

## **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**Title:** Consultancy to document project lessons learned, success stories and to develop a documentary for the Blue Oceans Programme.

**RFP No:** CIL-2025-CONSULTANCY-12

**Date of Issuance:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025

### **1. Background**

Liberia's 565 km coastline, rich in mangrove forests and fishing grounds, significantly impacts livelihoods, nutrition, and economy. The fisheries sector contributes 3% of GDP, provides employment to an estimated 37,000 fishers and processors and supplies 65% of protein needs. With 58% of Liberia's population living near the coast, migration from rural areas and increasing population pressures coastal ecosystems for resources. New infrastructure will further increase pressure on vulnerable ecosystems.<sup>1</sup>

Liberia, a least developed country, faces severe economic challenges due to the 14 years of Civil unrest. Ebola outbreak and COVID-19 pandemic. The World Bank estimates that 63% of the population in Liberia are living below the national poverty line, with 1.3 million living in extreme poverty. In addition, food security affects 41% of the population. Mangroves are highly productive ecosystems, providing an abundant food supply for juvenile fish and thereby facilitating high growth rates of many commercially important species that spend time in mangroves as juveniles before moving to offshore habitats such as coral reefs; these fisheries subsequently benefit from stock replacement from mangroves. The country's coastal and marine ecosystems, including mangroves, are vital for food, employment, and biodiversity. However, human activities such as coastal infrastructure development, unsustainable resource harvesting, subsistence agriculture, unregulated waste disposal, illegal sand mining, and poverty pose significant threats to these vital resources.

In an effort to contribute to addressing these challenges, the Liberia's Blue Oceans Programme (BOP) with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has invested both technical and financial support to the artisanal fisheries sector by providing grants to women fishmongers. BOP has established baselines on socio-economic drivers, gender, conflict, spatial extent, condition, and benefits of coastal and marine ecosystems. Some of the achievements of the BOP include Seed funding of USD75,000 was provided to strengthen fish value and supply chain, and women's businesses were scaled up as part of Community Fisheries Improvement Projects (CFIPs), Three fisherfolk units and 11 local management structures were established in four coastal counties, Technical assistance was provided to the Liberia Artisanal Fishermen Association (LAFA) to advocate for fisherfolk rights and combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in Liberia territorial waters, Four Community-Based Enterprises (CBEs) were supported in plastic waste management. The project also supported marine CSOs, obtaining pre-formative cooperative status in Rivercess, Maryland, Grandkru and Sinoe Counties. The BOP comes to an end in March 2026 therefore, documenting the impacts of the project is key.

It's against this backdrop that the BOP is seeking a qualified consultancy firm or organization to identify and document the programme's current issues/risks, lessons learn as well as producing a documentary and a new letter on the impact of the programme. The consultant will engage stakeholders from BOP targeted project sites.

## II. About the Blue Oceans Programme

The Blue Oceans Programme originated from the outcome of the 2019 Blue Oceans Conference (BOC) held in Monrovia, Liberia, where a Call-to-Action statement with voluntary commitments on sustainable development of the ocean and its resources were made. These commitments incorporated existing frameworks at the international, regional, and national levels for sustainable development, specifically those strategies related to conservation and management of the ocean and marine resources. With total funding of SEK 44.8 million from the Swedish Embassy in Monrovia, the BOP was developed with the main goal to improve the management of coastal and marine ecosystems for poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, and climate protection focused on four themes – blue economy, sustainable fisheries, climate change, and marine pollution. To achieve this goal, seven strategic objectives were proposed including (i) improved enabling conditions for coastal and marine resources management; (ii) improved enabling conditions for addressing marine plastic pollution; (iii) enhanced resilience of local communities and coastal and marine resources to climate change; (iv) improved sustainable management of small-scale fisheries; (v) enhanced institutional capacity and coordination for management of marine and coastal resources; (vi) inclusive and effective management of Social and environmental impacts; and (vii) effective delivery and knowledge management. To implement these strategies, a phased approach was adopted. The inception phase (June 2020 – September 2021) where SEK 4.8 million was used to establish BOP baseline that defines the spatial extent, condition, and benefits provided by coastal and marine ecosystems.

CI-Liberia during the inception phase collected and synthesized science-based data and information on coastal and marine ecosystem health, values, and socioeconomic drivers as well as gender and conflict analysis to inform BOP planning processes and implementation phase. The implementation phase (October 202 – September 2024) where SEK 15.2 million was allocated to implement activities on the four BOP themes of blue economy, climate change, marine pollution, and sustainable fishing. The expansion phase (April 2023 – March 2026) which is SEK 24.8 million focuses on improving livelihoods and management of mangroves through: developing marine spatial plans and guidance document for marine spatial planning; developing strategic plan and policy for MPA establishment; improving local communities' including Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups (VMGs) knowledge and skills to pursue diversified and climate-resilient livelihoods by local communities; develop and operationalize mangrove management plans and committees; promote renewable energy technologies for off-grid communities; improve high-quality fish catch and better prices for fish products; and build the capacity of CSOs/CBOs/coalitions/networks on the development and implementation of mangrove management plans, Marine spatial plans, and to advocate for inclusion of sustainability and equitable benefit sharing. Also, in the expansion phase, a field office will be established in Southeast Liberia.

## V. Submission Details

- a. **Deadline.** Proposals must be received no later than **(July 18, 2025, at 5:00 PM GMT)**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Proposals must be submitted via email to ([hrliberia@conservation.org](mailto:hrliberia@conservation.org)). All proposals are to be submitted following the guidelines listed in this RFP.
- b. **Validity of bid.** 15 days from the submission deadline
- c. **Clarifications.** Questions may be submitted to ([hrliberia@conservation.org](mailto:hrliberia@conservation.org)) by the specified date and time in the timeline below. The subject of the email must contain the RFP number and title of the RFP. CI will respond in writing to submitted clarifications by the date specified in the timeline below. Responses to questions that may be of common interest to all bidders will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.
- d. **Amendments.** At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, CI may, for any reason, modify the RFP documents by amendment which will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.