



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A CONSULTANT

(NATURAL RESOURCES EXPERT)

ICGLR Secretariat
BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

1. CONTEXT

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is an intergovernmental organisation established under the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, signed by Member States in 2006. The ICGLR provides a regional framework for conflict prevention, management and resolution, while promoting peace, security, stability, sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among its Member States. The Secretariat, based in Bujumbura, Burundi, implements the decisions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers.

The Great Lakes Region of Africa has endured nearly four decades of armed conflict, largely driven by armed groups that partly fund their operations through the illicit exploitation and trade of mineral resources. This is especially the case in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where more than 100 armed groups are currently active. Some of them are engaged in the illicit exploitation and smuggling of so-called conflict minerals, tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold (3TG). The conflict undermines socio-economic development, deepens ethnic grievances and causes humanitarian crises, making it hard to break the cycle of violence.

Illicit exploitation and smuggling of minerals have had far-reaching political, economic, and social consequences for the region. Politically, illegal mineral trade has undermined governance in conflict-affected countries by fostering corruption, illicit financial flows, organised transnational criminal networks and weakening state institutions through the establishment of parallel governments. It has financed armed groups, leading to insecurity and weakening public trust in government structures. Economically, the smuggling of minerals has deprived the government of essential revenue from taxes and royalties, limiting funds for development projects. It has discouraged legitimate investment and has perpetuated informal employment where workers face exploitation and unsafe conditions. Socially, illicit mineral exploitation has contributed to human rights abuses, including child and forced labour, community displacement, and widespread poverty. The resulting environmental degradation affects livelihoods, particularly in mining regions, while unequal wealth distribution has intensified social inequality.

To tackle these complex and intersectional challenges, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) was established in 2006 by the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. It is composed

of 12 Member States and serves as a regional framework for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, alongside promoting sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among its Member States. Specifically to address the link between natural resource exploitation and conflict, the ICGLR launched the *Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR)*, which was adopted by Heads of State in 2010. The RINR aims to transform the mining sector into a driver of sustainable development and comprises six mutually reinforcing tools:

- **Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM):** A regional system for certifying the origin and supply chain of designated minerals (3TG – tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold) to ensure they are conflict-free and sourced in accordance with ICGLR standards.
- **Harmonisation of National Legislation:** Alignment of national legal frameworks with ICGLR standards and protocols to strengthen regional coherence in natural resource governance.
- **Regional Database on Mineral Flows:** A regional platform for collecting and sharing data on mineral production and trade to improve transparency and traceability across borders.
- **Formalisation of Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM):** Measures to integrate ASM into the formal economy, thereby strengthening governance, traceability, working conditions and local economic development.
- **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI):** Promotion of transparency and accountability in the extractive sector through the application of EITI principles and peer learning among Member States.
- **Whistleblowing Mechanism:** A confidential reporting mechanism for incidents related to illegal exploitation of natural resources, corruption and human rights abuses.

The Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) is the core instrument of the RINR. It establishes regional standards and procedures for the traceability and certification of 3TG minerals, which have historically been associated with conflict financing, particularly in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The RCM Manual, first adopted in 2011 and revised in 2019, provides the operational framework for implementation and aims to prevent illegal interference by armed groups and security forces, as well as serious human rights abuses, along mineral supply chains.

Therefore, the ICGLR is recruiting a Natural Resources Expert to support the further development of the RINR as well as the implementation of its six tools in all 12 ICGLR Member States.

2. BACKGROUND

The ICGLR entertains close ties with a range of strategic, financing and implementation partners. As such, it has been implementing the project “Cooperation on Peace, Security and Responsible Resource Governance in the Great Lakes Region” together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Foreign Office of the Netherlands (DGIS). It is against this background that the ICGLR is recruiting a Natural Resources Expert to support the objectives of this project to strengthen the conceptualisation of the RINR, as well as its implementation in all 12 ICGLR Member States.

3. CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide all twelve Member States with technical expert advice on the national implementation of the six RINR tools (this includes, but is not limited to: process advice from status quo analysis to implementation, conduct of field missions and peer learning missions in the Great Lakes Region, as well as engagement, coordination and management of the relevant authorities in each Member State)
- Establish, maintain and expand ties with relevant private sector entities (such as the Responsible Minerals Initiative RMI, the London Bullion Market Association LBMA, etc.) to enhance the quality of the RINR through closer alignment with industry needs. This includes, but is not limited to, enhancing the compatibility of the RCM with the due diligence requirements of relevant downstream actors to promote RCM recognition as an upstream mechanism.
- Ensure alignment of the RINR with the recommendations of the RINR’s evaluation report, as well as with relevant international initiatives (OECD Due Diligence Guidelines, EU Regulation, Dodd-Frank Act, etc.).
- Organise, conduct and debrief the ICGLR Third-Party Audits of 3TG exporters in the Great Lakes Region, ensuring the qualified issuance of ICGLR Export Certificates as well as adequate knowledge management,

- e.g. through the creation of a TPA database and a centralised ICGLR Export Certificate overview.
- Prepare regular and ad-hoc briefings to the ICGLR Management Board on current developments in the Great Lakes Region related to mineral flows, broader industry developments and the role of the ICGLR, as well as operational updates. This includes preparing briefing documents, talking points, and other relevant documents to facilitate ICGLR's representation in high-level fora.
 - Represent the ICGLR at relevant industry fora and meetings within and outside the region, making substantive technical contributions to move the RINR agenda forward and to position the ICGLR as a credible, trustworthy and professional organisation promoting responsible upstream supply chains of minerals from the Great Lakes Region.
 - Coordinate operational planning, implementation of activities, and review exercises with the ICGLR's implementation partners, such as GIZ.

4. REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- The Natural Resources Expert will report to the Director for Democracy and Good Governance on their day-to-day tasking, performance appraisal, leave approval, budget execution, and all personnel-related matters
- The Natural Resources Expert will have a functional reporting relationship to the Deputy Executive Secretary for strategic access on high-level partnership alignment, geopolitical risk assessment, and sensitive political engagements.

5. KEY COMPETENCIES, EXPERIENCE, AND QUALIFICATIONS

A. Academic Qualifications

- Master's degree in Geology, Mining Engineering, Mineral Economics, International Relations, Political Science, Development Studies, Law, Business Administration, or a related field.
- A Bachelor's degree in a relevant field combined with an additional minimum of five (5) years of relevant experience may be accepted instead of a Master's degree.

B. Professional Experience

- A minimum of ten (10) years of progressively responsible experience in mineral supply chain due diligence, mineral traceability systems, or mining sector governance/oversight in Africa, preferably the Great Lakes Region.
- A minimum of ten (10) years of demonstrated experience in responsible mineral supply chains, due diligence, traceability and certification mechanisms, particularly concerning artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) and high-risk mineral supply chains.
- A minimum of eight (8) years of demonstrated experience in project management working with international cooperation partners, managing donor and partner relations (incl. governments, regional organisations, private-sector actors, civil society and development partners) and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes.
- A minimum of eight (8) years of demonstrated experience working in governmental, multilateral, intergovernmental, or regional organisations.

C. Technical Competencies

- Strong understanding of the ICGLR mandate, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development, and the regional political dynamics of the Great Lakes.
- Sound understanding of the ICGLR Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR) and its key instruments, including the Regional Certification Mechanism, mine-site inspections/validation, Third-Party Audits, mineral-flow monitoring and related regional governance mechanisms.
- Ability to analyse the relationship between natural resources, conflict, peace and security, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, as well as strong conceptual skills and the ability to translate complex technical and political issues into practical recommendations for implementation.
- Strong experience in preparing technical analyses, policy recommendations, strategies, reports and briefing documents for senior decision-makers.
- Proficiency in partnership compliance, due diligence, and audit readiness.
- Strong financial literacy and budget management capabilities.

- Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite and familiarity with database management or partnership tracking systems.

D. Core Competencies

- Strategic Thinking: Ability to critically review the ICGLR's tools, approaches and partnerships and align them with the wider industry discussions to make sure ICGLR remains relevant.
- Diplomatic Acumen: Exceptional interpersonal and negotiation skills, with the ability to navigate sensitive political environments and manage diverse stakeholder expectations.
- Integrity and Discretion: Unquestionable personal and professional integrity, with the ability to handle confidential and politically sensitive information with utmost discretion.
- Communication: Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and/or French, with a working knowledge of the other language. Knowledge of Portuguese is an asset.
- Team Collaboration: Ability to work effectively across departments, build consensus, and foster a culture of coordination rather than silos.
- Adaptability: Capacity to work under pressure, meet tight deadlines, and adapt to evolving political and operational contexts.

E. Language Requirements

- Fluency in English or French is required.
- Working knowledge of Arabic or Kiswahili or Portuguese is an advantage, given the region's linguistic diversity.

6. TERM OF OFFICE

- This consultancy will be financed through donor funding, and the successful candidates will have a contract for a renewable period of one year based on performance, availability of funds and any other factors.