



TERMS OF REFERENCE

- A. Job title:** National Consultant – Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Expert
- 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.

The proposed Adaptation Fund project for Montenegro aims to deliver concrete climate change adaptation measures across sectors such as water resources management, climate-resilient agriculture, ecosystem-based adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and early warning systems, with demonstration interventions in the Tara River Basin and potential national replication. While these interventions are expected to generate significant adaptation and resilience benefits, they may also entail potential environmental and social risks that must be identified, assessed, and managed in accordance with Adaptation Fund requirements and national legislation.

The Adaptation Fund requires all project proposals to comply with its Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), including early-stage screening, risk categorization, and identification of appropriate mitigation measures. Environmental and social safeguards are a mandatory component of Adaptation Fund proposal preparation, and inadequate safeguards analysis is a common reason for technical revisions or delays in project approval.

UNDP, as the designated Implementing Entity, is supporting the preparation of the Adaptation Fund project proposal and is responsible for ensuring full compliance with the Fund's ESP. The proposal preparation process is led by an international consulting company and supported by individually contracted national experts, including an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Expert, to provide country-specific safeguards expertise.

Within this framework, the National ESIA Expert prepared through GEF 7 will support environmental and social screening, risk categorization, and the preparation of safeguards inputs required for a submission-ready Adaptation Fund proposal.

The tasks outlined in this ToR fall under Component 1 but the assignment is cross-cutting and reflects the full range of project outcomes and interventions across all components.

II Objectives of the assignment:

The objective of this assignment is to conduct an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the proposed Adaptation Fund project in Montenegro, with a particular focus on interventions in the Tara River Basin, in order to identify, assess, and manage potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with planned climate change adaptation measures.



The assessment will ensure that the project complies with the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), relevant national legislation, and international best practices, while supporting the integration of environmental and social safeguards into project design and implementation.

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 ESIA Expert shall provide specialized technical inputs related to environmental and social safeguards. The Expert will work on a non-continuous basis and contribute analytical inputs, safeguards documentation, and revisions required to support the preparation of a high-quality Adaptation Fund project proposal.

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

1. Review of Policies, Legal Frameworks, and Baseline Conditions

- Review relevant national environmental and social legislation, regulations, and permitting requirements applicable to proposed adaptation interventions.
- Review the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy and associated guidance.
- Contribute to the assessment of baseline environmental and social conditions in the project's target areas.

2. Environmental and Social Screening

- Conduct or support environmental and social screening of proposed project activities in accordance with the Adaptation Fund ESP.
- Support determination of the project's environmental and social risk category.
- Identify potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with proposed adaptation measures.

3. Instruments and Mitigation Measures

- Identify and outline appropriate safeguards instruments (e.g. ESIA, ESMP, or ESMF), as required under the Adaptation Fund ESP.
- Propose mitigation measures to address identified environmental and social risks.
- Ensure consistency between safeguards measures and proposed project activities across sectors.

4. Integration with Project Design

- Work closely with sector experts (water, agriculture, biodiversity, DRR, gender) to ensure safeguards considerations are integrated into project design.



- Provide inputs to the theory of change, assumptions, and risk management sections related to environmental and social issues.
- Support alignment between safeguards measures, budget allocations, and implementation arrangements.

5.Review and Revision

- Review draft sections of the Adaptation Fund proposal related to environmental and social safeguards.
- Provide written comments and revisions to ensure full compliance with the Adaptation Fund ESP.
- Support incorporation of reviewer comments during proposal finalization.

IV Deliverables:

National ESIA 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 1 April 2026 – 31 December 2026, in coordination with the Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP representatives and the international consulting company.

Indicative Deliverables:

- Environmental and social baseline and screening inputs
- Technical inputs on baseline environmental and social conditions in the project's target areas.
- Initial environmental and social screening of proposed project activities in line with the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy (ESP).
- Environmental and social risk categorization and analysis;
- Identification and assessment of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with proposed adaptation interventions;
- Determination and justification of the Adaptation Fund environmental and social risk category;
- Draft safeguards instruments and mitigation measures;
- Inputs to the preparation of required safeguards instruments (ESIA, ESMP, or ESMF, as applicable);
- Identification of appropriate mitigation measures to address identified risks;
- Integration of safeguards into project design;
- Inputs to integration of environmental and social safeguards into the project's theory of change, risk management approach, budget, and implementation arrangements;
- Coordination with sector experts to ensure safeguards consistency across all project components;



- Review and revision of draft proposal sections;
- Review of Adaptation Fund proposal sections related to environmental and social safeguards;
- 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 the Project Manager.

Indicative Timeline and Deliverables

Deliverable / Output	Description	Estimated Level of Effort
Environmental and social baseline and screening inputs	Inputs on baseline environmental and social condition and initial screening of proposed project activities	7 working days
Environmental and social risk categorization and analysis	Identification and assessment of potential environmental and social risks; determination of ESP risk category	8 working days
Draft safeguards instruments and mitigation measures	Inputs to ESIA / ESMP / ESMF outline (as applicable), including proposed mitigation measures	5 working days
Integration of safeguards into project design	Inputs to project logic, risk management, and alignment with budgets and implementation arrangements	5 working days
Review and revision of draft proposal sections	Review of safeguards-related proposal sections; written comments and revisions	5 working days
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 – Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Expert shall possess the following minimum qualifications and experience:

- A university degree in environmental sciences, environmental management, social sciences, environmental engineering, or a closely related field.
- A postgraduate degree or specialization in environmental and social impact assessment or safeguards is an asset.
- A minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible professional experience in environmental management and social sustainability, with demonstrated ability to integrate environmental protection with social inclusion, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable resource use. Proven experience conducting environmental and social screening and preparing ESIA/ESMP/ESMF-type instruments.
- Proven experience working with national environmental authorities and regulatory frameworks.
- Prior experience contributing to project proposal preparation or safeguards inputs for international climate finance mechanisms (Adaptation Fund, GCF, GEF, or similar) is highly desirable.
- Familiarity with the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy is a strong advantage.
- Strong technical knowledge of environmental and social impact assessment methodologies; risk identification and mitigation planning; integration of safeguards into project design.
- Ability to translate safeguards analysis into clear, proposal-ready inputs.
- Experience working with government institutions, development partners, and 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).

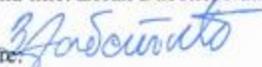
Applications must be delivered/drafted in English. Incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration. Applications must be sent by email no later than 20 March 2026, 12h CET.

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