

Terms of Reference

Hiring of a Consultant Specializing in the Amazon's Point of No Return (PNR)



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1. Background and Rationale

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) was established in 1995 to support the implementation of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, promoting conservation, cooperation, and sustainable development in the Amazon region for the benefit of its inhabitants. As a treaty-based organization dedicated to sustainable development, ACTO represents Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela. Leveraging its regional reach, ACTO promotes political dialogue and cooperation among its Member States—key to tackle environmental challenges in the Amazon. It also works to close gaps in resource management, ensuring that local communities and Indigenous Peoples are included in sustainable development decisions.

In mid-2023, during the Presidential Summit and Ministerial Meeting held in Leticia, Colombia, the Presidents of the Amazonian countries called on ACTO to play a more active role in coordinating environmental matters in the Amazon, highlighting the need to strengthen ACTO's technical and managerial capacities. Additionally, the leaders highlighted the importance of more effectively promoting the generation and use of high-quality environmental, social, and economic data. In this context, the Amazon Regional Observatory (ARO) has gained strategic relevance, as it will provide the eight Member Countries with a solid scientific foundation for decision-making on sustainable development. Its role is essential in delivering scientific evidence to help address the region's environmental challenges.

Building on these commitments, the Belem Declaration reinforces the need for high-level government collaboration to advance a shared agenda for the Amazon, focused on sustainable development, conservation, and the responsible use of biodiversity, forests, and water. It also underscores the urgency of preventing the region from reaching a tipping point, combating deforestation and illegal activities, and fostering an inclusive economy that generates income and employment. Achieving these goals requires strengthening ACTO and implementing social participation mechanisms, with special attention to Indigenous Peoples and local and traditional communities.

Recognizing the region's climate risks along with the upcoming CoP 30 negotiations presents an opportunity for ACTO and ARO to take on a high-impact role in 2025; therefore, these elements are adopted as strategic references in the planning of the ARO and the role of ACTO.

With deforestation and climate change accelerating, the Amazon faces the risk of reaching a Point of No Return (PNR), with global consequences; therefore, it is crucial to engage an expert who can systematize scientific information and raise public and political awareness about the need to prevent this scenario.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

Hiring an expert to develop and disseminate the scientific concept of the Point of No Return in the

Amazon, through the production of scientific articles, newsletters, webinars, a scientific panel, strategic meetings, and a TED event.

2.1. Specific objectives:

- Specific objectives 1. Support ACTO in the initial development of ARO 2.0 (focusing on essential databases for the PNR).
- Specific objectives 2. Develop and produce scientific material on the Point of No Return.
- Specific objectives 3. Organize and participate in webinars and strategic meetings with decision-makers, as well as in CoP 30.
- Specific objectives 4. Support ACTO in structuring its Scientific Panel.

3. ACTIVITIES/RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

The senior consultant must carry out the following activities:

Specific objectives 1. Support ACTO in the initial development of ARO 2.0

- Support and provide technical guidance to the companies and/or consultants responsible for implementing PNR monitoring in the ARO, in the development of the products outlined in their contracts.
- Support technical activities alongside the ARO's team of professionals and the contracted companies or consultants.
- Monitor, evaluate, test, and validate the new PNR monitoring prototype in ARO 2.0.

Specific objectives 2. Develop and produce scientific material on the Point of No Return.

- Identify potential information sources related to the ARO's themes and sub-themes, as well as the focal points and main information users in the Member Countries.
- Identify and characterize the thematic information available from civil society organizations and research centers.

Specific objectives 3. Organize and participate in webinars and strategic meetings with decision-makers, as well as COP 30.

- Support ACTO in structuring a proposal for a seminar featuring recognized experts to discuss the methodology, variables, and indicators for monitoring the PNR in the first half of 2025.
- Conduct a literature review on topics related to the PNR.
- Prepare proposals for four webinars on the PNR to be held in 2025, including the definition of the agenda, invited speakers, and target audience
- Develop the foundational publication "State of the Art on the Point of No Return."
- Prepare and coordinate publications focused on mitigation and adaptation solutions.
- Provide technical support and generate content for CoP 30, with an emphasis on the North-South agenda and regional agenda.
- Provide technical support and generate content for CoP 30, with an emphasis on Regional Guidelines.
- Participate in preparatory events for CoP 30.

Specific objectives 4. Support ACTO in structuring its Scientific Panel

- Support ACTO in structuring its Scientific Panel.
- Support the ARO/ACTO in fostering engagement, dialogue, and cooperation with:
 - ✓ The Scientific Panel of the Amazon (SPA)
 - ✓ Institutions and scientists from the ACTO Member Countries
 - ✓ International institutions and scientists
- Support ACTO in structuring long-term cooperation partnerships with scientific institutions.

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND REPORTS

- Outcome 1 – Work Plan with methodology and execution schedule (10%)
- Outcome 2 – Publication of an article on the state of knowledge of the PNR (20%)
- Outcome 3 – Creation of six newsletters (one every two months) (20%)
- Outcome 4 – Execution of four webinars (one each quarter) (20%)
- Outcome 5 – Planning and execution of a TED event (10%)
- Outcome 6 – Proposal for structuring the ACTO Scientific Panel (10%)
- Outcome 7 – Conference and/or participation in a face-to-face event at COP 30 (10%)

Each report/outcome should be submitted in Portuguese and/or Spanish in digital format, along with the corresponding supporting documentation (documents, attachments with diagrams, graphs, tables, images in JPG, maps, photographs, interviews, contact lists, shapefile, Excel spreadsheets, or other databases, etc.).

Each report/outcome must contain at least the following structure:

- 1-Background
2. Methodology
3. Results
- 5.Conclusions, recommendations, and proposals
6. Annexes

The content should align with the descriptions provided in these Terms of Reference (ToR).

Deadlines for review, adjustments, and approval

ARO Coordination will have a period of 05 (five) business days for review and comments.

The consultant will have five (5) calendar days to submit a revised version incorporating the suggested modifications. An additional five (5) business days will be provided for a second review, and if necessary, another five (5) business days for final adjustments, followed by five (5) business days for final approval.

Reports must be approved by both the ARO Coordination and the ACTO Coordinator of Science, Technology, and Innovation.

5. REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

The consultant must demonstrate international competencies and experience in managing the topics covered in these ToR, including expertise in planning, report writing, monitoring, interacting with various sectors, and teamwork.

1. Academic Background

- At least 15 years of studies in Biology, Engineering, Agronomy, or related fields.
- Ph.D. or master's degree in related areas (Environmental Sciences, Ecology, Climatology, Geosciences, or similar)

2. Professional Experience

- Proven experience in writing scientific articles on climate change and/or the Amazon region.
- Ability to translate scientific concepts into accessible communication for the general public.
- Experience organizing events and webinars.
- Experience in participating in scientific panels and interacting with key stakeholders.
- Proficiency in English, with Spanish being an additional advantage.

3. Corporate and Personal Skills

- Demonstrated personal integrity with values of honesty, respect, and professional ethics.
- Commitment to the ACTO's vision, mission, and strategic objectives.
- Sensitivity and adaptability to political, intercultural, gender, religious, racial, national, and age-related contexts, with respect for diversity.
- Ability to establish cross-sectoral relationships and generate synergies with multiple stakeholders.
- Strong planning, prioritization, and strategic thinking skills.
- Flexibility, adaptability, initiative, and management skills focused on achieving results.
- Commitment to deadlines while ensuring high-quality standards.
- Ability to collaborate effectively within multidisciplinary teams, with a strong focus on achieving goals.
- Skills in mediation, problem-solving, and conflict management.
- Ability to build collaborative networks and foster teamwork
- Excellent internal and external communication skills.

6. WORKING CONDITIONS AND WORKPLACE

The consultant will provide services remotely but must be available to attend the ACTO Permanent Secretariat (PS/ACTO) headquarters in Brasília, Brazil, as needed.

7. SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION

The consultant will report to the PS/ACTO, under the operational supervision of the ARO Coordination and the ACTO Science, Technology, and Innovation Coordination.

8. CONTRACT DURATION

The contract will commence upon signing and will last for 12 months, with the possibility of renewal by mutual agreement between the parties.

The consultant must be available to start work immediately.

9. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Intellectual property rights for the deliverables will be distributed in accordance with the terms outlined in the contract. The contracting institution retains the right to make adjustments to the scope of work according to the project's needs.