

Request for Proposal: Water Management Consultancy

RFP n#: 2022-06-IM-WATERMANAGEMENT

Location: Mali

Start date: 01/08/ 2022

End date: 30/11/2022

Better Cotton key contact:

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All applications must be sent to tender@bettercotton.org and addressed to the BCI contact, with the subject header: "Application RFP Water Management Consultancy". Further information about the [project and position is detailed below](#). Questions, requests, and applications sent after the deadline (15 July 2022) will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Background

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. Through our network of field-level programme partners we have trained over 2.5 million farmers in 23 countries in more sustainable farming practices. A quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard. We have united the industry's stakeholders behind our efforts, and by 2030 our aim is to have trained 5 million farmers and doubled global production of Better Cotton.

The Better Cotton Standard System (BCSS) is at the heart of Better Cotton's approach and includes six main components: the Better Cotton Principles & Criteria, assurance programme, capacity building, chain of custody, monitoring and evaluation, and the Claims Framework. The Better Cotton Principles and Criteria lay out the global definition of Better Cotton, across seven principles. They ensure that Better Cotton meets clearly defined requirements for pesticide use, water management, biodiversity, soil health, fibre quality, decent work, and management systems.

The Better Cotton programme is delivered through a network of more than 70 Programme Partners (PPs), often local NGOs or cotton supply chain partners who recruit and train field staff and organise and work with farmers on the ground. These partners are a critical part of Better Cotton's operating model and the key touchpoint between the BCSS and millions of cotton farmers.

To ensure change, Better Cotton coordinates a capacity building program to help farmers adopt practices consistent with the Better Cotton Production Principles. The capacity building program is delivered through experienced Implementing Partners, which are organisations interested in working with cotton farmers to enable them to grow and sell Better Cotton.

Description

Better Cotton has developed a standardised training programme for Programme Partners on the Better Cotton Production Principles and Criteria and has identified the need for additional capacity building for partners on targeted, thematic areas. This assignment concerns the adaptation and implementation of a Water Stewardship Plan by smallholder cotton farmers in Mali to preserve water resources and enhance water quality on and around their farms.

Water consumption is one of cotton's biggest challenges. Diversion of water and its pollution by cotton growing can have severe impacts on ecosystems. When cotton is irrigated, the production uses a large amount of water, and surface and ground waters are often diverted to irrigate cotton fields. This can lead to freshwater loss through evaporation, and inefficient water management. In parallel, runoff of pesticides, fertilizers, and minerals from cotton fields risk contaminating rivers, lakes, wetlands, and underground aquifers. These pollutants affect biodiversity directly by immediate toxicity or indirectly through long-term accumulation. In Mali where cotton is a rainfed crop, availability of water, rainfall patterns, soil moisture management are challenges faced by cotton growers.

In this regard, Better Cotton has been developing a Water Management Plan to support cotton farmers understand and preserve their water resources. This first starts with a participatory mapping of water resources relevant for Better Cotton production and using it as a basis to define collective actions. Key information such as who detains influence and control of water resources, where those resources come from (irrigation, rainfall, pumped water), who are the water users, which boundaries exist, etc, are all covered. The training then guides farmers to a series of best practices that can be simply adopted in the field. These practices cover topics such as soil moisture, irrigation, and water quality.

The expert will provide support to the Better Cotton Training Team to develop locally adapted training material and guidance on implementation of the Water Stewardship Plan in Mali. The consultation must be delivered considering the following specificities:

- Cotton production in Mali is managed by the CMDT (Compagnie Malienne de Développement des Textiles)
 - Better Cotton trains an estimated 142,184 producers through the CMDT in Mali
 - This represents 67% of all cotton producers in the country
 - Better Cotton is grown in 2 out of the 4 Filiales of the CMDT: Filiale Nord-Est and Filiale Sud
 - The "Zone de Production Agricole" (ZPA) is the basic unit for the extension services provided by CMDT
 - Producers ensure the production of seed cotton with the technical support of the cotton company and the financial support of banks and microfinance institutions
 - CMDT is responsible for the marketing, transport and ginning of seed cotton and the sale of finished products (lint and seed)
- Better Cotton in Mali
 - Producers are smallholders and work on small areas of land (average of 2.5 Ha)
 - They also grow cereals, including millet, sorghum, and corn
 - Cotton is primarily a rain-fed agriculture (no irrigation system)
 - Cotton yields are dropping due to soil degradation, climate change, and pest pressure

Scope of Work

The overall objective is to support smallholder farmers in Mali to meet the core indicators of Better Cotton's Criterion 2.1; and supporting continuous improvement. This will include the four steps below:

Activity 1: Adaptation of a global water training material to the local context in Mali

Global training material has been made available by Better Cotton and a Global Water Expert from the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS). The consultant will adapt this training material to the Malian context.

Output: The consultant will adapt the BCI global water management modules to the Malian context.

To be delivered in collaboration with the Better Cotton team and the CMDT representative.

Activity 2: Preparing and delivering training to CMDT staff and Better Cotton country team

The training on water stewardship will last 2 days. At the end of the training, participants should understand:

- the key components of an effective Water Stewardship Plan (i.e.: participatory mapping, soil moisture, irrigation and water quality)
- the methods and techniques available to implement the Plan.
- The impact of climate change on water availability for cotton growers and adaptation techniques.

Output: The consultant will train CMDT training staff [TOT]

Activity 3: Propose a sustainable water management capacity building plan for the next 3 years.

The expert will propose in collaboration with CMDT and Better Cotton staff a water management capacity building plan that includes promotion of practices through demonstration plots.

Output: The consultant will develop a water management capacity building plan for the next 3 years.

Activity 4: Mapping of stakeholders engaged in water management at the national level

P&Cs indicators 2.1.9 and 2.1.10 request Producer Units to identify and implement collective collaborations for sustainable water use. The consultant will identify stakeholders engaged in water management at the national level and outline partnerships that already exist with CMDT.

Output: The consultant will map the main stakeholders engaged in water management in Mali

Note: It is strongly considered that this local expert will remain in close contact with the Better Cotton Regional Manager and might be hired for further work on water as judged necessary per BCI.

High-level Timeline

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|------------------------------|---|
| 15 July 2022 | All applications must be submitted by email, headed "Application RFP Water Management Consultancy - Mali - 2022-06-IM-WATER MANAGEMENT" addressed to Lisa BARRATT at tender@bettercotton.org |
| 16 July 2022 to 25 July 2022 | Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews |
| By 30 July 2022 | The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful <u>shortlisted</u> applicants will also be notified |
| 1 August 2022 | Activity kick-off |
| By 10 August 2022 | Consultancy timeline is validated |
| By 10 September 2022 | Finalize training modules adaptation |
| By 20 October 2022 | Develop the CB plan and the management plan, including the demo plots protocol and identification of demo plot sites |
| By 30 October 2022 | Deliver the TOT Finalize the stakeholders mapping |
| By 30 November 2022 | Submit the final report |

Required Skills & Knowledge

| Skills, Knowledge and Experience |
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| <i>Essential</i> |
| Advanced University Degree in Biology, Forestry, Water/Natural Resources Management, Environmental Sustainability; or another relevant field |
| At least 6 years of relevant field experience with in-depth understanding of water conservation issues and policies |
| A good understanding of Mali or Sub-Saharan Africa's water context, threats, actors and opportunities |
| Knowledge of local water policies and processes |
| Experience in delivering interactive trainings to a wide range of participants |
| Fluent in English and French |
| <i>Desirable</i> |
| Experience working in the agricultural commodity sectors |
| Strong knowledge of ISEAL and its codes, or ISO Standards as they apply to standard systems and certification bodies |
| Good understanding of knowledge management, learning and innovation |

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| Understanding of the training-of-trainers process, monitoring & evaluation or standards systems |
| Proven ability to collaborate effectively across different teams and cultures, strong relationship building skills and service-oriented attitude |
| Excellent organisation and capacity to handle a set of different priorities several projects running in parallel |
| Proven ability to work autonomously with a high level of personal effectiveness and ability to adapt to changing priorities |
| Good communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly and concisely, as well as the ability to assimilate and process information for wide-ranging audiences |
| Experience in a multi-stakeholder initiative or supporting multi-stakeholder dialogue and consultation |
| Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills with a proactive approach to finding and proposing solutions to challenges within clearly defined boundaries |

Application Requirements

Proposals responding to this Request for Proposals should be a maximum of 5-6 pages (excluding CVs), and include the following:

- Overview of relevant experience;
- Proposed methodology and timeline;
- Detailed and transparent budget in EUROS, including time allocation and day rates.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Better Cotton is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources. All applications will be reviewed under the principles and subject to Better Cotton's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.

Proposals can be sent in French.