

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

### EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

#### SUMMARY OF PROCUREMENT

WRI intends to award a Fixed Price Plus Reimbursable type contract for an external review of WRI's programmatic work. Included in this assessment will be a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of WRI's Core Functions (Communications, Development, Human Resources, Managing for Results, Operations, and Research, Data and Innovation) in contributing to and supporting delivery of the programmatic work.

The 2021 External Review is intended to provide an independent mid-term assessment of progress towards delivering WRI's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan ([www.wri.org/about/strategic-plan](http://www.wri.org/about/strategic-plan)). The review will assess the effectiveness, relevance, coherence, and efficiency<sup>1</sup> of WRI's implementation. The results of the 2021 External Review will inform the programming and implementation of the last period of the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. Further, results will feed into the development of WRI's forthcoming five-year Strategic Plan.

**The proposal deadline is February 16, 2021. The External Review is expected to begin March 29, 2021 and is expected to be completed, along with all deliverables, by November 15, 2021.**

#### BACKGROUND

##### ***About the World Resources Institute***

Founded in 1982, WRI is a global research organization that seeks to turn big ideas into action at the nexus of environment, economic opportunity, and human well-being. Its more than 1,000 experts and staff work closely with governments, private sector, and civil society to drive ambitious action based on high-quality data and objective analysis. WRI's mission is "to move human society to live in ways that protect Earth's environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of present and future generations." With its partners, WRI has demonstrated the success of breakthrough ideas and scaled up these solutions for far-reaching, enduring impact. In recent years, WRI has expanded its presence in major emerging economies by opening offices in China, Brasil, Europe, India, Indonesia and Mexico, as well as a growing presence in Colombia and Africa.

Since its founding, the World Resources Institute (WRI) has received significant support from bilateral development agencies of OECD countries. This support has been crucial to enabling WRI to take a strategic, focused, and long-term approach to addressing environmental and development challenges and to expand its presence and influence in the developing world where the bulk of WRI's work is concentrated. As part of WRI's commitment to institutional

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<sup>1</sup> Relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency criteria, as described in the revised Evaluation Criteria for the OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>)

excellence and to accountability towards its core bilateral partners, a comprehensive External Review of WRI is conducted every 3-4 years.

WRI focuses on seven urgent global challenges that must be addressed to reduce poverty, grow economies and protect natural systems:

1. **Climate:** Protect communities and natural ecosystems from damage caused by greenhouse gas emissions, and generate opportunities for people by catalyzing a global transition to a low-carbon economy.
2. **Energy:** Drive the scale-up of clean, affordable power systems throughout the world to deliver sustainable socio-economic development.
3. **Food:** Ensure the world's food systems reduce their impact on the environment, drive economic opportunity, and sustainably feed 9.6 billion people by 2050.
4. **Forests:** Alleviate poverty, enhance food security, conserve biodiversity, and mitigate climate change by reducing forest loss and restoring productivity to degraded, deforested lands.
5. **Water:** Achieve a water-secure future by mapping, measuring, and mitigating global water risks.
6. **Sustainable Cities:** Improve quality of life in cities by developing and scaling environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable urban and transport solutions.
7. **The Ocean:** We are charting the path for a New Ocean Economy that is good for jobs, economic growth and human health -- while protecting and restoring the ocean.

### ***WRI's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan***

WRI's latest Strategic Plan focuses on addressing seven interrelated environment and development global challenges that must be addressed with urgency; Food, Forests, Water, Energy, Cities, Climate and the Ocean. The Plan employs a "Count It, Change It, Scale It" approach: rigorous, independent research is used to influence government policies, business strategies, and civil society action as well as inform our own priorities and approaches. The approach uses high quality and successful demonstration examples to influence policy on a national, regional, and international stage, ensuring strong communication and alignment between all levels.

A key part of this approach is the spotlight on fewer, larger projects, with a special focus on "delivery platforms" – large scale, multi-stakeholder, multi-year initiatives aimed at advancing pre-defined goals that, if achieved, will significantly contribute to achieving our mission. In both WRI's core work and delivery platforms, we seek to create an irresistible offer, an identified "tipping point," and a clear strategy for scaling.

Guided by changes in the world and what we have learned in our previous work, the Strategic Plan sets out seven key imperatives – "hallmarks" – to support delivery on the ambitious goals. These include:

1. We will focus on catalyzing the systemic changes required to address urgent global challenges;
2. We will increase our focus on jobs, health, gender and social equity, and human security;
3. We will be at the forefront of the data revolution;
4. We will make the best use of our global network;

5. We will be disciplined in choosing what we do, creating clear strategies for turning ideas into action;
6. We will act with more agility, accept more risk and manage it better;
7. We will equip WRI for the new world in which we operate.

### ***Previous Evaluations and Reviews***

The last External Review, conducted in 2016, helped inform WRI's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan through valuable contributions to institutional learning and strategic prioritization and planning.

Evaluations undertaken in the past five years include the following:

- 2020 NDC Partnership Midterm Review
- 2020 Impact Evaluation of GFW-Pro
- 2019-2020 Impact Evaluation of Global Forest Watch
- 2019 Impact Assessment of Land Accelerator work for the DOEN Foundation and BMZ
- 2018 Terminal Evaluation of Scaling- Up the Sustainable Energy for All Building Efficiency Accelerator for UNEP/ GEF
- 2016 External Review of WRI's portfolio by TripleLine for WRI's Core Donors. The External Review included an in-depth review of 3 Signature Initiatives; Aqueduct, Global Restoration Initiative, and the International Climate Action Initiative
- 2015 Due Diligence Assessment by Norad of WRI's program management and organizational capacity
- 2015 Due diligence assessment for DFID of WRI's governance and financial management
- 2015 Mid-term Performance Evaluation of Global Forest Watch for USAID
- 2015 10-year DFID Forest Governance, Markets and Climate program country reviews, including Global Forest Watch activities in DR Congo, Republic of Congo, and Indonesia

### **SCOPE OF WORK AND OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES**

The external review will provide a high-level assessment of WRI progress in implementing the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. The effectiveness, relevance, coherence, and efficiency of WRI's implementation of the programmatic work will be assessed. The findings of the review will inform WRI's ongoing implementation of the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan as well as the development of the upcoming 2023- 2028 Strategic Plan. The review will include the following components, with indicative level of effort in parentheses:

- 1. A high-level assessment of WRI's progress implementing its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan: (80%)** including programmatic strategies for delivering on the seven global challenges, covering work undertaken by WRI's Programs, Centers, International Offices and delivery Platforms; programmatic results to date against the Outcome indicators and targets specified in the Results Framework of the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, with particular attention to how and to what extent the Platforms<sup>2</sup> contribute to the targets and

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<sup>2</sup> The assessment of Platforms contribution to WRI's Results Framework includes those Platforms that are WRI-owned (e.g. Aqueduct, Global Forest Watch, AFR100, etc.) as well as those that are co-owned by WRI (e.g. Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA), the Partnership for Accelerating a Circular Economy (PACE), the NDC Partnership (NDCP), the Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G), the New Climate Economy (NCE), the Coalition for Urban Transitions (CUT), the New Urban Mobility Alliance (NUMO), the Science Based Target Initiative (SBTi), and the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU), etc.).

Outcomes in the Results Framework; an assessment of the inclusion of the cross-cutting issues of poverty and gender; and recommendations on improving programmatic and implementation effectiveness in achieving Outcomes. Further, included in this assessment will be a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of WRI's Core Functions (Communications, Development, Human Resources, Managing for Results, Operations, and Research, Data and Innovation) in contributing to and supporting delivery on the seven global challenges. Where appropriate, comparisons with peer organizations may be helpful.

- 2. An in-depth review of the Africa Strategy: (20%)** an assessment of progress implementing "WRI in Africa," its 5-Year Strategy; including the cross-cutting themes of poverty and gender; and how effective the Global Programs, Centers and other relevant WRI-hosted Platforms were in contributing to WRI Africa's Outputs and Outcomes.

In the above components, the review will provide an assessment of WRI's response to and progress made against the recommendations outlined in the [2016 External Review](#) with special attention to the inclusion of the cross-cutting issues of poverty, gender, and rights.

**COVID-19 Implications:** With the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, WRI has embarked on a serious effort to shift and adjust to the new realities and ways of working to achieve our objectives. While the overall transformations that need to take place remain the same, the strategy to achieve those transformations is different. **COVID-19 implications should be taken into account in the external review, where possible, including assessing WRI's response and agility in shifting strategy to meet new realities.**

With uncertainty surrounding business-related travel due to COVID-19, it is anticipated that much of the review will be conducted virtually with limited in-person interaction at WRI's global office in Washington, DC. This will require working across multiple time-zones. This may change as the circumstances unfold in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The consultants will start by producing an Inception Note setting out proposed methods and a work plan for the conducting the review according to the agreed upon terms of reference, including articulating key questions, approaches to measuring progress and learning, approach to review implementation, data management and informational needs. The consultants, in coordination with WRI and bilateral donor agencies providing institutional flexible funding<sup>3</sup>, will develop the list of individuals and organizations they will approach as part of the external review process. To the same group, the consultants will do a mid-term presentation indicating progress status and list of external stakeholders met. The final report will highlight strengths and weaknesses, issues for consideration, and recommendations for improvement for each of the components listed above. The report will include an executive summary. The consultants will provide WRI and above referenced donor partners with an advance draft of the report for review and comment before submitting the final report, however the consultants will have final authority on what is included in the final report.

The consultants will be responsible for designing robust review methodologies to achieve the Scope and Deliverables described above, collecting data and analyzing information obtained.

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<sup>3</sup> Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden

The external review should conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. It is expected that the external review team describes and justifies appropriate evaluation approaches/ methodologies and methods for data collection in the Inception Note. Limitations to the chosen approaches/methodologies and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed. In the Inception Note, mitigation measures to address limitations shall also be presented. The consultants' Inception Note will be approved by WRI, with input from WRI and bilateral donor partners (in April 2021).

WRI will establish a small team to support the review process; provide information on WRI systems, strategies, and outcomes; and identify partners and other stakeholders familiar with WRI's work that the consultants can contact. WRI will manage the administrative components of the review and will be responsible for issuing the contract with the consultants, as well as processing payments.

### **TIMING**

**Please submit your initial proposal by February 16, 2021. Top candidates will be interviewed between March 8-12. A final determination will be made on March 17, 2021. The External Review is scheduled to begin March 29, 2021.**

The mid-term presentation of progress will be presented to WRI and core funders July 5, 2021. A first draft will be submitted by October 4, 2021. The final report of the External Review is to be submitted by November 15, 2021. The final report will be presented to bilateral partners and WRI in late November 2021. WRI's Global Board will also be briefed of the findings in January 2022.

### **Milestones and dates:**

March 29, 2021:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kick-off meeting with leadership of WRI</li> </ul>
April 20:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inception Note Due: articulating key review questions, proposed methods, and a workplan that includes approach to implementation, data management and information needs</li> </ul>
April 30:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List of individuals and organizations to interview, survey, or otherwise seek information from submitted to WRI. Interview requests, data requests to teams at WRI, surveys/questionnaires, etc. submitted to teams</li> </ul>
July 5:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ER team provides update to WRI and core donors on who they have met with and the evaluation process to date</li> <li>▪ Submission of final questions, requests for information, etc. due to WRI for responses</li> </ul>
July 30:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inputs review with WRI coordination team</li> </ul>
Sept. 10:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Last inputs (comments, documentations, etc.) from WRI due</li> </ul>
October 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First draft of complete External Review submitted to WRI for clarifications, response, questions, etc.</li> </ul>

October 22:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comments, questions, clarifications on First Draft of External Review due from WRI &amp; Core donors</li> </ul>
Nov. 15:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final External Review submitted to WRI</li> </ul>
Late Nov. (TBD) Jan. 2022 (TBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation to WRI and Core Donors</li> <li>▪ Presentation to WRI Global Board</li> </ul>

**BUDGET**

WRI will consider proposals up to USD \$150,000 inclusive of labor and qualifying expenses.

- Best pricing in the initial proposal and pricing should be valid for ninety (90) days.
- A proposed budget with a breakdown of costs sufficient to assess reasonableness and compliance with our funder requirements.
- Please also include a competitive payment schedule associating amounts with work milestones.
- In Excel format, provide pricing for all applicable costs associated with this solicitation. Allowable costs include consultant salaries, subcontractors, project-related supplies, research expenses and communications expenses. Travel should be essential only\*; meetings should be conducted virtually until at least July 2021. We anticipate continued restrictions on WRI staff and consultants for in-person interactions past July 2021 but will evaluate based on the latest COVID-19 statistics and WRI’s reopening framework of “measured, partial and slow” principles. Provide explanation for any other direct or indirect costs:

Project Expenses	USD
Consultant Salaries	0
Subcontractors	0
Travel (essential only)	0
Project-Related Supplies	0
Research Expenses	0
Communications	0
Other Direct Costs (*please detail)	0
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>0</b>

*\*Please note that the Consultants are required to comply with WRI’s current COVID travel restrictions. If and when travel is deemed essential to support the External Review, it will be approved through the appropriate WRI channels.*

Please note that WRI is an IRS-registered 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization. WRI is not VAT exempt. All prices or quotes should include VAT and tax, as applicable.

**GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

**Requirements**

The selected consultants are asked to demonstrate capacity through successful experience demonstrating the following:

- Experience evaluating large, global nonprofits (minimum 3 recent, similar in size and scope to WRI);
- Demonstrated abilities in using robust, mixed methods to evaluate complex, international programs;
- Demonstrated experience openly engaging staff and teams in the evaluation process, proactively explaining decisions based on good practices in evaluation, and using strong evidence bases for conclusions and comparisons;
- Demonstrated commitment to focusing on learning, from successes and failures, and sharing learning through the evaluation process;
- Understanding of WRI's values, demonstrated ability to adhere to highest professional standards and reflect the values and commitments of the Institute in the methodological approaches;
- Ability to compose a consulting team that is diverse, geographically representative of our organization, and committed to equitable evaluations;
- Demonstrated expertise evaluating cross cutting thematic areas of poverty and gender;
- Demonstrated ability to manage and synthesize the inputs and participation of the various teams as well as the range of partners and stakeholders involved in WRI's work;
- Superior communication skills (both written and verbal) and facilitation skills;
- Ability to effectively conduct the work remotely, utilize diverse methodologies to engage staff and stakeholders in the evaluation process, across all time zones, and creatively during the pandemic;
- Experience contextualizing findings and using relevant comparisons with peer organizations;
- Overall cost and reasonableness of the proposal.

**Preferred:**

- Demonstrated expertise in at least some of the thematic areas of WRI's work would be an advantage, though not required;
- Multilingual team (languages spoken in countries where WRI has offices being the preference).

**Proposal Content:**

Prospective consultants should submit:

1. Management, key personnel and staffing plan. This section should include the CVs/ resumes of Consultants that will be assigned to the implementation of the tasks described in the proposed methodology and according to the requirements above
2. A narrative proposal for delivering the scope of work according to the timetable, including 1) detailing the proposed methodologies/approaches that the team would utilize for the components of the External Review 2) a workplan for completing the External Review components 3) outputs of the scope of work that clearly demonstrates an orientation towards participant ownership and learning
3. A list of at least 3 recent similar experiences with similar assignments that reflect the above Requirements, including names and contact information as references

4. A proposed budget with a breakdown of costs sufficient to assess reasonableness and compliance with our funder requirements. Please also include a competitive payment schedule associating amounts with work milestones
5. An account of how the work and/or organization is sustainable; This may include, but is not limited, to:
  - a. reporting GHG/carbon emissions of operations, setting science-based targets for emissions reductions, and implemented actions like reduced air travel, sustainable purchasing and procurement, energy efficiency and renewable energy purchasing, and food and event sustainability
  - b. environmental management systems, policies, or initiatives to reduce carbon emissions
  - c. brief description(s) of any environmental management systems and/or sustainability policies or initiatives in place within the organization
6. A summary of accounting system which will support claims. This may include, but is not limited to describing what system is used for calculating costs that will be submitted for payment and bookkeeping practices.

### **Expression of Interest, Deadline for Questions, and Proposal**

**All expressions of interest and questions about this RFP must be received via email to the contact below by February 8, 2021 by 5 pm (EST-Washington, DC).** Answers to the questions will be shared with all parties who have asked questions or otherwise expressed interest. An email stating interest in completing a proposal is sufficient for the statement of interest.

Nina Ullery  
Senior Associate Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning  
[nina.ullery@wri.org](mailto:nina.ullery@wri.org)

**All proposals must be sent by February 16, 2021 by 5pm (EST-Washington, DC) in electronic format to the same contact listed above.**

### **EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all proposals submitted in response to this RFP:

- The extent to which the consultants' proposal fulfills WRI's stated requirements as set out in the RFP;
- The robustness and appropriateness of the methodological approaches to the External Review;
- Experience with similar projects, that openly engages staff and teams in the process;
- Expertise, diversity and qualifications of the consultant team;
- Sustainability – WRI values sustainability and all other factors being equal, will favor a proposal to more sustainably perform the work;
- Overall cost effectiveness of the proposal.



**Selection Process**

No proposal development costs shall be charged to WRI and all expenses are to be borne by the bidders. WRI may award to the bidder offering best value without discussions. However, WRI reserves the right to seek bidder clarifications and to negotiate with those bidders deemed to be within a competitive range.

WRI may, at its discretion and without explanation to the prospective consultants choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective consultants or make multiple awards under this RFP.

**If you already submitted a bid under the first publishing of this RFP (original bids due December 18, 2020), then there is no need to resubmit your bid. WRI is only requesting new, original bids with the republishing of this RFP.**