



Terms of reference for undertaking restoration activities in a degraded forest patch in Bugoma Central Forest Reserve, located in Kikuube District

Background

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Chimpanzee Sanctuary and Wildlife Trust, also known as Chimpanzee Trust (CT), are implementing a two-year project titled **“Recovery of Eastern chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) by de-risking their suitable habitats in the Albertine rift of Uganda”** with funding support from the **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**. The project started in June 2022 and aims to reduce the loss and degradation of suitable habitats for chimpanzee conservation in Uganda’s portion of the Albertine Rift, mainly targeting selected Central Forest Reserves and the neighbouring communities.

One of the project activities is to support forest recovery activities such as planting tree species preferred by chimpanzees and removing tree stranglers and invasive species in chimpanzee habitats—Central Forest Reserves. To this end, WCS and CT have planned to use project funds to support NFA in restoring at least eighty (80) hectares in Bugoma CFR in Kikuube district using experienced forest restoration contractors through active planting of native tree species, including those that are ideal for chimpanzee foraging and nesting. This will include identifying and mapping targeted sites, diagnostic assessment to ensure the proper species-site matching and active planting and management of the restored site for an entire year.

In line with the above, NFA, CT, and WCS invite bids from suitable and experienced companies to undertake forest restoration activities in Bugoma CFR.

1. Objectives of the assignment

The assignment’s main objective is to restore earmarked degraded forest patches within Bugoma Central Forest Reserve, measuring eighty (80) hectares. The specific objectives include:

- a) To develop restoration management plans for the identified degraded forest patch(es).
- b) To plant the sites with indigenous tree seedlings based on assessing the previous tree species composition, including those suitable for chimpanzee foraging and nesting.

- c) To professionally maintain the planted sites to achieve the desired restoration outcome.

2. Roles and responsibilities of the contractor

The specific roles and responsibilities of the successful contractor will be to:

A. Conduct stakeholder and community engagement

The success of this assignment is expected to be highly dependent on stakeholder and community participation and engagement. Before and during restoration and maintenance activities, the selected contractors are expected to collaborate closely with NFA and WCS to identify the relevant stakeholders and plan and conduct stakeholder engagement initiatives, such as meetings. The stakeholder and community engagement goal is for the various stakeholders to understand the assignment's goals/objectives and support the successful implementation of the forest restoration project.

B. Map, delineate and assess the sites to be restored

Within the Bugoma CFR, NFA has already designated locations for restoration areas for WCS support. The selected contractor shall map and define the specific restoration sites measuring the target hectares—eighty (80) hectares. The delineated sites shall be marked with proper features. Although WCS and NFA have already conducted a diagnostic study that determined the historical tree species composition that would be suited for the site, it is anticipated that the selected contractor will also conduct a rapid assessment and compare notes.

C. Develop management plans for areas to be restored

The contractor will lead in developing a costed restoration management plan for the restoration sites assigned to them in collaboration with NFA, WCS, CT, district local governments, communities, and other stakeholders as will be determined. The plans shall also include comprehensive plans for undertaking the maintenance works for each site and will be beyond the selected contractor's contractual period to enable NFA to carry forward after the assignment. It is envisaged that NFA and WCS shall approve the plans.

D. Conduct restoration planting in accordance with standard silvicultural protocols, and NFA guidelines for Natural Forest restoration—2019 (to be shared once selected)

Some of the recommended restoration practices include:

- i. Slash a strip of one-meter-wide from the external boundary.
- ii. In areas where the external boundary of the site is contiguous with the forest boundary, the selected contractor will plant boundary markers in a 5-meter strip using species that will be agreed upon with NFA.
- iii. Marking the spots where indigenous tree species will be planted, preferably at 5mx5m intervals, but this may be altered depending on other factors, such as the presence of remnant trees that must be maintained.
- iv. Pitting: A pit of one foot deep and one foot wide while separating the topsoil from sub-soil

- v. Post-plant spot weeding around the pit to ensure that a radius of 1 (one) meter is established near the spot where the seedling is planted.
- vi. Gap filling before the first post plant spot weeding operation to ensure appropriate stocking.
- vii. Ensure periodic data collection on tree survival and growth patterns.
- viii. Identifying seedlings sources in partnership with WCS and NFA and transporting the seedlings to field sites.
- ix. Based on the preliminary assessment from baseline assessments, the selected contractor will procure appropriate seedlings from designated nurseries to be recommended by WCS and NFA. The WCS and NFA will inspect and approve the seedlings before loading to designated locations for quality control and assurance purposes.
- x. Moving seedlings from where the vehicle can reach the planting sites.
- xi. Planting the seedlings after removing the polythene bags by first replacing the topsoil and subsoil last and firming the soils appropriately.
- xii. The seedling/s should be planted in the upright position.
- xiii. Planting according to seasonal suitability. If necessary, hydrogels can be used to ensure a high survival rate for seedlings.
- xiv. The payment for services (local labour, etc.) and the management of planting operations.
- xv. Work with WCS, CT, and NFA to sensitize the adjacent communities to highlight the restoration benefits.
- xvi. Undertake community surveys to assess the attitudes of local communities during project implementation to make appropriate adjustments for post-planting maintenance activities.

E. Ensure observance of environmental protection measures

Some of the measures will include:

- i. Ensure all existing native trees and bushes on site are protected from harm during the operations.
- ii. The polythene bags from seedlings and any non-biodegradable waste will be removed from the site on completion of the work and should be collected and disposed of properly without compromising the environment's cleanliness.

F. Ensure observance of occupational Health and Safety (H&S) measures

Some of the tasks for observance of H&S will include:

- i. The selected contractor will conduct an H&S risk assessment of the work before engaging in activities.
- ii. H&S risks will be documented with appropriate mitigation measures noted.
- iii. Employees and workers will receive a safety briefing starting each workday to highlight risks and appropriate mitigation measures.

G. Undertake maintenance of the trees planted and protection of existing native trees in accordance with standard protocols and NFA guidelines for Natural Forest Restoration—2019 (to be shared with the selected contractor)

The selected contractor will be required to maintain the planted trees for an entire year. The maintenance phase will entail activities such as:

- i. Updating the restoration management plans to include any emerging issues that may be identified.
- ii. Sustaining a stakeholder engagement strategy in collaboration with NFA, mainly through meetings with adjacent communities, districts and local authorities, and other relevant stakeholders.
- iii. Survival assessment in the same plot used for assessments during the planting phase or any other survival assessment and sampling approaches.
- iv. Beating up to replace seedlings that could have died.
- v. Weed seedlings established to ensure successful growth.
- vi. Protecting the restoration sites against **fires and animals**.
- vii. Appropriately manage stranglers which could hinder the successful establishment of newly planted trees and regenerating seedlings.

3. Expected Deliverables

Provide reports in formats that will be provided at intervals that will be specified.

- 4** Interested bidders should address bids to:
The Chairperson Procurement Committee,
WCS, P.O Box 7487, Kampala.

Tender documents, written in English, should be submitted by email ONLY to mnyago@wcs.org with copies to gngendo@wcs.org no later than **5 pm on Friday, April 28th, 2023**. The subject line should be: **“Expression of Interest to Carry Out Restoration Activities in Bugoma CFR.”**

