



## **CALL FOR MARINE ECOLOGICAL & COMMUNITY EXPERTS TO REVIEW BUSINESS PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE CORAL REEFS UNDER THE MIAMBA YETU: SUSTAINABLE REEF INVESTMENT PROGRAM**

### **Background**

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has been working to save wildlife and wild places around the globe since 1895 in the world's most important places for the protection of marine biodiversity, including the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region of Africa.

As part of efforts to conserve and protect the WIO's coral reefs, WCS is implementing the Miamba Yetu Sustainable Reef Investments programme along the length of Kenya and Tanzania's coasts - including the Zanzibar archipelago. The programme is funded by the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) which was launched in 2021 as the first blended finance instrument dedicated to coral reefs.

Miamba Yetu is a US\$40 million investment vehicle that aims to support businesses that directly or indirectly benefit coral reefs over the next 10 years, with catalytic investments in the form of concessionary debt and equity. A proportion of grant funding is also provided to further de-risk investments and improve returns for businesses. Bankable or investable projects that can benefit from the Miamba Yetu programme include those in:

- Coastal tourism
- Land-use management that reduces erosion
- Fisheries management and coastal marine livelihoods
- Waste management
- Blue carbon

WCS has developed a pipeline of bankable projects that will be considered for financing through an investment company which is currently being established. We are merging our experience in marine conservation with the financial expertise of Okavango Capital Partners to establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to attract and blend various sources of capital for onward financing to businesses. This financial mechanism will be a pioneer model for delivering sustainable finance and incubating smaller-scale investments that economically benefit local people while directly contributing to conservation outcomes for reef systems.

Miamba Yetu will be exploring more opportunities throughout the region to support businesses and development organizations that have the potential to improve WIO's coral reefs and require financial support to achieve this.

### **Reason for the Call for Experts**

As the convener for GFCR investments in the Kenya and Tanzania coral reef seascapes, WCS has the responsibility to review projects for ecological impact to coral reefs and for how projects affect and benefit coastal communities. WCS seeks to engage experts from Kenya & Tanzania to ensure inputs and transparency in selection of projects.

### **Expert Panelist Responsibilities**

Panelists will serve for a period of 2 years with possibility to renew participation.



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On a quarterly basis, review 2-4 proposals from business enterprises for significant potential for positive impact to coral reef ecosystems and positive social impact to coastal communities. Proposals will be in a standardized format, and WCS will provide a score sheet to be filled out, and there is the opportunity to provide written feedback as well. Feedback from Experts will be combined with WCS expertise in advising which projects should be considered for funding. A separate panel evaluates the business and economic viability of projects, and projects must pass both an ecological/social review and financial review to be considered.

It is anticipated that the quarterly proposal review will take 2-4 hours per quarter.

WCS will hold annual in-person meetings for all panelists to review which projects were selected and provide updates on the progress of projects being implemented. WCS will cover costs of panelists to attend the annual in-person meetings with location alternating between Kenya and Tanzania. Annual meetings will include a site visit to a funded project. It is anticipated that in-person meetings will be 2 days (plus travel time).

### **Desired Qualifications for Expert Panelists**

- Panelists can join as either individuals or members of an institution. In either case, the following qualifications are preferred (even if representing an institution, the participant should have the below qualifications).
- At least 5 years of experience working with Kenya or Tanzania coral reef ecosystems and/or small-scale fishing (SSF) communities (research, project implementation, or community development) resulting in understanding of key reef threats and socio-economic needs.
- Understanding of coral reef ecological monitoring or social science assessment protocols (demonstrated in CV through publications or technical papers).
- Evidence of leadership role in the region or in the home institution (NGO, Government, or Academic), with knowledge of national and regional initiatives relating to coral reefs and SSF communities.
- Willingness to review 2-4 proposals quarterly for funding considering ecological and social impacts according to established criteria, and to meet in person annually to discuss Miamba Yetu progress and investments.
- Masters degree or above in marine or social science or community development.

### **Benefits of serving as an Expert Panelist**

Identifying lasting financial solutions for coral reefs through business investments is a relatively new approach. Experts will have an opportunity to understand businesses in the region that can positively impact coral reefs and help direct funding to those that have the biggest possibility of positive impact. Experts will help advise on ways to increase Miamba Yetu impact and provide linkages to other regional and national efforts.

WCS will cover costs of travel to the annual meetings.

Panel members and their institutions will be featured on the Miamba Yetu program website. Note that if the institution of a panel member is applying for funding, they will not conduct a review for that proposal. Being a panel member does not disqualify an institution from participation.



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### Expected Number of Expert Panelist & Selection Criteria

We anticipate no more than 12 panelists with 4-6 spots reserved for government representatives.

Panelists will be selected considering how well they meet the above criteria (e.g. most or all criteria met) and to ensure a diverse representation of experts spanning coral reef science, policy, and community development. All panelists who apply will be given response on their application.

### Application Process

Applications should include:

- 1) A cover letter briefly indicating the experience of the individual or institution, reasons for desire to be an expert panelist, and indication of willingness to spend 3-4 hours quarterly reviewing proposals and attend an annual 2-day meeting (with all costs covered)
- 2) A CV for the individual who will participate on the panel.

Applications should be submitted by the **30<sup>th</sup> June 2023** to:

*Dr. Jennifer O'Leary WCS - WIO Marine Director: [joleary@wcs.org](mailto:joleary@wcs.org)*

Questions about the program can be directed to:

Dr. Fahd Al-Guthmy, Miamba Yetu Program Director: [falguthmy@wcs.org](mailto:falguthmy@wcs.org)

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