

Draft Framework for the African Great Lakes Conservation Fund

July 5, 2017

Introduction

As part of the MacArthur Foundation's exit plan for the Great Lakes of East and Central Africa region, an award was made to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to create the \$500,000 African Great Lakes Conservation Fund. TNC proposes to award these funds with a term of approximately two years (since an no-cost extension was recently awarded to TNC). This fund represents an opportunity to build upon the recommendations of the African Great Lakes Conference: Conservation and Development in a Changing Climate (AGLC) documented in the [Conference Resolution](#).

To best allocate these funds and gain a clear understanding of other opportunities in the region, an African Great Lakes Conservation Fund side event was held after the AGLC. This meeting brought together 28 representatives from government ministries, multilateral, bilateral and foundation donor organizations as well as other partners working on relevant issues in the Great Lakes region. This side event sought advice as to how best to take advantage of this funding opportunity.

Highest priority recommendations from the AGLC

The 26 recommendations included in the Resolution of the AGLC are the high-level action points developed under each of the six themes, specifically:

1. Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity Benefits
2. Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management
3. Climate Change Impacts, Mitigation, and Adaptation
4. Population Dynamics, Health, and the Environment
5. Balancing Conservation and Development and
6. Governance and Financing

To identify which of the recommendations were feasible as follow-up actions the list was triaged into short, medium and long-term action categories reflecting how long it would likely take to achieve or make significant progress on each of these recommendations (Table 2). Given the available financial resources and time, realistically only those recommendations listed as short to medium-term priorities should be pursued.

Recommendations from the AGLCF Side Event

The high-level summary of the working group discussions from the side event included:

- 1) Address some of the critical issues that have arisen from the AGLC given the available time and resources
- 2) Solicit grants rather than have an open call for proposals
- 3) Focus on fewer, larger grants as opposed to several small grants
- 4) Ensure continuation of a network and information exchange
- 5) Build upon existing initiatives and approaches but assess whether new technology can be applied to improve these practices.
- 6) Lay a foundation for a follow-up conference within five years
- 7) Support foundational grants that respond to the recommendations from the AGLC
- 8) Provide resources to initiate planning and fundraising for a follow-up conference in 2-5 years

- 9) Integrate with other investments in the region including both donor aid and private sector

Cross referencing the conference recommendations with the advice from the AGLCF side meeting and TNC staff and contractor assessment, the following ten recommendations were identified as priority short to medium-term recommendations:

Table 1: High priority, near term recommendations from the AGLC Resolution.

Recommendation	Theme	Duration
f) Develop best practices and support implementation of policy for caged aquaculture, and promote use of those practices through coordinated adaptive research, planning, licensing, and compliance;	2	Short-term
r) Determine potential impacts of oil and methane exploration and exploitation by conducting scientific, evidence-based Environmental and Social Impact Assessments at the site prior to extraction, by monitoring impacts during and after the end of operations, and putting in place appropriate mitigation measures through trans-boundary cooperative efforts to enhance preparedness to oil spill response;	5	Short-term
x) Support publication of findings from the African Great Lakes Conference in at least three international scientific journals for the benefit of the regional and global community;	6	Short-term
v) Utilize the African Great Lakes Conservation Fund announced at the African Great Lakes Conference to begin addressing common priority issues and mobilize additional funds for that purpose;	6	Short-term
b) Map the distribution of aquatic species, including their endemism and diversity, and determine and address the causes of decline in populations and species;	2	Medium-term
i) Promote multi-sectoral integrated community-based development tools that contribute to sustainable conservation and management of natural resources, such as Population, Health, and Environment;	4	Medium-term
w) Contribute information on projects, issues, and solutions to the newly created African Great Lakes Information Platform to create a common and robust Internet-based tool that provides access to information for conservation and sustainable development of the African Great Lakes and their basins;	6	Short-term
g) Use the best available science on climate change dynamics and impacts, especially how climate change interacts with other stressors, and put in place adaptation and mitigation measures to increase resilience by communities;	3	Medium-term
y) Meet again as a ‘Network of African Great Lakes Basin Stakeholders’ in a similar conference within the next five years to report upon the status, trends, and values of major ecosystem services and review promising interventions, new science, and priority issues of relevance to the seven lake basins;	6	Medium-term
u) Establish a ‘Network of African Great Lakes Basin Stakeholders’ to coordinate action and exchange on priority issues defined by the African Great Lakes Conference and subsequent gatherings supported by the experience of the African Network of Basin Organizations and the	6	Medium-term

International Network of Basin Organizations, as it develops its structure and functions;		
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Of these ten recommendations, (v) could be considered redundant, as action is already being undertaken in-line with these with the Grant program discussed in this framework. In addition, (x) may not be necessary given current funding streams provided by journals discussed at the Conference; however, it will be necessary to confirm in July-August that these three special issue journals coming out of the Conference are moving ahead expeditiously and without the need for additional funding. Also, (y) and (u) are tightly linked and could be effectively combined into one priority.

Cross-cutting themes

During the conference, there was a consistent call for **improved communication across all themes**. In awarding the Funds, projects should emphasize how they will strive to improve communication and provide access to information in the proposals. This should include linking with the African Great Lakes Information Platform and other relevant networks.

A second cross-cutting theme was **using technology to improve natural resource management**, and applying technologies that have been developed elsewhere to the African Great Lakes region. An example that was a priority to many lakes was improving fisheries catch assessment using electronic data methods to get an understanding of trends in fish catch, particularly for pelagic fish stocks lake-wide.

Proposed Concept Note Topics

Considering all recommendations and given the level and duration of funding, the priorities for follow-up under the AGLCF were narrowed to eight. Included below each are example organizations that we might solicit multi-lake concept notes from.

- 1) Develop best practices and support implementation of policy for caged aquaculture, and promote use of those practices through coordinated adaptive research, planning, licensing, and compliance;
 - a. LVFO, NaFIRRI
- 2) Determine potential impacts of oil and methane exploration and exploitation by conducting scientific, evidence-based Environmental and Social Impact Assessments at the site prior to extraction, by monitoring impacts during and after the end of operations, and putting in place appropriate mitigation measures through trans-boundary cooperative efforts to enhance preparedness to oil spill response;
 - a. Greenwatch, Oxfam
- 3) Map the distribution of aquatic species, including their endemism and diversity, and determine and address the causes of decline in populations and species;
 - a. IUCN, Conservation International
- 4) Promote multi-sectoral integrated community-based development tools that contribute to sustainable conservation and management of natural resources, such as Population, Health, and Environment;
 - a. Population Reference Bureau, Pathfinder International

- 5) Contribute information on projects, issues, and solutions to the newly created African Great Lakes Information Platform to create a common and robust internet-based tool that provides access to information for conservation and sustainable development of the African Great Lakes and their basins;
 - a. NET Africa, Universities in African Great Lakes Region, IWMI, BirdLife, Conservation International
- 6) Use the best available science on climate change dynamics and impacts, especially how climate change interacts with other stressors, and put in place adaptation and mitigation measures to increase resilience by communities;
 - a. Universities in African Great Lakes Region
- 7) Promote the use of technology to improve resource management across the African Great Lakes, most likely through promotion of electronic fish catch assessment;
 - a. TAFIRI, FAO
- 8) Promote and support the development a continued “Network of African Great Lakes Stakeholders” including government agencies, basin organizations, NGOs, academics and research institutions focused on the sustainable development of the African Great Lakes in order to maintain productive exchange and build momentum and funding options for the next African Great Lakes Conference.
 - a. INBO, ARCOS, IUCN, AWF

Of these 8 recommendations that would lead to concept note request, TNC believes we should aim for 6 proposal topics in order to maximize the use of the available funds and recognizing that not all 8 topics may result in viable concept notes.

Donor Liaison

Several other donors are actively investing in conservation and sustainable development initiatives in the Africa Great Lakes region. These include, but are not limited to the African Development Bank, l'Agence Française de Développement, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), European Union, JRS Biodiversity Foundation and Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

Engaging representatives of these organizations, especially through the Advisory Committee, will help with ensuring sustainability of the projects supported by AGLCF. There may well be opportunities for these donors to provide direct or in-kind support to the projects supported by the AGLCF, especially in the case of CEPF given their upcoming grant program process for a portion of the same region.

Timeline

Given the time available, even considering the no-cost extension from MacArthur Foundation, identifying relevant partner organizations and soliciting concept notes and preliminary budgets would speed up the overall process of awarding the grants through the AGLCF. Grantmaking entities such as CEPF and JRS Biodiversity Foundation generally provide 4-6 weeks for the concept notes to be prepared, especially if projects are to be undertaken in partnership with other organizations.

Full proposals, workplan, and budgets generally require up to three months to prepare depending on how complex the application process is.

Early July 2017	Circulate the Framework document for comments and request comments on framework and concept notes topics, and request names and contacts of potential organizations that could be invited to submit concept notes under each of the recommendations.
August 2017	Solicit concept notes from organizations that undertake the activities identified. Form Advisory Committee for in person meeting.
October 12 or 13, 2017	Physical meeting of the Advisory Committee, discuss and decide upon which applications should be supported given the available resources and preliminary budgets. TNC to collate this feedback to the partner organizations and request a full proposal and budget limits if necessary.
Late October 2017	TNC to request full proposals, work plan, detailed budget and financial risk documents from partner organizations (approximately 8 weeks)
January 2018	Selected Advisory Committee members review specific proposals and provide detailed feedback to the grantees on the goals, objectives and activities as well as recommendations as to how the partner organizations can partner with other relevant organizations.
Quarter 1 2018	TNC to undertake contracting of the partner organizations for grants.
Quarter 1	Interim reporting from grantees.
Quarter 1 2020	Final narrative and financial reports received from grantees. Feedback provided and grants closed.

Concept note application template

There are several examples available of letters of inquiry or concept notes available [online](#), which might be suitable.

A full proposal template should include: (Needs to be refined)

Title
Web summary
Introduction
Statement of the problem
Objectives and activities
Measurement of success
Budget
Workplan (Gantt Chart)

Table 2: Recommendations from the AGLC grouped by theme and duration

Number code	Theme
1	Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity Benefits
2	Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management
3	Climate Change Impacts, Mitigation and Adaptation

- 4 Population Dynamics, Health and the Environment
- 5 Balancing Conservation and Development and
- 6 Governance and Financing

Recommendation	Theme	Duration
f) Develop best practices and support implementation of policy for caged aquaculture, and promote use of those practices through coordinated adaptive research, planning, licensing, and compliance;	2	Short-term
r) Determine potential impacts of oil and methane exploration and exploitation by conducting scientific, evidence-based Environmental and Social Impact Assessments at the site prior to extraction, by monitoring impacts during and after the end of operations, and putting in place appropriate mitigation measures through trans-boundary cooperative efforts to enhance preparedness to oil spill response;	5	Short-term
x) Support publication of findings from the African Great Lakes Conference in at least three international scientific journals for the benefit of the regional and global community;	6	Short-term
v) Utilize the African Great Lakes Conservation Fund announced at the African Great Lakes Conference to begin addressing common priority issues and mobilize additional funds for that purpose;	6	Short-term
b) Map the distribution of aquatic species, including their endemism and diversity, and determine and address the causes of decline in populations and species;	1	Medium-term
l) Promote multi-sectoral integrated community-based development tools that contribute to sustainable conservation and management of natural resources, such as Population, Health, and Environment;	5	Medium-term
w) Contribute information on projects, issues, and solutions to the newly created African Great Lakes Information Platform to create a common and robust internet-based tool that provides access to information for conservation and sustainable development of the African Great Lakes and their basins;	6	Long-term
g) Use the best available science on climate change dynamics and impacts, especially how climate change interacts with other stressors, and put in place adaptation and mitigation measures to increase resilience by communities;	3	Short-term
y) Meet again as a 'Network of African Great Lakes Basin Stakeholders' in a similar conference within the next five years to report upon the status, trends, and values of major ecosystem services and review promising interventions, new science, and priority issues of relevance to the seven lake basins; and	6	Medium-term
u) Establish a 'Network of African Great Lakes Basin Stakeholders' to coordinate action and exchange on priority issues defined by the African Great Lakes Conference and subsequent gatherings supported by the experience of the African Network of Basin Organizations and the International Network of Basin Organizations, as it develops its structure and functions;	6	Medium-term
BOUNDARY OF PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AGLCF		
c) Determine the occurrence, dynamics, and causes of proliferation of major aquatic invasive organisms and put in place mitigation and control measures;	1	Short-term
q) Assess socioeconomic and environmental trade-offs associated with hydropower dam siting, ensure adequate mitigation measures, and evaluate and promote other renewable power options such as wind and solar to meet energy demands;	5	Long-term
h) Restore forest and wetland cover, regulate water withdrawal to protect environmental flows, and boost hydro-meteorological and environmental monitoring networks to provide data for early warning on climate and non-climate related hazards;	3	Medium-term
d) Undertake lake-wide assessments for key fish stocks, determine appropriate fishing capacity and exploitation patterns, control overcapacity, promote an ecosystems approach to fisheries development and management, and where necessary revise fisheries policy;	2	Long-term
k) Address the need for contraception as a basic human right, and increase access to family planning, reproductive health, and maternal and child health services as key to limiting rapid population growth rates and enhancing adaptation to climate change impacts;	4	Long-term
m) Advocate for all national environmental, developmental, and health policies to recognize population pressure and promote family planning as a key strategy to address population growth and adaptation to climate change impacts;	4	Long-term
o) Increase women's participation and leadership roles in fisheries management and promote human and fishing rights for women fishers and promote education of girls to enable them to play a meaningful role in basin development and governance;	6	Long-term
s) Develop regional policies and management strategies consistent with stakeholder countries, as well as national priorities and objectives, that support collaborative, multi-national actions to ensure sustainability of resources of the African Great Lakes and their basins for each trans-boundary lake basin;	6	Long-term
i) Establish in each lake basin a network of freshwater and terrestrial protected areas sufficient in size, governance, and design to ensure conservation of the rich heritage of aquatic species and to serve as sources of replenishment;	1	Long-term

j) Promote sustainable agricultural practices that benefit soil fertility and minimize atmospheric and riverine nutrient loading to conserve water quality;	5	Long-term
t) Enhance good governance based on regional and international best practices by promoting sustainable financing, effective decision making, enhanced regulatory compliance and adaptive management;	6	Long-term
n) Mainstream HIV/AIDS and water-related diseases such as bilharzia, malaria and cholera prevention, treatment, and vaccination in provision of health services with special emphasis on fisherfolk;	4	Long-term
z) Ensure that future generations of scientists, managers, politicians, and stakeholders have the capacity, knowledge, and ability to address current and future issues of the African Great Lakes and their basins.	6	Long-term

Agenda for the African Great Lakes Fund Side Event
Friday May 5th 14:00-17:00
Imperial Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda

- 14:00 Welcome and introductions (TNC/JRW)
- 14:15 Objectives of the side event.
Motivation for seeding the African Great Lakes Fund (JRW)
High level summary of the conclusions of the AGLC (Richard Ogutu Ohwayo)
- 14:45 How to use the African Great Lakes Fund to address the conclusions from AGLC?
(Working groups?)
- 15:30 Tea and coffee break
- 15:45 Opportunities for leveraging the Fund? (Working groups?/Round Robin)
Other donors in the region?
In-kind contributions?
Private sector?
- 16:30 Summary of the conclusions from the discussions (JRW to lead)
Next steps/road map to providing funding?
- 16:45 Closing session.

Africa Great Lakes Conservation Fund Side Event
May 5th 2017 Imperial Beach Resort, Entebbe, Uganda.
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**Africa Great Lakes Conservation Fund Side Event
May 5th 2017 Imperial Beach Resort, Entebbe, Uganda.
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**Africa Great Lakes Conservation Fund Side Event
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Participants List**
