

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CIRCULAR ECONOMY BUSINESS MENTORING EXPERTS – SRI LANKA

SHORT TERM CONSULTANCY

In the framework of the European Union (EU) funded CIRCULAR project, Expertise France is seeking **technical experts / consultants to support and mentor food businesses on identification of Circular Economy practices** in Sri Lanka, with a specific focus on reducing food loss/waste and single-use plastics in the food sector in Sri Lanka.

I. General information

Title of the Assignment	Consultancy for mentoring food businesses on identification of Circular Economy practices under the Access to Finance component of the CIRCULAR Project
Name of the project	Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR)
Country	Sri Lanka
Maximum estimated duration	A period of 6-10 months

II. Context and justification of the need

1. Expertise France

Expertise France is the French Public Agency for International Technical Cooperation. As a subsidiary of the Agence Française de Développement Group (AFD Group), it designs and implements projects which aim to contribute to the balanced development of partner countries, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda and the priorities of France's external action.

The agency achieves this goal by implementing national or regional-scale projects in major areas of public action:

- Democratic, economic and financial governance
- Peace, stability and security
- Climate, agriculture and sustainable development
- Health and human development.

Expertise France promotes international solidarity by facilitating the transfer of skills, fostering peer dialogue, and mobilising experts to support development cooperation aligned with the rule of law, human rights, and France's Official Development Assistance priorities.

For more information, please visit the website - www.expertisefrance.fr

2. CIRCULAR project

"Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR)" project, is a three-year initiative funded by the European Union and partly co-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project is jointly implemented by Expertise France (EF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

CIRCULAR takes an integrated approach to promoting a Circular Economy in Sri Lanka's food sector, focusing in particular on reducing food loss and waste, as well as limiting the use of Single-Use Plastics (SUP). The overall objective of the project is to **promote a Circular Economy approach in the food sector**, while increasing resilience to food crises and climate change.

The specific objectives (outcomes) of the project are twofold:

Specific Objective 1 (SO1): *to increase recovery, processing and supply of edible and safe food surplus and/or waste for the benefit of vulnerable consumers and/or food producers* (implemented by FAO).

Specific Objective 2 (SO2): *to enhance effectiveness of the sustainable production, distribution and consumption models related to food waste/loss and single-use plastic food packaging* (implemented by EF and GIZ).

Expertise France contributes under the following outputs:

- **Output 2.1:** Increased awareness (and behavioural change) among the general public, economic operators, consumers and civil society about public incentives, sustainable products, solutions and services on the market.
- **Output 2.3:** MSME, startups, social enterprises, cooperatives have increased access to finance and BDS related to sustainable and gender sensitive business models and practices.

Via **output 2.3**, EF will be taking a holistic approach to increasing access to finance for Circular Economy targeting growth and expansion firms requiring financing of \$500,000 to \$5 million and by working with Accounting firms, certification bodies, insurance companies, banks, NBFIs, DFIs and other key actors in improving the Circular Economy financing ecosystem.

III. Objectives and desired results

a) General objective of the consultancy

The overall objective of this consultancy is to provide one on one mentoring for 20 food businesses on profitable circular business models. The one on one mentoring will support the food businesses to assess wastage across the value chain and to identify financially viable and scalable circular economy business models with clear revenue potential. The mentoring services provided to businesses will entail:

- Value chain assessment with a Circular Economy lens to identify critical waste points,
- Circular practices to be applied across the value chain,
- Identification of technologies and solutions to be used,
- Estimation of total financing required for implementing CE projects

The food businesses that receive mentoring through the consultancy will have a well-defined technical plan on their Circular Economy transition. The businesses will then use this technical plan to connect with investors and to explore alternative financing for the effective implementation of the circular plan.

b) Specific objective of the consultancy

Expertise France is seeking a consultancy firm with proven expertise in sustainable food systems and Circular Economy models to provide mentoring services. Specifically, the consultants will:

- Conduct value chain assessments with a Circular Economy lens to map processes and identify critical points of waste including - food loss, food waste, and SUP waste.
- Propose circular practices tailored to each business, outlining where and how they can be introduced at each stage of the value chain.

- Identify appropriate technologies and solutions that align with the proposed circular practices and are feasible for adoption by the business.
- Estimate the costs of implementation and highlight opportunities for new revenue streams that can emerge through circular business models.
- Determine the total financing required for businesses to adopt and scale these Circular Economy projects.
- Finalise a circular transition plan that provides a comprehensive plan for the adoption of the Circular Economy models including timelines, costs and the plan for implementation.

IV. Description of the assignment

The consultant will achieve the objective of this assignment through the following activities:

1. Value chain assessment with a Circular Economy lens

The consultant will work closely with participating food businesses to carry out a detailed value chain assessment with a Circular Economy lens. This assessment will cover every stage of the chain, including sourcing, production, processing, packaging, distribution, retail, and end-of-life management. At each stage, the consultant will identify points where food loss, food waste, or the use of single-use plastics is most significant. The assessment will apply Circular Economy principles to highlight inefficiencies, leakages of resources, and areas where value is currently being lost. The consultant will also document business practices that are already in place, even if they are not formally recognised as circular, so that these can be used as a baseline for further improvements. In addition, the consultant will examine issues of food safety and regulatory compliance to ensure that any proposed solutions will strengthen existing standards rather than compromise them.

2. Proposal of circular practices

Following the value chain assessment, the consultant will propose a set of circular practices that can be realistically applied by each business. The practices may include waste-to-value models, the utilisation of by-products, closed-loop packaging systems, improvements in resource efficiency, or the use of digital tools to track materials and waste. Each recommendation must be tailored to the context of the specific business, taking into account its scale, market position, and operational capacity. Only Circular Economy business models that demonstrate clear profitability and the potential for financial sustainability should be recommended. Proposals must also explain how they contribute to food safety standards, trade compliance, and the ability of businesses to meet export market requirements. The consultant will outline the economic, social, and environmental benefits expected from each practice, with explicit reference to how these benefits will support business strategy and competitiveness.

3. Identification of technologies and solutions

The consultant will identify the most relevant technologies and solutions that can support the adoption of the proposed circular practices. These may include technologies that are already available in Sri Lanka, as well as proven international solutions that could be adapted to the local context. Each technology or solution will be described in detail, including its costs, scalability, and integration requirements. The consultant must also assess how these technologies can help businesses to improve traceability, enhance food safety, and ensure compliance with international quality standards.

4. Estimation of costs and revenue opportunities

The consultant will prepare a detailed estimate of the financial implications of implementing the proposed practices. This will include the upfront investment that is required, as well as any operating and maintenance costs. In addition, the consultant will highlight where businesses can generate new revenue streams by adopting circular practices. These revenue opportunities may include premium market access, the recovery and resale of by-products, or the diversification of product lines. Financial metrics such as

the break-even point, the return on investment, and the payback period must be calculated wherever possible. Only business models that demonstrate realistic and positive financial returns will be recommended for implementation.

5. Circular transition plan

The consultant will prepare a step-by-step circular transition plan for each business. The plan will set out the sequence of actions needed to adopt the proposed circular practices. It will also include activities for the capacity building of staff and relevant market actors, ensuring that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to apply the changes effectively. The consultant will design and deliver training sessions covering topics such as food safety, waste reduction, resource efficiency, and quality compliance. The consultant will also advise on the changes that businesses may need to make to their internal processes, procedures, and policies in order to embed circular practices sustainably. The implementation plan will allocate responsibilities within the business, identify measurable milestones, and propose indicators for monitoring progress.

6. Estimation of total financing requirements

The consultant will prepare an overall estimate of the financing that each business will require in order to adopt and expand its Circular Economy strategy. This will include capital expenditure, working capital requirements, and any recurring operational costs that will arise during the transition. Although the consultant will not provide direct support for investment readiness or investor matchmaking, the analysis should give each business a clear understanding of the financial resources they will need to mobilise.

V. Place, Duration and Indicative Timeline

1. **Estimated contract start date:** 05 March 2026
2. **Estimated contract end date:** 04 March 2027
3. **Effective duration:** The mentoring is expected to take place between 6-10 months from the start date
4. **Location:** Colombo - Sri Lanka

VI. Required Expertise and profiles

The assignment requires strong technical and analytical expertise in Circular Economy applications within the agri-food sector, combining sustainability knowledge with practical business and financial insights. The consultant or consulting team should collectively demonstrate the following qualifications and skills:

Preferred qualifications

- The consultant team is expected to have a degree in Environmental Economics, Circular Economy, Food Technology, Sustainable Business, or related disciplines.
- Over 10 years of relevant professional experience in sustainability, Circular Economy, or private sector development (for individual consultants, or collectively across key team members for consulting firms).
- Experience in working in Sri Lanka or in the South Asian region are preferred. For international consultancy firms, an established operational presence and team in Sri Lanka will be considered a strong advantage.

Technical expertise

- Advanced understanding of Circular Economy frameworks and principles, including resource efficiency, waste-to-value systems, and closed-loop production models.

- Proven experience conducting value chain or supply chain assessments in agri-food or related sectors, with focus areas such as food loss reduction, packaging, waste management, and resource optimisation.
- Demonstrated ability to identify and evaluate technologies and innovations that enhance circularity, traceability, and food safety.
- Strong familiarity with food safety regulations, export standards, and trade compliance relevant to the Sri Lankan or regional context.
- Experience in preparing financial analyses for sustainability or circular investments, including cost-benefit assessments, ROI, and payback analyses.
- Knowledge of environmental and social impact assessment and integration of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria into business planning.

Analytical and advisory skills

- Proven capacity to translate technical findings into practical business recommendations tailored to company size, sector, and market context.
- Experience developing implementation roadmaps, investment plans, and capacity-building frameworks for private sector stakeholders.
- Ability to identify financing needs and estimate indicative investment requirements (CAPEX and OPEX) to support circular business transitions.
- Strong analytical, synthesis, and reporting skills, with ability to produce clear and actionable insights for both technical and non-technical audiences.

Other Skills

- Excellent communication and facilitation skills to engage effectively with SMEs, financial institutions, industry associations, and development partners.
- Experience designing and delivering mentoring sessions on sustainability or circular business models.
- Ability to work independently or as part of a multidisciplinary team, with a collaborative approach to problem-solving.
- Excellent research, analytical and writing skills. The use of AI-assisted research and editing tools is permitted; however, the consultant is expected to apply their own judgement and writing style to ensure the final product is accurate, engaging and consistent.

VII. Expression of Interest

All the consultants/ experts expressing interest must include:

- **A technical note** (maximum 1 page) detailing the suitability and interest to engage on this assignment
- **Company profile and CVs** of the key members of the consultancy

The documents must be submitted on Expertise France platform through the following link:

https://expertise-france.gestmax.fr/14787/1/call-for-expression-of-interest-circular-economy-business-mentoring-experts-sri-lanka-h-f/en_US

Deadline for submission: **26/02/2026**

And sent by e-mail to: habbipriya.karthigesan@expertisefrance.fr

After the finalisation of the specific mentoring requirements of the businesses, selected consultants will be contacted by the Expertise France team with detailed Terms of Reference (ToRs).

The consultant will then be requested to provide a technical and a financial offer based on the ToRs.