

Terms of Reference

Project:	“Biodiversity mainstreaming into Sectoral Policies and Practices and Strengthen Protection of Biodiversity Hot-spots in Montenegro”
Job title:	Development of municipal forestry development plan
Duration of assignment:	1st February 2024 – 30 th September 2024
Location:	Home based, Montenegro

Background:

The project “Biodiversity mainstreaming into Sectoral Policies and Practices and Strengthen Protection of Biodiversity Hot-spots in Montenegro” is geographically focused on the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) of Montenegro and includes various types of interventions and involves both ecosystem protection and work with production sectors, such as tourism, agriculture and forestry.

The Component 1 of the proposed project deals with the management constraints associated with the Protected Areas (PA’s) estate and unprotected biodiversity hot-spots. The project will provide for the improved management of the pilot PA’s in order to ensure compliance with the international requirements for protection of valuable biodiversity within the KBAs and other international biodiversity hot-spots. Through spatial planning instruments, the project will promote concrete solutions for valuable and threatened biodiversity conservation outside the PA’s.

The Component 2 targets the productive landscape outside PA’s and in the vicinity of KBA’s, where the project will address the sectoral threats to biodiversity via mainstreaming biodiversity-friendly practices and adjust the sectoral development scenarios for tourism, agriculture and forestry to take into account the potential impact on biodiversity.

The project will offer assistance to the Government in developing best practice standards for sustainable tourism and nature-based biodiversity-friendly tourism and support the small-scale tourism business development towards the more offerings of biodiversity-sensitive nature-based products. For the forestry sector the project will offer best-practice standards for mainstreaming biodiversity - friendly forestry practices, will assist the Government with support and services for private forest owners, and help promote biodiversity – positive entrepreneurship in forestry. For the biodiversity mainstreaming in agriculture, the project will support the Government with the introduction of agro-environmental incentives and piloting of agro-environmental measures.

The task under this Terms of Reference falls within the Component 2 Outcome 4: Biodiversity conservation considerations mainstreamed into forestry policies and practices around KBAs, Output 4.1 - Best-practice standards mainstreaming biodiversity-friendly forestry practices developed.

Purpose and objectives of the assignment

The primary goal of this assignment is to support both national and local governments in enhancing their planning practices related to the management and utilization of forests and forest resources. The specific focus lies in piloting modern planning approaches while simultaneously improving the transparency and inclusivity of decision-making processes.

The methodology for achieving this objective will involve a "learning by doing" approach, wherein the process will be tested and implemented. As a result, the following outcomes are anticipated:

- **Developed Forest Development Plan:**

Creation of a comprehensive Forest Development Plan tailored for the selected target municipality/municipalities.

- **Private Forest Management Plans:**

Formulation of private forest management plans specifically for the target municipality/municipalities, covering a minimum of 600 hectares.

The selected service provider will undertake an in-depth analysis of existing practices within the context of Montenegro's forest management and planning. This includes an examination of the legislative framework, associated risks, and negative experiences tied to these processes. Simultaneously, the service provider will scrutinize relevant international regulatory frameworks, identifying good practices and recommendations applicable to the Montenegro context and the purpose of this assignment.

Addressing identified gaps and shortcomings, the service provider will deliver two expected results in a professional, inclusive, and cooperative manner, employing a "learning by doing" approach. In practice, this involves timely and transparent identification of all relevant stakeholders at both the national and local levels. These stakeholders may include national institutions, municipalities, local communities, private forest owners, NGOs, and other pertinent entities. The service provider will develop and implement an appropriate engagement and capacity-building plan concurrently with the development of plans.

Throughout the development process, the service provider will leverage available data and information sources, such as statistical offices, line ministries, cadastre, scientific works and research, existing legislative and policy documents, published peer-reviewed and grey literature, and national statistical and other databases (including the forest inventory). Relevant outputs from ongoing projects in forestry and nature protection sectors, such as the Natura 2000 mapping, will also be considered.

The expected outcomes for the beneficiaries include:

- **Developed and Delivered Plans:**

Successful creation and delivery of the Forest Development Plan and Private Forest Management Plans.

- **Structured Methodology:**

Documentation of a structured methodology accompanied by lessons learned, recommendations, and conclusions for potential replication in other locations. This methodology will encompass necessary legal and good practices within the Montenegro context and highlight any missing elements, such as safeguards for biodiversity conservation,

understanding the impact of interventions on the livelihood of the local population, and social and economic impacts and risks.

- **Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement:**

Development and documentation of structured guidelines for engaging relevant stakeholders in the planning process. The company personnel will collaborate closely with the project's Chief Technical Specialist and Project Manager to ensure the quality of outputs and alignment with the ongoing processes within the overall project.

Job content

- Performing an in-depth analysis of the existing forestry policies and practices (national, municipal, private level), identifying opportunities to integrate biodiversity-friendly policies and practices into the Municipal Forestry Development Plan, in order to enhance biodiversity conservation within municipal forest management as well as into pilot management plans for private forest.
- Performing an analysis of innovative methodologies and standards for sustainable forestry planning and management, in order to establish new benchmarks and best practices that align forestry practice with biodiversity conservation. International guidelines, standards and best practices to be consulted.
- Analysing how forestry policies and practices, including the proposed biodiversity friendly ones, may have differential impacts on different genders and marginalized groups. Identify gender-specific challenges and opportunities and develop strategies and actions that promote gender equality and social inclusion in forestry planning and management, ensuring that the Municipal Forestry Development Plan addresses gender issues and empowers women and marginalized groups in forestry activities.
- Analysing capacity gaps within municipal forestry departments and among stakeholders, as a basis of the capacity building programs on forestry planning and management that takes into consideration biodiversity protection and gender issues.
- Drafting a comprehensive Municipal Forestry Development Plan for selected municipality that incorporates biodiversity-friendly policies, new methodologies, and standards as well as pilot management plan for private forest within the target municipality.
- Engaging with various stakeholders, including government agencies, private forest owners, local communities, NGOs and other relevant parties through formal consultations in order to ensure that the deliverables are well-informed and inclusive and promote transparency, inclusivity, and ownership of the plan among stakeholders.
- Formulating narrative reports describing the methodology, data sources and findings in order to ensure that the recommendations align with the overall forestry and nature protection policies as well as the project goals.
- Formulating briefs and inputs for the Project implementation unit.

Expected deliverables

- Municipal Forest Development Plan document that incorporates all the elements outlined above (contemporary sustainable forestry practices, nature protection and biodiversity concerns, gender issues) and is prepared on the basis of legal requirements, the Methodology for policy development, drafting and monitoring of strategic planning documents, as well as international standards, guidelines and best practices in relation to forestry, nature protection and gender.
- Guidelines on the newly developed methodologies and standards for forestry planning and management that incorporates biodiversity and gender issues. This should serve as a reference document for forestry sector personnel and private forest owners.
- Private forest management plans in the target municipality, covering at least 600ha.

- Reports documenting the engagement with various stakeholders, including government and municipal agencies, private forest owners, local communities, NGOs, and other relevant parties through formal consultations. This report should outline the insights gained and contributions made by stakeholders to the policy development process, including on biodiversity protection and gender issues
- Inputs provided to the Project implementation unit, offering guidance and insights based on the experts' analysis and recommendations to facilitate the implementation of the new forestry plan, as well as upscaling of the methodologies and standards
- Progress reports to the Project Implementation Unit.

The Company is expected to report to the Project Manager and Chief Technical Specialist on a weekly basis through phone calls, e-mails, and in-person and online meetings.

The Company will submit all the agreed contract deliverables in electronic form, in the appropriate file formats.

Duration of the assignment and timetable

The assignment should be implemented during 8 months in the period of 1 February 2024 – 30 September 2024.

Timetable:

- Draft Municipal Forest Development Plan and guidelines on the newly developed methodologies and standards for forestry planning and management that incorporates biodiversity and gender issues – until 31st May 2024
- Private forest management plans in the target municipality, covering at least 600ha - until 31st July 2024
- Final documents submitted by the 30 September 2024.

Reporting:

Provide three reports not longer than three (3) pages, in English or local language, to Project Manager and Chief Technical Specialist as follows:

- a. Progress report including submission of Draft Municipal Forest Development Plan and guidelines on the newly developed methodologies and standards for forestry planning and management that incorporates biodiversity and gender issues – until 31st May 2024
- b. Progress report and submission of private forest management plans in the target municipality, covering at least 600ha - until 31st July 2024
- c. Final report, by 30th September 2024.