



THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES

UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY



BID INVITATION

DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF VISITOR FACILITIES

IN QUEEN ELIZABETH CONSERVATION AREA

JUNE 2019

1. INTRODUCTION.

Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament, (Cap 200 of 2000), and is responsible for managing the Conservation Areas of Uganda, including 10 National Parks, and 12 Wildlife Reserves, as well as wildlife management areas, including 14 wildlife sanctuaries and 5 community wildlife areas.

The Mission of UWA is to economically develop and sustainably manage the wildlife and Conservation Areas of Uganda in partnership with neighboring communities and other stakeholders for the benefit of the people of Uganda and the global community. The National wildlife policy (1999) authorizes UWA, in consultation with other lead agencies to control and develop or license the development of tourist facilities in the wildlife-protected areas. UWA Management recognizes the tourism potential of the conservation areas and encourages investment in tourism related facilities.

These investments are either undertaken directly by UWA or sub-contracted to private investors. The majority of accommodation facilities/investments within the conservation areas, are currently owned and managed by private investors. Few investments are still managed directly by UWA and plans are underway to place them under private management soon.

The Ugandan Government, with substantial assistance from the international community, has made considerable efforts to create a sound foundation for the growth of tourism. These measures have started paying off as evidenced by the increased numbers of visitors to the country. Visitor numbers to all the protected areas have consistently increased by over 10% per year in recent years. Better facilities have attracted more visitors, and in turn the growth in visitor numbers is creating demand for a greater range, number and quality of accommodation and recreational facilities. Wildlife tourism is by far the largest component of Uganda's tourism industry. International tourism assessments predict that the country's tourism growth is expected to compete favourably with its competitors in East Africa.

Uganda has made an impressive commitment to wildlife conservation and currently some 10% of the country's land area is protected in a range of national parks, wildlife reserves and wildlife management areas, including wildlife sanctuaries and community wildlife areas.

2. THE UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is the statutory body that is charged with conserving and sustainably managing these conservation areas, in trust for the people of Uganda. It has a vision to become a leading self-sustaining wildlife conservation agency that transforms Uganda into one of the best eco - tourist destination in Africa.

UWA was created in 1996 by a merger of the former Uganda National Parks and Game Department organisations, and has a duty to carry out its mandate by operating in accordance with sound financial and commercial practice. The Uganda Wildlife Act, 2000 governs its operations. UWA has developed comprehensive General Management Plans for its various conservation areas and these provide the framework within which UWA structures its relationships with the private sector and neighbouring communities. The plans provide the detailed vision for each protected area's development.

The Uganda Wildlife Act authorises UWA to enter into commercial arrangements for the management of parts of its conservation areas and for the provision of services and infrastructure. Such arrangements are usually governed by concession agreements. These investments are undertaken and managed with due consideration for their environmental impact and the requirements of the National Environment Act must be fully complied with. Concession private investments are encouraged by the management of UWA, and are important for the management of the protected areas because:

- They introduce fresh investment and efficiency in the provision of services and recreational facilities that support and promote visitation to the protected areas.
- They encourage private sector participation in conservation activities.
- They are a source of additional revenue to support UWA's conservation programmes, and promote the well being of neighbouring communities.

3. QUEEN ELIZABETH CONSERVATION AREA

Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (QECA) is the second largest protected area in Uganda covering an area of 2465 sq km² comprising:

- Queen Elizabeth National Park
- Kyambura Wildlife Reserve
- Kigezi Wildlife Reserve

It is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Uganda, and has witnessed a rapid increase in visitor numbers over the past 10 years. The awe-inspiring Mweya peninsula is the focal setting for visitor activities within the area. The increase in visitor numbers has created a demand for additional visitor accommodation facilities and new services.

The General Management Plan for QECA (2011 to 2021) identifies potential of scenic sites to develop accommodation facilities to meet this growing demand for accommodation services within the Park.

This bid invitation is aimed at attracting suitable investors to develop and operate accommodation facilities which will enhance visitor experience in this area.

4. EXISTING TOURIST FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

It is anticipated that visitors to Queen Elizabeth National Park will continue to increase with improved tourist facilities, products and services. The park is centrally located amongst other key tourist attractions in the Western and south western parts of Uganda which include Bwindi Impenetrable National Park famous for the Mountain Gorillas, Rwenzori Mountains National park famous for unique flora and fauna and Kibale National park for Chimpanzee tracking. This makes Queen Elizabeth National Park a convenient overnight stopover destination for tourists visiting the region

The Park is a scenic tourist destination with a variety of unique land forms such as the explosion craters, a home to some of the world's endangered animal species and habitat to over 600 species of birds.

Current accommodation in the park caters for both high end and decent budget accommodation. The magnificent Mweya Safari Lodge located at the Mweya peninsula, Jacana Safari Lodge on the banks of Lake Nyamusingiri and Ishasha tented Camp on the banks of River Ntungwe in the Ishasha Sector offer befitting high end accommodation services that enhance visitor experience. On the other hand, the newly renovated UWA Lower camp accommodation facility at Mweya peninsula adequately caters for the budget visitors.

The present range of tourism activities in the Park includes:

- Scenic game and bird-watching drives
- Launch trips along the Kazinga channel
- Primate tracking in the Kyambura Gorge
- Camping-based visits
- Chimpanzee tracking in the Kyambura Underground forest
- Nature walks

5. VISITORS TO QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

Table 1 below indicates the trend of visitor numbers for the last five years. The more detailed park statistics show an increasing number of foreign nationals visiting the park which translates into increased revenue.

Improved accommodation and better provision of services has helped to make the park one of the most frequently visited protected areas in the country. In recent years QECA has always hosted averagely above 30% of all the tourists visiting the Parks.

TABLE 1 VISITORS TO QENP 2014–2018

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Visitors to QENP*	58,769	72,964	85,905	81,660	86,875
Total Visitors to all Parks	202,885	215,558	245,725	285,671	325,345
% visiting QENP	28.3%	33.8%	34.3%	28.5%	26.7%

Extracted from UWA Visitor Statistics (excludes transit visitors).

6. PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP NEW ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES IN QECA

The General Management Plan for the QECA 2011 to 2021 recognises the increase in the number of visitors to QECA. This has necessitated for the development of more mid range and high end accommodation facilities to cater for the ever growing number of tourists to the park. In this regard UWA is calling for Expression of Interest from interested entities to Develop and Operate visitor facilities as specified below.

	Description of Investment	Location	Category
1	Construct and manage a 20 bed luxury tented camp at Lake Chibwera	Kyambura Wildlife Reserve	High end
2	Develop and Operate a Luxury House boat on Kazinga Channel	Mweya	Mid-range

7. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE TO BID.

UWA is seeking to identify a credible investor to develop and operate the each of the above listed visitor facilities in QECA to be run as concessions. The sites will be developed in accordance with the Uganda Wildlife Act and other relevant laws. UWA will sign concession contracts with the successful bidders basing on its standard contract approved by the Solicitor General for a period of 10 years.

7.1. Eligibility to Bid.

While the bidding process is open to all, the selection criteria shall be guided by the guidelines issued by the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority. UWA is specifically seeking for investors with the following competences.

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in the management of tourism facilities. Experience in managing similar facilities will be an added advantage.
- Necessary technical knowledge and financial capacity to develop and successfully operate the tourism facilities.
- An acceptable business/development plan to create and manage the facilities in a low impact and environmentally acceptable manner.

The main bidding document for concession opportunities within the conservation areas is the Business/Development plan submitted to UWA in the form of an investment proposal.

The investment proposal is prepared by the applicant in response to the bid invitation. It is submitted in two parts – the technical and financial proposals. The technical proposal should contain all the relevant information about the investor, and the project, and should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the challenges of the proposed investment, and the strategies that will be employed to ensure the success of the venture. The financial proposal should contain the applicant's offer of financial support to UWA. The technical and financial proposals should be submitted in two separate and clearly marked envelopes.

Applicants are advised to carefully read the bid document, including the terms and conditions of the Standard Concession Agreement attached hereto, before preparing their proposal. UWA will discuss details of the agreement (during negotiations) with the best-evaluated bidder after communication of the award of contract.

The proposals form an important component in UWA's evaluation and selection of the investor, and will be used during the investment negotiations and the award of contract. The business/development plan will eventually be annexed to the final concession agreement.

Essential to the business plan is information regarding the following:

7.2 Technical Proposal.

The technical proposal should contain an analysis of the investment proposal, indicating how the various related components of the investment will be undertaken. Basic information should include:

7.2.1 Bidder's Profile.

This should contain information on the applicant's company and any other partners involved in the proposals, with attached copies of supporting documents.

7.2.2. Experience

Information on the experience of managing similar investments will help in the evaluation of the bid proposal. Copies of the company/companies' Memorandum and Articles of Association, Trading Licenses, Registration certificate, tax clearance and current audited financial statements, should be submitted in support of the application.

7.2.3. Description of the physical structures.

The proposal should be accompanied with a simple site layout of all structures, tents, canteens, staff quarters etc, to be developed in the area, indicating the location of the different facilities and a description of the materials and process to be used in the construction. Copies of photographic designs of similar structures should be included if available. Bidders are advised to visit the site of the investment, at their costs and acquaint themselves with the site, and possible challenges.

7.2.4. Timetable.

Information on a realistic timetable for the development must be included in the proposal. This should include the time necessary for mobilisation, construction and eventual start-up of operations, including the date by which the new and renovated facilities will be available for use. The successful bidder will be expected to adhere to the investment timetable stated in the proposal.

7.2.5. Manpower.

The plan should indicate the number of employees required to manage the proposed facilities, and whether the required skills will be available locally.

7.2.6. Utilities.

The proposal should give a detailed plan for the provision of utilities, such as water, energy, light, communications, safety and other services.

7.2.7. Environmental Considerations and Waste Management.

Waste management within the protected areas is of special concern to UWA. Bidders will be required to indicate in their proposal, knowledge of dealing with waste generated from the operation of the investment. The proposal should indicate clear measures and methods of disposal of various types of waste that will be generated by the investment.

The plan should also indicate measures that will be out in place to ensure that visitors to the camp will not endanger the natural resources available within the protected areas.

7.2.8. Community Participation / Benefit.

UWA is concerned to ensure that neighbouring communities benefit from, and thereby appreciate, conservation efforts. The plan should highlight the expected benefits, if any, from the development that will accrue to neighbouring communities.

7.2.9. Support from UWA.

The proposal should include a full description of the support required from UWA that will be essential for the operation of the investment.

7.2.10. Investment Capital.

Bidders should indicate the amount of investment capital required for the project with a breakdown showing the costs of the different components of the proposed investment. It is important to indicate the sources of investment funds, and whether these funds are firmly committed. UWA's standard terms require it to have a first lien over all developments within the protected areas.

7.2.11. Rates.

Provide indicative rates to be charged for the various services to be rendered when the facilities are operational. The concessionaires are free to set their own tariff rates, and will not be restricted to the rates contained in the proposals.

7.2.12. Marketing.

The success of any investment depends on the ability of its management to effectively market it. The proposal should indicate the target markets for the accommodation facilities and the marketing plan for the investment. Experience of marketing similar facilities, or association with organisations well established in the field, will be an advantage.

7.2.13. Approval of Structural /Development Plans.

UWA shall approve construction material and design before any construction commences. The best-evaluated bidder will have to seek written approval from the relevant district authorities of their structural or development plans. Approved copies of the plans will thereafter be submitted to UWA.

7.3. Financial Proposal.

UWA partly depends on revenue generated from its concessions within the conservation areas to pay for conservation operations. The proposal should indicate the level of fees that the investor is willing to pay to UWA. This will be used to determine the best evaluated bidder. UWA currently charges concessionaires the following fees:

- A non-refundable one-off signing fee for the concession. The fee has been fixed at US \$ 5,000.
- An Annual Fixed Fee for the concession to be quoted in US Dollars, not below \$ 5,000, paid at the beginning of the calendar year
- A Variable Fee based on the bed night occupancy of the accommodation (to be quoted by bidders in US Dollars per bed night) per actual visitor bed night at the campsite.

The financial proposal should be consistent with the level of fees that the applicant has incorporated in the costing, and the assumptions made in the technical proposal. The proposal should indicate the expected total yearly payment of fees to UWA based on the rate and projected level of operation.

The financial offers will determine the ranking of bidders who have passed the technical proposals. The bidder with the best financial offer to UWA will be declared the best-evaluated bidder.

8. PROCEDURE FOR AWARD OF CONTRACT.

8.1. Identifying Concession Opportunity.

UWA has produced General Management Plans (GMPs) for most of the conservation areas. These were prepared in an elaborate consultative and participatory manner with all stakeholders. Commercial activities identified during the planning process, and included in the GMPs, have to be environmentally sustainable, contribute to the welfare of the neighbouring community, and promote visitors' enjoyment of the conservation areas.

8.2. Selection of Investor.

As a matter of policy, all concession opportunities within the conservation areas are competed for openly through a process of open competitive bidding. Bids are evaluated by an evaluation committee specifically constituted by the UWA Contracts Committee in line with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) regulations. UWA reserves the right to seek clarifications from bidders on aspects of their investment proposals during and after the evaluation.

The winning bidder is expected to carry out at their own cost, an Environmental Impact Assessment whenever necessary as the Uganda laws and relevant regulations demand.

8.3. Target Groups.

In determining the award of a contract, management is guided by:

- The experience of the applicant in the line of business.
- The capacity of the applicant, (both technical and financial) to implement the proposed investment.
- The quality of the applicant's development/ business plan.
- The commitments (if any) requested of UWA.
- The quality of the proposed staff to manage the investment.
- Environmental considerations
- Record of previous performance in particular with Investors operating similar investments within or adjacent to UWA protected areas.
- Contributions and benefits accruing to communities
- Support to Conservation

8.4. Submission, Receipt and Opening of Bids.

Three copies of the technical proposal should be placed in one sealed envelope and clearly marked "**Technical Proposal for Concession to Develop and Manage Visitor facilities at (Insert the site Name here) with in Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area.** Ensure you include the name of the site you are applying for as directed above.

The Financial Proposal (in three copies) should be sealed in a separate envelope and clearly marked "**Financial Proposal for Concession to Develop and Manage Visitor facilities at (Insert site Name here) with in Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area.** Ensure you include the name of the site you are applying for as directed above.

Both envelopes of the technical and the financial proposal should be placed and sealed inside the **main bid envelope** and be addressed to:

Address/ Office:

The Executive Director

Uganda Wildlife Authority

Plot 7 Kira Road, Kamwokya

P.O. Box 3530

Kampala

Bids should be **delivered to the office of the Executive Director, at UWA Headquarters**, Second Floor Mt. Gorilla Nest Building, no later than the deadline of **Friday 9th August 2019 at 11.00 a.m.** Bids received after that time/date will be returned unopened. Bidders are advised to have their bids registered on delivery at UWA. Bids will be opened immediately after the bid deadline (11.05 am) in the conference room, in the presence of bidders' representatives who may choose to attend the opening ceremony.

UWA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to Bidders.

8.5. Bid Evaluation Procedure.

A multi-disciplinary Evaluation Committee specifically constituted by the UWA Contracts Committee, in line with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) regulations, will evaluate bids. UWA reserves the right to seek clarification from bidders on aspects of their investment proposals during and after the evaluation.

8.6. Evaluation Criteria.

UWA gives equal opportunities to all to undertake investment opportunities within the Conservation Areas. While new entrants are encouraged to take up new investments opportunities, existing investors/concessionaires may also apply for additional investment opportunities taking note of clause 8.1 above

8.7. Financial Evaluation Criteria.

All Bidders who pass the technical stage will be invited for the opening of their financial envelopes. The Financial proposals will be evaluated according the financial offer to UWA in terms of fees. The bid with the highest financial offer to UWA, from among those whose technical proposal obtained more than 70% shall be declared the best-evaluated bid.

8.8. Validity of Proposals.

The proposal should be valid for not less than 120 days to allow time for evaluation and negotiations of award of contract.

8.9. Withdrawal and Replacement of Bids.

A Bidder may withdraw or replace its bid after it has been submitted at any time before the deadline for submission of bids by sending a written notice, duly signed by an authorised representative. Any corresponding replacement of the bid must accompany the respective written notice.

Bids may only be modified by withdrawal of the original bid and submission of a replacement bid by written notice. Modifications submitted in any other way shall not be taken into account in the evaluation of bids.

Bids requested to be withdrawn shall be returned unopened to the Bidder.

No bid may be withdrawn or replaced in the interval between the deadline for submission of bids and the expiration of the period of bid validity specified by the Bidder or any extension thereof

8.10. Notice of Award of Contract.

The Executive Director Uganda Wildlife Authority will in writing communicate award of contract to the best-evaluated bidder, who will thereafter be invited for negotiations before signing of the concession contract.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

All investments undertaken within the Conservation Areas must undergo an EIA by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). The cost of preparing the **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** study will be borne by the applicant.