

Terms of Reference: Consultant to support the Local Community Forest Concession (CFCL) development process in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (OWR) buffer zone, Walese-Dese Chiefdom

Overview.

The Wildlife Conservation Society is seeking a motivated, pro-active and engaging consultant to coordinate the delivery of activities that advance the role of Local Community Forest Concessions (CFCLs, *Concessions Forestières des Communautés Locales*) in sustainable land-use management in the buffer zone around Okapi Wildlife Reserve (OWR).

OWR is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, home to globally significant wildlife populations, such as those of okapi, elephants, and chimpanzees, and as a Reserve, it provides local communities and indigenous peoples with opportunities for sustainable natural resource use. The Reserve, however, is faced with threats relating to illicit natural resource exploitation, unsustainable economic development, and in-migration. There are also large tracts of still intact forest especially on the eastern border outside the OWR limits, with significant potential for CFCLs to play a key role in ensuring that communities sustainably benefit from forests in the OWR buffer zone while reducing threats to its biodiversity.

The consultant will be responsible for facilitating the participatory development, designation, and management of CFCLs through effective engagement with communities and Provincial authorities. This will involve building awareness of CFCLs, supporting communities to designate CFCLs while taking into account other land use priorities, ensuring equitable participation, participatory mapping, development of community forest management and business plans, and delivery of training.

Objectives: This consultancy aims to:

- Develop a concrete and detailed roadmap for the community forest concession development process in the Walese-Dese Chiefdom aligning with the national guidelines for community forest concession development process, and lessons learned from other protected areas.
- Identify key actors (Community Animators) in the community to support the community forest concession development process.
- Engage with communities to build awareness and provide technical support in relation to community forest concession development
- Implement Free Prior Informed Consent processes in relation to the development of community forest concessions
- Coordinate with the OWR Community Conservation team to ensure the establishment of a clear natural resources governance structure able to manage the to-be developed community forest concession.
- Ensure participation of indigenous people, women and youth in community forest concession creation and management
- Coordinate the delivery of support to communities in the participatory mapping of community forests and development of land-use zoning plans
- Liaise closely with Provincial government authorities to support CFCL approval processes, including working closely with the Governor's Office and responding to requests from authorities

Reporting and expected deliverables

Action	Deliverable	Timeline
Develop a detailed roadmap for CFCL development.	Roadmap to be validated by the OWR Site and Program management	15 days upon contracting
Work with WCS Social Safeguarding team to conduct the community engagement and follow-up on the follow-up on the FPIC process	Meeting PV and reports	7 days after the completion of the FPIC
Identify key community animators	Meeting PV and reports	10 days upon contracting

Develop a plan for participatory mapping and work with OWR Bio-monitoring + GIS to conduct CFCL mapping exercise	Meeting PV and reports	30 days upon contracting
Engage with local and provincial government authorities	Meeting PV and reports	Continuous

Required Expertise and Qualifications

- **Education:** Bachelor’s degree in Forest Governance, Sustainable Forest Management, Environmental Studies, Social sciences or a related field
- **Experience:**
 - At least 5-years professional experience in community forest management
 - Knowledge of DRC’s laws on Community Forestry and Indigenous Peoples
 - Proven ability at engaging and supporting rural communities in forest management in the DRC
 - Experience in the development of CFCLs in DRC (desirable)
 - Proven ability at building the capacity of rural communities in natural resource management
 - Proven ability at engaging and building relationships with Government representatives
 - Experience working with local communities, government agencies, and other conservation organizations.
- **Skills:**
 - Result-oriented.
 - Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement abilities.
 - Familiarity with sustainable wildlife management practices and policies.
 - Deep knowledge of CFCL development process, expected challenges and possible solutions.
- **Language:**
 - Fluency in French and Swahili, basic knowledge of English an asset.
 - Knowledge of local languages spoken in and around the reserve (Lese, Bila, Ndaka, Mbuti) an asset.

Terms and Conditions

- The work will be paid as per the following schedule: 40 % at the signature of the contract, 40% upon submission of the first version of the report, 20% upon submission of the final and approved version of the report.
- The estimated number of days for the work is **45 working days**, starting October 20.
- All expenses outside salary (travel, other expenses deemed necessary for the mission) will be purchased directly by WCS.
- Duration of the assignment is 60 days (including preparation, travel etc.).
- Working locations: Epulu, Okapi Wildlife Reserve and Walese Dese Chiefdom

Interested candidates should submit the following to drcprocurement@wcs.org **before 15 October 2024**.

- Resumé (CV) detailing experience with similar tasks
- A financial proposal (in USD)
- Any more information that might help appreciate the consultant's capacity to carry out the mission.

Evaluation criteria		Score
Statement of Capacity	Educational background, relevant experience, knowledge of the context	50%
Cost proposal	Suitability of the budget proposed	50%
Grand total		100%