



Terms of Reference

CONSULTANCY SERVICE FOR SCALING UP BIOCHAR SOLUTIONS IN VIETNAM'S AGRI-FOOD SECTORS

Project: Circular Economy Cocoa - From Bean To Bar

Budget line: 6.1.3.3 | Date: 28.08.2025

1. BACKGROUND

HELVETAS is an independent development organization based in Switzerland with affiliated organizations in Germany and the United States. Helvetas has been active in Vietnam since 1995, working in various areas typically Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, Forestry, Eco-Tourism, and Rural Economy.

Under the European Union's SWITCH-Asia programme, HELVETAS is implementing the project "Circular Economy Cocoa: From Bean to Bar," which aims to develop circular economy solutions within the cocoa and agri-food sectors. This project, which began in 2022, is active in 6-7 cocoa-growing provinces across the Central Highlands and Mekong Delta of Vietnam.

Following the successful demonstration of pyrolysis biochar production within cocoa supply chains (e.g., Marou Chocolate, Puratos) in FY2025, HELVETAS Vietnam seeks qualified consultant(s) to **replicate and scale biochar production and application** across additional cocoa farms and other agri-food sectors such as coffee, coconut. This initiative will contribute to reducing agricultural waste, enhancing soil health, and promoting low-carbon circular agricultural practices in Vietnam.

2. OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this service package is to scale up biochar production and application (as a proven circular economy solution) in agri-food sectors, contributing to enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of agricultural practices in Vietnam.

Specific objectives include:

- Supervise and support the production and quality assurance of pyrolysis biochar kilns.
- Establish and monitor biochar demonstration sites across different crops (cocoa, coffee, coconut, etc.).
- Provide technical training and capacity building for farmers, cooperatives, and partner company staff on biochar production and application.
- Develop technical guidelines and recommendations for policy and industry-wide replication.

3. LOCATIONS

Demonstration and training sites are in the following 04 provinces:

- **Dak Lak:** Krong Ana, Ea H'leo (02 districts)
- **Lam Dong:** Cu Jut, Gia Nghia, Krong No (03 districts)
- **Gia Lai:** Dak Doa, Chu P'rong, Duc Co (03 districts)
- **Khanh Hoa:** Ma Noi, Phan Rang (02 districts)

- Additional sites and sectors may be added upon request and feasibility.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant is expected to perform, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

- **Kiln Production Supervision:** Oversee fabrication and installation of at least 12 pyrolysis kilns per design specifications; adapt designs to meet site-specific conditions and partner needs (if required).
- **Demonstration & Application:** Set up and monitor at least 12 biochar demonstration plots; ensure effective use in different crops and farming systems.
- **Capacity Building:** Deliver hands-on training (theory and practice) for farmers, and staff of 07 companies/cooperatives on operation, maintenance, and application of biochar.
- **Knowledge Products:** Develop training materials and technical guidelines for biochar production from agricultural residues; prepare recommendations for replication and integration into circular economy models.

5. METHODOLOGY

The consultant should propose innovative and practical approaches for implementation, ensuring:

- Active collaboration with HELVETAS project staff, partners, and smallholders.
- Context-specific adaptation of technologies for different agri-food sectors.
- Participatory and inclusive training methods.
- Clear monitoring and evaluation framework for demonstration sites and training outcomes.

6. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The Consultant should have:

- Master's degree or higher degree in environmental/agricultural sciences or related fields; at least 10 years of relevant work experience.
- Demonstrated knowledge and hands-on experience in pyrolysis biochar production, application, and its integration into sustainable agricultural systems.
- Proven track record in implementing biochar or similar circular economy initiatives.
- Experience in technology transfer and farmer-focused training.
- Strong communication skills in Vietnamese and English; experience working with international development projects is an asset.

7. DELIVERABLES

- At least 12 fully operational biochar demonstration sites across cocoa and other agri-food sectors.
- At least 07 hands-on training sessions for farmers and staff of 07 Project partner companies (Vietnamese language).
- Training materials and technical guidelines on biochar production and application (English and Vietnamese language).
- Final report including lessons learned, recommendations for scaling, and policy advocacy input.

8. SUGGEST TIMELINE

Consultancy is expected to commence in **September 2025**.

Activity	Timeframe
Contract negotiation and signing	Week 1
Supervision and quality check of kilns	Week 1-4
Demonstration site setup and training	Week 5-7
Final reporting	Week 8
Contract liquidation	Week 8

9. TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL PROPOSALS

Proposals should include:

- **Technical Proposal:** CV(s) with relevant expertise and experience, approach and methodology, detailed work plan with timeline, quality assurance measures.
- **Financial Proposal:** Cost breakdown (consultant days, rates, travel, and other expenses) following EU cost norms, with justification.

10. SUBMISSION

Interested candidates should submit their Profiles, Technical and Financial Proposal to Helvetas Vietnam at diep.dinh@helvetas.org and helvetas.vietnam@helvetas.org with attention to the EU Circular Economy Project.

Deadline for submission: 12/9/2025.