



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Organisation:	Lilongwe Wildlife Trust
Contract type:	Short-term consultancy (desk top and Lilongwe site visits)
Project:	Developing a habitat map and forest restoration plan for the Nature Sanctuary at Lilongwe Wildlife Centre
Contract length:	Approx 10 days (to be determined)
Contract start:	August 2026

Background

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre (LWC) is a 70-hectare protected urban nature reserve that provides critical habitat for wildlife, supports environmental education and research, and offers recreational opportunities for visitors. The reserve contains a tapestry of indigenous woodland, riparian zones, wetlands, and areas affected by invasive species.

To strengthen conservation management and guide future restoration efforts, LWC seeks to update its existing habitat map and develop a practical, evidence-based Forest Restoration Implementation Plan. Through a grant from the High Ambition Coalition Rapid Deployment Mechanism (HAC-RDM), this contract will draw on technical input from relevant experts, including the National Botanical Gardens and Herbarium, the Department of Forestry, academic institutions, and other specialists in forestry, ecology, and conservation management.

Purpose

To produce an accurate, GIS-based habitat map of the LWC Nature Sanctuary and develop a prioritised Forest Restoration Implementation Plan that supports biodiversity conservation, ecosystem resilience, climate adaptation, and sustainable management.

Objectives

The consultancy will:

- Review and update the current habitat map using field verification and spatial analysis.
- Classify and delineate habitat types, vegetation communities, and ecological features across the reserve.

- Assess forest condition, canopy cover, regeneration, invasive species, and degraded areas.
- Identify priority sites and interventions for ecological restoration.
- Develop a phased Forest Restoration Implementation Plan with clear actions, timelines, costs, and monitoring indicators.
- Strengthen collaboration with relevant government agencies and technical experts to validate findings and recommendations.

Scope of Work

The consultant shall undertake the following tasks with the indicative timelines as follows:

A. Inception and Desk Review (2 days)

- Review existing habitat maps and management plans, or associated GIS datasets, and ecological reports, if available.
- Develop an inception report outlining methodology, workplan, stakeholder engagement, and data requirements.

B. Habitat Mapping & Forest Assessment (3 days)

- Conduct field surveys to verify habitat boundaries and ecological characteristics (dominant flora, habitat condition and areas of ecological significance) and include identifying degraded habitats, erosion hotspots and invasive plant species.
- Identify areas requiring rehabilitation and map and classify habitats using GPS, GIS, remote sensing, and ecological assessment methods.
- Produce digital habitat maps and associated GIS layers.
- Evaluate forest structure, species composition, regeneration status, and ecosystem health.
- Assess threats affecting long-term forest resilience.

E. Forest Restoration Implementation Plan (5 days)

Develop a practical implementation plan that includes:

1. Restoration objectives and guiding principles.
2. Priority restoration zones with recommendations for removal of exotic/invasive species including GPS marked areas, methods, timeframes; indigenous species planting recommendations (including the establishment of a plant & tree nursery with proposed species, planting/growing regimes) and invasive species management & monitoring strategies.
3. Natural regeneration and assisted regeneration approaches.
4. Summary of an outline five year implementation schedule and milestones.

Deliverables

The consultant shall submit:

1. Two page Inception Report and related workplan.
2. Develop GIS-based Habitat Map and associated spatial datasets.
3. Forest Restoration Implementation Plan and prioritised actions (including tree nursery), summary of budget estimations, implementation schedule and expected restoration milestones.

Duration

Consultants are asked to propose the budget and number of days for the assignment.

Consultant Qualifications

The consultant or consulting team should demonstrate:

- A MSc in Forestry, Ecology, Botany, Environmental Science, Conservation Biology, or a related discipline.
- Proven experience in habitat mapping, forest inventories, and ecological restoration planning.
- Expertise in GIS, remote sensing, and spatial data analysis.
- Experience working in tropical forest ecosystems and protected areas.
- Familiarity with Malawi's forestry policies, indigenous vegetation, and conservation priorities is essential.
- Strong report-writing skills.

Reporting Arrangements

The consultant will report to the General Manager of Lilongwe Wildlife Centre or their designated representative. Draft deliverables will be reviewed by LWC and relevant technical stakeholders before final approval.

Ownership of Outputs

All maps, GIS files, databases, reports, photographs, datasets, and other materials produced under this consultancy shall become the property of Lilongwe Wildlife Centre. The consultant shall not distribute or publish these materials without prior written approval from LWC.

How to apply: Please send a covering letter (maximum of 2 pages) and CV (maximum of 2 pages) to applications@lilongwewildlife.org

Closing date: Friday 21st August

LWT is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity. All employment/consultancy decisions are based on qualifications and experience, merit and organisational need and all reasonable adjustments will be made where possible.