengthening to report on payment for a Forest Carbon Market-Based Mechanism
2.3.1   Update Standard Operating Procedures for reporting on activity data and forest carbon monitoring.
2.3.2   Conduct training on maintaining current capacities and on new skill areas
2.3.3   Develop reporting templates to meet payment mechanism

Products:
- *SOPs and training materials on reporting on activity data.*
- *Templates for meeting requirements of payment mechanism.*

2.4   Support annual reporting on status of forest sector safeguards under REDD+
   2.4.1 Monitor forest sector REDD+ activities in accordance with the objectives of national forest programmes and international commitments
   2.4.2 Monitor and report on REDD+ activities that promote the conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, the enhancement of social and environmental benefits
   2.4.3 Assess and report on risks of reversals and displacement of emissions of the REDD+ activities are addressed through the MRVS and national forest monitoring system

Products:
   ▪ *Annual report on status of forest sector safeguards under REDD+*

2.5   Contribute to UNFCCC reporting requirements (including BUR (REDD Technical Annex) and GHG Inventory) for REDD+ on FREL and related areas
   2.5.1   Compile activity data and forest carbon reporting for BUR
   2.5.2   Report on land classes and forest emissions levels for REDD Technical Annex, National Communication and GHG reporting
   2.5.3   Update and submit FREL to UNFCCC as needed to reflect market-based mechanism

Products:
   ▪ *Technical support and guidance in preparation of forest sector commitments to UNFCCC reporting requirements*

2.6   Engage with stakeholders at national and international levels and build alliances
   2.6.1   Participate in and engage with international REDD+ and forestry governance at Amazon Basin, Guiana Shield eco-region, South-South partnership, HFLD country grouping, GFOI, NASA, Google Earth Engine and Rainforest National alliances, among others.
   2.6.2   Produce and deliver presentations, case studies and reports on Guyana's model of MRVS and REDD+ forestry governance
   2.6.3   Support UNFCCC processes on REDD+ and forest areas including attending SBSTA meetings of the UNFCCC and other REDD+ forum/events.

Products:
   ▪ *Reports, presentations, publications and outreach materials on Guyana's MRVS developed for engagements with stakeholders at national and international levels and building alliances.*

2.7   Produce annual report on forest sector commitments under SDG 13 and 15
   2.7.1   Conduct assessment of mangroves forest based on activity data and carbon studies that are linked to the MRVS process.
   2.7.2   Develop technical report on mangroves forest and explore areas of aligning with national MRVS
   2.7.3   Develop State of the Guyana Forest Report (2020 to 2023), including chapter on mangroves

Products:
   ▪ *Report on status of mangroves linked to MRVS process*
   ▪ *Chapter on Mangroves for State of the Guyana Forest Report (2020 to 2023)*

2.8   Conduct monitoring and reporting on Intact Forest Landscape (IFL)
   2.8.1   Compile historic assessment of IFL
   2.8.2   Develop linkage with IFL and high biodiversity areas including Protected Areas

2.8.3   Develop Status Report on IFL

Products:
- *3 reports on Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), one for each reporting period*

3.   Profile of Consultant

3.1   **Qualifications** – A PhD in GIS/ Remote Sensing, Forest Biometrics, Forestry/Forest Management, Natural Resources Monitoring, or a related field, with a strong emphasis on development of systems for the measurement and monitoring of forest area change, requirements for reporting to the UNFCCC and IPCC reporting for Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF).

3.2   **Experience –** At least 10 years of experience in the development of systems for the measurement and monitoring of forest activity data, land cover change, forest change detection, working with IPCC Good Practice Guidelines and familiarity with the UNFCCC methodologies. Knowledge of Guyana's forest monitoring system for REDD+ and issues relating to Guyana's Monitoring Reporting & Verification System is required.

3.3   **Skills and Abilities-** Candidate must possess excellent oral and written English communication skills. The Candidate must be able to articulate ideas in a clear and concise style.

3.4   **Technological Awareness-** Ability to make effective use of required computer software and other equipment relevant to the post is critical.

3.5   **Teamwork:** Good interpersonal skills and ability to establish and maintain effective working relations in a multicultural organization. Ability to provide effective support in relation to work conducted by and in collaboration with colleagues.

3.6   **Availability:** The Consultant is expected to make his/her self-available throughout the duration of the project.

3.7   **Future collaboration-** the Consultant may be considered for future collaboration with the GFC in the continued development of the MRVS at the end of the contract.

4.   Authority and Role of the GFC

The GFC has full authority and responsibility for this contract which includes oversight over service provider and of the procurement process. The GFC is a semi-autonomous organization formed in 1979 with a legal mandate to manage and control the utilization of the State Forest Estate. Its main role is to ensure the sustainable utilization of the State Forest Estate in keeping with sustainable forest management principles and guidelines captured in the Forest Act, 2009.

Governed by a developmental mandate, this agency ensures that that there is a balance among the pillars of social, economic and environmental development. Over the past decade, the Commission has undergone rapid development in the implementation of sustainable forest management, legality, and environmental standards.

The Guyana Forestry Commission will provide access to relevant personnel and information on REDD+ implementation in Guyana. The management of GFC will identify GFC staff members whom will be collaborating with the Consultant to plan and implement technical activities. The Consultant will receive full logistical support at pre-approved level, from the GFC.

The management of GFC will approve the following submissions from the Consultant:
- Work plan

– Technical Reports

5. Outputs/ Deliverables

	Deliverable	Timeline for Submission/ Support		
		Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
1.	*3 Reports on forest carbon emissions and removals, one for each of the assessment periods.*	May 31, 2022	May 31, 2023	May 31, 2024
2.	*Satellite imagery and land use data available for forest cover and change mapping.*	April 30, 2022	March 31, 2023	March 31, 2024
3.	*Data sharing platform operationalised for data sharing between the GFC and natural resources management agencies.*			May 31, 2024
4.	*SOPs developed on near real time monitoring system.*			May 31, 2024
5.	*Technical support provided for verification activities.*	April to July, 2022	Jan- Apr, 2023	Jan- Apr, 2024
6.	*SOPs and training materials on reporting on activity data.*	December 31, 2022	December 31, 20232	April 30, 2024
7.	*Templates for meeting requirements of payment mechanism.*	April 30, 2022		
8.	*Annual report on status of forest sector safeguards under REDD+*	December 31, 2022	December 31, 20232	May 31, 2024
9.	*Technical support and guidance in preparation of forest sector commitments to UNFCCC reporting requirements*	December 31, 2022	December 31, 20232	May 31, 2024
10.	*Reports, presentations, publications and outreach materials on Guyana's MRVS developed for engagements with stakeholders at national and international levels and building alliances.*	December 31, 2022	December 31, 20232	April 30, 2024
11.	*Report on status of mangroves linked to MRVS process*	May 31, 2022	May 31, 2023	May 31, 2024
12.	*Chapter on Mangroves for State of the Guyana Forest Report (2020 to 2023)*			May 31, 2024
13.	*3 reports on Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), one for each reporting period*	May 31, 2022	May 31, 2023	May 31, 2024

6. Schedule and Duration

The work of the Consultant is expected to be executed over the period April 2022 to June 2024.

7. Application Process

Details of the Terms of Reference and Scope can be found on the GFC website at www.forestry.gov.gy under the tab Publication – **Terms of Reference - Specialist on Forest Area Assessment**

Interested Individuals or firms must:

- Submit a 5-10 page project proposal no later than 25th April, 2022.
- Proposals should be addressed to:

  The Commissioner of Forests
  Guyana Forestry Commission
  1 Water Street, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana, South America.

Or can be emailed to: ndewnath@gmail.com copied to finance@forestry.gov.gy

The Proposal should specifically cover:

a. Proposed methodology to undertake the services as specified in this TOR
b. The fees and business conditions associated with the implementation of the services as specified in this TOR
c. Activity Timeline
d. In an appendix, the experience/resources you would bring to the project. Applicants are expected to provide named references with proven implementation and business experience in the terms of reference outlined. This appendix should cover your organization's previous work experience, as well as work relating to this area.
e. Proposals must be submitted in English and costs must be quoted in US dollars.

Some of the Assessment Criteria for the proposals include:

- Technical strength and credibility of proposal in meeting required generally accepted international guidelines and standards.
- Experience of the Provider in the development of systems for the measurement and monitoring of forest activity data, land cover change, forest change detection, working with IPCC Good Practice Guidelines and familiarity with the UNFCCC methodologies.
- Cost Considerations and efficiency of approach

8. Continuation of work

The goal of the MRVS to provide the basis for measuring verifiable changes in Guyana's forest cover and resultant carbon emissions from Guyana's forests, which will underpin results-based REDD+ compensation in the long-term, based on international guidance and best practice. The lack of continuity poses a significant risk to the results of the MRVS and the selected consultant will be re-engaged through direct sourcing (sole sourcing) for repetition of similar services beyond the contract period through a new or extended agreement. The additional services are not limited to the above scope, but can include the following:

a) support the development of monitoring framework(s) for Guyana's engagement in payment for ecosystem services schemes such as Blue Carbon, Mangroves & Biodiversity Protection;
b) continue to expand Guyana's MRVS and capabilities to access forest carbon-based market mechanisms;
c) explore and incorporate new technologies and development areas into the MRVS based on international guidance and the evolving requirements of the System.