



Call for Proposals (CfP)

Invitation

Ethiopia/ Amhara Region

"Resilient livelihoods and sustainable ecosystems in the Simien Mountains National Park (SMNP) woredas"

Modality of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)

 Austrian
Development
Agency

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Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
A.S. L	Above See Level
AWF	African Wildlife Fund
CBO	Community-based organisation
CfP	Call for Proposals
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DA	Development Agents
DP	Development Partners
EFCCC	Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission
EGSIA	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Assessment
EGSIM	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management
EU	European Union
EWCA	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GMP	General Management Plan
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoC&T	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
MOFEC	Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation
MWCA	Ministry for Women's and Children's Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGZ	North Gondar Zone
PAC	Park Advisory Committee
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMNP	Simien Mountains National Park
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation

1. Title of the Call for Proposals

"Resilient livelihoods and sustainable ecosystems in the Simien Mountains National Park (SMNP) woredas"

Country/Region: Ethiopia, Amhara National Regional State, North Gondar Zone

2. Introduction and Context

Introduction

The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) has been engaged in supporting the rehabilitation and sustainable management of the Simien Mountains National Park (SMNP) and improving the food security situation of the communities in the North Gondar Zone (NGZ) since 1998. The ADC has supported the regional and federal government institutions' efforts both in the protection of the SMNP and maintaining its status as World Natural Heritage Site,¹ as well as the improvement of livelihoods of the communities living in districts (woredas) bordering SMNP.

Despite this remarkable effort, challenges persist affecting the sustainability of long-term rehabilitation and conservation of the SMNP and its ecosystem services, while at the same time enabling communities to reduce their direct dependency on the natural resources of the park. Community participation in park management and clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the surrounding communities related to natural resource use are crucial elements to reduce pressure on the parks' resources.

Building on the past long-standing experience and strong cooperation with the regional government, the ADC is committed to further support the country to enable the SMNP to meet and maintain international standards and to catch up with the national parks in East Africa in terms of conservation and management of endangered species and biodiversity, maintenance of ecosystems and environmental services while ensuring sustainable livelihood options and maximum socio-economic and environmental benefits for the surrounding communities of the SMNP by pursuing an integrated regional development and community-driven approach.

This Call for Proposals (CfP) invites interested development organisations to submit their proposal for sustainable, inclusive and conflict-sensitive development of the SMNP and surrounding woredas (Debark, Janamora and Beveda from the beginning and with possible extension to, Adarkay and Tselemit woredas in the subsequent years depending on the conflict situation in the border areas to Tigray). Applications

¹ The removal of SMNP from the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger has been achieved in May 2017 and coincided with the 50th anniversary of the SMNP

will be assessed with respect to the quality of the chosen approach, the appropriateness of the methodology and the proposed activities to achieve the specific outputs and outcomes, as well as efficiency of budgeted means according to the criteria listed in Annex 1.

The total available budget for this CfP is EUR 3.000.000,00. One proposal can be financed with this budget.

Context

ADC has provided strategic development support to Ethiopia for more than two decades, particularly in the Amhara region. The long-term commitment and initiatives contributed to improving the management and conservation in the SMNP through the development of the institutional landscape and support of food security efforts of the communities in the target areas. This was confirmed by the final evaluation of the last project phase, conducted by external consultants (the final evaluation report is accessible on the website as part of the documents of the call for proposal).

The project area is characterised by a high degree of poverty and vulnerability to climate risks, a high percentage of women headed households (about 25%) and gender disparities. The villages (kebeles) are located in very remote, high-land areas (3000-4000m a.s.l.), partly with steep terrains, erosive rains and predominant traditional farming systems - leading to widespread land degradation and erosion. The communities around the park have very limited livelihood options and are dependent on subsistence agriculture. Declining landholdings, over-exploitation and unsustainable farming systems are threatening the living conditions of the local communities; many of them affected by chronic food insecurity. The close proximity of the SMNP offers potential involvement in tourism related activities, but also results in reduced access to open grazing areas and other natural resources. Improved but still limited participation of the local communities in park management and limited knowledge about their rights and responsibilities concerning sustainable natural resource management pose additional barriers. Most of the households are vulnerable; they lack coping strategies to deal with shocks and natural disaster risks. Women are disproportionately affected by this. The recurring crises in Ethiopia are threatening the livelihoods of the people and cause impacts to the natural resources and the functioning of a sustainable ecosystem in the park.

In addition to the above-mentioned bottlenecks, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the socio-economic vulnerabilities in the country and deteriorated the food security of the target communities with tremendous effects on their livelihoods. The tourism flow to the SMNP areas has been seriously hampered by the pandemic and consequently all tourism related activities were disrupted in the target areas. Moreover, the instability due to the conflict between the government of Ethiopia and the Tigray Defence Force since November 2020, has at times expanded to Amhara region.

The current ongoing war and instability in the border areas to Tigray hampers access to Adarkay and Tselemit woredas at this moment. These woredas are likely to be difficult to access in the near future for project operations unless the conflict totally ceases. In general, the repercussion of this conflict has caused massive displacement, destruction of infrastructure and institutions, disruption of seasonal agricultural production and hampered the development efforts in the border areas. As the conflict commenced during the pick time of the meher agricultural season, the farming practices have been interrupted and the upcoming harvest is anticipated to be very low in the target areas. The war has especially affected the more vulnerable groups of the society mainly women, persons with disabilities, IDPs and elderly people.

In order to address the complex challenges of food insecurity, scarce natural resources, climate change, ongoing conflicts etc. as well as the lack of assets of the rural population, ADC is committed to continue its support to the SMNP woredas, focusing on the strengthening of socioeconomic and environmental resilience of rural households and communities through increased food security and diversified livelihood opportunities and to provide support to the SMNP management with a focus on enhancing community participation. A focus will be on women, youth and vulnerable people (particularly people with disabilities).

The planned project is situated in a context of two larger-scale KfW funded programs in the area. The first one has a focus on biodiversity conservation and institutional strengthening of the SMNP administration including eco-tourism development. The project is implemented by AWF and SMNP administration inside the Park for the period 2018- 2023. The second one has a focus on sustainable land management (SLM III) in four watersheds, three to the south and one to the north of the Park. It is implemented by local government institutions together with the consulting service GTEC and targets the buffer zones in Beyeda, Janamora, Adiarkay & Debark woredas. These watersheds have only limited overlap with the 42 SMNP-surrounding kebeles.

Another program by UNDP/UNWTO/UNESCO is currently in the design phase focusing on livelihood development in SMNP.

Moreover, there is also the ADC-funded resilience building project, implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation focusing on improving community resilience in Debark, Janamora and Tselemit woredas of NGZ.

The objective of improving livelihoods in the surrounding kebeles of SMNP, which are not yet covered by other programs is seen as a priority by all stakeholders and development partners. Consequently, with the planned project funded by this CfP, ADC envisages to fill this gap and reduce the pressure to the park.

Coordination, harmonisation and complementarity with the above-mentioned programmes is crucial and should be addressed by the applicants. In this respect, close cooperation should be envisaged with EWCA, as it has been responsible for the

elaboration of the SMNP General Management Plan (GMP) for a 10 years' period (2020 – 2030) with technical support from AWF/KfW (the approved GMP is accessible on the ADA website as part of the documents of the call for proposal). The project funded under this CfP should be aligned with the objectives of the GMP with particular focus on the livelihoods of the communities and the restoration of ecosystems.

For further information on ADC programmes please see <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/>².

3. Impact, Outcome and Outputs

Impact

Sustainable, gender-sensitive and inclusive development of the communities in and around the SMNP.

Project Objective

Improved livelihoods and resilience of the communities in and around SMNP hand in hand with empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable groups as well as improved conservation of the SMNP and resilience of its ecosystems.

The project will thus contribute to several SDGs, especially SDG 1, 2, 5, and 15.

Outcomes

- Natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services are well protected through community involvement in restoration, rehabilitation and conservation measures in the SMNP and surrounding kebeles.
- Livelihood options for women, youth and vulnerable groups are diversified and improved while at the same time climate-resilience and sustainable natural resource management are enhanced.
- Capacities of EWCA/SMNP in inclusive participatory approaches are enhanced and coordination mechanisms at relevant regional, zonal, woreda and kebele level are improved.

4. Target group(s), beneficiaries and partners

Target group(s) and beneficiaries

Target groups of the project are the different partners involved in the federal government institutions (especially EWCA and MOFEC), SMNP administration, regional,

² The overall objectives of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) are to support its partners in (i) reducing poverty, (ii) preserving environmental resources and (iii) safeguarding peace and human security. In its programmes and projects, ADC always pays attention to gender equality and takes the needs of children and persons with disabilities into consideration.

zonal, woreda and kebele administration and experts, the local civil society organizations, the private sector as well as local communities in the selected kebeles of the 5 woredas around the SMNP. In order to enable effective project management, only Debark, Janamora and Beyeda woredas are targeted from the beginning. The project target area should be expanded to Adarkay and Telemmit woredas, once the conflict has subsided and security improved and these areas can be accessed. Direct beneficiaries will be communities affected by the decreased access to natural resources due to National Park protection as well as residents of remote and hard-to-reach kebeles bordering the National Park. Moreover, households which have been affected by the current conflict and lost their assets will be targeted.

Main beneficiaries of the project should be women and youth as well as the most vulnerable people (i.e. persons with disabilities, elderly persons, extremely poor, female-headed households etc.).

Selection criteria for kebeles to be considered are accessibility to the project sites, park boundary, share of female-headed households and of households which have lost their assets due to the current conflict with Tigray, high population density, level of vulnerability, impact on livelihoods through Park restrictions (like loss of grazing areas), proximity to wildlife corridors, former/ongoing ADC intervention area/other donor programs, and motivation/interest of the community. The applicants are requested to weight the suggested criteria, include additional ones, if necessary, and suggest which combination of criteria is envisaged in order to obtain maximum positive impact (see maps, population details and proposals for criteria among the documents provided on the website). At least 1 kebele in each of the 5 woredas should be included. In total, at least 10 kebele should be targeted. In case the security situation does not improve and the two currently inaccessible woredas³ cannot be safely accessed, 10 kebeles in the remaining 3 woredas should be targeted.

Applicants are furthermore requested to provide estimated numbers and composition of the target group(s) and beneficiaries in their proposal.

Partners

The project will directly involve the concerned government units at the federal level (i.e. EWCA, MOFEC, MOA and MWCA) as well as their structures at regional, zonal, woreda and kebele levels. They shall be directly involved in the planning and implementation⁴, including monitoring and steering, of the project in accordance with their responsibilities and expertise. Other concerned institutions, like universities (Gondar & Debark), research centres, CBOs etc. shall be involved based on specific demands and potentials.

³ Ardakay and Tselemit woredas are directly bordering Tigray and are difficult to access at the moment, and can only be accessed safely if the conflict is totally ceased.

⁴ Due to current restrictions, under no circumstances are budget management tasks to be transferred to partners, no direct payments to government institutions can be made.

5. Guiding principles

Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM)⁵

Environmental and social sustainability as well as gender equality are fundamental to the achievement of development outcomes. Therefore, they should be systematically mainstreamed in programmes / projects. Proper EGSIM requires that social, gender and environmental opportunities and benefits are enhanced in the project. It further ensures that environmental, gender and social risks and adverse impacts are avoided, minimized, mitigated or managed. The promotion of environmental, gender and social standards and safeguards should thus be considered at the earliest stage of the design, systematically addressed during implementation and followed-up through monitoring and evaluation.⁶ The applicants shall outline potential environmental, gender and social risks, including risk mitigation and management.⁷

Environment and climate action

The project will adhere to an environmental-friendly approach. Potential negative environmental and social impacts of the project will be avoided by design or at least minimized and mitigated according to international safeguards. ADC applies a mainstreaming approach to ensure that environment; climate and disaster risk reduction measures are included in planning and design. A climate adaptation lens must be applied in the promotion of environmentally sustainable, ideally organic, agriculture. With a view to boosting resilience, local adaptation and/or mitigation measures shall be reflected in all project activities. Conservation of the SMNP and its ecosystems as well as ecosystem restoration should be guiding principles throughout the project. This implies sustainable natural resource management aiming at decreasing the pressure on the SMNP and its biodiversity values.

Gender

The project has a strong focus on gender equality and women's/girls' empowerment. Contributing to the intention of the EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GAPIII)⁸, ADC shall ensure that explicit benefits are to be delivered to women and girls either through gender equality as the main purpose or pursuing gender mainstreaming in the design and planning of interventions. Existing gender inequalities and barriers should be identified through an intersectional gender analysis and appropriate approaches and measures defined to ensure equal access and benefits through gender-responsive results and indicators. Gender should therefore

⁵ See: http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Handbuecher/Environmental_and_Social_Impact_Management/EGSIM_Manual_Juni2018.pdf

⁶ The implementing agency will be required to report on the guiding principles, challenges and risks faced as well as on mitigation measures applied in the annual progress reports

⁷ This might entail an environmental, gender and social impact assessment as well as a risk management and sustainability plan.

⁸ <https://euagenda.eu/publications/eu-external-action-gender-action-plan-gap-iii-2021-2025>

be mainstreamed throughout the project and the ADA minimum standards for gender should be fulfilled (see ADA policy document on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls)⁹.

Social Inclusion (Leave No One Behind)

To address poverty and exclusion, interventions shall focus on poor, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups as mentioned above. Emphasis should be given towards smallholder farmers who primarily depend on agriculture to sustain their livelihoods in marginalized areas and kebeles. A pro-poor focus should be applied emphasizing the inclusion of poor and vulnerable groups in decision-making that affect their lives, equality in access to resources and services as well as strengthened capabilities in order to cope with climate change impacts and other crises.

Conflict Sensitivity

The project will strictly adhere to a conflict sensitive approach, where the applicants shall demonstrate in all stages of the project cycle management (project design, implementation and monitoring) their capabilities to (a) understand the conflict context in which they are operating, in particular inter/intragroup tensions and dividing issues with a potential for conflict, as well as connecting factors with the potential to mitigate conflict and strengthen social cohesion; (b) understand the interaction between their project intervention and the (conflict) context; and (c) act upon that understanding in order to avoid unintentionally exacerbating tensions (*do no harm*), and to maximise the potential contribution to strengthen social cohesion and peacebuilding.

6. Planning principles

In general, the project will focus on the following **strategic approaches and principles** in managing this project and to ensure sustainability and inclusion:

- participatory and inclusive processes in project design and planning, implementation and decision-making;
- human rights-based approach, putting peoples' rights in the centre;
- community-driven innovations and development, ensuring bottom-up design, community ownership and sustainability;
- empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable people to ensure explicit benefits and participation in decision-making processes;
- sustainable and inclusive economic development through diversification of the rural economy and improved linkages to markets;

⁹ https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Leitlinien/Englisch/PD_Gender_2017_EN.pdf

- sustainable natural resource management and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- capacity development to enhance capabilities of local authorities, public service providers as well as smallholder farmers, and to enhance management and maintenance capacities for local communities;
- participatory land use and management, including promotion of improved access to natural resources (land) for women, youth and vulnerable people;
- conflict-sensitivity to ensure do-no-harm and to maximise potential peacebuilding impacts of the intervention;
- coherence, complementarity and coordination with other interventions of the humanitarian, development and/or peacebuilding sectors in line with the principles of the triple nexus approach¹⁰;
- application of systemic/integrated and innovative approaches, use of local knowledge/experiences; use of appropriate and context-specific technologies, facilitation of multi-stakeholder partnerships and joint learning.

The logic of the intervention shall be presented along with quantitative and qualitative results and representative, measurable indicators on each level (impact, outcome and outputs) and linked to relevant SDG targets. Gender-responsive, environmentally and socially inclusive/sensitive indicators shall be used to measure the performance of EGSIM. The underlying theory of change shall also refer to external factors that further or hinder the intended change and the assumptions on which it is built.

The mentioned cross-cutting issues, guiding principles and standards must be reflected in the intervention logic and specifically in the logical framework matrix submitted as part of the application under this CfP.

An inception phase of maximum 6 months can be envisaged for additional in-depth data collection, vulnerability, intersectional gender analysis, conflict sensitivity assessment as well as natural resource baseline information and climate risk analysis as well as other comprehensive analyses as required. Since the project will be located partially within a protected area, and is thus categorized as moderate risk, a limited in-depth EGSIA – focussing at least on the Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management Standard – will be required. All required terms of references shall be shared with the Austrian Coordination Office in Addis for review, comments and approval.

Should an inception phase be planned, an inception report should be presented to ADA for review and approval one month after the completion of the inception phase. This inception report should include the relevant information based on the activities of the inception phase (reports on in-depth data collection and other analysis shall be attached). A revised description and planning of the intervention (revised project

¹⁰ <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/643/643.en.pdf>

documents)¹¹ will be presented to ADA for review and approval after all necessary studies have been undertaken. The final selection of Kebeles targeted by the project, based on the selection criteria suggested in the proposal and informed by potential further in-depth analyses during the start/inception phase should also be included in the inception report or revised project documents.

Any knowledge documents as well as the administrative closure of the intervention have to be planned accordingly, so that these are completed at the end of the project. The audit should be commissioned in a timely manner so that the final audit report is available three months after project closure. The applicant has to outline an appropriate exit strategy in the proposal. The preparation of an external evaluation should be started in the first quarter of the third implementation year, so that the final evaluation report is available three months before project closure at the latest and can inform any subsequent engagement of partners.

7. Applicants / Implementing Agencies

Eligible applicants are **development organisations** as well as **equivalent institutions** as defined in Section 3, Subsection 2, of the Austrian Development Cooperation Act¹², which dispose of adequate administrative and project implementing capacities as well as accurate business performance.

Development organisations as defined by this Federal Act shall be non-profit making legal entities under private law provided that their objectives laid down in their statutes and their actual operations include development cooperation. Institutions, in particular of the legally recognised churches and religious communities, the provincial and local governments and other corporations under public law as well as enterprises, provided that they perform development cooperation as defined in Section 2, Subsection 3, of the Austrian Development Cooperation Act shall be treated as equivalent to development organisations.

Applicants must demonstrate experiences in all mentioned thematic areas of the CfP. Thus, applications under this CfP can be submitted by a consortium consisting of two or more eligible partner organisations/ institutions. Therefore, whenever reference is made to the “applicant” or “applicants” this term shall also refer to “consortium” or “consortia”.

The applicant must prove its eligibility by submitting constitution/ statutes, registration, ADA Financial Health Form and a proof of creditworthiness / financial soundness according to a recognized rating system (e.g. by Creditreform, Kreditschutzverband 1870, Bisnode, Crif, Dun & Bradstreet, Schufa, Moody’s, Fitch, DBRS).

¹¹ All mentioned documents shall be consistent amongst each other and be prepared in a manner that changes made against the originally approved versions can be easily tracked.

¹² See: <http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001847>

ADA will conduct a partner due diligence assessment in order to ascertain eligibility, proper registration and suitability with regard to the criteria stipulated in Annex 1.

Furthermore, already at the stage of proposal preparation applicants must take into account all standard guidelines and policy documents of the Austrian Development Cooperation as available from <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes>.

8. Budget allocation and general requirements

The total available budget allocated by ADA for this CfP is EUR 3.000.000,00. The Project shall commence latest on 1 December 2022.

Project proposals must meet the following conditions:

- The planned duration of the submitted project should be 36-42 months, including the inception phase.
- Any applicant may not submit more than one project proposal under this CfP.
- Any grant requested under this CfP may not exceed 95% of the total eligible costs of the project. Thus, the applicant must make a financial contribution (contribution in cash) of at least 5% to the proposed total project budget. This contribution shall be financed from the applicant's own resources or from third party contributions but must in any case originate from another source than public funding. The applicant must prove the availability of the contribution (bank statement, commitment for funding etc.).
- In addition, contributions in kind – such as provisions of materials and/or services – will be taken into consideration in the content and qualitative assessment provided that they add value to the achievement of the expected results of the project. These contributions cannot be budgeted and/or accounted for in financial reports/audits.
- The administrative costs for implementation by the applicant are limited to 10% of the total eligible direct project costs. For further information and definition of administrative costs see the guidelines on “Indirect Project Costs”¹³ on the website.
- The applicant shall be responsible for the payment of any taxes, fees, social charges or insurances related to the proposed project, the amount of which will be deemed to have been included in the project costs. With regards to possible tax exemption applicants are referred to the Agreement between the Ethiopian Government and the Republic of Austria on Technical and Financial Cooperation.

¹³ See https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Projektentwicklung/Englisch/Indirect_Project_Costs_PBE_July2019.pdf

9. Submission

The funding application consists of the following parts:

- Application form (including capability statement, reference projects, organigram, CVs etc.)
- Project proposal (detailed project description should not exceed 30 pages, font not smaller than Arial 10)
- Programme budget & Financing Plan, including budget notes
- Logical framework
- Time Schedule
- Environmental, Gender and Social Standards Checklist
- Annexes to the application (such as statutes, registration, annual reports, financial statements/annual audit reports, financial health form, etc.)

Project proposals must be submitted in English language (one copy scanned in pdf and one copy in formats compatible with MS Word and MS Excel, maximum size 5 MB per document) to

smnp.cfp@ada.gv.at

The deadline for the submission of applications is **June 12th, 23:59 hours**, CET. Please mention "SMNP" in the subject of any email correspondence (incl. submission).

Only applications in compliance with the terms of the CfP, based on the standard formats and submitted on time will be considered.

Please consider that only receipt time of emails is relevant for decision on timely submission and that email transmission might suffer delays.

No handwritten documents will be accepted.

The **standard formats/templates** to be used for the preparation of the project proposals can be accessed from the following web link: <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/calls> or <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/funding/country-and-regional-strategies>

Six-monthly reporting on project implementation must follow the standard ADC reporting format: <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/funding/project-management>

Questions regarding this CfP may be submitted up to 21 days before the deadline for the submission of the applications to the above-mentioned e-mail address. Clarifications regarding questions received by interested applicants will be published on the ADA website 14 days before the deadline of the CfP.

The decision on the grant award will be based exclusively on the applicable evaluation criteria for this CfP (as included in Annex 1) and the available funding.

Applicants shall have no legal entitlement to the award of a grant under this CfP and in case a grant is not awarded no legal claim accrues from the application. An objection against the rejection of a proposal will not be accepted.

Following the evaluation of the applications received in response to this CfP, ADA will inform the applicant with the highest evaluation score about the internal grant award decision and, if necessary, invited to clarify open questions and to make necessary improvements and corrections. It is expressly noted that the information about the decision does not give the applicant any entitlement to the award of the grant. The applicant will not acquire that right until a grant agreement has been signed in which the terms and conditions of the contract will be stipulated.

The type of agreement to be concluded will be a Grant Agreement, incl. General Terms and Conditions in the English language: <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/downloads#c2437>.

ADA reserves the right to determine whether the project will be funded from the Austrian Development Cooperation budget or from the European Recovery Programme (ERP) funds.

Applicants whose applications have been excluded as not fulfilling the criteria for eligibility for the CfP will be informed of the reasons in writing.

Unsuccessful applicants – not qualifying for the highest score – will be informed in writing.

10. Data Protection

Information on the protection of personal data: <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/privacy-notice>.

11. Reference Documents

The required reference documents of ADC, international and national strategies, guidelines, policies and working documents are listed as follows including the website links for the applicant's reference in designing this CfP document.

ADC Country strategy to Ethiopia for the period 2019 to 2025

https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Landesstrategien/CS_Ethiopia_2019-2025.pdf

Funding Guidelines Country and Regional Strategies

<http://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/funding/country-and-regional-strategies/>

Thematic guidelines and working documents

<https://www.entwicklung.at/en/themes>

Definition and minimum standards for the DAC gender equality policy marker, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Handbook-OECD-DAC-GenderEquality-Policy-Marker.pdf>

Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual and Environmental, Gender and Social Standard (EGSS) Checklist,

<http://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/funding/country-and-regional-strategies/>

Manual Capacity Development,

http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Handbuecher/Kapazitaetsentwicklung/Manual_Capacity_Development.pdf

Relevant Strategies, Policies and guidelines in Ethiopia

Federal and regional government policy strategies and plans and programs

- The Second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) (2015/16-2019/20), National Planning Commission, May 2016.

http://dagethiopia.org/new/images/DAG_DOCS/GTP2_English_Translation_Final_June_21_2016.pdf

- Ethiopian's Climate Resilient Green Economy: Green Economy Strategy, Sep. 2011. FDRE,

https://www.mofed.gov.et/media/filer_public/9e/23/9e23b2bc-0f3f-4035-ac8a-f0009b5b704a/crge_strategy.pdf

- Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (2015) Ethiopia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020. Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/et/et-nbsap-oth-en.pdf>

- MoCT. (2015). Sustainable Tourism Master Plan 2015-2025. Retrieved from <http://www.moct.gov.et/tourism-master-plan>
- MoFED. (2003, April). Rural Development Policy and Strategies. Retrieved from https://www.gafspfund.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/6.%20Ethiopia_Agriculture%20strategy.pdf
- Ten Years Development Plan 2021-2030
- EWCA SMNP General Management Plan
- Grazing Pressure Reduction Strategy for Simien Mountain National Park
(the last three documents are available on the website)

Annex 1: Criteria for Eligibility Assessment

The eligibility of proposals shall be assessed by a commission based on formal and financial criteria as well as criteria with regard to the content.

A) Formal Criteria

Only proposals that fulfil all formal criteria and contribute explicitly and demonstrably to the achievement of the objectives and expected results of this CfP will be evaluated with respect to quality assurance and financial criteria. The project's relevance for this CfP must therefore be clearly apparent from the "Summary" (see section "Summary" of the Project Document¹⁴).

The following **formal criteria concerning the submission of the proposal** have to be fulfilled:

- Submission in due time and at the specified location under the title and reference number of the CfP
- Not more than one proposal submitted.
- Modality of submission: electronical (one copy scanned in pdf and one copy in formats compatible with MS-Word and MS-Excel)
- Completeness of the proposal: in accordance with the invitation of the CfP and with the required formats, annexes to the application (such as statutes, registration, ADA Financial Health Form and proof of creditworthiness / financial soundness according to a recognized rating system etc.)
- Language: English
- Duration: the proposed intervention shall have a duration of maximum 42 months, including inception phase and shall commence latest on 1 December 2022
- The proposal could be submitted by a consortium consisting of at least two or more eligible partner organisations/institutions. Any partner in a consortium must not be involved in more than one project application/proposal submission
- Amount of funding: the amount of the contribution requested from ADA shall not exceed EUR 3.000.000,00 Mio. Any grant requested under the CfP shall be for a maximum 95% of the total eligible costs
- The applicant shall make a monetary contribution of at least 5% of the total eligible costs. This monetary contribution shall in any case originate from a source other than public funding.
- The administrative costs for implementation do not exceed 10% of the total eligible direct project costs.

¹⁴ See: Project document at <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/funding/country-regional-programmes/>

Any contributions in kind – such as provision of material and services – will be taken into consideration in the content and qualitative assessment, seeing that they add value to the outputs of the project. However, these contributions cannot be accounted for in financial statements.

The following **formal criteria concerning the applicant** have to be fulfilled:

General:

- The applicant is considered eligible according to the Austrian Development Cooperation Act Section 3, Subsection 2 (Applicants must complete the application form and provide relevant documents as listed in section 2.2 of the application form e.g. constitution, statutes etc.);
- Registration (register of associations, register of companies etc.)
- The average annual turnover of the applicant over the past 3 years must exceed EUR 3,000,000.00. (complete the ADA Financial Health Form)
- The applicant must have an internal control system/functions in place (dual control principle (signatory powers) / signatory rules; audit, certified quality management system, etc.).

A list of reference projects (in the format included in the application form incl. maximum one page per project) meeting the following criteria must be submitted:

- Successful implementation of at least 3 projects in ADC's priority regions and countries in Africa during the last 5 years, at least one of these in livelihoods improvements (especially of women and vulnerable groups) and natural resource management in Ethiopia;
- at least one project with a total budget of at least EUR 3.000,000.00;
- Reference projects should have a visible capacity development component and showcase cross-cutting issues such as social inclusion, gender equality, environment, climate mainstreaming, human-rights based approaches and conflict sensitivity.
- No small-scale or short-term intervention (e.g. ad hoc technical assistance, assessments, project preparation missions, evaluations etc.) must be presented as a reference project.

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to carry out the proposed project based on:

a capability statement (to be submitted in the format included in the application form) in which the following questions must be addressed:

- The Applicant's experience in the thematic areas of the Call for Proposals (at least 5 permanent staff work for the applicant currently in fields related to this Call for Proposals).
- The Applicant's experience in project cycle management, including risk management, monitoring, steering and evaluation as well as in capacity

development of state or non-state actors in transition/developing countries (in particular in the natural resource management, climate change, gender mainstreaming, women empowerment, social inclusion/equality, resilience) to be presented with a description of the structure including its staffing.

- Description of the Applicant's existing contacts, partnerships, presence in Ethiopia.
- Description of the available human resources that the applicant can draw on for the successful project implementation incl. description of any existing structure in the partner country with of at least 2 permanent experienced key staff available for the planning and implementation of the proposed project (to be presented via CVs¹⁵).
- Applicants must demonstrate the involvement of highly qualified experts with well-founded knowledge in the thematic areas of this Call for Proposals as key staff for the project implementation with at least 3 years' technical experience in the last 5 years for the proposed position to be presented via CVs (experts must be perfect in English and Amharic language)¹⁶;

The above-mentioned eligibility criteria will also be applied to a consortium consisting of two to three organisations/institutions, not to each single partner of a consortium.

B) Substantive Criteria

Submitted project proposals will be evaluated using a scoring system. Criteria with regard to the content are based on ADA's quality assurance criteria, targeted and weighted according to the specific requirements of the present CfP.

A minimum of at least 75 points (out of 100) is required with no section scoring zero for the awarded project to be eligible.

1) *Relevance of the Proposed Project Intervention (max 25 points)*

The project is considered relevant if it addresses the actual problems, priorities and needs as well as the potentials of the selected target group(s) and intended beneficiaries. Moreover, the proposed interventions shall be in line with the aims of the target group(s), beneficiaries and partners, shall be adapted to the local situation and take the political and institutional framework into account.

- Quality of the stakeholder analysis: Are the target group, the beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders clearly identified and described (who and how many

¹⁵ The CVs should be submitted preferably in the Europass CV format <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions/templates/doc>; not more than one CV may be presented for each of the proposed positions.

¹⁶ In support of their capability statement, Applicants may submit curricula vitae (CV) of proposed staff/experts that will be deployed to the project by the Applicant. The CVs should be submitted preferably in the Europass CV format. More than one CV may be presented for each of the proposed positions.

people will directly benefit, composed in terms of e.g. sex, age, disability, ethnicity, minority, etc.? Who and how many people are supposed to benefit in the long term and indirectly?) Have their specific problems, potentials and interests been analysed in a comprehensive, intersectional and inclusive manner? Is the intervention inclusive so as to leave no one behind and reach out to the most vulnerable?

- Quality of the problem and potential analyses: Have the specific social, economic, political, legal and institutional problems been analysed in a comprehensive manner? Have the social inclusive, gender-responsive, conflict, environmental and climate action opportunities and risks been analysed? Have existing relationships and potential user conflicts between local communities and park management/SMNP been analysed? What potentials have been identified and shall be used to resolve the identified problems? Are there mechanisms in place to regularly revisit and update the analyses?
- Quality of the strategic approach and methodology: Is the strategic approach based on local knowledge, innovation and methodologies (e.g. lessons learned from other interventions or from international experiences)? Does the strategic approach respond adequately to the identified problems and potentials as well as to the specific problems, potentials and interests of the target group(s), beneficiaries and partners? How will the strategic approach overcome possible conflicting needs, priorities or interests of the target group(s), beneficiaries and partners? Which measures will be taken to minimize possible (unintended) negative social, economic and ecological, climate change impact of the intervention (including climate adaption measures)? How will inclusive participation and representation of the target group(s) and beneficiaries in planning, implementation and decision-making processes be assured? Has a conflict-sensitivity approach been visibly integrated throughout all stages of project cycle management? Is the intervention aiming to strengthen interlinkages and adopting (context-specific) principles of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach?
- Coherence with the relevant development policy framework in Ethiopia: Does the proposed intervention contribute to the realisation of the relevant strategies, policies and guidelines in Ethiopia (Ten Year Development Plan 2021-2030, SMNP GMP etc.)? Which are the relevant (international or national) conventions, treaties, guidelines and regulations on social inclusive, gender and environmental standards and / or safeguards? Is the institutional set-up in place adequate to implement them?
- Coordination and harmonisation: How well does the proposed intervention complement the (mentioned) existing interventions in the area? What coordination is in place to avoid duplications and to reach synergies? How is this coordination organised and for which results? Is the intervention following (context-specific/as the context allows) principles of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus?

- Quality of the description of the context: political, legal, economic, ecological, social and cultural data and facts

2. Feasibility of the Proposed Intervention (25 points)

The intervention is considered feasible if the project objectives can be achieved within the given time frame with the proposed means and if the possible risks are manageable.

- Quality of the intervention logic: Are project goal, outcomes, results and activities coherent? Are the planned activities sufficiently balanced? Is the Theory of Change consistent? Are proposed baselines and verification of indicators realistic and adequate? Will SMART indicators with a target value for each indicator - disaggregated for women, men and vulnerable groups, if applicable - measure to what extent the development results will be achieved? Are the indicators linked to the relevant SDG targets and are they suitable to measure progress?
- Quality of project planning/targeting: What is the sustainable benefit for the target group(s) and beneficiaries, differentiating benefits for men and women and – if feasible – for different social groups? Is the proposed time frame and action plan realistic under the given situation and with the budget available? Are the proposed selection criteria for targeted communities well balanced and complementary to other (existing) interventions?
- Quality of risk management: Does the proposal include a comprehensive and plausible risk assessment, identifying the main prevailing risks to the achievement of the project outcomes/objectives. Which measures are foreseen to mitigate possible negative external risks? Which measures are foreseen to avoid, minimize or mitigate possible environmental (including climate), gender-related and social risks and/or adverse impacts? How will the risks be monitored and managed?
- Quality of the institutional set-up: Who are the partners in implementation? What is their comparative advantage? What will be the organizational structure of the partners for internal and external coordination, management and controlling? Are the roles of the partners clearly defined with respect to responsibilities and expected outputs?
- Quality of monitoring and evaluation: How is the monitoring and decision process for steering measures organized? Who is responsible for data collection and analysis of data? How will experiences and lessons learnt be taken into account? To whom and in which form are the monitoring results disseminated? What different kinds of measures are foreseen to assess the status of implementation, outputs achieved and possible needs for adaptation?

3. Sustainability of the Proposed Intervention: 25 points

Sustainability means that the positive effects and impacts initiated by the intervention will persist after the end of the intervention. This part of the evaluation will focus on:

- Strengthening of institutionally viable structures and processes: Does the intervention contribute to capacity development at institutional level (e.g. ensuring inclusiveness, efficient and demand-driven service delivery, advisory services, transparent management of funds, accountability etc.) and at individual level (e.g. concerning awareness on the legal rights and responsibilities concerning sustainable natural resource management, diversified livelihood activities etc.)?
- Political support: How will the political support after the end of the intervention be ensured? How might the required financial and technical support to the communities be structured after the termination of the intervention?
- Change-Management: How will the sustainable reform process look like after the end of the intervention? Will the local authorities and communities be better equipped to apply good practices and/or scale up innovative approaches applied by the project? Will/can bottom-up processes and community-driven approaches be maintained?
- Socio-cultural, environmental and climate aspects: Will the beneficiaries have equal access to and benefit from the planned outputs of the intervention, without discrimination due to sex, age, disability, ethnicity, minority, etc.? Will it be likely that resilience at household and community level and capabilities to cope with climate change impacts and other shock is enhanced? Will the project contribute to gender equality? Will the project ensure sustainable ecosystem services and natural resource availability (water, land, soil and biodiversity)? Will the natural resources and ecosystems be more resilient to the impacts from climate change and any natural disasters?

C) Financial Criteria

Only costs that are directly related to the implementation of the proposed intervention are eligible for funding. The adequacy of the assumed (unit) costs will be checked. The calculation of the budget must be sound and comprehensible as well as coherent with the proposed logic of intervention. This applies also to the administrative costs of the applicant which are only eligible as far as they are related to the project cycle management including monitoring and steering activities.

Costs and Efficiency of the Planned Project: 25 Points

- Is the budget coherent with the intervention logic?
- Are the individual costs, e.g. salaries, fees, travel costs, and costs for planned activities appropriate and do they reflect the actual price situation? Are unit costs adequate and comprehensible?

- Is the human resources set-up and logistic set-up the most efficient? Is the relation of personnel cost, equipment etc. to costs of investments for the direct benefits of beneficiaries adequate? The administrative costs must not exceed 10% of the total direct project costs. Are administrative costs of the applicant related to project cycle management (steering, including monitoring activities) duplicated in personnel costs or other costs?