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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Regional Assessment on Uptake of the CEC Guidelines on
Environmentally Sound Management of Spent Lead-Acid Batteries**

for the project

**Scoping: Uptake of Best Practices for Environmentally Sound
Management of Spent Lead-Acid Batteries**

Commission for Environmental Cooperation

2026

I. Overview

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is requesting proposals from prospective consultants related to regional assessment on uptake of the 2016 CEC Technical Guidelines on Environmentally Sound Management of SLABs in North America (CEC-ESM Guidelines). Specifically, the consultant would be expected to generate robust, science-based evidence on current SLABs management practices, the extent to which the Guidelines have been adopted, and opportunities for strengthening environmentally sound management (ESM) across the region. Specifically:

1. Design a science-based survey for collecting relevant data to assess the adoption of the CEC-ESM Guidelines and the current SLABs management practices in North America.
2. Collect, analyze, and clean the data collected to present a technical report that includes:
 - a. Overall findings
 - b. Levels of Guideline uptake in the region
 - c. Common management practices
 - d. Novel management practices
 - e. Gaps and opportunities regarding ESM of SLABs.
3. Develop a policy report highlighting relevant findings and recommendations on improving dissemination and adoption of ESM practices (the report will be tailored to all government levels). Industry, regulators, and other stakeholders.
 - a. Recommendations should include summary briefings and (if applicable) follow-up activities or projects to be implemented within the CEC context.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) was established in 1994 by the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, a parallel environmental agreement to NAFTA. As of 2020, the CEC is recognized and maintained by the Environmental Cooperation Agreement parallel to the new Free Trade Agreement of North America. The CEC brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the general public, Indigenous People, youth, nongovernmental organizations, academia, and the business sector, to seek solutions to protect North America's shared environment while supporting sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. Find out more at: www.cec.org.

The CEC's Council, its governing body, approved the project entitled Scoping: Uptake of Best Practices for Environmentally Sound Management of Spent Lead Acid Batteries as part of the Operational Plan for 2024, with the purpose to assess the uptake of the CEC Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of SLABs and collect information on current SLABs management practices. For a complete description of the project, including tasks and related budget, please visit the CEC website at:

II. Terms of Reference

A. Overview and Scope

The purpose of this contract is to support the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) in assessing the uptake and regional implementation of the 2016 CEC Technical Guidelines on Environmentally Sound Management of Spent Lead-Acid Batteries (CEC-ESM Guidelines) in North America. The project aims to generate high-quality, science-based evidence on current SLABs management practices, the degree of adoption of the Guidelines across facilities in Canada and Mexico, and opportunities to improve environmentally sound management (ESM) in the sector.

To achieve this, the consultant will design and implement a regional survey to collect, analyze and validate the resulting data; and prepare both technical and policy products that summarize findings, identify gaps and opportunities, and provide recommendations for improved dissemination and uptake of ESM practices.

Expected outputs include a survey instrument, a technical analytical report, and a policy-oriented report tailored to government agencies, industry, regulators, and other relevant stakeholders.

B. Description of Services

The consultant shall coordinate with CEC's designated contacts to accomplish the following:

1. Design and define survey instrument

- Establish survey purpose, structure, question design, and confidentiality protocols.
- Conduct in-house pre-testing of the survey tool.
- Finalize the survey for deployment in English, French and Spanish (translation will be done by the CEC).

2. Define survey outreach strategy

- Identify relevant SLAB recycling facilities and stakeholders in the region.
- Use as reference sources: CEC 2014 workshop participant lists, TRI/NPRI/RETC databases, and other relevant inventories.
- Develop a regional outreach plan to encourage survey participation.

3. Conduct and monitor survey implementation

- Launch and disseminate the survey across stakeholder groups.
- Provide periodic updates on response rates and troubleshoot access issues.

4. **Analyze survey results and produce the technical report (with a suggested length of no more than thirty pages), including:**
 - Overall findings
 - Levels of uptake of the CEC-ESM Guidelines
 - Common and innovative practices
 - Identified gaps, risks, and opportunities
 - Recommendations for improved dissemination and future work.
5. **Develop a summary report for decision making (with a suggested length of no more than ten pages).**
 - Summarize key findings for decision-makers at all government levels, industry, NGOs, and other stakeholders.
 - Provide targeted recommendations and, if applicable, propose follow-up actions or projects.
 - Dissemination and presentation of results.

All work is expected to be completed **within 10 months of the contract starting date** and no later than **August 2027**, in alignment with the project schedule.

Deliverables	Due Date / Timing
Draft survey sample	Month 1
Draft implementation strategy	Month 1-2
Launch final survey	Month 3
Survey implementation and monitoring	Months 3-5
First draft of the technical report	Month 5-6
Final version of the technical report	Month 6-8
First draft of the policy report	Month 7-9
Final version of the policy report + dissemination materials	Month 9-10

C. Periodic Reporting Requirements

Throughout the project, in support of the work's preparation, the consultant will collaborate with the CEC Secretariat, the Steering Committee, other experts, and government officials, as needed. However, the consultant shall receive direction only from designated CEC Staff.

The CEC Secretariat will forward draft deliverables to the project's Steering Committee and other experts for their review and comments. As needed, the CEC Secretariat will arrange online or in-person meetings with the consultant, CEC staff, and selected

experts. These meetings will serve to present draft products, assess progress, validate methodological decisions, and identify any potential issues requiring attention.

The consultant will prepare short monthly status reports summarizing:

- Progress achieved during the previous month
- Current implementation status of activities and deliverables
- Anticipated progress for the upcoming month
- Potential problems, risks, or delays, including explanations
- Any actions required from the CEC Secretariat to facilitate progress.

Monthly reports shall be submitted electronically to designated CEC staff.

The consultant will perform the work from their own offices and is expected to be available for virtual meetings during standard business hours in North America.

D. Quality of Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for providing deliverables of **publishable quality** (i.e., copy-edited prior to submission) in (English, French or Spanish) and, when applicable, for the technical review and editing of the materials. Technical review and stylistic correction required to ensure the quality of the materials will be the responsibility of the consultant. The consultant will submit to the CEC Secretariat all written material (including complete drafts and final reports) in Microsoft Word, following the format of the CEC's Report Template, if applicable, or in another format approved by the CEC, and adhering to the precepts of the Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products, as supplemented by the CEC's English Style Guide. [Include reference to any other CEC guideline, as necessary, e.g., for mapping, databases, photos.] Supporting documents for tables, figures and maps will be submitted with the report in their original file format (e.g., Excel or ArcGIS). Note that all amounts shall be presented in metric units. The CEC Secretariat will be responsible, when applicable, for translation, printing, publication and distribution of products from this activity.

Upon delivery by the consultant of reports or other materials under the project, the CEC will require a 15-business day period to review the document(s), notify the consultant of any potential issues or errors, and return the document(s) to the consultant for appropriate corrections, at no extra cost.

In all cases, contract payments will be withheld if products submitted to the CEC fail to fulfill the quality and formatting requirements specified above. If the consultant neglects to make the required corrections or, if following corrections, a deliverable remains unsatisfactory, the document shall be edited or revised by a third party designated by the Secretariat, the cost of which shall be deducted from the consultant's fees at a pre-agreed rate.

E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of conveying someone else's original expression or creative ideas as one's own and can be a violation of copyright law. Neither intentional nor unintentional plagiarism is acceptable to the CEC. The consultant must follow good scholarly methodology in preparing reports and deliverables under the contract, including systematic referencing in footnotes or in-sentence references, for any secondary sources, quotations, data, etc., that do not originate with the author. Sources for tables and figures reproduced from other literature must be given in a "Source" attribution immediately below the table or figure. Failure to properly reference the source of such borrowed material constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a breach of contract.

For further information, see Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products. In addition, for every written deliverable submitted, the Consultant must use iThenticate software, or equivalent software approved by the Commission, to validate the written product in question and must forward the results of the plagiarism review to the CEC at the time of document submission. Contract payments will be retained if products do not fulfil these requirements.

III. Requirements and Proposal Evaluation

A. Mandatory Requirements

To be eligible for further consideration, all consultants must fulfill the following basic requirements.

1. In-Country Ability

The consultant, as well as all their personnel and subconsultants, must reside and be authorized to work legally in Canada, Mexico or the United States of America. If travel is required, the consultant must possess valid documentation to travel and must comply with sanitary regulations/ restrictions within the three countries.

2. Key Personnel

For the purposes of this RFP, the term "consultant" may refer to either a group or company or a single individual.

If a proposal is submitted by a group of individuals or institutions, a "lead" consultant should be designated to take responsibility for ensuring the overall coordination, coherence of activity outputs, and satisfactory integration of information and ideas.

3. Qualifications Required

The consultant must possess competence and experience in:

- Environmental policy, hazardous waste management, or circular economy, preferably with expertise related to lead-acid battery recycling, environmentally sound management (ESM) practices, or industrial environmental performance.

- Previous experience in transboundary movement of hazardous waste in North America will be considered an asset.
- Design and implementation of technical or science-based surveys, including sampling strategies, questionnaire development, confidentiality protocols, and data collection approaches for specialized industrial or regulatory audiences.
- Quantitative and qualitative data analyses, including data cleaning, validation, interpretation of environmental management practices, and preparation of analytical technical reports.
- Policy analysis and development of actionable recommendations for government agencies, industry, regulators, and other stakeholders.
- Excellent organizational, project management, and communication skills, with the ability to deliver high-quality products within strict timelines.
- Experience working in multi-stakeholder and multilateral contexts will be considered an asset.

Language Requirements

- The consultant must be fluent in written and spoken English and Spanish.
- Proficiency in French is highly desirable, given the nature of the project and the need to deploy the survey instrument in all three languages.
- Previous work experience producing technical materials in English, French, or Spanish will be considered an asset.

4. Proposal Submission

Prospective consultants should refer to the **Terms of Reference (Section II)** of this document for more detailed information on the project and the services to be provided. Prospective consultants are requested not to reiterate the Terms of Reference in their submissions but are invited to suggest modifications to enhance the proposal, if applicable.

Proposals must be organized as indicated below and include the following information:

1. Knowledge and Understanding of Work

- Provide brief background information relevant to this project that will serve to demonstrate the consultant's experience and subject knowledge. The statement should address desired results; guidelines (parameters within which results are to be accomplished); resources (human, financial, technical, or organizational support available to help accomplish the results); and other aspects deemed applicable by the consultant. The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate not only the consultant's general and specific familiarity with the subject area, but also to highlight writing skills.

2. Organization, Qualifications and Experience of Project Team

- Identify organization of Project Team, including project manager and country team leads for Canada, Mexico and the United States, where relevant.

- Provide a summary of qualifications and experience for each team member (including alternates) and any other relevant information (e.g., language proficiency).

3. Allocation of Time (Hours) and Costs by Task and Team Member

- For each member of the project team, provide a detailed breakdown of assigned tasks, hours worked, and labor costs.
- Identify any other direct and indirect costs, including travel costs if applicable (include estimate for in-person meetings taking place at any of the three countries) and applicable taxes.
- Clearly identify total hours worked under and the total cost (including taxes) of this project.
- Identify any additional tasks or activities not specified within the terms of reference but that will be undertaken by the contractor at no additional cost.

Annex A: Letters of Recommendation and References

- Two letters of recommendation from previous assignments.
- Details and contact information for three or more references.

Annex B: Resumés for Each Team Member

- Resumés for all project team members.

Annex C: Examples of Previous Work

- Provide two samples of previous work.

Annexes D.1 and D.2: Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence for Contract

- A copy of the completed and signed CEC form must be provided. Annex D.1 is used when the consulting entity is an individual and Annex D.2 is used when the consulting entity is an institution or company.

B. Other Information to be provided.

Potential consultants are encouraged to submit any additional information that they believe will assist the CEC Secretariat in the evaluation of their proposal. However, the proposal should not exceed six (6) pages, exclusively of applicant resumés, samples of previous work or corporate brochures.

C. Type of contract to be used for these services.

The CEC Secretariat intends to use a milestone-based contract for these services. A sample is available upon request.

D. Selection procedure

The consultant deemed best qualified will be selected on the basis of a competitive process, in accordance with sections 2.5-2.7 of the CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual.

Proposals that the CEC Secretariat determines to be complete will be evaluated by the CEC Secretariat according to the following criteria:

(The table below is an example and can be modified to best suit the RFP)

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Point Rating
Understanding of project requirements	20
Suitability of the proposed approach and work plan	20
Consultant's experience and qualifications and competency of key personnel	40
Consultant's ability to show analytical capabilities and effective writing	10
Adequacy of budget	10
<i>Total</i>	100

E. Estimated level of resources required.

The maximum budget for this activity is C\$30,000 (Canadian dollars), including professional fees and expenses. Any reimbursable expenses detailed in the CEC standard contract should be made available upon request.

For universities and nongovernmental organizations, note that the CEC accepts that overhead be charged for administration and other indirect costs up to 15% of the total value of the contract.

If the proposal was presented by a consultant established in Mexico, the applicable value-added tax will be 0%, in accordance with Article 29, section IV, paragraph a) of Mexico's VAT Act, as these are technical services that were engaged from abroad.

If a currency other than Canadian dollars is used in the proposal, the consultant should indicate the total cost in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes, detailing the exchange rate used.

F. Financial and Other Confidential Information [optional]

For this proposal, the CEC Secretariat will not require the submission of any confidential information, nor will the CEC Secretariat require information regarding insurance, bonding financial status, or company ownership.

G. Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Decision

The proposal, including all relevant attachments, must be received by the CEC Secretariat by **17h 00m (Eastern Time) on 14 September, 2026**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to

Monica Valtierra Brestchneider, Project Lead, Sustainable Living and Economics
mvaltierra@cec.org

The proposal format must be in Adobe PDF format. Once the proposal has been submitted electronically, the CEC will confirm receipt within three business days.

The CEC Secretariat intends to select the consultant and notify the applicants within a reasonable period following the proposal submission deadline.



Annex D.1 - SCHEDULE D (Individuals)

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE, IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

ACCEPTANCE

☐

I hereby declare that I accept to serve as a consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

(If you accept to serve as a consultant, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)

☐

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

☐

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, I may set out measures I intend to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____



Annex D.2 - SCHEDULE D (Companies or Institutions)

CONSULTANT'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____,

acting as the legal representative of _____

ACCEPTANCE

☐ hereby declare that _____ accepts to serve as a consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

(If you accept to serve as a consultant, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)

☐ _____ **is impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to _____ impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

☐ _____ **is impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intends to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as _____ impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, _____ may set out measures it intends to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____