REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

END RESULT CONTRACT

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
October 14, 2026, at 11:59 P.M. ICT (UTC+7)

TYPE OF CONTRACT: END RESULT CONTRACT
The fee includes all consulting fees, employee compensation and benefits, overhead, travel expenses or any other type of expenses incurred to effectively complete the services/deliverables agreed upon. The payment represents the sole and complete liability of USSEC for services rendered in relation to the agreement. **The USSEC Budget Table Template must be completed, outlining how the fee was derived. Said budget table should be very detailed to show the breakdown of costs.** USSEC will evaluate proposals based on: • Responsiveness and understanding of the assignment. • Quality, practicality, and defensibility of the methodology and commercial model. • Relevant technical and Southeast Asia experience, assigned personnel, and stakeholder access. • Quality of comparable work samples and references. • Ability to meet the required schedule and four-market scope. • Fee, clarity of the optional component, and overall value. USSEC is seeking proposals for the work outlined in the RFP. This detailed cost analysis will assist in determining the fair market value, and it provides USSEC with the opportunity to evaluate proposals to select the best contractor based on experience, availability, expertise, approach, and cost. **DEMONSTRATED SUSTAINABILITY AND CARBON CREDENTIALS ARE ESSENTIAL AND A DETAILED SUMMARY OF CREDENTIALS MUST BE A PART OF PROPOSAL.**

RFP TITLE:	Southeast Asia Sustainability Analysis
RFP CONTACT:	
Name:	Sherine Lau
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Email:	slau@ussec.org

PROPOSAL DEADLINE:	**October 14, 2026, at 11:59 P.M. ICT (UTC+7)**

INTRODUCTION:
The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) builds preference for U.S. Soy through market development, education, technical support, and industry engagement in international markets.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC's standard practice is to issue an RFP every three years in an open and competitive manner. This type of cost analysis will assist in determining the fair market value for the work to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate various proposals and select the best contractor based on experience, availability, expertise, approach, and cost.
OBJECTIVE:
USSEC seeks a contractor to determine whether the lower-carbon profile of Sustainable U.S. Soy and documentation available through the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) can create measurable commercial, financial, regulatory, or compliance value for customers in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The work must translate technical findings into practical customer value, an economic model, competitive benchmarking, and internal options for future educational or technical engagement. Thailand is the priority market and will receive the greatest depth of analysis. This RFP does not assume that an SSAP certificate is a carbon credit, offset, tax incentive, or regulatory instrument. The contractor must distinguish current recognition from potential pathways and clearly identify limitations, evidence gaps, and claims requiring additional verification or legal review. **Compliance limitation:** contractor activities are limited to research, analysis, USSEC-approved interviews, and preparation of internal strategy and educational materials. Contract funds may not be used to influence legislation or governmental policy or action.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OR WORK:

Country Scope

Market	Minimum Interviews	Required Depth
Thailand	8	Full analysis under all workstreams; complete commercial model; competitive benchmark; stakeholder map; government/regulatory background brief; customer-facing materials.
Philippines	4	Country-specific framework scan across all analytical pathways; preliminary commercial value findings; stakeholder map; principal opportunities and constraints.
Indonesia	4	Country-specific framework scan across all analytical pathways; preliminary commercial value findings; stakeholder map; principal opportunities and constraints.
Vietnam	4	Country-specific framework scan across all analytical pathways; preliminary commercial value findings; stakeholder map; principal opportunities and constraints.

If narrative scope language conflicts with this table, the table governs the required depth by market.

REQUIRED WORKSTREAMS:

1. **Regulatory and market framework.** Identify applicable Scope 3 reporting and disclosure requirements by company type and timing; map carbon-credit schemes and eligibility, including T-VER in Thailand; and identify relevant tax incentives, green finance, sustainability-linked lending, and supply-chain finance mechanisms.
2. **SSAP recognition pathways.** Analyze separately: (a) Scope 3 inventory reporting; (b) supply-chain reduction or insetting claims; (c) formal carbon-credit or offset eligibility; and (d) tax-incentive or green-finance eligibility. Determine current recognition, additional evidence or approvals required, and where no present pathway exists. Do not imply that SSAP is itself a T-VER or other carbon credit.
3. **Commercial value model.** Quantify potential value under representative buyer profiles and procurement volumes. Express results, as applicable, per metric ton, per shipment, and annually for a representative buyer, including potential compliance savings, tax or credit value, financing benefits, and sensitivity to carbon-price and incentive assumptions.
4. **Competitive benchmarking.** Compare U.S. Soy with relevant origins, sustainability certifications, and offset options using a transparent methodology that states the functional unit, system boundary, land-use-change treatment, transport assumptions, allocation method, data sources, exclusions, and uncertainty. Use recognized standards and data sources, including the GHG Protocol and GFLI where appropriate.
5. **Primary stakeholder research.** Conduct at least 20 USSEC-approved interviews: eight in Thailand and four in each other market. Each market must include a commercial buyer, an industry association, a relevant regulatory or carbon-market body, and a financial institution. The proposal must identify likely independent access and where USSEC introductions are needed. Desktop research alone is insufficient.
6. **Government and regulatory pathway analysis.** For Thailand, identify realistic regulatory-recognition, administrative, technical-clarification, or industry options for USSEC's internal consideration; responsible agencies; required evidence; implementation considerations; and potential value to Thai companies. Prepare a stakeholder map and recommended sequencing for factual, educational, or technical engagement.
7. **Optional Scope 1 feed-efficiency assessment.** Separately price an assessment of whether U.S. soybean meal may reduce nitrogen excretion or improve feed efficiency in ways that create a credible Scope 1 advantage for customers that operate animal-production systems. Thailand requires full analysis; the other three markets require a preliminary scan. Cover poultry, swine, aquaculture, and beef/dairy where commercially significant. Quantify the benefit and uncertainty where supportable, or document why it is not credibly quantifiable. Keep all Scope 1 findings separate from Scope 3/SSAP findings.

STAKEHOLDER APPROVAL AND COMPLIANCE:

No external outreach may occur before the Early Thailand Insights Memo readout. After that readout, interviews may begin only with prior written USSEC approval of the proposed interviewees, scope, timing, and messaging. All outreach must be informational, educational, or research-oriented. Lobbying, advocacy, or communications principally intended to change legislation, policy, or regulation are outside the contractor's scope.

The contractor must provide an anonymized interview log and a source-and-evidence matrix linking material findings to supporting primary and secondary evidence and identifying findings that could not be independently validated.

AI USE, DATA HANDLING, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- **Human validation.** All technical and quantitative findings, including carbon-footprint figures, T-VER and SSAP pathway conclusions, and Scope 1 findings, must be reviewed, verified, and approved by a named qualified professional on the contractor's team before submission. AI-generated content may not be submitted as a deliverable or represented as a finding without such review.
- **Data handling.** USSEC confidential information, proposal content, findings, and underlying data may not be entered into any public or non-enterprise AI tool. If AI tools are used on this engagement, only enterprise- or business-tier tools with contractual protection against the vendor's use of inputs for model training or retention may be used, and only for this engagement.
- **Confidentiality and non-disclosure of findings.** Without USSEC's prior written consent, the contractor and its personnel, affiliates, and subcontractors may not publish, disclose, distribute, present, reuse, or otherwise share any findings, analyses, drafts, deliverables, underlying data, or other work product developed under this RFP with any third party, including for case studies, marketing, portfolio, publication, conference, training, benchmarking, or model-training purposes. This restriction is in addition to, and does not limit, the confidentiality, non-use, ownership, and intellectual-property terms of the resulting agreement.
- **Accountability and originality.** The contractor remains fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and defensibility of all deliverables regardless of the tools used to produce them. AI use does not reduce the contractor's obligations under this RFP, including the confidentiality, non-use, and intellectual-property terms governing USSEC's data and findings.

DELIVERABLES AND PAYMENT

Due Date	Payment	Deliverable
November 17, 2026	—	Early Thailand Insights Memo: preliminary findings, likely recognition pathways, early risks, commercial implications, and readiness for later approved interviews. Includes a readout call.
December 7, 2026	50%	Interim Report: Thailand regulatory/incentive map; preliminary SSAP pathway assessment, stakeholder map, commercial value findings, and optional Scope 1 findings if awarded; initial scans and workplan confirmation for the other three markets.
February 5, 2027	50%	Final Report and complete deliverable package for all four markets.

THE FINAL DELIVERABLE PACKAGE MUST INCLUDE:
▪ Executive summary and editable presentation deck for leadership, customers, industry, and approved government discussions. ▪ Full Thailand analysis and country-specific analyses for the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam at the depth stated above. ▪ Regulatory and incentive maps; four-pathway SSAP recognition assessment; competitive benchmark; and claims-risk guidance. ▪ Customer-facing value proposition and an unlocked Excel commercial-value calculator with documented formulas, assumptions, and sensitivity analysis. ▪ Thailand stakeholder map and government/regulatory background brief with factual educational talking points, subject to USSEC Legal/Compliance review. ▪ Optional Scope 1 assessment, if awarded. ▪ Anonymized interview log and source-and-evidence matrix. ▪ Editable source files: Word and PDF reports; PowerPoint and PDF deck; unlocked Excel models; and editable stakeholder and evidence files. USSEC will provide consolidated comments within five business days of each formal submission. The contractor will complete one consolidated revision round within five business days unless otherwise agreed. Payment follows written USSEC approval of the applicable deliverable.

RFP AND PROJECT TIMELINE:
• **RFP Distribution:** August 4, 2026 • **Last Day to Submit Questions:** October 7, 2026 (by 12:00PM ICT) • **Proposals Due to RFP@USSEC.ORG and slau@ussec.org :** October 14, 2026, at 11:59 PM ICT • **Selections Made By:** October 28, 2026 • **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** October 28, 2026 • **Contracting and onboarding completed:** November 4, 2026 • **Project kickoff:** November 9, 2026 • **Final Report:** February 5, 2027

TYPE OF CONTRACT AND BUDGET:
This will be an End Result Contract. The proposed fee must include all consulting fees, compensation, overhead, travel, and other expenses required to complete the work. Bidders must complete the USSEC Budget Table provided with the RFP and separately show: (1) Base Scope total; (2) Optional Scope 1 total; and (3) combined total if the option is exercised.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:
Proposals must be no longer than 10 pages, excluding resumes, references, work samples, and detailed technical appendices, and must include: • Executive summary and understanding of the objective. • Detailed approach and workplan covering all required workstreams and the different country depths. • Carbon-footprint methodology and data sources.

- Stakeholder research plan, anticipated access, and compliance with the prior-approval requirements.
- Dated schedule for the Early Memo, Interim Report, Final Report, and four-market sequencing.
- Team qualifications and resumes for assigned personnel.
- Two references for projects of similar scope, complexity, and value, plus relevant work samples.
- Completed budget with hourly rates, estimated hours, out-of-pocket expenses, Base Scope, Optional Scope 1, and combined total. The link to the budget table is RFP-Budget-Development-Worksheet-V1.xlsx.
- A deliverables checklist confirming all required outputs and editable files.

EVALUATION:

USSEC will evaluate proposals based on:

- Responsiveness and understanding of the assignment.
- Quality, practicality, and defensibility of the methodology and commercial model.
- Relevant technical and Southeast Asia experience, assigned personnel, and stakeholder access.
- Quality of comparable work samples and references.
- Ability to meet the required schedule and four-market scope.
- Fee, clarity of the optional component, and overall value.

NOTES:

- Proposals may be duplicated for internal review, will be treated as confidential to the extent practicable, will not be returned, and may be retained by USSEC.
- USSEC may request clarifications, permit corrections, reject any proposal, waive deficiencies, and negotiate with a proposer.
- Submission indicates acceptance of the RFP conditions unless exceptions are clearly identified in the proposal and accepted in the final contract.
- Without USSEC prior written consent, proposers and their personnel, affiliates, and subcontractors may not disclose information received in connection with this RFP.
- Fees are in lieu of employee benefits. The contractor is responsible for applicable taxes and must provide the appropriate IRS Form W-9 or W-8 series form before payment.
- The contractor may not act as agent or representative for a product or service directly or indirectly competitive with U.S. soybeans or soybean products during the contract term.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND

BUILDING A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. SOY

USSEC's strategy can be found here: http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/
USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here: Strategic Plan | United Soybean Board

We are a dynamic partnership of key stakeholders representing soybean producers, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusiness and agricultural organizations.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) focuses on attaining market access, differentiating, and elevating preference for the use of U.S. Soy for human consumption, aquaculture, and livestock feed in more than 90 countries. USSEC members represent the soy supply chain including U.S. Soy farmers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses, and agricultural organizations. USSEC is funded by the Soy Checkoff, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) matching funds, and industry. Visit www.ussec.org for the latest information about USSEC and U.S. Soy internationally.

Our 15-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and seven members representing trade, allied industry, and state organizations.

New board members are seated annually. We are receiving funding from a variety of sources including soy producer checkoff dollars invested by the USB and various state soybean councils; cooperating industry; and the American Soybean Association's investment of cost-share funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service.

The United Soybean Board, created by the 1990 Farm Bill to manage and direct the National Soybean Checkoff, is dedicated to marketing and research for the soybean industry. USB is comprised of 73 volunteer soybean farmers representing the interests of fellow growers nationwide. Each board member is nominated by Qualified State Soybean Boards (QSSBs) and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Because of the limitations on administrative and salary costs established in the Act, USB outsources the majority of its program management responsibilities to USB's three primary contractors:

- U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. for international marketing and global opportunities activities.

As one of these three primary contractors USSEC may also undertake initiative activities on behalf of USB. USB considers primary contractor staff (approximately 60 people) as core USB staff. These three primary contractors use a number of subcontractors and, together, these entities carry out approximately 450 projects each year for USB. USB also manages approximately 10 subcontractors.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 {voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,1400 Independence Avenue,SW,Washington,D.C.20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442;or (3) email:program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

CIVIL RIGHTS CLAUSE
Contractor agrees that during the performance of this Agreement it will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, parental status or protected genetic information. Contractor further agrees that it will fully comply with any and all applicable Federal, State and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, without limitation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require Contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinance, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to Contractor.

MANDATORY CONTRACTUAL TERMS
Contracts: the following terms are required: 1. USSEC, as well as the Secretary of Agriculture, may terminate the contract and be relieved of payment. USSEC will pay for all work performed under contract until the date of termination.

2. Any work a contractor undertakes prior to contract approval by AMS is at their own risk and USSEC is not financially liable if the contract is not approved.
3. Funds paid to the contractor may not be used for the purpose of influencing legislation or governmental policy or action. “Influencing legislation” is defined as any attempt to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment thereof concerning current or proposed legislation or any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or with any government officials who may participate in the formulation of legislation. “Government officials” refers to federal employees outside of USDA, foreign, and State governments/officials, legislators, and legislative staffs. “Influencing of governmental policy or action” is defined as any action the principal purpose of which is to bring about a change in existing policy or regulation or affect the outcome of proposed policy or regulation, except those actions which are specifically provided for in the Soybean Act and Order.
4. The contractor must (a) keep accurate records, books and documents involving transactions relating to the contract; (b) retain the records, books and documents for three years; and (c) said records, books and documents may be subject to inspection and audit by a representative of USDA and/or USSEC.
5. EEO policy statement: contractor agrees that, during the performance of this Agreement, contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, protected genetic information, or reprisal. Contractor further agrees that it will fully comply with any and all applicable Federal, State and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinance, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to the contractor.
6. Subcontractors. Subject to USSEC’s approval, the contractor may subcontract specific tasks to outside parties. Should the contractor elect to subcontract specific tasks, subcontractors will be subject to the same contractual terms as its contract agency in regard to: (1) reporting and record keeping; (2) travel expenses; (3) title of property; (4) confidential information; (5) influencing legislation and/or influencing governmental policy or action; and (6) federal civil rights policies. The primary contractor agency that has a direct contract with USSEC will be fully responsible for the quality of all work product, including any approvals from AMS. Any such authorization in the contract must state that entering into a subcontract does not relieve the contractor of primary responsibility to carry out the terms and conditions of the underlying contract in accordance with the Act, Order, Regulations and USDA policies.
7. Confidentiality. Financial or commercial information obtained under contract with USSEC that is privileged and confidential shall be kept confidential by all persons, including employees and former employees of USSEC, USDA and the contractor having access to such information.

Contracts: the following terms are not allowed:

1. Indemnification provisions, unless it is clear that the indemnification will in no way obligate the U.S. government to pay on a potential claim.
2. Liquidated damages.

Intellectual property: Rights will be governed by the Bayh-Dole Act, 35 U.S.C. §§ 200–212, for any entity that is a "contractor" as defined by the Act at § 201(c).

Expenses: the following expenses are prohibited under the Act and Order:

1. University Principal Investigator salaries.
2. University overhead/indirect costs; non-Principal Investigator salaries are an exception.
3. Entertainment expenses.
4. Spousal/family/companion expenses.
5. Personal expenses, except as specifically allowed in USSEC's travel policies.
6. Open bars.
7. Funding of capital equipment unless the equipment is purchased (a) in direct connection with a plan or project and (b) is necessary for completion of the plan or project.