

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**BIODIVERSITY APPROACHES – ENVIRONMENT SCAN
AND BARRIER ANALYSIS**

Date 24/03/2023

Context

Gold Standard is a civil society NGO and a standards body that promotes the best that can be achieved in climate and development projects. It was established in 2003 by [WWF](#) and other international NGOs as a best practice standard to ensure that projects which reduce carbon emissions also deliver credible, high-integrity sustainable development benefits. In close collaboration with its network of partners (civil society, governments, and private sector), Gold Standard leads several global innovation programs and supports 2000+ climate and development projects in over 80 countries worldwide.

Gold Standard has a keen interest in biodiversity credit/claims – a term generally used indistinctly for biodiversity impact claims (an assertion that investments/actions resulted in positive biodiversity impacts; cannot be used for offsetting negative

impacts on biodiversity) or for biodiversity offsets (tradeable units used to neutralize” negative impacts on biodiversity under the mitigation hierarchy). There are multiple proponents of biodiversity credit/claims, however each may have a different way of measuring and delivering them. Regardless of the method followed to develop a biodiversity credit/claim, the intent is common, which is to secure funding for biodiversity impact measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) in order to address the biodiversity emergency the planet is facing.

Overview and Purpose of the Assignment

Gold Standard is seeking the services of an implementing partner who can help us better understand:

The demand for biodiversity credit/claims

Mapping current and potential users of biodiversity credit/claims (i.e. who they are, and why they are interested in biodiversity credit/claims):

- Where is the demand for biodiversity credit/claims coming from?
- What are the reasons why stakeholders do or don't identify, manage, and MRV biodiversity impacts?
- The different claims associated with biodiversity credit/claims (offsets and claims) by stakeholder group and intended use (i.e. offsets, contribution to impacts, others)

The supply of methods and tools for biodiversity credit/claims

- Which are the methods and tools used by stakeholders to identify, manage, and MRV biodiversity impacts with the aim of generating biodiversity credit/claims? Why are these methods and tools preferred over others?
- What are the most used and trusted standards for investing in biodiversity impacts?
- To what extent can existing carbon market tools contribute to the development of biodiversity impact tools.
- What demand is there for measuring claims of biodiversity and climate mitigation outcomes holistically and what tools would enable claiming for both

(e.g. like nature based climate solutions – could we have biodiversity climate solutions)

- What methods or tools are missing that could enhance the flow of investment or help overcome
- barriers to investments into biodiversity impacts?

The Gold Standard will use the outcome of this assessment to understand whether, and if so, how it can drive more investment into such initiatives by using and developing its products and services.

The primary tasks of the implementing partner will be as follows, with more information set out in the following section:

1. To identify the key operators/proponents, the main corporate and private investors and the main public players interested in using or interested in generating biodiversity credit/claims
2. To identify the key drivers incentivizing purchase of biodiversity credit/claims including identification of the main corporate and private investors and the main public players (DFI/MDBs) who are expressing an interest in this market. It will be important to clarify what the preferences of potential biodiversity credit/claim buyers are i.e. what claims are needed by buyers.
3. How are people buying –ie what business models ec. Funds, corporate holdings purchasing for reporting purposes, other?
4. To identify any existing and emerging barriers to the take up of biodiversity credit/claims the main corporate and private investors and the main public players in biodiversity credit/claim initiatives, this will include the likely sustainability reporting trends in the next 5 yrs.
5. To make recommendations for how current and potential GS products and services could help address the identified barriers withholding investment into biodiversity credit/claim initiatives

The intended purpose of these tasks is to identify how GS can make a contribution to the sector,

Description of the Assignment

The project is expected to have three main tasks:

1. **Tasks 1 - Identification:** Literature Review, Desktop stakeholder mapping; desktop methods and tools mapping; development of questionnaires; reach out to stakeholders.

2. **Task 2 - Engagement:** Interviews. Applicants should use annex A as a guide for developing their own technical proposal. Results should be disaggregated by stakeholder group.
3. **Task 3 - Recommendations:** Develop a report with findings disaggregated by stakeholder group.

Anticipated outputs and timeline

Output	Start date	End date
Identify and contract implementing partner	24/04/23	05/05/2023
Task 1:		01/06/2023
Task 2:		14/07/2023
Task 3:		01/08/2023

Methodology and Work Plan

Applicants should submit proposals relevant to the purpose and description of the assignment including all elements outlined below. Proposals should be no more than ten pages.

- (1) Overview of the organisation(s), highlighting relevant experience and evidence of related projects;
- (2) CVs of the participating consultant(s) demonstrating suitable qualifications and experience;
- (3) A high-level work plan for the assignment taking account of key touchpoints, including:
 - (a) intended approach for phase I
 - (b) envisioned approach for phase ii
 - (c) envisioned approach for phase iii
- (4) A budget, broken down between the three phases outlined above.

The proposed budget must include day rates and the total price of the assignment as well as payment terms. All figures should be presented in USD.

Please note that whilst our maximum budget is US\$50,000, our tender evaluation will consider price as one of the key factors.

Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following formal criteria:

- 1) **Timeliness.** The proposals must be submitted on or before the stated deadline in order to be considered for further evaluation.
- 2) **Proposal Format.** The proposals shall follow the requested format and include all of its elements.
- 3) **Proposed Scope of Work.** Gold Standard will assess to what extent the proposal clearly addresses the needs of the assignment.
- 4) **Qualifications and Team.** Gold Standard will assess whether the proposed team possesses expertise and relevant experience to assure successful completion of the work and delivery of good quality outputs.
- 5) **Work plan.** The proposed work plan and approach will be assessed for efficiency, relevance and technical feasibility.
- 6) **Budget.** Gold Standard will assess if the budget is reasonable, adequate for the proposed work and provides good value for money. Budgets should not exceed US\$50,000

Contract Award

Gold Standard will award a contract to the proposal that best meets the needs of our project, the requirements of the funding institution and the principles of the Gold Standard procurement policy. We may also find that no proposal completely fulfils these needs and choose not to award a contract or alternatively to negotiate directly with one or more of the contractors to refine their proposals.

Proposals may be disqualified on the following grounds:

- Submission of an incomplete proposal
- Illegal conduct or attempts to influence the evaluation process
- Material misrepresentation in the proposal
- Determination that the contractor is in a conflict of interest or is unlikely to fulfil the terms or conditions of the proposal
- Requested changes by a contractor in the proposal representations made after the closing date
- Changes in laws or regulations affecting the solicitation

Confidentiality

Proposals should not include proprietary or confidential information. Each recipient of this Request for Proposals should treat the contents of the solicitation as business confidential and should use and disclose the contents of the solicitation only for the purposes of preparing and submitting a proposal.

Applications and closing date

Please submit your complete proposal via email to [Giancarlo Raschio](#) no later than **24th April 2023, 18:00 CET.**

Indicative timeline	Due date
Release of the Request for Proposals	24/03/2023
Closing date of the application process	24/04/2023
Indicative date for award of a contract	05/05/2023

Annex A – Guidance questions for the development of a technical proposal to undertake the assignment

Aim - Better understand demand for biodiversity impacts credit/claims, main tools being used/emerging and the principal barriers withholding investment into biodiversity impacts

Biodiversity impact credit/claims: for the purpose of this interview we identify two types:

- a. Biodiversity offsets (tradeable units used to neutralize” negative impacts on biodiversity under the mitigation hierarchy)*
- b. Biodiversity claims (an assertion that investments/actions resulted in positive biodiversity impacts; cannot be used for offsetting negative impacts on biodiversity)*

ID	QUESTIONS
1	Type of organization: 1. Corporate 2. Impact fund manager 3. Asset owners (Development Finance Institution, Insurance) 4. Private investor (not corporate) 5. NGO
2	Is your organization investing in biodiversity <u>impact measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV)</u> (Yes/No)?
	IF YES (if no, move to Orange section below)

3	<p>NOTE: If investing in multiple activities, identify the main three activities (ranked by area size ha) and/or investment (USD). Then, answer all the following questions for each of the three activities your organization is investing in.</p>
4	<p>What is the purpose of the investment in biodiversity impacts MRV?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biodiversity offsets - Biodiversity credit/claims - Carbon credit/claims - Adaptation benefits - Combination of the above - Other
5	<p>Size in hectares of the intervention?</p>
6	<p>Size of investment (USD):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <100K b. 100-500K c. 500K-1MM d. 1-5MM e. 5-10MM f. >10MM
	<p>Where is the biodiversity intervention implemented? Please indicate country, region, and district)</p>
7	<p>On which activity type you're investing to generate biodiversity impacts?</p> <p>Forestry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afforestation/Reforestation - Forest regeneration - Avoided deforestation - Improved forest management - Natural forest management - Agroforestry - Silvopasture - Fire management <p>Grasslands</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoided conversion - Conservation <p>Agriculture and livestock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nutrient management - Reduced tillage - Cover crops - Irrigation management - Improved crop rotation - Soil amendments - Sustainable grazing – sustainable intensification - Sustainable grazing – improve feed <p>Blue carbon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mangrove protection - Mangrove afforestation/reforestation - Restoration of saltmarshes or peatlands - Avoided conversion of saltmarshes or peatlands - Aquatic biomass growth (seagrass, macroalgae) - Restoration of aquatic biomass
8	Standard issuing the biodiversity credit/claim?
9	Methodology used to issue biodiversity product? Why using this methodology?
10	Technology and/or index used to measure (MRV) biodiversity impacts? Why using this technology?
11	Are these biodiversity products verified by an independent, third-party auditor? Who is the auditor? If not, why not?
12	For what purpose they want to use biodiversity credit/claim?
13	If you intent to use the biodiversity credit/claim to make a claim, what claim do you intend to make?
14	<p>Which of the following reflects best the claim you intend to make regarding biodiversity improvements?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The organization’s intervention is contributing to the protection of local ecosystems and biodiversity in geography “A”

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The organization’s intervention is reducing forest fragmentation in geography “A” 3. The organization’s intervention has reduced forest loss by Y% and has increased forest connectivity by Z% over the assessment period, thus contributing to the protection of local ecosystems and biodiversity in geography “A” 4. The organization’s intervention has reduced forest loss by Y% and has increased forest connectivity by Z% over the assessment period, which resulted in an improvement of the habitat of endangered specie “X” in geography “A” 5. The organization’s intervention has reduced forest loss by Y% and has increased forest connectivity by Z% over the assessment period, which resulted in an improvement of the habitat of endangered specie “X” and an increase in 10% of the population of endangered specie “X” in geography “A” 6. The organization has offset the residual negative impacts on biodiversity generated by its operations in geography “A” by retiring a certain amount of biodiversity offsets.
15	<p>If your investment is related to the <u>generation and sale</u> of biodiversity offsets, please indicate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where will your organization trade biodiversity offsets?: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only locally among buyers within the ecosystem/jurisdiction where the biodiversity products are generated • Within and/or outside the ecosystem/jurisdiction where the biodiversity products are generated, for example, in international markets 2. Do you expect the product to be allowed to be traded more than once?
16	<p>If your investment is related to the <u>purchase and retirement</u> of biodiversity offsets, please indicate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where will your organization purchase biodiversity offset from:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only from projects in the same ecosystem/jurisdiction where the residual biodiversity impact is located. • From projects within and/or outside the ecosystem/jurisdiction where the residual biodiversity impact is located (e.g. international markets) <p>2. Does your organization has a preference on purchasing biodiversity offsets directly from projects? Or is it open to also purchase such offsets from intermediaries/brokers?</p>
17	<p>What target, commitment or reporting system is the claim made against? E.g. CSR, SBTn, other</p>
	IF NO
18	<p>In your view, what are the barriers for investing in biodiversity impacts? Please elaborate how these barriers affect willingness to invest in generating and MRVing biodiversity positive impacts.</p> <p>How could GS help remove these barriers?</p>