

Call for Proposals

Communications Advisor and Content Writer: ForestLink Community Based Real Time Monitoring System

May 2020

1. Context

The Rainforest Foundation UK

The mission of the Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) is to support indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforest to:

- Secure and control the natural resources necessary for their long-term wellbeing and managing these resources in ways which do not harm their environment, violate their culture or compromise their future.
- Develop means to protect their individual and collective rights and to obtain, shape and control basic services from the state.

RFUK considers that an essential first step to protect and manage the tropical forests and to reduce poverty in tropical forest countries is to realise the rights of the traditional and indigenous communities who live in those forests. With secure rights to land and livelihoods, forest peoples can effectively manage forest resources and direct and manage their own development.

RFUK tackles the underlying causes of deforestation linked to the problems of disenfranchisement of forest peoples globally and locally. From the field to the international policy arena, RFUK reinforces the active participation of forest peoples in the decisions that affect them. We work with over 15 partner organisations in tropical forest countries and our programme work is split into the following thematic areas:

- Threats to forests from the extractive industries, infrastructure development and agro industrial expansion;
- Conservation effectiveness and monitoring of initiatives to reduce deforestation and degradation (REDD);
- Community-based forest management, land-use planning and tenure reform;
- Community mapping and forest monitoring;
- Indigenous peoples' rights.

ForestLink Real Time Monitoring (RTM)

ForestLink Real-time community-based monitoring is an award-winning initiative that connects local people with national law enforcement in an effort to stop illegal logging and deforestation. Using our innovative ForestLink system, forest communities can send alerts and evidence of a number of threats to the forest, even in remote areas with no mobile connectivity. This can be used to address a wide range of threats including illegal logging, illegal mining and oil spills.

By unlocking the potential of forest guardians in defending their traditional forests, the initiative can

also lead to much more targeted and efficient forest protection as opposed to existing monitoring approaches which tend to rely on external observers travelling to forest areas from capital cities or even abroad.

Together with our local partners, some of our achievements include:

- ForestLink deployed and tested in DRC, Congo, Ghana, Cameroon, Peru and shortly in Liberia;
- Hundreds community observers have already been trained and are using the technology;
- Hundreds of alerts successfully sent by trained community monitors, leading to reductions in illegal activities, better law enforcement and regulatory interventions including fines, suspensions and seizures of illegal timber;
- Arrests and the seizure of mining equipment across the Madre de Dios region in Peru;
- Improved social agreements between logging companies and local communities;
- Enhanced advocacy at the national and international levels where ForestLink has been used to support campaigns on forest governance.

RTM-ForestLink is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Tropenbos, Fondation Ensemble and the Waterloo Foundation.

The DFID funded programme

Since 2015, RFUK has partnered with four local civil society organisations: Civic Response in Ghana, FODER in Cameroon, GASHE in DRC, and CJJ in the Republic of Congo since 2015 to develop, test and deploy ForestLink to reduce forest illegalities for the benefit of local communities. The current phase of the programme (2018-2021) aims specifically to:

- Enhance law enforcement and forest peoples' rights;
- Promote governance reforms and to institutionalise the ForestLink RTM system within national forest monitoring, control and law enforcement systems;
- Improve and upscale the system and adapt it to cover a wider range of illegal activities from other industries;
- Further support FLEGT VPA processes in implementing countries;
- Promote equitable benefit sharing from forest management with local communities.

2. Objective of the Consultancy

In order to promote community based forest monitoring and specifically the ForestLink RTM system within national governments, international institutions and civil society, it is crucial to properly document and communicate the experiences, unique approach, impact and further potential of the initiative. Under the DFID-funded project, the objectives of this consultancy are to:

1. Develop publication standard communication outputs about the ForestLink-RTM initiative and related forest issues;
2. Provide strategic advice to enhance and maximize project communications.

3. Deliverables

- Content for a publication of the ForestLink initiative including country case studies (up to 40 pages in text in Word format);
- Content for a specific micro-site dedicated to the RTM ForestLink initiative;
- Review and edit to publication standards project outputs, including:
 - A study commissioned by RFUK into the long-term sustainability of the initiative in rainforest countries (e.g. incentive and funding mechanisms for local users to sustain and manage the system);
 - Other documents produced by the project such as reports and methodological notes.
- Writing clear and effective information materials, e-newsletters, blogs, newsletter articles and web content and more.

4. Methodology

The consultant(s) is expected to:

- Review relevant 'base' project materials (documents, data, reports, testimony etc.);
- Provide inputs for the publication plan;
- Provide ongoing advice and support to the project communication strategy through regular discussions and meetings with the RFUK team;
- Deliver the planned outputs.

5. Timeline

- It is estimated 70 days of work in total, equivalent to 2 days of work per week for a period of 9 months from July 2020 to March 2021;
- The publication is expected to be completed in full, and submitted to RFUK by November 2020;
- All the other outputs are expected to be completed by the end of March 2021;
- The consultancy is expected to begin in July 2020;

6. Skills and Experience

- Qualifications and experience in content writing, especially in relation to international development, political science, land or forest management, forestry, anthropology, or a related relevant field;
- Demonstrated experience and skills in delivering efficient communications;
- Excellent analytical, writing and editing skills;
- Excellence in supporting strategic communications;
- Understanding of forest governance issues in the Congo Basin, West Africa and at the international level;
- Experience of working in the charitable sector;
- Significant experience in similar consultancy work;
- Capacity to effectively and proactively communicate with team members and local partners;
- A track record of working to tight deadlines to produce high-quality outputs;
- Fluency in both English and French, written and spoken.

7. Application process

The consultant should submit an application in writing to **joe@rainforestuk.org**, with: *RTM content writing - your/your organisation's name* in the reference field of the email.

This must include:

- Presentation of the organisation or consultant profile and relevant CV;
- A technical proposal including a detailed timetable and indicative methodology;
- A financial proposal detailing consultant fees (travel costs to RFUK offices will also be covered by RFUK);
- Details of previous relevant missions or consultancies carried out during the last five years.

Closing Date for Proposals: **June 26th 2020 at midnight (UTC/GMT)**

Contact: Joe Eisen, Executive Director: joe@rainforestuk.org