



CEC
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Producing a report summarizing existing programs aimed at raising consumers' awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging in North America

for the project
Advancing Responsible Purchasing of Wood Products



**Commission for Environmental Cooperation
2024**

I. Overview

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is requesting proposals from prospective consultants related to the identification of current trilateral context for sustainable forest management (SFM), illegal logging, forest law enforcement, third-party certifications, and consumer awareness in North America. Specifically, the consultant would be expected to: conduct a review of available literature and existing programs aimed at raising consumers' awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, and an analysis of the state of consumer knowledge within Canada, Mexico and the United States. This with the purpose of:

1. Producing a report summarizing existing programs aimed at raising consumers' awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, including their impacts on forest communities, ecosystems and Indigenous communities, and participatory environmental monitoring activities that combat illegal logging.
2. Gathering information and analyze the gaps in consumer knowledge and awareness of SFM and illegal logging, including their impacts on forest communities, ecosystems, and Indigenous communities. Consider results of surveys of B2B procurement behavior, such as: APEC EGILAT Survey of Private Sector Organizations in the Forest Products Supply Chain | APEC. To add some value to the existing body of work, the consultant will consider ways to gather more information on the state of knowledge/buying habits concerning wood products.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) was established in 1994 by the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, a parallel environmental agreement to NAFTA. As of 2020, the CEC is recognized and maintained by the Environmental Cooperation Agreement parallel to the new Free Trade Agreement of North America. The CEC brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the general public, Indigenous People, youth, nongovernmental organizations, academia, and the business sector, to seek solutions to protect North America's shared environment while supporting sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. Find out more at: www.cec.org.

The CEC's Council, its governing body, approved the project entitled Advancing Responsible Purchasing of Wood Products as part of the Operational Plan for 2023, with the purpose of increasing the understanding of wood product consumers in the three countries and how they can support SFM and contribute to fight against illegal logging through their purchasing power and by the responsible purchasing of wood products. For a complete description of the project, including tasks and related budget, please visit the CEC website at: <http://www.cec.org/files/documents/operational_plans/cec-responsible-purchasing-of-wood-products.pdf>.

II. Terms of Reference

A. Overview and Scope

Illegal logging, and the trade in illegally logged timber, is a domestic, regional, and global issue. It has negative economic, environmental, and social impacts, including—but not limited to—forest degradation, loss of traditional homelands for Indigenous and tribal communities, and the creation of unfair market conditions that disadvantage legal and sustainable sources of wood and wood products.

This project will deepen the knowledge of the extent, risks, and awareness of illegal logging within each country's forest product supply chains. This project will aim to increase the understanding of wood product consumers and how they can support SFM and contribute to fight against illegal logging through their purchasing power and by the responsible purchasing of wood products. The project will also encourage the use of key mechanisms for civic participation in environmental protection to address citizen complaints and by informing consumers of the consequences of purchasing illegal timber (applicable fines and penalties).

This project seeks to understand the current level of consumer awareness among different groups in the supply chain and gaps in existing awareness-raising initiatives. The project will address the gap through the development of awareness campaigns tailored to the three countries and their context, with an emphasis on the impact of illegal logging on forest communities, ecosystems, and Indigenous communities, and access to information on surveillance actions in which the population can participate.

The project's public awareness campaigns will thus seek to empower consumers at various levels of the supply chain who purchase wood products, helping them to become actors of change by promoting citizen participation in monitoring compliance with environmental legislation and by informing the population about the negative impacts of illegal logging, particularly in forest communities, ecosystems, and indigenous communities, and the applicable penalties. Specifically, a broad number of actors and stakeholder groups will be invited to participate in workshops, including youth, women, and Indigenous People, and they will be the target audience for the public awareness campaigns. The project will also include Indigenous perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) as well as a gender perspective.

The first phase of this project consists of conducting a review of available literature and existing programs aimed at raising consumers' awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, and an analysis of the state of consumer knowledge within Canada, Mexico and the United States. The expected outcomes are:

- A report summarizing existing programs aimed at raising consumers' awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, including their impacts on forest communities, ecosystems and Indigenous communities, and participatory environmental monitoring activities that combat illegal logging.

- Key messages and public awareness campaign material tailored to each country made available in the three languages, to communicate the importance of responsible purchasing of wood products, sustainable forest management, and illegal logging in North America, including the recognition of the impact on forest communities, ecosystems and Indigenous communities, and to raise awareness of the citizen participation mechanisms that can be used to identify illegal logging practices in North America and the applicable sanctions.

B. Description of Services

The consultant shall coordinate with the CEC’s designated contacts to accomplish the following activities, subtasks, and deliverables:

Activity 1	Conduct a review of available literature and existing programs aimed at raising consumers’ awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, and an analysis of the state of consumer knowledge within the three countries.	
Output(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A report summarizing existing programs aimed at raising consumers’ awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, including their impacts on forest communities, ecosystems and Indigenous communities, and participatory environmental monitoring activities that combat illegal logging. 2. Gather information and analyze the gaps in consumer knowledge and awareness of SFM and illegal logging, including their impacts on forest communities, ecosystems, and Indigenous communities. Consider results of surveys of B2B procurement behavior, such as: APEC EGILAT Survey of Private Sector Organizations in the Forest Products Supply Chain APEC. To add some value to the existing body of work, the consultant will consider ways to gather more information on the state of knowledge/buying habits concerning wood products. 	
Expected results, performance measures	The report will provide key information to support the development and targeting of effective awareness campaigns tailored to specific consumer groups and each country and their context (Activity 2). It will consider aspects such as language barriers and the need for differentiation by gender and age.	
Baseline (current status), if known	Several national, multilateral, and private sector-led programming exist that are addressing awareness-raising on SFM, illegal logging, and responsible procurement, including literature and studies on consumer behavior, especially B2B. Studies on awareness and consumer behavior of end-consumers and SMEs may be limited.	
Target (by project end)	A report which summarizes existing literature and programs aimed at raising consumer-awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging, as well as an analysis of the state of consumer knowledge within the three countries, and potential gaps that would inform the development of targeted public awareness campaigns.	
Subtask 1.1	Review available literature and existing programs aimed at raising consumer awareness of sustainable forest management and illegal logging.	When: Four months after the start of contract

Subtask 1.2	Gather information on the state of knowledge/buying habits of the end consumer of wood product (e.g., a person who buys a table from a furniture store or SMEs, from whom it has been hard to obtain information). Also, identify the most effective means for expanding consumer knowledge and awareness of SFM and illegal logging.	When: Four months after the start of contract
Subtask 1.3	Hold a workshop to share and validate information that has been compiled. Workshop participants would include relevant experts, such as government representatives, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, academia, wood product producers, community representatives, members of the Participatory Environmental Monitoring Committees (CVAP), etc. Due to limited project funds, the workshop will be held virtually.	When: Five months after the start of contract
Subtask 1.4	Finalize the report on trinational context, based on output from subtasks 1.1, 1.2. and 1.3.	When: Six months after the start of contract

All work is envisioned to be completed by 1 May 2025 or within 6 months of the start of the contract.

C. Periodic Reporting Requirements

Throughout the project, the consultant will work in close collaboration with the CEC, the project's Steering Committee, and experts to gather information to support delivery of the work. The consultant may consult directly with other experts linked to the Steering Committee, as needed and in coordination with the CEC designated staff. However, the consultant shall report only to, and receive direction only from, the CEC designated staff.

The CEC Secretariat will forward draft deliverables to the project's Steering Committee and other experts, for their review and comment. The CEC Secretariat will arrange teleconferences with the consultant, the CEC designated staff, and other experts on an as-needed basis. The goal of these meetings will be to present the products and assess progress on the project.

The consultant will present periodic status reports to the CEC designated staff, and to the Steering Committee when requested by CEC, that summarize the following:

- progress in previous month;
- current status;
- anticipated progress in upcoming month;
- potential problems, with description of and reasons for any delays; and
- actions that should be taken by the CEC Secretariat to facilitate the project.

A copy of these reports is to be sent to the CEC designated staff by e-mail.

The consultant will work in their own offices.

D. Quality of Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for providing deliverables of publishable quality (i.e., copy-edited prior to submission) in English, and, when applicable, for the technical review and editing of the materials. Capacity to provide deliverables also in Spanish or French will be an asset. Technical review and style correction required to ensure the quality of the materials will be the responsibility of the consultant. The consultant will submit to the CEC Secretariat all written material (including complete drafts and final reports) in Microsoft Word, following the format of the CEC's Report Template if applicable, or in another format approved by the CEC, and adhering to the precepts of the Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products, as supplemented by the CEC's English Style Guide. Supporting documents for tables, figures and maps will be submitted with the report in their original file format (e.g., Excel or ArcGIS). Note that all amounts shall be presented in metric units. The CEC Secretariat will be responsible, when applicable, for translation, printing, publication and distribution of products from this activity.

Upon delivery by the consultant of reports or other materials under the project, the CEC will require a 15-business day period to review the document(s), notify the consultant of any potential issues or errors, and return the document(s) to the consultant for appropriate corrections, at no extra cost.

In all cases, contract payments will be withheld if products submitted to the CEC fail to fulfill the quality and formatting requirements specified above. In the event that the consultant neglects to make the required corrections or if, following corrections, a deliverable remains unsatisfactory, the document shall be edited or revised by a third party designated by the Secretariat, the cost of which shall be deducted from the consultant's fees at a rate of C\$60 per hour.

E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of conveying someone else's original expression or creative ideas as one's own and can be a violation of copyright law. Neither intentional nor unintentional plagiarism is acceptable to the CEC. The consultant must follow good scholarly methodology in preparing reports and deliverables under the contract, including systematic referencing in footnotes or in-sentence references, for any secondary sources, quotations, data, etc., that do not originate with the author. Sources for tables and figures reproduced from other literature must be given in a "Source" attribution immediately below the table or figure. Failure to properly reference the source of such borrowed material constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a breach of contract.

For further information, see [Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products](#). In addition, for every written deliverable submitted, the Consultant must use iThenticate software, or an equivalent software approved by the Commission, to validate the written product in question and must forward the plagiarism review results to the CEC at the time of document submission. Contract payments will be retained if products do not fulfil these requirements.

III. Requirements and Proposal Evaluation

A. Mandatory Requirements

To be eligible for further consideration, all consultants must fulfill the following basic requirements.

1. In-country Ability

The consultant, as well as all their personnel and subconsultants, must reside and be authorized to work legally in Canada, Mexico or the United States of America. If travel is required, the consultant must possess valid documentation to travel and comply with sanitary regulations/ restrictions within the three countries.

2. Key Personnel

For the purposes of this RFP, the term "consultant" may refer to either a group or company or a single individual.

If a proposal is submitted by a group of individuals or institutions, a "lead" consultant should be designated to take responsibility for ensuring overall coordination, the coherence of activity outputs, and the integration of information and ideas.

3. Qualifications Required

The consultant must be qualified, competent and experienced in the subject area.

Educational Background

- The consultant and key support personnel must hold an advanced degree in a relevant field such as Forestry, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), Environmental Science, Natural Resource Management, or a related discipline with a focus on sustainable development.

Professional Experience

- The consultant must demonstrate competency and document 5 years of work experience within the past 10 years (non-overlapping) in the field and on issues related to illegal logging, SFM, and environmental protection, with particular familiarity with Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
- The consultant should possess in-depth knowledge of forest product supply chains and a thorough understanding of environmental laws and regulations related to illegal logging and forest management in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, as well as mechanisms for civic participation in environmental monitoring and compliance.
- Education and/or experience related to consumer/public awareness studies and campaigns will be an asset.

Language Proficiency

- As the services/report will be provided in English, the consultant must have excellent writing skills and be fluent in both written and spoken English. Proficiency

in Spanish and/or French is desirable. Capacity to provide the deliverables in Spanish and/or French will be an asset.

Cultural, Indigenous and Gender Sensitivity

- Sensitivity to cultural differences and the ability to incorporate Indigenous perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) into the project.
- Awareness of gender issues and the ability to integrate a gender perspective into the project will be an asset.

Demonstrated Experience

To demonstrate the qualifications mentioned above, the proposed consultant must provide a minimum of three (3) examples of completed projects. For each project, the consultant must provide:

- i. Client organization name, project title, and industry sector.
- ii. Client contact name and title.
- iii. Description of the project, involvement of proposed team members, deliverables expected, and methodologies used.
- iv. Lessons learned.

Geographical Presence

- Having a branch/subsidiary company or partners/associates or hiring subconsultants in at least two of the three countries (Canada, Mexico, and the United States) is required to minimize travel while ensuring a bilingual team in Spanish and English to carry out fieldwork in these countries.

4. Proposal Submission

Prospective consultants should refer to the **Terms of Reference (Section II)** of this document) for more detailed information on the project and the services to be provided. Prospective consultants are requested not to reiterate the Terms of Reference in their submissions but are invited to suggest modifications to enhance the proposal, if applicable.

Proposals must be organized as indicated below and include the following information:

1. Knowledge and Understanding of Work

- Provide brief background information relevant to this project that will serve to demonstrate the consultant's experience and subject knowledge. The statement should address desired results; guidelines (parameters within which results are to be accomplished); resources (human, financial, technical, or organizational support available to help accomplish the results); and other aspects deemed applicable by the consultant. The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate not only the consultant's general and specific familiarity with the subject area, but also to highlight writing skills.

2. Work Plan and Schedule

- Provide a general work plan and schedule, as well as the proposed methodology for carrying out this project. The bidder must submit a work plan

that demonstrates they can meet the requirements and timelines outlined in the Description of Services. The work plan must include:

- An overview and understanding of project requirements.
- Breakdown of each project task; resources (human, financial, technical, or organizational support) available to help accomplish the results, and scheduling: a detailed description of timing and task allocation for each team member.
- The bidder's approach and a detailed description of the methodology, providing clear and logical explanation of data gathering and analysis.

3. Organization, Qualifications and Experience of Project Team

- Identify organization of Project Team, including project manager and country team leads for Canada, Mexico and the United States where relevant;
- Provide a summary of qualifications and experience for each team member (including alternates) and any other relevant information (e.g., language proficiencies).

4. Allocation of Time (Hours) and Costs by Task and Team Member

- For each member of the project team, provide a detailed breakdown of assigned tasks, hours worked, and labor costs;
- Identify any other direct and indirect costs, including travel costs if applicable (include estimate for in person meetings taking place at any of the three countries) and applicable taxes;
- Clearly identify total hours worked under and the total cost (including taxes) of this project.

5. Added Value Within Identified Budget

- Identify any additional tasks or activities not specified within the terms of reference but that will be undertaken by the contractor at no additional cost.

Annex A: Letters of Recommendation and References

- Two letters of recommendation from previous assignments;
- Details and contact information for three or more references.

Annex B: Resumes for Each Team Member

- Resumes for all project team members;

Annex C: Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence for Contract

- Provide a completed copy of the CEC form identified in the Annex to this Request for Proposals.

Annex D: Examples of Previous Work

- Provide two samples of previous work.

Annexes D.1 and D.2: Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence for Contract

- A copy of the completed and signed CEC form must be provided. Annex D.1 is used when the consulting entity is an individual and Annex D.2 is used when the consulting entity is an institution or company.

B. Other Information to be provided.

Potential consultants are encouraged to submit any additional information that they believe will assist the CEC Secretariat in the evaluation of their proposal. However, the proposal should not exceed six (6) pages [adjust, accordingly], exclusive of applicant resumes, samples of previous work or corporate brochures.

C. Type of contract to be used for these services.

The CEC Secretariat intends to use its milestone-based contract for these services. A sample is available upon request.

D. Selection procedure

The consultant deemed best qualified will be selected on the basis of a competitive process, in accordance with sections 2.5-2.7 of the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

Proposals that the CEC Secretariat determines to be complete will be evaluated by the CEC Secretariat according to the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Point Rating
Understanding of project requirements	20
Suitability of the proposed approach and work plan	20
Consultant’s experience and qualifications and competency of key personnel (as described in Section III, points 3 and 4)	40
Consultant’s capability and ability to assess and synthesize information and strong and effective writing and communication skills	5
Consultant’s capacity to deliver the deliverables in two of the three languages (English, French and Spanish)	5
Adequacy of budget	10
<i>Total</i>	100

A minimum score of 80 will be required for the prospective consultant's proposal to be eligible for further consideration.

Proposals in response to this request will be evaluated by the CEC designated staff and technical reviewers, who will form an Evaluation Committee. Each member of the

Evaluation Committee will receive a copy of the proposals and will be asked to rate each proposal using the evaluation criteria and its maximum point ratings given above.

The CEC designated staff will arrange for a conference call/meeting among the members of the Evaluation Committee to discuss the ratings, arrive at final scores, and, subsequently, a ranking of all proposals. The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, in terms of the evaluation criteria, will be noted and summarized. Once the selection has been made, each prospective consultant will be provided with their score—if requested—along with their comparative ranking. However, neither the evaluations nor the scores of other bidders will be provided.

E. Estimated level of resources required.

The maximum budget for this activity is C\$75,000.00 (Canadian dollars), including professional fees and expenses. Any reimbursable expenses would be detailed in the CEC standard contract, available upon request.

In addition, the cost of using iThenticate software (US\$100) or other approved software to detect plagiarism should also be considered.

For universities and nongovernmental organizations, note that the CEC accepts that overhead be charged for administration and other indirect costs up to 15% of the total value of the contract.

If the proposal was presented by a consultant established in Mexico, the applicable value-added tax will be 0%, in accordance with Article 29, section IV, paragraph a) of Mexico's VAT Act, as these are technical services that were engaged from abroad.

If a currency other than Canadian dollars is used in the proposal, the consultant should indicate the total cost in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes, detailing the exchange rate used.

F. Financial and Other Confidential Information

The consultant will be paid according to the table of activities, subtasks, and outcomes in the "Description of Services" and "Estimated level of resources required" sections above.

Payment shall be made only for bona fide consultant fees and legitimate expenses incurred in accordance with the contract for professional services, and only upon receipt and documented acceptance by the Secretariat of statement(s) of account/invoice(s) from the consultant. Settlement of invoices that are acceptable for payment will normally be made 30 days from the date of receipt by the Commission.

For this proposal, the CEC Secretariat will not require the submission of any confidential information, nor will the CEC Secretariat require information regarding insurance, bonding financial status, or company ownership.

For universities and nongovernmental organizations, note that the CEC accepts that overhead be charged for administration and other indirect costs up to 15% of the total value of the contract.

If the proposal was presented by a consultant established in Mexico, the applicable value-added tax will be 0%, in accordance with Article 29, section IV, paragraph a) of Mexico's VAT Act, as these are technical services that were engaged from abroad.

If a currency other than Canadian dollars is used in the proposal, the consultant should indicate the total cost in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes, detailing the exchange rate used.

G. Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Decision

The proposal, including all relevant attachments, must be received by the CEC Secretariat by **12:00 AM EST on 4 October 2024**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to sgagnon@cec.org

Samantha Gagnon

Lead, Advisory Groups and Private Sector Engagement

sgagnon@cec.org

Proposal format must be in Adobe PDF format. Once the proposal has been submitted electronically, the CEC will confirm receipt within three business days.

If receipt is not confirmed by e-mail within this time, **applicants must contact the CEC**.

The CEC Secretariat intends to select the consultant and notify the applicants within a reasonable period following the proposal submission deadline.



Annex D.1 - SCHEDULE D (Individuals)

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE, IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

ACCEPTANCE

hereby declare that I accept to serve as a consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

(If you accept to serve as a consultant, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, I may set out measures I intend to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____



Annex D.2 - SCHEDULE D (Companies or Institutions)

CONSULTANT’S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____,

acting as the legal representative of _____

ACCEPTANCE

hereby declare that _____ accepts to serve as a consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

(If you accept to serve as a consultant, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)

_____ **is impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to _____ impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

_____ **is impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intends to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as _____ impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, _____ may set out measures it intends to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____