

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS – INNOVATIVE RESEARCH ACTIONS TO ENHANCE THE RESILIENCE OF THE WEST AFRICAN COASTAL ZONE, TARGETING RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS**

**PRCM / WACA ResIP**

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## 1. GENERAL CONTEXT

West Africa's coastline, one of the most biodiverse in the world, is both an invaluable ecological heritage and a pillar of livelihood for millions of people. Mangroves, estuaries, reefs, dunes, beaches, and wetlands coexist and support essential economic activities, including artisanal fishing, coastal agriculture, local processing, tourism, and crafts. These ecosystems also provide vital functions: shoreline stabilization, flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, and pollutant filtration.

But this balance is seriously threatened. Coastal erosion is intensifying, resources are being depleted, and habitats are degrading under the combined pressure of climate change and unsustainable human activities, including sand extraction, uncontrolled urbanization, pollution, and deforestation. This context of increased vulnerability calls for bold, integrated responses rooted in the territories.

It is within this logic that the West Africa Coastal Areas Management Program (WACA) is an ambitious regional initiative designed by the World Bank in response to requests from coastal countries, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), and its partners. The West Africa Coastal Resilience Investment Project 2 (WACA ResIP 2), for the period 2023–2027, consolidates the achievements of the initial WACA ResIP program through four priority areas: (i) strengthened regional governance, (ii) better coherence of regional, national and local policies, (iii) increased attention to environmental and social sustainability, and (iv) an active promotion of local dynamics and innovations from the territories.

With this in mind, reference institutions such as the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone (PRCM), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Network of Marine Protected Areas in West Africa (RAMPAO), the Abidjan Convention, and the Dakar Ecological Monitoring Centre (CSE) have been mobilized. by WAEMU, to provide strategic technical assistance to the nine (9) beneficiary countries: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, and Togo.

Among these partners, the PRCM – a regional platform for consultation, influence, dialogue, and action for marine and coastal conservation – plays a key role in promoting applied research for public decision-making, climate resilience, and territorial innovation. It oversees a funding mechanism, governed by this Regulation, aimed at supporting high-impact action research projects carried out by scientific and academic institutions and multidisciplinary teams. These projects must produce useful, transferable, and operational knowledge that can be directly used to improve policies, strengthen territorial planning, or guide sustainable investment decisions.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR PROJECTS

This call for research Action projects (CFRAPs) aims to promote applied and action research that supports the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable resilience of coastal ecosystems in West Africa. The objective is to generate practical and transformative knowledge through multidisciplinary approaches, co-developed with regional stakeholders and aligned with the priorities of the WACA ResIP program.

Specifically, this CFRAP aims to:

- Enhance the ecological, economic, and social resilience of coastal communities against the impacts of climate change through local solutions for sustainable resource management, environmental restoration, and reducing environmental risks.
- Encourage action research projects that are tailored to local conditions and address the environmental, social, and economic challenges of coastal areas.
- Develop tools, recommendations, and solutions that can be directly applied to develop or enhance public coastal management policies.
- Promote innovative and replicable methods in resilience, participatory governance, green technologies, and nature-based solutions.
- Enhance regional, national, and local scientific capacities by mobilizing researchers and institutions based in the beneficiary countries.
- **Create a space for dialogue and co-creation** among local actors, researchers, communities, and decision-makers by fostering connections between traditional knowledge, technical innovations, and public policies.

Through these objectives, the "Call for Action Research Projects" (CFRAP) seeks to enhance the participatory, inclusive, and territorial aspects of the WACA ResIP Project by encouraging bottom-up innovation and fostering sustainable partnerships among coastal resilience stakeholders.

### 3. AREAS OF INTERVENTION

The CFRAP covers the nine beneficiary countries of the WACA ResIP Projects: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, and Togo. Based on the priorities identified in the project documents and the available knowledge, the following areas are proposed as priorities:

- Benin: Coastline between Cotonou, Grand-Popo (the Mouth of the King in particular), and the wetlands of the Ouémé valley.
- Côte d'Ivoire: Ébrié and Aby lagoons, coastal area between Grand-Lahou and Assinie; (including the Ehotilés Islands).
- Gambia: Gambia River estuary, mangrove areas, and beaches near Tanbi Wetlands.
- Ghana: Central Coast around Cape Coast – Elmina and Erosion Vulnerable Areas (Keta).
- Guinea-Bissau: Bijagos Archipelago and coastal areas around Cacheu, and Cacine.
- Mauritania: Areas within the PNBA, the Senegal River Delta (Diawling National Park and RBT on the Mauritanian side), Nouakchott, and Nouadhibou.
- Sao Tome & Principe: Coastal and marine areas rich in biodiversity in the south and around the islet of Rolas and the area of Angolares.
- Senegal: Petite Côte, Saloum Delta, Casamance Maritime, mangroves of Ziguinchor and Kolda.
- Togo: Coastal area between Aného and Lomé, lower Mono valley.

### 4. TARGETS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility criteria aim to ensure that subsidy recipients are legitimate, competent, rooted in the coastal regions, and possess practical, realistic solutions. The call is exclusively open to research institutions, university centers, laboratories, multidisciplinary teams, or consortia affiliated with recognized academic, research, or development organizations active in the countries covered by WACA ResIP.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a recognized academic or research institution, based in or active within the target countries, or a research team affiliated with an educational or research organization.
- Justify a legal existence and relevant scientific references in the fields related to the themes of the call.
- Present an applied or action research project involving local stakeholders (communities, public authorities, etc.).
- Show the ability to generate transferable results (publications, tools, platforms);
- Demonstrate a proven ability to manage international or regional projects administratively and financially.
- Uphold the principles of ethics, transparency, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.
- Not be in a conflict of interest or involved in ongoing litigation related to the management of previous projects.

Consortia comprising multiple research institutions are highly encouraged, including those with international partners, as long as there is a single designated leader.

## 5. PRIORITY THEMES

Each of the listed themes highlights a major challenge facing coastal areas in West Africa. Proposals should address not only the technical aspects of each theme but also consider the broader socio-environmental context and potential for innovation. The expected results should inform public decision-making and promote scalable solutions for resilience and sustainable development.

The priority themes align with the objectives of the WACA ResIP and the strategic directions of the PRCM. Proposals should therefore align with one or more of the following themes, focusing on producing useful knowledge for the governance, adaptation, and sustainable management of coastal zones.

### **Theme 1. Analysis of coastal dynamics and risk modelling:**

Understanding coastal dynamics is crucial for predicting and reducing the physical impacts of climate change on vulnerable coastlines. This theme encourages the study of key processes, such as erosion and flooding, using advanced prospective modeling tools.

- Erosion, flooding, salinization, and physical vulnerability of coastal regions.
- Remote sensing, geographic information systems, and prospective scenarios.

### **Theme 2. Environmental governance and public policies:**

Effective governance frameworks and policy tools are crucial for maintaining coastal sustainability. Proposals in this area should examine legal, regulatory, and institutional mechanisms that support more inclusive and effective coastal management.

- Studies on legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms.
- Comparative study of co-management mechanisms and decentralization processes.

### **Theme 3. Nature-based solutions and green technologies:**

This theme highlights innovative and eco-friendly approaches to restoration and risk reduction, especially through the use of nature-based solutions (NBS) that are effective, replicable, and supported by communities.

- Action research on environmentally friendly ecological restoration methods.
- Assessment of the effectiveness and transferability of nature-based solutions (NBS).

### **Theme 4. Socio-anthropology and community resilience:**

Social and economic factors influence how coastal populations perceive and address environmental challenges. Proposed research should focus on risk perceptions, coping capacities, and sustainable livelihoods, especially among vulnerable groups.

- Risk perceptions, traditional knowledge, social dynamics, and inclusion.
- Research on mobility and local adaptation methods.

### **Theme 5. Capitalization and scientific valorization:**

Applying research findings is essential to bridge the gap between science and public decision-making. This topic highlights the importance of enhancing the accessibility, dissemination, and use of scientific knowledge to support evidence-based decisions at all levels.

- Development of decision-making tools and platforms for sharing data, knowledge, and scientific publications.
- Organizing symposia and transferring knowledge to decision-makers.

## **6. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF FUNDING**

**Grant amount:** Requested budgets should be below USD 50,000. They can be adjusted based on the relevance and scope of the projects.

**Project duration:** Projects will be carried out within a maximum of 18 months. An exceptional extension may be granted upon a justified request approved by the PRCM.

**Co-financing rate:** At least 20% co-financing is required, which can be provided in cash or in-kind (such as volunteer hours, facilities, or contributions from partners).

**Grant payment terms:** Funding will be disbursed in three installments as follows:

- A first installment (advance) will be paid after signing the formal contract and submitting a request for funds to the PRCM, deposited into the beneficiary's bank account.
- A second tranche will be disbursed after the PRCM reviews and approves the interim technical and financial reports, which must include copies of supporting documents covering at least 80% of the expenses from the first tranche, along with a request for funds.
- A third and final payment will be made after the final technical and financial report is approved, supporting documents for all previously disbursed amounts are submitted, and a request for funds is provided.

**Financial justification:** The beneficiary must submit supporting documents for each tranche, including accounting documents, proof of expenditure, and budget monitoring tables. A financial

reporting template will be provided. If there are significant deviations from the initial budget, a revision of the expenditure plan may be necessary.

**Dedicated bank account:** The PRCM may require opening a project-specific account to ensure the traceability of financial flows.

**Contractualization:** A draft contract will be provided to the beneficiary by the PRCM project coordinator once the budget, payment schedule, co-financing arrangements, expected results formulation, planned achievements, monitoring and evaluation system, and various contractual obligations (including report formats and submission dates) have been discussed, verified, and approved. A formal contract will then be signed between the PRCM and the project leader (or the leader of the consortium). This contract will specify:

- The expected results.
- The implementation schedule.
- The terms of disbursement.
- The contractual obligations of the beneficiary and the PRCM.
- Reporting and auditing rules.

After the formal contract is signed between the PRCM and the successful project leader, and a request for funds is submitted, the first payment will be made to the project leader's bank account or to the dedicated project bank account if applicable.

**Budget revisions:** Budget adjustments can be made if they are justified, put in writing, and approved by the PRCM.

**Procedures for non-compliance:** If there is a failure to fulfill contractual obligations, such as not completing planned activities, misusing funds, or missing reports by the required deadlines, the PRCM reserves the right to take appropriate measures. These may include temporarily suspending disbursements, requesting a review of the implementation plan, or even terminating the contract early. These steps aim to ensure proper resource management and the achievement of expected results.

**Valuation of co-financing:** In-kind contributions will be included in the financing plan and analysis grids, as long as they are well justified (e.g., letter of availability, time estimate, etc.).

**Support for project leaders:** Coaches acknowledged for their diverse skills and extensive experience in coordinating conservation and local development projects can be called upon to offer methodological and technical guidance to project leaders when needed. These coaches can assist with identifying technical training resources, facilitate organizing exchange visits, or help prepare periodic activity reports. They will also support the implementation stages of funded projects.

**Participation in organizing research symposia on the vulnerability and resilience of coastal and marine areas:** The PRCM, in collaboration with the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), the African Centre of Excellence for Coastal Resilience (ACECoR) at the University of Cape Coast, and other research centers or institutes active in the WACA ResIP Projects' areas of intervention, will organize symposia that mobilize institutions, research centers, international experts, and regional scientific networks (including the scientific college of the PRCM, the regional scientific committee of WACA, and the science and technology committee of the Abidjan Convention). These symposia will serve to present the progress and results of the projects selected through the calls for projects outlined in this regulation.

**Monitoring methods and expected deliverables:** A monitoring and evaluation system for the effects of the WACA ResIP2 project will be established by the PRCM, enabling the maintenance of a dashboard and the regular production of reports on the progress of funded projects. Additionally, each project leader will be responsible for submitting periodic reports following an agreed-upon format with the PRCM and documenting the development of the indicators established during contract negotiations.

The PRCM will coordinate quarterly updates for each project's dashboard through the WACA ResIP2 project.

The feedback of information, both verbal and written, will continuously support the communication of the WACA ResIP2 Project of the PRCM with stories of actions, events, and the transmission of media (maps, photos, videos, interviews, deliverables, and reports).

## 7. CONDUCT OF THE CALL FOR PROJECTS

### 7.1 Process

1. Launch of the project call by the PRCM.
2. Reception and initial screening of projects.
3. Interview phase or request for additional details.
4. Final selection made by an independent multi-stakeholder committee

### 7.2 Selection Criteria

- Relevance of the project to the themes and objectives.
- Methodological clarity and operational feasibility.
- Wearer's organizational capacity.
- Innovation, sustainability, and the potential for replication or scaling.
- Consideration of gender and social inclusion.
- Geographic relevance and environmental urgency.

## 8. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

The project selection process is conducted **in a single phase** to simplify the procedure and expedite its implementation.

Project leaders must submit a **complete project file directly**, following the framework provided by the PRCM. This file must include:

- A clear analysis of the context and the issues identified.
- Definition of objectives and expected results.
- A comprehensive outline of the planned activities.
- The intervention area, stakeholders, and implementation mechanisms.
- A structured, logical framework with indicators, results, and sources of verification.
- A detailed budget by item of expenditure and an estimate of co-financing (at least 20%).
- Implementation schedule (timeline);
- Governance, monitoring, and evaluation, along with social and environmental risk management arrangements.
- The required administrative documents include articles of incorporation, proof of registration, activity reports, financial statements, and resource declarations, among others.

The independent selection committee will review each application received using a **detailed evaluation grid** (see Annex 1), focusing on the relevance of the proposals, their feasibility, sustainability, territorial anchoring, and compliance with the objectives of the WACA ResIP program.

#### 9. PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

Launch of the call for projects	July 14, 2025
Deadline for submission of projects	August 25, 2025
Selection Committee Meeting	September 25, 2025
Announcement of results and signing of contracts	October 25, 2025

#### 10. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING PROJECTS

Project leaders are encouraged to submit their applications to the following email address: [webgis@prcmarine.org](mailto:webgis@prcmarine.org) by 25/08/2025.

#### 11. FINAL PROVISIONS

- Failure to follow the correct format or provide mandatory documents may lead to the application's rejection.
- The PRCM reserves the right to reject any application that is incomplete or non-compliant.
- No funding will be granted to two projects submitted by the same organization under the same call.
- The PRCM may request adjustments or reformulations before signing the agreements.
- Participating in the call signifies your full acceptance of these terms and conditions.

**Dakar, 14 /07/2025**

**The Executive Directorate of the PRCM**



#### APPENDIX 1: EVALUATION GRID FOR FULL PROJECT DOCUMENTS

Criteria	Weighting
Quality of the diagnosis and relevance of the analysis	15 pts
Coherence of the logical framework and proposed indicators	15 pts
Detail and realism of planned activities	15 pts
Clarity of the timetable and implementation modalities	10 pts
Realism and justification of the proposed budget	10 pts
Gender mainstreaming, social inclusion and youth	10 pts
Environmental sustainability and ethics of the project	10 pts
Organizational capacity and references of the wearer	10 pts
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 pts</b>

#### Minimum score required for selection: 70 points

The PRCM will offer support to project leaders, including:

- An initial training session on project management and financial monitoring.
- A follow-up system that includes field visits and personalized support.
- A mid-term review and a final validation of the project.

Funding will include:

- Creating experience sheets
- Participation in regional webinars
- Participation in coastal vulnerability and resilience research symposia
- Participation in the Regional Marine and Coastal Forum
- Sharing results on the PRCM and WACA platforms

## APPENDIX 2: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND PARTICIPATION RULES

- 1. Intellectual Property:** Submissions remain the intellectual property of the applicants. However, by submitting a proposal, applicants authorize the PRCM and its partners to publicly share the results, visuals, and summaries for communication, learning, and visibility purposes.
- 2. Originality:** Applicants must confirm that their proposals do not infringe on any third-party rights, including copyrights, trademarks, or patents. If third-party elements are used, the appropriate written permissions must be provided.
- 3. Misrepresentation:** If misrepresentation or plagiarism is proven, the PRCM reserves the right to disqualify the proposal and terminate any funding agreement.
- 4. Code of Conduct:** Applicants agree not to submit any content that is defamatory, offensive, illegal, or inappropriate. Files must be free of viruses or corrupted content.
- 5. Taxes and Responsibilities:** Applicants are solely responsible for any taxes or financial obligations associated with the funds received.
- 6. Dispute Resolution:** Participation signifies acceptance of the stated rules. Any disputes that may arise will be resolved amicably between the PRCM and the involved party.
- 7. No Obligation to Award:** The PRCM reserves the right to cancel, postpone, or withhold funding from a proposal at its sole discretion.