

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs
Central Africa Regional Program
Funding Opportunity Number: F19AS000063

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Please note that this document will be updated as USFWS staff receive additional inquiries.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply?

Federal, state, and local government agencies; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with or without 501(c)(3) status; public and private institutions of higher education; and individuals are eligible to apply. Individuals are exempt from registration in sam.gov but will still need to apply to www.grants.gov.

Can my organization submit more than one pre-proposal?

- Yes.

Can applicants apply to the Central Africa Regional Program AND to one of the Multinational Species Conservation Funds?

- USFWS supports wildlife conservation projects in Central Africa through multiple mechanisms: the Central Africa Regional Program, the Combating Wildlife Trafficking program, and the Funds created by Congressional Acts for the conservation of African elephants, great apes, and marine turtles. The Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for all programs are located on the USFWS International Affairs How to Apply page (<https://www.fws.gov/international/grants-and-reporting/how-to-apply.html>). Applicants should review the funding priorities for each Notice of Funding Opportunity and apply to the program that aligns most closely with the objectives of the proposed work.
- Because of the uncertainties of eligibility (see section on the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, or TVPA, below) and other factors, if applicants choose to submit proposals to more than one program, please note that (a) proposals must align with the funding priorities advertised in the NOFO to which the proposal is being submitted, and (b) USFWS will not award duplicative work. Applicants must notify the Program in writing that the proposed project/proposal does not have any duplication of work that is currently being funded by another Program within USFWS International Affairs.

Is an applicant eligible to apply for a conservation project in the same landscape as an existing USFWS-funded cooperative agreement?

- In general, to streamline support and reduce administrative costs, it is preferable that the request for USFWS funds for all high priority conservation activities in one area be included in a single cooperative agreement annual workplan for that site. Applicant organizations that are not currently partners in a cooperative agreement can still apply and the merits of these requests will be reviewed according to the criteria and the priorities of the Program to which

they are submitted. USFWS encourages applicants who wish to work in ongoing USFWS cooperative agreement landscapes to share their proposal with all partners and to discuss the conservation priority of the proposed activities, relative to the current activities supported by USFWS.

Is an existing cooperative agreement partner eligible to apply to a new NOFO priority (e.g., Reducing Protected Species in the Commercial Bushmeat Trade) in the same landscape?

- While eligible to apply, current cooperative agreement recipients are encouraged to prioritize any activities and budget requests that occur within the geographic scope of an existing cooperative agreement within their existing annual workplan.

What is the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and how does it impact eligibility?

Section 108 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), 22 U.S.C. § 7106, establishes minimum standards that foreign governments must comply with in order to demonstrate that they are making significant efforts to eliminate the trafficking in persons. According to Section 110 of the Act, 22 U.S.C. § 7107(a), “It is the policy of the United States not to provide nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance to any government that (1) does not comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; and (2) is not making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with such standards.” Each year, a [report on Trafficking in Persons](#) (TIP) is released which outlines the ranking of countries in regards to compliance with the minimum standards set forth. Based on the [Presidential Memorandum published on November 29, 2018](#), under 22 U.S.C. § 7107, no waivers were granted to the following Tier 3 countries in the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) for FY19: Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Republic of the Congo.

The USFWS is currently evaluating the impact of these restrictions on the FY19 AFR NOFO for those programs subject to the TVPA and is assessing potential exemptions where they may apply. If you have any questions about the TVPA and its applicability to your proposal, please contact the Program Officer identified in the NOFO.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

If selected for funding, when does USFWS expect awards to be made available?

- If you are successful with your proposal, awards are normally made available prior to the end of the fiscal year, i.e. September 30, 2019.

What is the estimated total Program funding?

- The estimated total Program funding is more than US \$14 million.

Where does the funding come from?

- Since 1989, USFWS has provided support to projects that target key pressures to wildlife and their habitats, strengthen capacity, and build a better evidence base for conservation. USFWS funding in Central Africa is programmed in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for

International Development's (USAID) Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), under the Foreign Assistance Act (1961).

What is the estimated funding for each project supported through the new FY19 funding opportunities?

- The amount of funding requested must match the scope of activities, anticipated results, and length of the project period. The estimated funding level for:
 - *Protecting Parks* priority is multi-year grants of \$200,000 - \$400,000 annually.
 - *Reducing Protected Species in the Commercial Bushmeat Trade* priority is multi-year cooperative agreements of \$100,000 - \$300,000 annually.
 - *MENTOR* cooperative agreement of \$400,000 to \$800,000 over two- to five-years.Higher funding amounts for each of these priorities will be considered with appropriate justification.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Can pre-proposals be submitted in French or Spanish?

- Pre-proposals and invited full proposals must be in English.

Does a pre-proposal require a cover page?

- No, a pre-proposal does not require a cover page. It would be fine to include your contact information with your DUNS and SAM registration information; however, there is no need to include a separate cover page when you submit your pre-proposal concept. For applicants submitting via Grants.gov, the SF-424 cover page is generated automatically. Foreign applicants who are submitting through the program email box, should submit a SF-424.

Is a budget justification needed for the March 18, 2019 pre-proposal deadline?

- No, a budget justification is not requested. The pre-proposal only needs to include a budget. If the applicant is invited to submit a full proposal then a budget justification will be expected be included at that time.

How do I apply to the Central Africa Regional Program?

- To apply, please see the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) website: <https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/notice-of-funding-opportunity-africa-2019-english.pdf> U.S. applicants must submit through www.grants.gov. Foreign applicants are encouraged to submit applications through www.grants.gov. However, foreign applicants may also submit their proposal to the following email address: wwb_africa@fws.gov.

Are you only accepting pre-proposals?

- Yes, only pre-proposals will be accepted on March 18, 2019. Applicants will be notified of the opportunity to submit a full application for either a grant or cooperative agreement by April 16, 2019 (by invitation only). The deadline for submitting full applications (including all items in the Application Checklist) is May 7, 2019.

Can a project apply for funding if it has USAID funding?

- Yes. However, the applicant cannot use any other U.S. government funds as matching funds on their application. Projects with USAID funding should add a section describing the activities supported (through CARPE or another U.S. government fund or program) and the added value of USFWS support. Please note how the proposal differs or builds upon funding available from USAID.
- U.S. applicants must have a DUNS number and be registered in DUNS and SAM in order to submit an application through www.grants.gov. International applicants must be registered in DUNS by the time they apply and in SAM by August 1, 2019 in order to receive funds.

If USFWS chooses to fund a proposal, can the applicant charge costs before the grant is awarded?

- With prior approval, applicants can incur pre-award costs up to 90 days before the award period of performance start date. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award and only with the written approval of the Federal awarding agency. Any costs are incurred at the applicant's risk. Please see 2 CFR 200.458 Pre-award costs for more information: <https://tinyurl.com/yyureg72>

What is Leahy Vetting?

- The Leahy Vetting requirement is included annually in the Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act. The Leahy Amendment prohibits assistance to individuals with human rights abuse records. It requires that military and civilian security force individuals or units receiving U.S. government assistance be screened for any record of human rights abuse. Conservation efforts authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act often require work with and/or support to law enforcement personnel including park rangers, police, customs officials, or any other “foreign security forces” (anyone with authority to detain, confiscate, arrest, and/or use force). Training is the most frequently cited example of assistance, but any provision of materials or equipment must be vetted. If security forces are involved in any project activities, please explain in detail the specific resources that will be used to support these forces and whether the project participants are a unit (i.e. rangers from protected areas) or a group of individuals. If your proposal is selected for funding, a USFWS Program Officer will contact you with further instructions. More information on Leahy vetting is available through the U.S. Department of State here: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/other/2017/271082.htm>

If selected for funding, how often do recipients have to submit reports?

- USFWS will specify in the Notice of Award document the reporting and reporting frequency applicable to the award. Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award. Performance reports are narrative in format and must contain: (1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; (2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and (3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results including, but not limited to, problems, delays, or

favorable developments. Financial reports must be submitted in the Standard Form 425 (SF-425) format.

BUDGET & PROPOSAL CONTENT

What should be included in a pre-proposal?

- Pre-proposals should be limited to four pages. The Statement of Need for the pre-proposal should include:
 - Title of project;
 - Geographic location;
 - Species or habitat targeted for conservation (including any existing estimates of population size, geographic range, or extent);
 - Description of direct threats that affect the targeted species at the project site and specific threats the project plans to address;
 - Project goal and objectives;
 - Proposed activities to reduce direct threats and improve the status of species and habitats;
 - Description of how the proposal differs from past work or builds upon past successes, failures, and lessons learned;
 - Explanation of any relevant USAID/CARPE or other U.S. government funding, and added value of USFWS funding;
 - Proposed Monitoring and Evaluation, including anticipated outputs and conservation outcomes. See: Standard Measures of Effectiveness and Threats for Wildlife Conservation in Central Africa (<https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/guidance-effectiveness-measures-central-africa.pdf>) for application questions for consideration and recommended indicators; and
 - One-page Summary Budget.

Can additional attachments accompany the pre-proposal?

- Additional attachments are strongly recommended. Applicants can include attachments to demonstrate their capacity to implement the proposed activities and show relevant history. There is no page limit for the attachments. Attachments may include:
 - Letter(s) of government support;
 - Letter(s) of support from partners; and
 - CVs of key personnel.

Is it possible to include a vehicle purchase in a one-year grant?

- It is possible. Remember to include in the Project Activities how the vehicle will be used. From page 12 of the NOFO: *The methods, including equipment used/requested and personnel conducting the work, should be clearly articulated in this section [Project Activities, Methods, and Timetable].* If selected for funding, please refer to the property standards as specified in 2 CFR 200.313 Equipment: <https://tinyurl.com/y5gx2ceg>

Does USFWS provide any technical support to develop proposals?

- USFWS published a document titled “Standard Measures of Effectiveness and Threats for

Wildlife Conservation in Central Africa” (<https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/guidance-effectiveness-measures-central-africa.pdf>) for applicants to enhance monitoring and evaluation of projects funded through the USFWS Africa Regional Program. This document describes application questions and standard effectiveness measures for eight conservation actions most frequently funded by USFWS in Central Africa. This document has valuable information for applicants including: 1) a definition for conservation action; 2) a high-level theory of change; 3) enabling conditions; and 4) monitoring questions and indicators. USFWS encourages all applicants proposing conservation projects in Central Africa to use this guidance. Recipients of cooperative agreements are required to use this guidance.

What is MENTOR?

- Through academic and field based training, MENTOR Programs develop trans-disciplinary teams of emerging African conservationists who work together to implement conservation actions to address threats to wildlife. More information on the MENTOR program is available here: <https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/factsheet-mentor.pdf>

Does the MENTOR program provide financial support to PhD students?

- Many MENTOR Fellows have pursued PhD degrees upon completion of their programs with Mentors, USFWS, and other partners assisting with guidance, references, and sharing of PhD scholarship information. In general, however, MENTOR programs do not fund the tuition costs associated with PhDs and the completion of advanced degrees abroad.

How long do the MENTOR programs typically last?

- While most of the MENTOR programs have been 18-month post-graduate programs, some have been longer. USFWS recognizes that the MENTOR model should be tailored to meet the needs and context for each issue and region, and thus, is open to considering different models of length and structure.

What are some of the key components of the MENTOR program?

- One of the key components of each MENTOR Program is to have a Coordinator who mentors the Fellows and organizes the academic and field portion of the program. Team building, conflict management, and adaptive management have also been important parts of the Programs. NGOs and government agencies have been very generous about coming in to teach the Fellows during different modules. Mentors have also been hired to provide technical expertise. Salaries for a Coordinator, Mentors, Lecturers, and MENTOR Fellows should be competitive, and commensurate with their experience as well as where they are from.

Under the supporting wildlife colleges priority, which institutions are eligible for funding?

- National and regional universities, colleges, and research institutions that support wildlife and protected area management in the 10 Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe) are eligible to apply for funding.

You are the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, but most grants in Central Africa seem to be about wildlife and not fish - why is that?

- USFWS supports wildlife conservation projects in Central Africa through multiple mechanisms: the Central Africa Regional Program, the Combating Wildlife Trafficking program, and the Funds created by Congressional Acts for the conservation of African elephants, great apes, and marine turtles. The Central Africa Regional Program provides funding from the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) and has supported fisheries projects in the past. All proposals that are relevant to the funding priorities listed in the NOFO are welcome.

Are fish farming and other livelihood projects eligible for funding?

- Livelihood projects are only eligible if they are directly relevant to the funding opportunities outlined in the NOFO.

What is the geographic focus of the Central Africa Regional Program funding?

- Funding will only be considered for projects that impact wildlife populations in the 10 Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Proposals for work outside Central Africa must justify the proposed intervention in terms of its potential impact on wildlife populations in Central Africa.

How long do projects typically last?

- USFWS-funded projects have a period of performance that typically ranges from 1 to 5 years.

The Central Africa Regional Program used to have a specific call for Gabon. Are pre-proposals for Gabon eligible?

- Yes, all proposals for Gabon are welcome as long as they align with the priorities stated in the NOFO.

Can applicants support graduate students through a proposed project (e.g., tuition, stipends)?

- USFWS supports efforts to strengthen the capacity of Central African universities, colleges, and research institutions to provide training to address threats to wildlife. Tuition for individuals will not be considered; however, this does not preclude support for graduate student involvement in project implementation (e.g., field work, analyses). A project proposal will be strengthened by including Central African graduate students.

What kinds of projects have been funded in the past?

- To see a complete list of projects funded from FY2013 to FY2018 under the Central Africa Regional Program, please see: <https://www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/africa/central-africa.html>

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Who is eligible to apply for a cooperative agreement?

- All projects are eligible to apply for a cooperative agreement and all proposals that meet minimum programmatic requirements will be reviewed. There are two fundamental criteria in which eligible proposals are assessed during review in the USFWS Central Africa Regional Program: (1) likelihood of impact and conservation benefit via proposed activities; and (2) the applicant's capacity to implement the proposed activities (see pages 20-21 of the NOFO). There are a number of sub-factors that are considered in cases where competing applications receive equivalent scores, including financial need. See NOFO (p. 20) for the complete list. Regarding financial need, this section of the NOFO is relevant (p. 9): "This section should also explain how the proposal differs from past work, or builds upon it, including how the applicant plans to expand upon the successes, failures, and lessons learned of past efforts. Projects with USAID funding should add a section describing the activities supported (through CARPE or another U.S. government fund or program) and the added value of USFWS support. Please note how the proposal differs or builds upon funding available from USAID." Please note that any request will be strengthened by detail in the budget table on additional donors and the added value of USFWS support.

What makes a cooperative agreement different from a grant?

- Under cooperative agreements, substantial involvement by USFWS should be expected and may include participating and collaborating with the recipient or other personnel in carrying out the scope of work including: training recipient personnel or detailing Federal personnel to work on the project; reviewing and approving one stage of work before the next stage can begin; reviewing and approving proposed modifications or sub-awards, prior to the award; helping select project staff or trainees; directing or redirecting the work because of interrelationships with other projects; having power to immediately halt an activity if detailed performance specifications are not met; and limiting recipient discretion with respect to scope of work, organizational structure, staffing, mode of operations, and other management processes, coupled with close monitoring or operational involvement during the period of performance under the award.

If applying for a multi-year cooperative agreement, does the applicant need to submit workplans for each year?

- No. Full proposals for cooperative agreements only need to include a workplan for the first year. Workplans are required each year for active cooperative agreements and continued funding is contingent upon successful performance and review of the annual workplan.