

Consultancy: Legal consultant to support ClientEarth's fundamental rights work in Europe

Duty station: Home-based / remote

Type and duration of contract: Consultancy contract, part-time for 11 months, (approximately 25 - 30 hours/week)

Sarting date: 23 March 2026 to 22 February 2027

Closing date for applications: 9am GMT on 11 February 2026

Background

1.1 About the organisation

ClientEarth is a global environmental organisation that uses the power of law to bring about systemic change that protects the earth for – and with – its inhabitants. The organisation works in partnership across borders, systems and sectors, using the law to protect life on earth. The aim is to bring about end-to-end systemic change: informing, implementing and enforcing the law, advising decision-makers on policy, and training legal and judicial professionals.

ClientEarth was set up in 2007 in Europe. More than 18 years on, it is now actively engaged in over 60 countries through a network of ClientEarth branches, representative offices and subsidiaries, as well as through strategic partners with a shared vision of a future where people and planet thrive together.

1.2 About the assignment

In the last five years, there have been significant advances in the legal recognition of environmental human rights. Many national constitutions, for instance, now recognise the fundamental right to a healthy environment. At the international level, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a landmark Resolution (76/300) on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The International Court of Justice declared the right to a healthy environment as the foundation for the realisation and enjoyment of human rights, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, in a case in which ClientEarth intervened, also recognised the right to a healthy climate as a component of the right to a healthy environment. Taken together, these developments show that human rights law and human rights courts are key players in the effort to curb the triple planetary crisis.

ClientEarth's "The Right to a Healthy Environment in Practice" Project leverages these legal developments by integrating environmental and human rights law to develop stronger obligations on States to protect people and planet, creating legal precedents and environmental justice models for other activists to use. In this way, the project seeks to achieve justice for those who suffer the severest effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. This contract is particularly focused on strengthening the European legal framework to protect fundamental rights against biodiversity loss.

Classification: Internal

1.3 Partnerships

ClientEarth works directly with several partners in Europe – legal organisations, non-legal civil society organisations and scientific institutes – and engages with other civil society organisations. We aim to support the most affected communities in defending their rights and achieving redress through innovative legal actions.

2. Purpose

In the frame of this project, ClientEarth would like to commission an external consultant to provide:

2.1. Legal Research and analysis and thought leadership - conduct research and prepare analysis in relation to the integration of international environmental law and European human rights law in the intersection of biodiversity protection and social rights, in the context of specific and confidential legal interventions identified by ClientEarth.

2.2. Stakeholder Engagement – where necessary, consult and collaborate with partners and key stakeholders identified by ClientEarth.

3. Deliverables

The consultant will:

- Undertake specific research and analysis tasks in the area of biodiversity and human rights protection;
- Undertake legal drafting tasks that integrate said research and analysis into ClientEarth legal briefings and other written outputs;
- Contribute to the development and drafting of funding proposals on the theme described above (where relevant).

The consultant will undertake these tasks under the overall responsibility of ClientEarth's Fundamental Rights Lead, Vesselina Newman. Biweekly meetings, as well as monthly activity reports should be sent to or held with ClientEarth's Fundamental Rights Lead to update on ongoing work. The consultant will be expected to keep a timesheet and bill based on hours worked on a monthly basis.

The consultant will not be asked to represent ClientEarth. The location for this consultancy is home office. The consultant is expected to provide her/his own office space, accommodation, transport, IT equipment (including email address) and working materials. The consultant will have access to the IT tools necessary to collaborate with ClientEarth staff and partners.

4. Duration and Budget

The consultancy will commence in early March and conclude no later than February 2027. The total budget available for this consultancy is GBP 80,000. This includes all consultancy fees (including any applicable taxes) and any associated costs incurred by the consultant. Travel and per diem if required by the consultancy will be covered additionally.

5.1 Qualifications and Experience

The consultant should have:

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- Substantial and well-documented research and analytical skills in the field of international human rights law, including experience in developing legal strategies and interventions (essential);
- Experience of international human rights litigation (essential)
- Experience in environmental law, in particular in the legal protection of biodiversity (highly desirable);
- Bachelor's degree in law (essential), or equivalent professional experience (essential);
- Commitment to ClientEarth's vision, mission, values, and a working style which reflects these (essential).

5.2 Skills

- Excellent legal and policy analysis skills (essential)
- Critical thinking, highly creative, flexible and solutions-oriented (essential)
- Fluent in English (CEFR level C2) with outstanding written and oral communication skills (essential)
- Cross-cultural awareness and flexibility (essential);
- Ability to explain complex legal information in a simple language and to adapt language, content and style to different audiences (essential)
- Well-developed interpersonal communication style and ability to work collaboratively with partners from a distance and split across different geographies (essential)
- Excellent organisational and planning skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities (essential)

6. Application Process

Interested candidates should submit their CV, a proposed fee rate, and a short proposal (up to 3 pages) detailing the following *(i)* the candidate's experience in the intersection of international human rights law and protection of the environment; *(ii)* the risks that biodiversity loss creates for internationally protected human rights; and *(iii)* how an organisation such as ClientEarth can contribute to the protection of these rights through strategic litigation in Europe. The candidates should submit their CV, their proposal, and a proposed fee rate to Vesselina Newman, Fundamental Rights Lead (vnewman@clientearth.org) **before 9am GMT on 11 February 2026**.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an online discussion of their proposal in the week of **16 February 2026**.

The criteria for awarding the consultancy is based on 'best value for money'. For the purpose of all tenders ClientEarth defines best value for money in procurements as:

Value for money should not drive all procurement decisions to the cheapest option. Value for money is the right sized solution, delivered in a timely manner to move an initiative, or the organisation forward.

The best value for money will be assessed on the basis of the qualification, experience and skills criteria above, as well as the concept note.

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