

Description of Requirements

Context of the Requirement	<p>Montenegro's forests represent a vital resource for biodiversity and socio-economic activities. Non-timber forest products (NTFP), including wild berries, mushrooms, medicinal plants and others play a significant role in the country's rural livelihoods and ecological sustainability. However, despite the sector's importance, it faces significant challenges, including:</p> <p>Regulatory Gaps and Enforcement Issues The collection of NTFP in Montenegro is hindered by inconsistent legal frameworks across state, private, and protected forests, resulting in exploitation disparities. This regulatory fragmentation is further aggravated by a lack of harmonization among the institutions responsible for managing forests, parks, and natural resources, leading to significant inefficiencies in enforcement and oversight.</p> <p>Unsustainable harvesting practices Unsustainable harvesting practices, including overuse, the use of damaging and prohibited tools, intentional setting of fires etc, pose a serious threat to biodiversity and the sustainability of future yields. This issue is compounded by the limited monitoring of NTFP quantities harvested annually, which undermines effective planning for sustainable resource management.</p> <p>Market and Value Chain Constraints The dominance of informal markets in the NTFP sector reduces traceability and hampers control over sustainable sourcing. This challenge is further exacerbated by poor infrastructure and the absence of organized stakeholder associations, weakening value chain efficiency and diminishing profitability.</p> <p>Economic and Social Challenges Harvesters, predominantly from marginalized rural areas, receive minimal financial returns due to exploitative trade practices and a lack of understanding of market dynamics. Additionally, inadequate training and awareness among harvesters regarding sustainable practices contribute to overharvesting and significant environmental degradation.</p> <p>Policy and Data Deficiencies: The inadequate integration of NTFP data into forest management plans hinders effective ecosystem and resource management. This issue is further compounded by the lack of targeted government support or incentives to encourage sustainable use and fair trade within the sector.</p> <p>To address these challenges, the development of a comprehensive framework to organize NTFP stakeholders into an effective association and strengthening their capacities is critical, which is the focus of this Terms of Reference.</p>
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	Such an intervention seeks to revitalize the NTFP sector, contributing to its ecological sustainability and socio-economic viability, while aligning with international best practices and national development goals and policies.
Brief Description of the Required Services	<p>1. Stakeholder Identification and Engagement: Identify and actively engage stakeholders relevant for the NTFP sector, ensuring meaningful participation of marginalized groups, particularly women and rural communities.</p> <p>2. Organizational and Governance Support: Analyze potential association models based on stakeholder input, feasibility, and international best practices, and support the design of an accountable and transparent governance structure.</p> <p>3. Capacity Building: Develop and deliver a tailored training program for NTFP harvesters, including modules on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Association management, including financial management, monitoring, and strategic planning; -Sustainable harvesting practices, focusing on biodiversity and forest ecosystems protection, and climate adaptation; -Product development, processing, and value-added market strategies, with emphasis on traditional and local knowledge. <p>4. Institutional Setup for Engaging Trained Harvesters: In collaboration with key regulatory agencies and companies, develop and propose a standardized protocol mandating the engagement of trained harvesters in commercial operations, while integrating the capacity-building program into stakeholder activities.</p> <p>Throughout all tasks, gender mainstreaming will be a cross-cutting priority, ensuring gender-sensitive approaches, meaningful participation of women, and the collection of gender-disaggregated data to foster inclusivity and equity.</p> <p>By achieving these tasks, the assignment aims to revitalize the NTFP sector, promote sustainable resource management, and align with Montenegro's national development goals and international best practices.</p>
List and Description of Expected Outputs to be Delivered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meetings with stakeholders verified by reports, participation lists, photos, and ensuring meaningful representation of women; 2. Report on the analysis of association models and their feasibility and the proposal of the most feasible model, including assessment of the impacts on women; 3. Proposed structure of the NTFP association, with defined roles and responsibilities (ensuring women representation in decision making), protocols of communication and operation, and a capacity building plan; 4. Set of documents for formal/legal registration of the association of NTFP harvesters (e.g. filled in forms, written statute as well as rulebooks on systematisation, functional forms such as memorandum, travel orders, workplan for the first year, capacity building programme, etc); 5. One capacity building event on association management delivered in person for the duration of at least 2 days for at least 5 participants interested in the managing the proposed association; 6. One capacity building event organised by the organisation on sustainable harvesting

	<p>practices delivered in person for the duration of at least 2 days for at least 15 harvesters;</p> <p>7. One capacity building event on product development delivered in person for the duration of at least 1 day for at least 15 stakeholders;</p> <p>8. Training materials in the form of presentations, tools, reading materials, guidelines etc. as a package that can be used in subsequent trainings;</p> <p>9. Proposal of the protocol that mandates companies to engage harvesters who have completed recognized training and capacity building program, verified by the relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>10. Proposal of the most feasible model for integrating the capacity building program into the operations of the key stakeholders (NTPF trade companies, national institutions); and</p> <p>11. Final report documenting the process and lessons learned.</p>
Person to Supervise the Work/Performance of the Service Provider	All deliverables must be quality reviewed and approved/accepted by the Chief Technical Specialist, Project Manager and Project Director.
Location of work	<input type="checkbox"/> Exact Address/es <i>[pls. specify]</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Contractor's Location and as defined in the ToR
Expected duration of work	During 12 months in period from 01st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
Target start date	01st April 2025
Latest completion date	31st March 2026
Travels Expected	Yes
Pre-bid conference	N/A
Special Security Requirements	N/A.
Implementation Schedule indicating breakdown and timing of activities/sub-activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Required <input type="checkbox"/> Not Required
Names and curriculum vitae of individuals who will be involved in completing the services and proposed team's structure with indicated names and functions (i.e. Team Leader, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Required <input type="checkbox"/> Not Required Important Remarks: - In case a sub-contracting is envisaged, the majority of the required/ proposed team members (key personnel) must be the Bidder's (legal entity's) employees, including the Team Leader. Bids containing the majority of the proposed team members that are a sub-contractor's personnel shall be rejected. - Under the Project implementation rules, the Bidder is not allowed to subcontract employees of Montenegrin government and public institutions.

Proposal Submission Address	e-mail: irena.krivokapic@mers.gov.me and irenakrivokapic@gmail.com
Deadline for Submission of Proposal	24th February 2025 at 15:00h All e-mail correspondence to be clearly marked with the tender number (see the “ REFERENCE ” field from the 1 st page above). Offers received by the Ministry after the above-mentioned date and time will be rejected and returned to sender unopened.
No. of copies of Proposal that must be submitted via e-mail	Original: 1 electronic copy of technical proposal and 1 electronic copy of financial proposal in separate files, duly marked as Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal, with indicated tender “ REFERENCE ” number of tender (please see the 1 st page above). Remark: Technical proposals and financial proposals must be submitted in separate emails. The technical proposal should not be password protected. In the eventuality, files containing the technical proposals exceed the 15MB permitted file size for attachments, should be broken down to several files and sent sequentially. Each file should be named as follows: <proposer name–technical proposal file no. N> (N=1, 2, 3, etc). The financial proposals should be sent in PDF format and password protected so that they cannot be opened otherwise. Password for the financial proposal must not be provided to the Ministry until it is formally requested by the Ministry procurement focal point.
All documentations submitted in this proposal, including catalogs, instructions and operating manuals, shall be in English or local language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English or <input type="checkbox"/> local language Remark: the original documents and copies of original documents submitted by local companies, such as the Company Registration Certificates, Tax Payment Certificates, etc. can be in Montenegrin language.
Documents to be submitted (Technical Proposal envelope)	X Duly Accomplished, Signed and Stamped Form as provided in the Annex 2 , and in accordance with the list of requirements in Annex 1: - one copy <u>without populating proposed pricing information in the Technical Proposal file</u> , and - other copy <u>with the proposed pricing information in the Financial Proposal file (must be password protected)</u> ; X Documents Establishing Offeror’s Eligibility &Qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Company Profile, which should include a <u>short description of the company/NGO and other relevant information concerning the requirements indicated in this document - it should not exceed three (3) pages.</u> ● Certificate of Registration (potvrda o registraciji) of the business in Montenegro, including Articles of Incorporation (akt o osnivanju), or equivalent document if the Bidder is not a corporation. ● Income Statement and Balance Sheet (bilans uspjeha i bilans stanja) for 2022 and 2023; Required minimum turnover for a bidder is 50.000,00 EUR per each of the above-mentioned years.

- **Latest Internal Revenue Certificate / Tax Clearance (potvrda poreske uprave o nepostojanju dugovanja)**, not older than 6 months, confirming that all taxes by the bidder have been paid. Alternatively, bidders may submit signed self-declaration confirming they have requested issuance of the above-mentioned Certificate from the Tax Office and Ministry reserves the right to request submission of this Certificate during the bids evaluation phase as well as the right to disqualify the offer if such Certificate is not swiftly submitted upon the mentioned request;
- Relevant experience in providing similar services such as development of nature protection policy, enhancing protected area management, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, institutional capacity building for environmental/nature protection (minimum two comparable projects in the last five years). The reference list must be submitted using the table provided herein:

Client*	Assignment description	Duration (from-to; Month-Year)	Value in EUR
1.			
2.			

Please insert more rows, if applicable

***Reference details must contain: name of client, name of client's responsible person and his/her phone no. and e-mail address.**

- **Documents establishing Qualifications of proposed team members: Copies of Diplomas and CVs for each proposed team member**, specifying the exact number of years and nature of experience working in the relevant fields. CVs to be submitted in the consistent format that enables evaluation as per the criteria indicated in the attached ToR (no specific format is required). The team must have proven experience in similar projects.
- And all other as required by ToR (Annex 4).

In the case of a joint venture/consortium, provide **consortium agreement** that shall clearly state the leading partner/institution which will be responsible for signing and implementing the contract with the Ministry. In this case, bidders shall also provide **a brief presentation of each member** together with the list of their relevant references/experience. The documentation required in this section must be submitted **for all consortium partners**. The **majority of the required/proposed team members (key personnel) and majority of percentage of the total assignment must be the Lead Partner's responsibility**. Under the Creative concept/Methodology, a brief **description of each partner's responsibilities and related percentages of envisaged work must be stated**.

Currency of Proposal	Euro
Value Added Tax on Price Proposal	Must be inclusive of VAT and other applicable indirect taxes
Validity Period of Proposals (Counting for the last day of	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 days <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 90 days <input type="checkbox"/> 120 days

submission of quotes)	In exceptional circumstances, the Ministry may request the Proposer to extend the validity of the Proposal beyond what has been initially indicated in this RFP. The Proposal shall then confirm the extension in writing, without any modification whatsoever on the Proposal.
Partial Quotes	Not permitted
Liquidated Damages	<input type="checkbox"/> Will not be imposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Will be imposed under the following conditions: Percentage of contract price per day of delay: 1% Max. no. of days of delay: 15 days Next course of action: Ministry may cancel the Contract.
Payment Terms	The latest within thirty (30) days from the date of meeting the following conditions: a) Ministry's written acceptance (i.e., not mere receipt) of the quality of the outputs; and b) Receipt of invoice from the Service Provider.
Person(s) to review/inspect/ approve outputs/completed services and authorize the disbursement of payment	The outputs are to be approved by the Chief Technical Specialist, Project manager, and Project Director who will issue clearances for payments.
Type of Contract to be Signed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service contract
Criteria for Contract Award	<input type="checkbox"/> Lowest Price Quote among technically responsive offers (threshold 70% points obtained in the technical evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highest Combined Score (based on the 70% technical offer and 30% price weight distribution)
Criteria for the Assessment of Proposal	<u>Technical Proposal</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expertise and experience of the Bidder (20,00%) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed Methodology/Creative concept for the Completion of Services (40%) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management Structure and Qualification of Key Personnel (40%)
Ministry will award the contract to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One and only one Service Provider <input type="checkbox"/> One or more Service Providers, depending on the following factors:
Annexes to this RFP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form for Submission of Proposal (Annex 2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detailed ToR(Annex3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requested expertise (Annex4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technical Evaluation Criteria (Annex 5)

<p>Contact Person for Inquiries (Written inquiries only):</p>	<p>irena.krivokapic@mers.gov.me and irenakrivokapic@gmail.com</p> <p>(indicate clearly the tender “REFERENCE” number from the 1st page above on all correspondence/Subject of an e-mail query)</p> <p>IMPORTANT REMARK: Bidders are requested to visit daily the Ministry website at www.gov.me/mers and project website www.biodiversitymontenegro.me in order to check for potential tender updates and/or questions and answers documents.</p> <p>Any delay in the Ministry's response shall be not used as a reason for extending the deadline for submission, unless the Ministry determines that such an extension is necessary and communicates a new deadline to the Proposers.</p>
<p>Right to accept any proposal and to reject any or all proposals</p>	<p>Ministry reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals, and to annul the proposal process and reject all proposals at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected proposer or proposers or any obligation to inform the affected proposer or proposers of the grounds for Ministry’s action. Ministry shall not be obliged to award the contract to the lowest priced offer.</p>
<p>Deadline for Inquiries:</p>	<p>Two (2) days before the submission date.</p>