Laikipia Conservancies Association

Nanyuki, Kenya

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

FOR

PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CARRY OUT A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF THE NAIBUNGA CORRIDOR TO ASSESS ITS ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS, IDENTIFY KEY WILDLIFE HABITATS, AND EVALUATE POTENTIAL THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

RFP Reference: RFP/LCA/2026/OCT/NAIBUNGA-ECO

Project: Comprehensive Ecological Survey of the Naibunga Corridor

Project Location: Naibunga Community Conservancies (Lower, Central, and Upper) — Laikipia County

Consultancy Type: Technical/Research Consultancy

Duration: 10–12 weeks

Expected Start Date: November 2026

1. Background and Context

The Laikipia Conservancies Association (LCA) is a member-led organization of Conservancies in Laikipia County. LCA works to promote sustainable coexistence between wildlife, pastoralist communities, and conservation enterprises, recognizing that the long-term viability of wildlife conservation in Laikipia depends on the active participation and economic empowerment of communities.

The Naibunga Corridor — spanning the Lower, Central, and Upper Naibunga Community Conservancies — forms a critical wildlife dispersal and connectivity link within the wider Laikipia-Samburu-Meru ecosystem, facilitating the seasonal movement of elephant, large carnivores, and other wide-ranging species between core protected areas and community rangelands. The corridor's ecological integrity underpins the viability of wildlife populations across the landscape and the tourism, livestock, and conservation-based livelihoods that depend on them.

Despite its significance, the corridor faces mounting pressure from land-use change, subdivision and fencing of group ranches, expansion of settlement and cultivation, unregulated resource extraction, invasive species encroachment, and climate-related degradation of rangeland and riparian habitats. There is currently no comprehensive, up-to-date ecological baseline that maps habitat condition, documents key wildlife use areas, and identifies the specific threats undermining corridor function across its full length.

Without such evidence, the LCA and its member conservancies are unable to prioritise habitat restoration investments, advocate credibly for land-use planning safeguards, or design targeted interventions to secure the corridor's long-term connectivity function.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) sets out the scope, methodology, deliverables, and requirements for a consultancy to conduct a rigorous ecological survey of the Naibunga Corridor, generating actionable evidence to guide the LCA and its members in corridor conservation planning and biodiversity safeguarding.

The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the prime donor and implemented by Conservation International (CI) as the GEF Implementing Agency, in partnership with the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, the State Department for Wildlife, the Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Association (KWCA), the Laikipia Conservancies Association (LCA), and other conservation partners.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to generate a comprehensive, evidence-based ecological assessment of the Naibunga Corridor that characterises current habitat conditions, identifies and maps key wildlife habitats and movement areas, and evaluates the nature, extent, and severity of threats to biodiversity and corridor connectivity. The assessment will combine ecological field survey, spatial analysis, and community and stakeholder engagement to produce a credible baseline and a set of prioritised, actionable recommendations.

The findings will directly inform the LCA's corridor conservation strategy, support land-use planning engagement with member conservancies and county authorities, and provide a baseline against which future change in corridor ecological condition can be measured.

This assessment must be: ecologically rigorous and scientifically defensible; spatially explicit; community-informed and locally grounded; and practically actionable within the operational and financial context of the LCA and its partner conservancies.

3. Objectives of the Study

3.1 Overall Objective

To produce a comprehensive, spatially explicit ecological assessment of the Naibunga Corridor that characterizes habitat condition, maps key wildlife habitats and movement areas, and evaluates threats to biodiversity, generating actionable evidence to guide corridor conservation planning and resource allocation by the Laikipia Conservancies Association.

3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To assess and map the current ecological condition of habitat types across the Naibunga Corridor, including rangeland, riparian, woodland, and dispersal zones.
2. To identify and characterise key wildlife habitats, including core use areas, breeding and calving grounds, and seasonal refugia within the corridor.
3. To map wildlife movement patterns and connectivity pinch-points along the corridor, with particular attention to elephant and large carnivore movement.
4. To assess vegetation composition, cover, and condition, including identification of degraded areas and invasive species infestation.
5. To evaluate land-use change within and adjacent to the corridor, including fencing, subdivision, settlement expansion, and cultivation encroachment.
6. To identify and assess other threats to biodiversity, including unregulated resource extraction, poaching pressure, human-wildlife conflict hotspots relevant to corridor function, and climate-related degradation.
7. To assess water resource availability and distribution and its influence on wildlife movement and habitat use across the corridor.
8. To document community perceptions of corridor condition, land-use trends, and wildlife movement changes over time.
9. To assess existing conservation and land management interventions within the corridor and their effectiveness in maintaining connectivity.
10. To identify priority zones for habitat restoration, threat mitigation, and connectivity safeguarding.
11. To conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of ecological, land-use, and climate-related threats to corridor integrity.
12. To generate targeted, evidence-based recommendations for corridor conservation, differentiated by site, threat type, and habitat priority.
13. To provide an ecological baseline for the corridor against which future monitoring and change detection can be measured.

3.3 Assessment Components Summary

No.	Assessment Component	Objective Focus
1	Habitat Condition Mapping	Vegetation type, cover, condition, degradation extent
2	Key Wildlife Habitat Identification	Core use areas, breeding/calving grounds
3	Connectivity & Movement Analysis	Movement corridors, pinch-points, dispersal patterns
4	Vegetation & Invasive Species Assessment	Composition, cover, invasive infestation
5	Land-Use Change Analysis	Fencing, subdivision, settlement, cultivation encroachment
6	Threat Identification	Extraction, poaching pressure, HWC hotspots, climate degradation
7	Water Resource Assessment	Availability, distribution, influence on wildlife use

No.	Assessment Component	Objective Focus
8	Community Perceptions	Perceived trends in land use, wildlife movement, corridor condition
9	Existing Interventions Review	Current conservation measures, coverage, effectiveness
10	Risk Assessment	Ecological, land-use, and climate-related risk dimensions

4. Scope of Work

The assessment will be conducted in a phased approach, combining desk-based research, ecological fieldwork, spatial analysis, and community engagement to generate actionable, validated findings. Each phase builds cumulatively toward a comprehensive and defensible assessment.

Phase	Title	Primary Purpose	Key Output
1	Inception & Design	Establish research parameters, tools, and site preparation	Inception Report
2	Ecological Field Survey	Generate primary ecological and spatial evidence across the corridor	Field Survey Data Package
3	Spatial & Threat Analysis	Habitat mapping, connectivity analysis, and threat assessment	Analysis Reports
4	Synthesis & Recommendations	Integrate findings and produce actionable guidance	Ecological Survey Report

5. Deliverables

The table below sets out all deliverables by phase.

Phase	Deliverable	Key Content	Deadline
1	Inception Report	Methodology, sampling strategy, survey protocols, workplan, site entry plan	End of Week 2
1	Field Survey Instruments	Transect/plot protocols, KII and FGD guides, spatial data recording templates	End of Week 3
2	Field Survey Data Package	Vegetation and wildlife sign data, GPS tracklines, field notes, interview transcripts	End of Week 7
3	Habitat & Connectivity Analysis Report	GIS maps, habitat condition classification, movement corridor mapping	End of Week 9
3	Threat & Land-Use Change Report	Threat mapping, land-use change analysis, severity ranking	End of Week 9
3	Risk Assessment Report	Ecological, land-use, and climate-related risk analysis	End of Week 9
4	Validation Session Reports	Community and conservancy feedback and corrections	Week 10
4	Final Ecological Survey Report	Integrated findings, habitat and threat maps, recommendations, M&E framework	End of Week 12

6. Research Design and Methodology

6.1 Community Entry and Research Partnerships

Before any field data collection begins, the consultant will undertake a structured community entry process across each conservancy segment. Formal introduction meetings will be held with conservancy management,

community elders, and other relevant gatekeepers before any survey activities are deployed. The purpose, scope, and expected use of the research will be explained transparently in local languages.

Working through the LCA and partner conservancy teams, the consultant will identify and work with community liaison partners and, where appropriate, community wildlife scouts in each site to support field access, local knowledge input, and community feedback throughout the process.

The research team will commit to at least one structured feedback session per conservancy segment before the study concludes, sharing preliminary findings in accessible, plain-language format and genuinely inviting community and conservancy response.

6.2 Ethical Standards and Research Permits

The consultant will coordinate with the LCA in ensuring all data collection instruments, consent procedures, and data storage protocols comply with NACOSTI requirements and Kenya's Data Protection Act 2019. Specifically:

- Free, prior, and informed consent will be obtained from all interview and focus group participants, with consent procedures adapted for low-literacy contexts
- Consent is ongoing and dynamic; participants retain the right to withdraw at any point without consequence
- Community and traditional ecological knowledge shared during the study will not be appropriated, commercialised, or attributed without the explicit and ongoing consent of the individuals and communities who hold it
- Field survey activities will be conducted with due regard for wildlife safety and minimal disturbance to habitats and species

6.3 Data Management and Quality Assurance

All field survey protocols and instruments will be piloted before full deployment, and piloting must be documented in the inception report. The consultant will implement a field supervision protocol including daily review of collected data, GPS data quality checks, and secure, systematic data storage in compliance with the Kenya Data Protection Act 2019.

6.4 Data Analysis and Synthesis

Ecological and spatial data will be analysed using GIS software (QGIS or ArcGIS) for habitat classification, connectivity mapping, and land-use change analysis, complemented by appropriate statistical analysis of vegetation and wildlife sign data. Qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs will be analysed thematically using a structured codebook applied consistently across all conservancy segments. Ecological, spatial, and community-knowledge findings will be systematically triangulated at the analysis stage.

Before findings are finalised, preliminary results will be shared with conservancy management and community representatives through structured validation sessions. Where validation surfaces significant divergence from the research team's interpretation, both perspectives will be presented transparently in the final report.

7. Coordination and Oversight

The consultant will work in close and regular coordination with the LCA team, who will serve as the primary point of contact throughout the study.

The LCA will fulfil the following responsibilities throughout the engagement:

- Provide the consultant with timely access to all relevant project documents, institutional contacts, and background materials at the commencement of the study
- Facilitate formal introductions to conservancy management, county government offices, community leadership structures, and relevant stakeholders across the Naibunga Corridor
- Review and provide written feedback on all submitted deliverables within ten working days of receipt
- Coordinate and accompany the consulting team to review meetings at the close of each phase

The consultant will fulfil the following coordination responsibilities:

- Submit a brief fortnightly progress update to the LCA, flagging any risks to timeline, scope, or quality
- Notify the LCA immediately of any ecological, safety, or community sensitivities arising during fieldwork
- Participate in all scheduled coordination meetings and validation sessions
- Ensure all deliverables are submitted in the format and by the deadlines specified in the agreed workplan

No phase of the study may commence without written sign-off from the LCA on the deliverables of the preceding phase.

8. Required Qualifications and Experience

The LCA seeks to engage a consulting firm, research organisation, or consortium with demonstrated expertise across the ecological, spatial, and community-engagement dimensions of this assessment. This is a multi-disciplinary assignment requiring specialisation across ecology and habitat assessment, wildlife biology, GIS and remote sensing, and community-led research practice in Kenyan conservation landscapes. Applications from consulting firms or consortia with complementary expertise distributed across team members are strongly encouraged.

8.1 Essential Organisational Requirements

- Documented field research experience in Laikipia County or comparable Kenyan ASAL conservation landscapes
- Demonstrated experience engaging with pastoralist and agropastoral communities as genuine research partners, including documentation of how findings were returned to and used by those communities
- Track record of producing ecological research that has directly informed conservation programme design or land-use planning decisions
- Clear understanding of Kenya's Data Protection Act 2019 and NACOSTI research permit processes
- Existing institutional relationships with KWS, Laikipia County, or conservancy networks in the target areas are a significant advantage

8.2 Desirable Qualifications

- Prior experience conducting ecological or corridor connectivity assessments specifically in the Naibunga Conservancies or comparable Laikipia landscapes
- Proficiency in one or more local languages spoken in the target communities — Maa, Kikuyu, or Samburu
- Experience developing corridor or connectivity monitoring frameworks
- Familiarity with NDMA drought monitoring data and its relevance to seasonal habitat and wildlife movement dynamics

8.3 What will not be accepted

- Applications that propose to cover all required roles with fewer than three named team members, unless compelling and specific evidence is provided that individual team members genuinely hold multiple specialisations at the required depth

- Applications that name team members for credentialing purposes without providing credible evidence of their actual commitment to and availability for this specific assignment
- Consulting firms or individuals with an undisclosed conflict of interest in conservancies or enterprises with a financial interest in the outcome of this assessment
- Applications that cannot demonstrate genuine, field-based ecological survey experience in Kenyan pastoral or conservation landscapes and propose to rely primarily on desk-based research or remote data collection
- Applications that describe community engagement in generic or tokenistic terms without providing specific, evidenced examples of non-extractive research practice from prior engagements

9. Application Requirements

Applications must include the following documents, submitted as a complete package. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

9.1 Required Documents

a) Letter of Interest — maximum two pages, setting out why the firm or consortium is specifically suited to this assignment and what distinguishes their approach to ecological corridor assessment in the Naibunga context.

b) Technical Proposal — maximum 12 pages excluding annexes, covering:

- Proposed methodology and survey design
- Team composition, roles, and how expertise is distributed across the required functional areas
- Approach to community entry and non-extractive research practice
- Proposed workplan with phasing, milestones, and explicit account of the NACOSTI research permit timeline
- Identification of key risks to the study and proposed mitigation strategies

c) Financial Proposal — itemised budget in KES, clearly distinguishing:

- Professional fees by team member and role, with daily rates and days of effort specified
- Field survey costs including equipment, camera traps, and field assistant recruitment
- Travel and subsistence costs across the Naibunga Lower, Central, and Upper Conservancies
- Community liaison partner compensation, explicitly budgeted at a fair and respectful level
- GIS, remote sensing, and data analysis costs
- Community and conservancy validation session costs
- Any other direct costs with justification

d) Curriculum Vitae for all proposed team members including relevant qualifications, summary of ecological and conservation field experience, and a list of relevant recent publications or technical reports.

e) Two samples of comparable prior work — preferably including at least one ecological or corridor connectivity assessment conducted in Kenya or a comparable East African context.

f) Conflict of interest declaration — a signed statement by the lead applicant confirming that no undisclosed conflict of interest exists and committing to immediate disclosure if any conflict arises during the engagement.

10. Assessment and Selection Criteria

All applications will be evaluated through a two-stage process. Stage 1 assesses mandatory threshold requirements on a pass/fail basis. Only applications passing Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2 for full technical and financial evaluation.

10.1 Stage 1: Mandatory Threshold Requirements

Requirement	Pass Criteria
Advanced degree	At least one team member holds a Master's or PhD in a relevant discipline
Minimum experience	Team leader demonstrates minimum 10 years of applied ecological field research experience
Kenya field experience	Firm demonstrates documented field research experience in Laikipia County or comparable Kenyan landscapes
Ecological/wildlife expertise	At least one team member demonstrates specific habitat or wildlife ecology field experience in East Africa
GIS and spatial competency	At least one team member demonstrates specific GIS and remote sensing mapping experience
Community engagement competency	Application demonstrates credible experience in community-led, non-extractive research practice
Complete application	All required documents submitted

10.2 Stage 2: Technical and Financial Evaluation

Overall Weighting: Technical 75% / Financial 25%

This weighting reflects the technical complexity and community-sensitive nature of the assignment. The LCA is committed to selecting the firm that offers the strongest methodology, deepest ecological and spatial expertise, and most credible field-based survey approach within a well-justified and realistic budget.

No.	Criterion	Clause No.
1	Technical approach, methodology, and survey design	10.2.1
2	Ecological expertise and understanding of the Naibunga Corridor context	10.2.2
3	Spatial analysis and GIS capability	10.2.3
4	Community-led engagement approach	10.2.4
5	Team composition and relevant experience	10.2.5
6	Workplan and operational management approach	10.2.6
	Total	—

11. Submission Details and Tentative Timeline

Applications must be submitted electronically to procurement@laikipiaconservancies.org. by no later than 4:00 PM on 15th November 2026. Applicants should clearly indicate the RFP reference number in the subject line of the email. **Hard copy submissions will not be considered. Only complete applications submitted to the email address above by the stated deadline will be evaluated.**

Item	Details
Open Advertisement	30th October 2026
Close Application	15th November 2026, 4:00 PM
Mode of Submission	Electronic submission to procurement@laikipiaconservancies.org. only — hard copy submissions will not be considered
Work Commencement	Immediately upon contract signing

Item	Details
Enquiries	procurement@laikipiaconservancies.org.

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information relating to this RFP, including the RFP documents, technical and financial proposals, and any data, reports or records arising from the assignment, shall be treated as confidential. Applicants and the selected Consultant shall not disclose such information to any third party, or use it for any purpose other than preparing an application or performing the consultancy contract, without the prior written consent of Laikipia Conservancies Association.

Personal data (including staff CVs, referee details, bank details, and community or beneficiary information) shall be collected, processed, stored and shared only as necessary for the purposes of this RFP and the consultancy contract, and in accordance with the Kenya Data Protection Act, 2019 and its regulations. Applicants and the Consultant shall put in place appropriate technical and organisational safeguards against unauthorised access, loss, alteration or disclosure, and shall notify Laikipia Conservancies Association promptly of any suspected data breach.

Laikipia Conservancies Association, Conservation International and the Global Environment Facility may access and process information submitted by applicants for evaluation, verification, audit and reporting purposes, subject to these safeguards. These obligations continue after the completion or termination of the consultancy contract.

13. LCA-KWCA-CI Prohibited Practices

LCA-KWCA-Conservation International (CI) requires that all Delivery Partners, applicants, consultants and their sub-contractors, employees and agents observe the highest standards of ethics and integrity during the procurement process and in the performance of any resulting contract, and that they do not engage in any Prohibited Practice. For the purposes of this RFP, Prohibited Practices include the following:

- **Corrupt practice** – offering, giving, receiving or soliciting, directly or indirectly, anything of value to improperly influence the actions of another party.
- **Fraudulent practice** – any act or omission, including a misrepresentation, that knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a party in order to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation.
- **Coercive practice** – impairing or harming, or threatening to impair or harm, directly or indirectly, any party or its property to improperly influence the actions of a party.
- **Collusive practice** – an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including improperly influencing the actions of another party.
- **Obstructive practice** – deliberately destroying, falsifying, altering or concealing evidence material to an investigation, making false statements to investigators, or threatening or harassing any party to prevent disclosure of matters relevant to an investigation, or acting to impede CI's audit or inspection rights.

An applicant found to have engaged in a Prohibited Practice will have its application rejected and, where a contract has been awarded, the contract may be terminated, without prejudice to any other remedy available to Laikipia Conservancies Association or Conservation International, including debarment from future procurement and engagements and referral to the relevant authorities. Any suspected Prohibited Practice shall be reported promptly to Laikipia Conservancies Association. The full CI Prohibited Practices document is available at the link below, and prevails over this summary:

14. Code of Conduct and Ethics

Applicants and the selected Consultant shall conduct themselves ethically and with integrity in all dealings under this RFP and any resulting contract.

The full Code of Conduct is herein linked (https://www.conservation.org/about/our-commitment-to-ethics/code-of-conduct). Delivery Partners are expected to review and adhere to the principles outlined in the Code of Conduct.