

Advocates for Community Alternatives



Position Description – African Climate Legal Fellow - Senegal

Advocates for Community Alternatives (ACA), an NGO based in Accra, Ghana and operating within West Africa, is recruiting a Fellow to participate in the African Climate Legal Fellowship Program (ACLFP). **This is a full-time, one-year position based in Senegal, with the expectation of extension after one year, funding and program needs permitting. The position will be remote within Senegal, and will include field time and other ACA-related travel.**

Established in April 2016, ACA helps West African communities that are threatened by the destructive impacts of extractives-led development to take control of their own futures. We do this by working with communities to design their own sustainable development plans and to advocate to achieve those plans. We also build networks of lawyers and other experts to help communities' plans come to fruition. ACA has projects in communities in Ghana's Bono East and Eastern Regions, in Liberia and Guinea addition to collaborating and supporting programs for the Public Interest Lawyering Initiative for West Africa (PILIWA), a network of lawyers and legal advocates in nine West African countries.

The role will be part of the African Climate Legal Fellowship Programme (ACLFP), a pilot initiative aimed at bringing experienced lawyers to the environmental public interest sector in Africa and providing pathways for new talent to enter the public interest sector. In addition to the ACA placement, Fellows will be part of a broader cohort benefiting from mentorship, coaching and leadership development, training in environmental and climate change law and science, and a network of likeminded lawyers in Africa. Travel within Africa for a launch convening will also be required. IREX, a global non-profit that has supported more than 50,000 Fellows over 50 years, will implement the fellowship and provide ongoing support to you and your nonprofit organization.

Fellowship Project and Outcomes

Niafrang is a small coastal village located near the Gambian border in Casamance. Already threatened by rising sea levels and other impacts of climate change, the community's fields and freshwater supplies are protected by a barrier dune that prevents salt water from contaminating the water table. The Senegalese government has granted a concession and permits to Astron Ltd, an Australian-based and Hong Kong-owned company, to mine the barrier dune for zircon and other minerals. The proposed activities constitute an existential threat to the community and the nearly pristine and diverse ecosystems on which they depend for economic and cultural resources.

The Fellow will be responsible for providing the necessary legal, judicial, and advocacy assistance to end the threat of mining activity for the extraction of zircon and other minerals in Niafrang Community. This work will build on years of legal, advocacy, and other technical support to Niafrang provided by ACA and other local partners.

The Fellow will report directly to ACA's Legal Director but will also be supervised and receive guidance on a daily basis from a law firm in Senegal. This position will likely require some travel, mostly within Senegal. **By the end of the Fellowship, the Fellow will ensure that Niafrang Community's requests to cancel Astron's legal permission to mine has at least been presented in the Senegalese courts, if such permission has not already been revoked by other means.**

U.S. Mailing Address: Ghana
341 W.24th St., Apt 21C Hse F523/2

Office Physical Location:
No. 14, Just Here Rd., Mile 7
Accra, Ghana

Roles and Responsibilities

The Fellow will be expected to carry out the following activities:

- Review all relevant documents available about the mining project in Niafrang;
- Propose legal strategies aimed at securing the cancellation of existing mining licenses in Niafrang.
- Develop a timeline for the agreed activities.
- Draft, file, and present pleadings in court in pursuance of the agreed legal strategies.
- Explore and propose alternative non-judicial strategies to engage stakeholders such as the Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Environment, regulatory and administrative bodies, media, etc., with the view to achieve the objective of cancelling mining licenses threatening Niafrang.
- Consult periodically with Niafrang community to update them on legal strategy and take onboard their opinions.
- Collaborate with the ACA Science advisor and the Niafrang community to develop advocacy strategies based on the results of scientific studies.
- Work with a licensed law firm to undertake the assigned duties.
- Provide a monthly report on the activities carried out.
- Provide any legal policy documents to be undertaken in this matter
- Participate in regular coordination meetings with ACA.

Required Qualifications

- Law degree (J.D., LL.B., or equivalent).
- License to practice as a lawyer in Senegal.
- At least 4 years of experience as a practicing lawyer in Senegal.
- Experience working with NGOs and Civil society.
- Familiarity with and experience with Senegalese mining laws and judicial mechanisms.
- Fluency in French and working knowledge of English.
- Experience with technology tools such as Google Meet, Zoom, WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Word and Excel, Google Docs, etc.

Preferred Qualifications

- Human rights legal experience.
- Experience working with rural communities.
- Experience in negotiating or interacting with the Senegalese administration on behalf of clients.

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Compensation

The position offers an annual salary between \$15,000 - \$20,000. Exact salary depends on the candidate's experience and professional qualifications, as well as any special skills that he/she brings to the job.

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