

## Terms of Reference (TORs)

**Project title:** Flagship Study on LT-LEDS: Assessing Impact and Strengthening Effectiveness as Tools to Deliver Climate Action.

**Contracting organization:** 2050 Pathways Platform hosted at the European Climate Foundation.

### 1. Purpose and background

Article 4.19 of the Paris Agreement (2015) invited Parties to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS, often referred to as Long-Term Strategies or LTS). Over the past decade, these strategies have seen expansive uptake by countries worldwide, becoming a central tool for articulating long-term climate ambition and aligning it with national development priorities. Today, more than 79 LTS have been communicated under the UNFCCC, with many others in preparation or revision.

Alongside this growing body of national strategies, there is now a broad community of development partners that have scaled up their support to LTS formulation and implementation. Multilateral development banks, bilateral agencies, and UN institutions have increasingly invested in LTS processes, recognizing their value as a framework for aligning long-term climate goals with development pathways. Initiatives such as the NDC-P Global Call for NDCs and LTS, GEF's Net Zero, Nature Positive programme, UNDP's Climate Promise, and dedicated support from agencies including AFD 2050 Facility, GIZ, and others, illustrate how the international community has expanded technical and financial assistance for LTS.

The [2050 Pathways Platform](#), a government and multi-stakeholder initiative, has been at the forefront of supporting governments to prepare and communicate these strategies. Yet, as the global climate agenda shifts decisively towards implementation, there is still limited systematic evidence of how LTS have been used, what impacts they have generated, and what lessons can be drawn to enhance their effectiveness as tools for action.

This flagship study will undertake a comprehensive review across a wide set of countries, including 2050 Pathways Platform member countries that have adopted an LTS and additional countries identified through partners. The objective is to capture the real-world impact of LTS, test emerging findings with experts and practitioners, and distill lessons and practical recommendations for governments, development partners, and the UNFCCC process on how to maximize the impact of LTS as practical instruments for implementation in the decade ahead.

This work is part of the project "Laying the foundations for long-term low emission development strategies (LTS)" (see [project page](#)), funded from Germany's International Climate Initiative (IKI). The project led by the 2050 Pathways Platform is equipping countries with tools to design robust and ambitious LTS, to better align short-term planning with long-term objectives, and to build institutional capacity for sustained implementation; in addition, the scope of work seeks to capture and disseminate lessons learned and best practices through global knowledge products.

## 2. Scope of work

The study will adopt a **results-oriented impact lens**, focusing on LTS **downstream effects** in policymaking, financing, and implementation. The analysis will cover four main dimensions:

- A. **Domestic Use and Impact:** including the use of LTS to integrate transition goals into national development plans, NDCs, sectoral policies, fiscal frameworks, and other documents, and analyze evidence of policy shifts, budget allocations, or regulatory changes linked to LTS. As well as influence on institutional arrangements (e.g., inter-ministerial coordination, planning authorities, governance reforms), the local real economy and financial system.
- B. **International Influence:** Including understanding how LTS have shaped development cooperation, donor programming (bilateral and multilateral), and contributions to regional leadership, strengthened knowledge exchange, and peer learning.
- C. **Implementation Triggers and Barriers:** Identification of concrete projects, investments, or programs directly informed by LTS. Analysis of enabling and constraining factors: political economy, institutional capacity, data/analytical gaps, financing challenges, or other relevant factors identified.
- D. **Forward-Looking Lessons and recommendations for enhanced implementation:** Based on findings, develop practical options to strengthen LTS as living instruments that inform near-term decisions (NDCs, sectoral pathways, public investment plans, private sector mobilization) to accelerate climate action in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The recommendations should also address how LTS can better integrate just transition, equity, and social considerations, and provide guidance on evolving the LTS mandate within the UNFCCC process, and implications for the evolution of the Paris Agreement's architecture towards implementation-fit approaches.

The research will be based on a broad review across a large number of countries. This will include all 2050PP member countries that have adopted an LTS and additional countries identified in collaboration with partners. By taking this wider lens, the study will be able to identify patterns, commonalities, and divergences, and provide a richer evidence base for drawing lessons. The analysis will combine a review across this large sample with short illustrative vignettes that showcase particular experiences.

Crucially, the study will not be a desk exercise alone. Emerging findings will be tested, debated, and sharpened through structured expert consultations and validation sessions, engaging key stakeholders in the study development. This iterative process will help ensure that the lessons and recommendations are grounded, feasible, and widely owned.

### 2.1 Planned activities

- 2.1.1 **Inception Phase:** Develop a work plan for the project describing the methodology and tools proposed for the assignment and detailing the outputs, milestones, and deliverables that will be produced.

The methodology should include a theory of change to trace pathways from LTS to impacts, combine multiple sources of evidence, and emphasize both rigor and participation. Develop a structured interview and data collection framework and identify countries that will be covered in the analysis (balanced across income levels, regions, and political contexts).

- 2.1.2 **Desk Research:** Review all available LTS, secondary literature, complementary analysis supporting/linked to LTS in the country, and independent evaluations, providing a systematic picture across a large number of countries. In-depth country analyses to capture variations in LTS design, uptake, and impact.
  - 2.1.3 **Survey and Interviews:** Complement desk research by structured surveys disseminated across 2050PP member countries and by targeted interviews with policymakers, technical experts, development partners, civil society, and private sector representatives. Triangulate perspectives to assess both perceived and observed impacts.
  - 2.1.4 **Expert Consultations / Validation sessions:** Test preliminary findings at several stages with practitioners and experts, for example, via focus group meetings. Key moments could include consolidating the methodology proposed, midway through the study to test emerging findings, and towards the end to sharpen lessons and recommendations. Refine lessons and ensure recommendations are feasible and actionable.
- 2.2 **Final report and presentation of findings and recommendations:** Draw cross-cutting lessons and distill policy-relevant insights. Ensure recommendations are clearly targeted to governments, development partners, and the UNFCCC process. Preset results to target audiences to disseminate the findings.

### 3. Expected deliverables

The consultant(s) will deliver the following outputs:

#### 3.1.1 **Product 1: Inception Report**

A detailed plan outlining the methodology, analytical framework, country coverage, and data collection tools. The inception report will also include a proposed design for expert consultations and validation workshops, including the selection of participants and the process for capturing inputs.

#### 3.1.2 **Product 2: Interim Analytical Note**

A short report summarizing emerging findings from the cross-country review, highlighting initial lessons on LTS impacts and their role in implementation. The note will be used as a basis for the first expert consultation, allowing feedback and discussion to refine the direction of the analysis.

#### 3.1.3 **Product 3: Final Report**

A comprehensive analytical report (~50-60 pages plus annexes) presenting findings from the multi-country review clearly and engagingly. The draft report will be tested in a validation workshop with governments, experts, and partners before finalization. The final report will include, at least:

- Executive summary with key lessons for enhancing LTS as tools for action.
- Description of the process and methodology followed.
- Comprehensive analysis of all identified impact dimensions, clearly articulated and supported with evidence.
- Illustrative country vignettes showcasing diverse experiences.
- Actionable recommendations for governments, development partners, and the UNFCCC process.

#### **3.1.4 Product 4: Policy Brief**

A concise 5–8 page summary of key findings and recommendations, aimed at decision-makers and negotiators. The brief will integrate feedback from the validation workshop to ensure clarity and relevance.

#### **3.1.5 Product 5: Presentation Deck and Results Delivery**

A visually engaging set of slides highlighting the study's key messages and recommendations, prepared for dissemination at key moments (e.g., COPs, regional dialogues, donor roundtables). The consultancy is also expected to deliver the presentations of results to relevant audiences, ensuring that findings are clearly communicated and discussed with stakeholders.

#### **3.1.6 Product 6: Consultation and Workshop Reports**

Design, organize, and conduct expert consultations and validation sessions at key stages of the study (consider a mix of virtual and in-person options as feasible). Produce summary reports documenting the process, outcomes, and how stakeholder feedback was incorporated into the analysis, ensuring that the consultations meaningfully shape the final recommendations and outputs.

### **4. Characteristics of the assignment**

**Duration of contract:** This assignment is expected to have an approximate duration of at least 6 months from the contract's effectiveness date.

**Start date:** Expected start date is 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025 at the latest.

**Location:** remote with some travel foreseen for stakeholder engagement activities.

### **5. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **2050 Pathways Platform (2050PP)**

- Leads and steers the study, providing strategic direction, technical guidance, and oversight throughout all phases.

- Actively reviews and advises on interim and final outputs to ensure quality, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives.
- Facilitates engagement with governments, development partners, and other stakeholders, including expert consultations and validation workshops.
- Ensures that lessons learned and recommendations are captured and integrated into 2050PP knowledge products for wider dissemination.

#### **Implementing Firm / Consortium**

- Executes all activities outlined in the ToRs.
- Produces all deliverables to a high-quality standard and on time.
- Maintains close coordination with 2050PP, incorporating feedback throughout the study.

#### **6. Application process and deadline**

Please send your expression of interest to apply for this project to the 2050 Pathways Platform Secretariat at [secretariat@2050pathways.org](mailto:secretariat@2050pathways.org) by **no later than 27th October 2025, 17:00 CET**, stating the following in the subject of the email: “Flagship Study on LT-LEDS”. You should include as part of your application:

A **narrative proposal** which should include:

- A methodological section, including how you are planning on approaching and carrying out the different activities highlighted in these TORs, considering each of the three phases of work identified in the TORs.
- A Gantt Chart for the project, detailing the schedule for the delivery of the project, including the indication of timing of activities, delivery of outputs, and key meetings/events
- Firm/ consortium’s background, legal status, credentials, expertise, and relevant experience. Demonstrable experience in the field (see section 6 below) and examples of previous research work.

A **financial proposal** with your estimated budget requirements to carry out the works, divided into consulting fees and other project expenses (travel, workshops etc.) – see template provided in Annex 1. The maximum available budget for this assignment is EUR 188,000. Proposals must not exceed this amount. Evaluation will consider technical quality, value-added contributions, and cost-effectiveness. Competitive proposals offering efficient use of resources will be viewed favorably.

Once the consultancy is selected, some additional documents will be required for due diligence and granting.

#### **7. Qualifications sought from the consultancy firm/consortium**

The consultancy firm/consortium is expected to demonstrate a strong combination of technical expertise, analytical capacity, and practical experience relevant to long-term climate strategies. Specifically, the team should have the following qualifications:

### Technical and Analytical Expertise

- Proven experience in climate policy, long-term low-emission development strategies, and climate action planning.
- Strong background in policy research, evaluation, or impact assessment, preferably in multi-country or international contexts.
- Familiarity with the role of multilateral and bilateral development agencies, UN programs, and international climate finance mechanisms in supporting LTS.
- Ability to conduct rigorous comparative analysis and synthesis of evidence across multiple countries.
- Experience with quantitative and qualitative research methods, including surveys, structured interviews, and content analysis.

### Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Skills

- Experience designing and facilitating expert consultations, validation workshops, or stakeholder dialogues.
- Strong ability to engage governments, development partners, civil society, and the private sector to collect input and validate findings.

### Communication and Knowledge Translation

- Proven ability to produce high-quality, policy-relevant reports, briefs, and presentations for international audiences.
- Capacity to translate technical and complex findings into actionable recommendations for policymakers and development partners.

### Team Composition and Management

- Demonstrated experience in managing multi-disciplinary teams, ideally within a consortium setting.
- Capacity to coordinate large-scale multi-country research while ensuring methodological rigor and timely delivery of outputs.

### 8. Annex 1: Budget Template (please develop according to the following cost categories and per phase of project implementation)

	Amount in EUR	Comments
<b>Phase I</b>		
<i>Consulting fees</i>		
<i>Travel (including accommodation)</i>		
<i>Venue rent</i>		
<i>Catering</i>		
<i>Material</i>		
<i>Others</i>		
<b>Phase II</b>		

<i>Consulting fees</i>		
<i>Travel (including accommodation)</i>		
<i>Venue rent</i>		
<i>Catering</i>		
<i>Material</i>		
<i>Others</i>		
<b>Phase II</b>		
<i>Consulting fees</i>		
<i>Travel (including accommodation)</i>		
<i>Venue rent</i>		
<i>Catering</i>		
<i>Material</i>		
<i>Others</i>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		