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Terms of Reference (TOR)

1. Project BioConnect

Ref: EuropeAid/171337/DD/ACT/LB

Ensuring effective management and governance in Sites of Ecological Importance and expanding biodiversity protection in Southern Lebanon.

Shouf Biosphere Reserve

seeks

Senior Consultancy to develop a Management Plan for MH Protected Area

Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Lebanon

Location: MH

Duration of consultancy: 12 months

Collaboration beginning: 1 October, 2022

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The proposed Action seeks to address the important socio-economic challenges that jeopardise conservation and sustainable development in Lebanon to the greatest possible extent, in line with the Call's objectives and priorities through the following overall objectives:

1. Enhancing the management and governance of sites of ecological importance in southern Lebanon
2. Creation of new Protected Areas and OECMs for broader landscape conservation in southern Lebanon.

It focuses on the following specific objectives:

1. Linked to the Overall objective 1 1.1) Design and implement rigorous, regular and consistent monitoring and evaluation schemes for key biodiversity (endangered species/ecosystems) and pressures; 1.2) Ensure effective, equitable site management, including appropriate management plans/guidelines for the sites; 1.3) Abate the main pressures on key biodiversity; and 1.4) Enhance sites' regulation enforcement.
2. Linked to the Overall objective 2: 2.1) Identify and assess suitable new PAs or OECMs; 2.2) Ensure sound management plans/guidelines for the new sites; and 2.3) Improve landscape connectivity among existing and new PAs/OECMs.

The project activities will be implemented mainly in 10 locations in the Southern part of Lebanon:

Shouf Biosphere Reserve (Shouf and West Bekaa), Caza of Jezzine, Mount Hermon, Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, and villages in Metn.

The lead manager of the project is **Al-Shouf Cedar Society** in partnership with: ADR (Association for the Development of Rural Capacities); ACE (Association for Community and Environment), and SPNL (The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon). It is supported by the local authorities, and local communities, in addition to the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture.

The geographical scope of the consultancy

The scope of work covers Mount Hermon Area

Mount Hermon Protected area, established on property No. 5851 (Amiri) of the Rashaya Al-Wadi real estate area, Rashaya District - Bekaa Governorate covers an area of 1260 hectares. It is located in the eastern Lebanon mountain range, specifically In Mount Hermon, also known as Jabal al-Sheikh, which is one of the important areas in terms of biological diversity in the Mediterranean region. It aims at protecting natural resources (ground and surface waters) and ecosystems, preserving landscapes, and conserving biodiversity, especially endangered species with extinction. The area is rich in oaks, mallow, and other perennial trees, in addition to Hawthorn and wild almonds. It is characterized by the presence of a large number of plants, of which 100 species are medicinal. There are also endemic species of mammals in Lebanon, such as wolves, hyenas, and wild cats. Moreover, this site is a sub-crossing for migratory birds, especially the steppe eagle.

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The tasks mentioned in this section shall be performed in close cooperation with the BioConnect team and in close coordination with the BioConnect scientific committee, and in consultation with the Ministry of Environment.

Overall Scope of work

Under the direct supervision of the project coordinator, the selected consultant is expected to:

A. Preparatory work :

1. Formation of a planning team that includes the Al-Shouf Management Team, Ministry of Environment (MOE), Rashaya municipality, MH staff and the consultants. The planning team will meet to prepare a preliminary "table of contents" that will later be presented to and accepted by the MOE.
2. Gather basic background information that encompassed a review of studies and references to the zones and boundaries of MH, its physical characteristics, and socioeconomic features, and the views of key stakeholders.
3. Review any Marketing, Ecotourism and Monitoring Plans of MH if available, bearing in mind that these detailed studies include the opinions and aspirations of stakeholders from all the villages surrounding MH.

B. Analysis & Drafting of the report

1. Write the background and site description sections of the management plan
2. Determine the vision and objectives of MH protected area
3. Integrate the marketing, ecotourism and monitoring plans in the management plan.
4. Assess the constraints that hinder the achievement of the objectives
5. Formulate management strategies that help overcome the constraints
6. Include the zoning requirements in the management plan as well as the activities and rules of conduct in each zone.
7. Detail the projects that would best promote the implementation of the objectives of the Management plan.
8. Prepare the required Project Workplan, Annual Project Evaluation, Five Year Review of the Management Plan and Monitoring Implementation.
9. Diagnose the management structure of MH by analyzing the existing staff structure, stakeholders, current programs being implemented, and present infrastructure of the MH and the services it provides.

10. Field work

1. Meet the planning team on a regular basis
2. Organize a one-day workshop for validation of the management plan.
3. Organize discussions on the best method(s) to distribute the plan with a focus on a simple chart to explain the zoning requirements (and the activities and rules of conduct in each zone) to each of the municipalities that comprise the MH Reserve

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11. Other

1. Participate in the meeting of the BioConnect committees when needed
2. Coordinate with other consultants and experts to make sure that the objectives are met.

Expected Outputs and Deliverables

Deliverables/ Outputs	Estimated Duration to Complete Target	Due Dates	Review and Approvals Required
Deliverable 1: Methodology of work	2 weeks	2 weeks from the contract signature	Project Coordinator (ACS and MH)
Deliverable 2: table of contents	2 weeks	2 weeks from the contract signature	Project Coordinator (ACS and MH)
Deliverable 3: The Plan draft	4 months	4 months after the contract signature	Project Coordinator (ACS and MH)
Deliverable 4: Workshop validation report & Final MH Management plan	6 months	6 months after the contract signature	Project Coordinator (ACS and MH)

All deliverables must be submitted in English language and are under the ownership of ACS

Applicants:

Applications can be submitted by institutions or by a consortium of individual applicants and teams (universities, NGOs...etc.) with the appropriate expertise and experience. It is to be noted that universities and research institutions with lab facilities will have an advantage.

TOR activities period: 12 months starting from Signature date.

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Qualification Requirements

The expert/team wishing to be considered for the services described herein should have the following qualifications:

1. at least a Master's degree in a related field. If a team, then the CVs of its main members should be qualified
2. A minimum of 8 years of relevant experience in developing management plans.

All communication and requested reports/deliverables shall be written in English.

2. Project implementation reporting:
Reporting to ACS should be conducted on a monthly/deliverable basis.