



Senior Programme Officer, SADC TFCA Financing Facility (WMRT), S.Africa

Vacancy #:	7691
Unit:	ESARO - South Africa Conservation Areas and Species
Organisation:	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
Location:	South Africa Country Office, Pretoria, South Africa
Reporting to:	Team Leader, SADC Transfrontier Conservation Areas Facilities
Work percentage:	100%
Grade:	P2
Expected start date:	01 September 2026
Type of contract:	Fixed-term (up to 1 months)
Closing date:	02 September 2026

BACKGROUND

THIS IS A LOCAL POSITION OPEN TO NATIONALS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY. THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE CAN BE BASED IN COUNTRIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WHERE IUCN HAS OFFICES

BACKGROUND:

The IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) operates in twenty-four countries in the Horn of Africa, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. IUCN's work in the region is guided by its 20-Year Vision (Unite for Nature) and its Intersessional Programme (2026-2029), which were adopted by IUCN's Members in October 2025. Biodiversity conservation is a crosscutting theme across IUCN ESARO project and programme portfolios. The overall strategic aim is to ensure that biodiversity is stabilized, sustained, retained and restored in terrestrial, marine and inland water ecosystems. Strategic priorities include capacity building of IUCN Members and partners, as well as the ESARO Secretariat, and mobilizing technical and financial support to tackle new and emerging biodiversity conservation challenges in the region, using a One Programme approach across the Union. The implementation of the SADC TFCA FF is a key strategic priority in the IUCN-SADC Action Plan under the auspices of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions. IUCN ESARO is the Project Executing Agency (PEA) for two Southern African Development Community (SADC) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) grant-making facilities. IUCN ESARO seeks to recruit a highly qualified and experienced Senior Programme Officer to manage and coordinate the "Training Facilities and Programmes for wildlife Rangers and Managers in the SADC Region programme", from here on referred to as the Wildlife Manager and Ranger Training Programme (WMRT). A summary of the two SADC TFCA Financing Facilities is as follows:

SADC TFCA Financing Facility:

The development and establishment of a regional and sustainable Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) financing mechanism is a major component of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) TFCA programme (2023-2033). The initial funding for the SADC TFCA Financing Facility has been provided by the German Government (BMZ through KfW), with additional commitments made by EU under the NaturAfrica programme. The intention is to leverage additional funds from various partners, to reach an operational funding volume of approximately EUR 100 million in the medium to long term.

The SADC TFCA Financing Facility (FF) is intended to foster closer collaboration between stakeholders supporting TFCAs and provide the basis for longer-term and more sustainable funding opportunities to develop all TFCAs. The SADC TFCA FF is fully aligned with the objectives of the SADC Programme for TFCAs (2023-2033) aiming at contributions to various objectives and goals in other relevant SADC strategies and protocols.

Through the TFCA Financing Facility, investments in tangible measures strengthening ecological, economic, cultural and institutional connectivity within SADC TFCAs will be leveraged in a flexible, demand-and performance driven way. The measures shall integrate three dimensions: improved habitat connectivity, especially for elephants and large carnivores as flagship species ("species" dimension), improved management effectiveness and governance of TFCAs and protected areas PAs ("habitat" dimension) and improved livelihoods for communities affected by human-wildlife co-habitation ("people" dimension)

Wildlife Manager and Ranger Training Programme:

The Wildlife Manager and Ranger Training Programme (WMRT) is managed as a separate window under the SADC TFCA FF and funded by the German Government through the financial cooperation of BMZ and KfW. The WMRT aims to strengthen the capacities of personnel in SADC TFCAs to help implement existing SADC TFCA programmes. With a commitment of currently € 5 million made to this programme by the German Government, the WMRT is a grant-making programme disbursing funds for needs-based training for Wildlife Managers and Rangers in SADC TFCAs.

JOB DESCRIPTION

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Under the supervision of the Team Leader, working in close collaboration with the SADC TFCA FF Project Management Unit (PMU), the Senior Programme Officer will lead day-to-day management and coordination of the WMRT including administration of the training grants in liaison with SADC Member States, NGOs, National NRM Training Institutions, SADC Secretariat and donors.

SPECIFIC DUTIES:

Specific duties will include:

Implementation of the Training Facilities and Programmes for Wildlife Managers and Rangers in the SADC region:

Support the Team Leader and the PMU in assessing training needs for SADC TFCAs and develop training priorities and strategies aligned with SADC priorities and regional and global best practices
Lead preparation, implementation and monitoring of work plans and budgets for the WMRT
Provide technical support to applicants in formulating proposals for training in TFCAs
Lead appraisal, scoring and selection of training proposals, in close liaison with other PMU members
Oversee contracting, implementation and monitoring of training grants, including review of progress reports
Contribute to the design of training tools and curricula development, including overseeing procurement of external experts and services to support implementation of the training programme

Implementation of the SADC TFCA Financing Facility project:

Support the Project Management Unit with day-to-day grant management tasks related to the main facility including design of calls for proposals, review of project proposals and managing grant contracts.

General Responsibilities:

Oversee technical and financial reporting on the WMRT in accordance with donor contractual reporting requirements;
Assisting the Team Leader in monitoring grants and portfolio performance according to monitoring guidelines, in liaison with IUCN ESARO Regional M&E Manager;
Liaison with the ESMS Officer on relevant activities – risk screening of proposals, and mainstreaming rights-based approaches in training programmes.
Organise field visits and spot checks on the ground to support grantees, capacity build and to monitor compliance;
Work closely with the Team Leader, to leverage additional funding support for the Facilities, including preparing presentations and proposals to donors and other stakeholders;
Assist with coordinating with other grant-making mechanisms in the region to build on complementarities and synergies;
In line with relevant communications strategies, help to communicate project results through the IUCN website and SADC TFCA portal, (in the form of articles, news stories, publications, etc.);
Provide administrative and logistical support to project implementation including the organization of workshops, meetings and consultations;
Ensure the collection, collation, and reporting of all project data and documents, and be responsible for the submission of technical progress reports, as well as all weekly and monthly reports according to the agreed formats and deadlines;
Attending the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings, helping to prepare and deliver presentations and reports for the same
Attend relevant regional and global meetings e.g. TFCA network as required and delegated by Team Leader

Other responsibilities:

Perform other duties as may be assigned from time to time, provided that they complement, and do not impact negatively, on the main duties above.

REQUIREMENTS

• POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

Education;

An advanced degree in a relevant discipline, such as, natural resources management and biodiversity conservation, environmental policy and management, development studies or related fields, from a recognized university.

Work Experience;

At least 7 years of relevant biodiversity conservation and natural resources management experience, programme management or grant management experience is required at regional or international level

Extensive experience in managing grant programmes and/ or project management for large donor funded projects

Solid knowledge of biodiversity conservation, especially area-based conservation, and relevant competencies required in nature conservation

Practical experience in implementation of nature conservation projects in the field, training and capacity building in line with national policies

Demonstrated experience with organising meetings, workshops and training

Demonstrated experience working with donors, donor reporting requirements, disbursing grants and working with grantees

Demonstrated experience in monitoring and evaluating projects is an advantage

Experience in interacting confidently with diverse stakeholders including with governments, NGOs and local communities

Specific knowledge and experience with transboundary conservation, particularly the SADC TFCA context would be an added advantage

Excellent reporting skills and writing skills.

Language Proficiency;

Fluency in written and spoken English. Portuguese would be a distinct advantage.

Core Competencies;

Transparency: Able to build trust and contribute to informed and responsible decision making by carrying out the work of

IUCN in a transparent manner; provides clear guidance to ensure that objectives and desired measurable results are understood by members of the team.

Inclusiveness: Understands and accepts cultural diversity, and provide a tolerant, positive and supportive working environment that fosters respect for diversity, demonstrates ability to work in a multicultural, multi ethnic environment and to maintain effective working relations with people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

Professionalism: Promote the organization's interests, objectives and values in a diligent and professional manner.

Accountability: Takes responsibility of individual and collective actions, promotes the IUCN One Programme approach.

Functional competencies;

Strong communication skills, both written and verbal.

Ability to identify issues, analyze and participate in the resolution of issues/problems. Ability to conduct data collection using various methods.

Excellent analytical skills for the review and assessments of project proposals.

Computer proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel and PowerPoint), database applications, spreadsheet and graphics presentations

Conceptual analytical and evaluative skills to conduct independent research and analysis, including familiarity with and experience in the use of various research sources, including electronic sources on the internet, intranet and other databases.

Ability to apply judgment in the context of assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities.

Takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.

APPLICATIONS

Applicants are requested to apply online through the HR Management System, by opening the vacancy announcement and pressing the "Apply" button at:

<https://hrms.iucn.org/vacancy/7691>

Applicants will be asked to create an account and submit their profile information. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date. The vacancy closes at midnight, Swiss time (GMT+1 / GMT+2 during Daylight Saving Time, DST). Please note that only selected applicants will be personally contacted for interviews.

Other job opportunities are published in the IUCN website: <https://www.iucn.org/involved/jobs/>

About IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and around 16,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being.

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