



TERMS OF REFERENCE

A CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT ECOTOURISM STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIONAL FORESTRY AUTHORITY

1. Introduction

The National Forestry Authority (NFA) is seeking the services of a consultant to develop ecotourism guidelines and to train NFA staff on how to implement them in order to improve ecotourism management and related activities in Central Forest Reserves (CFRs).

NFA uses ecotourism as a strategy to help protect and conserve the Central Forest Reserves. Many of the CFRs are rich in biodiversity that needs protection and careful management to prevent its loss, misuse, degradation and the disrespect of nature.

NFA is a semi-autonomous government organization established under the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act (2003) to sustainably manage Central Forest Reserves in Uganda.

The Constitution of Uganda under article 237 (2) provides for the sound management of forest resources in Uganda and vests ownership of forest reserves in the Government.

Forest-based tourism is one of the activities that NFA views as a key contributor to its revenue generation as well as for helping to build and enhance partnerships with the private sector, non-government organisations and local communities.

2. Overall purpose and objectives

The overall purpose of the project is to improve the quality and sustainability of eco-tourism activities managed by NFA across Central Forest Reserves in Uganda by:

- Objective 1: Reviewing the approach and standards underpinning NFA's management of ecotourism activities in Central Forest Reserves.
- Objective 2: Creating guidelines for developing and managing eco-tourism in Central Forest Reserves that underpin NFAs ecotourism approach and standards.
- Objective 3: Developing a straight-forward quality assurance and monitoring framework for ensuring that the ecotourism principles, standards and supporting guidelines are implemented as designed.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will provide NFA with a straight-forward and effective framework and means for implementing environmentally sustainable and quality assured ecotourism activities in Central Forest Reserves. The consultant will be expected to work closely with NFA staff and to carry out consultations with NFA's tourism and other forest conservation stakeholders. The key components of the scope of work are:

1. Review and set out the approach and standards for underpinning NFA's ecotourism activities across Central Forest Reserves, referring closely to the draft NFA Tourism Strategy (2020) and taking into consideration the current general situation in terms of institutional, environmental and social/cultural opportunities, issues and challenges across the central forest reserves.

2. Develop guidelines to ensure that existing tourism activities do not adversely impact the biodiversity of Central Forest Reserves and that visitors are appropriately managed, offered quality services and afforded an appropriate duty of care.
3. Develop guidelines to ensure that future development and diversification of tourism activities in Central Forest Reserves is based on best environmental and aesthetic practices, and aligned with relevant policies, laws and regulations.
4. Develop guidelines, and/or make recommendations to NFA, for ensuring appropriate and sustainable levels of livelihood and other benefits are provided from tourism to communities living adjacent to CFRs in which tourism activities are being carried out.
5. Provide a straight-forward design/framework for an ongoing programme of quality assurance and monitoring for eco-tourism management that ensures NFA's ecotourism principles and standards are upheld through the effective implementation of the ecotourism guidelines and ensuring that they remain fit for purpose.
6. Provide inputs and improvements to NFA's draft Ecotourism Strategic Development Plan

4. Outputs

The consultant will provide the following outputs:

1. An inception report that sets out the key theory and practice considerations in delivering the scope of work, together with a methodology including areas of emphasis, list of stakeholders to be consulted, work plan and planned set of outputs.
2. An agreed set of documents (outputs) that comprise the following:
 - a. A set of principles and standards for underpinning NFA's tourism activities in Central Forest Reserves, including a quality assurance and monitoring framework.
 - b. Straightforward, clear and appropriately structured guidelines that are easy to implement and monitor for NFA staff, private sector partners and visitors on how daily ecotourism activities should be carried out in Central Forest Reserves.
 - c. Straight-forward, step-by-step, and appropriately structured guidelines for NFA Staff and private sector partners on how new ecotourism development projects are to be planned, developed and implemented in Central Forest Reserves.
3. A commentary on NFA's draft Ecotourism Strategic Development Plan.
4. A work plan and schedule for staff capacity building and training of trainers (management) that underpins the successful and sustainable implementation of NFA's ecotourism activities in Central Forest Reserves.

5. Implementation and timeline

It is expected that the consultancy will be undertaken by a single consultant unless there is a clear and compelling justification for additional team members. It is recommended that the consultant commit to deliver the outputs in no more than 40 days of work, as follows:

1. Inception – 10 working days.
2. Guideline development and finalization – 30 working days.
3. Inputs and improvements to NFA's Strategy – 5 working days.

6. Qualifications and experience

The consultant will be expected to have the following qualifications and experience:

- A post-graduate degree in tourism or an equivalent and directly relevant discipline.
- A proven track record as a practitioner and provider of advisory services with at least ten years' experience in conservation, tourism and development which includes:
 - Two or more assignments on the development of ecotourism standards and/or guidelines for an organisation managing ecotourism.
 - Demonstrable experience in promoting the meaningful involvement of local communities in tourism.
 - Thought leadership and/or intellectual products on best practices in ecotourism development.
- A reasonable understanding of natural resource management and forest conservation in Uganda, and equally of the environment in which public institutions in Uganda operate.
- Excellent interpersonal, listening and communication skills, as well as analytical and report writing skills.
- Demonstration of having reliably carried out consulting assignments in a timely manner and to a high standard.

7. Applications

Please note that **previous applicants need not re-apply.**

Expressions of interest (EoI) should be sent via email to UGprocurement@awf.org by **Tuesday, 27th September 2022** and contain the following:

1. A headed cover letter with the full particulars of the applicant's organization signed by an office holder of the organization with the authority to sign and submit the EoI.
2. A technical submission of no more than 5 pages responding to these Terms of Reference excluding table of contents, annexes etc.
3. The summary details of the proposed team (which should be kept as small / lean as possible) set out in a half page with a short explanation of why the people comprising the team have been chosen.
4. The résumés of the team – comprising of no more than 3 pages per résumé.
5. The names and contacts of three people able to provide references, two of which must be past clients who should be able to comment on tourism related work previously carried out by the applicant for them.
6. A two-page financial note setting out a sufficiently detailed and cost-effective budget to include all anticipated costs.

It is important that applicants follow the above instructions closely – failure to do so may disqualify the applicant's EoI regardless of its merits. Official supporting documentation (e.g., company and tax registration certificates, academic certificates, professional certificates etc.) should not be submitted.