

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH GRANTS PROPOSALS RELATED TO THE ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTION

As a part of strategy to realize its vision of becoming research led university, the University of Rwanda closely partners with different stakeholders to ensure optimization of support from members of its research ecosystem. As a result of such collaborative working relationship, the University of Rwanda has received a research grant from the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), aimed at establishing long term research program (LTRP) for climate change adaptation (CCA) in Rwanda. Thus, the related research activities to be undertaken will lead to the implementation of activities aimed at establishing long-term research program (LTRP) to inform long-term climate change adaptation (CCA) planning and implementation in Rwanda. The LTRP will bridge the knowledge gap to identify the appropriate climate change adaptation (CCA) interventions and to design adaptation strategy.

Main activity

The main activity is to conduct broader research and knowledge in priority areas of climate change adaptation and Ecosystem Based Adaptation(EbA) to contribute to well-informed policy-making.

Research Focus

The program will focus on four important EbA related research areas namely:
Biodiversity and natural resources that are of benefit to the local people
Climate change adaptation strategies
Biodiversity resilience for climate change
Business models for engagement of private sector in EbA.

EbA Research Areas

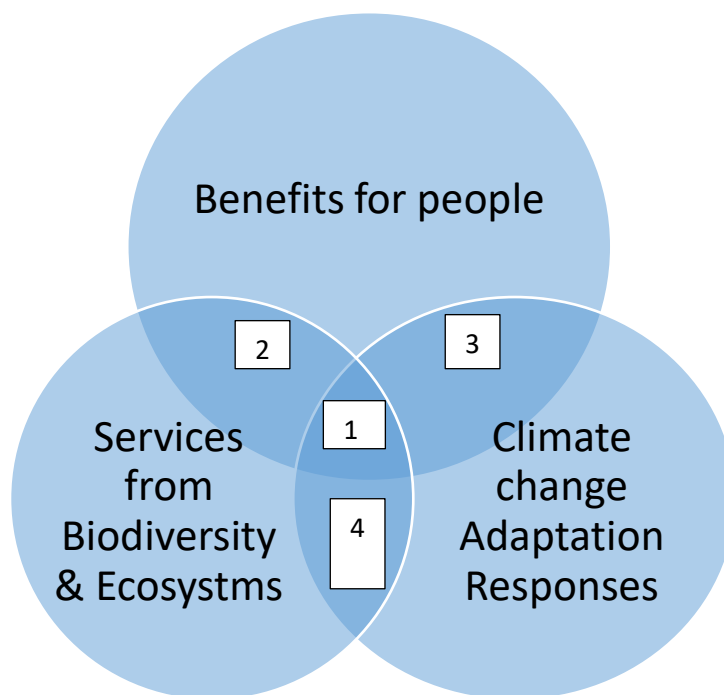


Figure2: Important conceptual areas for research to support EbA of greatest priority is indicated by the numbers. The meaning of the number 1-4 is indicated here below.

1. Priority: Transdisciplinary research linking all three EbA cornerstones.
2. Biodiversity benefits for people
3. Climate change adaptation strategies for people
4. Biodiversity resilience to climate change.

Table1: Proposed research questions per each research area.

Research Area		Research questions
1. Multidisciplinary linking all 3 cornerstones	Valuation and economic issues	What are the economic values of improved natural resource/ecosystem service provision resulting from the activities?
		What are the benefits and costs of EbA interventions (see Section 4)? What are the incentives that can help drive EbA implementation in the long term? Are the adaptation interventions cost-effective in the long-term?
	Implementation	How can non-EbA projects best be converted into EbA?
		Which circumstances yield the best or most reliable outcomes?
		How can projects be made sustainable in the long term? (Including themes such as values around stewardship; legacy impacts; ownership and maintenance). How can the adaptation interventions be better designed? and implemented under different conditions? How is the success of the interventions affected? By climate change?
	Monitoring and Evaluation	What are the ke indicators to measure EbA effectiveness? Development of an evidence base on the outcomes of EbA initiatives. What are the livelihoods benefits for EbA?
	Policy and Planning	How to integrate EbA into different sectors e.g., urban, agriculture, health & biodiversity. How to best integrate EbA across scales of governance, including a specific focus on local municipalities and how EbA considerations may be mainstreamed and/or operationalised into development planning at this scale? Specific studies of cross-sectoral EbA, e.g., involving food security; pest management; drought or flood mitigation; invasive alien species control; bush encroachment. Alignment between EbA and existing policies. How can EbA projects contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation?
		How best to integrate EbA with insurance considerations? Liability for outcomes of EbA projects.
	Capacity building	What are the key capacity gaps for implementing EbA? What learning materials are needed (formal or informal)?

		<p>How can the value of ecosystem services be better communicated?</p> <p>How can different types of knowledge (including indigenous knowledge, local ecological knowledge, citizen science) that engage/originate from non-scientists be (better] utilised to help address EbA research and practice needs?</p>
	Synergies and between co-benefits	<p>Integrating EbA with Ecosystem-based Mitigation.</p> <p>How can trade-offs be optimised?</p>
2. Biodiversity benefits for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the ecosystem services provided by targeted ecosystems? - What are the impacts of BbA interventions on the quantity and quality of ground and surface water sources? How does improvement in natural resources management through EbA impact agricultural Productivity? - What are the impacts of agroforestry on crop productivity under climate change conditions? - What are the main adaptation benefits of improved natural resource management? - Which stakeholders benefit or are negatively affected by the adaptation interventions? -Are there any unintended impacts of the adaptation interventions (positive or negative)? 	
3. Climate change adaptation strategies for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is climate change impacting livelihoods and what are the projected scenarios? - How is climate change impacting land use? - Are the adaptation interventions sustainable? - Are interventions gender sensitive? 	
4. Biodiversity resilience to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is biodiversity impacted by the EbA intervention? If negative, what mitigation measures are necessary? - What changes to the design of the intervention can be made to maximise the biodiversity benefits? - What adaptation impacts do the biodiversity benefits have for local communities, including farmers? - What socio-economic opportunities are provided by the biodiversity benefits of the interventions? <p>Have the interventions resulted in the spread of invasive alien plant species?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Development of a framework to assess biodiversity/ecosystem resilience to climate change. -What are the limits of ecosystem resilience to climate change impacts? Impacts of changes in water supply to biodiversity. Resilience of wetland ecosystems to climate change. (Research on) Identification of desired future states of ecosystems and the circumstances under which they are preferred, with appropriate 'back casting' to identify strategies for achieving those states. Conservations interventions to build resilience, e.g. corridors. -Do natural or near natural systems produce different benefits to artificial systems? -Are the activities successful in reducing encroachment and degradation of ecosystems? F-or restoration interventions, which species are the most productive under climate change conditions, and -Which species are unsuitable? -Are there any unintended: environmental impacts (positive or negative)? -To what extent is soil erosion reduced by the interventions? -Is the EbA intervention improving soil quality? 	

	-What are the impacts of agroforestry on soil biomass? -How much water is being used as a result of restoration as a form of EbA? -Are there any unintended impacts of the adaptation interventions (positive or negative)?
--	---

For the purpose of ensuring that each category of people is given an opportunity to benefit from this fund, proposals are invited from the University of Rwanda Academic staff as follows:

- i. Research grants for female academics
- ii. Research grants for academics who have completed PhD in the last 3 years.
- iii. Competitive research grants open to all academics.
- iv. Research grants for Transdisciplinary research linking all three EbA cornerstones (i.e; the team consists of colleagues from different disciplines who perform different, specialized functions).

A project proposal can be submitted to only one category of grants, and a researcher cannot be a PI in more than one proposal during the same period.

- **Eligibility for funding**

- i. A PI must be a holder of a PhD degree, and where the PI does not have a PhD degree but has a master's degree, the Co-Investigator (Co-I) must have a PhD degree. The PI must have a proven evidence of research activeness based on research publications.
- ii. Whenever possible, each research team must include at least one postgraduate student.
- iii. Whenever possible, each research team must have at least 1/3 of the opposite sex of the PI. In this regard, 30% of female team members should be respected whenever possible.
- iv. The research proposal should be aligned with at least one of the provided areas. This include the need for generating new knowledge (i.e fundamental or applied research) preferably using multidisciplinary approach.

- **Non-eligibility:**

- i. A PI who has an ongoing research project or abandoned research project funded through UR is not eligible.
- ii. To ensure equitable distribution of research funds among academic staff, it will take a minimum of three years for a PI who has completed his/her project to apply for a new project funding.

- **Project duration**

The duration for the funded project will be two (2) years, beginning from the date on which the PI receives the fund.

- **Budget**

The budget can include but not limited to following broad areas of research activities:

- i. **Purchase of minor equipment and consumables** (e.g laptop, chemicals and reagents, stationery and other necessary gear). While the PI will keep the laptop for future research activities after registration in the UR asset register, other remaining consumables such as lab equipment, reagents and chemicals will remain in the laboratory.

- ii. **Data collection and analysis:** Laboratory and/or field work, data access and analysis will be done professionally.
- iii. **Preparatory meetings** with the stakeholders meant to build rapport and enhance ownership which is a foundation for research uptake.
- iv. **Research dissemination:** conference attendance, production of brochures, feedback to the stakeholders' events, etc.
- v. Meetings for managerial implications/policy brief presentation and discussion
- vi. **Capacity building:** Participate in specialised training
- vii. **Other approved operational activities**

- The grant application will be channelled through the PIs' Head of Department and endorsed by the College Director of Research and Innovation of the concerned college and submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research using the following email addresses: advisor.dvcaar@ur.ac.rw and advisor.dvcaar@gmail.com with copies to the University director of Research and Innovation, Prof Bideri Ishuheri Nyamulinda, at nbideri@yahoo.com, the Dean of the School and the College Principal.

- **Project Proposal Template** (<https://ur.ac.rw/?APPENDIX-3-PROPOSAL-TEMPLATE>)

All applications must follow the format given attached to this call.

- **Deadline for the submission of the grant proposals is 23rd December 2021.**

- **Include the following in your application:**

- i) A letter to the DVCAAR
- ii) The completed application template
- iii) Current CVs of the PI and all CO-PIs that include a list of current peer reviewed publications
- iv) List of all research projects in which investigators on the team have been involved in (if any)

Done at Kigali on October 22,nd 2021



Prof Nosa Egiebor

Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research