Request for Expressions of Interest (EoI)

Short-term consultancy (STC) position

Development of a Scoping Study on the use of AI in Evaluations for

AF-TERG, CIFs E&L Initiative and GEF IEO, GCF IEU

The purpose of request for expression of interests (EoI) is to seek the support of a short-term consultant (STC) in the development of the joins scoping study on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in evaluations for the evaluation functions of the Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Green Climate Funds and the Global Environmental Facility, jointly referred to as the four climate funds. The evaluation functions of the four funds have established an informal collaboration group in 2023. While this work is procured on behalf of the evaluation functions of the four funds, for administrative purposes, this study is led by the Adaptation Fund.

The **Adaptation Fund (AF)** is an innovative financing mechanism set up by the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), established to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol or the Paris Agreement and are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaption Fund (AF-TERG) was established in 2018, as an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Adaptation Fund Board (the 'AF Board' or the 'Board'), to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's Evaluation Policy.

The **Climate Investment Funds (CIF)** was established in 2008 to provide scaled-up climate finance to low- and middle- income countries to initiate transformational change towards low carbon, climate resilient development. With almost $12 billion pledged, CIF is one of the world's largest multilateral climate funds. CIF leverages MDBs as implementing agencies, jointly supporting nearly 400 projects in 72 countries—covering a range of climate mitigation and adaptation areas, including clean technologies, climate resilience, renewable energy integration, coal transitions, and nature. CIF's Evaluation & Learning (E&L) Initiative identifies strategic lessons across CIF's portfolio and enables learning that is timely and relevant, thus helping to inform decisions and strategies for CIF and the wider climate finance sector.

The **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** was set up by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2010 to support the efforts of developing countries to respond to climate change. It aims to deliver balanced funding for mitigation and adaptation while being guided by the Convention's principles and provisions. The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) was established by the GCF Board on 13 February 2014. It conducts independent evaluations of the GCF's activities to guarantee its accountability and synthesizes learnings from high-quality and rigorous evaluations to support the GCF's effectiveness and efficiency. The IEU operates independently of the GCF Secretariat. Its Head is appointed by and reports directly to the Board. The IEU also provides evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, for purposes of periodic reviews of the Financial Mechanism, of which GCF is a part.

The **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** is a multilateral family of funds dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution, and supporting land and ocean health. Its financing enables developing countries to address complex challenges and work towards international

environmental goals. [The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)](link) was established by the GEF Council in July 2003. The Office is independent from GEF policy making and its delivery and management of assistance and undertakes independent evaluations at the strategic level.

1. Background

Artificial Intelligence holds a big promise for making evaluations of climate interventions more efficient, relevant, effective, and impactful. For a number of years, evaluation offices have tried to employ automation and algorithms. The UNDP IEO's AIDA system is supporting the web-based retrieval of lessons and recommendations by keywords. The GEF IEO has also experimented with machine learning. With the introduction of generative AI / Large Language Models, however, this opportunity has sparked renewed interest.

At the same time, various issues with the application of AI in evaluations have been reported. For example, evaluation offices of UN agencies have reported at the end of January 2024 mixed results in the application of AI, emphasizing that while AI may reduce significantly the time required in certain evaluation activities, there is still need for training AI models and verification of the results generated by AI. Additionally, ethical considerations in the use of AI still remain a major issue.

It is important to point out that various research and experiments in using AI in developmental evaluations have taken place, but no comprehensive stocktaking of the opportunities and risks of the use of AI in the evaluation of climate interventions has been undertaken. Therefore, the evaluation functions of the AF, CIFs, the GEF, and GCF, , have decided to undertake a joint study with the objective of understanding the potential benefits and risks of using AI.

In theory, different automated tools can potentially enhance efficiency and effectiveness for evaluations in every phase of an evaluation and at every level. Some of the examples are provided below:

- During the design of an evaluation, AI could synthesize existing evidence and knowledge, as well as experiences and lessons with different methodologies.
- During the implementation of evaluations, AI can support the analysis of text documents and monitoring reports with automated tasks including summaries, coding, counting, aggregation, record-keeping and other labor-intensive aspects.
- During the consultation and writing processes, AI can support the process by providing automated translations and summarizing documents and focus group discussions.
- AI could play a role in the quality control and enforcement of technical standards of evaluations.
- During the use of evaluations, AI can support the learning from evidence, the synthesis of evaluation results, and the making-available of knowing what works where and when it is needed.

However, in practice, many stakeholders are concerned about potential risks associated with using AI. Some early studies and pilots have indeed highlighted that it is not advisable to use and depend on AI tools for certain evaluation tasks, such as generating images for geospatial analysis or data augmentation, conducting literature reviews, and synthesizing evidence from multiple sources. Furthermore, tools for several of these evaluation aspects are not yet available. Understanding jointly which ones could be implemented and developing them is a task in which the evaluation functions of the four multilateral climate finance mechanisms can leverage synergies. This applies to all of the possible applications, as all evaluation offices share the same challenges.

2. Scope of work

The evaluation functions of the four climate funds want to hire an individual consultant (STC) for a scoping study that shall – in close consultation with the four functions -collect information on and analyze the potential opportunities of and risks associated with using AI, for example in:

- o making evaluations more efficient and effective as well as strengthen the quality of evidence and external validity;
- o enhancing evaluation utilization and uptake of lessons learned and recommendations, including by allowing for ad-hoc context-sensitive syntheses of evaluative evidence;
- o better integrating learnings from evaluations into programme design including through better understanding what evidence and lessons are relevant for programme design and how to make it available;
- o Identifying emerging areas for future research/study and for tool development
- o Conducting joint assessments of impact or large-scale trends based on data from across the climate funds.
- discuss any other associated risks with using AI in evaluation;
- make suggestions for potential tools (including for example, for cost benefit analysis, proposed institutional arrangements, and target group strategies) and joint approaches to evaluations using AI.

The study will include interviews with key stakeholders and experts in the field. An indicative outline of the study will be provided to the consultant prior to commencing the work.

While the above scoping study may look into issues related to evaluations in general, it is important o emphasize that it should pay specific attention to the climate finance specific aspects of evaluations linked to mitigation and adaptation, as well as at the specific institutional and governance arrangements of the four funds and the respective limitations associated with that (e.g. rules related to the use of AI within the World Bank Group and the GCF).

The collaboration group of the evaluation functions of the four climate funds will serve as the steering group to this study. It will meet as often as necessary, but at least twice during the study period, once to discuss the approach paper, and once to discuss the first draft of the study.

Based on the results of the study, the evaluation functions of the four funds may decide to design a long-term programme for collaboration on AI.

3.   Deliverables and payment schedule

Overall, the Funds are seeking to provide a short study (26 expert days).

#	Deliverable	Inputs (expert-days)	Timeline
1	Approach Paper (up to 5 pages with a final outline of the study)	2	1 April 2024
2	Minutes from consultation with Steering Group	1	10 April 2024
3	Minutes from interviews with key stakeholders	2	20 April 2024
3	First draft	14	31 May 2024
4	Minutes from consultation with Steering Group and other stakeholders	2	10 June 2024
5	Final Draft	5	30 June 2024

4.   Arrangements

Location. The consultancy will take place at the consultant's own place of work, while working EST time zone office hours, as needed.

Travel. No travel is expected under this consultancy.

Support. The Adaptation Fund will provide the consultant with all necessary documentation needed in support of the above scope of work via access to a cloud-based background documentation repository or will provide access in another way to any documentation.

Arrangements. All contracts with the Adaptation Fund are World Bank contracts and follow the relevant rules and regulations of the Bank. The focal point for administrative matters related to this study will be the Secretariat of the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund, where the TTL of this study will be based. Payments for deliverables will be processed upon approval by the TTL.

Interviews: The steering group will support the consultant in organizing the interviews with key stakeholders.

5. Qualifications

Education: Strong and proven academic background in applied research and climate change sciences, with a PhD /Master level degree or equivalent in a relevant field (climate change adaptation; international development; social sciences or related area).

Experience:

- A minimum of 5 years of experience in understanding and practical application of various capabilities of AI and associated tools and models

- A minimum of 5 years of experience in the evaluation field, including managing, or conducting evaluations as well as evaluation syntheses and potentially also meta evaluations.

- Thorough understanding of climate finance, the four climate funds and the stakeholders to their projects and evaluations.

- Ability to communicate complex technical detail with clarity, and ability to identify and focus on the key messages among competing detail.

- Strong interpersonal skills, ability to work with different stakeholders and skills to promote good communication and a learning culture.

All application should be submitted in PDF to af-terg-sec@adaptation-fund.org by **11:59pm EST on April 16, 2024**. Please submit a CV and a cover letter briefly outlining the approach proposed for executing this study.