ANNEX 2: Terms of Reference

A. Project title

Development of Enabling Conditions and Capacities for Network-Based Biodiversity Conservation in Montenegro

B. Project Description

1. Context and Rationale

Montenegro has made significant progress in strengthening its biodiversity conservation framework over the past decade. This includes expansion of the protected area network, identification of key biodiversity areas, development of proposals for new protected areas, and establishment of a draft ecological network. At the same time, the country is aligning its biodiversity policy framework with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), EU accession requirements, and other international commitments that increasingly emphasise ecological connectivity, landscape-scale conservation approaches and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and land use.

These developments reflect a broader shift from traditional site-based conservation towards network-based conservation. While protected areas remain the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation, long-term conservation outcomes increasingly depend on the ecological connectivity between sites, the condition of the wider landscape, and the integration of biodiversity considerations into planning and management decisions beyond protected area boundaries. Effective conservation therefore requires not only well-managed protected areas, but also functional ecological networks, ecological corridors, restoration areas, and biodiversity-friendly management of productive and privately owned lands.

Despite this transition, existing planning, management, and assessment systems in Montenegro remain largely designed around individual sites rather than ecological networks. Protected area management, spatial planning, environmental assessment, permitting procedures, and sectoral decision-making processes are not yet fully equipped to address ecological connectivity, cumulative impacts, or network-level conservation objectives. Institutional mandates, methodologies, technical tools, and capacities required to support network-based conservation are at this moment underdeveloped.

Particular challenges arise in relation to the establishment and future management of the ecological network. Conservation objectives increasingly intersect with agriculture, forestry, water management, tourism, infrastructure development, renewable energy, and other development priorities. In the absence of appropriate methodologies, planning tools, and coordination mechanisms, these interactions can generate conflicts between biodiversity conservation objectives, local development aspirations, economic activities, and property rights. At the same time, implementation of network-based conservation requires stronger integration of biodiversity considerations into spatial planning, environmental assessment, permitting and land-use decision-making processes, particularly in areas that contribute to ecological connectivity.

Similar challenges exist within the protected area system itself. Existing management approaches and zoning system do not always adequately reflect their role within a broader ecological network. In some cases, uniform application of zoning and protection regimes across different protected area categories, governance arrangements, ownership structures, and land-use contexts creates tensions between conservation objectives and legitimate land-use needs, particularly on privately owned land. There is therefore a need to strengthen management approaches that recognise both site-level conservation objectives and the wider ecological functions that protected areas perform within the national ecological network.

Addressing these challenges requires the development of enabling conditions for network-based biodiversity conservation. This includes strengthening institutional and human capacities; developing methodologies and guidance for zoning, appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment; integrating ecological network

and connectivity considerations into protected area management, spatial planning, and permitting processes; improving the use of biodiversity data, indicators, and geospatial tools; and establishing mechanisms for coordination across sectors and landscapes.

In this context, there is a need to support Montenegro's readiness for implementation of network-based conservation approaches. This assignment will contribute to that objective by assessing existing capacities and systems, developing practical methodologies and guidance, strengthening institutional capacities, and identifying the reforms and actions required to integrate ecological network and conservation-compatible land-use considerations into planning, management, and decision-making processes. By doing so, it will help create the foundations for a more coherent, effective, and resilient biodiversity conservation system capable of addressing conservation challenges at landscape scale.

2. Overall Objective of the Project

Overall Objective

To strengthen Montenegro's readiness for implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation through development of methodologies, guidance, capacities, and enabling conditions that support integration of ecological network and ecological connectivity considerations into protected area management, environmental assessment, spatial planning, permitting, and land-use decision-making processes.

Specific Objectives

• Assess the current level of readiness for implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation, including existing planning, environmental assessment, permitting, protected area management, zoning systems, institutional arrangements, and technical capacities.

• Identify gaps, constraints, opportunities, and capacity needs related to management of ecological networks, ecological connectivity, and implementation of network-based conservation approaches.

• Assess the adequacy of existing protected area management and zoning systems in supporting conservation and ecological network objectives, ecological connectivity, and conservation-compatible land use, and identify options for their improvement.

• Analyse interactions, conflicts, trade-offs, and synergies between biodiversity conservation objectives and other sectoral priorities, including agriculture, forestry, water management, infrastructure development, tourism, energy development, and private land use.

• Develop methodologies, guidance, and practical recommendations for integration of ecological network and ecological connectivity considerations into protected area management, environmental assessment, spatial planning, permitting, and land-use decision-making processes.

• Strengthen institutional and technical capacities through targeted capacity-building activities on appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment as key tools for implementation of network-based conservation approaches.

• Develop recommendations for legislative, policy, institutional, technical, and governance improvements required to support effective implementation of ecological networks, ecological connectivity objectives, and network-based conservation approaches.

• Develop a roadmap for institutionalisation and long-term implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation, including priority actions, capacity development measures, coordination mechanisms, and enabling conditions required for successful implementation.

C. Scope of Work

The selected Service Provider (Company) shall be responsible for providing overall technical leadership, coordination, and quality assurance for the following tasks:

Inception and Methodological Framework
This phase will establish the methodological, analytical, and organisational framework for implementation of the assignment, including stakeholder engagement and coordination arrangements.
Tasks:
• Review relevant legislation, policies, strategies, studies, guidance documents, and project materials related to biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, protected areas, spatial planning, and environmental assessment.
• Develop the overall methodology, analytical framework, and detailed work plan for the assignment.
• Identify and map relevant stakeholders and institutions
• Develop a stakeholder engagement and consultation plan.
• Conduct inception consultations with key institutions and stakeholders.
• Identify priority themes, case studies, and areas requiring particular attention during implementation.

Assessment of Readiness for Network-Based Biodiversity Conservation
This phase will assess the extent to which existing governance, planning, management, assessment, and institutional systems are prepared to support implementation of ecological networks, ecological connectivity, and network-based conservation approaches.
Tasks:
• Assess the current framework for management of protected areas, ecological networks, ecological connectivity, and conservation planning.
• Assess the integration of ecological network and connectivity considerations into spatial planning, environmental assessment, permitting, and sectoral decision-making processes.
• Review environmental assessment and permitting procedures, including existing approaches to appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment.
• Assess biodiversity information systems, spatial data, indicators, GIS tools, and other information sources relevant to network-based conservation.
• Analyse institutional roles, mandates, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, and decision-making processes.
• Assess institutional, technical, and human capacities required for implementation of network-based conservation approaches.
• Identify key gaps, barriers, opportunities, and enabling conditions.

Assessment of Zoning Systems, Conservation-Compatible Land Use, and Cross-Sectoral Interactions
This phase will assess how existing management and land-use systems support or constrain implementation of ecological networks and ecological connectivity objectives.
Tasks:
• Review the adequacy of existing protected area zoning systems and protection regimes in relation to conservation and ecological network objectives, ecological connectivity, ownership structures, governance arrangements, and land-use contexts.
• Assess the contribution of protected areas to ecological network functioning and connectivity
• Analyse interactions, conflicts, trade-offs, and synergies between biodiversity conservation objectives and sectoral policies and land uses, including agriculture, forestry, water management, infrastructure development, tourism, energy, and urban development.
• Assess challenges associated with ecological network implementation on private and productive lands.
• Identify options for improving compatibility between biodiversity conservation objectives, property rights, productive land uses, and socio-economic development needs.

Development of Methodologies and Practical Guidance
This phase will develop practical methodologies and guidance required to support implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation.

Tasks:
• Develop an initial methodologies for appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment.
• Develop recommendations for integration of ecological network and connectivity considerations into protected area management, spatial planning, environmental assessment, and permitting processes.
• Develop recommendations for improving zoning systems, protection regimes, and conservation-compatible land-use approaches.
• Develop recommendations for application of biodiversity data, indicators, GIS tools, mitigation hierarchy and conservation-compatible land-use measures.
• Prepare practical examples and illustrative case studies demonstrating application of the proposed methodologies and guidance.

Capacity Building
This phase will strengthen institutional and technical capacities required for implementation of network-based conservation approaches.
Tasks:
• Assess capacity development needs related to ecological network legal requirements, management, ecological connectivity, appropriate assessment, and cumulative impact assessment
• Design a capacity-building programme focused on network strategic planning and management
• Design a capacity building programme focused on appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment
• Design a capacity-building programme focused on protected area zoning system
• Develop training materials, practical exercises, and supporting guidance.
• Organise and deliver training workshops for relevant institutions and stakeholders.
• Collect and incorporate stakeholder feedback into methodologies and guidance documents.

Institutionalisation and Roadmapping
This phase will develop recommendations and a roadmap for strengthening Montenegro's readiness for long-term implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation.
Tasks:
• Develop recommendations for strengthening institutional arrangements, governance mechanisms, intersectoral coordination, and decision-making processes.
• Identify legislative, policy, procedural, and organisational improvements required to support implementation of ecological networks, ecological connectivity objectives, appropriate assessment, and cumulative impact assessment.
• Develop recommendations for improved biodiversity data management, information sharing, and use of digital tools and systems.
• Develop a roadmap for institutionalisation and further development of network-based biodiversity conservation approaches
• Present and validate the proposed framework, recommendations, and roadmap with relevant stakeholders and institutions.

Throughout the assignment, the Service Provider shall ensure that gender equality and social inclusion considerations are adequately reflected in assessments, methodologies, guidance documents, consultations, and capacity-building activities. This shall include promoting meaningful participation of women and relevant stakeholder groups in consultation and training processes, considering potential social implications of ecological network establishment, zoning approaches, and conservation-related land-use decisions, identifying barriers to participation and integrating gender-responsive and socially inclusive approaches into recommendations related to network-based biodiversity conservation, institutional strengthening, stakeholder engagement, capacity development, and implementation of ecological network and connectivity objectives, where relevant and appropriate.

D. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The Service Provider shall deliver the outputs and specific deliverables listed below in a logical sequence aligned with the process. Indicative timeframes are expressed as periods counted from the date of contract signing.

Exact dates shall be confirmed in the approved Inception Report. All deliverables shall be subject to technical review and validation by the Implementing Entity and formal contractual acceptance in accordance with the agreed institutional arrangements.

Deliverable / Output	Description	Indicative Timing	Review and Approval
Inception report	Detailed methodology, analytical framework, work plan, stakeholder mapping, and stakeholder engagement approach.	Within 1 month of contract signature	IP
Baseline assessment report	Assessment of existing planning, environmental assessment, permitting, protected area zoning systems, and readiness for implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation approaches	Within month 3	IP
Capacity Building Programme	Design and delivery of capacity-building activities on network strategic planning and management, zoning, appropriate assessment and cumulative impact assessment, including training materials, practical exercises, workshops, and recommendations for further capacity development	Within month 4	
Framework and Roadmap for Implementation of Network-Based Biodiversity Conservation	Methodologies, recommendations, implementation approaches, capacity development measures, and institutionalisation pathways for strengthening network-based biodiversity conservation	Within month 5	

Total estimated duration: 5 months

D.2 Quality Standards

All deliverables shall:

- Be prepared in English (unless otherwise agreed);
- Integrate inputs from international and national experts into a single coherent proposal

D.3 Review and Acceptance

Each deliverable shall be reviewed within an indicative period of up to ten (10) working days following submission. The Company shall address comments and revise deliverables within timeframes agreed with the IP. Formal acceptance of deliverables shall be confirmed in writing by the designated approving authority.

E. Institutional Arrangement

Institutional oversight and reporting lines

The contract shall be administered and managed by Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region, which shall retain overall contractual authority, including contract supervision, performance monitoring, and formal acceptance of deliverables.

All key deliverables shall be subject to joint review by Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region and UNDP, with final contractual acceptance and payment authorization resting with Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region.

Contractor Management Structure

The Company shall designate a Project Manager who shall serve as the primary operational point of contact with IP. The Project Manager shall be responsible for:

- overall coordination of project activities;
  - day-to-day communication with stakeholders;
  - monitoring implementation progress;
  - ensuring timely delivery of outputs;
  - quality assurance of all deliverables.

The Company shall establish an appropriately qualified Project Team responsible for the execution of technical and substantive tasks under this assignment.

Progress Reporting

The Company shall submit monthly progress reports to IP.
Each report shall include, at a minimum:

- summary of activities performed;
- progress against milestones;
- risks and challenges encountered;
- mitigation measures;
- planned activities for the next reporting period.

IP may request ad-hoc briefings or presentations on project progress as required.

F. Duration of the Work

a) Duration of the assignment

The assignment is expected to be implemented over a fixed-term period, with a clearly defined start and end date, and an estimated overall duration of approximately 5 months, taking into account the scope, complexity and phased delivery of outputs.

b) Start date and expected completion

The assignment is expected to commence within two (2) weeks of contract signing, subject to the completion of contractual formalities and the availability of initial inputs and documentation.

The expected completion date is set at approximately 5 months from the commencement date, in line with the agreed scope of work and the phased delivery of outputs.

Any adjustments to the start date or completion timeline may be agreed in writing between IP and the Company where external factors — such as delays in data availability, regulatory changes or force majeure events — materially affect the implementation schedule.

c) Review, feedback and acceptance of deliverables

For each deliverable submitted under the assignment, an estimated review and approval period of up to ten (10) working days shall apply.

During this period, UNDP may provide comments, requests for clarification or requests for revisions. The Company shall address such comments within a timeframe to be agreed with the Project Implementing Partner. Formal acceptance of each deliverable shall be confirmed in writing by the designated approving authority.

d) Time sensitivity and implications of delays

The assignment is considered time-sensitive.

Any significant delay in the completion of the assignment may adversely affect the sequencing of subsequent project phases, the timely achievement of regulatory objectives, and the overall effectiveness of supervisory processes.

H. Qualifications of the Successful Individual Company

The selected Company must demonstrate the technical, organizational, and financial capacity required to successfully lead and coordinate the preparation of an financial plans in accordance with the ToR standards.

H.1 Corporate Registration and Relevant Experience

The Company must be a legally registered entity authorized to provide professional consulting services in fields relevant to biodiversity conservation and finance, climate change adaptation, climate finance, disaster risk reduction, environmental and social safeguards, or related disciplines.

H.2 Technical and Organizational Capacity

The Company shall demonstrate strong technical leadership, coordination, and delivery capacity for complex assignments related to network-based biodiversity conservation and conservation-compatible land use. This includes:

• Proven ability to manage and deliver multidisciplinary assignments involving biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, ecological connectivity, protected area management, environmental assessment, appropriate assessment, cumulative impact assessment, spatial and land-use planning

• Experience coordinating teams of international and national experts and ensuring effective collaboration across multiple technical disciplines and institutions.

• Demonstrated capacity to assess and develop methodologies, guidance documents, institutional frameworks, and recommendations related to biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, environmental assessment, or natural resource management.

• Demonstrated experience leading participatory processes involving public institutions, protected area managers, local communities, private landowners, private sector actors, academia, and civil society organisations.

• Strong project management and organisational skills, including the ability to deliver high-quality analytical, technical, and capacity-building outputs within defined timelines.

• Experience facilitating intersectoral coordination and dialogue among institutions responsible for biodiversity conservation, spatial planning, environmental assessment, infrastructure development, agriculture, forestry, water management, and other relevant sectors.

• Established internal quality assurance mechanisms to ensure consistency, methodological rigour, technical quality, and practical applicability of all deliverables.

The Company must demonstrate in-house expertise or access to qualified experts in the following areas:

Multidisciplinary knowledge in the fields of:

• Network-based biodiversity conservation, nature protection, and ecological network management.

• Ecological connectivity, ecological corridors, ecosystem restoration, and landscape-scale conservation approaches.

• Protected area management, governance, management planning, and zoning systems.

• Environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, appropriate assessment, and cumulative impact assessment.

• Spatial planning, land-use planning, and conservation-compatible land-use approaches.

• Environmental governance, institutional development, public administration, and intersectoral coordination.

• Environmental information systems, biodiversity data management, GIS, spatial analysis, and decision-support tools.

• Stakeholder engagement, participatory planning, conflict resolution, and collaborative governance approaches.

• Biodiversity policy, sustainable development, and biodiversity mainstreaming across sectors.

Previous experience in:

• Assessments of ecological networks, ecological connectivity conservation, network-based conservation approaches, or biodiversity mainstreaming in planning and management systems.

• Methodologies, guidance documents, technical manuals, operational procedures, case studies, or decision-support tools related to biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, environmental assessment, or spatial and land-use planning.

• Strategic documents, action plans, roadmaps, policy recommendations, governance frameworks, or institutional reform proposals related to biodiversity conservation or environmental management.

• Assessments of institutional capacities, governance systems, management effectiveness, or intersectoral coordination mechanisms.

• Appropriate assessment, cumulative impact assessment, and biodiversity-related environmental assessment procedures.

• Capacity-building programmes, training materials, and technical workshops related to biodiversity conservation, environmental assessment, protected area management, or ecological networks.

Familiarity with:
• EU biodiversity policy, ecological networks, Natura 2000 requirements, and relevant EU environmental acquis.
• The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and related international biodiversity policy developments.
• Ecological network concepts, ecological connectivity approaches, and network-based conservation principles.
• Protected area management, zoning systems, conservation planning methodologies, and management effectiveness approaches.
• Green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration, and landscape-scale conservation approaches.

Technical expertise:
• Ecological network planning and management, ecological connectivity conservation, and implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation approaches.
• Appropriate assessment, cumulative impact assessment, and integration of biodiversity considerations into environmental assessment and permitting processes.
• Protected area management, management planning, zoning systems, and integration of ecological network and connectivity objectives into protected area management.
• Biodiversity data management, indicators, mapping, GIS applications, spatial analysis, and use of decision-support tools.
• Assessment of interactions, conflicts, trade-offs, and synergies between biodiversity conservation objectives and sectoral policies, land uses, and development priorities.
• Development of methodologies, guidance documents, operational procedures, and practical tools supporting biodiversity conservation and environmental decision-making.
• Institutional, governance, and capacity assessments, including development of recommendations for system strengthening and implementation of network-based conservation approaches.
• Design and delivery of training programmes, capacity-building activities, and technical workshops.
• Stakeholder consultation, facilitation, participatory planning, and intersectoral coordination processes.

The following will be considered an asset:
• Previous experience in Montenegro or the Western Balkans region.
• Experience supporting implementation of ecological networks, ecological connectivity conservation, Natura 2000, or other network-based conservation approaches.
• Experience in conservation-compatible land-use approaches on private, agricultural, forest, or other productive lands.
• Experience in ecosystem restoration, ecological corridor planning, green infrastructure, or landscape-scale conservation initiatives.
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H.3 Human Resources and Key Personnel

The Company shall propose a core expert team, contracted under the Company, at a minimum including:

Team Leader / Network-Based Biodiversity Conservation Expert
The Team Leader shall be responsible for overall coordination, technical leadership, stakeholder engagement, quality assurance, and integration of all assignment components. The expert shall lead the assessment of institutional readiness for implementation of network-based biodiversity conservation and oversee development of the overall framework, recommendations, and roadmap.
Required expertise:
• Demonstrated experience in biodiversity conservation, environmental governance, ecological networks, protected area management, or natural resource management.

• Proven experience in leading multidisciplinary teams and managing complex assignments involving multiple institutions and stakeholders.
• Demonstrated experience in preparation of strategic documents, policy frameworks, roadmaps, action plans, or technical guidance documents.
• Proven experience in institutional assessments, governance analysis, policy development, or institutional strengthening processes.
• Demonstrated experience in stakeholder engagement, consultation processes, and intersectoral coordination.
• Proven experience working on projects related to biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, protected areas, environmental management, or sustainable land-use management.

Ecological Network, Connectivity and Conservation Planning Expert
The expert shall lead the technical assessment of ecological network implementation, ecological connectivity, network-based conservation approaches, and integration of ecological network objectives into decision-making systems.
Required expertise:
• Demonstrated experience in biodiversity conservation planning, ecological networks, ecological connectivity, ecosystem restoration, or landscape-scale conservation.
• Proven experience in development or assessment of ecological network, ecological corridor, connectivity conservation, or area-based conservation initiatives.
• Demonstrated experience in protected area management, conservation planning, or management effectiveness assessment.
• Proven experience in analysing interactions between protected areas, ecological networks, land use, and sectoral development priorities.
• Demonstrated experience in development of conservation strategies, management frameworks, or technical guidance related to biodiversity conservation.
• Proven familiarity with international approaches related to ecological networks, connectivity conservation, Natura 2000, OECMs, or related conservation frameworks.

Environmental Assessment and Spatial Planning Expert
The expert shall lead the review of environmental assessment systems, planning processes, and integration of ecological network and biodiversity considerations into environmental assessment, spatial planning, permitting, and land-use decision-making.
Required expertise:
• Demonstrated experience in environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, appropriate assessment, cumulative impact assessment
• Proven experience in development or application of environmental assessment methodologies, procedures, or guidance documents.
• Demonstrated experience in integration of biodiversity considerations into spatial planning, land-use planning, permitting, or environmental decision-making processes.
• Proven experience in development of planning methodologies, environmental assessment frameworks, or decision-support tools.
• Demonstrated experience in biodiversity data use, spatial analysis, GIS applications, or environmental information systems.
• Proven experience in analysing environmental, social, and land-use implications of development and planning decisions.

Protected Area Management and Zoning Expert
The expert shall lead the assessment of protected area management systems, governance arrangements, zoning approaches, and protection regimes, and provide recommendations for strengthening the contribution of protected areas to ecological networks, ecological connectivity, and network-based biodiversity conservation.
Required expertise:
• Demonstrated experience in protected area management, governance, conservation planning, or biodiversity conservation.
• Proven experience in preparation, implementation, or review of protected area management plans,

protection studies, or management frameworks.
• Demonstrated experience in development, application, or evaluation of protected area zoning systems and protection regimes.
• Proven experience in assessing protected area management effectiveness, governance arrangements, or institutional frameworks.
• Demonstrated experience in integrating biodiversity conservation objectives into land-use planning, management, or decision-making processes.
• Proven experience in analysing interactions between protected areas, ecological networks, ecological connectivity, and surrounding land uses.
• Demonstrated familiarity with international good practices and standards related to protected area management, governance, zoning, ecological networks, or connectivity conservation.
• Proven experience in development of recommendations, guidance documents, management frameworks, or policy measures related to protected area management and conservation planning.

Optional experts
The Company may propose additional experts where considered necessary to ensure adequate coverage of all thematic areas of the assignment. The following profiles are considered particularly relevant:

• Environmental Policy and Legal Expert – Provides expertise on environmental legislation, nature protection policy, environmental assessment requirements, protected area and ecological network regulation, and development of recommendations for legislative, regulatory, and policy improvements.
• GIS and Biodiversity Information Systems Expert – Provides expertise on biodiversity mapping, geospatial analysis, ecological connectivity assessment, GIS applications, biodiversity databases, environmental information systems, indicators, monitoring data, and decision-support tools for biodiversity conservation and environmental assessment.
• Socio-Economic and Land-Use Expert – Provides expertise on interactions between biodiversity conservation and land-use planning, socio-economic impacts of conservation measures, private land issues, conservation-compatible land use, stakeholder interests, and analysis of land-use conflicts, trade-offs, and synergies.
• Capacity Building and Stakeholder Engagement Expert – Provides expertise on institutional capacity assessments, development and delivery of training programmes, stakeholder consultation processes, facilitation of workshops, knowledge management, awareness raising, and strengthening capacities for implementation of ecological network, environmental assessment, and conservation planning approaches.

Minimum Qualifications of Key Experts

Education
All key experts shall possess:
• A university degree (minimum Bachelor's degree) in a relevant field such as biology, ecology, environmental sciences, natural resource management, environmental policy, sustainable development or related disciplines. The Team Leader should preferably hold an advanced university degree (Master's or PhD) in a relevant discipline.

Professional Experience
• Experience in biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, ecological connectivity, protected area management, environmental governance, environmental assessment, spatial planning, natural resource management, sustainable land-use management, or related fields.
• Experience in preparation of strategic documents, policy frameworks, methodologies, technical guidance documents, action plans, roadmaps, management frameworks, technical studies, assessments, or reform proposals.
• Experience in analysing governance systems, institutional arrangements, protected area management systems, planning frameworks, environmental assessment procedures, policy implementation processes, or coordination mechanisms.
• Experience in legal, policy, institutional, technical, environmental, or organisational assessments relevant to biodiversity conservation, ecological networks, environmental assessment, protected area management, or land-use planning.

• Experience in development of recommendations, implementation frameworks, institutional strengthening measures, capacity development programmes, governance mechanisms, coordination arrangements, or legislative and policy improvements.
• Experience related to ecological networks, ecological connectivity, protected areas, environmental assessment, ecosystem restoration, conservation planning, or network-based biodiversity conservation approaches.
• Experience in stakeholder engagement, consultation processes, multi-stakeholder dialogue, inter-institutional coordination, participatory planning, or conflict resolution processes.
• Experience in use, analysis, or interpretation of biodiversity data, environmental information, spatial data, indicators, GIS tools, or other evidence to support planning, management, environmental assessment, or decision-making processes.
• Experience in research, analysis, evaluation, and preparation of evidence-based recommendations to support biodiversity conservation, environmental management, institutional development, or policy reform processes.

Minimum Years of Experience
• Team Leader: minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience.
• Other key experts: minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience.

Skills and Competencies (Mandatory)
• Strong analytical, strategic thinking, and problem-solving skills.
• Excellent report-writing, technical drafting, and analytical documentation skills.
• Ability to analyse complex environmental, institutional, and policy issues and translate findings into practical recommendations.
• Strong communication, presentation, facilitation, and stakeholder engagement skills.
• Ability to work effectively with government institutions, protected area managers, planning authorities, technical agencies, civil society organisations, local communities, and other stakeholders.
• Ability to work as part of a multidisciplinary team and deliver high-quality outputs within agreed timelines.
• Excellent command of written and spoken English.
Additional Qualifications Considered an Asset
• Experience with EU biodiversity policy, ecological networks, Natura 2000, environmental assessment requirements, and EU accession-related environmental obligations.
• Experience in ecological network planning, ecological connectivity conservation, protected area governance, zoning systems, or network-based biodiversity conservation approaches.
• Experience in development of methodologies, guidance documents, or operational procedures related to appropriate assessment, cumulative impact assessment
• Experience in addressing land-use conflicts, stakeholder interests, private land issues, or balancing biodiversity conservation and development objectives.
• Experience in development of biodiversity information systems, environmental databases, GIS applications, spatial analysis tools, connectivity modelling, or digital decision-support systems.
• Experience in institutional reform processes, development of intersectoral coordination mechanisms, or strengthening of environmental governance systems.
• Experience working in Montenegro or the Western Balkans region.
• Experience in integrating gender-responsive and socially inclusive approaches into biodiversity conservation, environmental assessment, stakeholder engagement, planning, or capacity-building processes.

The Company shall demonstrate its capacity to ensure continuity of services throughout the contract period. Where third-party experts or short-term consultants are engaged, the Company shall retain full responsibility for coordination, quality, and timely delivery of outputs.

H.4 Financial and Legal Capacity
The Company must demonstrate adequate financial and legal standing to perform the contract, in accordance with applicable procurement requirements. Documentary evidence of financial capacity and legal eligibility shall be provided as part of the proposal submission.

The Company must not be subject to any legal, financial, or contractual restrictions that would prevent it from fulfilling the obligations under this assignment.

H.5 Ethical Standards and Compliance

The Company shall comply with applicable ethical standards, including:

- Integrity and transparency in professional conduct;
- Absence of conflicts of interest;
- Commitment to gender equality, inclusiveness, and respect for environmental and social safeguards.

The Company shall confirm its willingness to comply with the policies, procedures, and contractual requirements of the contracting authority and the Implementing Entity.

J. Recommended Presentation of Offer

As requested in the RFP

K. Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

As described in the RFP