



Call for Expressions of Interest and Pre-qualification Information:

Development of 4/5-star eco-tourism lodge in Akagera National Park, Rwanda

Akagera National Park is East Africa's best-kept secret – offering a unique and diverse tourism experience within its 112,000 hectares. Akagera has a string of beautiful lakes, abundant acacia woodland, open grasslands, and rolling hills with majestic views across the Akagera River wetland system to Tanzania. Akagera is the only savannah park in Rwanda and an ideal complement to Rwanda's international tourism circuit, including Volcanoes and Nyungwe National Parks and various cultural heritage and historical sites. In 2010 Akagera Management Company (AMC) was formed by the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and African Parks (AP), as a public private partnership, to undertake the rehabilitation and management of Akagera National Park for a period of 20 years. AMC's objective is the ecological, social and financial sustainability of the park, underpinned by carefully managed eco-tourism. With AMC's effective anti-poaching efforts there has been rapid growth in the now 13,500 large mammals. Lion and Black Rhino have been re-introduced into the park, restoring Akagera's Big Five status and presenting an exciting new high-end safari tourism destination in East Africa.

AMC and the RDB are jointly undertaking a tender process for the development of a 5-star eco-tourism lodge on Nyampiki or Kageyo Peninsulas in Akagera National Park.

Key Project Terms: (to be finalized after the site visit with short-listed bidders)

1. Build, Finance, Operate, maintain, manage and transfer an off-grid eco-lodge for a contractual period 15-20 years. Non-transferable without prior agreement with the management authority of the park
2. Mid/High-end, 4/5-star, off-grid, eco-tourism lodge that blends with the environment and doesn't break or illuminate the horizon
3. Indicative lodge size: 12-20 beds
4. Concession Fee and Park Entrance Fees (Premium/per calendar day) payable to AMC and commitment to the National Revenue Sharing scheme: fee structures to be determined
5. One of two different possible lodge locations/sites to choose from
6. Exclusive Use Area for lodge site and environs within radius of 250 metres
7. The central peninsulas are large areas, currently relatively unutilised for tourism purposes, with no accommodation facilities or tourism activities conducted in these areas. The peninsulas have lake access and expansive views
8. Future tourism hospitality development in these areas is restricted to a maximum number of vehicles (5), beds (20), and lodges (1) and (30) onsite staff

Information required from Interested Party: (max 10 pages)

Interested parties are requested to provide summary information on the bidding concessionaire (incl. any JV partners); management company (if different); relevant tourism brand/s; existing operations; marketing capabilities or partnerships; corporate structure; key individuals. The bidding concessionaire should meet the following pre-qualification criteria by providing proof of:

1. Size of existing safari tourism business: minimum of 18 existing beds; an annual turnover of greater than US\$2m; a capital base of greater than US\$1.5m
2. Having operated at least three high-end safari lodge for minimum 5 years, minimum two lodges in East Africa, in or adjacent to protected areas.
3. Experience in development and management of a greenfields safari tourism lodge and successful marketing of an emerging high-end safari tourism destination
4. Experience in managing value-added, high-end safari tourism activities (e.g. field guiding, bird-watching, sports fishing, boat cruises, hides and viewing platforms etc.)
5. International marketing capabilities or relationships to deliver high occupancies in East Africa.

6. Commitment to the elevation of local communities and environmentally sensitive best practice
7. Corporate Social Responsibility, managing staff and capacity building experience to empower the local community
8. Minimum of one business membership with recognized tour operators or tourism association
9. Experience in managing water, sewage and other utilities

Please submit Expressions of Interest and Pre-Qualification Information by email: eco-lodgeanp@rdb.rw or jesg@africanparks.org by 10:00am, 30th September 2020

Outline and Time-line of Tender process:

- Call for Expressions of Interest and Pre-qualification Information, closure 10:00am, 30th September 2020
- Formal location sites visit 9th September 2020 (Please contact park manager one week in advance to confirm visit jesg@africanparks.org)
- *Interested parties are welcome to visit Akagera as normal tourists at any stage*
- Short-listed bidders selected 16th October 2020
- Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by RDB/AMC and proposals submitted by bidders 10:00am, 20th November 2020
- Selection of Preferred and Back-up bidders by 30th November 2020
- Final negotiation and signing of concession agreement Construction to start by 15th January 2021
- Lodge opening (ideally) by the December 2021 High Season or latest 2022 season

General Information:

1. There is unmet and growing demand for a high-end, savannah-style, safari product in Rwanda as a compliment to a gorilla-trekking and cultural circuit.
2. Akagera National Park's mid-market Ruzizi Tented Lodge, opened in 2013 in the high-volume, lower-value South Zone of the park, is already achieving 60%+ high season occupancy levels
3. Rwanda High-end tourism displays moderate seasonality with Jun-Aug + Dec peaks, however Ruzizi has shown that demand is solid throughout the year. Year-round access to lodge sites
4. Concession Agreement to be signed with AMC and RDB, in accordance with RDB's Concession Guidelines for Protected Areas in Rwanda.
5. Concession fees will be used to fund park rehabilitation and management, and support local communities, underpinning the 'responsible tourism' premium offered
6. The potential lodge sites are 3.5 hours drive from Kigali Airport, a growing international business and development organisation hub with good airline connectivity (Amsterdam, Brussels, London, Dubai, Doha, Johannesburg, Nairobi, Addis Ababa).
7. Lodge site land title to be owned by the park; handover of lodge immovable assets to park at end of period; terminal value mechanism to be determined
8. Operator should be committed to the development of Brand Rwanda as a premier wildlife tourism destination, and supporting the Rwandan tourism industry through skills development, using Rwandan partners and suppliers, and local community upliftment.

For any queries, please contact:

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Disclaimer: This Call for Expressions of Interest does not obligate RDB/AMC to short-list any party, nor to explain any decisions in this regard. The terms and time-lines above are indicative and may be changed by RDB/AMC. All expenses incurred in the preparation, of this submission, as well as any associated site visits to Akagera National Park shall be for the interested party's own account. AMC/RDB agree not to disclose any confidential information contained in the submission to third parties unless expressly agreed by the interested party. The decision by the RDB/AMC Adjudication Committee is final.