

WWF GABON COUNTRY PROGRAMME OFFICE

Recruit a Consultant

For the Evaluation of the Achieving integrated conservation of Congo basin' most important costal landscape, FY 2023-2025

TERMS OF REFERENCE

07-01-2025

Project/Programme Name(s)	Achieving integrated conservation of Congo basin' most important costal landscape (FY23-FY25)
Project/Programme Location(s)	Gamba Landscape, southern Gabon
Project/Programme Duration (from start year)	3 years
Period to Be Evaluated	From July 2023 to June 2025
Potential Sites to Visit	Libreville, Mandji, and Gamba
Project/Programme Budget Sources and Amounts (for period to be evaluated)	1 050 000 € Funded by WWF NL

I. PROJECT/PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

1.1 Geographic scope of the project/programme

The Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati Landscape is transnational and centred on the Loango, Moukalaba-Doudou and Mayumba national parks in Gabon and the Conkouati-Douli National Park in the Republic of Congo. The Gamba Conkouati Landscape is known for its diversity in habitats, varying from sea and coastal vegetation, to lagoons, wetlands up to the lowland forest-savannah mosaic. This variety of mainly intact habitats harbours a large variety of species, of which 380 bird species, 89 mammal species, 86 reptiles, 66 amphibians and over 67 fish species.

WWF Gabon focuses its activities on the Gabonese segment of the Gamba-Conkouati Landscape. WWF has been active in the area for over two decades, starting by putting into place the first conservation infrastructures followed by wildlife and socio-economic inventories. WWF has become the major conservation driver in the area, supporting protected area management, tourism development, land use planning, implication of the local population in natural resource management, and building partnerships with the private sector for wildlife management.

The Landscape has been supported through what used to be the Gamba Field Programme, today called the Southern Gabon Programme and which borders have been extended. One of the main strengths of the Southern Gabon Conservation Programme is its holistic (landscape) approach therefore targeting maintenance of large ecosystems, rather than restoring or rehabilitating patches of habitats or protecting specific species

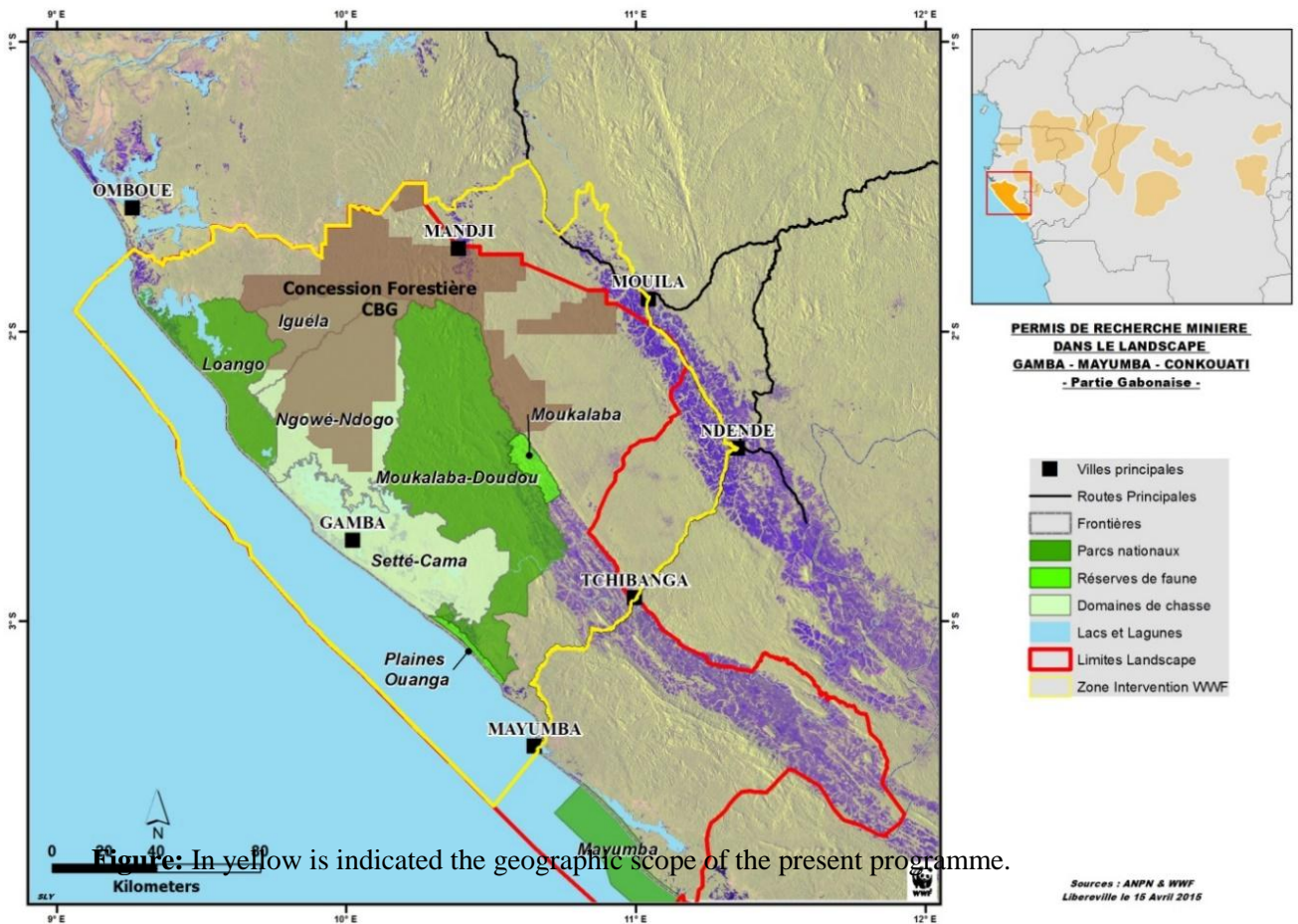


Figure: In yellow is indicated the geographic scope of the present programme.

1.2 Programme Overview

The main biodiversity targets for the Southern Conservation Programme are the:

- Forest ecosystem;
- African forest elephant;
- Great apes;
- Sea turtles.

WWF has been active in the area for over two decades, starting by putting into place the first conservation infrastructures followed by wildlife and socio-economic inventories. WWF has to date become one of the major conservation drivers in the area, supporting protected areas management, land use planning, engaging local populations in natural resources management, human wildlife conflict management, large mammal's surveys and building partnerships with the private sector for sustainable wildlife management. For this phase 4, the main biodiversity targets were: 1) African forest elephant, 2) great apes and 3) sea turtles. Main threats throughout the biodiversity were caused by existing and upcoming extractive industries, the related infrastructure development and the overall weak law enforcement driven by lack of national funding and poor governance. These direct threats are: 1) poaching for ivory, 2) poaching for bushmeat, 3) Wildlife Human Conflict, and, 4) habitat loss/fragmentation or degradation. But, for this phase 4, we were focused on the threats 1-3. Habitat loss/fragmentation or degradation was to be addressed in part of Forest Program.

These threats were addressed through one conservation strategy (sustainable wildlife management) and one finance strategy (Sustainable finance) targeting four (4) objectives: 1) By 2025, a regular data updated on species abundance, distribution and illegal hunting activities is set up and LCs are involved; 2) By 2025 illegal poaching is reduced to 25% through the implementation of the zero poaching approach in ProLab's areas; 3) By 2025 HEC has been reduced by 50% (in the plantation site) when compared with 2020 baseline by implementing the SAFE approach, 4) By 2025 the GSP has finalized his ESSF. That's allow to improve protection and promotion of individual and collective rights of LCs living within the GSP and minimize conflicts and 5) By 2024 the program has established sufficient and stable and diversified funding base.

II. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

2.1 Evaluation purpose and use

The fourth phase of the WWF NL funded project - “*Achieving integrated conservation of Congo Basin’s most important Coastal Priority Landscape (FY23-FY25)*” will be completed in June 2025 after 36 months of implementation on the ground. We are looking for a formative evaluation of the project that serves to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the work carried out so far including possible new directions and will lead to concrete recommendations for the design of the fourth phase of the project in order to guarantee its effectiveness. We specifically want to focus the evaluation and our learning on those elements of the integrated landscape approach that pertain to local communities: community engagement in conservation, human-elephant conflict, and income and job creation.

The audience for this evaluation is as follows:

Target audience of the final report	Objectives of the evaluation regarding the target group	Relevance, added value and benefit of the evaluation report for the target audience	Actions to be considered on the level of the target audience
WWF implementing office (Southern programme team)	Help to identify the strengths and weakness of the team, Drawing key lessons learned to contribute to organizational learning	Possible new directions for the next phase and recommendations	Organize the evaluation, conduct the field mission with the evaluator, follow the redaction and finalization of the report
WWF donor office (WWF NL)	Create a space for dialogue and exchange of opinions between all the actors involved Build a similar shared programme’s vision	Assess the results of a 3 years policy, guide its implementation and increase its funding. Collect lessons for other projects from the evaluation	Meetings with the evaluator Support the management response finalization Be critical during the revision of the first draft of the evaluation report

2.2 Objectives and Scope

In general the evaluation will have three objectives:

- 1- A (re)construction of the theory of change underlying the community development strategies;
- 2- A stock-taking and evaluation of what has been achieved, what has not been achieved in the project thus far, including reasons why results have (not) been achieved;
- 3- The drafting of recommendations for a new phase of the project in which the preservation of the natural heritage of the Gamba landscape is matched by economic growth for the benefit of future generations. The aim of the next phase is to contribute to the acceleration of the government's economic recovery plan by stepping up investment in the preservation of exceptional ecosystems

and their natural resources, as well as in sustainable tourism, which will create sustainable green jobs for young people, regardless of gender, in the Gamba landscape areas.

III. EVALUATION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

The evaluation should address the following evaluation questions:

Relevance

To what extent do project strategy and achievements demonstrate that there is a relevant approach in place to create community benefits like jobs or business opportunities, supportive of nature conservation efforts?

Efficiency

Are inputs (staff time, skills, facilities, budgets) commensurate with (expected) results, and is the project geared to adaptive management (collecting progress data and generating insights to inform programmatic changes)

Effectiveness

To what extent do project stakeholders and beneficiaries feel involved and experience benefits due to the project, and what factors determine the projects achievement of its objectives?

How are people (youth and adults) in the Gamba Landscape engaged in conservation, and how would stakeholders and beneficiaries recommend that the program increases their involvement and benefits?

Were the MSP's active and did they play a supporting role?

What is the scope for community-based tourism to develop sustainable economic activities yielding jobs and income? What other economic activities could yield jobs or income and could these activities be performed in a sustainable way?

Impact

What are signs of positive and/or negative impacts of the projects community development and engagement strategies on nature conservation goals?

How can impact be strengthened in the future programme?

Sustainability

How can the program ensure sustained benefits for stakeholders and communities as well as an increased or continued involvement of youth? Which elements of the project could in the future be managed by communities? Which conditions have to be met to make this possible?

IV. METHODOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

We are primarily looking for a qualitative and participatory approach to this evaluation. A document review will be required, combined with interviews and/or workshops with program staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries. We are however open to any suggestions on (participatory) approaches by the evaluator that add to evaluation reliability, validity or usability.

The program team will provide the evaluator with all the documents of the project, which include those mentioned in the annex. The evaluator will additionally be required to hold a briefing meeting with the NL team in charge of the contract before carrying out a field mission in Gabon. During the field mission data collection will be done with project staff, stakeholders and communities.

At the end of the mission, a feedback meeting will be organized in Gabon, which will bring together project staff, WWF and the donor. A debriefing meeting will also be held in Gembloux when the international expert returns from the mission. These workshops can be used for sensemaking and collective identification of lessons learnt.

V. PROFILE OF EVALUATOR AND WWF SUPPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Evaluator should be bilingual (English/French) in order to be able to evaluate all of the texts and reports prepared for WWF Netherlands by WWF Gabon, as well as to communicate with WWF staff in Gabon and relevant stakeholders/partners in the Gamba Landscape. It is essential that the evaluator has good interview and facilitation skills, and had a proven track record of successful participatory data collection with local communities. The evaluator should also have proven experience with in the evaluation of conservation projects implemented by non-governmental organisations, as well as familiarity with all of the issues surrounding wildlife conservation and management of Protected Areas in Africa, especially the Congo basin.

For WWF support, Pierre Brice MAGANGA, the project manager of the southern program, is the resource person and will be tasked with organizing the evaluation, consolidating and providing necessary information to the evaluation. Carmen IVALA and Régis MOUSSAVOU, will be in charge of financial aspects, Amour GUIBINGA and Cynthia N'SAFOU will give a support for technical aspects in Gamba respectively in Gamba and Mandji and Guy Aimé MOUSSAVOU will help for logistical arrangements.

VI. EVALUATION TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

The following *suggested* 15-day itinerary would allow the evaluator to visit key project sites as well as to conduct in-depth discussions with the project managers, field staff, partners and stakeholders. The indicative timetable for the mission is determined per day in the following table:

Location	Activities and/or Travel in Gabon	Duration of the mission in Gabon (days)														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Libreville	Arrival in Libreville (in Evening)															
Libreville	Interviews with WWF and partners as Direction Générale des Aires Protégées (DGFAP), Responsable cellule scientifique de l'ANPN, SE de l'ANPN, Olam, Luxury Green Resorts,															
Mandji	Field Visit (Doussala path and saline) & Meeting with Forestry Company "CBG" representative, PROLAB team, local farmers, primary schools teachers, Mayor of the town of Mandji and Prefect of the department of Ndolou															
Gamba	Field visit (Plantations, honey project, "grande Boucle" in the Loango National Park) & Meetings with local partners: Loango National Park Conservator, Chief of the Sette-Cama's Wildlife Brigade, local NGOs (Ibonga, Kussu, Diboty), Smithsonian Institute, local farmers, Assala representative, CCGL Président, Setté-Cama African Water.															
Tchibanga	Interview with Moukalaba-Doudou National Park conservator															
Mouila	Interview with the Provincial Director of water and forests, visit of Olam Plantation and interview with the local representative															
Libreville	Back to Libreville															
Libreville	Interview with other stakeholders (search for additional information)															
Libreville	Debrief in the office															

The evaluation key deliverables **written in French** are the following:

- Inception report including the report of the meeting with the NL team
- A presentation in French of the methodology and a feedback meeting on the initial findings to the southern programme team in Gamba and to the Core team in Libreville
- A draft report
- A final report

A first version of the report will be submitted no later than two weeks after the end of the field mission. A suggested outline can be found in the annex. The final evaluation report should be submitted in hard copy and electronic version two weeks after receipt of comments from mission sponsors. The evaluator will include the following performance ratings in his/her analysis:

- 4:** Highly Satisfactory - Results were achieved at or higher than expected level
- 3:** Satisfactory - Positive achievements outweigh shortfalls
- 2:** Unsatisfactory - Positive achievements are weak in relation to shortfalls or negative factors
- 1:** Highly unsatisfactory- Serious deficiencies/shortfalls and few positive achievements
- N/A:** Criteria not evaluated (requires explanation of why not evaluated or not applicable).

VII. BUDGET, FUNDING, AND PAYMENT TERMS

7.1 Financial conditions

The costs of the international plane ticket will be paid directly by the Program. Field trips will be provided by the Southern Program too. Accommodation, visa and airport tax costs will be reimbursed by the Program to the consultant on the basis of the original supporting documents. All amounts include any and all charges, expenses, fees and taxes. The budget available for the costs of fees and per diems of the expert amounts to 15,000 euros including tax. This amount cannot be exceeded for any reason.

7.2 Disbursement scheme

Schedule of Payments to Team Leader	Due Date	Payment %	Total €
When signing the contract	February, 24 to 28, 2025	40%	6 000
Submission of draft evaluation outputs	April, 01-04 2025	30%	4 500
Final payment on approval of evaluation outputs	April, 14-18 2025	30%	4 500
Total Payment			15 000

VIII. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Proposals in French can be submitted until February 17, 2025 before 13.00h Gabon time.

Applications must include the following:

- Cover letter setting out interest in and suitability for this consultancy role against the role requirements, including a statement that there are no conflicts of interest
- Proposed methodological approach
- The daily fees and the amount of per diems
- CV(s) and evidence of expertise in conducting evaluations, including qualitative participatory approaches

Please submit applications to EMassavala@wwfgab.org copied to pbmaganga@wwfgab.org. We will not be able to consider proposals that do not meet submission guidelines.

The consultancy will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- Relevant experience of consultant
- Proposed evaluation methodology
- Understanding of the Congo basin and nature conservation context
- Feasibility and value for money

Annexes

Documents available for review:

- The technical proposal of the southern programme (appendix 1);
- The financial proposal of the southern programme (appendix 2);
- The monitoring plan of the project (appendix 3);
- The annual work plans (appendix 4);
- The Technical Progress Reports of years 1 and 2–TPR–(appendix 5);
- The financial reports of Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 of FY23 ; of Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 of YF24 and Q1,Q2 of FY25 (appendix 6);
- The ONGs (IBONGA and Conservation Justice) grants for FY 23 (appendix 7)
- The report of the evaluation of the third phase FY18-FY21 (appendix 8)
- The protocol of data collection using camera traps for large mammal’s survey in Moukalaba-Doudou National (appendix 9)
- The report of the Moukalaba-Doudou NP large mammals survey (appendix 10)

Stakeholders to be interviewed:

The evaluator will do semi-structured interviews both with the field staff involved in the implementation of the program activities and our partners in Libreville and in the field (Rabi, Mandji, Tchibanga and Gamba). In Libreville, the assessor will meet with representatives of the Ministry of Water and Forests, the Directeur Général de la Faune et des Aires Protégées (DGFAP), the ministry of the environment, the National Agency for National Parks, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Tourism, Olam, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation Justice and Space for Giant.

In the field, the assessor will meet the representatives of the ministries and agencies listed above, namely the Provincial Director of Water and Forests of Ngounié (Mouila), Olam (Mouila), the ProLab team and the WWF team (Mandji); the curator of Moukalaba-Doudou national park (Tchibanga), the curator of Loango national park and the head of the wildlife brigade of Sette-Cama, the head of the agricultural sector, Ibonga, Kussu, Diboty, Luxury Green Resorts (LGR), Sette-Cama African Water, associations of farmers and local farmers and the prefecture and departmental council (Gamba).

Suggested outline of the evaluation report:

Box Report Table of Contents Template

The following provides a suggested outline for an evaluation report. While this should be easily applied to evaluations of simpler projects or programmes, adaptation will be needed to ensure reports of more complex programmes (e.g. Country Offices, multi-country regions, eco-regions, Network Initiatives) are well organised, easy to read and navigate, and not too lengthy.

Title Page

- ✓ Report title, project or programme title, and contract number (if appropriate), Date of report, Authors and their affiliation, Locator map (if appropriate)

Executive Summary (between 2 to 4 pages)

- ✓ Principal findings and recommendations, organized by the six core evaluation criteria
- ✓ Summary of lessons learned

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Body of the report (no more than 25 pages)

A. Introduction (max 3 pages)

- ✓ Concise presentation of the project/programme characteristics
- ✓ Purpose, objectives, and intended use of the evaluation (reference and attach the ToR as an annex)
- ✓ Evaluation methodology and rationale for approach (reference and attach as annexes the mission itinerary; names of key informants; a list of consulted documents; and any synthesis tables containing project/programme information used in the exercise)
- ✓ Composition of the evaluation team, including any specific roles of team members

B. Project/Programme Overview (max 5 pages)

- ✓ Concise summary of the project or programme's history, evolution, purpose, objectives, and strategies to achieve conservation goals (attach theory of change including conceptual model, results chain or logical framework and project monitoring system as annexes)
- ✓ Essential characteristics: context, underlying rationale, stakeholders and beneficiaries
- ✓ Summarise WWF's main interest in this project or programme

C. Evaluation Findings (3-5 pages)

- ✓ Findings organised by each of the six core evaluation criteria, including sufficient but concise rationale.
- ✓ Tables, graphics, and other figures to help convey key findings

D. Recommendations (3-5pages)

- ✓ Recommendation organised each of the six core evaluation criteria, including sufficient but concise rationale – recommendations should be specific, actionable and numbered.
- ✓ Project/programme performance rating tables to provide a quick summary of performance and to facilitate comparison with other projects/programmes (see the Summary Table Part B, below).

E. Overall Lessons Learned (max 3 pages)

- ✓ Lessons learned regarding what worked, what didn't work, and why
- ✓ Lessons learned with wider relevance, that can be generalised beyond the project

F. Conclusions

- ✓ General summation of key findings and recommendations

Annexes

- ✓ Terms of Reference
- ✓ Evaluation methodology detail
- ✓ Itinerary with key informants
- ✓ Documents consulted
- ✓ Project/programme theory of change/ logical framework/ conceptual model/ list of primary goals and objectives
- ✓ Specific project/programme and monitoring data, as appropriate
- ✓ Summary tables of progress towards outputs, objectives, and goals
- ✓ Maps
- ✓ Recommendations summary table