

Terms of Reference: Expert for Habitat and Species Monitoring for Shebenik National Park

1. Background:

The National Agency of Protected Areas, through the PONT Grant on Shebenik National Park, following the operational plans agreed for this protected area, is committed to enhance the monitoring of key habitats and species as a key component of overall management of the protected area. To ensure the effectiveness of our conservation efforts, we are seeking an experienced expert for 14 days of consultancy and to deliver a 2 days training program focused on monitoring of species and habitats. In relation to the questions “Detailed assessment of species” and “Detailed assessment of habitats” from the METT Assessment for 2023, for Shebenik National Park there were selected these habitats: Aquatic environments, Grassland, Shrublands-dwarf shrubs, Forests and species (*Lynx lynx*, *Lutra lutra*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Sesleria coelurans*, *Salmo trutta*). Given the importance for the objectives of the further development of the management of the protected area, the aim of this expertise is to start building the first steps on the monitoring of *Lynx lynx balcanicus* and in connection with his habitat by its identification according to the Natura 2000.

2. Objectives:

The primary objectives of the consultancy are as follows:

- a. Conduct a training to the RAPAs about the assessment of forests linked with the *Lynx lynx balcanicus* according to the Natura 2000 system and also *Lynx lynx balcanicus* identified as key indicator species from the METT Assessment conducted.
- b. Present a preliminary draft report regarding the monitoring protocols for forests connected with the *Lynx lynx balcanicus*.

3. Scope of Work:

The selected expert will be responsible for the following tasks:

- a. Review existing literature, policies, and methodologies related to forest habitats and *Lynx lynx balcanicus* species monitoring.
- b. Give an overall overview of the current state of forest habitat and *Lynx lynx balcanicus* species monitoring within Shebenik National Park
- c. Develop a presentation about standardized monitoring protocols for forest habitats and *Lynx lynx balcanicus* species, considering best practices and international

standards that include monitoring programs, including the establishment of sampling sites, data collection, and analysis.

d. Recommend a data management system for storing, analyzing, and reporting monitoring data.

4. Duration and Location:

The consultancy is expected to begin on 14 November 2023 and conclude on 24 November 2023. The majority of the work will be conducted in Tirana, with 2 days of travel to the sites.

5. Deliverables:

The expert is expected to deliver the following:

- a. A preliminary report on the monitoring of the forest habitats with the focus on the old growth forests of fagus and of the *Lynx lynx balcanicus* along with relevant recommendations.
- b. Presentation of the recommendations in an activity with the invited parties from NAPA.

6. Reporting:

The expert will deliver a report to the National Agency of Protected Areas together with recommendations.

7. Qualifications:

The ideal candidate should possess:

- a. 10 years of experience in the field of biodiversity expertise
- b. Demonstrated expertise in the monitoring of species and habitats
- c. Proven experience in designing and conducting training programs.
- d. Strong communication and facilitation skills.
- e. Familiarity with the ecological context of the project area.

8. Budget:

The budget for the consultancy corresponds to the budget line 2.2 of the operational plan, 2.2. Habitat and Species Monitoring on 14 days of consultancy divided on consultancy of a total budget of 1050 Euro and travel and meeting of a budget 1680 Euro, which makes a total of 2730 Euro for this consultancy including the 15% of taxes.

9. Application Process:

Konceptoi: Artenisa Peçulaj

Interested candidates should submit a proposal outlining their approach to the task by 13 November 2023. Submissions should be sent to info@akzm.gov.al

10. Deadline for Applications:

The deadline for receiving applications is 13 November 2023. Selected candidate will be contacted by email to proceed with the next steps