**Title:** Natural Resource Conservation Training and Capacity Building Specialist

**Location:** Congo Basin Coast, Libreville, Gabon **Closing date:** Applications considered immediately and not after 29 October 2012

**Start Date:** On or before 1 January 2013

**Background**:

The 1,400 miles of pristine beaches, lagoons and waters of the Congo Basin lie alongside the world’s second-largest intact forest. Here, on the western edge of Central Africa, WCS supports a major commitment to marine conservation. Increasingly, this wild coast is challenged by intensive overfishing, burgeoning offshore industry and coastal development. Successful conservation of the Congo Basin Coast, its ecosystems and wildlife can only be achieved by strengthening and connecting protected areas along the coast, improving fisheries enforcement, and assisting governments and private industry to put conservation at the heart of development planning. Having played an integral role in creating Gabon’s ambitious national protected area system, WCS is well positioned to provide the scientific and conservation leadership needed to ensure a future for this coast’s awe-inspiring wildlife.

As part of this work, WCS is looking to undertake biological surveys as part of feasibility studies and implementation plans for the conservation of biodiversity in the Congo Basin Coast (CBC) region. WCS is committed to implementing a resource development strategy in the CBC that is exemplary in terms of socio-economic and environmental safeguards and in accordance with both national law and international best practice, with a level of compliance consistent with World Bank performance standards. This approach is consistent with the belief that for oil and gas development to thrive, it must be good at generating economic value while also embracing impeccable social and environmental values and standards.

**Position Objective:**

The Natural Resource Conservation Training and Capacity Building specialist will provide oversight and monitor the proposed and actual activities of extractive industries working in the CBC region, and identify needs and opportunities for WCS to be engaged in mitigation and offset needs. The specialist will also lead activities to design and implement long-term training and education programs that can strengthen efforts to preempt risks and avoid, mitigate, or offset potential adverse impacts from industry developments on biodiversity and livelihoods in the Congo Basin Coast region. This person will work closely with WCS Congo Basin Coast program and country offices staff, NY-based staff, the government of Gabon, and local and international partners in industry and non-governmental organizations, report to the Director of the Congo Basin Coast program and be based in Libreville, Gabon.

**Principle Responsibilities:**

The specialist will also facilitate and participate in a planning process to identify, evaluate, prioritize and select potential mitigation, offset or compensation projects in the CBC. The specialist will lead the implementation of activities that will identify training and capacity building needs for appropriate stakeholder groups, and the design and delivery of training modules and educational programs to strengthen participation in natural resource management impact assessment and mitigation program by government, industry and other private sector interests, NGOs, and civil society. The specialist will specifically accomplish the following tasks:

**Training and Education Needs Assessment:** Supervise the preparation of a needs assessment among participating stakeholder groups for capacity building, training and education measures to support conservation, best management practices, risk responses, and mitigation and offset measures. The needs assessment will provide the CBC Project Manager and Executive Management Team with an outline of key stakeholder training needs to strengthen their ability to plan and deliver conservation results, including a determination of priority stakeholder groups to be engaged in planning exercises and training topics.

**Prepare Training Materials:** Supervise the preparation of training modules and curriculum that will respond to the needs identified in the training need assessment, and supervise the development of curriculum and an implementation plan for a proposed oil spill response and training center.

**Oversee Advanced Education Programs**: Work together with stakeholder representatives to identify advanced education opportunities for selected candidates.

**Lead and Facilitate Training Activities**: Take a lead in the organization and delivery of planning workshops to convene stakeholders to identify and validate prioritized projects that can avoid, mitigate, remediate or offset (compensate) possible risks or adverse impacts from extractive resource development in the CBC region, including oil spill response actions.

**Facilitate Planning Workshops:** Participate in planning workshops that will aim to prepare draft action plans for selected projects that industry can propose to respond to imminent CBC concerns; establish experience in the field; and generate applicable lessons

**Requirements and experience:**

* Graduate degree in marine science, ecology, or a related natural resource management discipline
* Minimum of 5 years work experience with biodiversity conservation or related natural resource management programs, with a minimum of 2 years experience working in Africa or a comparable developing region.
* Fluency in either/both French or English, with a strong and demonstrable working knowledge of the non-fluent language.
* Experience and advanced training in facilitation, working with groups, and the preparation and delivery of technical training programs, including demonstrated expertise in training, education, and institutional capacity need assessments and gap analyses.
* Experience coordinating and prioritizing project work, and the ability to set realistic timelines and budgets for task completion, and generate reports on progress to project milestones.
* Strong written and verbal communication skills, including experience developing white papers for managers and writing or contributing to peer-reviewed scientific papers.
* An ability to adapt approaches to local cultures and project situation, while maintaining a high professional standard
* Proven ability to work effectively in a multidisciplinary, highly interactive team

**Application**: Please send a CV, a cover letter describing your background and interests, and the names and contact information for three references, including a peer reference to jpolsenberg@wcs.org and mcallow@wcs.org.