

Terms of Reference

Consultancy:

Analysis of ResCA projects impact in achieving climate resilience and proposals of sustainability alternatives

I. CONTEXT

Central America is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change in the world due to its' geography, exposure and socio-economic conditions. Tropical storms, hurricanes, and droughts all cause severe impacts across the region. For example, Honduras ranked second and Nicaragua sixth in countries most affected by climate change according to the 2019 Global Climate Risk Index. Between 1998 and 2017, Honduras and Nicaragua lost USD \$556 M and USD \$223 M respectively to climate impacts (Eckstein et al., 2018). These impacts were especially damaging in rural areas, where according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 300,000 families were impacted by severe flooding in both Panama and Honduras. As a result, food insecurity in Central America, where there are currently 11 million malnourished people and 1.4 million people that need food aid, increased from 10.2% of the population in 2015 to 12.5% in 2017 (FAO, 2018). In addition, climate related migration in Central America is expected to reach an average of 1.4 to 2.1 million people, primarily from rural areas due to lost crop productivity (Kumari, 2018).

For these reasons, Central America is considered a priority action region for the implementation of TNC's Regenerative Ranching and Agriculture (R2A), previously referred to as the *Healthy Agricultural Systems (HAS) Strategy*. The R2A Strategy focuses on the mutually beneficial relationships between natural resources (water, soil, biodiversity, and natural habitats) and agricultural and fisheries sectors, by promoting regenerative agriculture and ranching practices that promote resilient and sustainable food production. Since 2016 The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has led the implementation of the Resilient Central America Program (ResCA, www.resilientcentralamerica.org/en), whose objective is to reduce the vulnerability to climate change of the agri-food and fisheries sectors and promote food security in the most vulnerable Central American countries. The ResCA program has three fundamental pillars of the program:

Trade and Access to Markets: ResCA seeks to link producers (farmers and fishers) to global and regional markets demanding "cleaner" and more sustainable agricultural products through interventions such as building traceability and validation mechanisms into supply chains, as well as promoting policy and regulatory reforms supporting the creation of producers' connection to sustainable supply chain initiatives. Encouraging regional and global market demand for goods produced through climate-smart agricultural is key to the Program's long-term success. Supporting governments to promote policies and extension services to establish Climate Smart Agricultural practices and verify sustainable sourcing of crops and fish is critical to proliferation of climate-smart approaches at national levels, ensuring they are linked to and supported by market demand for environmentally friendly crops and fish.

Increased Sustainable and Climate Resilient Productivity: ResCA seeks to establish agricultural policies, strategies, and practices that sustainably increase productivity and decrease pressure to expand into new, forested areas that would release CO₂; fisheries and mariculture practices that improve the resilience of fish stocks and their resilience to climate change; and new sources of finance (or facilitate access to current sources of finance), such as agricultural credit and innovative business models. It will also add more value to farm and fisheries products locally to make continued proliferation of these practices possible. This semester, we achieved the following outcomes per country.

Agricultural and Environmental Management: ResCA seeks to establish systems of agricultural and fisheries management that are compatible with environmental management goals, such as multi-stakeholder alliances to adopt landscape-scale analysis of environmental, social, and economic values, in order to improve the efficiency of and plan scaling of private and public resources for agricultural development; seascape-scale management of resilient fisheries and their important habitats, such as replenishment zones; consortia of producers, companies, and governments that make the contributions of these systems part of national commitments to emissions reductions. In this regard, the Program supports local and national governments to develop and implement sustainable agricultural plans and policies that emphasize the promotion of public goods; policy and regulatory changes that establish national development and productive priorities favoring growth of Climate Smart Agricultural practices and access to markets for sustainable goods; the establishment of government sponsored standards for landscape- and seascape-scale planning to identify climate-smart priorities for subsidies, extension, market development, and producers; as well as access to good practices related to land use planning for public and private sector.

The ResCA program aims to test innovative solutions in climate-smart regenerative agriculture through pilot projects that work across multiple scales in partnership with government officials and private sector actors. The ResCA program aims to provide systemic change and generate scalable successful experiences in the agriculture and fisheries sectors that could open access to financial resources that develop replicable models. These replicable models will be utilized as strategies to promote Climate Smart Agricultural approaches amongst critical audiences such as trade unions, ministries of agriculture and agricultural crop producers and fishermen.

The ResCA program has identified three main challenges that interventions should alleviate:

1. Weak policies in the realm of climate resilient approach in agriculture. National and local governments need stronger support to work on forest protection, wetlands, and other sensitive ecosystems that prevent encroachment and unsustainable agricultural practices.
2. High habitat loss closely linked with the development of unsustainable agricultural practices over the last 50 years in Central America. The highest deforestation has been in tropical forests with high biodiversity. The high use of agrochemicals and soil erosion caused by farming has had a major impact on terrestrial, aquatic and marine biodiversity systems.
3. Soil degradation, mainly due to water erosion, intense application of agrochemicals, and deforestation. Mesoamerica accounts for 26% of global soil degradation. In Central America, the agricultural frontier is expanding at high speed rates into more humid areas such as the Atlantic coast in Honduras and Nicaragua.

II. CONSULTANCY OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The consultancy aims to analyze the impact of ResCA projects outputs in achieving climate resilience. The scope is to determine, with the available data, how regenerative agriculture helps improve resilience to climate change through the integration of different management actions and practices of healthy agricultural systems. In addition, the consultancy aims to analyze and propose alternatives of technical and financial sustainability for ResCA intervention areas.

III. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

To fulfill the overall objective of this consultancy, the following three specific objectives are sought:

- To build a conceptual framework of EbA and regenerative agriculture
- To analyze the benefits of implementation of the Regenerative Ranching and Agriculture (R2A) strategy as a climate change adaptation strategy using one study case within the ResCA program
- To design metrics for climate resiliency, according to the R2A expected results and Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- To analyze and propose alternatives of technical and financial sustainability on ResCA intervention areas

IV. SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED

1. Evidence based nexus of regenerative agriculture with Ecosystem based Adaptation

Based on the ongoing projects build a framework linking the benefits of regenerative agriculture and ecosystem-based adaptation in building communities' climate resilience applicable to the agriculture and fishing sectors where ResCA is impacting.

The **specific outputs** expected for this activity are:

- a) A structured conceptual framework designed
- b) Clear and measurable benefits and links identified
- c) Broad applicability in Central America and to the specified value chain

2. R2A strategy as a climate change adaptation initiative

Using one study case within the ResCA program, link, the implementation of regenerative agriculture with adaptation to climate change in the short, medium, and long term.

The **specific output** expected for this activity is:

- a. Use a case study and their available data to identify the benefits of regenerative agriculture in the process of building adaptation in local communities and specific value chain

- b. List of actions/benefits, challenges and opportunities in using regenerative agriculture as a climate adaptation strategy including the role of the ecosystem services.

3. ResCA climate resilience evaluation and metrics

Assess the progress of the ResCA projects in achieving climate resilience, particularly a set of indicators that assess the progress of the projects in achieving climate resilience and ecosystem-based adaptation

The **specific output** expected for this activity is:

- a. Produce a series of metrics to assess the progress of ResCA projects in achieving climate resilience and ecosystem-based adaptation
- b. Produce a baseline evaluation of the current status of ResCA projects in achieving climate resilience and ecosystem-based adaptation

4. Alternatives of technical and financial sustainability

Analyze and propose alternatives of technical and financial sustainability of the ResCA projects. Produce a document with applicable sources of technical and financial support for ResCA project and produce a tentative action plan.

The **specific output** expected for this activity is:

- a. Document with applicable sources of technical and financial support for ResCA project
- b. Tentative action plan

V. DELIVERABLES

	Product	Delivery Date
A	Report with framework of R2A as an adaptation strategy	60 days from signature
B	ResCA climate resilience metrics & report of benefits of regenerative agriculture in the process of building adaptation	90 days from signature
C	ResCA sustainability analysis document and action plan and final versions of products A and B	120 days from signature

VI. CONSULTANCY DURATION

This consultancy is expected to take four months, initiating in June 2020 and finalizing in September 2020.

VII. CONSULTANT PROFILE DESIRED

The contractor (either individually or in a team), must demonstrate experience and verifiable skills in the following points:

- Minimum of five years' experience working in or with conservation organizations as technical advisors across the Latin America region.
- Minimum of five years' experience working on climate adaptation and building resilience as technical advisors or project implementors across the Latin America region
- Experience in the collection of primary and secondary, qualitative and quantitative information.
- Work experience in the public sector, international and/or regional organizations, specifically with agricultural, fisheries or livestock producers.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated proficiency in English and Spanish languages

VIII. CONSULTANCY REQUIREMENTS

- The contractor must have basic medical and life insurance
- The contractor must comply with the requirements demanded by the social and tax laws of his/her country of residence
- The contractor must comply with its tax obligations independently and in accordance with legal provisions
- The contractor must deliver the corresponding official vouchers for the payment of professional fees actually executed.

IX. CONSULTANCY VALUE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The proposed value of the contract should include the delivery of the products, including taxes and travel expenses anticipated. Payments will be made against the delivery of products to the full satisfaction of TNC. As proof of each payment, the corresponding official invoice must be delivered for each of the products, which must be authorized at the corresponding tax level. Payments will be made as follows:

Pago	Product	Payment Date	% Pago
1	Signature and Work Plan	Upon signature	15%
2	Producto A	60 days after	25%
3	Producto B	90 days after	25%
4	Producto C	120 days after	35%
TOTAL			100%

X. OTHER EXPENSES





All expenses, including at least two (2) trips to some of the Central American projects related to the fulfillment of specific activities and the delivery of products for this contract must be included in the economic offer.

XI. PRESENTATION OF THE CONSULTANCY

Those interested in applying for this consultancy must submit in PDF format and in separate documents:

- i) Letter of interest signed
- ii) Resume/Resumes
- iii) Economic Offer
- iv) Technical Offer (proposal according to what is requested in these terms of reference that includes activities, schedule and development methodology.)

These documents must be sent electronically to pilar.lozano@tnc.org by June 9th at 5 p.m. (Central America).

XII. CONTACT

Pilar Lozano-Rivera
Regional Strategy Conservation Associate
Resilient Central America (ResCA)
The Nature Conservancy, Latin America
pilar.lozano@tnc.org



Gift of the United States Government

