



African Parks Network

Centurion Building, The Oval, Cnr. Meadowbrook Ave
& Sloane Street, Bryanston East, Sandton
P.O. Box 2336, Lonehill 2062, RSA

POSITION TITLE: COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE

Location: Cotonou, Benin Republic

Reporting to: Regional Operations Manager, West Africa

Type of Contract: Full time

Closing date: 14th May 2023

Seeking internal or external candidacy

1. Background

African Parks is a non-profit conservation organisation that takes on the complete responsibility for the rehabilitation and long-term management of national parks in partnership with governments and local communities. Founded in 2000 in response to the dramatic decline of protected areas due to poor management and lack of funding, African Parks is currently managing 22 national parks and protected areas in 12 countries covering over 20 million hectares in: Angola, Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

African Parks utilises a clear business approach to conserving Africa's wildlife and remaining wild areas, securing vast landscapes and carrying out the necessary activities needed to protect the parks and their wildlife. The organisation maintains a strong focus on economic development and poverty alleviation of surrounding communities to ensure that each park is ecologically, socially, and financially sustainable in the long-term.

Since 2017, Benin Government has entered into a long-term agreement with African Parks to revitalize, rehabilitate and develop both Pendjari and W National Parks. Together, these two Parks form a significant portion of the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Complex, a globally significant transboundary landscape representing the largest intact wild ecosystem in West Africa.

The ultimate objective is to ensure that these protected areas are managed in a holistic way, ensuring that they are ecologically, socio-politically and financially sustainable. These three elements interact with one another and impact on each other, and therefore all three need to be considered in long-term planning and in all decision making. To achieve this desired impact of long-term sustainability, African Parks implements the following five key pillars of management in all the parks that it manages: (i) Park Management and Infrastructure, (ii) Law Enforcement, (iii) Biodiversity Conservation, (iv) Community Development and (v) Tourism and Enterprise Development. If well implemented, these protected areas will not only contribute to improved ecosystem services, but will bring safety and stability to these regions and drive socio-economic growth.

As part of its operations in Benin, African Parks is seeking a highly organized, self-motivated and passionate individual with good problem-solving and mentorship ability for the role of **Country Representative**.

2. Primary Purpose

- To ensure the legal and institutional representation of African Parks in Benin with local and national authorities, and also with institutional, technical and financial partners in the country and ensure the proper execution of the mandate.





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3. Key Responsibilities

- Ensure legal and high-level representation of African Parks in Benin.
- Ensure official communication with national authorities on behalf of African Parks in Benin;
- Cultivate good relationships with key stakeholders in government, sector ministries, partners and agencies at the national level;
- Lead and, where appropriate, participate in coordination processes between key national stakeholders;
- Manage mandate agreement and ensure compliance with their obligations in close collaboration with the supervisory authorities, the regional team and all the actors concerned;
- Coordinate all formalities relating to the Mandate and take the lead in negotiations with the Government to obtain specific facilities;
- Support the parks in the timely organization of steering and board committees and follow up on recommendations with the parks;
- Monitor and coordinate the progress of all institutional and national files directly impacting field operations;
- Contribute to the stability and development of the African Parks portfolio in Benin;
- Ensure compliance of operations with the legislative, normative and regulatory framework of Benin and provide advice to the parks;
- Take the lead in all conflictual situations involving the national representations of stakeholders;
- Coordinate official visits of Government partners and other key players in liaison with the parks;
- Maintain a strategic risk analysis and provide strategic advice to the parks with the support of the regional team;
- Contribute to developing a strong link with universities and research institutions at the national level;
- Support the parks in the management of communication as well as negotiations with the key partners of the protected area;
- Maintain a strategic watch on new developments that could impact the operations of the parks and inform them in time;
- Guide staff to communicate, advocate and network clearly, appropriately and strategically.
- Ensure the visibility of African Parks, its model and its values with all national and international structures in Benin as needed;
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders at the national level and see to their formalization;
- Contribute to resource mobilization efforts and play a key role in contacts with technical and financial partners at the national level;
- Manage the representative office in the required standards in terms of technical, financial, security, etc.;
- Contribute to the talent development program in support of the Human Resources Department;
- Perform any task that will be requested or delegated by the hierarchy.

4. Competencies, qualifications and experience needed for the role:

- Good leadership and people management skills
- Strong personal integrity and dependability
- Good team player and experience in managing teams





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- Experience in mediations and conflict management
- Excellent interpersonal and multi-stakeholder negotiation skills
- Excellent human contact, ability to work in a multidisciplinary and multicultural team
- Excellent oral/written communication in French and English;
- Good understanding and adherence to the African Parks management model
- Autonomy, versatility and initiative
- Dynamism, pugnacity, diplomacy and loyalty

5. Minimum Requirements Skills:

- Advanced university degree in development, environment, project management, law, diplomacy, political and/or social sciences or in a related field
- At least 10 years of proven experience in the conservation of natural resources and the management of Protected Areas.
- Demonstrated management capacity as well as practical experience in the areas of administration, human resources, finance and logistics
- Excellent knowledge of the functioning of governmental or non-governmental, sub-regional institutions, local actors and issues relating to the sustainable management of natural resources in Benin and in the sub-region.
- Proven experience in implementing operations in complex security environments.

6. Key relationships:

- Supervising Ministry and other sectoral ministries associated with PA actions in Benin
- Government Agencies, Centres and Administrations
- All institutional partners of African Parks in Benin
- The Beninese Armed Forces
- Regional Operations Manager
- Any functional regional support
- Park Managers
- Parks Management Units

7. How to apply ?

To apply, please email in a single PDF format your CV, cover letter and proof of related work experience explaining why you are a suitable candidate, along with three references to marca@africanparks.org copying huguesa@africanparks.org with subject heading: “**Country Representative position _Last Name**” by **14th May 2023**.

