



## Terms of reference

### Consultancy to coordinate a wildlife survey of Okapi Wildlife Reserve

#### ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is a US non-profit, tax-exempt, private organization established in 1895 that saves wildlife and wild places by understanding critical issues, crafting science-based solutions, and taking conservation actions that benefit nature and humanity. With more than a century of experience, long-term commitments in dozens of landscapes, presence in 46 countries, and experience helping to establish over 150 protected areas across the globe, WCS has amassed the biological knowledge, cultural understanding and partnerships to ensure that vibrant, wild places and wildlife thrive alongside local communities.

#### ABOUT OWR

Okapi Wildlife Reserve (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. WCS is currently working in partnership with the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) to implement a multi-pronged strategy to protect OWR that covers protected area governance and management systems, community conservation, security and law enforcement, buffer zone land-use management, and building external public support.

#### CONTEXT OF THE MISSION

Over the past 30 years, WCS has conducted regular surveys of wildlife in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (OWR) to monitor the status of key species, particularly mammals. These surveys have provided critical information that has informed the management of OWR, including a zoning plan as well as decision-making in relation to law enforcement and community conservation activity implementation. The last Reserve-wide survey of medium- to large- sized mammals in OWR was completed in 2017-18 and WCS now plans to conduct a new survey to produce updated species population estimates and assess trends. Historically, the methodological approach adopted used line transect distance sampling methods. We are now planning to integrate this with the more recently developed (2017) camera trap distance sampling (CTDS) method to provide more accurate estimates for some species (chimpanzees, elephants) and the first Reserve-wide estimates for a wider range of species (most of the ungulates, other terrestrial or semi-terrestrial species).

WCS is seeking a consultant with strong skills in the management of wildlife surveys in Central African tropical forests to work with OWR's existing Research and Monitoring team to deliver the 2024-25 Reserve-wide survey. The consultant will work under the supervision of the OWR Program Manager and will perform the duty of wildlife survey field coordinator for a period of nine months between October 2024 and June 2025. They will be responsible for working closely with the OWR Research and

Monitoring Lead, as well as wildlife survey field team leaders to ensure the design, development, implementation, analysis and reporting of the Reserve-wide survey. Off-site technical support to the survey will be provided by WCS's Global and Regional wildlife survey experts. The survey design has already been prepared by the Global and Regional experts in close collaboration with the OWR Research and Monitoring team. The consultancy will be delivered from Epulu, Ituri Province, and will involve field missions into remote tropical forest areas of OWR.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

WCS is seeking a consultant with a solid track record in the design and delivery of wildlife surveys in Central Africa's tropical forests. Experience in the use of distance sampling methods to estimate medium- to large- mammal abundance is an absolute requirement. The consultancy will be delivered between October 2024 and September 2025, and will involve working in close collaboration with OWR's Research and Monitoring Lead to undertake the following coordination responsibilities:

- Establishment of the field survey team (team leaders);
- Training /refresher course of the team leaders in both line transect and CTDS methods, likely in partnership with WCS Congo trainer(s);
- Logistics preparations for the survey, including equipment, food, etc.;
- Storage, maintenance, and provision of field survey equipment;
- Deployment of field survey teams into the field, ensuring robust implementation of the survey design and the methods, as well as adaptation and troubleshooting in response to issues that may arise;
- Accurate transfer and entry of data into the survey database, and creating both online and on-site backups of all data;
- Completion of data analysis (with oversight from regional and global WCS wildlife survey advisors);
- Write-up of survey technical report (with oversight from regional and global WCS wildlife survey advisors);

## KEY DELIVERABLES AND PROPOSED TIMELINE

The main objective of this consultancy is the delivery of a Reserve-wide wildlife survey of medium- to large- size mammals in the OWR in close collaboration with the WCS team. Specific deliverables include:

31 October 2024 – field survey team established and training underway.

15 November 2024 – wildlife survey designs and plans (already done) verified and finalized,, all necessary equipment acquired, process to purchase field rations underway.

1 December 2024 – any final adjustments to the survey design and additional training of survey team completed.

2 January 2025 – Line transects and camera trap deployment started

31 March 2025 – line transects and camera trap deployment completed.

30 June 2025 – camera trap data retrieved / arboreal primate survey completed.

31 August 2025 – data processing and entry completed (facilitated by outsourced specialists)

30 September 2025 – data analysis completed, and technical report prepared.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- PhD or MSc in conservation biology, ecological sciences, or similar subject.
- Demonstrated experience in the design and delivery of wildlife surveys in a Central African context.
- Knowledge and experience in the use of line transect and camera trap distance sampling methods.
- Experience coordinating large teams of field survey staff.
- Data management skills, including GIS and SMART.
- Experience in the production of scientific technical reports.
- Strong interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.
- Good cultural awareness and able to work effectively in multi-cultural environments.
- Willingness to live and work in a remote equatorial forest field site with basic amenities.
- Fluent in French and English. Swahili also an advantage as field staff all speak Swahili.

## 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 estimate number of days for the work is **270 working days**.
- All expenses outside salary (travel, other expenses deemed necessary for the mission) will be purchased directly by WCS.
- Duration of the assignment is 12 months.
- Working locations: Epulu, Okapi Wildlife Reserve

## Evaluation Process.

Applications will be evaluated by a selection committee composed of representatives of WCS DRC. The technical evaluation of the bids will be based on their compliance with the terms of reference and the following criteria: understanding and interpretation of the ToR, methodology, and the consultants' qualifications. Each compliant proposal will be assigned a technical score. Proposals that do not address critical aspects of the ToR, or do not achieve a minimum technical score, will be rejected at this stage. Tenders that are technically valid will be subject to a financial analysis to determine the best offer.

Evaluation Criteria		Scores
Technical Proposal	Quality of methodology proposed, Clarity on understanding of the assignment.	50%
Statement of Capacity	•PhD or MSc in conservation biology, ecological sciences, or similar subject. 10% Knowledge and experience in the use of line transect and camera trap distance sampling methods. 5%	30%

	<p>Experience coordinating large teams of field survey staff. 5%</p> <p>Data management skills, including GIS and SMART. 5%</p> <p>Experience in the production of scientific technical reports. 5%</p>	
Cost proposal	Suitability of the budget proposed	20%
Grand total		100%

#### CONTENT OF THE OFFER

Interested candidates should submit the following to [drcprocurement@wcs.org](mailto:drcprocurement@wcs.org) before **10 September 2024**.

- Resumé 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.

Please indicate "**OWR Wildlife Survey Consultancy**" in the subject line of your email.

## GENERAL CONDITIONS OF SUBMISSION

The following general conditions apply to all proposals submitted in response to any Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by WCS.

- **Non-Binding:**  
WCS's solicitation of proposals in response to any RFP does not commit WCS to award a contract, and this RFP is not an offer to enter into a contract for the services to be provided as described herein.
- **Proposal Materials and Costs:**  
WCS is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation, submission or negotiation of a response to its RFP or incurred for any other purpose or reason in connection with the RFP. No materials submitted with this RFP will be returned.
- **Confidentiality:**  
All information and material contained in any WCS RFP or issued by WCS or any of its agents as part of any WCS RFP process is confidential and is the exclusive property of WCS.
- **Modifications:**  
As a condition of award, WCS may request any proposer to make revisions, additions, or deletions to its proposal.
- **Subcontractors:**  
After award of contract, WCS will have no obligation, financial or otherwise, to any subcontractor of the awardee. Nevertheless, any subcontract will be required to be subject to and consistent with the prime contract between WCS and the awardee, and WCS may require any subcontract to include specific terms and conditions.
- **Reserved Rights:**  
WCS at any time in its sole discretion may, without notice and without liability to any candidate or any other party for their expenses incurred in the preparation of the responses hereto or otherwise, do any and all of the following:
  - Amend or withdraw this RFP;
  - Accept or reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP;
  - Award the contract to a proposer other than the candidate offering the lowest rate;
  - Request additional materials and clarification or modification of any submitted proposal;
  - Extend the time for submission of all proposals after notification to all prospective candidates;
  - Terminate negotiations with a selected candidate and select another candidate;
  - Take such action as WCS deems appropriate if negotiations fail to result in a signed agreement within a reasonable amount of time;
  - Terminate or modify the solicitation and selection process at any time and re-issue the solicitation to whomever WCS deems appropriate.

The selected candidate will be required to execute a written agreement with WCS, generally consistent with the terms set forth herein, effective upon the date the written agreement is executed by both WCS and the selected candidate.