



Terms of Reference

CNF/2024/GEO-TAGA

KEY INFORMATION

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| Functional title | Technical Assistance to Identify local climate refugia and develop the recommendations for effective management of identified sites (<i>Kazbegi National Park, Tusheti Protected Areas and Tusheti Protected Landscape and Pshav-Khevsureti Protected Areas</i>) |
| Project | UNDP-GEF PIMS6138 “Enhancing financial sustainability of the Protected Areas system in Georgia” |
| Duty station: | Home-based with missions to target PAs as relevant |
| Duration of assignment: | 6 months; 15 March 2024 to 15 September 2024 |
| Starting date: | 15 March 2024, or as soon as possible thereafter |
| Type of contract | Delivery-based |
| Application procedure: | The full Application Package should be sent to recruiting@caucasus-naturefund.org marked as “Identification of local climate refugia in target PAs” |
| Application deadline: | COB Tbilisi, Georgia (UTC/GMT +4h) on March 5th 2024 |
| For additional information: | Ms. Mariam Sulkhaniashvili, Conservation and Social Officer msulkhaniashvili@caucasus-naturefund.org |

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 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 will 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 Government of Georgia (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

Kazbegi National Park, Pshav-Khevsureti Protected Areas and Tusheti Protected Areas including Tusheti Protected Landscape (the target PAs) are important parts of Georgia’s national PA system and crucially contribute to meeting national commitments under biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. This requires effective management and protection against all anthropogenic threats.

According to Georgia’s Fourth National Communication to UNFCCC, the country is increasingly, but not uniformly affected by climate change. Climate change also affects the ecosystems and other biodiversity of Georgia’s PAs, as well as the people living around or visiting them. PA management will increasingly need to take into account their vulnerability to the changing climate and will need to adapt to it. So far, this need to adapt to climate change has not been systematically reflected in the management systems of any Georgian PAs. Therefore, the Caucasus Nature Fund has commissioned PA-specific climate change adaptation plans (PAAPs) for Kazbegi National Park, Pshav-Khevsureti Protected Areas and Tusheti Protected Areas (the target PAs), which build on a joint climate change vulnerability assessment (CCVA) for all three target PAs together. Climate adaptation strategies have been elaborated for three protected areas: Kazbegi National Park, Pshav-Khevsureti PA and Tusheti PA. 35 Adaptation Strategies were considered, out of which priorities were given to three strategies for each PA. For all of them priority was given to identification of local climate refugia and strict protection against non-climate threats.

Study of refugia on target territories is applicable to (sub-)nival, (sub-)alpine, forest, peatland and river ecosystems with the species to which they provide habitat and may be particularly relevant to habitats of mountain galliforms. Identification and protection of the areas which are in cooler and wetter

locations, where direct impact of climate change may be less than in surrounding areas and which have been generally undisturbed by humans and are expected to be less vulnerable also to future climate change, is of a high importance for planning of future development of Protected Areas. Such climate refugia are generally thought to help preserve habitats and ensure species viability. Potential refugia could be on the north facing or more sheltered slopes and areas with more secure water supply, e. g. near springs, but also in several other mountain settings. They shall first be mapped based on remote imagery and subsequent ground truthing based on agreed criteria, then they shall be prioritized and proposed to APA to include them into the strict protection zone – or theoretically in another zone that affords the necessary level of protection to exclude critical conventional (non-climate related) threats from the identified climate refugia.

SCOPE OF WORK

Pursuant to the Project Document agreed between UNDP and the GoG, and in line with the Responsible Party Agreement signed between UNDP and CNF, for this Technical Assistance CNF intends to commission a national expert as organization or group of individuals.

The overall objective of the Technical Assistance for the identification of local climate refugia is to identify, assess and map habitats creating potential refugia in Khazbegi National Park, Tusheti and Pshav-Khevsureti PAs. All three protected areas shall be screened for climate refugia, maps shall be prepared and recommendations developed on protection of identified refugia for the respective management bodies.

(1) Assessment Phase;

During the Assessment Phase, the Technical Assistance Provider will define criteria and types of habitats that may create climate refugia (for broad functional groups and habitats, considering main values) and use freely available remote sensing data to identify potential habitats creating climate refugia as per criteria.

The Technical Assistance Provider will organize all necessary working meetings with stakeholders to confirm with them the task, methodology and final outcomes and outputs of the assignment. The results of the meeting shall be provided in the assessment phase report.

The assessment phase shall include desk studies, stakeholder consultations, site visits, workshops, etc. in line with the methodology agreed. The results shall be in-depth discussed with APA and MEPA's Biodiversity and Forest Department.

As the output of the Assessment Phase, the Technical Assistance Provider will prepare the report which will contain detailed description of methodology, data and information collected and stakeholders consulted.

Deliverable 1: Assessment phase report, including agreed methodology, criteria and types of habitats creating climate refugia, consultation results and detailed workplan.

(2) Mapping Phase;

On the mapping phase Technical Assistance Provided will conduct field studies to check habitats creating potential climate refugia and prepare the maps, including identified habitats creating climate refugia for (sub-)nival, (sub-)alpine, forest, peatland and river ecosystems, for three protected areas.

The Technical Assistance provider should closely work and coordinate with the Agency of Protected Areas, the administrations of target PAs, the Biodiversity and Forest Department and engage them in the process in different formats, including physical or online meetings.

Deliverable 2: Field trip report and prepared refugia maps for target protected areas.

(3) Elaboration of Final Report and Recommendations;

On the third phase Technical Assistance Provider shall prioritize mapped climate refugia based on existence of conventional threats and elaborate recommendations for inclusion of refugia into respective protection zone (SPZ) of PA.

Elaboration of the recommendations should be a participatory process, involving the Agency of Protected Areas, the administrations of target PAs, the Biodiversity and Forest Department. The draft recommendations should be presented and discussed with the main stakeholders for their final endorsement and ownership of the results as well as next steps.

Deliverable 3: The final report with the justification and the list of prioritized refugia and recommendations for protection of identified areas for respective management bodies. . The report should also contain the information about the consultation processes with the stakeholders, including minutes of the meetings and presentations, photos or other visual materials if any.

DELIVERABLES

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

Deliverable 1: Assessment phase report, including agreed methodology, criteria and types of habitats creating climate refugia, consultation results and detailed workplan.

Deliverable 2: Field Trip report and prepared refugia maps for target protected areas.

Deliverable 3: The final report with justification and the list of prioritized refugia and recommendation for protection of identified areas for respective management bodies.

Any qualitative descriptive information and quantitative data presented in any report shall be maximally supported by tables, graphs and (geo-referenced) maps, as appropriate, containing all available quantitative and/or geographic information on issues related to the subject of the consultancy.

All reports prepared under the assignment shall include a complete list of literature consulted, including peer-reviewed publications, project reports, internal PA reports, and others as appropriate.

Also, all reports shall contain detailed descriptions of practical activities implemented: minutes/protocols of stakeholder meetings, names and affiliations of stakeholders consulted, etc.

The language for notices, instructions, and other formal messages between CNF and the Technical Assistance Provider under this Agreement shall be Georgian/English. The language for final report shall be Georgian and English languages.

PRELIMINARY WORK SCHEDULE

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

| Activities and Deliverables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Month | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug |
| Deliverable 1: Assessment phase report, including agreed methodology, criteria and types of habitats creating climate refugia, consultation results and detailed workplan. | | | | | | |
| Deliverable 2: Field Trip report and prepared refugia maps for target protected areas. | | | | | | |
| Deliverable 3: The final report with justification and the list of prioritized refugia and recommendation for protection of identified areas for respective management bodies. | | | | | | |

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Under this Technical Assistance CNF intends to commission a national expert as organization or individuals – working under the following overall division of responsibilities.

BUDGET

For the complete and satisfactory completion of the Consultancy and tasks specified in this TOR, CNF shall agree a lump-sum payment with the IE, negotiable according to the qualifications and experience of the consultancy team in consideration of the listed requirements, as well as the further detailing of the work program and approach proposed in the Application Package.

The lump-sum shall include a detailed breakdown of costs for all fee payments for the experts to work under the assignment, per diems, travel costs, taxes, overhead, any translations of reports, etc., as to be specified in financial offer submitted as part of the Application Package.

Specifically, the financial offer shall also include any relevant costs for the organization of the Inception/Information Workshops, consultation and other workshops, for which venue facilities will be provided free-of-charge by APA, a target PA authority or designated third-party, and APA and CNF will provide advisory and logistical support for identifying and inviting relevant participants. Any relevant costs for catering, participants’ travel and overnight stays, as needed, shall be specified in the financial offer.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

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

- Key Expert(s): Academic education and training background and as minimum holding a BA Degree in biology, zoology, botany, biodiversity monitoring, nature conservation or relevant field;
- At least 5 years of referenced experience in planning, preparation and implementation of botanical and zoological research and monitoring activities with reference to the indicators selected, preferably related to (target) PAs in Georgia;
- Proved knowledge on and experience in working on issues related with climate change adaptation (studies, projects, reports);
- Proven communication and reporting skills; demonstrated leadership and coordination skills in guiding teams of experts, including during field monitoring campaigns; demonstrated experience in writing monitoring plans and reports is an asset;
- In-depth knowledge and understanding on international standards and best practices on biological and zoological studies and PA management is an asset;
- Knowledge on the status, organization and functioning of the system of PAs of Georgia; specific knowledge of any of the selected target PAs is an asset;
- Prior working experience with UNDP and/or GEF is an asset;
- Fluent in speaking and writing in Georgian; good command of English in speaking and writing.

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 may propose subcontracting additional experts as considered needed, and he/she shall bear full responsibility for the services any expert 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 proposed subcontractors as well as a Declaration of Intent signed by all proposed subcontractors, describing the envisioned form of cooperation, lead consultant, division of work, etc.

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 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 act as an independent contractor under a Technical Assistance Grant Agreement with CNF. The applicant will not be an employee of CNF, and accordingly will be personally responsible for the payment of taxes according to relevant legislation.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

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, main implementation activities, etc. as considered relevant. It should also include work plan and timetable, including a description of methodology, as well as the itinerary and timetable of missions, site visits and deliverables. The work plan should include relevant information regarding technical and consultation workshops proposed.
- **Full CVs for Key Experts** proposed.
- **Detailed Financial Proposal**, including a breakdown of costs – all-inclusive consultancy fees (in days and stating unit rate) per individual team member, travel (air/land roundtrips and per diem as appropriate), any applicable VAT or other taxes, other costs, etc. - in GEL.