

Terms of Reference
for a consultant to carry out a desktop study on
Soil fertility and crop pest management practices and policies
in three regions of Africa (West, East and Southern Africa)

Context

It is widely recognized that current food production systems are not working, and that transformational change is needed. Opinions are divided on the direction of this change, and the fate of African soils is at stake. Indeed, soil degradation is increasing on the continent: more than 20% of the land in most sub-Saharan African countries is already degraded, affecting more than 65% of the population and having significant negative impacts on food production and livelihoods (FAO). Soil degradation and erosion in sub-Saharan Africa is considered one of the fundamental causes of stagnation or decline in agricultural productivity and provision of other ecosystem services. Reported yield losses range from moderate (2% decline over several decades) to catastrophic (more than 50%), depending on crop, soil type, climate, and production systems, with most studies reporting significant losses. Agricultural land is particularly prone to erosion and nutrient depletion. It is estimated that of the approximately 494 million hectares of land in sub-Saharan Africa affected by soil degradation, 46% is affected by water erosion, 38% by wind erosion, 12% by chemical degradation and 4% by physical deterioration. There is an urgent need for proactive interventions to halt and reverse land degradation.

Soil fertility management therefore remains one of the major challenges for most African farmers and states. On the one hand, access to chemical fertilizers remains problematic and accentuates the phenomenon of soil degradation, and on the other hand, the use of organic matter and ecological fertilizers remains marginal, poorly supported, and little promoted.

In addition, the fight against crop pests is another major concern for farmers on the continent. To deal with this, they too often use synthetic chemical pesticides that are sometimes obsolete and often without respecting doses, application frequencies, pre-harvest intervals or instructions in terms of protective equipment. This increases the risks of contamination and pollution (of water, air and soil), exposes populations (farmers, residents and consumers) to poisoning and disease and destroys biodiversity. Although in developing countries the use of synthetic plant protection products remains limited in volume due to poverty, there is nevertheless an increase. Moreover, since the rules of approval are less strict and controls are difficult, pesticides that are banned elsewhere because of their impact on health and/or the

environment are often found there. This situation is becoming increasingly worrying for the continent.

The alarming diagnosis of health and environmental risks linked to synthetic pesticides is now widely shared by the scientific community worldwide. With applications for both crop and animal production, agroecology is also recognized by scientists and international institutions (FAO, IFAD, UN) as a sustainable alternative to this excessive use of synthetic chemical pesticides and certain veterinary products.

The Healthy Soil Healthy Food programme is a joint initiative between AFSA (Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa) and SKI (Seed and Knowledge Initiative) that aims to promote soil management methods to improve and preserve soil health to achieve food security and safety. 15 partner organisations working closely with farmers are engaged in this initiative to become centres of excellence in soil health - 5 in West Africa, 5 in East Africa and 5 in Southern Africa, and to spread this approach across the continent. Promoting the production and use of environmentally friendly inputs (fertilisers and natural treatment products) is an important part of this programme. Indeed, it is possible to intensify agricultural production while having the least possible negative impact on the environment and human health using biopesticides and agroecological fertilisers.

To facilitate access to the use of agroecological inputs (natural treatment products against crop pests, and organic fertilisers), the programme 'Healthy Soil Healthy Food' intends to promote the production and domestic marketing of these alternatives in its areas of intervention in West Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa.

To this end, the programme wishes to recruit a consultant to conduct a desktop study on current practices and policies that promote or discourage the use of agroecological inputs in these three regions of Africa.

1. Objectives

General objective : To conduct an analysis of the constraints and opportunities related to the development of the production and commercialisation of bio-inputs (biopesticides, biofertilizers) in each of the three regions of intervention of the Healthy Soil Healthy Food (HSHF) initiative, highlighting, if necessary, the national singularities of the countries of the partner organisations: Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa.

Specific objectives :

- For each of the three regions (West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa), present the regulatory, legislative, and/or policy aspects related to the production and marketing of agricultural inputs.
- For each of the three regions, present the constraints, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses related to the development of bio-inputs production and marketing (biopesticides, biofertilisers). For each region, highlight any relevant national singularities that may exist in the countries of the HSHF partner organisations with respect to the

development of the agroecological inputs market in relation to the overall picture in the regional economic community.

- For each of the three regions, present the structure and evolution of the input market, paying particular attention to country singularities and also taking into account the informal sector.

2. Methodological approach

This is essentially a desktop study, but it may be supplemented by interviews (online/virtual) with a few key resource persons if the consultant deems it necessary.

3. Expected results

At the end of the mission, the regulatory framework as well as the public policies related to the production and marketing of agricultural inputs in the different regions concerned by the study are known. Also, the constraints, opportunities, threats and strengths related to the development of the production and marketing of bio-inputs (biopesticides, biofertilisers) in each of the member regions of the Healthy Soil Healthy Food initiative are known. HSHF programme members have accurate information and data, incl. on the structure and evolution of input markets, enabling them to develop strategies for the production, marketing and promotion of agroecological inputs.

4. Deliverables

During and at the end of the assignment, the consultant will submit:

- A draft report and a PowerPoint presentation for review and validation at the virtual workshop that will be organised by the study commissioner.
- A final report of 20-30 pages, including an executive summary and recommendations (without annexes), and a revised/final PowerPoint presentation. This report should include all documents consulted and a list of interviewees, if any.

5. Consultant profile

The consultants for this assignment may be established in one or more of the countries concerned by the Healthy Soil Healthy Food initiative.

The consultants should have sufficient experience in agricultural fertilisers and pesticides, regulations and standards for the use and marketing of fertilisers and pesticides, agricultural production and agroecological practices. The consultant shall have access to a sufficiently extensive literature database for the subject matter of this assignment.

The consultants shall be able to consult and use documents written in French and English.

6. Duration of the assignment

The final report must be delivered within a maximum of two and a half calendar months after the contract is signed.

7. Location

The assignment will take place at the consultant's headquarters.

8. Stages of the assignment

The assignment will be carried out be as follows:

- Virtual scoping meeting with the thematic group 'marketing of agroecological inputs and entrepreneurship' of the Healthy Soil Healthy Food initiative as soon as the contract is signed.
- Drafting of the provisional report within a month and a half maximum after the signature of the contract.
- Virtual workshop to validate the draft report (including PowerPoint presentation) organised by the commissioner within two weeks after the reception of the first draft report.
- Finalisation and submission of the final report and revised/final PowerPoint presentation within a maximum of two weeks after the virtual validation workshop.

9. Budget

The budget for this mission is US\$4,250 to cover consultant fees as well as communication and internet costs.

10. Bidding procedure

The different offers must be sent at the latest by 8am UTC/GMT on 15 November 2021 by e-mail to the following address: admin@afsafrica.org, with the title 'Offer for study on agroecological inputs - HSHF'.

Each bid should contain a technical proposal and a financial proposal.

Bids should be submitted in English or French. Financial bids shall be denominated in USD.

The commissioner/AFSA reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet its expectations.

11. Additional Questions

Questions regarding this call for proposal can be directed to admin@afsafrica.org by 8 November 2021.