

Consultancy for the development of a “Toolbox for Seagrass Management and Restoration in West Africa”

Terms of Reference

Background

Wetlands International is seeking support to develop a practical toolbox for the conservation, management and restoration of seagrass ecosystems in West Africa, as part of the project “*Climate Resilience for Critical Sites for Migratory Birds and People along the East Atlantic Flyway*” (CREAF).

CREAF is an eight-year, multi-country initiative funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI). Led by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) under the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, it is implemented by a consortium of 15 expert organisations across Africa and Europe, including Wetlands International. The project works across key coastal sites along the Atlantic coast of Africa to strengthen the climate resilience of wetlands and safeguard the migratory waterbirds that depend on them.

The East Atlantic Flyway connects Arctic breeding grounds with staging and non-breeding sites in Europe and Africa, relying on healthy coastal wetlands that also support fisheries, shoreline protection and local livelihoods. These ecosystems are increasingly threatened by climate change, coastal development and overexploitation. CREAM responds through improved monitoring, site management, governance and investment in nature-based solutions.

Within this framework, coastal habitats such as mangroves, tidal flats, saltmarshes and seagrass meadows are priority ecosystems. In West Africa, seagrass beds provide critical feeding habitat for shorebirds and support fisheries, yet face growing pressures and lack region-specific management guidance. The planned seagrass toolbox is therefore a key CREAM output, synthesising available knowledge and offering clear, practical recommendations for practitioners, site managers and policymakers.

Context

Wetlands International is a global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to safeguarding and restoring wetlands through science-based and community-informed approaches. Coastal wetlands are a core focus of our 2020–2030 strategy due to their importance for biodiversity, climate resilience and blue carbon.

The guidance manual will contribute directly to this agenda by consolidating existing knowledge and experience on seagrass conservation in West Africa and providing practical, regionally relevant guidance to support improved management and restoration of these vital ecosystems.

Supported by:



based on a decision of
the German Bundestag

Objectives & scope

The overall objective of this consultancy is to support Wetlands International in developing a practical, regionally relevant toolbox on the conservation, management and restoration of seagrass ecosystems in West Africa, in support of the CREAM project.

Specifically, the consultancy will:

- **Take a leading role in writing selected sections of the manual**, ensuring that the content is scientifically robust, practical, context-specific and consistent in style and terminology.
- **Work with Wetlands International and partners** to ensure that the guidance is clear, and fully aligned with the objectives of the CREAM project, and **participate in bi-weekly one-hour coordination meetings**.
- **Revise and finalise the assigned sections** following external peer review.
- **Review six two-page case studies** from the region.

Expected deliverables

Wetlands International has already developed an overall table of contents for a guidance toolbox on seagrass management and restoration. **Within this structure, the consultant is requested to develop the below chapters highlighted in green.**

Section	Title	Responsibility
INTRODUCTION		
Preface	Background & introduction	Wetlands International
Chapter 1	Seagrasses and shorebirds in West Africa	Wetlands International
Chapter 2	Planning and design of management & restoration interventions	Wetlands International
Chapter 3	Community & stakeholder engagement, governance & financing	Wetlands International
SECTION ONE - SEAGRASS MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS		
Chapter 4	Phasing out destructive fishing practices	Consultant
Chapter 5	Reducing land-derived sources of pollution	Consultant
Chapter 6	Adapting to climate change (incl. connectivity & genetic diversity)	Consultant
Chapter 7	Managing boating impacts	Consultant
Chapter 8	Managing coastal development (dredging, reclamation, infrastructure and mining)	Consultant
Chapter 9	Oil spill preparedness and clean-up	Consultant
Chapter 10	Managing biological threats from invasive species, pests, diseases and overgrazing	To be decided
SECTION TWO - SEAGRASS RESTORATION APPROACHES		
Chapter 11	Passive seagrass restoration (facilitating natural recovery)	Consultant
Chapter 12	Overcoming recruitment bottlenecks	Consultant
Chapter 13	Site selection for seagrass restoration	Consultant
Chapter 14	Active restoration methods	Consultant
Chapter 15	Restoration monitoring	Consultant
CASE STUDIES		
5-6 case studies	Case studies to be identified in connection with the management and restoration approaches	To be decided

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Each assigned chapter is expected to be in the order of five pages in length (excluding references), with a primary focus on practical tools and guidance for management and restoration. The consultant is expected to ensure that the chapters are well harmonised with the rest of the manual in terms of structure, terminology, level of detail and style.

Requirements

- Use a science and evidence-based approach: all recommendations on conservation, management and restoration must be grounded in the best available scientific and technical knowledge.
- For each type of intervention described, reference documented outcomes, drawing on peer-reviewed literature and relevant grey literature.
- Clearly cite sources and indicate the strength of evidence.

Profile of consultant

- Solid academic and/or professional background in marine/coastal ecosystems and conservation or natural resource management.
- Demonstrated experience in seagrass or coastal habitat management/restoration and in drafting technical guidance or manuals for practitioners.

Timing and duration

The work will take place between December 2025 and July 2026

Technical and Financial Proposal

A short (one or two page) technical and financial proposal must be submitted to Wetlands International, including the proposed methodology, work plan, timelines and a cost breakdown for the achievement of the deliverables. It must be accompanied with the following supporting documentation: 1. CVs of the personnel proposed to work on the consultancy, 2. Evidence of previous relevant experience.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be assessed by Wetlands International on technical and financial criteria.

Technical: Expertise and experience in seagrass management, **proposed approach and methodology**, and **understanding of the assignment and quality of the proposal**.

Financial: Reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and competitiveness of the budget.

Contact

Proposals should be sent to Wetlands International by **December the 10th 2025**, to the attention of Ana Colorado McEvoy, Project Manager, at the following e-mail address:

ana.colorado@wetlands.org

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