



Request for Proposals

**Evaluation of the previous management plan and development of a new plan for
Nkuringo Buffer Zone in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda**

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June 2021

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1.0 Introduction

The International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP) is a coalition of three international conservation organizations (Conservation International, Fauna & Flora International and WWF) which was formed with the mission to secure the future for mountain gorillas. The programme operates in the three countries that share the habitat of the mountain gorillas i.e. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Uganda, and works in close partnership with the Protected Area Authorities of the three countries namely: Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda Development Board (RDB) in Rwanda, and Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in Uganda. IGCP also works closely with the regional intergovernmental framework for transboundary collaboration under the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC).

To achieve its mission, IGCP developed the strategic plan 2018 – 2024 with five strategic objectives to guide its conservation work. Specific objectives related to this work are as follows:

- Strategic objective 2 - By 2024, men and women in park adjacent communities perceive that the positives from mountain gorilla conservation are equitably distributed and outweigh the negatives.
- Strategic objective 4 - By 2024, habitat and buffer zone safeguarding processes contribute to healthy mountain gorilla populations while protecting community rights.

Despite the various gorilla conservation efforts that resulted into the numbers of the Mt. Gorillas slowly increasing and changing their status from being critically endangered to endangered, mountain gorillas are still exposed to direct threats by non-targeted wildmeat hunting, disease, infrastructure development as well as the ongoing conflict and civil unrest in the larger region, impacting both people and wildlife. Increasingly, climate change is also showing negative indirect impacts that need to be addressed through conservation planning. In addition to being highly biodiverse, the region in general is endowed with rich mineral and forest resources, fertile and volcanic agricultural soils. The human population densities are among the highest in Africa at more than 600 people per km² in the areas adjacent to mountain gorilla habitat. Pressure on the land and other natural resources is therefore significant.

Tourism and other activities related to conservation of charismatic species, such as mountain gorillas, can boost local socio-economic development, when operations are sustainably managed and conservation-related costs to local communities are reduced.

Capitalizing on the tourism potential but mitigating the subsequent human-wildlife conflict, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) purchased the strip of land (12 kms by 350 m) with support from the and the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP), an area favored by gorillas in 2003 to turn it into a buffer zone. Buffer zone management activities

are developed through a multi-stakeholder participatory approach and jointly managed by UWA and NCCDF with the Joint Management Board (JMB) at the helm of its governance. The major purpose of the buffer zone is to safeguard the integrity of BINP from external impacts, and to maintain various ecosystem services, such as soil erosion control and fresh water supply as well as reducing conservation-related costs sustained by neighboring communities by mitigating conflicts between people and animals, and by generating additional employment and livelihood options, mainly through tea growing.

Development of the first management plan for the Nkuringo buffer zone delayed the establishment of the zone and was only launched in 2007. Evaluation of the first plan (2007-2012) as part of the process to develop the second plan (2015-2019) found poor planning and low prioritization of actions as the biggest factors hindering effective implementation. The planned evaluation of the latest, now expired plan must be undertaken to inform the development of the new management plan 2021 – 2026.

It is in this respect that IGCP received a small – scale funding agreement (SSFA) to implement the Vanishing Treasures, a global project funded by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg through United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP).

SSFA will support the implementation of the "Vanishing Treasures - climate resilient mountain ecosystems for resilient livelihoods and mountain flagship species" project. Project activities aim to improve the climate change adaptation capacity of mountain ecosystems and communities through nature-based solutions and thereby protect biodiversity and safeguard community livelihoods. The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) is managing the mountain gorilla component of the Vanishing Treasures project focusing on the Virunga mountains in Rwanda and Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda. This SSFA funding will support pilot activities for improved management of the Nkuringo buffer zone adjacent to Bwindi Impenetrable National park in Uganda.

Activities to be carried out with the support of SSFA under the Vanishing Treasures project include:

- i). Evaluation of the previous Nkuringo buffer zone management plan 2015-2019; and
- ii). Development of the new management plan for 2021-2026.

2.0 Objective

The key objectives of the ToR is to:

- i. Undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the 5 year (2014 - 2019) management plan for Nkuringo Buffer Zone; for the purpose of assessing extent to which its implementation was achieved considering effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability in relation to planned activities, programmes and objectives within that time frame.

Develop a buffer zone new management plan for the period 2021 – 2026, basing on the information obtained from the evaluation of previous management plan (2014 – 2019) and changing circumstances.

3.0 Scope of work

The consultant will work closely with UWA and NCCDF together with other stakeholders operating around BINP in Rubuguri and Nkuringo Town Councils. Specifically, the assignment will include:

1. Evaluation of the previous Nkuringo buffer zone management plan 2015 – 2019.
2. Conduct a stakeholder validation meeting to present the evaluation findings to allow input of the stakeholders to contribute to the final evaluation report.
3. Develop the new buffer zone management plan for 2021 - 2026 through a participatory process that will:
 - i. Review and update as appropriate the current management structure and organogram;
 - ii. Map and clarify the detailed roles for each stakeholder to help improve performance and manage expectations;
 - iii. Update and streamline the management programmes by prioritizing activities and removing redundancies across. Set clear measurable indicators and targets, which are based on baseline data, assigned accountabilities and results-based budgets. In parallel, develop a Theory of Change for Nkuringo with logical causal relationships and assumptions between outputs, outcomes and the anticipated impact to help streamline and focus the planned activities and attract donor funding;
 - iv. Update the M&E plan, in addition to a clearly costed budget allocations based on measurable outputs and targets. This will be annexed to the main buffer zone management plan document.
 - v. Develop a fundraising/resource mobilization plan to ensure sustained implementation of the management plan, with concrete goals, timelines and responsibilities.
4. Conduct a stakeholder validation meeting to present draft of the new buffer zone management plan 2021 – 2026 to allow input of the stakeholders to contribute to the final buffer zone management plan 2021 - 2026.
5. Work closely with the Task Team by submitting **weekly plan of activities and progress status report** to inform their actions and decisions through the consultancy period.

3.0 Deliverables of the consultancy:

The main deliverables of the consultancy are:

- i) Draft and Final, Validated Evaluation report of the 2015 – 2019 Nkuringo buffer zone management plan.

- ii) Draft and Final, Validated Nkuringo buffer zone management plan 2021-2026 with updated M&E plan, and a costed budget allocation based on measurable outputs and targets together with a resource mobilization plan.

4.0 Profile of the consultant

The successful consultant(s) should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- Must have a Post graduate degree in one of the following fields: Project Planning and Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Natural Resource Management, Protected Area Management, Rural Development/Community Development /Social work and Social Administration/Development Studies etc.
- Relevant professional skills and a matching experience in undertaking of assignments of a similar nature and scope.
- A good understanding of the local context, especially in the areas of conservation of mountain gorillas and community development.
- Be familiar with Participatory Rural Appraisal Approaches.
- Proficient in English and having a working knowledge of Rukiga and Rufumbira.

5.0 Consultancy timelines:

Total time allocated for the consultancy is two months from the date of the award of the contract.

6.0 Responsibility and reporting procedures

The consultant will be responsible to the Director IGCP for contractual obligations and to IGCP's Uganda Country Coordinator for technical matters during the delivery of the assignment.

7.0 How to apply

Interested applicant(s) with relevant practical skills and experience are invited to submit their application with details as indicated below:

The Letter of expression of interest to include:

- a) A suitability statement including CV with details of qualifications and experience.
- b) A technical proposal that summarizes understanding of the ToR, methodology and tools to be used.
- c) A financial proposal.
- d) Work-plan clearly indicating the activity schedule.
- e) Recommendation from previous clients where similar engagements were successfully accomplished.

Both technical and financial proposals and other supporting documents should be sent to the following email address: procurement@igcp.org, copying in rchota@igcp.org.

Financial proposals should outline direct costs (Professional fees, transport, accommodation all in Uganda Shillings). The deadline for submitting applications is June 21, 2021 at 5:00 pm East African Time.

DocuSigned by:

Anna Belim Masozera

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6/2/2021