

**Wildlife Conservation Society**

**Western Indian Ocean**

**TOR for Limited Term WCS position for**

**Blue Carbon Planning Across Kenya, Tanzania, and Madagascar**

**Background**

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and partners are tackling the issue of deteriorating marine environments in the Western Indian Ocean by working with coastal communities and MPAs on fisheries and marine management. The Western Indian Ocean is a socially and biologically diverse region that contains some of the world’s most extensive and most climate resilient coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrasses, which are critical sources of protein, coastal protection, and income to coastal populations. Yet, the integrity of the region’s ecosystems is threatened by the overexploitation of fisheries, habitat clearing, and pollution. These threats are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, coral bleaching, and storm events, as well as the insufficient levels of financing available to provide adequate protection and management.

WCS is currently evaluating the role that blue carbon ecosystem protection and finance can play in our conservation strategies at community scales and at larger (e.g. MPA) scales. This will contribute to our strategic development in three key WIO nations in which we operate: Kenya, Tanzania, and Madagascar, while sharing information and resources with our Mozambique team.

WCS is looking for a limited term staff member experienced in blue carbon ecosystems (and ideally with experience in carbon accreditation processes) to:

1. Develop a blue carbon strategy for three WIO nations (Kenya, Tanzania, and Madagascar), and support our field teams in engaging in this work,
2. Support Tanzania in launching blue carbon work in northern Tanzania and starting process of accreditation as a case study,
3. Support regional teams in ensuring linkages between blue carbon work with mangroves and seagrasses with coral reef and community conservation initiatives as part of an ecosystem-based approach, and
4. Provide scientific support and capacity building on social and ecological science to the region and ensure that programs can adequately evaluate indicators.

This position is to be full time for 1.5 years.

**Key Activities / Deliverables are (over 1.5 years of work):**

1. Criteria table for the three focal nations on site selection parameters for selecting areas for blue carbon conservation and finance projects
2. Map of what has been done previously in blue carbon ecosystem and finance fields in each of the 3 focal countries
3. Map areas of mangrove and seagrasses and assess trajectory of change over time
4. Estimate area that could be conserved under blue carbon conservation projects in each of the 3 focal nations (using criteria from deliverable 1) and estimate potential blue carbon sales in identified areas under small scale (e.g. Plan Vivo) and larger scale (e.g. VCS) approaches
5. Detail steps required to implementing small-scale (community level) blue carbon projects with approximate timelines
6. 1-day online training in blue carbon conservation and financing for WCS staff
7. Document any existing government frameworks or regulations around blue carbon sales and pathways in each of the 3 focal nations
8. For Tanzania only, develop a draft community blue carbon governance structure and benefit sharing approach based on lessons learned from projects regionally
9. Evaluate any potential partners or opportunities for financing blue carbon projects regionally
10. Develop a blue carbon roadmap in each of the three nations including the above products and capacity assessment of WCS teams to strengthen or build a blue carbon program considering staffing, skills, and funding; as well as appropriate tracking indicators for blue carbon program monitoring and evaluation of impacts.
11. Develop or revise community training modules in blue carbon ecosystems for communities in Tanzania
12. Coordinate with terrestrial carbon team in Tanzania to develop support framework for blue carbon projects in that nation.
13. Collaborate with WCS regional and global scientists to review coral reef monitoring protocols and determine needs for fish assessments in seagrass and mangrove areas and how we might use data to evaluate habitat connectivity and change as blue carbon projects are being implemented. Develop report and protocols.

**Terms**

The work will take place over a period of 1.5 years with start date in September 2022 (See proposed work plan in Table 1 below). The preferred work location for the candidate is in the WCS Mombasa, Kenya office, though there is a possibility to be based in our offices in either Tanzania or Madagascar. The work will require travel to sites in Kenya (3 weeks), Madagascar (4 weeks), and Tanzania (6-8 weeks), with travel covered under WCS travel policies.

**Required Qualifications:**

* Extensive field experience in mangrove and seagrass systems
* Masters degree of Ph.D. in marine science
* Ability to use GIS to analyze and develop spatial data layers on mangrove/seagrass coverage
* Experience developing marine monitoring protocols
* Experience in developing and leading trainings
* Experience working with small scale fishing communities and/or Marine Protected Area managers
* Willingness to travel to remote field sites
* Experience conducting networking nationally or regionally
* Demonstrated ability to work in a team and independently
* Excellent communication and organization skills
* Ability to work under tight timelines

**Desired Qualifications**

* Experience working on carbon credit and sales programs
* Data analysis and graphing in R, Python, or other programming languages
* Experience in the Western Indian Ocean or one of our three focal nation

**Expressions of interest**

To express interest in this opportunity, please submit applicants by emailing Dr. Jennifer O’Leary with the following (joleary@wcs.org)

* A letter expressing interest and summarizing relevant experience from past projects
* Up-to-date CV with three references included

Questions about the position can be directed to Jennifer O’Leary (joleary@wcs.org)

**Applications must be received by August 20, 2022**