



Appendix A.

Term of Reference for a Consultancy on Assessment of Institutional and Legal Framework on Wildlife Protection in the Greater Gola Landscape of Liberia and Sierra Leone

1. Background

The Greater Gola Landscape is situated at the heart of the Upper Guinean biodiversity hotspot. It is a transboundary region encompassing key protected areas across Sierra Leone and Liberia: the Gola Rainforest National Park (Sierra Leone), the Gola Forest National Park (Liberia), the Foya Proposed Protected Area (Liberia), the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (Sierra Leone), as well as surrounding areas of buffer zone and community-managed forests. Together, these create the largest remaining single block of the Upper Guinea Forest. The total size of this landscape is around 460,000 hectares.

The Greater Gola Landscape is rich in biodiversity, supporting viable populations of flagship, endemic, and globally threatened species. It is home to sixty (60) species of global conservation concern. Over eight hundred ninety-nine (899) vascular plants (including 232 trees, 21 threatened), forty-nine (49) mammals (9 threatened), Three Hundred and Thirty (330) bird species, and forty-three (43) amphibians have been recorded and are dependent on this forest landscape. The vegetation and soils of the Greater Gola Landscape are a significant carbon sink of great value, and the forest provides a wide range of other ecosystem services.

The people of the Gola Landscape, with an estimated population of about 65,000, are not just inhabitants but custodians of this precious ecosystem. They share a common culture, tradition, and lifestyle across the boundary of the two countries. These forest-based communities play a critical role in the use and management of forest and forest lands for commerce, agriculture, and conservation. Both countries share a common history of peace after conflicts, forest-based culture and socio-economy, and a commonly shared landscape for biodiversity and species. The governments of both countries recognized the importance of the similarity in history, culture, and values. Hence, a policy of integration and cooperation on sustainable natural resources management has been strengthened under a Partnership Agreement over the years, including The Gola Transboundary Peace Park Agreement.

2. The Gola Transboundary Peace Park Agreement

In 2011, under the auspices of the Mano River Union, the Sierra Leone and Liberian governments signed a Peace Park Agreement to protect the Landscape, leading to transboundary cooperation between

the two countries. The progress of the country's collaboration under the Agreement was assessed in 2019, resulting in an updated Agreement signed in 2020. The countries' renewed cooperation is focused on the management, research, protection, and conservation of the Greater Gola Transboundary Peace Park, and they emphasized their "mutual interest in continuing and strengthening joint management and conservation of national parks close to or contiguous with the border to conserve shared resources and ecosystems."

The Gola Transboundary Peace Park Agreement provides a framework for the joint management and conservation of the Gola Forest landscape. This agreement establishes a bilateral, inter-governmental Coordination Committee to direct and coordinate management and conservation activities. To further operationalize coordination between the countries and implementation of the Agreement, an instrument that incorporates all the legal opportunities and challenges across both countries regarding managing, utilizing, and conserving wildlife resources needs to be developed. This will help inform a collective approach to managing the landscape while identifying gaps and harmonizing efforts toward a more coordinated management of the transboundary landscape, including those of law enforcement.

Law enforcement activities that complement the conservation of wildlife resources in the landscape are a significant element of cooperation between institutions, organizations, and agencies involved in the transboundary landscape. To increase coordination, a clear legal and policy assessment of both countries' legal and policy instruments must be prioritized. Therefore, the Transboundary Coordination Committee considers the need to explore the process of harmonizing legal instruments for joint patrols and legal procedures on combatting wildlife trafficking and strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies on forest and wildlife resources in the transboundary landscape.

With support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through its West Africa Low Carbon Emission and Development (WABiLED) Project, the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL) seeks to engage a consultant to conduct a legal and policy assessment within the Gola Transboundary Peace Park framework to help inform coordinated law enforcement efforts.

3. Objectives of the Consultancy

The objectives of the assignment are:

- ✓ To carry out a broad investigation of the policy and legislation frameworks on wildlife crime, prosecution of offenders, and specific reference to fines and conviction in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

- ✓ To examine and provide information on law enforcement agencies and their roles/capacity /protocols related to wildlife traffic and protection laws on endangered species in Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- ✓ Identify gaps from the above-mentioned assessments and provide recommendations for short— and long-term options to address them.
- ✓ To identify, recommend, and design possible and applicable frameworks for a harmonized approach to the management of wildlife crime in the Greater Gola Landscape based on the international partnership agreement of the Mano River Union (MRU), the Gola Transboundary Peace Park Agreement and the examined/investigated Wildlife Policies and Legislations in Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- ✓ Prepare a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for implementation of enabling the proposed framework on shared application of policy and institutional coordination for the management of wildlife resources in the Greater Gola Landscape

4. Scope and Methodology of Implementation of the Consultancy

The Consultant supports the SCNL and other conservation partners in accessing the policy and legal framework, including the institutional arrangements within Liberia, that support the implementation of Liberia and Sierra Leone's coordination efforts under the Gola Transboundary Peace Park Agreement. The Consultant will work with the Sierra Leonean Counterpart hired for a similar review in Sierra Leone to identify gaps and propose a harmonization plan that would inform a cooperative MoU between the Forestry Development Authority of Liberia and their Sierra Leonean counterpart. The Consultancy task is expected to be implemented within a month.

5. Administration and Reporting

The WABiLED Project's project administrator, who provides funding support to this Consultancy, is located at the Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia. The Project Administrator will, therefore, handle all issues related to logistics, management, and general administration of the Consultancy. The Project Administrator will work in collaboration with the project's ESPB Project Manager.

The consultancy's report will be submitted to the Focal Point on Gola Transboundary coordination, the Forestry Development Authority Liberia, and the NPPA Sierra Leone. A copy of the report will also be shared with the Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL), the Conservation Society of Nature (CSSL), and the Gola Rainforest Company (GRC) in Sierra Leone.

6. Deliverables

- An inception report submitted within one week after signing and mobilization for the Consultancy.
- Draft report after twenty-two (22) days of mobilization of the Consultancy
- Final report after one month of the Consultancy

7. Funding

The West Africa Low Carbon Emission and Development (WABiLED) Project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides funding for this consultancy. The Royal Society leads the WABiLED Project in the Greater Gola Landscape for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which has its administrative office in Monrovia, Liberia.

8. Payment

The selected consultant will be offered a fixed-price contract. The Payments will be made as follows:

- a) 50% upon signature of the contract
- b) 40% upon completion of the draft report of the policy and legal instruments applicable to the Greater Gola Landscape in Liberia and Sierra Leone
- c) 10% upon completion and submission of the revised and finalized report of the Consultancy

9. Application Procedure

Interested applicants are required to submit the following on or before the deadline of this RFP:

- A detailed technical proposal;
- A financial proposal specifying fees for the consultancy;
- A detailed CV reflecting consultant's qualification and experience; and
- Samples of similar work conducted before;

All applications received by the submission date will be reviewed by a selection committee based on predetermined criteria. Interested applicants are to submitted their bids via vacancy@scnlliberia.org on or before Tuesday, 8th October, 2024.

Females and persons with disability who are qualified are encouraged to apply

