

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RECRUITMENT OF EXPERTS TO CONDUCT EVALUATIONS FOR SELECTION OF AU CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE – AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY

Background:

The African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), a specialized technical office of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Economy, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) of the African Union Commission (AUC), is mandated to support and coordinate the utilization of livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and wildlife as resources for both human wellbeing and economic development in the Member States of the African Union. The Vision of the AU-IBAR Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is an Africa in which animal resources contribute significantly to integration, prosperity and peace. AU-IBAR intervention in the fisheries and aquaculture sector is guided by the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) which is aimed at improving governance of the sector for increased sustainable contribution to food security, livelihoods and wealth creation. Also, within the framework of the African Union Agenda 2063, the Africa Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) envisioned an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that significantly contributes to Africa's transformation and growth. The PFRS identified the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic resources as a key policy area for strategic interventions and actions, while, the ABES is consolidated based on the following five detailed thematic areas:

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, 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 surrounded by highly productive marine ecosystems. The continent is also endowed with networks of rivers and lakes. The seas, oceans, lakes and rivers inhabit significant number of biodiversity and the ecosystems provide sources of livelihoods, food security and wealth. These African aquatic ecosystems are sources of both living and non-living resources on which people depend for their livelihoods. However, the unsustainable exploitation of these resources is threatening biodiversity, marine and freshwater resources and environmental sustainability.

A key constraint to fully harnessing the potential contribution of these aquatic resources endowment for Africa socio-economic development is weak human resources and institutional capacity in the governance of these aquatic ecosystems. Thus, notwithstanding the current benefits and opportunities, the aquatic ecosystems management is still beset by challenges that require major governance and policy reforms, underscored by enhanced capacity, in order to unlock and unleash the full potential of the sector.

Thus, mindful of these challenges and aware of the huge potential of the sector for socio-economic advancement of the continent, the Joint Conference of African Ministers for Agriculture, Rural Development, Fisheries and Aquaculture in May 2014, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), requested African Union

‘to establish African Centres of Excellence for Aquaculture, capture fisheries, biodiversity studies and oceanography to enhance capacity for fisheries and aquaculture research.’ This recommendation was also endorsed by the Executive Decision Doc. EX.CL/842(XXV) of the African Union in 2014.

The above recommendation was also reinforced by the Hon. Ministers at the 2019 meeting of Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (STC-ARDWE) to further identify related disciplines for which institutions will be selected as African Union Centres of Excellence.

Therefore, AU-IBAR, with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is implementing a project on “*Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy*”, under which a call for Expression of Interest to become African Union Centres of Excellence in the following disciplines was launched:

- I. Aquatic ecology and biodiversity conservation; and,*
- II. Management of Aquatic ecosystems.*

Objectives of the consultancy:

In response to the above-mentioned call for Expression of Interest, institutions have submitted applications. The objective of this consultancy is therefore to recruit two (2) suitably qualified experts to conduct an evaluation of the submitted applications based on agreed criteria for qualification as African Union Centre of Excellence in the two indicated disciplines.

The evaluation of applications will be a desk review with virtual meetings organized as necessary.

Based on this evaluation, AU-IBAR in consultation and with participation of the experts, will undertake verification missions to the agreed institutions.

The specific Tasks:

Under the direct supervision of the technical leader of this assignment and with oversight supervision by the project management at AU-IBAR, the successful candidates would perform the following tasks:

1. Inception meeting with relevant personal at AU-IBAR
2. In line with agreed criteria, evaluate the applications (dossiers) that have been submitted by the applicants (institutions).
3. Assign scores against each criterion for evaluation
4. Based on the evaluation, identify the appropriate discipline(s) relating to aquatic ecosystems management and aquatic biodiversity conservation for which the institution would be selected as an African Union Centre of Excellence
5. Where necessary, participate in virtual and/or physical meeting, relating to this consultancy
6. Prepare a comprehensive report of the evaluation exercise and make relevant recommendations
7. Conduct verification missions to short-listed institutions to ascertain the veracity of the contents of their submitted dossiers and prepare a substantive report therefrom.

Duration

This consultancy shall be undertaken in two phases:

1. Desk review and evaluation of applications: this is expected to take no more than 4 working days per expert
2. Verification exercise: the duration of this phase will be agreed with AU-IBAR based on the outcomes of the desk review phase.

Supervision and approval of report

The expert will work under the coordination of the Project leader (AU-IBAR) and the mission team leader, with overall supervision by the Director, AU-IBAR, who will also have the responsibility of final approval of report.

Payment

The remuneration package for each successful candidate will be as follows:

Phase 1: Desk review of applications, at US\$ 300/day for 4 days (a total of US\$1200) to be paid after approval of report.

Phase 2: Verification exercise, at US\$ 300/day for a duration to be agreed with AU-IBAR in writing.

In addition, the costs of any **approved field verification mission** related to this consultancy will be paid for by AU-IBAR (travel, daily subsistence allowance).

REQUIREMENTS

Qualification

The successful candidate should have a minimum of Master's degree in fields relating to Conservation of aquatic biodiversity, Ecosystem Ecology, fisheries, aquaculture, oceanography or aquatic environmental studies. A PhD will be an added advantage.

General Experience:

The following experiences are required:

1. Over 5 years' teaching and research working experiences in natural resources sector in Africa
2. Familiarization with functions of national and regional institutions with mandates in aquatic biodiversity and environmental management.
3. Knowledge of Sustainable Development Goals and African Union development framework
4. Experience in monitoring and evaluation of natural resources systems

Specific experience:

1. At least 5 years teaching or research experience in research-based or tertiary level academic institutions
2. Proven experience in conducting similar assessment for selection of institutions as Centres of excellence
3. Knowledge of educational systems and curricula in fields relating to conservation of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems management in Africa
4. Ability to work in or supporting implementation of donor funded projects for accomplishment of stated goals in fields relating to aquatic biodiversity, fisheries, aquaculture and environment.

Other relevant skills

1. Record of scientific publications in fields relating to fisheries and aquaculture
2. Fluency in English and French languages
3. Evidence of computer skills a

Evaluation

The evaluation will be conducted virtually. The submitted dossiers will be forwarded to the successful candidates for evaluation.

| Criteria | Marks |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Qualification Master's degree | 15 |
| PhD degree (Additional 5) | 5 |
| General experiences | 20 |
| Specific experiences | 45 |
| Language (one language 5; two for 10) | 10 |
| Other skills | 5 |

Applications:

Interested parties are requested to submit the following documents as part of their application:

- i. Detailed curriculum vitae with references of similar tasks undertaken in the past
- ii. Signed declaration on exclusion criteria (format attached)
- iii. Copy of identification documents

Applications should be submitted to procurement@au-ibar.org on or before 30th December 2022