

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CREATE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT THE BIRDFRIENDLY CERTIFICATION FOR COFFEE AND COCOA IN SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Title	Carry out a feasibility study and support the early implementation of bird-friendly certification in São Tomé and Príncipe by creating enabling conditions and providing opportunities.
Project	<p>BirdLife International projects under its 10-years strategic plan for Sao Tome and Principe, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving the integration of biodiversity into the agro-forestry and fisheries sectors in Sao Tome and Principe - Global Environment Facility, through the International Fund for Agricultural Development; and - Saving Africa’s Galapagos: the precious forests of São Tomé and Príncipe - Cartier for Nature.
Contract type	Service Provision
Duration of Contract	[30-60] consulting days equivalent over a period of 1 year (2024-2025)
Starting date	October 2024
Country	São Tomé and Príncipe

Background

Located at the Gulf of Guinea, the archipelago of São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) consists of two islands and several islets. The two main islands cover an overall area of 1,001 km². Despite having a relatively small area, STP holds a unique biological diversity, with various types of ecosystems and endemic species, particularly birds. Out of 62 land bird species 28 are country endemics. This endemism has led to the recognition of five Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) that qualifying under both the A1 (globally threatened) and A2 (range restricted) criteria, while the sixth, Tinhasos Islands, qualifies under various A4 (assemblages or congregations) criteria.

Although little known, these remarkable islands are far from protected from human influence. With more than 200,000 inhabitants, most of the population is leaving along the coast, and is highly dependent from the ecosystem services delivered along forest gradients, from shade plantation to the Obô Natural Park.

Agriculture in STP has long been dominated by cash crops, most notably sugar cane, coffee and cocoa. When São Tomé and Príncipe declared independence in the seventies, the land from the old cocoa plantations was divided into smallholdings and distributed amongst the local people who used it to farm. Eventually, they organised themselves into co-operatives and decided to grow cocoa again. Today, cocoa remains the main crop of the export income generated. However, expanding agriculture and burgeoning human population are the primary threats to biodiversity, causing habitat degradation and loss. About a third of the forest has been converted into shade plantations and agroforestry systems to produce cocoa and coffee, the country's main export crops.

The comparison of forest cover between 1999 and 2018, the periods of the first and second forest inventories, shows a loss of forest cover, especially primary forest, from 40% to 27.8%. This loss was at the expense of an increase in shade forest, which increased from 29% to 31.6%.

Agriculture accounts for 20 per cent of São Tomé and Príncipe’s gross domestic product, 80 per cent of its export earnings, and more than 60 per cent of its employment. Aside from cacao, an important socio-cultural and

economic activity, being the main contributor to GDP and national exports, the islands' grow high quality pepper, vanilla, coconuts and palm oil.

There's also a consensus that, given the limited land available, the country should focus on promoting the quality of organic cocoa and coffee rather than increasing the area under cultivation. Thus, the certification that highlights the good agriculture practices that combine the biodiversity conservation will add values to the product and incentive the local farmers to adopt these integrative cultures. Plus, the islands naturally fertile soil conditions reduce the need for fertilizers in cocoa cultivation making it an ideal location for organic farming. As a result, the country's cocoa production and export follow cooperatives approach and are all organic.

By joining the cooperatives, farmers are guaranteed a regular buyer, payment throughout the year and they decide collectively how to invest the Fairtrade premium. São Tomé and Príncipe is currently home to over four cocoa cooperatives: Sociedade Santomense de Cacau (Satocao, Lda), Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau de Qualidade (CECAQ-11), CECAB (Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau Biológico) and others such as Diogo; and 1 coffee cooperative CECAFEB (Cooperativas de Exportação de Café Biológico). These cooperatives unify small and medium-sized farmers into self-sustaining village groups and provide them with a sense of purpose and economic stability.

Production companies have worked hard to obtain sustainable labels, including Organic Certification, Fairtrade Certification, Nature Land Certification and PGI (Protected Geographical Identification) Certification for and Organic /FFL - Fair for Life / Fairtrade Certification. Below is a summary of types of certifications that each cooperative currently possess:

Target product	Cooperative name	Certification
Cocoa	CECAQ11 Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau de Qualidade	Organic, Fairtrade and Protected Geographical Identification
	CECAB Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau Biológico (exports cocoa and produce chocolate)	Organic and Fairtrade
	Sociedade Satocao (exports cocoa)	Organic, Nature Land Certification and Protected Geographical Identification
Coffee	CECAFEB (exports coffee)	Organic, Fairtrade and Protected Geographical Identification
Processors/ companies	Diogo Vaz (manufacturer of chocolate products)	Organic Certification
	HBD Principe	Bird Friendly certification

To this end, BirdLife aims to assess and promote opportunities for strengthening the agricultural eco-certification program in the country, which offers advantages for people - generating additional income, and for nature - further promoting sustainable and biodiversity-friendly practices. Some of these entities have already taken remarkable steps towards this type of certification, such as HBD on the island of Principe, which recently obtained certification for supporting the effective management and monitoring of the Azeitona forest.

BirdLife, in collaboration with the IFAD's COMPRAN project hosted by the MAPDR, aims to establish a robust agricultural eco-certification program promoting sustainable and biodiversity-friendly practices in São Tomé and Príncipe's agroforestry sectors, focusing initially on cocoa and coffee.

Main objective

To assess the technical and commercial feasibility of developing Bird Friendly certification, specifically for the cocoa and coffee value chains, but potentially for others as well, we will consider the specific environmental and social conditions of São Tomé and Príncipe. This assessment will involve exploring scenarios and providing recommendations and guidance for long-term implementation, leading to a budgeted turnkey action plan.

Scope of Work and Outputs/Deliverables

This consultancy aims to support the early implementation of bird-friendly certification in São Tomé Island by creating enabling conditions and providing opportunities. This work should build on the experience of the Príncipe Island by further support the farmers and monitor compliance with the certification requirements.

The following activities will be contemplated.

Feasibility study and criteria development:

- Carry out a baseline study to assess the land baseline and requirements needed to achieve certification.
- Identify and engage key stakeholders in the cocoa and coffee value chains, including government bodies, farmers & farmers cooperatives and processors.
- Develop a marketing strategy for the implementation of this certification.
- Undertake scenario(s) analysis (including risk assessments and mitigation strategies) – this will inform the financial and technical feasibility of the scenario(s) as well as potential benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Propose specific action plans for the implementation of bird-friendly certification in STP.

Stakeholder engagement and capacity building:

- Organize stakeholder consultations and workshops to inform about the benefits and requirements of the Bird Friendly certification.
- Develop a capacity building program for farmers and other value chain actors to meet certification standard.

Technical assistance and support:

The recruited company/group of consultants must provide 1-year technical assistance including:

- Provide continuous technical assistance to potential certification participants, focusing on sustainable farming methods, shade tree management, and organic practices.
- Foster partnerships with local cooperatives and farmers to facilitate the adoption of certification standards.
- Supporting the implementation of the capacity building plan by training the beneficiaries on processing and marketing criteria (storage, processing, labelling, transport, use of logo, etc.), bird-friendly assessment methods, procedures for producers.

Certification Implementation and Monitoring

- Oversee the pilot implementation of the Bird Friendly certification on selected farms.
- Coordinate with approved agencies for inspections and compliance checks.
- Implement a monitoring system to regularly assess and ensure the integrity of the certification process.

Market Promotion and Brand Recognition:

- Collaborate with both local and international market stakeholders to enhance the market presence of Bird Friendly certified products.
- Develop marketing strategies to promote the environmental and social benefits of Bird Friendly certification.

Scaling up and Replication:

- Analyse the results of the pilot phase to refine and enhance the certification program.
- Plan and facilitate a strategy to scale up the certification to additional farms and possibly other agricultural sectors.

Deliverable:

- A kick-off and closing workshops.
- A comprehensive feasibility study report including market analysis, stakeholder analysis, and regulatory assessment. The study should include relevant technical & geographical information.
- A set of tailored biodiversity conservation criteria for certification.
- A detailed action plan for pilot implementation and scaling of the certification.
- Regular progress and impact reports throughout the project duration

EXPERT QUALIFICATION & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Extensive experience in agricultural eco-certification programs.
- Strong background in environmental conservation, particularly in biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices.
- Experience in project management and impact evaluation in agricultural or environmental contexts.
- Proven experience of working in a developing country context, preferably in Africa. Experience in small island developing nations will be an advantage.
- Written and spoken English. Portuguese (or Spanish) an advantage.
- Proven track record in stakeholder engagement and capacity building.

DUTY STATION AND DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The interested company shall propose and submit a realistic proposal.

A detailed budget proposal should be submitted with the application, covering all aspects of the consultancy, including personnel, travel, materials, and any other relevant expenses. Final deliverables should be submitted at the latest by December 2025.

Estimated timeframe:

Activity	Deadline
Contract signature	October 2024
Feasibility study and criteria development	December 2024
Stakeholder engagement and capacity building	January 2024
Technical assistance and support	Feb-Aug 2025
Certification Implementation and Monitoring	
Market Promotion and Brand Recognition	Sep-Dec 2025
Scaling up and Replication	December 2025

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Offerors must submit their application to saotomeprincipe@birdlife.org, including the following documents;

- Technical & Financial Proposals (2 distinct documents, in EUR) to implement the assignment, including detailed costing per deliverable,
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae of all experts involved,
- Example(s) of other works led by the expert(s)

All proposals must be submitted to the above address by 24 september 2024.

The above-mentioned documents, information and requirements are mandatory. Incomplete or non-fitting proposals will be rejected.

Successful as well as unsuccessful bidders will be informed by e-mail as soon as possible after the submission date.

Resources documents:

- BirdLife strategy the Restoration Plan, key articles, the IFAD ProDoc, and/or COMPRAN baseline studies,
- National Forest Development Plan (2018-2030)
- 2030 Sustainable Development Plan for the Autonomous Region of Príncipe (2019)
- Plano Nacional de Ordenamento do Território
- <https://www.imvf.org/project/apoio-as-fileiras-agricolas-de-exportacao-de-sao-tome-e-principe/>
- IFAD report Investing in rural people in Sao Tome and Principe
- Rethink the organic cocoa value chain of Sao Tome and Principe (Prazeres & Lucas. 2020)
- IFAD ProDoc
- COMPRAN baseline studies

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Payments are based upon timely delivery of the services specified in the TOR.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

BirdLife International's procedures will apply in evaluating the offers, with consideration to the principles of competition and transparency. Competition and transparency are achieved when invitation to tender is made open and published to reach all qualified applicants. Beyond this, the procurement committee will review proposals received, documenting/justifying decisions taken at each stage and provide feedback to applicants accordingly.

The proposals will be evaluated using the cumulative analysis method with a split 80% technical and 20% financial scoring. The proposal with the highest cumulative scoring will be awarded the contract. Applications will be evaluated technically, and points are attributed based on how well the proposal meets the requirements of the Terms of Reference using the guidelines detailed in the table below.

Assessment criteria	Points	Percentage
Experience		
Demonstrated experience & in-depth knowledge and practical experience with forest/forest products certification	35	55%

Demonstrated experience working in developing country contexts, preferably in Africa (and experience in Small Island Developing States).	15	
Other required experience & competencies.	5	
Quality of proposal		
Quality and soundness of proposed methodology and approach (including realistic work plan)	15	25%
Team (experts involved) composition and qualifications	10	
Technical Criteria	80	80%
Financial Criteria	20	20%
Total		100%

The award of the contract shall be made to the consulting company / group of consultants whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

1. Responsive/compliant with academic qualifications and language skills /acceptable, and
2. Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation: Technical Criteria 80% and Financial Criteria 20%.

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 56 points (70% of the total technical points) will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.