

# Job Description: Grazing and Fire Manager

**Location:** Gashaka Gumti National Park, Nigeria

**Position:** Grazing and Fire Manager

**Reports to:** Gashaka Gumti ANI Project Manager

## Job Overview

Covering 5,907 sq. km, Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP) straddles Taraba and Adamawa States in Nigeria and extends along the international border with Cameroon as one of West Africa's last great wildernesses. Gashaka Gumti's forests have some of Africa's highest levels of plant and animal biodiversity, partly due to the highly varied landscape and habitats within the park including dry wooded savannah, lowland rainforest, montane grassland, and montane cloud forests. Unfortunately, the park is threatened by poaching, logging, artisanal mining, and forest fires (from cattle grazing) by local communities, who are primarily herders and farmers. The park has been chronically underfunded for many years with poorly trained and ill-equipped rangers unable to tackle these threats. In 2018, Africa Nature Investors (ANI) Foundation signed a 30-year co-management agreement with the National Park Service and has made great strides in restoring the park's glory.

Without a doubt, the biggest threat facing the park is illegal cattle herding and associated grassland fires, from semi-nomadic Fulani cattle herders living within the park in enclave settlements and nomadic herders who come into the park in the dry season. ANI has started to identify alternative ranch locations outside the park to which some of the semi-nomadic herders could be moved, to reduce cattle herding pressure on the park. ANI requires a Grazing and Fire Manager who will be responsible for developing and implementing grazing management plans for two large-scale ranch locations to the north and south of the park as well as grazing plans for the 3 enclave settlements in the park and a "cattle tolerance zone in the peripheral parts of the park.

The role focuses on working with and supporting pastoralist cattle herders (grouped into associations) to manage their cattle productively and profitably within the grassland carrying capacity of these areas, while adopting modern, sustainable animal husbandry practices (holistic rotational grazing, improving grassland conditions, fodder production, etc.). The manger will also oversee implementation of fire management across the park, which will partly require persuading resident pastoralists to comply with the park's fire regime. The successful candidate will combine technical expertise in livestock production and fire management with strong leadership, training, and community engagement skills to achieve optimal productivity and long-term ranch sustainability.

## Key Responsibilities

- *Rangeland/Ranch Planning & Management:* Develop and execute a holistic ranch management plan within a communal landscape, implement rotational grazing to improve range and livestock productivity, as well as monitor grassland conditions.
- *Fire Management:* Ensure that in advance of the dry season, various requisite firebreaks are established, and blocks of grassland are burnt by the ANI helicopter and rangers. You will work with the ANI Community Liaison Officers to ensure that the pastoralists also adhere to the fire regimes in the areas they manage.
- *Livestock Production & Welfare:* Oversee breeding, selection, nutrition, health, and modern husbandry practices.

- *Pastoralist Engagement & Supervision*: Train and mentor herders, align traditional practices with modern systems (e.g. holistic rangeland management).
- *Resource & Infrastructure Management*: Manage water, fencing, forage or supplementary feeding, and infrastructure.
- *Record Keeping & Reporting*: Maintain herd records, breeding, weight gain, pasture, and productivity data.
- *Sustainability & Compliance*: Promote sustainable ranching practices and livelihoods and ensure regulatory compliance.
- *Mentoring*: Train a team of Nigerians the necessary skills so that they can take over supporting the Pastoralist associations with improving their rangelands/livestock productivity.

## Qualifications & Experience

- Bachelor's degree in Animal Science, Range Management, Agricultural Science, or similar.
- Minimum 5 years' experience in cattle ranch management or livestock operations and fire management - proven record of practical and applied skills.
- Knowledge of grassland and fire ecology, carrying capacity, and grazing systems.
- Experience in herd health, breeding, and nutrition programs.
- Supervisory experience with pastoralist communities is important.
- Strong leadership, communication, co-operative and conflict management skills.

## Key Competencies

- Strong technical expertise in livestock production, particularly cattle.
- Knowledge of modern ranching, sustainable land management and fire management.
- Ability to balance pastoralist traditions with improved ranching techniques.
- Strong organizational and leadership skills.
- Commitment to sustainability and community development.

## Performance Indicators / Targets

- *Herd Health & Productivity*: Mortality below 5%, calving 70–80%, weaning weights 160–200 kg.
- *Pasture Management*: Stocking rates within the grassland's carrying capacity, 70% pasture cover, 80% grazing compliance, dry season reserves. Fire control as per specified regime.
- *Animal Husbandry*: 100% vaccination coverage, parasite control when appropriate (, proper body condition scores, provide supplementary licks (protein/energy in winter and phosphate in summer), and or moving towards are more tick disease resistant cattle breed.
- *Training & Engagement*: Quarterly training, improved compliance, proven/documentated reduction in overgrazing reflected through improved stocking rates and cattle body condition.
- *Operational Management*: Quarterly reports, 95% infrastructure functionality, within budget limits.

## Remuneration & Benefits

- Competitive salary based on experience. Housing and transport provided.
- Time-off cycle: The rotation for expatriates is 90 days at work followed by 30 days leave.
- Other benefits: All transport, accommodation and meals while travelling between workplace and home. All meals at work are provided. Medical Insurance/ Aid provided.
- Applications should consist of a CV and cover letter. The CV should list three independent professional referees. Contact details for previous employers should be provided. Applications should be sent to: [vo@ani-nigeria.org](mailto:vo@ani-nigeria.org) not later than the 30<sup>th</sup> of June as one single Word document. The title/subject of your email and application should be the position you are applying for.