

Terms of Reference

Title	Consulting Services to Develop an Environmental and Social Risk Management System for the Tree Crop Development Authority (TCDA).
Duration of Assignment	September 2026 to March 2027
Type of Contract	Service Contract
Supervision	Tree Crops Development Authority and the GPSCP II PMU

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Introduction to the GPSCP Phase II Program

The Ghana Private Sector Competitiveness Program II (GPSCP II) is a program initiated through a bilateral initiative between the Switzerland Government through the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Government of Ghana. This program is being implemented jointly by NIRAS International Consulting and Proforest. By building on the achievements of GPSCP Phase I, the second phase (GPSCP II) aims at continuously improving the enabling environment for the cashew and palm oil sectors and contribute to higher private sector productivity and competitiveness by fostering inclusive and sustainable growth through enhanced trade and competitiveness.

The **Strategic Cooperation Partnership (SCP) under the GPSCP II** seeks to support the **Tree Crops Development Authority (TCDA)** with its mandate to regulate the cashew and oil palm sectors and facilitate high-impact reform initiatives. The following Terms of Reference (ToRs) are launched under the SCP considering the environmental and social risks within the TCDA's operations. To ensure responsible development of the sector, a well-structured approach towards managing environmental and social risks is required.

The purpose of these Terms of Reference is to develop an effective environmental and social risk management system (ESRMS). A system which will enable TCDA to systematically identify, analyse, and mitigate the environmental and social risks associated with its operations. The ESRMS must be designed to comply with national laws as well as relevant international standards. Overall, the system should serve to promote greater transparency, accountability, and stakeholder confidence in TCDA, thereby creating the mechanisms for long-term sustainability and responsible growth of the tree crop sector in Ghana.

The following deliverables/results are to be produced.

1. Inception Report
2. An institutional Gap Assessment Report, based on review of TCDA's policies, processes, and institutional frameworks in the context of Environmental and Social risk management
3. An Environmental and Social Risks Analysis Report, mapping the Environmental and Social risks categories posed by TCDA's mandate in the two value chains operations.
4. Draft Environmental and Social Risk Management System (ESRMS) including:
 - o Policy
 - o Standard Operational Procedures, tools and templates as relevant

- o Institutional arrangements (i.e., roles, responsibilities, approval and decision-making flowcharts, etc)
- o Grievance Redress Mechanism framework
- o Monitoring and reporting formats

5. Training Materials and two training workshops
6. Report on the development of an ESRMS as a pilot with a selected value chain actor
7. Final ESRMS Manual in print-ready and digital formats

Scope of Work

Inception and planning

The planning and inception activities should start with a kick-off meeting with the leadership of TCDA to agree on scope, timeline and deliverables including timeline for comments and approval. Subsequently, an inception report which captures the proposed methodology, timeline, data collection tools and approach, and stakeholder engagement plan should be prepared.

Institutional gap analysis and stakeholder consultation

This will entail review of existing Environmental and Social management Framework documents including policies, strategies, operational manuals, and sustainability frameworks, to establish what kind of system exist, if any. These documents must be provided by the TCDA.

Secondly, interview the relevant agencies; Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Forestry Commission (FC), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), Lands Commission, Ministry of Labour, Job and Employment, to identify any national regulation and other requirements to setting up an Environmental and Social Risk Management system in Ghana.

Thirdly, conduct a comparison of the existing Environmental and Social management Framework against the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework to identify gaps in complying with the international standards. And assess if certification standards such as ISO (including 14001; 45001; 31000) would be relevant for TCDA.

Finally, summarise these findings and use as a backdrop against which to fully *develop an Environmental and Social Risk Management System (ESRMS)*.

Identification and Analysis of Environmental and Social Risks based on TCDA risks profile

Identify and assess environmental and social risks directly associated with TCDA's operations and define risk categories within TCDA's mandate. The ESRMS should include tools or methods to enable TCDA identify risks and mitigation measures within the palm and cashew value chains.

Secondly, design the procedures for risk categorisation with defined levels of high, moderate, and low to facilitate consistent risk assessment across TCDA's operations. To be included in the Standard Operational Guidelines (ref below).

Develop an Environmental and Social Risk Management System (ESRMS)

Develop a comprehensive ESRMS that aligns with TCDA's mandate, national regulations and is according to The World Bank's **Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)**. This include developing the following:

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- *Policy Framework*
The policy framework will state TCDA's Commitment, define the Standards which TCDA will comply by; and provide the principles that will inform the approach of TCDA towards environmental and social risk management. The framework will also define the goals and targets for the *ESRMS*.
- *Standard Operational Procedures*
The operational procedures will define the screening and classification of risks; define the planning process for formulation of associated mitigation hierarchy; formulation of the management plans and monitoring hereof including process for defining indicators, timelines for reporting, and the establishment of internal audit mechanisms for effective tracking, evaluation, and continued improvement; grievance redress mechanism; and the governing of the system including approval procedures and responsibilities.
- *Resources, tools and templates*
Develop practical tools to guide the application of the ESRMS, including risk classification assessment forms, screening checklists, templates of the Management Plans (ESMPs), stakeholder engagement including community consultation templates, grievance redress mechanism forms, and standardized monitoring and reporting templates to ensure consistent application across TCDA's operations. Design a system for record keeping including tracking and storage.
- *TCDA capacity and departmental roles*
Assess TCDA's capacity and define roles of departments regarding the implementation of the ESRMS. This should include recommended staffing and expertise requirements as well as coordination mechanisms with relevant agencies such as the EPA to ensure effective and harmonized environmental and social risk management.
- *Grievance redress mechanism framework*
Develop a procedure for handling grievances which aligns with UN Guiding Principles and international best practices.
- *Monitoring, Reporting and Continuous Improvement Plan (MRCIP)*
Develop a Monitoring, Reporting and Continuous Improvement plan for ESRMS that ensures the system works in practice, remains compliant, and improves over time. The MRCIP should be practical, and embedded in management decision-making, not just a compliance exercise.

- *Capacity building*
Capacity Needs Assessment: Plan for continuous learning/ updating of staff (beyond the training provided as part of this consultancy), potential need for training of partners.

Validation

The draft ESRMS should be presented at a validation workshop attended by TCDA and relevant stakeholders. Feedback from the validation should be incorporated into the ESRMS and then finalised. *Specific timeline for feedback and final approval will be agreed during inception.*

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Capacity Building and piloting

Conduct training sessions for TCDA staff on the effective application of the ESRMS. For these sessions develop supporting training materials and presentation slides to facilitate system implementation/roll out. A general introductory training for all staff followed by a tailored training for specific staff based on expertise or roles could suffice.

As a follow-up to the tailored training, TCDA will be supported by the consultant to lead the development of an ESRMS with a selected value chain actor. This will entail the practical usage of the tools and methods proposed by the consultant for risk identification, classification and mitigation, and the roll out of an ESRMS. This pilot is to ensure that TCDA is adequately equipped to support the development of ESRMS for actors within the palm and cashew value chains.

Coordination and Oversight

The firm will report directly to the TCDA, working closely with relevant value chain managers. Oversight will be provided by the PMU of the GPSCP II (James.Akossah@Proforest.net).

Duration and Level of Effort

The duration of the assignment is six (6) months, with an expected level of effort of 90 expert days.

Technical Qualifications

Firm Qualifications

The consulting firm should demonstrate:

- Proven track record in Environmental and Social Risk Management Systems
- At least 10 years of institutional experience.
- Demonstrable knowledge on international Environmental and Social standards
- Demonstrated experience supporting government regulatory agencies, international organizations, and private sector actors.
- Access to and ability to deploy a multidisciplinary team with expertise in:
 - Natural resources management
 - Environmental and Social Risk Assessment
 - Geographic Information System (GIS)
 - Capacity building, training, and stakeholder engagement

Team Composition

The firm should propose a team that includes, at a minimum:

- **Environmental and Social Expert**
Provides overall technical leadership, ensures alignment with national and international safeguards, coordinates the team, leads consultations, and oversees all deliverables.
- **Social Development Expert**
Focuses on social risks such as labour, community engagement, and grievance redress, and supports the development of social guidelines and templates.
- **Natural Resource Management Expert**
Provides expertise on environmental risks related to land use, biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable agricultural practices, ensuring strong environmental inputs to the ESRMS.
- **GIS Expert (Optional)**
Supports spatial analysis and mapping of environmental and social risk areas to enhance risk screening and decision-making.
- **Training & Capacity Building Expert**
Skilled in adult learning, participatory training, and institutional strengthening.

Financial Proposal must include the following:

- Professional fees for team members
- Workshops and stakeholder consultations
- Development of tools and templates (not buying of equipment).
- Production of training and sensitization materials
- Operational expenses (travel, logistics, reporting)

Submission of request to participate

- Via e-mail to scp-gpscp2@niras.dk
- Deadline by 7th August 2026

Contents of the request to participate

- The tender/bidder must submit the following documents
- Technical proposal 10 pages
- CVs 3 pages
- References 2
- Financial proposal/offer