TERMS OF REFERENCE

Continental Review of Existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Document Lessons, Best Practices and Formulate Guidelines for their Sustainable Implementation and Governance in Conservation of Aquatic Biodiversity Resources within the African Union Member States (AU MS) and Regional Levels (West, Central and Northern regions of Africa)

Background

The Africa Blue Economy Strategy was endorsed at the highest political level of the continent. The Strategy incorporates key critical vectors for promoting blue economy development in the continent, including fisheries, aquaculture and ecosystem conservation; shipping, maritime safety and trade; climate change, environmental sustainability and ecotourism; sustainable energy and extractive mineral resources; governance, institutions, gender and job creation.

The objective of the Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that becomes a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth, through advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, marine ecosystem utilization, management and conservation and carbon sequestration, the growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, the development of sea, river and lake transport, the management of fishing activities on these aquatic spaces, and the exploitation and beneficiation of deep sea mineral and other marine resources.

The Africa Blue Economy Strategy is consolidated based on the following five thematic technical clusters:
1. Fisheries, aquaculture, conservation and sustainable aquatic ecosystems;
2. Shipping/transportation, trade, ports, maritime security, safety and enforcement;
3. Coastal and maritime tourism, climate change, resilience, marine ecosystem, environment, infrastructure;
4. Sustainable energy and mineral resources and innovative industries; and,
5. Policies, institutional and governance, employment, job creation and poverty eradication, innovative financing.

The African continent is adjacent to some of the highly productive marine ecosystems that include the seven African Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) viz., Agulhas Current LME, Beguile Current LME, Guinea Current LME, Canary current LME, Mediterranean Sea LME, Red Sea LME and Somali Current LME. These African marine ecosystems inhabit living and non-living resources; however, the unsustainable exploitation of these resources is threatening the biodiversity, resources and environmental sustainability. Several factors are threatening aquatic biodiversity in Africa marine ecosystems. These include overexploitation of living species, pollutions from several sources (land-based municipal and agricultural activities), dumping of toxic wastes, mining

activities, gas exploration, tourism development etc. Consequently, important aquatic resources are becoming increasingly susceptible to both natural and artificial environmental changes. Thus, conservation strategies to protect and conserve aquatic life are necessary to maintain the balance of nature and support the availability of resources for future generations.

Therefore, AU-IBAR, with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is implementing a 3-year project on "Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy' whose overall objective is to enhance the policy environment, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of AU member states and regional economic communities to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems. The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

1. Ratify and/or align relevant international/regional instruments related to blue economy themes (with specific reference to protecting and conserving biodiversity);
2. Optimizing conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while minimizing conflicts among blue economy sub-themes;
3. Strengthening measures for mitigating the negative impacts of coastal and marine tourism, oil, gas, deep sea mining and climate change on aquatic biodiversity and environment; and,
4. Strengthening gender inclusivity in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.

Rationale

Marine Protected Areas are effective tools for conservation and protection of vulnerable living resources in aquatic ecosystems. There are few known established MPAs in Africa's (e.g., South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania) aquatic ecosystems as these are a technical challenge on concept, establishment and governance of MPAs. They have been set up to protect vulnerable life-history stages of living aquatic species and ecosystems, to conserve aquatic biodiversity and minimize extinction risk, to re-establish or restore ecosystem integrity, depleted species and to enhance the productivity of fish and other living aquatic populations. They have also proved useful in terms of providing a public focus for marine conservation. Increasingly, they have been adapted to protect wide-ranging marine populations. Adaptations to the more highly mobile marine mammals among other migratory species include the use of larger protected areas, networks, and flexible zoning. Coral reefs and areas with endemic biodiversity are normally given priority when planning for MPAs.

On the high seas, in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), marine mammal data are sometimes used to define ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) as selected by the Convention on Biological Diversity. The conservation tool of important marine mammal areas (IMMAs) will aid the identification of marine mammal habitats for ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) marine key

biodiversity areas and assist with the design and evaluation of MPAs and MPA networks. IMMAs will also help in the monitoring of areas with high threat probabilities (e.g., shipping routes where ship strikes occur) which may then be addressed with MPAs, International Maritime Organization directives, or other conservation tools.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are therefore essential to conserve the biodiversity of the oceans and to maintain productivity, especially of fish stocks. At present there are too few MPAs and not many of them are effectively managed. It's therefore important to set out the various steps AU member states should take to manage existing and/or establish effective network of MPAs. IUCN has defined an MPA as "any area of intertidal or subtidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, historical and cultural features, which has been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment".

The need for effective governance of the marine protected areas (MPAs) in African countries is underscored by the significant territorial stakes raised by their extensive maritime domain. It is therefore necessary to develop an analytical framework to study the governance of MPAs. The study would commence with desk studies and limited field missions to assess the status and take inventory of existing MPAs (national or transboundary) in Africa, document lessons on their establishment, best practices and formulate guidelines for their sustainable implementation and governance. The assessment would be followed by stakeholder's consultation to validate framework for sustainable implementation of MPAs and make recommendations.

With respect to the above and considering that some coastal AU member states have either established MPAs and some are in the process of developing them, a myriad of challenges in the management of these MPAs have been the order of the day. AU-IBAR, with support from Swedish Development Agency (SIDA), seeks to undertake studies to formulate MPA guidelines, develop mechanism or priority areas for strengthening the sustainable implementation and governance of identified MPAs for conservation of aquatic biodiversity resources within the African Union member states and regional levels by seeking consultancy services from 2 suitable short-term consultants to undertake this assignment.

Objective

The overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct a continental review of existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), document lessons, best practices and formulate guidelines, mechanisms and priority actions for strengthening their sustainable implementation and governance for conservation of aquatic biodiversity resources within the African Union member states and at regional levels in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa

Scope

1. Review the institutional and governance arrangement or framework of all stakeholders involved in the management of existing Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa.
2. Formulate harmonized guidelines/approaches for sustainable implementation and governance of MPAs for conservation of aquatic biodiversity resources in AU MS and regional levels in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa.
3. Document lessons learnt and best practices, then make recommendations on further activities/best practices that need to be undertaken and mechanisms for implementation of same.
4. Develop mechanisms and priority actions for support to strengthening identified MPAs

Detailed Tasks

1. Liaise with the relevant persons at AU-IBAR for adequate briefing and clarification of tasks;
2. Prepare inception report within 5 days of signature to the contract outlining the methodology and approach for undertaking the assignment, detailed work plan, timelines with deliverables and comments on the Terms of Reference if any (in brief);
3. Review all the existing MPAs in AU-MS and at regional levels in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa and classify them according to IUCN categories for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs);
4. Review and documents the mechanisms or approaches involved in their establishments, challenges, lessons and best practices
5. Review the institutional framework and governance arrangement for the management of the identified MPAs within AU member states and regional levels;
6. Document lessons learnt and best practices in the governance of MPAs within AU-MS and transboundary MPAs; in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa.
7. Identify MPAs with endemic biodiversity (give their brief descriptions) hotspots
8. Document the range of goods and services within the existing select MPAs in AU-MS and regional levels
9. Identify gaps or weaknesses (SWOT analysis) including institutional capacity for the management of MPAs that need to be addressed;
10. Formulate MPA guidelines for sustainable implementation and governance (harmonized approach) for conservation of aquatic biodiversity resources within the African Union member states;
11. Develop guidelines and priority actions for support by the project for strengthening the establishment, implementation and governance of identified MPAs
12. Suggest additional activities/best practices that need to be undertaken in the management of MPAs

13. Develop comprehensive report at the end of assignment.

Deliverables

1. Inception report: A draft version detailing the methodology and approach used to undertake the consultancy within 5 days of signing the contract. The draft report should demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment by the consultant.
2. Synthesis of institutional framework and governance management systems, arrangement of identified MPAs within AU member states and at regional levels (for transboundary MPAs);
3. Report on review and classification of the existing MPAs in AU-MS and regional levels according to IUCN categories for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
4. Report on MPAs with endemic biodiversity hotspots with brief descriptions;
5. Document Lessons learnt and best practices in the management of identified MPAs within AU-MS and transboundary MPAs;
6. Detailed note on a range of goods and services within the existing select MPAs in AU-MS and regional levels
7. Gaps or weaknesses (SWOT analysis) including institutional capacity for the management of MPAs that need to be addressed;
8. Develop guidelines on mechanisms and priority actions for intervention by the project to support strengthening of implementation and effective governance of identified MPAs for the conservation of aquatic biodiversity in AU member states and at regional levels for transboundary MPAs.
9. Note on additional activities/best practices that need to be undertaken in the management of MPAs with the AU-MS and at regional levels for transboundary MPAs.
10. Approved comprehensive final report on the consultancy in English detailing all work undertaken with recommendations.

Requirements

Qualifications

The successful candidate should have an advanced degree in disciplines related to MPA Planning and Management, Marine ecology and aquatic conservation biology, Marine Environmental Protection, Aquatic Environmental Sciences or Fisheries sciences. A PhD degree will be an added advantage.

Experience

General Experience

1. Familiarization with national institutions with mandates in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.
2. Familiarization with functions of regional economic communities and specialized regional institutions with mandates in fisheries, aquaculture, aquatic biodiversity and environmental protection.
3. Knowledge of AU and global instruments related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.
4. Experience of governance issues in Africa large marine ecosystems and freshwater ecosystems, management systems, transboundary issues, challenges and opportunities.
5. Record of experience working with multiple stakeholders across a wide range of disciplines in ocean governance and in facilitating stakeholders' consultative workshops

Specific Experience

1. At least 7 years working experience in research and development related institutions and of conducting research, assessment towards conservation of aquatic ecosystems.
2. Demonstrated evidence of performing similar tasks related to this consultancy in the last 5 years.
3. Record of experience on implementation and governance issues in Marine Protected Areas (MPA).
4. Record of experience in enhancing institutional capacity on governance and implementation of MPAs for conservation of aquatic ecosystems and environments.
5. Evidence of formulating policies, strategies for restoration of degraded ecosystems to enhance aquatic biodiversity conservation in Africa.

Other Essential Skills and Experience

1. Diplomacy and good interactive skills necessary for dealing with senior officials in Government, RECs, other regional organizations, and donor/development organizations in Africa; Good networking skills and ability to maintain positive and constructive
2. Very strong writing, analytical and communication skills are necessary.
3. Proficiency in at least 2 AU languages

Evaluation & Award Criteria

The applications will be evaluated on the basis of the relevant technical qualifications, experience and competence of the candidates.

Applications received will be reviewed on the basis of the criteria below:

Criteria for Scores

Criteria	Scores (%)
Qualifications	15
General Experience	25
Specific Experience	50
Other skills	5
Proficiency in at least 2 AU languages	5

Gender Mainstreaming

The AU Commission is an equal opportunity employer and qualified women are strongly encouraged to apply.

Duty Station

This consultancy will be home-based with travel on specific assignments agreed with the AU–IBAR Management.

Duration

The duration of this assignment is 45 calendar days but can be accomplished within 60 days from the date of signature of the contract.

Remuneration

The professional fee for the consultancy is USD 13,500. No other payment will be made in respect of this consultancy. Expenses for missions will be covered separately in accordance with the applicable African Union Commission rules and regulations.

Supervision and Reporting

The candidate will be under the direct supervision of the project team leader with oversight supervision by the Director of AU-IBAR. The team leader will have the responsibility of approval of reports

Study Areas and Application Procedures

The successful consultant is to conduct this assignment in the West, Central and Northern Regions of Africa.

Applications must include the following documents:
i.   Detailed curriculum vitae (CV)

ii.   Copies of academic and professional certification documents

iii.   Declaration on exclusion criteria (see format attached)'

iv.   Identification documents

Application Deadline

The closing deadline is **on or before 1700hrs; Friday, 22nd July 2022, Nairobi local time.**
The address for submission of applications is: procurement-20220713-1@au-ibar.org with a
copy to alexander.eyong@au-ibar.org