



## **Wetlands International, Africa Office**

### **Reference: WI 2 PO 17**

#### **International Waterbird Census (IWC): Building Capacity for the Conservation and Monitoring of Coastal Wetland Birds in West Africa**

**Title:** Project Officer

**Starting Date:** July, 2017

**Reports To:** Project Manager

**Coordinates With:** technical team, head office IWC staff, communications staff, project managers, freelancers and contractors.

**Staff Reporting:** none

#### **Background**

Wetlands International is a global network that is dedicated to safeguarding and restoring wetlands for people and nature. We are driven by the knowledge that safeguarding and restoring wetlands is urgent and vital for water security, biodiversity, climate regulation, sustainable development and human health.

Operating in more than 20 countries, the organization has its head office in the Netherlands, an African regional office based in Dakar, Senegal and country offices in Eastern and West Africa.

Wetlands International Africa consists of a head office in Dakar, Senegal and country offices in Mali, Guinea Bissau, Kenya and project offices in several countries. In country offices we are able to implement our work on the ground.

In West Africa, Wetlands International Africa's work, conducted with partners and allies involves the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems using a unique combination of conservation and restoration methods with the advancement of alternative livelihoods and capacity development. Biodiversity conservation is a core element of the work of Wetlands International and this is implemented through dedicated biodiversity projects and through integrating biodiversity in other projects. The Project officer will be part our biodiversity team in charge of the water bird aspects of the biodiversity portfolio.

**Wetlands International-Africa** is launching a new project supported by the **MAVA Foundation** under its **Outcome Action Plan (OAP) for Coastal Wetland Birds in West Africa**. The project, titled *IWC: Building Capacity for the Conservation and Monitoring of Coastal Wetland Birds in West Africa*, aims to strengthen networks for the conservation and monitoring of coastal waterbirds and their key sites between Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau. This region supports the greatest numbers of waterbirds in coastal Africa. The first phase of the project runs

from 2017 until the end of 2019. The project will be managed by the Wetlands International Africa Office based in Dakar, Senegal.

### **Purpose or the Position**

As a member of the Wetlands International Africa technical team, the Project Officer will play a key role in ensuring the day-to-day development and implementation and eventual success and conclusion of the project. The Project Officer will be directed by the Project Manager and guided by a Project Advisor, with further support from technical staff within the Wetlands International network. The Project Steering Committee will guide the project itself.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Working to annual work plan agreed with the project manager and within the African Strategy and the global Stream Implementation Plan for Healthy Wetland Nature, the Project Officer will:

- Strengthen the management and co-ordination of the International Waterbird Census in West Africa, focused on the countries in Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.
- Work with Wetlands International and with academic partners to build waterbird capacity in West Africa through a targeted programme of support for Masters and PhD positions and strengthened capacity of local universities.
- Develop a programme of capacity-building for fieldworkers and volunteer networks to gain competence in the identification and counting of waterbirds and in site monitoring.
- Organise a programme of workshops and monthly field events to fulfil project planning, capacity-building and site-based monitoring and conservation.
- Support the development of and work with national waterbird census networks, through close liaison with National Coordinators (NCs).
- Develop procedures for implementing regional and site monitoring strategies and year-round sustainable monitoring plans, in liaison with regional partners and key site managers.
- Coordinate annual and more regular monitoring through the IWC, and ensure the efficient submission and collation of data.
- Through the support of the Wetlands International Headquarters, especially its Technical Officer responsible for the IWC, gain competence and familiarity with the IWC database, and support data managers in West Africa to manage their own national data and work effectively with the IWC database.
- With assistance of the Project Advisor and the IWC coordinator for the African Eurasian Region, assess the population sizes, distribution and trends of waterbirds along the West African coastline and the main threats to birds and sites.
- Stimulate NCs to produce annual national IWC reports and compile and produce annual regional reports focused on the status and trends of coastal wetland birds and their sites.

- Work with key site managers and research staff to determine and map areas needed by waterbirds to fulfil their life cycles, to build monitoring into site management plans, to improve surveillance and to develop procedures for minimising disturbance to waterbirds.
- Work with regional and local partners to assess potential socio-economic and cultural values of wetland birds in the region.
- Work closely with national and regional partners, notably with PRCM, to ensure a strong advocacy message for waterbirds in West Africa.
- Support countries to implement relevant MEAs, especially AEWA and Ramsar, including through targeted campaigns linked to World Migratory Bird Day and World Wetlands Day.
- Work closely with BirdLife International and local partner organisations to ensure effective collaboration with BirdLife projects focused on coastal seabirds and migratory birds (especially within the framework of the 'Alcyon programme' and project 'CMB').
- Actively engage in fund-raising, especially for sustainability of the IWC in West Africa, as part of a portfolio of Biodiversity projects.
- In liaison with the Project Manager, organise monthly project management team meetings and support a mid-term and end-of-project evaluation.
- Oversee and contribute to the development of publications and other outreach materials or media, ensures effective communication of research findings towards specific government and private sector target audiences;
- Coordinate project reporting according to MAVA reporting schedules.

### **Expectation for the Position**

The successful candidate will be a creative mind and dynamic young West African professional with field, ornithological and data management and analysis experience, and proven ability in report writing.

### **Qualifications Required**

#### Education

At minimum BSc in biology; a Msc. Degree preferred

#### Experience and Core Competencies:

This is a medium level position in which the post holder is expected to bring a proven track record but also further learn and grow in the position and the regional and international network of Wetlands International and other stakeholders and contribute to establishing a biodiversity portfolio.

- 3 – 5 years of field experience in ornithology and exposure to wider biodiversity conservation
- Affinity and experience with data management and analysis and reporting

- High level of enthusiasm and motivation for engaging quickly in a new and exciting project
- Have good organisational and interpersonal skills
- Willingness to work in a team but with a reasonable degree of independence
- Fluency in written and spoken French and a strong ability in English are essential; working level of Portuguese is also desirable
- Willingness to work with a wide range of partners (governmental, academic and non-governmental) and to travel within the region and to Europe
- Eagerness to learn and to gain experience through the project
- Readiness to engage in fund-raising and meeting with donors
- Familiar with 1 or more countries of the program
- Proficiency with relevant technology and software.
- Ability to prioritize and meet deadlines

**To apply:**

Send a cover letter and a resume (maximum 4 pages in one document) detailing your experience in relation to the above areas, with the position and the reference in the subject line.

Email: [hr@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:hr@wetlands-africa.org)

**Application Deadline: 25 August 2017**

Only selected candidates will be contacted