Terms of Reference (ToR):

Grazing Action Plan for Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve

Project: ResiLAND – ***Resilienza ai cambiamenti climatici attraverso azioni di pianificazione, formazione e gestione integrata del territorio*** **- AID 012590/06/4**

1. Description of the project:

The ResiLAND project is funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and implemented by Istituto Oikos, the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa (APJM) and Al-Shouf Cedar Society (ACS). ResiLAND seeks to promote resilience to climate change through planning, capacity development and integrated land management.

This project is poised to make a significant impact on Lebanon's natural reserves, focusing on three primary sites: The *Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve*, the *Shouf Biosphere Reserve* and the *Mount Hermon Natural Reserve*. The ultimate goal is to bolster local communities and enhance their capacity for managing these vital ecological areas in the face of climate challenges.

Key outputs of the project encompass sustainable agricultural training and development, the planning of agroforestry-pastoral landscapes, restoration efforts in priority sites within each reserve, and the innovative use of biomass for energy, reducing climate-related risks.

In addition to these deliverables, the project has established three specific expected results:

- **R1 - Updated Tools:** ResiLAND intends to provide all stakeholders with effective and updated tools for adaptive and integrated land management.
- **R2 - Ecosystem Restoration:** The project is set to undertake extensive environmental management interventions to restore agro-forestry-pastoral lands. These activities involve restoring stonewall terraces, developing composting units using local farmer's agricultural waste, implementing direct fire risk reduction measures and promoting bioenergy production.
- **R3 - Renewable Energy:** ResiLAND will provide public buildings, agricultural and ecotourism small and medium-sized enterprises with renewable energy supply systems. These will ensure the sustainable management of natural resources and reduce fossil fuel consumption.

Direct beneficiaries of the ResiLAND project are diverse, including farmers, shepherds, local municipalities and numerous community members.

2. General context

RESILAND objective is to rationalize grazing practices by employing sustainable interventions focused on managing and restoring the agro-forest landscape. The aim is to secure seasonal forage and water availability in appropriate areas, avoiding excessive pressure on pastures and conflicts between fauna and livestock. Additionally, restoring woody species in scattered stands ensures forage during droughts and aids in climate adaptation by creating shaded areas and improving transhumance corridors.

The lack of grazing management, particularly goat grazing, contributes significantly to the degradation of mosaic forest-pastoral landscapes and soil erosion in JMBR. This lack of management reduces the regenerative capacity of shrub species and trees, impacting both ecological and economic values. For instance, overgrazing in Yahchouch is affecting the habitat, including the economically important *Origanum syriacum*, while areas like Nahr el Dehab require increased grazing to control flammable biomass. Addressing the initial overgrazing concern might involve negotiating with shepherds to redirect their herds to the Nahr el Dahab site. This approach not only eases pressure on the upper Yahchouch site but also rejuvenates the Nahr el Dahab area, potentially attracting shepherds due to the richer biomass.

3. Overall objective of the Consultancy

As an integral part of the agro-forest-pastoral landscape restoration aiming to improve ecosystem services and resilience to climate change, this consultancy shall design and kick-off a **grazing action plan** for *the Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve (JMBR)*. Thus, directly benefiting shepherds, farmers and inhabitants of the buffer and development zones of the reserve.

4. Deliverables

Deliverables
1. Literature review of existing assessments and studies on grazing management
2. Assessing shepherds' grazing practices and challenges: a. Conducting individual interviews and surveys with all JMBR shepherds making sure to establish positive contacts with them b. Assessing grazing practices by the local shepherds (enclosures, handling conflicts with wildlife, hygiene and herd health, etc) c. Identifying the shepherds' challenges, issues and needs through detailed surveys (ex: not enough grazing land, high land prices, not enough fresh grass, not enough tree cover) d. Mapping farms, grazing spots, and assessing the seasonal availability of fodder, water sources, and transhumance routes

3. Lead a knowledge sharing workshop Set up a general workshop for all shepherds on forest regeneration and biodiversity concepts (seasonality of species, endemic species, forest succession, etc.), also including a detailed project description to explain the context to the shepherds.
4. Development of a collaborative Grazing Action Plan a. Develop a grazing management plan aiming to improve access to seasonal forage (native forage species to be sown/planted), access to water (identification of water points for livestock use), creation of shaded areas (native trees planting) and enhanced transhumance corridors. b. Develop guidelines and maps for shepherds and per season, in collaboration with the local shepherds. c. Draw up a proposal for individual agreements (detailing guidelines and commitments such as grazing trails and biomass management) with shepherds: collaborative framework agreements with shepherds committing them for restoration and forest management activities that will be put into action by APJM. The proposal must be submitted to the contracting agency for approval.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation a. Conduct two assessments of the implemented plans and agreements (after 2 months and 8 months)

5. Methodology

The number of **targeted shepherds** is 7 (6 goat owners, and 1 cow owner), with a total number of around 800 goats and 30 cows. Most of the herds are present in Jabal Moussa (core area) in autumn and springs seasons, with little numbers in winter and summer. Most shepherds prefer to spend summer in higher altitudes and winter in lower altitudes (Nahr Ibrahim).

Numerous shepherds pass through Jabal Moussa for transhumance. While these are not directly targeted by the consultancy, the grazing action plan needs to take them into consideration.

The Consultancy must include **data collection, mapping farms and shepherd routes**, and conducting **participatory sessions** with shepherds to identify challenges and solutions. Following this, and in close collaboration with the targeted shepherds, a detailed **grazing action plan** will be developed by outlining priority interventions and determining carrying capacity and optimal livestock numbers. Accordingly, pilot grazing initiatives in the actively managed areas will be conducted.

This consultancy aims also to align with ResiLAND overarching goal of **mitigating fire risks** through a comprehensive approach encompassing thinning, composting, and eco-briquette production using collected biomass. A pivotal aspect of this strategy involves establishing agreements with local shepherds to manage biomass regrowth through controlled grazing. The **grazing action plan** will concentrate on curbing the accumulation of flammable biomass in selected areas identified as areas with high fire of risk, involving the region's existing shepherds.

All these interventions aim to enhance ecological and economic values, prevent fires, and promote renewable energies through biomass management. Agreements with shepherds will ensure collaboration in restoration/management activities, offering for instance, grazing access, improved water point access, and veterinary advice in exchange.

6. Roles and responsibility

Key responsibilities of the contracted party are:

- Prepare and submit an activity plan and timeline responsive to the listed requirements as per this ToRs
- Close collaboration with the staff engaged in the project by the contracting authority
- Meet the agreed deadlines and expected quality standards
- Report regularly to the ResiLAND team and be responsive to the requests and suggestions given by the contracting authority
- Prepare and submit reports (report on assessment work; report on knowledge sharing workshop; grazing action plan; report on assessment visits)

Key responsibilities of the contracting authority are:

- Review the content of the prepared materials for suggestions and approval
- Provide necessary support to the contracted party
- Inform the company/expert duly on any potential changes and deviations from the initial plan
- Hold the company/expert accountable to the agreed terms.

7. Duration

The engagement of the contracted party is foreseen to start on April 1, 2024 and to last until October 31, 2024. The expected number of working days is 15 days approximately. In particular, for the deliverable 1, 2, 3 and 4 the date of submission is scheduled for May 31, 2024. Deliverable nr. 5 is scheduled to be concluded on October 31, 2024. The date may be extended if the contracting authority deems it necessary for the achievement of the deliverable n. 4 and 5.

8. Competencies of the company/expert

The interested parties should meet the following criteria:

- Relevant background on Sustainable Agronomy, Ecology and/or Veterinary
- Have an expertise of a minimum of 3 years in developing relevant actions plans in Lebanon and at least 3 previous collaborations including shepherds or grazing actions plans.
- Able to present a portfolio with previous experience in similar works.

9. Required documentation

Interested parties that would like to submit their offers must submit the following documents:

- Technical offer

  Technical proposal should include, but not limited to, understanding of the ToR, methodology and tentative work plan. The company/expert should clearly indicate the relevance of the previous experiences and the application of these methods to this project.

- Financial offer

  The financial proposal needs to include the total financial expected implications to carry out this work, including a detailed breakdown of costs for each activity to be accomplished. This financial offer should be presented as per template (Annex I - Financial offer). The amount of the financial proposal should not exceed 3,000 USD tax included.

- Professional Portfolio

  Documentation of previous work should be included in the offer.

10. How to apply

The interested parties should send all the required documents listed above to the e-mail address info@jabalmoussa.org indicating the following reference: 01/AS/RESILAND/APJM/24.

11. Criteria for evaluation

The ResiLAND evaluation committee will assess submissions through a best-value determination, evaluating proposals based on the following criteria: Impactful CV/previous experience (30%); Technical proposal and work plan (30%); Financial proposal (40%).

The evaluation committee will thoroughly review the technical proposals based on the listed criteria. Cost proposals will undergo scrutiny to ensure completeness and accuracy. Additionally, the committee will assess the reasonableness and cost-effectiveness of the budget, ensuring it aligns with a clear understanding of project requirements.

12. Deadline for submission of the offer

The deadline for submitting the offer is March 18, 2024.

Annex I - Financial Offer

Publication Reference: 01/AS/RESILAND/APJM/24

Project Name: ResiLAND – *Resilienza ai cambiamenti climatici attraverso azioni di pianificazione, formazione e gestione integrata del territorio*- AID 012590/06/4

Name of tenderer: _____

Deliverables	Expected Working days	Budget
1. Literature review of existing assessments and studies on grazing management		
2. Assessing shepherds' grazing practices and challenges: a. Conducting individual interviews and surveys with all JMBR shepherds making sure to establish positive contacts with them b. Assessing grazing practices by the local shepherds (enclosures, handling conflicts with wildlife, hygiene and herd health, etc) c. Identifying the shepherds' challenges, issues and needs through detailed surveys (ex: not enough grazing land, high land prices, not enough fresh grass, not enough tree cover) d. Mapping farms, grazing spots, and assessing the seasonal availability of fodder, water sources, and transhumance routes		
3. Lead a knowledge sharing workshop Set up a general workshop for all shepherds on forest regeneration and biodiversity concepts (seasonality of species, endemic species, forest succession, etc.), also including a detailed project description to explain the context to the shepherds.		
4. Development of a collaborative Grazing Action Plan a. Develop a grazing management plan aiming to improve access to seasonal forage (native forage species to be sown/planted), access to water (identification of water points for livestock use), creation of shaded areas (native trees planting) and enhanced transhumance corridors.		

b. Develop guidelines and maps for shepherds and per season, in collaboration with the local shepherds. c. Draw up a proposal for individual agreements (detailing guidelines and commitments such as grazing trails and biomass management) with shepherds: collaborative framework agreements with shepherds committing them for restoration and forest management activities that will be put into action by APJM. The proposal must be submitted to the contracting agency for approval.		
5. Monitoring and Evaluation a. Conduct two assessments of the implemented plans and agreements (after 2 months and 8 months)		
Total amount requested		