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## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

for the initiative

### **Reaching Horizon 2030: an Environmental Outlook for North American Cooperation**

**Commission for Environmental Cooperation**

**2024**



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## I. Overview

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is requesting proposals from prospective consultants to support the implementation of the initiative *Reaching Horizon 2030: an Environmental Outlook for North American Cooperation (H-2030)*.

The 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](http://www.cec.org).

## II. Terms of Reference

### A. Overview and Scope

The global community recognizes that we are in a critical decade where meeting 2030 climate change and biodiversity goals is essential to keeping global warming within 1.5°C and addressing biodiversity loss. In the 2023 CEC Council Statement, the three North American countries underlined “the importance of promoting collective action to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.”

The CEC work program offers a unique opportunity to support North America's leadership as it contributes to key international goals. The *Reaching Horizon 2030: an Environmental Outlook for North American Cooperation (H-2030)* initiative will help inform CEC work so that it supports the Parties' commitments to these climate and biodiversity targets.

The CEC's H-2030 initiative will help anticipate and prepare for emerging environmental and climate challenges that North America will face leading to 2030 and beyond. Through expert engagement and public consultations in fall 2024 (through the CEC's [Joint Public Advisory Committee](#)), the initiative will identify and issue recommendations on how the CEC could be most strategic in addressing the triple planetary crisis and supporting international goals, and addressing these challenges through its strategies, programs and partnerships. The initiative will also include the design of two or three pilot projects, guided by expert input, which will serve to initiate and test new collaborative areas of work under the CEC at a later stage (as described in the section below).

The H-2030 initiative will be structured around the following three workstreams, with a focus on specific priority topics<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Please find more information about these priority topics [here](#).



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- Workstream 1: **Climate Change** — will help identify emerging priority mitigation and adaptation issues, strategies and actions, losses and damages, and climate financing opportunities across the region from a human rights perspective, especially for populations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.
  - Priority topic: **Earth Observation Technologies and Other GIS Tools**
- Workstream 2: **Pollution** — will seek guidance on identifying priority areas and technologies for emissions reduction strategies and actions across the region.
  - Priority topic: **Sustainable Transportation**
- Workstream 3: **Biodiversity Loss** — will help identify focus issues for biodiversity conservation strategies - and consequently of local communities and Indigenous peoples whose livelihoods are closely tied to nature (in line with the international goals) - and actions across the region.
  - Priority topic: **Ecosystem Services / Sustainable Use and Management of Biodiversity**

The following cross-cutting themes will also be integrated in each of the workstreams:

- Indigenous Knowledge (IK) /Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)
- Environmental Justice
- Subnational governance/action (including cities/urban dimensions)
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Private Sector Engagement

For more information about the initiative, please visit the CEC website at:

[http://www.cec.org/files/documents/operational\\_plans/project-description-h2023-en.pdf](http://www.cec.org/files/documents/operational_plans/project-description-h2023-en.pdf)

## B. Description of Services

The consultant shall coordinate with the CEC's designated contacts to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Develop a workplan. The consultant will present and discuss a proposed work plan during an initial teleconference with the CEC's designated contacts and the initiative's appointed government leads, in order to confirm project activities, deliverables and timeline. The workplan should provide information about the methodologies that the consultant will use to achieve the expected outcomes.
2. Conduct research and consult with the CEC's designated contacts and the appointed government leads to identify a draft list of experts that could be invited to form a Roster of Experts.<sup>2</sup> The consultant will propose candidates for the Roster of Experts using the following criteria:

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• <sup>2</sup> A Roster of Experts can be tapped to provide specific expert advice on the selected topics during the implementation of the initiative. The Roster will include a diverse array of governmental and nongovernmental



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- a. That the potential experts represent areas of expertise that might not be adequately represented by the appointed government leads.
  - b. That the potential experts strengthen the integration of the cross-cutting themes defined above.
3. Synthesize the information provided by the appointed government leads and the experts (through meetings, teleconferences, calls, etc.) into the development of a comprehensive, analytical H-2030 report. To produce the report, the consultant will coordinate with the CEC's designated contacts to:
- Support and participate in monthly or bi-monthly (to be determined) videoconferences with the appointed government leads (and at times with the Roster of Experts) to seek their input for the overall assessment and the three priority topics.
  - Produce a Draft Report Outline to be proposed to the CEC's designated contacts.
  - Work with the CEC's designated contacts to coordinate the review of the draft report outline.
  - Review project-related documents and conduct surveys (or virtual interviews) with selected actors and experts, if necessary.
  - Conduct complementary research, including desk-top research and direct, targeted contact with additional experts, as defined by the appointed government leads or the CEC's designated contacts.
  - Participate in an in-person public meeting organized by the CEC to engage with key actors and consult with the public on the priority issues. More specifically, the consultant is expected to:
    - Propose an agenda for the public meeting.
    - Recommend key participants that could be invited (outside those already involved).
    - Facilitate the public meeting.
    - Prepare summary notes identifying the main conclusions.
    - Factor into the H-2030 Report the produced JPAC recommendations.
  - Include an overarching assessment of key environmental issues, challenges, and emerging trends to 2030 in North America under the triple planetary crisis (building on previous CEC assessments and state of the environment reports). The overarching assessment will consider each workstream and help identify:

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experts (e.g., from academia, advocacy groups, NGOs, or industry). The Roster will be expected to remain available for consultation and advice over a period of 7-8 months to inform and/or contribute to the development of the H-2030 report (terms of engagement to be developed).



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- Emerging priority climate mitigation and adaptation issues, strategies and actions across the region.
- Priority areas and technologies for emissions reduction strategies and actions across the region.
- Focus issues for biodiversity conservation strategies and actions across the region.
- Include special sections (or “chapters”) providing strategic recommendations outlining concrete actions for the North American region to take by 2030 on the three following priority topics<sup>3</sup>:
  - Earth Observation Technologies and Other GIS Tools (Workstream 1: Climate Change).
  - Sustainable Transportation (Workstream 2: Pollution).
  - Ecosystem Services / Sustainable Use and Management of Biodiversity (Workstream 3: Biodiversity Loss).
  - Specific questions to be explored under the priority topics will be defined with the CEC’s designated contacts and the appointed government leads.
- Include recommendations for potential pilot projects that could be supported by the CEC to advance the priority topics within each of these special sections. The number of potential pilot projects to be recommended will be defined through the discussions with the appointed government leads but will not exceed three recommendations per priority topic. Note that although the H-2030 report will include general recommendations for potential pilot projects, the development of the detailed pilot project proposals will be coordinated separately, and thus will not fall under the responsibility of the consultant.
- Provide information, for both the overarching assessment and the special sections, about:
  - Shared priorities and goals in North America.
  - Main environmental challenges that North America will face.
  - Concrete actions that the North American region should take.
  - Integration of the four cross-cutting themes defined above.
  - Potential CEC strategies, programs and partnerships to contribute to addressing these challenges.
- Review and verify preliminary findings (through consultations with the CEC’s designated contacts) and incorporate revisions into the analysis.
- Complete detailed review and prepare the final report.

The consultant will produce a first draft H-2030 report outline and will work with the appointed government leads and the CEC’s designated contacts to finalize the draft report.

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<sup>3</sup> Please find more information about these priority topics [here](#).



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The timeline presented below is approximate and may change. The CEC invites prospective consultants to modify the schedule suggested, based on their evaluation of this proposal, keeping in mind that the work must be completed by the identified end date.

Task	Deliverable(s)	Approximate Dates
Propose a workplan and methodology	Draft workplan and methodology Call to present workplan and methodology	30 August 2024
Propose a Roster of Experts	Annotated list of potential experts to include in the Roster of Experts	27 October 2024
Propose a Draft report outline to the CEC's designated contacts.	First draft report outline	24 January 2025
Deliver a first draft report	Revised draft document	9 May 2025
Deliver a revised draft report addressing initial comments	Draft document	18 July 2025
Deliver a final report addressing final comments	<b>Final document</b>	26 September 2025

### C. Periodic Reporting Requirements

The Consultant will prepare brief, factual monthly status reports 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.
- Actions that should be taken by the CEC's designated contacts to facilitate the project.

All communications, including teleconferences and expert consultation meetings, will be supported by the CEC's designated contacts. Prospective consultants should not include these costs in the budgets submitted with their proposals. The cost of travel expenses related to the in-person meeting **should not** be included in the proposal, as they will be supported by the CEC outside the consultant's budget.

The Consultant will work in their own offices.

### D. Quality of Deliverables

The final report, prepared in English, shall include a **five-page executive summary**, including key highlights and findings, and **not to exceed 50 pages** (excluding annexes), in total.



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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. Technical review and style correction are required to ensure the quality of the materials and will be the responsibility of the consultant. The consultant will submit to the CEC's designated contacts all written material (including complete drafts and final reports) in Microsoft Word, following the format of the CEC's [Document 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.

After 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 then return the document(s) to the consultant for appropriate corrections, all at no extra cost.

For the revision of the final report, the CEC will require a period of between 20 to 25 business days, since it will be circulated among the participating communities for their comment.

#### **A. 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 fulfill these requirements.

### **III. Requirements and evaluation of the proposal**

#### **A. Mandatory Requirements**

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

1. In-country Ability



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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. 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

In addition to understanding the subject matter, the consultant must possess competence and experience in:

- Conducting research on environmental topics including interdisciplinary, social-ecological expertise
- Working with international organizations
- Synthesizing and analyzing information from multiple sources
- Writing technical reports in English

The consultant must be fluent in both written and spoken English; proficiency in Spanish is desirable.

## 4. Proposal Submission

It is the intention of the CEC Secretariat to include the **Terms of Reference (Section II)** of this document in the contract negotiated with the successful applicant. Therefore, prospective consultants should refer to these 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.

### i. 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.

### ii. Workplan and Methodology

- Provide a detailed and comprehensive work plan and methodology that clearly demonstrates how key activities under Section B (Description of Services) will be undertaken.
- Identify suggested modifications to the Terms of Reference, and the reasons for such modifications, if applicable.





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**iii. 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).

**iv. 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 applicable taxes.
- Clearly identify total hours worked under and the total cost (including taxes) of this project.

**Annex A: Corporate Information**

- Identify relevant corporate information.

**Annex B: Letters of Recommendation and References**

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

**Annex C: Résumés for Each Team Member**

- Résumés must be submitted for all project team members.

**Annex D: 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 E: Examples of Previous Work**

Provide two samples of previous relevant work.

**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 ten (10) pages, exclusive of annexes described above 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:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Point Rating</b>
Understanding of initiative requirements	20
Suitability of the proposed approach and workplan	20
Consultant's experience and qualifications and competency of key personnel	40



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Consultant's ability to show analytical capabilities and effective writing	10
Adequacy of Budget	10
<i>Total</i>	100

A minimum score of 80 will be required for a proposal to be eligible for further consideration. Cost efficiency will be considered in the evaluation.

#### E. Estimated Level of Resources Required

The budget for this activity will **not exceed C\$100,000** (Canadian dollars), including professional fees and expenses. Reimbursable expenses are detailed in the CEC standard contract, available upon request.

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 were 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, the consultant should indicate the total cost of the professional services in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes, and according to the exchange rate in force at the submission date.

#### F. Financial and Other Confidential Information

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

#### G. Conflict of Interest

"Conflict of interest" means, but is not limited to, a situation where a consultant's personal interest is sufficiently connected with professional duties under the contract, such that it results in a reasonable apprehension that said personal interest may influence the exercise of professional responsibilities under the contract. For example, a direct conflict of interest exists when the consultant is also a CEC government official or is related to or closely affiliated with a CEC government official, CEC staff member or third party involved with the performance of the services.

The consultant will inform the CEC Secretariat of any circumstance that existed prior to the execution of this contract or that could manifest during the performance of this contract, which could constitute a conflict of interest. The consultant will complete and sign, on behalf of all his or her personnel, the attached *Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence* (see Annex). The Consultant will also take note of the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

#### Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Decision



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The proposal, including all relevant attachments, must be received by the CEC Secretariat offices by **17:00 EDT on 12 August 2024**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

**Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to [rinfiesta@cec.org](mailto:rinfiesta@cec.org) and [jacasis@cec.org](mailto:jacasis@cec.org).** Proposal format may be in Microsoft Word or 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 contact person is:

Rocío de la Infiesta  
Assistant to the Director, Government Relations, Strategy and Performance  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation  
[rinfiesta@cec.org](mailto:rinfiesta@cec.org)

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



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ANNEX (see also Schedule D in CEC standard contract)

**CONSULTANT'S  
DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT**

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCEPTANCE**

hereby declare that I accept to serve as 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: \_\_\_\_\_