



## Terms of Reference

### International Expert to undertake a System level and Institutional Analysis of the Overall Georgian Protected Area System

#### KEY INFORMATION

<b>Full title</b>	International Expert to undertake a System level and Institutional Analysis of the Overall Georgian Protected Area System and provide Recommendations on Adjustments / Reforms necessary to increase effectiveness and sustainability
<b>Project</b>	UNDP-GEF PIMS6138 “Enhancing financial sustainability of the Protected Areas system in Georgia”
<b>Duty station:</b>	Home-based with at least 1 mission for maximum 10 days to Georgia.
<b>Duration of assignment:</b>	October 2022-May 2023
<b>Starting date:</b>	October 2022
<b>Type of contract</b>	Technical assistance; delivery based
<b>Application procedure:</b>	The full Application Package should be sent via email <a href="mailto:recruiting@caucasus-naturefund.org">recruiting@caucasus-naturefund.org</a> , marked as “System level and Institutional Analysis of PA System of Georgia- <b>International Expert</b> ”.
<b>Application deadline:</b>	COB Tbilisi, Georgia (UTC/GMT +4h) on September 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
<b>For additional information:</b>	Ms. Tamar Pataridze, Consultancy Program Manager, at <a href="mailto:tpataridze@caucasus-naturefund.org">tpataridze@caucasus-naturefund.org</a>

#### BACKGROUND OF CNF

The Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) is a conservation trust fund founded in 2007 with the support and encouragement of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Development Bank KfW, Conservation International (CI) and WWF.

By providing long-term funding and management assistance to help meet the core needs for Protected Areas (PAs) in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, CNF supports the conservation of the unique flora, fauna and ecosystems of the Caucasus for future generations, while at the same time improving the lives of local people today.

CNF’s support to PAs ensures that basic needs are met through supplements to operational and personnel expenses, and that capacities are strengthened to ensure an improved management of PAs in addressing poaching, logging and other illegal activities, in monitoring flora and fauna species diversity and the health of natural ecosystems, in education of the public, and in promoting tourism and sustainable development.

## **PROJECT FRAMEWORK**

The GEF/UNDP project “Enhancing financial sustainability of the Protected Areas (PA) system in Georgia” is a 5 year “technical assistance” project financed by the GEF through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia, with resources allocated from the GEF Operational Program for Biodiversity. The project was officially approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on 17 August 2018 and signed by the Government of Georgia (GoG) on 12 December 2018.

The project objective is “To secure long-term financial sustainability and effective management to conserve globally significant biodiversity of target protected areas in Georgia”. Through the project, GEF incremental support is intended to significantly contribute to enhancing the financial sustainability, and with it the management effectiveness, of target PAs, as such improving the Government’s ability to improve the status of biodiversity and ecosystem services through managing an effective system of PAs, as agreed to under national plans and international commitments. By increasing financial resources, especially from domestic revenue, and improved management effectiveness of target PAs, the project will contribute to reducing threats to, and improving the in-situ conservation status of identified globally threatened biodiversity in target PAs that meet established criteria for Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

To achieve this, the project will provide technical support to the GoG with the implementation of activities under its three components: (i) Financial sustainability of sub-system of PAs representing Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs); (ii) Improved management and financial effectiveness demonstrated for targeted large-scale PAs; and (iii) Knowledge Management and monitoring and evaluation.

## **OUTLINE OF CONSULTANCY**

In accordance with standard UNDP/GEF procedure the Project undertook a Midterm Review (MTR) between August and November of 2021 (MTR Report is available from Project Manager). One of the key findings of the MTR was that, at the mid-point, the project would significantly benefit the future effectiveness and sustainability of the Georgian PA system through support to reviewing and making actionable recommendations on the overall systemic level capacity and institutions that exist in the country for PA management.

The PA system of Georgia was last reorganized in 2006, almost 16 years ago. Since then, the national situation has changed significantly - legislation and policy has changed, the parent institution (MEPNR/MEPA) was reformed, new categories of PAs have emerged, the complexity and demands of managing multi-use zoned PAs have increased, the number of PAs and area covered has also increased, Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) was established, and very significant sums of international donor support were invested.

Future plan to further increase the system to 25% of the country (according to draft NEAP<sup>1</sup> document) will multiply the challenges. The international context has also changed significantly, with the depth of the environmental threats to all countries becoming an increasing international priority, including the global biodiversity crisis and its relationship to climate change mitigation. Furthermore, though the Agency of Protected Agency (APA) in its current form has successfully presided over a growing PA estate, it faces challenges and constraints, and there are various

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<sup>1</sup> National Environmental Action Plan (2017-2021)

indicators that suggest a sub-optimal system. For example, the rapid turnover of staff, both in HQ and at PA level (most significantly for a centralized system the high turnover of leadership), limited conservation background of HQ staff, structure that is still largely focused on infrastructure development and weak in terms of capacity to address other key management tasks (such as monitoring, natural resource management in traditional use zones, poor communication [rather than PR] with local stakeholders, etc.), mission drift in terms of dominance of tourism, etc. There are concerns that despite the significant international donor support the long-term biodiversity conservation goals funding all parties aimed to achieve may be at risk.

In the context of protected landscapes (and the newly established Biosphere Reserve category), Ramsar and Emerald sites there has been a vacuum of central policy and support (though this is now being addressed by the BD and Forestry Department of MEPA) - if these new but important approaches are to flourish it is critical, they get such support.

Under these circumstances some adjustment to the overall PA management system seems highly necessary, and this needs to be assessed and pragmatic ways forward agreed. If the system design and functionality is not appropriate, all other efforts are compromised.

Additionally, with the establishment of the Biodiversity and Forestry Department of the MEPA, and the planned development of a PA Policy document, the situation would seem ripe to look at the current situation and how “fit for purpose” the institutions and their operational mechanisms are under these new circumstances.

Based on all the above, and in accordance with a recommendation from the MTR, the management team unanimously made the decision to allocate sufficient resources to conduct the assessment and hence help the strengthening of the overall PA system.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The **overall objective** of the Technical Assistance is undertaking a broad assessment of the overall existing PA system in Georgia in the context of current circumstances and future needs, as a basis for identifying possible reforms and adjustments to improve “fitness for purpose”, and future managerial and financial effectiveness and sustainability of key institutions tasked with protected areas management.

The implementation of this task will be undertaken by a team lead by an experienced international protected area consultant, supported by a national expert well versed in the history and current real status of the national protected areas system and the national challenges faced.

The overall task of the international lead consultant will be to ensure that an impartial and systematic review of the currently existing protected areas system, institutions and operational mechanisms is undertaken, and that key relevant international experience and lessons learned are applied pragmatically in order to develop actionable recommendations regarding future adjustments and reforms of the system to make it more goal oriented, effective, robust and sustainable. The following key steps and tasks are envisioned as follows:

1. Undertake, with the support of the national consultant and project team, a document review of the overall Georgian development context and its evolution since 1990's in order to clarify the national development context and long-term national development strategy (including role of tourism, biodiversity and protected areas in that context).
2. Carry out, with the support of the national consultant and project team, a review of existing national biodiversity conservation (and related environmental) strategy / planning, and biodiversity policy (specifically the protected areas system - its long-term goals and objectives).
3. Undertake a review of available documents and reports of the project and other actors (donors, APA, MEPA, CNF, KfW, national relevant NGOs etc.) regarding the evolution of the current PA system institutions and approaches to PA management in Georgia (in the context of wider national development policy and planning and historical context).
4. Map and describe in detail the currently existing system for PA<sup>2</sup> policy and PA management based on previous document reviews and follow up discussions with the national consultant, CNF and project team.
5. Undertake a focused review of current PA institutions including: mandates, institutional structures, internal governance, financing, organizational arrangements, practices and procedures, and assess how effectively they achieve the expected policy and strategic objectives.
6. Through analysis of the above, and on the basis of wider international experience of PA systems, undertake an initial identification of the key system level issues and constraints of the existing PA system in Georgia in terms of it meeting the long-term biodiversity strategic goals, and furthermore, identify the root causes of these issues and constraints.
7. Based on the above root cause analysis of issues / constraints currently facing the overall PA system and its component institutions, propose specific remedial steps that could be taken in order to ensure the future PA system is "fit for purpose" and can effectively reach the relevant national biodiversity (and other related) strategic goals.
8. Undertake an in-country mission of maximum 10 days to Georgia in order to gain additional "on-ground" understanding of the national development context generally, and specifically reach greater understanding of the issues and challenges facing the PA system at national (government, donor and NGO actors), regional (regional governments and stakeholders), and local levels (PA, local authorities, NGOs, communities, other stakeholders) through interviews, consultation and observation.
9. Undertake any revisions to previous analysis of the root causes and potential solutions / remedial actions to issues facing the PA system in Georgia based on the increased familiarization and clarification of conditions and practical issues from the in-country mission.
10. Develop one (or a number) of alternative options and scenarios for undertaking the

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<sup>2</sup> Including IUCN categories but not only

practical steps required to implement the proposed PAs system adjustments / reforms recommended previously, and, with the support of the national consultant and in consultation with key stakeholders, refine and elaborate them further.

Organize together with national expert to organize the workshop to present the findings of the consultancy to date to key stakeholders and to review proposal/s and ideally reach consensus on the preferred way forward.

11. Provide advice and inputs as possible or relevant (in the context of this ToR task) to the national PA policy planning as well as NBSAP<sup>3</sup> process that may be underway concurrently with the consultancy and make relevant contributions to this process.

## DELIVERABLES

During the duration of the assignment the following deliverables will be submitted to CNF:

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>% Payment</b>
<i>Deliverable 1:</i> Brief inception report and overall workplan	Within 2 weeks of contract signature	10%
<i>Deliverable 2:</i> Summary report on PA system analysis and provisional recommended remedial steps that could be taken in order to ensure the future PA system is more “fit for purpose” to reach the relevant national biodiversity (and other related) strategic goals	Within 2 months of contract signature	20%
<i>Deliverable 3:</i> Report proposing one or several specific alternative options and scenarios for undertaking the practical steps required to implement the proposed PAs system adjustments / reforms	Within 6 months of contract signature	30%
<i>Deliverable 4:</i> National workshop to discuss and reach broad consensus on proposed adjustments and reforms to PA system facilitated	Within 7 months of contract signature	20%
<i>Deliverable 5:</i> Final report summarizing overall findings and results of the consultancy and any additional recommendation relevant to future PA policy and management system reforms and evolution.	Within 8 months of contract signature	20%
	Total period 8 months	

The language for notices, instructions, and other formal messages between CNF and the Technical Assistance under this Agreement shall be English. The language for the deliverables 2,3 and 5 shall be also in English and Georgian. The translation costs will be covered by CNF directly.

The maximum number of days expected to be worked by international expert on a given assignment including missions(s) to the country is 30 days in total.

<sup>3</sup> National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

## PRELIMINARY WORK PLAN AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The following activities and deliverables apply according to the tentative time schedule:

Activities and Deliverables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Month	Oct.22	Nov.22	Dec. 22	Jan. 22	Feb.23	March.23	April 23	May 23
1) Workplan and inception report								
2) Main findings and provisional recommendations on PA system adjustments / reforms								
3) Report proposing one of several specific PA system adjustments/reforms options / proposals								
4. National PA system workshop facilitated and consensus built								
5. Final Summary report and recommendations								

## KEY QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants interested in signing the Agreement with CNF for the implementation of the above listed activities should meet the following generic qualifications:

- At least 15 years of practical working experience in conservation and Protected Areas development / management, in particular Protected Areas systemic capacity assessment and institutional development, including demonstrated active leadership and/or participation in the transition of PA management systems and approaches to more effective and sustainable trajectories.
- Proven analytical skills; strong verbal and written communication skills; demonstrated technical report writing skills; experience with hands-on institutional capacity building
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of international best practices and experiences in regards to PA system organization, institutions and operational practices, especially in the Caucasus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.
- Relevant knowledge on the status, organization, functional responsibilities and operability of the system of PAs of Georgia; specific knowledge of, and past working experience with APA and target PAs is an important asset.
- Prior working experience with UNDP and/or GEF is an asset.
- Fluency in speaking and writing in English.

## BUDGET

For the complete and satisfactory completion of the Technical Assistance and tasks specified in this TOR, CNF shall make available a lump-sum negotiable according to the qualifications and experience of the Technical Assistance Provider in consideration of the listed requirements.

The Technical Assistance Provider is requested to submit a financial offer presented as a detailed breakdown of costs proposed, including all fee payments, per diems, travel costs, taxes, overhead, any

translations of reports, and other relevant costs.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Any costs or expenses incurred in preparing the application are at the applicant's risk, and are not eligible for reimbursement by CNF.

The successful applicant is allowed to establish a consultancy team, and conclude subcontracts as needed. If the applicant envisions using subcontracts, then he/she shall act as Team Leader and bear full responsibility for the services any subcontractor performs. The assignment of all activities to one or several subcontractors is not permissible. The Application Package shall include a description of experience and CVs of all proposed subcontractors as well as a Declaration of Intent duly signed by all proposed subcontractors, describing the envisioned form of cooperation, division of work, etc. Before any contract with CNF shall be signed, the applicant will be required to submit evidence of a formal agreement jointly signed with all subcontractors, including a description of joint and individual liability.

Awarding of the contract shall be based on an evaluation by the CNF Tender Commission, consisting of representatives of CNF and third-party representatives as relevant. The Tender Committee shall evaluate information provided in the Application Package on: (1) knowledge and understanding of the subject of the tender; (2) evidence of relevant experiences in the subject of the tender; (3) knowledge of and experiences working with and in PAs in the South Caucasus, specifically Georgia, and specifically on PA management, institutional development, biodiversity conservation; (4) demonstrated capability to deliver against timetable; (5) detailed financial proposal. The Tender Commission may interview one or more applicants to assist its evaluation process.

The Tender Commission reserves the right to cancel the procedure at any moment and not conclude any contract, without further notice to the applicants. It also reserves the right not to accept the lowest bid.

The applicant will sign an Agreement with CNF in the capacity of independent contractor. The applicant will not be an employee of CNF, and accordingly will be personally responsible for the payment of taxes according to relevant legislation.

## **MODE OF APPLICATION**

Applicants are requested to submit a full Application Package in the English language, including the following:

- Cover Letter, explaining the relevant qualifications, experience and skills of the applicant.
- Detailed Description of Approach (max. 3 pages) to deliver the outcomes sought, including an understanding of the work required, comments on the TOR and activities proposed (if any), description of proposed approach and methodology, main implementation activities, etc. as considered relevant.
- Full CV of any team member proposed.
- Detailed Financial Proposal, including a breakdown of costs – all-inclusive consultancy fees (in days and stating unit rate) per individual team member, travel, any applicable VAT or other taxes, other costs, etc. - in USD
- Contact details for two referees (who will not be approached without your permission).

