



TERMS OF REFERENCE

- A. Job title:** National Consultant – Biodiversity & Ecosystems Expert (Adaptation Fund Project Preparation)
- B. Type of position:** National
- C. Duty Station:** Home based/Podgorica, Montenegro
- D. Contract type:** Individual Contract
- E. Duration of appointment:** 30 working days over a period of 1 April 2026 – 31 December 2026, on a non-continuous basis, within the Adaptation Fund project proposal preparation timeframe
- F. Deadline for application:** 20 March 2026, 12:00h

I 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.

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 provides for the improved management of the pilot PA’s in order to ensure compliance with the international requirements for the protection of valuable biodiversity within the KBAs and other international biodiversity hot-spots. Through spatial planning instruments, the project promotes 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 addresses 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 tasks defined in this ToR fall under Component 1, with the primary objective of improving the management of international nominations—specifically the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve Tara River Basin.

The Tara River Basin represents one of Montenegro’s most ecologically valuable river systems, providing critical ecosystem services such as water regulation, erosion control, biodiversity conservation, and support to local livelihoods. However, climate change is increasing pressures on the basin through altered hydrological patterns, erosion risks, and ecosystem degradation, threatening both



biodiversity and downstream communities. Montenegro has established climate policy priorities and targets that emphasize ecosystem-based adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and resilient ecosystem management. In this context, the Tara River Basin represents a priority site where strengthened ecosystem resilience could generate significant adaptation benefits.

Through the GEF-7 project, support is being provided for the preparation of a full Adaptation Fund project proposal focused on this target area, through a process led by UNDP. As the designated Implementing Entity, UNDP is overseeing proposal development to deliver concrete adaptation benefits through international consulting firm and national experts to ensure both technical expertise and alignment with national and local priorities.

II Objectives of the assignment:

The objective of this assignment is to support the preparation of the full Adaptation Fund project proposal by providing specialized technical inputs on nature-based adaptation and biodiversity-related measures for the Tara River Basin. The National Biodiversity & Ecosystems Expert will contribute to the relevant sections of the proposal by identifying, justifying, and designing ecosystem-based interventions that strengthen ecosystem resilience, protect ecosystem services, and generate measurable adaptation benefits, while ensuring alignment with national priorities and Adaptation Fund requirements.

III Job content

Under the overall supervision of the Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP representatives and in close coordination with the international consulting company leading the Adaptation Fund proposal preparation, the National Biodiversity & Ecosystems Expert shall provide sector-specific technical inputs related to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The Expert will work on a non-continuous basis and contribute analytical inputs, technical designs, and revisions required to support the preparation of a high-quality, submission-ready Adaptation Fund project proposal.

The Expert's duties and responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

I. Technical Review and Baseline Analysis

- Review relevant national and sub-national policies, strategies, and plans related to biodiversity, ecosystems, protected areas, forestry, and climate change adaptation.
- Review available ecological data, biodiversity assessments, and ecosystem management studies relevant to the Tara River Basin and other targeted areas.
- Contribute to the assessment of baseline ecosystem conditions and climate-related adaptation gaps.



2. Climate Risk and Vulnerability Inputs (Ecosystems and Biodiversity)

- Provide technical inputs to the climate risk and vulnerability analysis related to ecosystems, habitats, and species, including climate-driven degradation, fragmentation, and loss of ecosystem services.
- Support identification of climate change drivers affecting ecosystem integrity and resilience.
- Contribute to the articulation of a clear **climate rationale** for ecosystem-based adaptation and biodiversity-related measures, consistent with Adaptation Fund guidance.

3. Design of Ecosystem-Based Adaptation and Biodiversity Measures

- Identify and technically define **ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)** and biodiversity-focused adaptation interventions.
- Support the design of measures such as habitat restoration, riparian buffer rehabilitation, sustainable forest and land management, erosion control through natural solutions, and ecosystem connectivity enhancement.
- Ensure that proposed measures are technically feasible, locally appropriate, and aligned with national biodiversity and conservation frameworks.

4. Contribution to Project Logic and Results Framework

- Provide sector-specific inputs to the **theory of change**, outputs, indicators, and targets related to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience.
- Support definition of measurable adaptation outcomes and indicators in line with the Adaptation Fund Results Framework.
- Contribute to assumptions and risk analysis related to ecosystem-based interventions.

5. Environmental and Social Safeguards Support

- Support environmental and social screening from a biodiversity and ecosystem perspective, in coordination with the ESIA Expert.
- Identify potential environmental and social risks associated with proposed ecosystem-based interventions and suggest mitigation measures.
- Ensure alignment with the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy.

6. Coordination and Review

- Participate in technical coordination meetings as required.
- Review draft sections of the Adaptation Fund proposal related to biodiversity and ecosystems and provide comments and revisions.
- Support incorporation of reviewer comments and revisions during the proposal finalization stage.



IV Deliverables:

The National Biodiversity & Ecosystems Expert shall deliver the following outputs in support of the Adaptation Fund project proposal preparation. All deliverables shall be prepared in English, submitted in electronic format, and aligned with the Adaptation Fund project proposal template and guidance.

The assignment shall be carried out over 30 working days, on a non-continuous basis, over a period of TBD months, in coordination with the Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP representatives and the international consulting company.

Indicative Deliverables

1. Technical input note on ecosystem and biodiversity climate risks and vulnerabilities

- Written technical inputs on climate-related risks affecting ecosystems and biodiversity, including habitat degradation, fragmentation, loss of ecosystem services, and climate-induced pressures.
- Inputs to the climate rationale section of the Adaptation Fund proposal (ecosystems and biodiversity components).

2. Technical inputs on ecosystem-based adaptation and biodiversity measures

- Technical definition and justification of ecosystem-based adaptation and biodiversity-related interventions.
- Inputs on feasibility, design considerations, and alignment with national biodiversity and conservation frameworks.

3. Inputs to the project theory of change and results framework

- Sector-specific inputs to the project's theory of change, outputs, indicators, and targets related to ecosystem resilience and biodiversity conservation.
- Support definition of measurable adaptation outcomes in line with the Adaptation Fund Results Framework.

4. Environmental and social safeguards inputs (ecosystems and biodiversity)

- Technical inputs to environmental and social screening related to ecosystem and biodiversity-based interventions.
- Identification of potential environmental and social risks and proposed mitigation measures, in coordination with the ESIA Expert.

5. Review and revision of draft proposal sections

- Review of draft Adaptation Fund proposal sections related to biodiversity and ecosystems.



- Written comments and revisions based on feedback from UNDP, the international consulting company, and other reviewers.

All reports shall be submitted in English, in electronic format, and in accordance with UNDP reporting standards and agreed timelines. All deliverables shall be subject to review and formal approval by Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor and UNDP representatives.

Payments under this contract shall be made upon satisfactory completion and formal written approval of deliverables by Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor and UNDP representatives, in accordance with the agreed payment schedule to be defined in the contract. No payments shall be made for deliverables that have not been formally reviewed and approved by both Project Manager and Chief Technical Advisor.

Indicative Timeline and Deliverables

Deliverable / Output	Description	Estimated Level of Effort
Technical input note on ecosystem and biodiversity climate risks and vulnerabilities	Written inputs on climate-related risks affecting ecosystems and biodiversity (habitat degradation, fragmentation, loss of ecosystem services); inputs to climate rationale of AF proposal	7 working days
Technical inputs on ecosystem-based adaptation and biodiversity measures	Technical definition and justification of ecosystem-based adaptation and biodiversity-related interventions; feasibility and policy alignment	8 working days
Inputs to theory of change and results framework	Sector-specific inputs to theory of change, outputs, indicators, and targets related to ecosystem resilience and biodiversity	5 working days
Environmental and social safeguards inputs (ecosystems and biodiversity)	Inputs to environmental and social screening; identification of ecosystem-related risks and proposed mitigation measures, in coordination with ESIA Expert	5 working days
Review and revision of draft proposal sections	Review of biodiversity- and ecosystem-related proposal sections; written comments and revisions based on UNDP and team feedback	5 working days



Deliverable / Output	Description	Estimated Level of Effort
Total		30 working days

V Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity and ethics and a commitment to transparency and accountability in all professional activities;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Ability to lead strategic planning, results-based management and reporting in complex public-sector and central banking environments;
- Builds strong relationships with institutional counterparts and stakeholders, focuses on impact and result at the institutional level and responds positively to feedback;
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude;
- Excellent communication skills, facility in working with teams and capacity to compose clear and readable narrative reports;
- Demonstrates ability to manage complexities and work under pressure, as well as conflict resolution skills;
- Excellent organizational and time management skills;
- Knowledge Management and Learning;
- Shares knowledge and experience;
- Actively works towards continuing personal learning, acts on learning plan and applies newly acquired skills;
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills;
- Ability to work independently and in a team.

VI Qualifications and expertise:

The National Consultant – Biodiversity & Ecosystems Expert shall possess the following minimum qualifications and experience:

- A university degree in biology, ecology, environmental sciences, forestry, natural resource management, conservation biology, or a closely related field. A postgraduate degree or specialization in a relevant discipline shall be considered an asset.
- A minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible professional experience in biodiversity conservation, ecosystem management, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience in ecosystem-based adaptation, nature-based solutions, or climate-resilient ecosystem management.



- Proven experience working with protected areas, riverine ecosystems, forests, or landscape-level conservation initiatives.
- Prior experience contributing to project proposal preparation or technical inputs for international climate finance mechanisms (Adaptation Fund, GCF, GEF, or similar) is highly desirable.
- Familiarity with Adaptation Fund requirements shall be considered an advantage.
- Strong technical knowledge of ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solutions; biodiversity conservation in climate change contexts; restoration of degraded ecosystems and ecosystem services and climate resilience.
- Ability to translate ecological analysis into clear, proposal-ready inputs.
- Experience working with government institutions, protected area authorities, and development partners in Montenegro or comparable contexts.
- Ability to work effectively in multidisciplinary teams.
- Strong coordination, communication, and drafting skills.
- Full professional proficiency in English (spoken and written).
- Knowledge of local languages is required.

VII Application procedure:

Candidates must submit their applications, via email to the following email address irena.krivokapic@mers.gov.me and irenakrivokapic@gmail.com clearly specifying the job for which the candidate is applying for.

For the application to be valid, the following needs to be provided:

- A Curriculum vitae CV (Europass format is preferred);
- Filled in reference form (Annex 1);
- A signed declaration (Annex 2).

Applications must be delivered/drafted in English. Incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration. Applications must be sent by email no later than 20 March 2026, 12h CET.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for the interviews.

The Project Implementation Unit reserves the right to request additional documentation and/or to schedule a written test for candidates, should they deem necessary for the evaluation process.

Term of reference approved by:

Name and title: Zoran Dabetić, National Project Director

Signature: 

Date: 4 March 2026