



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.42-43/3
22 April 2024

Adaptation Fund Board

**REQUEST FOR DIRECT PROJECT SERVICES AND
NO-COST EXTENSION OF THE PROJECT
COMPLETION DATE:
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY
(BENIN, BURKINA FASO, NIGER)**

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) during its intersessional period between thirty-third and thirty-fourth meeting of the Board, approved a four-year project titled “Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Measures in the Concerted Management of the WAP Transboundary Complex: ADAPT-WAP” submitted by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) for a requested amount of US\$ 11,536,200 (decision B.33-34/25).
2. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and improve populations’ livelihoods affected by climate change within the WAP Complex, through the establishment of a Multi-Risk Early Warning System (MREWS) and the implementation of concrete adaptation measures. This is enabled through the implementation of a suite of interventions that focus on: (i) The integration of climate change aspects into the management of the WAP Complex; (ii) Designing and implementing a MREWS (drought, floods, and fires); (iii) Improving the resilience of ecosystems and the livelihoods of population and users through the implementation of concrete adaptation actions; and (iv) Awareness, communication and capacity building for a concerted, integrated and sustainable management of the WAP Complex.
3. As mandated by the decision, an agreement was prepared and signed between the Board and OSS in October 2019 of the date and the project started implementation on 21 April 2020. As of the date of issuance of this document, a total amount of US\$ 9,255,450 had been disbursed to the project by the Trustee, corresponding to eighty per cent of the project funding. The project started its implementation on 21 April 2020, and two project performance reports (PPR) have been received and cleared by the secretariat.
4. On 2 February 2024, the secretariat received a request from OSS (Annex I) for the provision of direct project services (DPS) to the project’s executing entities (EEs). This request was supported by letters of endorsement from the Designated Authorities (DA) of Benin (Annex II), Burkina Faso (Annex III), and a support letter from the EE from Niger, informing that the Department of Water and Forest, had requested support in the provision DPS (Annex IV). This letter in lieu of the endorsement letter from the DA of Niger, can be accepted as an exceptional circumstance, due to the volatile political situation in Niger, as communicated by OSS to the secretariat.
5. The request for DPS provision when the project is under implementation, is described in the Operational Policies and Guidelines (OPG) Annex 7, that reports *“In cases where a request for DPS is submitted to the secretariat for a project/programme that has been already been approved by the Board, which is only possible on an exceptional basis, the IEs shall submit all the relevant justification for the DPS explaining how the costs were established, along with a letter from the Designated Authority of the Adaptation Fund for the country(ies) of the project/programme endorsing the DPS”*.
6. The execution services proposed to be devolved to OSS relate to procurement processes. The rationale for the request of DPS provision, is due to the lengthy and slow procurement processes, particularly in Burkina Faso and Benin.
7. The Implementing Entity (IE) confirms that there will be no need for budget reallocation associated with the requested DPS, which will be covered by the IE fee. Any additional cost that will arise from the provision of such services will be covered by OSS with its own resources and will not be charged to the project. OSS does not foresee any budget realignment to carry out these functions.

8. As part of these documents, OSS submitted also the first request for a regular eighteen-month no-cost extension of the project completion date, from 20 April 2024 to 20 October 2025. As outlined in the Adaptation Fund Policy for Project/Programme Delays (AFB/B.34-35/6), an implementing entity may request an extension beyond the original project completion date up to 18 months for a concrete adaptation project/programme if: (i) no additional funds are required; (ii) the project/programme's originally approved scope will not change; and (iii) the entity provides reasons and justifications for the extension. The DA must be notified of an extension request.

9. The reasons for this request, as outlined in the memo shared by OSS (Annex V), are multifaceted and relate to the following factors: delays related to changes in the institutional arrangement in Benin; delays in procurement; delays related to termination of a service contract; delays related to the insecurity in the WAP complex and peripheral areas; delays due to recruitment and assignment of project supporting staff; and political instability in Burkina Faso and Niger where coup d'états halted the implementation of project activities.

Secretariat's review of the request

7. Following a review of the request, the secretariat finds that the request from OSS to provide DPS to the executing entities in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, is justified and will ensure timely delivery of project activities and utilization of funds, in line with the Adaptation Fund Policies. Additionally, the secretariat finds that the request for an eighteenth-month no-cost extension of the project completion's date is justified, in view of the reasons advanced by OSS. As evidenced by the memo provided by the IE, it is noted that this request would allow sufficient time for the project to compensate for accumulated delays due to the reasons afore mentioned, and to ensure the fulfillment of the project outcomes.

8. Finally, the secretariat acknowledges that these requests have been endorsed by the Das and are supported by the EEs, in accordance with provisions set forth in the OPG Annex 7 and the Policy for Project/Program Delays.

Recommendation

9. The Board may consider and decide to approve the provision by OSS of a no-additional-cost direct project services and the request for an eighteenth-month no-cost extension of the project's completion date from 20 April 2024 to 20 October 2025, for the project "Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Measures in the Concerted Management of the WAP Transboundary Complex: ADAPT-WAP" implemented by OSS.

Annex

1. Request for the provision of Direct Project Services by OSS;
2. Letter of endorsement by the Designated Authority of Benin for the DPS request;
3. Letter of endorsement by the Designated Authority of Burkina Faso for the DPS request;
4. Support letter by the Executing Entity of Niger for the DPS request;
5. Letter from OSS requesting a no-cost extension of the project's completion date.

Annex 1. Request for the provision of Direct Project Services by OSS



n°37/se/24

Tunis, February 2nd, 2024

Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat

MSN-P-P-400
1818 H Street NW
Washington DC 30433 – USA

Subject: AF regional project ID AF 00000111: "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP" in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger: Request for approval of Direct Project Services.

Dear Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat,

Reference is made to the regional Adaptation Fund project titled "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP" executed by The National Centre of Management of Fauna Reserves (GENAGREF) in Benin, the National Office of Protected Areas (OFINAP) in Burkina Faso and the General Directorate of Water and Forests (DGEF) in Niger, and implemented by OSS as Regional Accredited Entity which is also hosting the Project Regional Executing Entity.

After three years of implementation, the project's effectiveness rate is rather low, given the poor performance assessed during the mid-term evaluation, hence the request for the No-cost Extension to catch up on the recorded delays and achieve the project's objectives. One of the main reasons delaying project implementation are the lengthy and slow procurement processes, particularly in Burkina Faso and Benin. During OSS supervision missions, this issue was regularly raised by the national project management units in the three countries, who expressed the need to be supported by the Implementing Entity in handling specific procurement processes according to its own procedures.

Following discussions with the Executing Entities (EEs) and after agreeing we are requesting your approval for Direct Project Services. To note that the EEs will prepare the terms of reference and specifications for the activities to be carried out, and will formally request OSS to take charge of the process until contracting with the selected consultants or service providers and their payment on their behalf.

It should be noted that the services which will be provided by OSS will be covered by project management fees and that will not generate costs on budget components / activities. Any additional cost that will arise from the provision of such services will be covered by OSS with its own resources and will not be charged to the project. OSS does not foresee any budget realignment to carry out these functions.

I would like to thank you for your support and will be looking forward the AFB decision.

Yours faithfully,

Nabil BEN KHATRA

Executive Secretary



Annex 2. Letter of endorsement by the Designated Authority of Benin for the DPS request



MINISTÈRE DU CADRE DE VIE
ET DES TRANSPORTS
EN CHARGE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE
REPUBLICQUE DU BENIN



ADAPTATION FUND

January 29, 2024

N°0053/DGEC/MCVT/SD

Letter of Endorsement by Government

To: The Adaptation Fund Board
c/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
Email: Secretariat@Adaptation-Fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Support to the request of Direct Project Services: Regional Project "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex (Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger)".

The above matter refers.

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in Benin, I endorse the request by the National Centre of Management of Fauna Reserves (CENAGREF), for the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) to provide Direct Project Services (DPS) beyond its role as a Regional Implementing Entity.

We are strongly convinced that in order to effectively execute project activities and avoid potential delays, CENAGREF Benin needs to rely on OSS for specific recruitment and procurement processes, using OSS guidelines and procedures, including contracting and payment on behalf of the Executing Entity.

We would like to thank you for your support and look forward to fruitful collaboration in the implementation of this project.

Yours sincerely,


Professor Martin Pépin AINA
Adaption Fund Focal Point of Benin



Annex 3. Letter of endorsement by the Designated Authority of Burkina Faso for the DPS request

BURKINA FASO

Unité-Progrès-Justice

Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Prospective

Direction Générale de la Coopération



ADAPTATION FUND



Letter of Endorsement by Government

Ouagadougou, 26th January, 2024

To: Adaptation Fund Board
C/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
Email: Secretariat@Adaptation-Fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Support to the request of Direct Project Services: Regional Project "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex (Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger)".

The above matter refers.

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in Burkina Faso, I endorse the request by the National Office of Protected Areas (OFINAP), for the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) to provide Direct Project Services (DPS) beyond its role as a Regional Implementing Entity.

We are strongly convinced that in order to effectively execute project activities and avoid potential delays, OFINAP Burkina Faso needs to rely on OSS for specific recruitment and procurement processes, using OSS guidelines and procedures, including contracting and payment on behalf of the Executing Entity.

We would like to thank you for your support and look forward to fruitful collaboration in the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'O' followed by a smaller 'u' and a flourish.

Mr. Inoussa OUMINGA
Adaptation Fund National Designated Authority
Directeur Général de la Coopération
03 BP 7067 Ouagadougou 03
Tel: +226 70 41 99 41
Email: jouiminga@yahoo.fr

Annex 4. Support letter by the Executing Entity of Niger for the DPS request

REPUBLIQUE DU NIGER
Fraternité-Travail-Progrès
CONSEIL NATIONAL POUR LA SAUVEGARDE
DE LA PATRIE

MINISTRE DE L'HYDRAULIQUE, DE
L'ASSAINISSEMENT ET DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

DIRECTION GENERALE DES EAUX
ET FORETS

N° 00003 /DGE/F/DFC/AP



Niamey, le 23 JAN 2024

LE DIRECTEUR GENERAL
Chef de corps

à

Monsieur Nabil BEN KHATRA
Secrétaire Exécutif de l'OSS
Tunis

Réf : Accord du don N°01/ADAPT-WAP-NIGER/20

Objet : Demande d'appui en matière de passation de marchés

Monsieur le Secrétaire Exécutif

Permettez-moi tout d'abord, de vous adresser mes plus vifs remerciements pour l'accompagnement fourni par votre organisation dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du projet régional « Intégration des mesures d'adaptation au changement climatique dans la gestion concertée du complexe transfrontalier W-Arly-Pendjari (Adapt-Wap) » au Bénin, Burkina Faso et Niger.

Comme vous le savez, depuis le lancement régional du projet en avril 2020, l'exécution des activités au Niger a connu un grand retard du fait d'une multitude de difficultés, notamment d'ordre sanitaire, sécuritaire et institutionnel. Le processus national de passation de marchés s'avère l'une des principales contraintes qui affectent la bonne mise en œuvre du projet.

Face à cette situation, nous sollicitons votre appui en tant qu'Entité Régionale de Mise Œuvre, afin que vous puissiez assumer, conformément à vos procédures internes, la gestion des processus de passation de marchés relatifs à des activités spécifiques que nous identifierons en fonction de nos besoins. Cela englobera non seulement la sélection des prestataires, mais également la contractualisation et la gestion des paiements associés.

En optant pour cette approche, nous anticipons une accélération des procédures, une amélioration de l'efficacité opérationnelle, ainsi qu'une réduction des retards qui ont jusqu'à présent entravé le rythme d'exécution du projet.

Tout en vous réitérant notre engagement à œuvrer à l'atteinte des objectifs du projet, je vous prie d'agréer Monsieur le Secrétaire Exécutif, l'expression de mes sincères salutations.

Ampliations :

- MHA/E.....1 à-t-c-r
- DFC/AP1 pour suivi



Annex 5: Letter from OSS requesting a no-cost extension of the project's completion date.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CONCRETE ADAPTATION PROJECT/PRORAMME



REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CONCRETE ADAPTATION PROJECT/PROGRAMME

Request for extension of project/programme completion date

Implementing Entity Name: Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS)			
AF Project/programme ID: AF00000111			
Project/programme Title: Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP			
Countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	7/15/19		
Expected Project/programme Completion (date)	04/20/2024	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	10/20/2025

Reasons/justifications for the extension of project/programme completion:

The "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP" is considered to be the first regional climate change project for the largest and most important continuum of unharmed transboundary ecosystems in the West African savannah belt. The project was designed to be aligned with the sustainable development and climate change adaptation priorities of the three countries. It is in perfect harmony with Block W's transboundary planning and management plan, as well as national and regional policies, strategies and priorities in terms of sustainable development and adaptation to climate change.

It is a project dedicated on the one hand to building the capacities of stakeholders in strategies for adapting to climate change impacts and integrating the adaptation dimension into development plans at various levels, and on the other hand to enhance the resilience of the WAP complex ecosystems and most vulnerable local communities through concrete adaptation measures to better cope with the adverse effects of climate change within a regional vision.

After three years of implementation, the project's effectiveness rate is rather low, given the poor performance assessed during the mid-term evaluation, hence the need for additional time to catch up on the recorded delays and achieve the project's objectives.

The regional inception workshop was held on April 21, 2020, under special conditions coinciding with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation did not allow the regional project

management unit to travel to the countries, resulting in delays in setting up the national project teams and training them in implementation procedures and project management aspects. This unprecedented situation posed problems that affected the initial set-up of the project and hampered the timely deployment of the necessary resources and the establishment of the best conditions for starting implementation according to the initial plan.

Also, many difficulties were encountered, particularly by Benin and Burkina Faso' Project Management Units, in drawing up, finalizing and satisfying the conditions for entry into force specified in the funding agreements and the releasing of the first disbursements.

In addition to the above-mentioned reasons, many other challenges were faced during implementation, delaying or postponing certain key activities. The main key points are highlighted below:

1. Delays related to changes in the institutional arrangement in Benin:

The effective start-up of the project in Benin was hampered by the new institutional arrangement for the Pendjari and W/Benin parks. Indeed, during the Due Diligence mission conducted in January 2020, OSS was informed of the new management and concession procedures set out in the delegated management contract signed between the government of Benin and the African Parks Network (APN). This new arrangement required some adjustments and adaptations in the drafting of working documents such as the procurement plan, annual work plan and budget, etc., for the full execution of project activities. This was agreed through a time-consuming consultation process. In addition, after starting the implementation of this agreement, CENAGREF and APN (African Parks Network) encountered some difficulties, mainly due to APN's internal management procedures. This has not helped to reduce the delays already experienced.

2. Delays in procurement:

Bureaucracy and slow procurement procedures in Burkina Faso are among the major constraints, causing important delays which can't be easily addressed. For example, the process of recruiting the consulting firm to carry out the studies on transhumance corridors, water points and grazing areas, which was launched in May 2021, had taken more than one year to be completed. Same challenges are also being experienced by Benin and Niger Executing Entities.

3. Delays related to termination of a service contract:

The Regional Executing Entity was constrained to terminate the contract with the group of consulting firms assigned to design and implement the MR-EWS, due to the inability of the contractor to provide deliverables that meet the requirements of the ToRs and with the required quality. This was led to a very negative impact on the project's progress and disbursement. New measures were taken to relaunch the implementation of MR-EWS with the strategic involvement of the AGRHYMET Regional Center, but this would need additional more time to achieve it with all related activities.

4. Delays related to the insecurity in the WAP complex and peripheral areas:

The security situation in the project intervention area got worse during the second and the third year of the project implementation. The entire area of the WAP complex has become inaccessible due to the presence of armed terrorist groups and therefore no activities could be carried out inside the area. In addition, some peripheral zones in the 3 countries started presenting high security risks, obliging some villages to move to other safe regions. This situation has delayed and hindered the implementation of many activities.

5. Delays due to recruitment and assignment of project supporting staff:

The three countries have experienced delays in hiring or assigning project supporting staff. Moreover, in Benin and Burkina Faso, recruited staff left the project which took more time to be changed through new hiring processes.

6. Weak project team's capacity and changes

In Burkina Faso, we noted a weak capacity in terms of technical and management skills (poor quality of supervision, reporting and management). Furthermore, the national project coordinator who is the General Director of the Executing Entity, has other duties and thus is not fully dedicated to manage and coordinate the project and the team. This affected the efficiency of the activities' execution in the country.

In Benin, the project national coordinator, has left for other duties and this has also caused additional delay to replace him and for the new one to take over the tasks and understand the project philosophy.

7. Political Instability:

During its implementation the ADAPT-WAP project has experienced major challenges related to political instability where in Burkina Faso a "Coups d'Etat" has occurred two times and consequently has halted the activities also at the central level. To note also, during this precedent year Niger was experiencing the same challenges related to Political volatile systems and a "Coups d'Etat".

Recommendation of the mid-term evaluation

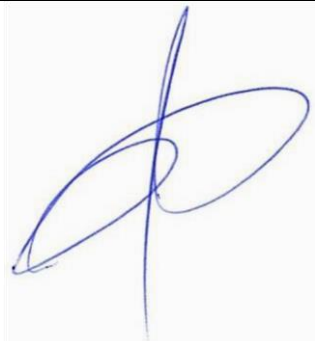
The project mid-term evaluation conducted underlined also the delays occurred to the project due to the above-mentioned reasons and therefore recommended to extend the project duration for 24 months. This will allow to compensate the delayed project start and achieve all the planned outputs to reach the project outcomes.

With regard to the above, the implementing entity, OSS, would like to request a no-cost project extension of **18 months**. This will allow to:

- *Compensate for accumulated delays encountered due to different challenges and constraints faced in the project start and implementation,*
- *Ensure fulfillment of the project outputs and outcomes for enhanced sustainability.*

Implementing Entity certification

This request has been prepared in accordance with Adaptation Fund policies and procedures, has been agreed by participating executing entities, and the designated authorities (DA) of the three countries has been notified.



Mr. Nabil BEN KHATRA, Executive Secretary of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) as the Project contact person.

Date: January 26, 2024

Tel.: +216 71 206 633 Email: boc@oss.org.tn