

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Private Sector Needs for Energy Auditing Tools in the Caribbean**

#### **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION**

##### **1.1 Relevant Background**

The Caribbean region, characterized by its Small Island Developing States (SIDS) status, faces numerous challenges, including high dependence on imported fossil fuels, small market sizes, limited economies of scale, and vulnerability to external shocks. These constraints impact economic resilience, business competitiveness, and sustainability efforts, particularly in the context of energy consumption and efficiency. Recognizing these challenges, the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export), in collaboration with Business Support Organizations (BSOs), with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to advance energy efficiency (EE), Resource-Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP), and Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) across the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed structural weaknesses within Caribbean economies, particularly the reliance on foreign tourism and commodities. Economic activity in the region declined by 9.9% from 2019 to 2020, surpassing the 6.8% contraction experienced by Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) as a whole. For instance, in Barbados, the tourism sector's contribution to GDP plummeted from 17.5% in 2019 to just 2.8% in 2021. The hardest-hit sectors included tourism, retail, and services, disproportionately affecting women-led businesses and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These economic vulnerabilities have reinforced the urgency for Caribbean nations to adopt strategies that reduce dependence on imported resources, create resilient jobs, and add value through local manufacturing and services.

Access to affordable and clean energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable resource use are critical enablers of business competitiveness. The integration of resource-efficient practices and circular production methodologies can significantly lower costs, enhance productivity, and align Caribbean businesses with global environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards. Notably, EE standards are being developed under the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), covering buildings, appliances, and lighting. However, the uptake of EE, RECP, and VSS strategies remains limited due to technological gaps, lack of access to finance, and insufficient awareness, particularly among MSMEs. Many businesses perceive these measures as complex and financially burdensome, hindering widespread adoption.

To address these challenges, this initiative aims to develop and implement an online energy audit tool and training programs to support MSMEs in adopting EE, RECP, and VSS strategies and technologies. The project will focus on enhancing awareness, facilitating access to information, and providing technical support to businesses, helping them transition towards sustainable and cost-effective operations. By doing so, the initiative seeks to transform MSMEs' perception of sustainability measures from burdensome obligations into viable business opportunities.

The initiative will also include advocacy efforts to promote EE, RECP, and VSS adoption, fostering a more resilient and competitive Caribbean business ecosystem. The digital platform established under this project will serve as a scalable solution, offering iterative upgrades, sector-specific insights, and country-level business cases to ensure long-term impact beyond the project's implementation phase.

Given the region's heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels and its susceptibility to climate-related disasters, transitioning to renewable energy and energy-efficient practices is both an economic and environmental necessity. Natural hazards such as hurricanes, which are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change, pose a significant threat to energy infrastructure. Without resilient energy solutions, these events can result in severe disruptions and financial losses.

Through this initiative, Caribbean Export and its partners aim to bridge the gap in MSME support, fostering a more sustainable, resource-efficient, and competitive private sector in the Caribbean.

## **1.2 The Team's Mission**

Caribbean Export is committed to bridge the gap in knowledge, financing, and technological capacity that prevents MSMEs from leveraging EE, Resource-Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP), and Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) as business enablers. Recognizing the role of digitalization in driving these transitions, Caribbean Export aims to provide MSMEs with the necessary tools, strategies, and support services to integrate sustainability into their operations.

To achieve this, Caribbean Export, in collaboration with its partner Business Support Organizations (BSOs), is establishing a digital platform that will serve as a hub for knowledge, best practices, and business cases related to EE, RECP, and VSS. This platform will be complemented by country-level helpdesks that provide targeted

advisory services to MSMEs. The initiative also seeks to stimulate a market for specialized EE and RECP services, which are currently only accessible to larger firms.

Within this context, Caribbean Export is seeking a consulting firm/individual to develop comprehensive policies and strategies for energy efficiency, sustainability standards, and circular economy adoption in MSMEs. These policies will be designed for implementation by national governments, BSOs, and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of Caribbean businesses while fostering sustainable economic growth.

### **1.3 Contracting Authority**

The contracting authority for this assignment is the Caribbean Export Development Agency (*hereinafter* Caribbean Export/the Agency).

### **1.4 Beneficiary Countries**

IDB Caribbean Countries: Belize, Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

## **2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1 Overall Objectives**

The objective of this consultancy is to assess and define the specific needs of the private sector in the Caribbean regarding energy auditing tools. The findings will guide the development of an online energy audit tool that supports micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in improving energy efficiency (EE), adopting resource-efficient cleaner production (RECP) practices, and meeting voluntary sustainability standards (VSS).

### **2.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the Consultancy are:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of MSMEs regarding energy auditing tools, including awareness, technical capacity, and perceived challenges.
- Identify the key features and functionalities required in an energy audit tool tailored to the Caribbean business environment.
- Provide recommendations on the tool's scope, user interaction level, data requirements, and output format.

- Ensure alignment with international energy audit standards while addressing region-specific challenges and opportunities.
- Assess the role of business support organizations (BSOs) in promoting and facilitating the adoption of the tool.

### **2.3 Scope of Work**

The Consultancy will:

#### **A. Desk Research**

- Review existing energy audit tools and best practices applicable to MSMEs.
- Assess the current regulatory frameworks, incentives, and policies supporting energy efficiency and sustainability in the Caribbean.

#### **B. Stakeholder Engagement**

- Conduct surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions with MSMEs across various industries in the target countries (Bahamas, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago) to determine the needs and requirements of such a tool.
- Engage with key stakeholders such as BSOs, government agencies, and financial institutions to understand the support mechanisms available for energy audits.

#### **C. Analysis and Reporting**

- Analyze data collected from MSMEs to determine their level of awareness, willingness to adopt EE/RECP/VSS practices, and technical gaps.
- Provide recommendations for structuring the audit tool, including data input methods, interactive features, and reporting formats.
- Identify potential barriers to adoption and propose strategies for overcoming them.

### **2.4 Purpose of consultancy**

This consultancy is a crucial step in ensuring that the online energy audit tool meets the needs of Caribbean MSMEs and effectively contributes to enhancing business competitiveness through improved energy efficiency. The study will lay the foundation for the design and implementation of the tool by providing data-driven insights into user preferences, technical requirements, and capacity-building needs.

## 2.5 Expected Results

- A clear understanding of MSME needs and expectations for an energy audit tool.
- Identification of key functionalities and features required for the tool to be effective in the Caribbean business environment.
- Evidence-based recommendations to guide the tool’s development, ensuring usability, relevance, and compliance with global energy efficiency standards.
- A roadmap for MSMEs and BSOs to adopt and integrate energy audits into business practices.

## 3. ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS AND MITIGATION

### 3.1 Assumptions

- MSMEs recognize the value of energy efficiency and sustainability in improving their operations.
- BSOs and policymakers actively support the integration of EE and sustainability policies into national and regional frameworks.
- The Online Energy Audit Tool is technically sound, user-friendly, and accessible to MSMEs across the region.

### 3.2 Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Limited awareness and adoption of EE/RECP/VSS by MSMEs	Implement targeted awareness campaigns and train BSOs to provide hands-on support to MSMEs.
Technical and financial barriers for MSMEs in implementing green energy solutions	Develop financial incentives and support mechanisms in collaboration with financial institutions.
Low engagement from policymakers and regulatory bodies	Conduct policy dialogues and advocate for regulatory frameworks that incentivize energy-efficient investments.
Challenges in integrating the Energy Audit Tool with MSME operations	Provide technical assistance and demonstrations to ensure seamless adoption.
Natural disasters and climate vulnerabilities	Promote resilient energy infrastructure and disaster recovery planning as part of EE strategies.

## 4. DELIVERABLES

### 4.1 Deliverables

The consultant will provide the following:

1. Inception Report (Week 2)

- Outline of the methodology, research plan, and stakeholder engagement strategy.
- 2. Stakeholder Consultation Report (Week 6)
  - Summary of findings from surveys, interviews, and focus groups.
  - Insights on MSME perceptions and barriers to energy audits.
- 3. Draft Needs Assessment Report (Week 8)
  - Comprehensive analysis of private sector needs.
  - Initial recommendations for tool design and functionality.
- 4. Final Report (Week 10)
  - Incorporation of stakeholder feedback.
  - Finalized recommendations and a roadmap for tool development.

## 5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

### 5.1 Management structure

The Manager - Technical Programmes will retain overall responsibility for the overall project. Day-to-day supervision of this project is the responsibility of the Project Assistant who will communicate progress to the Manager.

### 5.2 Reporting

Report outlining key activities undertaken, progress made and results achieved must be submitted to Mr. Wayne Elliott, Manager-Technical Programmes at [welliott@carib-export.com](mailto:welliott@carib-export.com) and copied to Mr. Christopher Richards, Project Assistant – Technical Programmes at [crichards@carib-export.com](mailto:crichards@carib-export.com).

## 6. Payment timeline:

Payments will be made upon delivery and acceptance of each report.

Deliverable	Timeline
Inception Report	10%
Stakeholder Consultation Report	30%
Draft Needs Assessment Report	30%
Final Report	30%

## **7. REQUIREMENTS**

### **7.1 Qualifications and Work Experience**

A team comprising of at least two qualified experts, with the following qualifications and experience:

- A master's degree in Energy Engineering, Environmental Science, Sustainable Development, Business, or a related field.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in energy efficiency, renewable energy, or sustainability initiatives.
- Demonstrated expertise in energy audits, clean energy adoption, and circular economy strategies.
- Experience in policy development related to energy efficiency and just energy transition.
- Strong project management skills – A certification in project management will be an asset.
- Knowledge of the various relevant regional trade agreements.
- Experience working with enterprises and with national trade promotion organizations and/or other business support organizations.
- Experience and a track record in resource mobilization.
- Proven relationship management skills.
- Fluent in English.
- Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office programmes especially Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project and Microsoft PowerPoint.

### **7.2 Contract Duration**

The consultancy will be completed within 4 months, with milestones aligned with deliverables.

### **7.3 Location**

The Consultant can complete the tasks virtually.

### **7.4 Required Documentation**

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A detailed CV highlighting relevant experience.

- A technical proposal outlining the approach and methodology for the consultancy.
- A financial proposal detailing the consultancy fees, in USD.
- Contact information for at least two professional references.
- Signed Application Declaration in Clause 10.

All applications must be submitted by email to [greenenergy@carib-export.com](mailto:greenenergy@carib-export.com) , no later than 4:00pm AST, September 30, 2025.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Consultancy will be monitored and evaluated by Caribbean Export over the duration of the project. Performance on the project will be measured by satisfactory completion and timely submission of the deliverables outlined in Sections 4, and as outlined within the work plan submitted. Feedback, other than acceptance, on each submitted deliverable is not a requirement for the continuation of the project. However, in some instances the Consultant may need to integrate any feedback into the subsequent deliverables. The Contracting Authority will provide feedback to the consultant within ten (10) working days of receipt of the final report.

## **9. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION**

To participate in any activity executed or supported by Caribbean Export, you hereby agree that any information and personal data that you share and is collected by the Agency will be processed for the purpose of reporting the outcomes and impact of your projects and/or participation. Please note that Caribbean Export reserves the right to publish the Contractor's/Participant's name and address, the purpose and nature of the activity, and financial arrangements, in accordance with Caribbean Export's Personal Data Protection Policy. [Personal Data Protection Policy](https://content.carib-export.com/download/personal-data-protection-policy/). (<https://content.carib-export.com/download/personal-data-protection-policy/>). Derogation from publication of this information may be granted if it could endanger the Contractor/Participant or harm his/her commercial interests.



## **10. DECLARATION**

To participate in any procurement undertaken by Caribbean Export, all applicants must complete and submit to the agency the Applicant Declaration Form. <https://content.carib-export.com/download/applicant-declaration-form/>