



Environmental Impact Assessment for Sommalife, Ghana: GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation 2.0 grantee

Terms of Reference

May 2025

Overview

GSMA requires the services of a consultancy firm/specialist consultants to undertake an environmental impact assessment for Sommalife's operations, with a focus on their new project that has been awarded a grant under the GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation 2.0. This should include the following:

- I. Project and literature review of a) Sommalife's operations and their new project supported by GSMA; b) key environmental literature, considerations and regulations in relation to the project and the context; c) stakeholder and subject matter expert interviews; d) critical observation and assessment of key environmental conditions, with a focus on shea parkland conservation activities.
- II. An Environmental Management Plan and supporting workshop (EMP) based on a materiality assessment of environmental impact, with a set of indicators and plan for monitoring, and recommendations for mitigation of any negative risks or tracking positive impact.
- III. A final Environmental Impact Assessment report, integrating the literature review, EMP and other insights.

The details are outlined within this Terms of Reference document. **The deadline to submit expressions of interest is 23:59 (UK time) on Tuesday 17th June 2025.** GSMA will review submissions on a rolling basis and may extend the deadline, if needed. The work is expected to be completed by September 2025.

GSMA Mobile for Development

GSMA's Mobile for Development team drives innovation in digital technology to reduce inequalities in our world. Singularly positioned at the intersection of the mobile ecosystem and the development sector, we stimulate digital innovation to deliver both sustainable business and large-scale socio-economic impact for the underserved.

Our unique research and insights platform advances digital innovations and implementations that empower underserved populations to build a better future. Our in-market expertise informs partnerships between the mobile industry, tech innovators, governments and the development sector. And our unparalleled convening power motivates conversations and inspires action.

GSMA ClimateTech Programme

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity and we continue to see its impacts, including: frequent extreme weather events; food and water insecurity; displacement of vulnerable populations; increase in temperatures; wildfires and droughts; reduction of wildlife populations and biodiversity; lower agricultural yields; sea-level rises and daily loss of forest.

The mission of the [GSMA's ClimateTech Programme](#)¹ is to unlock the power of digital technology for climate action to create a low-carbon, climate resilient, and environmentally sustainable future. Through our research activities, we identify, promote and inform opportunities for digital innovation and develop pathways for aligning climate action with the sustainable development agenda. We also catalyse vital partnerships between the GSMA, the mobile industry, tech innovators, governments and the development sector with the aim of reducing fragmentation, facilitating scale and promoting collective action.

GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation

The [GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation Cohort 2.0](#)² was launched during the GSMA's MWC Barcelona event in February 2023, and is supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The fund is designed to help accelerate the testing, adoption and scalability of digital innovations that enable the world's most vulnerable populations to adapt to, anticipate and absorb the negative impacts of climate change, or strengthen biodiversity. It builds on the previous GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation, currently supporting [11 start-ups](#)³.

The fund seeks to support start-ups, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to leverage mobile and digital technology to build the climate resilience of vulnerable low-income communities and marginalised groups in Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Grantees are to receive an equity-free grant of between £100,000 and £250,00 to pilot and scale their innovation over an 18-month period, with additional soft benefits such as GSMA facilitated industry partnerships, provision of mobile and digital, monitoring and evaluation, and market expertise through GSMA staff, and a platform to raise the profile of their start-up or SME to potential investors.

¹ [GSMA | ClimateTech | Mobile for Development](#)

² [GSMA | Announcing The GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation Cohort 2.0 | Mobile for Development](#)

³ [GSMA | The GSMA Innovation Fund for Climate Resilience and Adaptation: Portfolio overview | Mobile for Development](#)

Under this fund, up to 11 start-ups and SMEs across Africa and Asia have been awarded grants to pilot and scale innovative digital solutions for **climate action**.

Sommalife

[Sommalife](#) is a Ghana-based start up that is improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, particularly women, by digitising agricultural value chains and promoting regenerative farming practices. The organisation supports farmers with mobile tools that enhance access to markets, finance, and training, while also encouraging long-term climate resilience and environmental sustainability.

Over 16 million women in West Africa rely on shea production, yet Ghana loses 20,000 hectares of land annually to desertification. With 80% of charcoal in northern Ghana made from shea trees, this threatens one million farming households and accelerates climate change. The shea tree, now listed as vulnerable, remains largely unmapped and unprotected, endangering livelihoods and biodiversity.

With support from the GSMA Innovation Fund, Sommalife is currently scaling its **TreeSyt digital platform** to strengthen the productivity and resilience of Ghana's shea value chain. The platform uses USSD and mobile technology to register farmers, track production in real time, and facilitate access to agroforestry resources, sustainable inputs, and digital financial services.

The project also has a focus on the conservation and regeneration of **shea parklands**, which are critical to the livelihoods of women farmers in northern Ghana. Sommalife is working with several communities to protect shea parklands through sustainable agroforestry, providing training on shea regeneration and climate-smart agriculture to farmers. They have also set-up tree nurseries to support replanting efforts and biodiversity in the region.

Environmental Impact Assessment Assignment

We are seeking the services of a consultancy firm/specialist consultants to conduct an environmental impact assessment of Sommalife's operations, particularly focusing on the GSMA supported project. We expect this work to be done through the following three phases (*suggestions for alternative approaches are welcomed by consultants*):

I. Project and Literature Review

A review of:

- a. Sommalife's operations and their new project supported by GSMA
- b. key environmental literature, considerations, and policy and regulatory framework in relation to the project and the context
- c. 6 stakeholder (farmer, start-up staff) and subject matter expert interviews (agriculture and conservation experts)
- d. In-person field visit for critical observation and assessment of key environmental conditions, with a focus on the shea parkland conservation activities. The consultant may want to supplement this with primary data collection.

The majority of the review process is expected to be desk-based. The review should be summarised in a word document and pdf no longer than 6 pages.

II. Environmental Management Plan and Workshop

An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) based on a materiality assessment of environmental impact, with a set of indicators and plan for monitoring, and recommendations for mitigation of any negative risks or tracking positive impact. This should be done on MS Excel or tabulated if using other software.

A workshop to discuss and refine the EMP with Sommalife should take place before finalising the EMP. The consultant is expected to lead on the preparation of the workshop agenda, materials, logistics (with support from GSMA), and facilitation. The workshop is expected to take place in person, but can be done virtually if needed.

III. Environmental Impact Assessment report

A final Environmental Impact Assessment report, integrating the literature review, EMP and other recommendations and insights for Sommalife. The project activities are limited in scope and scale; thus, the environmental impact assessment is expected to be streamlined to focus primarily on key environmental issues relating to the project intervention, with some additional consideration of Sommalife's wider operations.

The report should be presented in a word document and pdf no longer than 12 pages.

Working with GSMA and Sommalife

The GSMA Climate Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Manager will provide overall direction to the consultant, as well as facilitate initial communication with Sommalife. The consultant is expected to lead on project communications with Sommalife thereafter.

Key Deliverables and Timeline

July 2025

- Project and Literature Review
- Environmental Management Plan

September – 2025

- Final Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Application and selection process

Interested applicants are asked to submit:

1. Documentation of the firm's or consultant's knowledge and expertise on:
 - Environmental impact assessments
 - Environmental monitoring, data collection and testing relating to forest conservation and regenerative agriculture
 - Carbon and energy savings
 - International development and humanitarian aid – specifically climate action
 - Innovative mobile digital technologies
 - Expertise, and presence or established networks in Ghana

2. Samples of two recent and relevant pieces of work e.g., environmental impact assessment reports.
3. Name and CVs of team working on the project
4. Detailed proposal of plan to complete the work including:
 - High-level proposed approach and methodology.
 - High-level schedule and activity timeline
 - Please note any limitations, risks and mitigations.
 - Any additional considerations that you feel have been left out
5. Budget including:
 - Personnel fees (broken down by name, role, activity, daily fee rate and proposed number of days per each of the three phases of the project outlined in the ToR)
 - Expected expenses and travel costs. If international travel is expected, this should be limited to one short trip for either the baseline observation or the EMP workshop.
 - Expected costs for specialist data collection tools and services
 - The GSMA default currency requirement for all proposals is 'UK Pounds Sterling', this will be the contract currency for the successful Respondent

Due to GSMA compliance requirements, exact project budgets cannot be provided at this stage. You are, however, able to provide a few implementation/budget options that can help us assess value for money and we can align our project scope to the relevant budget after a consultant has been selected.

The deadline to submit expressions of interest is 23:59 (UK time) on Tuesday 17th June 2025. Proposals should be submitted to Samir Hafiz shafiz@gsma.com and Henry Bowes hbowes@gsma.com. GSMA anticipates that interviews will be conducted on Monday 23rd and Monday 24th June.