



THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

# SERVICE CONTRACT NOTICE

*Analysis of the Chinese market for tropical timber*

*from mainly COMIFAC countries*

**Reference:** TTT – F&P\_2

**Programme title:** 81318760 – Tropical Timber Trade Facility

## **1. Contract specifications**

### **Nature of the contract**

Fixed-price contract for services.

### **Description of the contract**

The purpose of these specifications is to select the firm/consultants who will be responsible for analyzing perceptions of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers on certified and legally verified tropical timber.

### **Maximum budget**

Value including VAT: €20,000

## **2. Conditions for participation**

To be eligible to participate in this tender, bidders must provide evidence, to the satisfaction of the contracting authority, that they meet the legal, technical and financial requirements and that they have the necessary resources to perform the contract effectively.

### **Number of bids**

A natural or legal person may not submit more than one tender, regardless of the form of their participation (as an individual legal entity or as the leader or member of a consortium submitting a tender). If a natural or legal person submits more than one tender, all tenders in which that person participates will be rejected.

### **Grounds for exclusion**

Tenderers appearing on the lists of persons, groups and entities subject to restrictive measures by the EU<sup>1</sup> and the United Nations at the time of the award decision may not be awarded the contract.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the *Official Journal of the European Union* contains the official list of entities subject to restrictive measures and, in the event of a conflict, takes precedence over the list on the [EU Sanctions Map](#) website.



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# INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS

## 3. Timetable

|   | DATE          | TIME                         |
|---|---------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Deadline for submitting requests for clarification to the contracting authority</b>        | 6 March 2026  | 5 p.m. (French time zone)    |
| <b>Deadline by which the contracting authority must respond to requests for clarification</b> | 11 March 2026 | –                            |
| <b>Deadline for submission of tenders</b>   | 16 March 2026 | 4 p.m. (French time zone)    |
| <b>Bid opening session</b>  | 16 March 2026 | 4:15 p.m. (French time zone) |
| <b>Notification of award to successful bidder</b>   | 20 March 2026 | –                            |
| <b>Signing of the contract</b>  | 27 March 2026 | –                            |

## 4. Selection and award criteria

### Selection criteria

An economic operator (i.e. a candidate or tenderer) may, where appropriate and for a specific contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links between itself and those entities. If the economic operator relies on other entities, it must prove to the contracting authority that it will have the necessary resources to perform the contract by producing a document in which those entities undertake to make those resources available to it. These entities, for example the economic operator's parent company, must comply with the same eligibility rules as the economic operator, in particular that of nationality, and meet the selection criteria for which the economic operator is calling on them. In addition, information relating to these third-party entities with regard to the applicable selection criteria must be included in a separate document, and not in the tender form. Proof of their capacity must also be provided at the request of the contracting authority.

With regard to technical and professional criteria, an economic operator may only rely on the capacities of other entities when the latter will perform the tasks for which those capacities are required.

With regard to economic and financial criteria, the entities whose capacities are used by the economic operator shall be jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract.

The following selection criteria will be applied to tenderers. If a tender is submitted by a



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consortium, these selection criteria will apply to the consortium as a whole, unless otherwise specified. The selection criteria will not apply to natural persons and single-member companies when they participate as subcontractors.

The tenderer may not cite as a reference in relation to the selection criteria any previous experience that resulted in the termination of the contract and its cancellation by the contracting authority.

**1) Administrative and regulatory capacity of the tenderer:** The tenderer has a status that legally allows it to provide international and services (e.g. consultant status, registration number, etc.) and demonstrates that it complies with the regulations of its country of operation (e.g. tax returns).

**2) Professional and technical capacity of the bidder:** The reference period to be taken into consideration corresponds to **the last three financial years preceding the submission deadline.**

- **Criterion 1:** The bidder demonstrates its knowledge of Chinese timber market through relevant professional expériences
- **Criterion 2:** The bidder must not have any professional conflict of interest that could compromise the impartial and objective implementation of the assignment. This will be assessed based on the sworn declaration and supporting documents provided.

This means that the service contract to which the tenderer refers may have been performed at any time during the period indicated, but does not necessarily have to have been completed during that period or have been performed throughout the entire reference period. Tenderers may refer either to service contracts that were completed during the reference period (even if they started before that period) or to projects that were partially implemented but not yet completed during the reference period. Only the part that was completed during the reference period will be taken into consideration. The successful completion of this part must be supported by supporting documents (approval of the report or deliverables, proof of payment, declaration or certificate of successful completion from the entity that awarded the contract), with an indication of the corresponding amount. If the project was implemented by the tenderer as part of a consortium, the supporting documents (approval of the report or deliverables, proof of payment, declaration or certificate from the entity that awarded the contract) must clearly indicate the share (in percentage terms) that the tenderer completed, with an indication of the corresponding amount. If the project was implemented by the candidate as part of a consortium, the supporting documents (consortium agreement, bank transfers between consortium members) must clearly indicate the share that the candidate completed, giving a description of the nature of the services provided.

## Award criteria

Best value for money.

## 5. Validity period

Tenderers shall remain bound by their tenders for a period of 90 days from the deadline for submission of tenders.



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In exceptional cases and before the expiry of the initial period of validity of the tender, the contracting authority may request in writing that tenderers extend this period by 40 days.

The successful tenderer shall remain bound by their tender for an additional period of 60 days. The additional period shall be added to the period of validity of the tender, regardless of the date of notification.

## ***6. Language of the tender***

Tenders, correspondence and documents associated with tenders exchanged between the tenderer and the contracting authority must be written in the language of the procedure, namely English.

When the documents are written in an official language of the European Union other than English, a translation should be provided.

## ***7. Submission of tenders***

Bids must be submitted digitally to the following address: **offres@atibt.org**

## ***8. Contents of tenders***

Bids must be submitted in two separate emails containing the following documents:

- One email entitled "technical bid" including:
  - o Submission form including the declaration of integrity, eligibility and environmental and social responsibility
  - o Technical proposal form
  - o Expert's CV (maximum 3 pages)
- An email entitled "financial bid" including:
  - o Financial proposal form

## ***9. Additional information before the submission deadline***

If the contracting authority, on its own initiative or in response to a request from a potential tenderer, provides additional information on the tender dossier, it must communicate this information in writing and simultaneously to all other potential tenderers.

Tenderers may send their questions in writing to the following email address no later than 8 days before the deadline for submission of tenders: **offres@atibt.org**

Potential tenderers seeking to arrange individual meetings with the contracting authority during the tender period may be excluded from the tender procedure.

## ***10. Modification or withdrawal of tenders***

Tenderers may modify or withdraw their tenders by giving written notice before the deadline for submission of tenders. No tender may be modified after this deadline.

No tender may be withdrawn between the deadline for submission of tenders and the expiry of the period of validity of tenders.



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### **11. *Costs incurred in preparing tenders***

The costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the tender are not refundable. All such costs shall be borne by the tenderer.

### **12. *Ownership of tenders***

The contracting authority retains ownership of all tenders received in connection with this call for tenders. Consequently, tenderers may not request that their tender be returned to them.

### **13. *Joint venture or consortium***

Where the bidder is a joint venture or consortium of two or more persons, the bid must be a single bid for the purpose of forming a single contract. Each of these persons must sign the tender and is jointly and severally liable for the tender and any contract that may result from it. These persons must designate from among themselves a leader authorized to commit the joint venture or consortium. The composition of the joint venture or consortium may not be changed without the prior written consent of the contracting authority.

The bid may only be signed by the representative of the joint venture or consortium if he or she has been expressly authorized to do so in writing by the members of the joint venture or consortium, and the notarized document or private deed conferring this authority must be submitted to the contracting authority in accordance with these instructions to bidders. All signatures at the bottom of the mandate must be certified in accordance with the national laws and regulations of each of the parties forming the joint venture or consortium, as must the written power of attorney establishing that the signatories of the bid are authorized to make commitments on behalf of the members of the joint venture or consortium.

### **14. *Opening of tenders***

The purpose of the opening session is to verify that tenders have been submitted in accordance with the formal requirements of the tender.

Any attempt by a tenderer to influence the evaluation committee during the examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of tenders, with the aim of obtaining information on the conduct of the procedure or influencing the contracting authority's decision on the award of the contract, will result in the immediate rejection of their tender.

The contracting authority shall retain all tenders received after the deadline for submission of tenders specified in the contract notice or in these instructions. The contracting authority cannot be held liable for any delay in the delivery of tenders. Tenders received after the deadline shall be rejected and will not be evaluated.

Once the contracting authority has opened the tenders, the documents become its property and are treated as confidential.

## **15. *Evaluation of tenders***

The evaluation procedure is entirely confidential, subject to the contracting authority's legislation on access to documents. The decisions of the evaluation committee are collegial and its deliberations are held in camera. The members of the evaluation committee are bound by secrecy. Evaluation reports and written minutes, in particular, are for internal use only and may not be disclosed to tenderers or any other party (other than the donor).

### **Examination of the administrative compliance of tenders**

The purpose of this phase is to verify whether the tenders comply with the essential requirements of the tender dossier. A tender is compliant when it meets all the conditions, terms and specifications contained in the tender dossier, without deviating significantly from them or imposing substantial restrictions.

Substantial restrictions or deviations are those that affect the subject matter, quality or performance of the contract, differ significantly from the terms of the tender dossier, limit the rights of the contracting authority or the obligations of the tenderer under the contract, or distort competition in relation to tenderers who have submitted compliant tenders. Any decision to declare a tender administratively non-compliant must be duly justified in the evaluation report.

If a tender does not comply with the tender dossier, it shall be rejected immediately and may not subsequently be made compliant by corrections or by removing discrepancies or restrictions.

### **Technical evaluation**

The quality of each technical bid will be evaluated in accordance with the award criteria and the corresponding weighting shown in the evaluation grid. No other award criteria will be used. The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requirements set out in the terms of reference.

In the interests of transparency and equal treatment, and in order to facilitate the examination and evaluation of tenders, the evaluation committee may request clarification from each tenderer on their tender, including the breakdown of prices, within a reasonable time limit to be set by the evaluation committee. The request for clarification and the response must be in writing, but no change in the price or content of the tender may be requested, proposed or authorised, unless it is necessary to confirm the correction of arithmetic errors discovered during the evaluation of tenders.

No request for clarification may distort competition. Any decision to declare that a tender does not comply with the technical requirements must be duly justified in the evaluation report.

### **Financial evaluation**

Once the technical evaluation has been completed, the envelopes containing the financial bids of those bids that have not been eliminated during the technical evaluation (i.e. those that have obtained an average score of 75 points or more) shall be opened. Bids that exceed the maximum budget allocated to the contract shall not be accepted and shall therefore not be

evaluated.

### **Preliminary conclusions of the evaluation committee**

The best value for money is determined by applying a weighting to technical quality and price according to a ratio of 80/20.

#### **16. Notification of award**

The contracting authority informs the successful tenderer and, at the same time, also informs the unsuccessful tenderers that their tenders have not been accepted.

Tenderers will be informed in writing of the outcome of this tender procedure by email.

Tenderers are informed that, in the event that the successful tenderer is unable to sign the contract, the contracting authority may review the award decision and award the contract to the tenderer whose tender was ranked second.

#### **17. Signing of the contract**

Within 7 days of receiving the signed contract, the other party must sign and date the contract before returning it.

If it is not possible to sign the contract as provided for in the award decision, or if the successful tenderer does not sign the contract as requested, the contracting authority reserves the right to review its decision and, where appropriate, award the contract to another tenderer or even cancel the procedure .

#### **18. Ethics, values and code of conduct**

##### **Absence of conflicts of interest and conflicting professional interests**

The tenderer must not have any conflicting professional interests, conflicts of interest or specific equivalent links with other tenderers or other parties to the project. Any undue influence or attempt to unduly influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing tenders any attempt to obtain confidential information or to enter into illegal agreements with competitors will result in the rejection of their tender and may result in their exclusion from future award procedures and/or financial penalties in accordance with the Financial Regulation in force.

##### **Respect for human rights and the values of the European Union, environmental legislation and fundamental labour standards**

The tenderer must comply with environmental legislation and core labour standards: participants who are awarded the contract must comply with environmental legislation, including multilateral environmental agreements, and the applicable core labour standards defined in the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organisation (in particular the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; the abolition of forced and compulsory labour; and the abolition of child labour).

The tenderer and its staff must commit to respecting the fundamental values of the EU and ensure that they uphold this commitment; the tenderer and its staff must respect the



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fundamental values of the EU, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities. The tenderer and its staff must comply with the applicable data protection rules and environmental legislation. In particular, successful tenderers must also comply with multilateral environmental agreements and the applicable core labour standards set out in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (in particular the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; the abolition of forced and compulsory labour; and the abolition of child labour).

The tenderer and its staff must respect EU values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

### **Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**

ATIBT applies a zero-tolerance policy with regard to all misconduct that affects the professional credibility of the tenderer.

Any form of physical violence or punishment, as well as threats of physical violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, or any other form of intimidation are prohibited.

### **Anti-corruption**

The tenderer must comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes relating to the fight against corruption. **GIZ** reserves the right to suspend or cancel project funding if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the procurement process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority does not take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, "corrupt practices" means offering any person an illicit payment, gift, gratuity or commission as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from performing acts relating to the award of a contract or the execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

### **Extraordinary commercial expenses**

Any tender shall be rejected or any contract cancelled if it transpires that the award of the contract or its performance has given rise to extraordinary commercial costs. Extraordinary commercial costs are commissions that are not mentioned in the main contract or that do not result from a contract entered into in due form with reference to the main contract, commissions that are not paid in exchange for a legitimate service actually rendered, commissions paid in a tax haven, commissions paid to a beneficiary who is not clearly identified or to a company that has all the characteristics of a shell company.

Contractors found to have paid extraordinary commercial fees on projects financed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) may, depending on the seriousness of the facts established, be subject to termination of the contract or exclusion from future award procedures.

### **Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud**

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure if it transpires





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that the contract award procedure has been marred by a breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If a breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the contract has been awarded, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

### **19. *Cancellation of the tender***

In the event of cancellation of a tender, tenderers shall be informed of this cancellation by the contracting authority.

The contracting authority shall in no event be liable for damages of any kind, including, without limitation, compensation for loss of profit, in any way related to the cancellation of a tender, even if it has been informed of the possibility of such damage. The publication of a contract notice does not commit the contracting authority to implement the announced programme or project.

### **20. *Appeals***

Tenderers who consider themselves aggrieved by an error or irregularity in the award procedure may lodge a complaint at the tender email address.

### **21. *Data protection***

The processing of personal data related to this tender by the contracting authority is carried out in accordance with the national legislation of the contracting authority's country and in accordance with the provisions of the relevant financing agreement.



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## 22. TERMS OF REFERENCE

*Analysis of the Chinese market for tropical timber*

*from mainly COMIFAC countries*

*February 2026*

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### Presentation of the TTT project

The Tropical Timber Trade Facility (TTT) is a project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in partnership with COMIFAC and its member states.

Its main objective is to reduce illegal deforestation in the Congo Basin by promoting legal and sustainable trade in tropical timber and its derivatives. The project covers the entire supply chain, from Central Africa to international markets, including China.

In this context, ATIBT is involved in several strategic areas:

- **Strengthening national legality and traceability systems** to improve supply chain transparency.
- **Supporting companies in obtaining certification** (legality, sustainability, FSC, PEFC, PAFC, etc.).
- **Strengthening the capacities of operators**, particularly about certification system requirements.
- **Promoting sustainable tropical timber** on international markets, particularly in Europe and Asia.

In this context, ATIBT is conducting a strategic study on market opportunities for certified tropical timber, with a specific focus on the Chinese market, which represents a major outlet for timber products from Central Africa.

This consultancy forms part of a broader analytical process led by ATIBT. The overall study is structured around three complementary components :

- **Component 1 (implemented internally by ATIBT):** Analysis of marketing and commercialisation strategies of certified tropical wood exporters from Central Africa and other tropical basin.
- **Component 2 (subject of the present consultancy):** Analysis of perceptions of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers and of the institutional, regulatory and commercial environment in China.
- **Component 3 (implemented internally by ATIBT):** Cross-analysis of supply and

demand, identification of convergences and gaps, and formulation of operational recommendations.

The consultant's contribution is therefore intended to complement and inform ATIBT's internal work. The formulation of final strategic and operational recommendations remains under ATIBT's responsibility.

## Sector context

China is the world's largest importer of tropical timber, with imports estimated at over 6 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2023 (ITTO, 2024). Since the early 2000s, it has become the primary destination for timber exports from the Congo Basin, accounting for 70–85% of exports from several Central African countries (World Bank, 2022).

However, the Chinese timber market is undergoing significant structural changes, affecting demand patterns and the conditions under which certified timber can be marketed and valorised. Since 2018, Chinese customs data indicate a contraction in tropical timber imports, driven notably by a slowdown in the construction sector and evolving consumption patterns (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2024).

Recent studies highlight an increasing segmentation of the Chinese tropical timber market (Sun et al, 2023; Chen & Innes, 2022):

- An emerging premium segment (15–20%) with sensitivity to sustainability issues and a potential willingness to value certification.
- A dominant intermediate segment, primarily driven by price–quality considerations, with limited but growing interest in certification.
- A price-sensitive mass market segment, where environmental attributes play a marginal role in purchasing decisions.

While forest certification schemes such as FSC and PEFC aim to signal legality and sustainability and reduce information asymmetry, certified forest companies from the Congo Basin face persistent difficulties in monetising certification on the Chinese market. Certification-related costs are estimated at 5–12% of operating costs, while observed price premiums in China remain limited (3–8%), significantly lower than in European or North American markets (Sun & Cao, 2021).

Empirical evidence suggests that limited buyer awareness, weak institutional incentives, and inadequate marketing strategies contribute to this situation. A better empirical understanding of Chinese buyers' perceptions and of the institutional and regulatory environment is therefore required to inform realistic and targeted recommendations.

A robust, empirically grounded understanding of Chinese buyers' perceptions and of the institutional, regulatory and commercial environment in China is therefore required to inform

realistic and differentiated market strategies for certified tropical timber from Central Africa.

## Objective of the service

### Overall objective :

To analyse perceptions of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers on certified tropical timber and the institutional, regulatory and commercial environment in China, to generate robust empirical evidence supporting ATIBT's strategic analysis and recommendations. The analysis is therefore expected to generate directly operational insights regarding target audiences, appropriate messages, effective communication channels and possible market incentives.

### Specific objectives :

- **SO1:** Document and analyse perceptions of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers, their preferences and purchasing criteria regarding certified tropical timber
- **SO2:** Identify and prioritise barriers and enabling factors influencing the purchase of certified timber from the perspective of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers, including an analysis of sales channels, distribution channels and information channels relevant to these actors, in order to inform the design of targeted communication and marketing campaigns, in order to determine who should be targeted, through which channels, with which messages and at which stage of the purchasing process.
- **SO3:** Analyse the Chinese regulatory, policy and institutional framework shaping the import and commercialisation of certified timber

## Expected results, activities and deliverables

The study will adopt a mixed-methods approach in order to capture both broad market perceptions and in-depth insights regarding third-party legal verification and certified products. Data collection will be conducted directly with Chinese importers and Chinese sellers operating on the European and domestic markets. For Chinese consumers, data will also be collected directly.

A combined quantitative and qualitative strategy will be implemented. First, a large-scale online questionnaire will be distributed to consumers to gather general trends and preferences in a cost- and time-efficient manner. In a second step, a feasible number of qualitative interviews will be conducted with Chinese buyers/sellers to triangulate the survey results and gain a deeper understanding of consumers and importers' motivations, perceptions, and decision-making processes. This sequential design will allow both breadth of coverage and

depth of analysis while keeping the number of interviews manageable.

**Result:** *Perceptions of Chinese importers, Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets and Chinese consumers regarding third-party legality verification and certified tropical hardwood are analysed.*

## Activities:

### 1. Desk review:

A comprehensive review of existing materials will be conducted, including:

- Regulatory frameworks governing timber importation, legality requirements and traceability in China, particularly those that may influence the sourcing and promotion of certified timber products.
- Import/export rules, customs procedures and applicable standards.
- Trade agreements and cooperation frameworks between China and African countries.
- Market studies and sectoral reports
- FSC China and PEFC China publications
- Trade statistics and sales feedback
- Specialised media and communication materials
- Relevant academic literature

As a part of the desk review, the consultant will seek to collect and review relevant information from key organisations working on related topics, including TRAFFIC. This review will allow the identification of current market trends, reported challenges related to certified timber and general perceptions of tropical hardwood, certification and legality verification in China.

### 2. Structured questionnaire:

- Design and administer a structured questionnaire to Chinese consumers (target ≥ 1500 responses)
- Gather information on:
  - Perceptions and overall image of tropical hardwood in the Chinese market.
  - Preferences and purchasing criteria (quality, species, certification, sustainability attributes, price).
  - Types of products and main uses (construction, furniture, decoration, etc.).
  - Perceived value of third-party legality verification and certification and willingness to pay price premiums
  - Incentives of purchasing, purchase frequency vs type of products/price, preference on the product characters, communication channels, attitude toward timber legality, etc.

- Preferred and trusted information channels (online platforms, professional networks, media, trade fairs, influencers, etc.) and reactions to different types of messages and communication formats.

### **3. Qualitative and quantitative semi-structured interviews:**

- Conduct semi-structured interviews with Chinese sellers on the European and domestic markets, Chinese importers, and Representatives of FSC-China, PEFC China and OLB-China (target ≥ 16)
- Collect insights on barriers, motivations, and best practices in promoting legally verified and certified tropical hardwood.
- Complement findings from the questionnaire and desk review to provide richer contextual understanding.
- Specific analytical focus on:
  - Perceptions and overall image of tropical hardwood on the Chinese market.
  - Preferences and purchasing criteria (quality, species, certification, sustainability attributes, price).
  - Types of products and main uses (construction, furniture, decoration, etc.).
  - Obstacles and challenges perceived by sellers in promoting certified products.
  - Perceived value of legality verification, certification and willingness to pay price premiums.
  - Particular attention will be paid to identifying practical communication levers, credible messengers and effective ways to reach different buyer segments.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Analytical report synthesising insights from the desk review, questionnaire and qualitative interviews, covering:
  - Image and reputation of African tropical timber on the Chinese market
  - Hierarchisation of purchasing criteria (product types, uses, price, quality, certification, species, traceability, delivery conditions, timber specificities)
  - Level of awareness and understanding of legality verification and certification schemes
  - Incentives and barriers to purchasing tropical hardwood products in general.
  - Incentives and barriers specifically related to purchasing legally verified or certified products.
  - Perceived value of legality verification and certification and willingness to pay
  - Perceived risks associated with purchasing illegally sourced timber (e.g., financial risks, reputational risks, legal concerns).
  - Mapping of priority target groups and recommended communication channels for each segment.
  - Practical guidance on key messages and positioning elements to be used in



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future promotional campaigns.

- Decision-making processes and information channels
- Results of the questionnaire
- Transcripts of the interviews with stakeholders

## Methodology

1. **Quantitative analysis:** Responses from the online consumer questionnaire will be statistically analyzed to identify trends in perceptions, preferences, and purchasing behavior regarding third-party legal verification and certified products. Where available, sales indicators and market data will be used to complement and contextualize survey results.
2. **Qualitative analysis:** Interviews conducted with importers, and sellers will be transcribed and coded using thematic content analysis. This will allow the identification of recurrent perceptions, motivations, barriers, and decision-making factors related to certified tropical hardwood products.
3. **Triangulation:** Results from the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews will be systematically compared to validate findings, identify convergences or divergences, and refine interpretations.
4. **Comparative analysis:** Cross-case comparisons will be carried out between different respondent groups (consumers, sellers, importers) and across certification schemes (e.g., third party legality verification, FSC and PEFC-China) to highlight best practices, market opportunities, and recurring constraints.
5. **Integrated insights:** Combine desk review, questionnaire and interview results to provide a comprehensive understanding of perceptions, preferences and challenges, and to generate actionable recommendations for the design of communication and marketing campaigns (target groups, messages, channels, timing and formats).

## Timeline

The level of effort for the assignment is estimated at **30-35 working days**, to be implemented over a maximum period of **six to eight weeks** from the date of contract signature.



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| Activity  | Number of days    |
|---|-------------------|
| Desk review and institutional regulatory analysis with quantitative data collection | 5-6 days          |
| Questionnaire design and follow-up  | 10-11 days        |
| Semi-structured interviews with sellers and FSC/PEFC/OLB representatives            | 11-12 days        |
| Data analysis and synthesis   | 4-5 days          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>30-35 days</b> |

## Budget

The maximum budget allocated to this consultancy is EUR **20,000** (maximum, all taxes included – TTC). The financial proposal shall be submitted as a lump sum, inclusive of all professional fees, taxes and charges.

## Required profile

- Master's degree or equivalent in economics, marketing, international trade, social sciences or related disciplines.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in market analysis.
- Proven knowledge of the Chinese timber market or China–Africa timber trade relations.
- Solid understanding of forest certification schemes (FSC, PEFC, OLB).
- Strong professional network in China enabling access to qualified stakeholders.
- Excellent analytical and writing skills.
- Native proficiency in Chinese and full professional proficiency in English and/or French