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BEDZSMITH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL INC.
WWW.BEDZSMITH.ORG A501(C)(3) NONPROFIT, EIN 33-3009586

Funding Application

Description of Applicant and Request for Funds

1. *Full name of applicant organization:* BEDZSMITH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL INC.
2. *President/ CEO:* Hope Ahodokpo
3. *Legal status:* A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT, EIN 33-3009586
4. *Year of establishment:* 1975
5. *Contact e-mail:* info@bedzsmith.org
6. *Location of Head Office:* 320 East 197th Street Apt #4B, Bronx, NY 10458-3681 USA
7. *Website:* www.bedzsmith.org
8. *Annual income of the organization over the last three years (in USD\$), including income source(s):* \$10,000
9. *Request for funds, starting total amount per year in USD\$:* 188,687
10. *Our mission:* To empower underprivileged individuals, groups and communities in the United States of America, Canada, Ghana, and the other countries to enhance education and health, end hunger and overcome hardship. We also aim to restore 80% of degraded forests and clean 90% of polluted water bodies. Efforts will include planting native tree species like *Hevea Brasiliense* to enrich soil fertility, reduce erosion, and fight climate change. At the same time, we will focus on removing heavy metals from rivers and streams to revive aquatic habitats.
11. *Our Vision:* To become a world leader for uplifting the under privileged and Replanting forests and rehabilitating polluted water bodies. Reducing toxic chemical impacts on health, fertility, and maternal well-being. Empowering communities to move from illegal mining to sustainable livelihoods. Advocating for stronger environmental governance and enforcement.

Project Outline

12. *Project title:* Keta Lagoon Blue Carbon Mangroves Restoration, Conservation and Coastal Communities Sustainable Livelihoods initiative in Ghana.
13. *Background and justification for the project, including link to other relevant initiatives/projects/national priorities – when relevant and depending on type of project.*

Below are pressing issues facing some of the communities in Ghana, W. Africa that need urgent assistance. Mangrove ecosystems are vital coastal habitats that provide numerous ecological and socioeconomic benefits. However, due to human activities and climate change, mangroves have been rapidly declining worldwide. This project proposal aims to outline a comprehensive plan for mangrove restoration and conservation and coastal communities' sustainable livelihoods initiatives in Ghana.

14. **Objectives:** The primary objectives of this project are as follows:

- ❑ Restore degraded mangrove areas: Implement restoration techniques to revive degraded mangrove habitats and increase their resilience to environmental stressors.
- ❑ Enhance biodiversity conservation: Protect and promote the diverse flora and fauna that depend on mangrove ecosystems, ensuring their long-term survival.
- ❑ Mitigate climate change impacts: Mangroves act as crucial carbon sinks, sequestering large amounts of carbon dioxide. By restoring and conserving mangroves, we can contribute to climate change mitigation efforts.
- ❑ Support local communities: Involve and empower local communities in mangrove restoration and conservation initiatives, providing them with sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Residents of Keta/ Anlo wetlands area and adjoining coastal communities in the Keta/ Anlo Municipality of the Volta Region, Ghana are living on the mangrove harvesting as a main source of fuel wood for their daily activities and leaving behind a trail of destruction. Mangroves are small trees that grow particularly along coastlines and in brackish water. They play different critical roles in the environment. They are the most effective natural protection against tropical storms, acting as wave and wind breakers, according to the World Bank. They protect coastlines from erosion, reduce flooding by absorption of excess water and provide a congenial environment for birds, crabs and fish to breed. Mangroves are not only important in the environment, especially to the marine ecosystem, but they are very fragile and threatened across the world. Data by Global Forest Watch says the world lost between 22,000-62,000 acres of mangroves each year between 2001 and 2012 alone. In Ghana, the global agroforestry platform, or International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) reports a net loss of 133,189 acres (539 square km) of mangroves between 2000 and 2020.

Controlling the spate of unsustainable cutting of mangroves has been difficult due to the large dependence on it as a source of livelihood for the coastal dwellers. To protect the mangrove, there should be a mass education in the communities about how to conserve them and to assist the communities with clean energy for fuel in place of the mangrove. Lack of education about the importance of mangroves in the communities are the main reason for the wanton degradation witnessed in the coastal communities. There should also be an incentive in the communities for those who would plant free seedlings provided by the government.

Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc would continue assisting the communities along the coast with the different non-governmental organizations working to protect the environment. Some of the areas along the coast have been suffering serious erosion and flooding because of unsustainable mangrove harvesting. The degradation caused by cutting the mangroves resulted in water logging and flooding in the surrounding coastal towns, causing damage to human settlement and shelter, infrastructure, water and sanitation, health and nutrition, education, and agriculture. The flood affected thousands of people in the area. The crises and its impact have demanded more food aid, health care, shelter construction and water and sanitation activities. By the end of 2028, the Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc hope to plant 200,000 mangrove seedlings covering fifty hectares of degraded mangrove forests within the Keta/ Anlo wetland in the Volta Region, Ghana. The project hopes to sequester 1.8 million megagrams of carbon in the long-term. This is a capital-intensive project to capture and store atmospheric carbon dioxide to prevent the occurrence of climate change. The objective of the proposed humanitarian relief assistance is to assist and supplement the non-governmental organizations and government's effort in restoration and conservation of the mangroves.

15. Project summary

This project aims to plant 200,000 mangrove trees, and install three hundred bee hives and will:

1. Conduct educational and training activities (classes/workshops/field activities) within the target area focused on linking the importance of biodiversity conservation and management.
2. To socio-eco-environmental recovery for 1,000 local stakeholders primarily targeting local coastal community groups (e.g., fishers, farmers, charcoal, and salt producers),
3. Promote the development of environmentally friendly activities such as mangrove-linked apiculture, plant nurseries (reforestation) and eco-tourism with and within the local communities to protect biodiversity, create jobs, generate incomes, and create sustainable livelihoods, and,
4. Establish and develop local capacity to protect the environment through the beginnings of local community based “Nature Teams” each consisting of six individuals trained in environmental/biodiversity issues, to begin gathering data concerning local biodiversity and protect and manage coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves; these individuals will take the local lead in the development and promotion of sustainable livelihoods within their communities and engage in biodiversity protection and data collection.

16. Methods and Activities:

To achieve the project objectives, the following methods and activities will be implemented:

- Site selection and assessment: Identify degraded mangrove areas and assess their restoration potential. Consider ecological factors, such as tidal influence, water quality, and proximity to intact mangroves.
- Restoration techniques: Employ appropriate restoration methods, such as reforestation with native mangrove species, installation of artificial structures (e.g., mangrove poles), and natural regeneration promotion.
- Biodiversity conservation: Implement measures to protect and restore the diverse flora and fauna in mangrove ecosystems. This may include establishing protected areas, creating nesting sites for migratory birds, and conducting habitat monitoring.
- Climate change adaptation: Develop strategies to enhance mangrove resilience to climate change impacts, such as sea-level rise and extreme weather events. This may involve planting climate-adapted mangrove species and implementing erosion control measures.
- Community engagement: Collaborate with local communities through awareness campaigns, training programs, and capacity-building workshops. Foster their participation in restoration activities and explore sustainable livelihood options like eco-tourism or community-based enterprises.
- Monitoring and evaluation: Establish a robust monitoring framework to assess the progress and effectiveness of restoration and conservation efforts. Regularly evaluate key indicators, such as mangrove health, biodiversity richness, and community well-being.

17. Stakeholders and Partnerships:

To ensure the success of the project, active collaboration with various stakeholders is crucial. The key stakeholders include:

- Government agencies that are responsible for environmental management and coastal development. The Ministry for Lands and Natural Resources is on the ground providing free seedlings, called propagules to

interested residents to plant along the coast. The Regulations of Wildlife Division under the Forestry Commission have also been monitoring the growth of the Mangroves along the Keta/ Anlo wetlands. The Forestry Commission have been controlling the spate of unsustainable cutting of the mangroves by the coastal dwellers as a source of livelihood. Ghana's Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Development Plan is also educating the locals.

- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with expertise in mangrove restoration and conservation. The Forestry Commission collaborates with community members and local NGOs like Keta Ramsar Center and Regenerative Development of Anlo Wetlands ReDAW (www.redaw.org) in educating the locals on conservation and habitat restoration. Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc would engage other key international NGOs already on the ground like Seawater Solutions (www.seawatersolutions.org), Innovate UK to ensure a successful project.
- Research institutions in mangrove ecology, climate change, and community engagement like Regional Marine Center at the University of Ghana is providing data through satellite monitoring.
- Local communities residing in or adjacent to mangrove areas are constituting local watchdog committees to ensure the conservation and restoration of the mangroves. The project is aligning with Verra's Community, Climate & Biodiversity CCB Standard. We ensure that whole communities secure permanent legal land rights, while providing jobs and investment in forestry, aquaculture, beekeeping, agriculture, and finance for Community Trust Funds.
- Private sector entities interested in corporate social responsibility initiatives and sustainable development.

18. Project Approach

It will begin the strengthening of coastal community groups and the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable alternative income generating activities (apiculture) within the target site. It will also increase collaboration between Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc and local organizations and public sector agencies to reduce pressures on threatened area biodiversity and ecosystem services and increase resilience through the restoration and rehabilitation of critical mangrove ecosystems.

The project will integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and promote and implement nature based, environmentally friendly and sustainable agriculture and fisheries initiatives to enhance connectivity, ecosystem resilience, and promote sustainable livelihoods and food security.

Due to the dire economic situation of most coastal community stakeholders, the request that they protect and manage free access resources without providing them with a suitable alternative source of income, preferably environmentally friendly and sustainable, is not a viable alternative to protecting biodiversity and protecting and managing their resources. This project will begin to offer these alternatives.

19. SMART aim

This project will replant 200,000 mangrove trees with the goal of rehabilitating at least 1,000 hectares of mangrove forest and provide 300 new bee hives and apiculture training to 180 individuals in coastal communities within 3 years.

Activity plan: Methodology

1. Component One – Education/sensitization

Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc will work closely with coastal community stakeholders in general, and local fishers to examine the use of inappropriate resource in extraction processes and promote the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable income generating activities to protect area biodiversity and provide sustainable livelihood activities such as apiculture, plant(mangrove) nurseries, and nature-based eco-tourism using both formal Classes /seminars and informal meetings.

This activity will involve the sensitization of individuals and groups directly or indirectly affecting threatened area biodiversity and the design of protective and remedial activities (e.g., alternatives to inappropriate fishing methods, etc.) will be examined. These groups will include among others: public and private sector institutions including the local tourism industry, fishers, farmers, school children, church groups, women's groups, youth groups and young professionals. It will also involve the development of culturally appropriate educational materials, and the use of case studies/lessons learned.

Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc will assist local Keta/ Anlo stakeholders in understanding and managing the negative effects of inappropriate environmental activities on biodiversity as well as their socioeconomic well-being by strengthening the capacity of local communities through educational activities to help reduce pressures on threatened area biodiversity, ecosystem services, and increase environmental resilience. It will encourage the protection and management of local natural resources and biodiversity by promoting awareness/stewardship and the improved management of fisheries, salt, and forestry (mangrove) resources through networking and collaborative activities between local coastal community groups.

2. Component Two – Examination and initiation of alternative livelihood activities

Through the linking of protective measures with environmentally friendly and sustainable livelihood activities such as the development of apiculture (honey production), plant nurseries (reforestation) and nature-based tourism (eco-tourism) which have already been proven successful through previous NGO's activities will be initiated.

Reforestation will lead to restoration and protection of ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, the prevention of beach erosion, protection of fisheries production, storm surge protection. Biodegradable plant pots (locally made in bamboo) will be used in order to eliminate the waste generated by the use of plastic bags, provide local livelihood opportunities for local stakeholders who will produce them, and provide the local stakeholders and communities with a greater sense of participation as they increase their interaction with the project. The methodology outlines procedures to estimate net greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals resulting from restoration of tidal wetlands and seagrass beds along the entire salinity range, via enhancing, creating, and/or managing hydrological conditions, sediment supply, salinity characteristics, water quality and/or native plant communities with the intent of protecting and restoring various environmental benefits including emission reductions and the net sequestration of greenhouse gases.

Component Three – Two members from the local coastal communities will be trained in undertaking surveys, basic environmental conservation concepts, the proper identification of marine life and their habitat. They will be established as on-the-ground teams to perform stewardship activities with and within local fisher communities.

20. Budget and Timeline

Project budget per year for the project period:

The project budget will depend on the scale and scope of the restoration and conservation efforts. A detailed budget breakdown will be developed during the project planning phase. The project is expected to be implemented over a period of three to five years, allowing sufficient time for restoration activities, monitoring, and capacity-building initiatives.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Units/ (List salaries in hours)</u>	<u>Cost per unit (USD\$)</u>	<u>Total cost (USD\$)</u>	<u>Priority</u>
1. Transportation				
Fuel and oil			30,000	Medium
Sum transportation			30,000	
2. Suppliers and lodging				
Biodegradable plant pots	200,000	1	200,000	High

Shovels	120	20	2,400	High
Picks	120	30	3,600	High
Wheelbarrows	60	150	9,000	High
Buckets	100	5	500	High
Waterers	100	20	2,000	High
Fence posts	4,000	4	16,000	High
Barbed wire (rolls)	300	100	30,000	High
Bee hives	300	120	36,000	High
Apiculture equipment (misc.)			24,000	High
Sum supplies and lodging			323,500	
3. Salaries				
Project Leader	1,040 hours	30	31,200	Medium
Project Assistant	1560 hours	20	31,200	Medium
Apiarist (trainer)	110 hours	20	2,160	Medium
Nature Team (trainer)	200 hours	20	4,000	Low
Field support	18,000 hours	8	144,000	High
Sum salaries			212,560	
Total sum			566,060	

21. Commentary on budget

1. Fuel and oil – for vehicles, motorcycles, and boats to reach project sites and transport materials.
2. Biodegradable plant pots – for mangrove plant nurseries.
3. Shovels, picks, wheelbarrows, buckets, waterers – for plant nursery activities and field replanting.

4. Fence posts, barbed wire (rolls) – to fence off plant nurseries and plantation sites to prevent young plants from being eaten by loose animals.
5. Bee hives, apiculture equipment (misc.) – for local stakeholders in the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable alternative income generating activities (mangrove linked apiculture)
6. Project leader – overall project supervision
7. Project assistant – assistant to the project leader
8. Apiarist (trainer) – for apiculture training for local stakeholders
9. Nature Team (trainer) – training for Nature Team in environmental classes and monitoring
10. Field support – 40 people x 5 hrs./week x 30 weeks x 3 years x \$8; local stakeholders who will assist in developing plant nurseries, maintaining nurseries, replanting activities, monitoring activities.

22. Expected Outcomes:

The successful implementation of this project will lead to several positive outcomes:

- Restoration and rejuvenation of degraded mangrove areas, increasing their ecological function and resilience.
 - Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, including endangered species that rely on mangrove habitats.
 - Carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation through the expansion of healthy mangrove forests.
 - Improved socioeconomic conditions for local communities through sustainable livelihood opportunities and community empowerment.
- (a). 1,000 stakeholders (including children) have participated in environmental educational and monitoring activities targeting the protection of area biodiversity and achieving a greater understanding of the critical importance of protecting biological resources for their socio-eco-environmental well-being.
- (b). Identification of environmentally friendly and sustainable alternative income generating activity with local community groups including nature-based tourism with local community groups and tourism operators.
- (c). 180 local stakeholders participated in apiculture classes, 300 bee hives installed and operational mangroves nurseries in operation for reforestation activities.
- (d). 100,000 mangrove trees are established at plant nurseries and ready for planting.
- (e). 6 individuals engaged in the “Nature Teams.”
- (f). 1,000+ hectares of mangroves and associated ecosystems under improved management.

23. Evaluation process

Long-term Sustainability and Replicability

This project is linked through Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc’s 5 years of ongoing activities with fishers, farmers, women’s groups, merchants, tourism industry operators, community groups, concerned public and private sector institutions, and others making use of Ghana’s environmental resources through a wide variety of activities, guaranteeing links spanning many sectors. All sectors benefit from activities such as this through increased fisheries and agricultural production, increased tourism revenue, decreased flash flood potential, increased beach stabilization, and the overall betterment of their environment and socio-economic condition. This project is part of a larger effort by Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc in Ghana to continue to provide environmental educational activities as well as sustainable livelihood alternatives regarding resource management at all levels from the grassroots level to the public sector throughout Ghana. Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc will continue to contribute to ongoing activities targeted at the betterment of the socio-eco-environmental condition in Ghana through activities such as environmental education, the development of environmental educational materials, scientific surveys and awareness raising on threats to

biodiversity such as marine turtles, manatees, and conch, the strengthening of local grassroots organizations, conflict resolution programs, and research on, and encouragement of, the use of more environmentally friendly and sustainable fishing and agricultural methods to stem the deterioration of the environment and the loss of biodiversity.

Success of this project, as with Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc's previous activities, is guaranteed by intrinsically implicating local stakeholders in all aspects of the project from design to implementation in order to provide them with the ultimate sense of ownership, pride in success, and responsibility. The projects are undertaken with and for these stakeholders.

24. SWOT analysis

Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc's work is intrinsically linked to local stakeholders and local communities. They are consulted on what they see as critically needed environmental actions for their communities and are provided with ownership of the activities through their local associations who undertake all fieldwork and coordination for the activities. This ensures that they have "skin in the game", that they have provided their own time, energy, and efforts into ensuring the success of project goals. Projects without this type of community input are doomed to failure.

Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc has undertaken similar, smaller, activities at other locations and the ability to easily replicate this project's activities are evident in the requests we receive from locations throughout Ghana on how our initiatives can be replicated by other groups in their home locations. Ghana's extreme poverty continues to have major effects on the nation's ability to protect and manage its environmental resources (among other things). However, being an international founded and Ghanaian run institution, Bedzsmith Foundation International Inc has been able to manage its activities towards continued successes over the past decades.

Conclusion: Mangrove restoration and conservation initiatives are vital for preserving these unique coastal ecosystems and safeguarding the services they provide. This project proposal outlines a comprehensive plan to restore degraded mangrove areas in Keta/Anlo Wetlands, enhance biodiversity conservation, mitigate climate change impacts, and support local Keta/Anlo communities. By implementing this project, we can contribute to sustainable management and long-term preservation of mangrove ecosystems.

25.

