



Job Description

Position: Regional Forests and Climate Change Lead Central Africa
Location: Kigali, Rwanda
Reports to: Central Africa Regional Director
Direct Reports: None
Start date: December 2020
Position Type: Full time

Organization Background

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is a US non-profit, tax-exempt, private organization established in 1895 that saves wildlife and wild places by understanding critical issues, crafting science-based solutions, and taking conservation actions that benefit nature and humanity. With more than a century of experience, long-term commitments in dozens of landscapes, presence in more than 60 nations, and experience helping to establish over 150 protected areas across the globe, WCS has amassed the biological knowledge, cultural understanding and partnerships to ensure that vibrant, wild places and wildlife thrive alongside local communities. Working with local communities and organizations, that knowledge is applied to address species, habitat and ecosystem management issues critical to improving the quality of life of poor rural people whose livelihoods depend on the direct utilization of natural resources.

Program Overview

The WCS Central Africa & Gulf of Guinea program encompasses the three countries of Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon. WCS has been present and active in these three countries for almost thirty years, implementing long-term site-based initiatives in some of the most intact forested landscapes remaining in the region and in supporting governments and local partners in biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. As home to the second largest forest in the world, there are significant emerging climate financing opportunities and emerging international markets for nature-based solutions in the Congo Basin, including the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI) that is evolving as the foremost climate financing mechanism for the region. To capitalize upon these emerging opportunities, there is a need to develop and deliver innovative programs and projects that are well adapted to the particular context of the region, strongly aligned with government policy, and succeed in protecting forests, alleviating poverty and supporting local sustainable development. To this end, WCS is seeking to substantially develop its climate and forests portfolio in the region and to capitalize upon its more than three decades of experience and trusted relationships with government and local partners.

Job Summary

The Wildlife Conservation Society is seeking a Regional Forests and Climate Change Lead to provide technical and program development support in the implementation of WCS's climate change and forest protection strategy in the Congo Basin. Working closely with the Central Africa Regional Director, the successful candidate will bring extensive knowledge and experience of the emerging marketplace for climate financing opportunities in the region and excellent awareness of national government commitments and existing regional mechanisms. They will also bring a well-developed network of partners with which to enhance WCS's strategic approach.

Responsibilities

In close coordination with the Central Africa regional program and national field offices, the Regional Forests and Climate Change Lead will:

- Assist the Central Africa Regional Director in the development and implementation of a WCS strategy for climate and forest protection in the Congo Basin that capitalizes upon WCS strengths and field conservation priorities and links them to existing and emerging opportunities for enhanced financing.
- Provide up to date analysis of national, regional and international policy development on forests and climate change in the Congo Basin and analyze opportunities for WCS to support government partners
- Remain current on climate financing opportunities (national, regional, bilateral and multilateral) and identify areas of strategic alignment with WCS priorities
- Provide technical support to field projects on program development, proposal preparation and implementation of forest/climate projects – including but not limited to projects addressing protected area management, market-facing REDD+ and other carbon financing mechanisms, ecosystem services, commodities and agroforestry, land tenure and governance.
- Identify and build strong partnerships from amongst the public, private and NGO sector that align and enhance WCS strategic priorities
- Provide technical coordination and proposal development support for large climate financing opportunities in Central Africa
- Representation of WCS's Central Africa program at regional and international climate policy forums and support to country programs as needed with national representation in policy fora
- Provide close liaison and regular coordination with WCS's Global Forests Program, Intact Forest's Strategy and Forests for Life Partnership to ensure strong representation of Central Africa's priorities for nature-based solutions to climate change.

Requirements

- An advanced degree in conservation, environmental studies or related field
- At least 5 years' experience of large, multi-stakeholder project management
- Demonstrated experience working on nature-based solutions to climate change including REDD+ and other performance-based payment systems in a global context
- Demonstrated experience in program development for large multi-lateral climate financing mechanisms
- Demonstrated experience of Congo-Basin climate financing context, with specific reference to CAFI

- Experience working on field-based implementation of avoided deforestation, sustainable agriculture, forest governance or other climate-relevant projects.
- Experience of private sector engagement on climate change mitigation measures an advantage
- Excellent written and oral language skills are required in English and French
- Excellent skills in representation, communications and partnerships building
- Willingness and availability to travel around the region, and internationally as needed

Application process

Interested candidates, who meet the above qualifications, skills and experience, should apply by emailing a detailed application/cover letter and CV together with the names and contact information of three references to: AfricaApplications@wcs.org. Please include “Central Africa Climate/Forest Lead” in the subject line of your email. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews. If you have any queries related to this position please contact: AfricaApplications@wcs.org

Application Deadline: **30 November 2020**

WCS is an equal opportunity employer dedicated to hiring and supporting a diverse workforce. We are committed to cultivating an inclusive work environment and look for future team members who share that same value.
EOE/AA/M/F/Vets/Disabled