

Special Call for Concept Notes

WWF/WIOMSA Western Indian Ocean Tuna Challenge

INTRODUCTION

With tuna stocks worldwide in decline, the growing international demand for tuna, including illegal, unregulated and unreported fisheries, has put the rich tuna stocks of the region under serious threat. 70 to 80% of the Indian Ocean Tuna, worth 2 to 3 billion US\$ annually, is caught in the Western Indian Ocean sub-region.

WWF and WIOMSA are announcing a call for the development of Concept Notes for innovative research projects regarding the ecological as well as socio-economic challenges facing the Tuna industry in the Western Indian Ocean sub-region. The Concept Notes should come up with the most plausible, innovative and thought-provoking ideas on how to address the critical questions on the tuna industry.

The lead authors of the five shortlisted submissions will be invited to present their Concept Notes during a special side-event at the upcoming 7th WIOMSA Scientific Symposium in Mombasa, Kenya, 24 to 28 October 2011.

Based on the inputs from the five concept notes as well as from the discussions in the side event, Terms of Reference for a Call or Calls for Full Proposals will be developed. The side event will also decide on the number of topics to be included in the call(s). The Call for Full Proposals will be open to everyone, including the authors of the shortlisted five.

Through this process, WWF together with its partners expects to develop and implement targeted research around the Western Indian Ocean tuna fisheries, within the context of its regional tuna fisheries reform programme. The research results from the supported projects will help to provide the necessary up-to-date information to advice the Governments of the region in designing, negotiating and implementing adequate measures to make the tuna fisheries more sustainable. The information generated could also form a basis for the negotiation of better fisheries access agreements with foreign fishing nations as well as to raise concerns of the region at international forums such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and the World Trade Organizations.

SCOPE OF THE CONCEPT NOTE

The proposed projects should aim at addressing questions highlighted below and related topics:

Question 1: Why is it that the majority of the Indian Ocean Tuna is caught in the Western Indian Ocean?

If indeed 70- to 80% of the Indian Ocean tuna is caught in the Western part of the ocean, why is that? What makes this region so special? What are the features and hot spots that require special protection in order to ensure sustainability of the lucrative tuna fisheries?

Question 2: Who is currently benefiting from the Western Indian Ocean tuna fisheries and what are the reasons for this scenario?

The tuna fisheries are worth an estimated 2 to 3 billion US\$ per year, but who is actually profiting from these revenues. How much do the tuna fisheries contribute to the countries of the region and the livelihoods of their citizens, who are among the poorest in the world? Which are the market players that gain benefits and why is this so? What are incentives and institutional arrangements influencing the tuna fisheries? How could the countries of the region benefit more from this industry?

Question 3: What is the impact of fisheries subsidies on the Western Indian Ocean tuna fisheries?

Many foreign fishing fleets that dominate the tuna fisheries in the WIO are subsidized by their host nations. What is the economic impact of such subsidies on the fisheries? How does this impact the negotiation position of the WIO states?

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR PROPOSALS SELECTION

The over-riding principle governing selection of projects for funding is that, the proposal should have high scientific merit and demonstrate that its results will provide some tangible (direct or indirect) answers to the questions described above. Selection of concept notes will be guided by the following specific criteria. These criteria are not presented in any particular order:

- **Quality science.** The concept note should be innovative, have scientific merit and have clearly defined research questions and hypotheses. Proposals that will employ new approaches to solving problems and exploiting opportunities in resource management or development are encouraged. Also they should be competitive with current ongoing work in the relevant scientific fields.

- **Scientific quality/merit.** The degree to which the proposed project will advance the state of the science or discipline through use of innovative and unique approaches/methodologies to solve the identified management problems and exploit opportunities in resource management.
- **Feasibility (methods, logistics, etc).** Proposed methods and analytical techniques should be cost-effective, feasible and environmentally friendly.
- **Networking established within and outside the region.** The degree/extent to which the applicant(s) establish collaboration with other experts from within and outside the region for the purpose of addressing all the technical matters the project entails.
- **Trans-disciplinarity.** Preference will be given to multidisciplinary/transdisciplinary proposals. However, outstanding proposals from either the social or biophysical sciences will also be considered favorably.
- **Natural science/Social/humanities competence.** The degree to which investigators are qualified by education, training, and/or experience to execute the proposed project; and the degree to which they possess good records of achievement derived from previous projects funded by other funding agencies.
- **Stakeholder involvement.** The degree to which users, or potential users, of the outputs and outcomes of the proposed research have been involved in the project's planning or will participate in its implementation or will be targeted by the project's activities.

WHO CAN APPLY

The concept notes could be submitted by government departments, research and academic institutions, NGOs, CBOs, private companies as well as interested individuals as long as they meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The Principal Investigator should have attained an education level of at least MSc or MA degree in a discipline(s) related or relevant to the focus of the proposal.
- Evidence of potential/existing collaboration with appropriate experts who are competent in the technical matters that the proposed project entails.
- Research teams from within and outside the region are encouraged to apply. However, special considerations will be given to teams comprising experts from within and outside the region

FORMAT OF CONCEPT NOTE

The concept notes should **not exceed five pages**, and should contain the following information:

- **Title:** The title should serve to identify the project. It should be as short as possible and sufficiently descriptive to reflect the nature of the proposed work.
- **Investigators:** List of names and affiliations of each investigator who will significantly contribute to the project.
- **Proposed Project period:** Start and completion dates.

- **Rationale:** This section should attempt to answer the following critical questions: What are we going to learn from the results of the proposed project that we do not already know and why is it worth knowing? It should also give background information including a brief review of relevant literature and lead to a clear statement of research problems and the need for new knowledge. Possible applications of generated knowledge, expected impacts and other potential benefits of the project.
- **Objectives:** State the overall purpose and the specific objectives of the study against which the progress of the project could be assessed.
- **Methodology:** The concept note must specify the research operations that will be undertaken and the way the results of these operations will be interpreted in relation to the central problem(s). It is important that Applicants are as specific as possible about the activities they plan to undertake to collect information, about the techniques they will use to analyze it, and about the tests of validity to which they commit themselves
- **Results/Outputs:** Define the major outputs expected from the project.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Concept notes should be submitted by email by 31 July 2011. Authors will be informed if their submission has been shortlisted by 15 September 2011.

Concept notes should be submitted to:

The Executive Secretary, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA)

Email: secretary@wiomsa.org