



## **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

**for**

# **ECO-RESTORATION FOR CLIMATE ACTION (ERCA) PROJECT**

**2023-2025**

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## **Organization**

Green Environment and Climate Change Initiative (GECCI) is an environmental conservation organization incorporated under the law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Organizational Registration Number: 165856. GECCI focuses on combating climate change and deforestation through initiating projects and programs in-line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs) and UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration.

## **Our Vision**

GECCI has a vision of a Nigeria where people consciously protect the environment for the present and future generations.

## **Our Mission**

Our vision drives our mission to promote environmental literacy, protect the environment using nature-based solutions, promote sustainable use of natural resources, and advocate for climate justice.

## **Our Belief**

GECCI believes in singing the songs of nature in the ears of the people so that in doing the actual work, we dance to the tune of the environment.

## **Our Objectives**

- Design and implement strategic programs and projects addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Undertake natural resources conservation activities such as afforestation and reforestation.
- Promote sustainable environmental practices.
- Sensitize children, women and men on climate change especially those at the grassroots' level.
- Introduce and support programs on economic empowerment of youth, women and men.

## **Our Core Values**

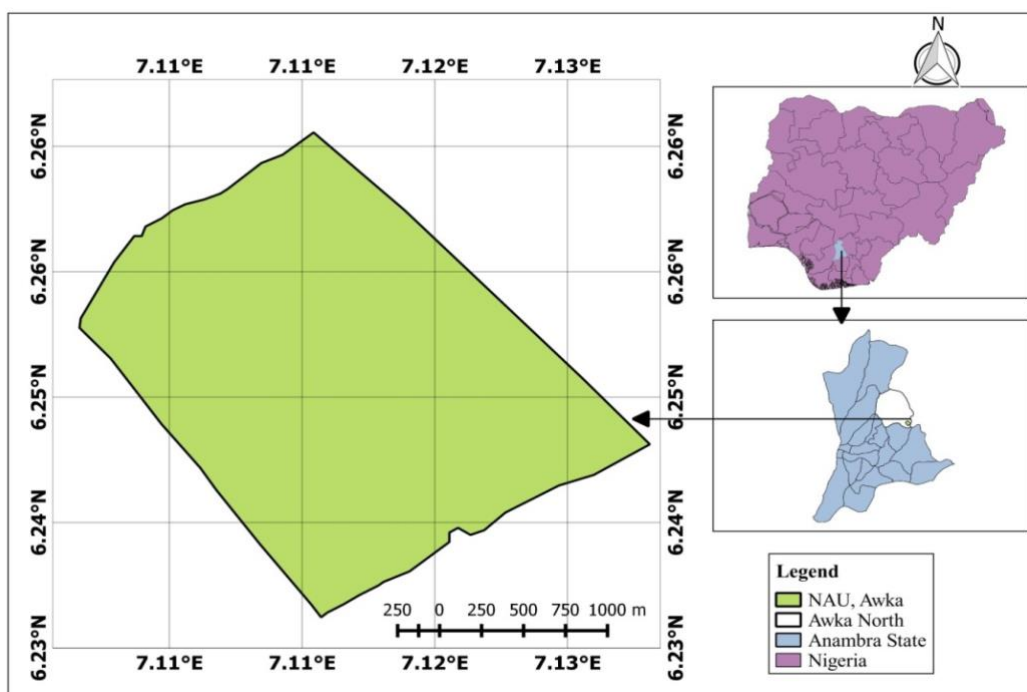
- Transparency and Accountability
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Excellence
- Environmental Responsiveness

## Introduction

According to the UN FAO, 9.9% or about 9,041,000ha of Nigeria is forested. Nigeria had 382,000ha of planted forest. The forests have very rich biodiversity that is made up of different types of trees, plants, and animals. The forest is also home to various indigenous communities that have lived in harmony with nature. It is also the main source of timber, non-timber forest products and medicinal plants. But these important resources are not sustainably used, managed, or conserved. The Global Forest Watch gave a report that from 2002 to 2021, Nigeria lost 153kha of its humid primary forest making up 14% of its total tree cover loss in the same time period. And that 14% of this tree cover loss occurred in areas where the dominant drivers of loss resulted in deforestation.

## Project Location

The Eco-Restoration for Climate Action (ERCA) project will take place in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Forest (NAU) Awka, Nigeria



## Problem Statement

Forests in Anambra State, located in the southeastern part of Nigeria, were once dense and thriving ecosystems with a diverse range of flora and fauna. However, in recent years, the forest has been facing a significant threat in the form of deforestation and degradation, which has led to loss of wildlife habitat, soil erosion and a decline in the quality of the air and water in the region. The main cause of the problem includes illegal logging, overgrazing and urbanization which have contributed to the destruction of large swaths of the forest. In Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Awka Nigeria, where I will execute the Eco-Restoration for Climate Action (ERCA) Project, I have examined the major problems to be:

1. Unguarded deforestation and decimation of our forest ecosystem. The excessive clearing of trees leads to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, flooding, and climate change. The forests in NAU, home to wide range of plants and animal species such as *Mona Monkey*, which is endemic to the region, is at threat of being endangered or at a greater risk of extinction.
2. The massive deforestation contributes to climate change by releasing large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and some of the factors leading to these are logging, urbanization, and farming.
3. We have lost our forest cover to several factors, and it calls for a need to equip the university community with the proper knowledge of restoration.

## Project Objectives

- To restore the degraded landscape in Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU) Forest.
- Contribute to Nigeria’s National Determined Contribution (NDC) to improve forest management and forest restoration with a combined mitigation potential of 89Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e/year.
- Contribute to promoting meaningful participation of youth in ecosystem restoration of Nigeria NDCs Awareness and Advocacy key project area.

## Project Target Group

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Community

## Project Description

Restoration of 15 hectares of lost forests in Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), would have the capacity to mitigate a few million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. This is a considerable contribution to global climate efforts.

The Eco-Restoration for Climate Action Project will be in three phases. They include:

1. Establishment and nursing of 5000 indigenous forest seedlings
2. Restoration of 15 hectares of NAU degraded forest.
3. Capacity Building of Stakeholders in Ecosystem Restoration.

## Implementation Plan

The implementation plan for the project include:

S/N	Activity	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Time Frame
1.	Meeting with project stakeholders. (NAU community, partners and GECCI team) and NAU committee selection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picture of the meeting</li> <li>• Pictures of the NAU committee</li> </ul>	August 2023
2.	Evaluation of the degraded land to determine the condition of the land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picture of the site to be restored.</li> <li>• Pictures of the team during site assessment</li> <li>• Report of the forest inventory of the degraded forest area.</li> </ul>	September 2023

3.	Development of a restoration strategy. It would involve tree species selection and planting technique.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft copy of the drafted strategic plan</li> </ul>	October to December 2023
4.	Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures of the capacity building, training and workshop session.</li> <li>• Report of participants evaluation.</li> </ul>	January to March 2024
5.	Establishment of a forest nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures of the Forest nursery</li> <li>• Report on seedling growth/condition</li> </ul>	January to December, 2024
6.	Transplanting/Enrichment planting of the 5000 indigenous nursery seedlings at the degraded site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5000 seedlings planted.</li> <li>• Pictures during planting</li> </ul>	March to August 2025
7.	Report Compilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report submitted</li> <li>• Video story of the entire project session</li> <li>• Journal/conference research publication from the project.</li> </ul>	September to December 2025

Various activities suggested in the restoration plans will be carried out by the NAU forestry department, co-implementing organization and GECCI. We shall be providing the necessary support to carry out the suggested interventions. With proper monitoring tools, we will ensure that the project is delivered within the timelines and the university management and community remains involved in all the activities throughout the project duration.

**Capacity Building:** To make the communities well versed with the restoration and conservation techniques, we shall undertake training workshops. These workshops will be customized to train the students, bio-resources conservation monitors/forest guards and GECCI staff to successfully implement their plans effectively. The following areas will be covered during the training:

- Tree Nursery Establishment
- Natural restoration techniques
- Plantation and protection
- Climate Change adaptation
- Monitoring and mapping techniques
- Forest Information System (FIS)

### **Implementing Organization**

1. Green Environment and Climate Change Initiative (GECCI)

Responsibilities:

- a. Project planning and execution
- b. Monitoring and evaluation

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## Partners

1. Department of Forestry and Wildlife (FOW) Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka  
Anambra State, Nigeria

### Responsibility

- Selecting viable Seeds
- Raising quality seedling
- Nursery development
- Facilitators

2. Green Initiative for Humanitarian Aid and Development (GreeniHAD)

### Responsibility

- Assist to structure and plan project implementation.
- To develop the human capacity and skills of the student, FOW bio-resources conservation monitors/forest guards and GECCI team
- Partners in consultancy

## BUDGET

Total Budget for the Eco-Restoration and Education for Climate Action Project is approximately 7,500 in euros.

S/N	Items	Units (€)	Unit cost (€)	Total cost of 1st Year Cycle (€)	Total cost of 2nd Year Cycle (€)
1.	Evaluation of the degraded land				
2	Nursery Establishment				
	<u>Purchase of</u>				
	Seeds	5000		250	
	Wheelbarrow	2	85	170.00	
	700litres tank for water storage	2	241.33	482.66	
	Watering can	4	10.6	42.4	
	Spade	4	9.05	18.1	
	Rake	4	10.6	42.4	
	Trowel	6	8.04	48.24	
	Potting bags	50 packs	5.00	250.00	
	Soil	10 trips	100.56	1,005.6	
	Organic manure	20 bags	10.06	201.2	
	Nursery diary book	1	5.00	5.00	
	Nursery record book	5	5.00	25.00	
	Hand gloves	20 pairs	12.99	259.8	
3.	Clearing of site for planting Hired Laborers for 10 days (per hour)	10 persons	12.00		1,200
4.	Construction of the tree nursery				
	<u>Purchase of</u>				

	Bamboo	50	6.03	301.5	
	Shade construction (manpower)	4	25	100.00	
5.	Transplanting of Seedlings				
	Measuring Tape	1	10.79		10.79
	Pegs	30 bundles	10.6		318.00
	Rope	10	11.80		118.00
	GPS	1	29.99		29.99
6.	Capacity Building and Training of the students and staff of GECCI (two sessions)	20 participants	500	500.00	500.00
7.	Monitoring and Evaluation (monthly)	24 times	20	240.00	240.00
8.	Report writing, and compilation				150.00
9.	Transportation	24 months		150.00	150.00
10.	Contingency				680.00
	<b>Total:</b>			<b>4,091.9</b>	<b>2,716.78</b>
	<b>Grand Total:</b>				<b>7,488.68</b>

## Impact

1. The ERCA project would contribute to revitalizing the degraded landscape and restore the natural balance of the NAU forest.
2. It will provide habitat for wildlife and help mitigate the effect of climate change.
3. Increase Carbon Sequestration.
4. The ERCA project has empowered the NAU Community especially students of the forestry department and provided opportunity for engagement.
5. By involving the NAU community in the project, they will become invested in long term sustainability of the ecosystem.

## **PROJECT REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS**

GECCI has an effective Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system supported through a viable MEAL structure. The project team will develop a MEAL plan that will serve as a guide to the implementation of MEAL activities of this project. This plan will describe the processes and responsibilities for the collection, reporting and management of data including the responsible persons for the MEAL activities. In the addition to quality benchmarks for key activities and effective complaint and response mechanism (CRM) system to be set up, the data generated will inform learning and timely decision-making.

We shall be using a Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation framework for carrying out the monitoring and evaluation of the project. The tool for collecting the information will include surveys, environmental assessment, nursery establishment and planting record, meeting and training feedback, record. The following steps will be used for the purpose:

- Establishing objectives for monitoring
- Developing the monitoring questions
- Establishing direct and indirect indicators
- Collecting information
- Analyzing data collected

The MEAL team in collaboration with the program team will conduct routine monitoring visits, which will be done on a monthly basis, to protect sites to ensure activities are being implemented according to project plans are properly documented. On a bi-monthly basis, the monitoring visits will be jointly done with partners. A checklist and quality benchmarks will be used during this routine monitoring visits. Further, monthly data validation will be facilitated by the MEAL team in coordination with the programs to ensure the quality of the data collected. Mobile devices (kobo collect) will be used in collecting survey data, seedling growth parameters, nursery, and field activities and this will be uploaded on a daily basis and real time feedbacks and verification done. Other internal monitoring activities will include watering, weeding, and general nursery/field situation will track progress of the project. Tools to be utilized for this include the detailed implementation plan, budget variance analyses, performance indicator and the indicator tracker (IPTT).

In addition, qualitative data will be routinely collected through monitoring visits and meetings with partners, members of the FOW committees, bio-resources conservation monitors/forest guards, university security department, and most importantly GECCI – to provide real-time feedback on the quality and effectiveness of program activities. Nursery Record Books and Financial Account will be evaluated. An external evaluation from the funding partner will be conducted during the last year.

### **MAINSTREAMING GENDER STRATEGY**

GECCI will ensure that there is no discrimination and will work with both male and female students/partners and ensure suitability of project activities by holding discussions with them throughout the project. Recognizing the important roles of both men and women, GECCI will aim for gender balance in trainings, workshops and employment of casual workers and volunteers. Their voice on project improvement will be heard and considered in the programme implementation review. We will ensure equitable gender participation during training, committee formation and feedback.

### **MAINSTREAMING PROTECTION STRATEGY**

Protection will be mainstreamed in the project. GECCI will provide the use of personal protective equipment by all involved in the project. At the implementation site, GECCI will ensure that the site has adequate safe and clean water for drinking and handwashing.



GECCI will sensitize staff, Bio-resources conservation monitors/forest guards, university security staff, FOW Staff on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), protection risks, Human rights violations, psychological first aid, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and referral pathways. GECCI has an existing reporting platform that enables that every case is reported on time and acted upon. The Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM) has clear, transparent procedures and provides a safe, confidential channel for victims and potential victims to voice their complaints and feedback on issues concerning the organization, the project and project activities.

### **PREVENTION of FRAUD, CORRUPTION and THEFT**

Potential for fraud and corruption in the recruitment, logistics and procurement process; To address this all GECCI staff are aware of GECCI fraud and corruption policy. To mitigate risks, GECCI operates in strict alignment with existing fraud policies, financial management, recruitment and procurement guidelines and procedures. Regular fraud and corruption awareness is shared, compliance is systematically monitored and any sign of potential fraud or corruption is fully investigated. Formal complaints and feedback mechanisms will be set up for community members to express their views and concerns on the project approach, activities, and impact, as well as on safety issues and the behavior of GECCI staff. GECCI also has a reporting platform where both the staff and stakeholders/ beneficiaries report any identified issues of fraud and corruption. GECCI also has internal audit department that conducts regular checks in all stages of the implementation cycle. Any suspected cases of fraud and corruption are investigated and firm actions taken when necessary. The stakeholders (service providers and vendors) are sensitized on the GECCI policies on fraud and corruption before engagement and regular reminders are made. They are also sensitized on pathway for reporting any complaints.

### **SUSTAINABILITY and EXIT STRATEGY**

The exit transition strategy in this project will be based on three pillars: 1) Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), 2) building capacity of the University to continue to provide services; and 3) strengthening community or FOW Department structures so that they can effectively mobilize staff and students for behavior change and to demand for services.

- One key factor in ensuring sustainability is to establish long-term partnerships with the university community.
- Building capacity of university to deliver services: Engagement with key University stakeholders from the beginning of the project will be critical not only for the project's success in achieving its objectives, but also for university ownership of the project. Under this project, GECCI will work through University structures. For example, the project will be delivered in collaboration with the Staff and Students of the Department of Forestry and Wildlife within existing Departmental facilities where possible, and implementation will also be done together with trained University workers. This builds the government long-term capacity to forest nursery and field services.
- By involving the FOW Bio-resources conservation monitors/forest guards, integrate B.Sc. and M.Sc. final year projects and encourage FOW to initiate conservation researches using the seedling as experimental plants. Also by involving other stakeholders who live and work in the UNIZIK forest, this project can benefit from their knowledge and expertise, and gain their support for ongoing conservation efforts.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would be signed between the Green Environment and Climate Change Initiative (GECCI) and the Department of Forestry

and Wildlife, Nnamdi Azikiwe University which would ensure the sustainability of the project.

- **Strengthening community structures:** A key strategy to all of GECCI's work is to build the capacity of community structures in a lasting way. This project will engage a large cadre of FOW/University Staff who will play an important role in the community even beyond the life of the project, by raising awareness of the importance of conservation. They will have the capacity to still manage and take sustainable decisions at the end of the project and will also be informed of the services that University should be providing for the forest. GECCI works through the community to identify leaders who can serve as change agents and who will be dedicated to community service through taking part in groups, even after the project ends. Strengthening community structures enables GECCI to promote lasting behavior change, such as improved conservation practices and improved referral pathways for SGBV, SEA among others.
- **Collaboration with other organizations:** Partnering with other organizations that are working towards ecosystem restoration. This will help to broaden the scope of our project and enable us to achieve more significant impacts.
- **Educate and raise awareness:** Organizing workshops, seminars, and campaigns to educate people about the importance of preserving the forests. Raising awareness among the local population will help to create a sense of responsibility, which could lead to increased support for the project.
- **Exploring different sources of funding to help scale up the ERCA project,** applying for grants from various organizations or seek partnerships with businesses that are interested in supporting sustainable development projects.
- **The closure of the project will be done systematically by first informing the stakeholders of the project end date.** GECCI will ensure that both the University management and FOW Department structures have the relevant capacity for program implementation. GECCI will withdraw their support gradually to ensure that all structures in place can function independently and all concerns are addressed during the transition period. The transition period will depend on the capacity of the structures in place but should last not less than 3 months.