

## ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Strengthening strategic framework in nature protection sector and further implementation of Natura 2000 in the Republic of Serbia EC-ENEST/BEG/2025/EA-RP/0059

The annex III “Organisation and Methodology” should ideally be less than 25 pages (without the Logical Framework Matrix, the Timetable of Work and the Activities Matrix), in font size 12.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Appropriate Assessment
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DTM	digital terrain model
DSIP	Directive Specific Implementation Plan
IAS	Invasive alien species
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
LSG	Local Self Government
MEP	Ministry of Environmental Protection
MIFP	Multiannual Investment and Financial Plan
NPI	National Program for Integration into the European Union
PSC	Project Steering Committee
pSCis	Potential sites of Community interest
SPA	Special Protection Areas
WG	Working group

# 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## 1.1. Partner country

Republic of Serbia

## 1.2. Contracting authority

European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia.

## 1.3. Country background

Serbia as an EU Candidate Country intensified the **EU accession process in environment sector** in 2019 by adoption of the Negotiation Position for Chapter 27- Environment and Climate Change on the 21st of January 2020. A Negotiation position was submitted to EC, and according to the so far presented data, significant deficiencies are identified in the Environment and Climate Change sector.

**According to EC Progress Report 2024**, “Alignment in the field of **nature protection**, in particular with the Habitats and Birds Directives, is moderate. Serbia should further pursue the work to identify and pre-designate sites that will be covered by the Natura 2000 network. Serbia should adopt the new nature protection law to fully align with the EU *acquis*. Institutional and human resource capacity at national and local levels remains weak, in particular as regards enforcement and wildlife trade.”

**The Economic Reform Programmes for the Period 2024-2026 (ERP)<sup>1</sup>** envisages measures with impact on preservation of biodiversity such as investment in the construction of new irrigation infrastructure and creating conditions for the development of biosciences and bioeconomy through the construction of BIO4 Campus.

## 1.4. Current situation in the sector

The Republic of Serbia is characterised by a large genetic, species, ecosystem and landscape diversity. The highland and mountainous areas of the Republic of Serbia, as part of the Balkans peninsula, represent one of a total of six centres of European biodiversity and are to date inhabited by many relic and endemic-relic species. The Balkans endemites comprise around 14.94% of the flora of the Republic of Serbia (547 species), while local endemic species comprise 1.5% (59 species). Genetic resources in the Republic of Serbia are highly diverse and cover a large number of native varieties of domestic plant species and breeds of domestic animals. Genetic resources of importance for food production and agriculture are maintained in traditional agricultural systems or ex-situ conditions.

The decrease of biological diversity in the Republic of Serbia arose as the consequence of the disappearance, degradation and fragmentation of habitats, reduction in wildlife species' population numbers, vulnerability of the conservation of genetic diversity of various native populations of plant and animal species, the introduction of invasive and allochthon species in nature, climate change, natural disasters, and human impact.

The Republic of Serbia became a signatory of the Declaration on Environment and Development (Rio Declaration) of 1992, while the Law on the ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted in 2001.

**The Environmental Approximation Strategy 2011-2019 (EAS)<sup>2</sup>, an EU-funded project**, assessed needed institutional and administrative measures and investment costs (app 139 MEur) for the Nature protection sector.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rsjp.gov.rs/en/news/economic-reform-programme-erp-2024-2026/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2011/80/1/reg>

The draft **DSIP for the Birds and Habitats Directive** (Report on the current state of transposition of the EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EU and the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into Serbian national law) was developed as output of an UNDP project activity to support Negotiation Position and planning of implementation measures for Birds and Habitats Directive.

The key national strategic document is the **Nature Protection Program of the Republic of Serbia**<sup>3</sup> for the period 2021-2023 with an Action plan, adopted in 2021. It establishes the strategic goals, measures and activities for improving public policies for nature conservation and preservation of biological diversity, integration of the principle of preservation of biodiversity in sectoral development policies, in processes for finance management and planning, sustainable use of components of biodiversity, reducing the negative impact of development on biodiversity, and public participation in the decision-making process.

Aiming to monitor progress in the achievement of the **Nature Protection Programme**, the **Action Plan for the implementation of the Nature Protection Programme**<sup>4</sup> defines indicators for quality evaluation that will enable the appropriate presentation and realisation of progress in the implementation of the overall goal and specific programme objectives, measures and activities, in cooperation with the relevant sectors.

**The Nature Protection Program of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2025-2033 is under preparation.** This Program will be done in compliance with the global biodiversity targets of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 and the Law on Planning System of the Republic of Serbia (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 30/18).

**The National Legal Framework** (main legal acts) in nature protection are presented in Annex 1.

**The EU Legal Framework relevant for nature protection include at least the Birds Directive, Habitats Directive**<sup>5</sup>, the Invasive Alien Species Regulation<sup>6</sup>, the CITES Regulation<sup>7</sup>: Regulation 511/2014 on compliance measures for users from the Nagoya Protocol<sup>8</sup>, EIA Directive and SEA Directive<sup>9</sup>, Water Framework Directive<sup>10</sup>, INSPIRE Directive<sup>11</sup>, Liability Directive.

Biodiversity protection and conservation represent an intrinsic part of EU environment policy and are part of the *acquis communautaire* in the form of several directives and regulations, the main being the so-called Nature Directives – Birds (2009/147/EU) and Habitats (92/43/EEC) Directives. Their correct and functional transposition is one of the basic pre-accession obligations of every Candidate Country including Serbia.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/drugiakt/2021/53/1/reg>

<sup>4</sup> <https://pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/drugiakt/2021/53/1/reg>

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01992L0043-20130701>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1483614313362&uri=CELEX:32014R1143>

<sup>7</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01997R0338-20230520>

<sup>8</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/511/oj/eng>

<sup>9</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014L0052> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A128036&qid=1656427429209>

<sup>10</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/60/oj/eng>

<sup>11</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2007/2/2019-06-26>

These Directives have to be transposed and implemented without transitional periods, therefore before EU accession date. Proposal for Natura 2000 network has to be prepared, negotiated, agreed and adopted in pre-accession period, so that it could become operational immediately after accession. Also, the institutions and stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Directives and management of Natura 2000 network have to be capable for implementation of transposed Birds and Habitats Directive and prepared management of protected areas designated as Natura 2000 sites.

Serbia has made progress with preparing for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, as presented on the official website: <http://www.natura2000.gov.rs/en/>. Additionally, progress is regularly reported through documents such as the NPI. Relevant legislation is almost fully transposed, and implementation is ongoing. Since 2010, Serbia has started with technical tasks regarding review, analysis and gathering data on species and habitats, together with capacity-building activities through several EU funded and national projects. However, the implementation is not yet finished, and more specific activities should be executed in order to fulfil all the requirements for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. Some activities need to be implemented during a longer period in order to gather more information in the field on species and habitats, to strengthen relevant capacities, to prepare main stakeholders for the management process, to increase an effectiveness of awareness campaign and communications activities, and above all to effectively manage Natura 2000 sites.

**The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP)** is the key institution in the Environment and Climate Change Sector, responsible for policy making, legislation, enforcement and strategic planning in the nature protection sector. MEP is the leading institution for the development of the Program for Nature Protection of the Republic of Serbia. MEP is also responsible for policy coordination and achieving a large number of goals defined in the strategies and programs. MEP is the central national authority responsible for the EU Directives' transposition and alignment with the nature protection sector regulations. MEP is a competent authority (CA) for the Natura 2000 designation process in charge of drawing up the list of sites hosting natural habitats and wild fauna and flora and introducing appropriate conservation objectives and measures. MEP is the lead institution in the Negotiating Group for Chapter 27 - Environment and Climate Change, and thus responsible for reporting to the European Commission (EC) on the overall progress during the EU negotiations process and it also coordinates activities with other institutions involved in environmental and climate change acquis implementation - and nature protection acquis implementation. In addition, MEP is responsible for the process of implementing, monitoring /reporting on EU assistance in the Environment and Climate Change Sector, including Nature Protection sector.

The species monitoring, the assessment of each species' conservation status, and the implementation of criteria for the identification of sites are assisted by the **Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia** and the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina. Both are also CITES Scientific Authorities. At the same time, MEP is the Managing Authority for CITES responsible for issuing permits and certificates and controlling commercial activities, as well as for registering scientists and scientific establishments. Nevertheless, Serbia has not made progress in implementation of key digital tools for CITES implementation such as eCITES Implementation Framework, CITES ePermitting Toolkit neither ASYCUDA eCITES system, resulting in a significant gap in electronic permit management. The progress and challenges in Serbia's implementation of the CITES Convention and the EU Wildlife Trade Regulation were discussed during a TAIEX study visit on wildlife trade regulation and invasive alien species regulation, (ID: 86305, date: 16 - 18 september 2024), held in the Republic of Croatia . The lack of CITES software that is needed to support the procedure of issuing permits and reporting in Serbia can be solved by establishing the national CITES permitting system similar to the one existing in Croatia and that was one of the key finding of the TAIEX study visit. During the event, details were clarified, next steps were outlined, and valuable knowledge and experience were gained.

Conservation status monitoring is an integral part of the uniform information system established and managed by the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency.

Competences over implementing **appropriate assessment procedures** of plans/projects to prevent negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites are split between MEP and Province of Vojvodina (Provincial Secretariat for Urban Planning and Environmental Protection) and LSGs authorities charged with environmental protection responsibilities depending on the competences over the adoption of plans and development consents for particular projects.

Based on legal provisions in Law on Nature Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 36 of May 15, 2009, No. 88 of November 23, 2010, No. 91 of December 3, 2010 - correction, No. 14 of February 22, 2016, No. 95 of December 8, 2018 - amended law, No. 71 of July 15, 2021.), the management of sites can be entrusted to entities such as public enterprises, technical/expert institutions, civil society organizations, church, monastery, museums, etc. The Directorate for Forestry (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management) has forest management competencies, and it is in charge of the game and hunting regime which must comply with a system of strict protection of wild animals and birds. Environmental Inspectorate supervises internal trade and the movement of live specimens and compliance with the ban on the use of leghold traps and the Directorate for Forestry (Sector for hunting). Customs Authority (Ministry of Finance) is responsible for controlling foreign trade in goods, monitors trans-boundary movement and trade in specimens of protected species and leghold traps with the assistance of Border Police (Ministry of Interior).

LSG units are entrusted with performing inspection supervision in protected areas designated by the local self-government unit's competent authority.

## **1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities**

**Development of EMERALD network in Serbia (2005-2008):** Establishing the EMERALD Network in Serbia started in 2005 within the pilot project funded by Council of Europe and continued until 2011. Central EMERALD database is in the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia. 61 sites of the EMERALD Network in Serbia were adopted by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in 2011. Project's aim was the development of network of ASCis (areas of special conservation interest) according to Recommendation No 16 of Bern convention. It provides a bases for the data management and general approach for designing the NATURA 2000 network.

The European Commission, the European Environment Agency and the Bern Convention are launching the implementation of a new IPA funded project "Mobilisation of Emerald Network databases in the Western Balkans in preparation of biogeographical seminars" which will aim to facilitate the update of the Emerald Network databases in the Western Balkans to support them in their preparation for a possible evolution into Natura 2000 designations. The outcome of the Reference List seminars on 23th and 25th May 2022. were made as a results of the Project.

**Important Plant Areas (IPA), started 2002:** List of proposed IPA in Serbia includes: 62 IPA - Important Plant Areas which are contributing important plant information for proposed NATURA 2000 sites (7,473 km<sup>2</sup>, 8.5% of Serbia). Preliminary list of IPA in Serbia includes territories of 5 National parks and more than 10 natural reserves, as well as several areas which are not actually protected but are of particular conservation interest. IPA program is coordinated by IUCN and financed by several donors (public authorities, international organisations, and private foundations). The program began in 2002 and now is being implemented in all of Europe.

**Inventory of wetlands and other wet habitats in Serbia (2006):** Outcome of project is inventory of all wet habitats in Serbia, including those habitats that could be designated as Ramsar sites, as well as important habitats on local, regional and national levels. Financed by the Directorate for Environmental Protection of the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, it was prepared by the Faculty of Biology, Belgrade University.

**Protection of Biodiversity of the Sava River Basin Floodplains (Life 2007):** The project supported the Sava Basin countries in identifying, designating and managing biological and landscape diversity along the Sava River and in supporting the implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (Habitat Interpretation Sheets NATURA 2000 for the habitat types occurring along the Sava River elaborated).

**Harmonization of national nomenclature of classification of habitats with international standards (EUNIS system of classification). (2003-2005):** Classification and codification of habitats on the national level, as well as connecting of national codification system to international habitats

classification (EUNIS, CORINE, RAMSAR, IUCN, etc.) is done in accordance with documents which define protection of habitats (Habitats Directive, CBD and Bern Conventions).

**IPA 2007 Twinning project “Strengthening Administrative Capacities for Protected Areas in Serbia (NATURA 2000)” (2010-2012):** The main purpose of the project financed by EU was to strengthen the capacities of the competent bodies in RS towards the successful implementation and enforcement of NATURA 2000 network on central and regional/local levels, with the main objective being the development of a system for Nature Protection in the Beneficiary Country (BC) in line with the EU environmental acquis. The Twinning project lasted 2.5 years and was completed in June 2012. The following results have been accomplished: support in further harmonization of the EU Habitat and Birds Directive and national legislation, strengthened the administrative capacity of all relevant sectors at the national and regional levels, two pilot management plans for Natura 2000 were developed and the preliminary list of SPAs based on Bird Life criteria. The Twinning project produced an extensive catalogue of measures to be taken by Serbia to advance with the implementation of EU Nature Directives specifically with regard to identifying NATURA 2000 sites.

**IBA Programme - 43 IBA sites recognized (2016):** Solid base for establishing SPA according to Birds Directive. The IBA Programme of BirdLife International aims to identify, monitor and protect a global network of IBAs for the conservation of the world's birds and other biodiversity. Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia - an affiliate to Birdlife International - has a wide range of finalized and ongoing projects related to bird protection. Since 1998 this NGO has implemented directly more than 30 projects and participated as partner in Birds of Europe - Their conservation Status, (2003), and Monitoring birds to control avian influenza prevention (2005-2007).

**Centers of flora biodiversity in Serbia (2008):** Guidelines for evaluation and implementation of protection strategy. The follow-up of this study is made by the project "Important Plant Areas in Serbia (IPA)" which is a step towards the registration of those sites in Serbia and their inclusion in the European network of IPAs.

**"Ex situ" protection of biodiversity of aquatic ecosystems of Serbia (2006-2012):** The project aimed to provide ex-situ conservation for critically endangered species or for the species that are expected to become extinct in the near future. The process of ex-situ conservation should be carried out by the list of obligations defined by the international agreement-CED (Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

**National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD (2011-2020):** Strategic Plan in the Republic of Serbia, GEF/UNDP project, 2013-2016- The Republic of Serbia revised the Strategy on Biological Diversity adopted in 2011 to comply with the new Strategic Plan of the UN Convention on Biodiversity and prepared the fifth report on the implementation of this Convention.

**EPPA Project:** The EU Environment Partnership Programme for Accession ([EPPA](#)) in the Western Balkans and Turkey supported development of environmental governance through compliance with the EU environmental acquis.

**EU4Green:** Support the implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. Through transboundary activities and cooperation, EU4Green endeavours to create a joint force in the Western Balkans to protect biodiversity in accordance with EU legislation.

**IPA 2012 project “Capacity Building to Implement 'Acquis' Standards in Nature Protection Establishment of NATURA 2000 and the related Supply Tender for IT equipment and software for Serbian NATURA 2000 Database” (2015-2017)** The main goal of the supply was to provide an infrastructure for the establishment of a central data base for NATURA 2000 as defined by Law on Nature Protection and is a pre-requisite to implement the service contract for the establishment of NATURA 2000 network. The project started in November 2015 but was terminated in April 2017 by the EU Delegation.

**IGIS Project (2010-2013, Infoterra Geo-Information Solution:** IGIS project was to form a single geospatial data system, and it included mapping of land cover, agri-environmental and natural habitats



in 6 pilot sites (20% of the whole territory of Serbia). Based on the IGIS system, the ROA will have satellite imagery of the territory of Serbia, a digital terrain model (DTM) and aerial photographs of the stale territory. National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) represents an integrated geospatial data system, enabling users to identify and access spatial information acquired from different sources, from local, national to global level, in a comprehensive manner. The establishment of NSDI is based on the INSPIRE principles.

**Directive Specific Implementation Plan (DSIP- 2015):** Strategic document important for the implementation of the EU Habitats and Bird directives. DSIP was delivered in 2015 within the UNDP project as a strategic document containing a detailed description of all duties and steps for the establishment of Natura 2000.

**IPA project “Support from Policy and Legal Advice Centre (PLAC 2013- 2016)”:** The scope of PLAC II project is to provide support to relevant national institutions in charge of alignment of national legal acts with the EU acquis and to contribute to further building of capacities of relevant national structures for successful carrying out of accession negotiations. A Senior Expert was deployed between October and December 2017 to assist the MEP in the area of EU regulations implementing Nagoya Protocol in the European Union. The Expert proposed amendments on the Law on Nature protection and on some by-laws.

Within “**Policy and Legal Advice Centre (PLAC III)**”, the legal gap assessment of the national legislation relevant for full implementation of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulation, institutional gap assessment, draft of the amendments to by-laws in force and draft of the new by-laws to close the legal gap alignment with the EU Wildlife Trade Regulation, were prepared.

**Project "Preparation of the Management plans for populations of Bear and Lynx" (2017-2018):** TAIEX support, funded by the EU, project for specific work on Natura 2000 through expert missions and workshops is was in implementation in 2017 and 2018. The First expert mission with the aim of strengthening the capacities of the national experts for applying methodology and data gathering on pilot areas for the establishment of Natura 2000 in Serbia was held from 17-21 July 2017. The Second expert mission was held from 5-9 February 2018.

**“Development of a WEB application for entering data on habitat types and individual groups of organisms of flora and fauna for the purpose of establishing an ecological network of the European Union Natura 2000 in the Republic of Serbia”** financed from the Republic of Serbia and realized in accordance with GDi Solutions (Belgrade enterprise);

**“Establishment of an ecological network on the territory of the Republic of Serbia”; “Establishment of the Ecological Network of the European Union Natura 2000 as part of the Ecological Network of the Republic of Serbia” and, “Production of a Red Book of Flora, Fauna and Fungi in the Republic of Serbia”** which are implementing by the Institute of the Nature Conservation of Serbia in cooperation with the Faculty of Biology, University of Belgrade, in front of the Consortium consisting of Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Forestry, Institute for Multidisciplinary Research and Institute for Biological Research "Sinisa Stankovic", University of Belgrade, Museum of Natural Sciences in Belgrade, Faculty of Science University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University of Niš and Faculty of Science, University of Kragujevac, and the Society for the Study and Protection of Birds and other relevant scientific institution through the contracts financed by the Budget of the Republic of Serbia.

**The first phase of the project "Establishment of an ecological network in RS" (2015-2020)** Development of the Red Book of Plants, Animals and Fungi in the Republic of Serbia (2015-2017) – the first phase. The Red Book of Birds was prepared and was planned to be published. The second phase of the project is coordinated by INCS in collaboration with INCVP and scientific institutions, which assists MEP in performing the following activities: Identification and mapping of habitat types in Serbia, Collection and evaluation of existing data; Research; Establishment of GIS; Preparing the manual for the identification of habitat types, habitats and species; Mapping of habitat types for identification of



pSCI; Identifying criteria for selection of ecologically important areas and ecological corridors; establishing criteria for the selection of Natura 2000 sites (SPA and pSCI).

**IPA 2016 project “EU for Natura 2000 in Serbia” 2019- 2021:** The overall objective of the project was to increase the effectiveness of the Republic of Serbia in the preparation for EU accession in the area of nature protection, and the purpose is to assist the Beneficiary country to carry out the preparation establishment of Natura 2000 network. The project achieved the following results: identification of 90% of SPAs and 70% of pSCIs according to the Birds and Habitat Directives, for NATURA 2000 Network; Information System, Data base and GIS for NATURA 2000 developed, harmonization of National legislation with EU directives related to nature protection, technical and administrative capacity for implementation of nature protection legislation strengthened and public awareness campaign for NATURA 2000. Also, three pilot management plans have been drafted according to Birds and Habitats Directives indications in three potential Natura 2000 sites, one of which is a SPA and two of them pSCI, together with the guidelines on drafting management plans and a clear template of minimum contents (Guidelines for Natura 2000 site management plans). The project experts have developed the Methodology for field mapping habitat types, including the field mapping form and description of all attributes, their units, and instructions for the field mapping, and the Methodology for field mapping species, adjusted according to the specifications of each group of species. The field mapping mobile application was prepared according to these methodologies. As part of the methodology preparation for field mapping habitat types, the Interpretation Manual of the European Importance Habitat Types in Serbia was also adjusted. **Note also the official website of Serbia on Natura 2000:** <http://www.natura2000.gov.rs/en/>

Within IPA 2020 "**Green Agenda for Serbia**", a National Action Plan on preventing illegal bird killing (IKB) is under development.

The Environment Accession Project, phase 4 (**ENVAP 4**) project - Support to the Preparations of the Republic of Serbia for EU Accession Negotiations in the Field of Environment and Climate Change" work on pipeline development for nature protection sector. See at: <https://www.naturvarsverket.se/en/international/cooperation/bilateral/serbia/>

**Protection and investment in biodiversity and water in order to strengthen resistance to climate change",** within the wider initiative "EU for the Green Agenda in Serbia". This initiative is being implemented with the technical and financial support of the European Union and in partnership with the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, implemented by UNDP in cooperation with the Embassy of Sweden and the European Investment Bank (EIB), with additional funding from the Governments of Sweden, Switzerland and Serbia. Project Goal is to preserve wetlands in Serbia by improving their climate resilience and protecting their biodiversity, in line with the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.

**The Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support (GBF-EAS) project** funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to fast track readiness and early actions to implement the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Financial and technical support package focuses on four components: alignment of national strategic document (NBSAP), monitoring systems, policy and institutional coherence and biodiversity finance. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is supporting the Ministry of Environmental Protection in execution of the GBF-EAS project in the Republic of Serbia with specific focus on the preparation of the update of Serbia's NBSAP e.g Nature Protection Programme of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2025 2032.

## **2. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

### **2.1. Overall objective**

The overall objective (Impact) to which this action contributes is to support the protection of the environment, improve its quality and contribute to actions and policies aimed at biodiversity conservation in Serbia.

## 2.2. Specific objective(s)

The specific objectives (Outcomes) of this contract are as follows:

1. **Specific objective (Outcome) 1:** To provide continuous support in identification and designation of the Natura 2000 sites establishing the base for successful implementation and management of future Natura 2000 network
2. **Specific objective (Outcome) 2:** To strengthen the **regulatory framework** for nature protection and biodiversity conservation in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements
3. **Specific objective (Outcome) 3:** To strengthen the **capacities of authorities** and other relevant bodies for the implementation of nature protection legislation and relevant international conventions (agreements) and to facilitate the **consultation process** in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements including Appropriate Assessment
4. **Specific objective (Outcome) 4:** To improve **investment planning** of nature protection and biodiversity conservation
5. **Specific objective (Outcome) 5:** To increase **public awareness** of nature conservation in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements

## 2.3. Expected outputs to be achieved by the contractor

The service will be paid on the basis of the delivery of the specified output(s). Payments might be totally or partially withheld if the contractual result(s) have not been reached in conformity with the detailed terms of reference. Payment(s) is/are based on the approval of this/these deliverable(s). Partial payment has to be determined according to the partial implementation of the output(s).

The expected outputs of this contract are as follows:

**Specific objective (Outcome) 1:** To provide continuous support in the identification and designation of the Natura 2000 sites, establishing the base for successful implementation and management of future Natura 2000 network.

- **Output 1.** The final list of the potential Natura 2000 sites (100 % of pSCI and 100% of SPA) for the whole territory of the Republic of Serbia identified and designated.
- **Output 2.** SDF (Standard Data Form) are 100% completed for the final proposal of the potential Natura 2000 network
- **Output 3** Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans of the Ecological Important sites including identification of conservation goals and conservation measures and the way of implementing conservation measures for target habitat types and species, except for birds, for conservation areas important for species and habitat types
- **Output 4 – Output 23** At least 20 Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites developed
- **Output 24 – Output 30** At least 7 measures/actions identified in Management Plans implemented
- **Output 31** Information System updated and integrated with GIS

**Specific objective (Outcome) 2:** To strengthen the **regulatory framework** for nature protection and biodiversity conservation in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements

- **Output 32:** Legal Gap Assessment Report developed
- **Output 33:** Development of a draft National Restoration Plan
- **Output 34:** At least 3 legal acts drafted/amended

- **Output 35:** Feasibility Study for appropriate assistance and care for injured, distressed, or confiscated wild animals
- **Output 36:**, Guideline for the implementation of the Appropriate Assessment procedure for the ecological network
- **Output 37:** Guideline for the functioning of rescue centres or facilities for injured and captured species
- **Output 38:** Guidelines and instructions for enforcement of the Law on Nature Protection developed
- **Output 39:** Software for CITES permits created (to be maintained by the MEP) and relevant staff trained

**Specific objective (outcome) 3:** To strengthen the **capacities of authorities** and other relevant bodies for the implementation of nature protection legislation and relevant international conventions (agreements) and to facilitate the **consultation process** in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements including Appropriate Assessment

- **Output 40:** Institutional and administrative gap assessment report with recommendations for improvement
- **Output 41:** TNA for implementation of policy and law enforcement in the field of nature protection and Capacity Building Programme with Training program and Plan
- **Output 42:** Training and Study Tour Report
- **Output 43:** Roadmap for integration of nature protection in sectoral policies

**Specific objective (outcome) 4:** To improve **investment planning** of nature protection and biodiversity conservation

- **Output 44:** Criteria for selection and prioritization of investments
- **Output 45:** Prioritised nature protection projects pipeline
- **Output 46:** Relevant technical documentation for at least 1 investment priority nature project proposal developed
- **Output 47:** Action plans for at least 10 Identified priority measures delivered
- **Output 48:** Proposal of financing mechanisms for implementation of nature protection projects pipeline

**Specific objective (outcome) 5:** To increase **public awareness** of nature conservation in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements

- **Output 49:** Communication plan for Public Awareness and corresponding Communications materials developed
- **Output 50:** Report on the Implementation of the Public awareness campaign and visibility actions

**The financial offer shall include a breakdown indicating the price for each expected output.**

### **3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS**

#### **3.1. Assumptions underlying the project**

- Commitment of the Serbian Government to further transpose and implement EU legislation

- Continued support to EU negotiations in Chapter 27 Environment and Climate Change
- Sufficient capacity and stability of staff at senior levels in relevant institutions
- Results of complementary projects are available;
- Collaboration and cooperation among relevant stakeholders and institutions ensured (including cross-sectoral);
- Institutions in the nature protection sector have the capacity and resources to actively take part in project results;
- No significant delays (project start, approvals of experts and documents, access to workplaces, field work);
- Working Groups for all components operational;
- Background data and information for the development of studies, technical and other documents are available and timely provided

### **3.2. Risks**

- Lack of support and cooperation;
- Lack of personnel on the beneficiary side;
- Lack of IT and technical facilities;
- Lack of documents and data;
- Delays of various kinds (project commencement date, approvals of outputs, field work etc);

## **4. SCOPE OF THE WORK**

### **4.1. General**

#### **4.1.1. Description of the assignment**

This project will provide continuous support in identification and designation of the Natura 2000 sites, establishing the base for successful implementation and management of future Natura 2000 network, as one of the top priorities in the negotiation process in view of Serbia's EU membership.

The process of identification, designation and implementation of Natura 2000 is essential for the fulfilment of EU obligations from Chapter 27 during EU accession negotiations. Through the previous IPA 2016 Natura 2000 project identification of 90% of SPAs and 70% of pSCis for NATURA 2000 network is completed and covered app 30% of territory of the Republic of Serbia.

The aim of this project is to conduct surveys to complete identification of the 100 % of SPAs and 100% of pSCis for the NATURA 2000 network, input the data into the operational Information System in line with the needs of MEP and connection with database of relevant institutions as well as to support during the designation process, ensuring the formal protection of sites and to provide examples of best practices done in the previous period. The preliminary protection of the identified Natura 2000 sites will be secured through stakeholder engagement at the local level (land users and landowners) in the protected areas (including Ecological Network and Natura 2000 sites). Consultation procedures with stakeholders will be organized in all relevant sites. Implementation of Natura 2000 will be supported through the development and implementation of management plans for Protected Areas and measures for ecologically important areas including selected Natura 2000 sites, and for target species (from Annex I of the Birds Directive and Annex II and IV of Habitats Directive). The key enforcement gaps will be identified and addressed, such as prevention of illegal activities (prohibited trapping methods, illegal killing, use of poisons, etc), regulation and monitoring of derogations issued by MEP, national wildlife offence/crime-related database, national wildlife and poison detector dog programme, support to rescue centres for injured and captured species.

Legislation in the nature protection sector is advanced but not fully harmonised with the EU acquis and international obligations. Full transposition of the EU acquis in national legislation is the priority which has to be addressed before accession. The main legal gaps identified are in sectoral legislation, which is not aligned with nature legislation. Some corrections and adjustments are needed in legislation to align

with EU Directives and the Law on Nature Protection transposing the EU requirements with regard to Natura 2000.

The institutional framework in the nature protection sector needs to be assessed and recommendations should be prepared for improving the organisational and institutional structure and capacities for implementing nature protection measures taking into account different roles at the national, provincial and local levels. Particularly, the assessment will be made for the new roles and responsibilities that have to be operational after the EU accession, such as monitoring, reporting and management of Natura 2000. The continuous capacity-building activities for the new and current staff shall follow the institutional improvements.

Multi-annual Investment and Financing Plan (MIFP) as a strategic framework for environmental investment planning currently does not include nature protection-related investments. These investment needs should be identified to assist MEP in investment planning. Extension of the project pipeline identified by MIFP document with relevant nature protection investments pipeline will help find financial support for LSG units and managers of Protected Areas to establish management and maintenance of the sites, ensuring the conservation of the target nature values of these protected areas.

Therefore, Serbian legislation for ecological network and Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites including Management plans of the Ecological Important Sites which overlapped with Protected areas shall be the basis for the identification of investment needs. Also, the development of the criteria for prioritization of projects could enable the identification of priority investment measures and the development of technical documentation for selected investments.

There are gaps and conflicts between nature protection objectives and procedures and sectoral policies, the most significant being concerning the infrastructure planning, water management, forestry, energy and tourism. Facilitation of dialogue between the sectors and introduction of changes in sectoral policies are needed to achieve compliance of other sector's legislation and practices with the Nature Protection Law. Consultations with institutions from different sectors, on national and local level aim to achieve changes in legislation, strategies and procedures of other sectors which impact nature protection, and consequently to integrate nature protection policy and relevant provisions from the Habitat and Bird Directives as the horizontal issue.

Public awareness regarding nature protection is weak. Therefore, public awareness campaigns and visibility actions need to be implemented widely at the national level to cover the general public and target specific groups – school children, CSOs, etc. Also, the campaigns shall be organised to cover specific sites and to be implemented on regional and local levels to include the most important stakeholders- land owners and land users, municipalities, etc.

#### **4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered**

Republic of Serbia

#### **4.1.3. Target groups**

The target groups are the main beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project. Those are institutions and organizations on the national, provincial and local levels. Their capacities are crucial for the identification, proper designation and efficient management of the Natura 2000 network and nature protection legislation in Serbia.

Primary beneficiaries of the project are the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), the Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province and the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia in cooperation with the RGA.

### **4.2. Specific work**

#### **Inception phase**

The inception phase will last 8 weeks. As a minimum, activities during the Inception phase will include:

- **A full project review** to determine all factors relevant to the project implementation, including an analysis of assumptions and risks.
- **A kick-off meeting** between the contractor, contracting authority and MEP to discuss the project's objectives and activities and to confirm the lines of communication,
- Identifying project stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities during project implementation
- **A public project presentation** organized with various stakeholders and general public after approval of the Inception Report by Contracting authority and Beneficiary.

During this phase, the contractor will establish a mode of day-to-day working collaboration with the Department for Project Management (DPM) and the Department for Nature Protection within MEP.

The contractor will prepare an **Inception Report** which should include an analysis of the current state of the nature protection sector and most recent activities, as well as the Work Plan for the entire project duration including the phases of the project, a detailed plan for the next reporting period, tasks to be performed, and possible constraints and an Implementation Schedule.

The Contractor will be responsible for organizing the inception event to present the objectives and expected outputs for at least 50 participants.

**Below is an indicative list of the activities that shall be delivered:**

Tenderers are encouraged to include additional activities as they think appropriate within their Organisation & Methodology.

**Outcome 1 - Continuous support in identification and designation of the Natura 2000 sites provided, establishing the base for successful implementation and management of future Natura 2000 network**

Non-exhaustive list of potential activities:

**Activity 1.1. Conduct research on the territory of the Republic of Serbia for the identification and designation the remaining SPAs and pSCis of NATURA 2000 network to achieve 100%**

The contractor needs to conduct a **desktop analysis** of all available data, reports and documents and to develop plans for fieldwork.

This activity includes data collection and review, preparation of the list of expected species or habitat types as well as surveying and assessing habitats and species that are of European importance as outlined in the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive in line with Methodology for field mapping habitat types and Methodology for field mapping species, ecological assessment and designation of sites.

The contractor needs to follow the established methodology: to work on desktop analysis and implement fieldwork activities during the vegetation seasons, in order to complete the list of the potential Natura 2000 sites.

These sites shall be identified in line with scientific and technical criteria, analysing all available biodiversity data sources as well as fieldwork data.

Additionally, the contractor will provide technical assistance throughout the Natura site designation process, including support for the preparation of documents required for designation in accordance with Serbian legislation.

**Activity 1.2. If needed, revise some of the Standard Data Forms (SDF) and complete SDF (Standard Data Form) for the remaining selected sites based on research conducted**

Each country designates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) according to scientific criteria. While the country may choose the most appropriate criteria, they must ensure that all the 'most suitable territories', both in number and surface area, are designated. Site-specific data are transmitted to the Commission using Standard Data Forms. Will be the European Commission who determines if the designated sites are sufficient to form a coherent network for the protection of these vulnerable and migratory species, becoming an integral part of the Natura 2000 network.

Therefore, the contractor shall ensure the high quality of Standard Data Forms (SDF) for Natura 2000 considering that SDF is crucial for the accurate designation, management, and monitoring of protected areas.

The contractor will organize at least 2 Biogeographical Seminar/s for analyses for sufficiency of all data within the completed SDF. Approximately 25 participants will be invited for each seminar. Seminars will be organized in Belgrade as pilot seminars to prepare the Serbian administration for Biogeographical Seminars in line with the procedure, when the European Commission shall determine if the designated sites are sufficient to form a coherent network for the protection of these vulnerable and migratory species, becoming an integral part of the Natura 2000 network.

Based on lessons learned and conclusions from the seminars, the contractor will update and improve SDFs if necessary.

### **Activity 1.3. Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans of Ecological important sites**

Guidelines for the preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites in Serbia were developed under IPA 2016 Natura project. The guidelines can be applied to any site that meets the criteria designated under the Birds and/or the Habitats Directive. Still, the fundamental principles and the structure of management provided in this guideline may be used to prepare management plans for any other kind of protected area including relevant sectoral plans for using natural resources and spatial planning.

However, this Guideline has to be revised into new Guidelines that provide detailed instruction to integrate management of species and habitats, but also including already defined guidelines and measures in existing management plans for protected area categories and zones (e.g. National or Natural Parks, Special Nature Reserves, etc. and Natura 2000 sites as well as for targeted species) in cases areas where different protected areas are overlapped with ecological important sites. Additionally, instruction for revision of existing protected areas management plans to address the management of Natura 2000 sites, if feasible. Also, clear instructions should be provided in cases when the boundaries of other types of the protected area and those of the Natura 2000 site are not coincident including implementation of the mechanism for cooperation with users and owners (contracts).

Identification of conservation goals, conservation measures and the way of implementing conservation measures for target habitat types and species, except for birds, for conservation areas important for species and habitat types which are carried out in the framework of planning documents for the management of natural resources, spatial planning documents, management plans for protected areas and/or ecological network areas, management plans, and in the implementation of interventions and/or activities that could affect conservation objectives for the achievement of which conservation measures are prescribed.

Guideline will provide a standardized approach to developing management plans, guiding their development in detail and ensuring that all plans follow a consistent methodology. This will be crucial for the efficient monitoring of the development of several management plans in parallel by the MEP and different recipients. Also, standardized development of management plans will enable the transfer of experience and best practices between beneficiaries during the development of management plans and later during their implementation.

Guideline should be user-friendly and effective, using simplified language and clear instructions.



Also, the new Guideline has to ensure that the management practices remain effective, relevant, and aligned with EU and Serbian legislation and scientific knowledge and to include best practices as well as to ensure consistency with current policy framework.

Also, the contractor shall consider stakeholder engagement, public participation, and collaboration with local communities during the development of Management Plans and their implementation. Practical experience in implementing management plans across different Member States can highlight challenges, gaps, or areas for improvement.

It can also serve as an educational tool, raising awareness among the public, stakeholders, and decision-makers about the importance of conserving targeted species and the actions needed to protect them as well as a tool for capacity building.

The contractor will submit Guidelines for the preparation of Management Plans for Ecological important sites to MEP for approval. The new Management plans for Ecological Important Sites when its subject is the Natura 2000 site will be developed in line with approved Guidelines.

#### **Activity 1.4. Development of a minimum 20 Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites**

Natura 2000 sites and targeted species which will be the subject of Management Plans will be selected by MEP, based on proposal, justification and argumentation of the contractor.

The first draft of Management plans for Ecological Important Sites has to be completed within the first 18 months from the commencement day of the Project and submitted along with the relevant Interim report.

The contractor will improve the Management Plans for **Ecological Important Sites**, incorporating conclusions from meetings, recommendations from study tours, and feedback provided by the EUD, MEP, and Managers of the ecological important sites on the draft version.

Each Management plan for Ecological Important Sites shall be prepared in line with the Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans for Ecological important sites. Contractor shall organize field visit to the area subject to Management Plan and meeting with management.

Working versions shall be in Serbian language to enable discussion and inputs from managers of of the ecological important sites.

#### **Activity 1.5. Implementation of a minimum of 7 management measures/actions which are identified in the Management Plans.**

Management measures/actions identified in the Management Plans developed under the previous contract will be taken into consideration for implementation. These Management Plans are:

- ✓ Management Plan of the potential pSCI “Kraljevac”
- ✓ Management Plan of the potential Special Protected Area “Slano Kopovo”
- ✓ Management Plan of the potential pSCI “Dolina Pcinje”

Ministry of Environmental protection will provide all developed plans to selected Contractor immediately after signing of the contract for review.

Therefore, during the inception phase, the Contractor will review previously developed Management Plans and provide the MEP with an assessment of which management measures/actions might be eligible and suitable for implementation under this service contract along with assessment of their indicative budget, taking into account the total budget allocated for its implementation. If deemed appropriate, and upon approval by EUD and MEP, implementation of these measures can commence.

For management measures/actions outlined in the Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites developed under this contract, implementation will commence after the relevant Management Plan's completion and approval. Selection of management measures/actions from Management plans for Ecological Important Sites will be made in consultation with MEP and EUD. These measures/ actions must be eligible for financing under a service contract. Additionally, both the indicative budget and the readiness of specific management measures/actions for implementation within the Project's timeframe must be taken into account. The selection process will follow the prioritization criteria established under Component 4 of this contract.

**Activity 1.6. Update of Information System with all electronic data which are outputs of this contract as well as integration with GIS.**

The development of an Information System for management and maintenance by MEP is planned for 2025 and will be funded by the budget of the Republic of Serbia. Consequently, the input of data collected through this contract by the Contractor can only commence once the Information System is operational, which is anticipated to be in 2026. Additionally, the Contractor is required to integrate the Information System with GIS, provide at least ten GIS licenses for at least two years, and deliver training on GIS for the designated staff.

**Outputs related to Outcome 1:**

- **Output 1.** The final list of the potential Natura 2000 sites (100 % of pSCI and 100% of SPA) for the whole territory of the Republic of Serbia identified and designated. The list shall be completed within 24 months from commencement date.
- **Output 2.** SDF (Standard Data Form) are 100% completed for the final proposal of the potential Natura 2000 network within 26 months from the commencement date.
- **Output 3.** Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites developed within five months from commencement date, in Serbian and English language. 100 copies of Guideline in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.
- **Output 4 – Output 23.** At least 20 Management Plans for Ecological Important Sites developed in Serbian and English language within 24 months from commencement date. Five (5) copies of each plan in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.
- **Output 24 – Output 30.** At least 7 management measures/actions identified in management plans implemented. Implementation of the actions shall be completed two months before the end of the contract at the latest.
- **Output 31.** Information System updated and integrated with GIS and staff trained. Update of Information System and integration with GIS shall be completed two months before the end of the contract at the latest.

## **Outcome 2 - Regulatory framework for nature protection and biodiversity conservation improved**

Non-exhaustive list of potential activities:

### **Activity 2.1: Conduction of Gap assessment related to nature protection legislation**

Legislative gap assessment will provide a critical review of the level of compliance between specific pieces of national legislation for nature protection and relevant EU legislation. Therefore, the contractor needs to possess a comprehensive understanding of the EU acquis, particularly Habitats and Birds Directives, CITES, IAS, ABS regulation, ZOO Directive as well as Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on Nature Restoration and Amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869). The contractor will study the text of relevant EU legislation and guidance materials to identify the specific requirements and obligations imposed by the EU framework. Based on a review of relevant documents, the contractor will identify the key provisions, requirements, and objectives outlined in the EU acquis including targets, timelines, and any other specific obligations.

The contractor will be responsible for assessing the status of the transposition and implementation of the EU acquis into Serbian legislation. This will involve reviewing relevant documents and outputs produced under the IPA 2016 Natura 2000 project, as well as analysing current primary and secondary legislation. Additionally, the contractor will take into account legal acts under development through various projects (e.g., PLAC, Green Agenda). Through this process, the contractor will identify any gaps, inconsistencies, or discrepancies between the existing Serbian legal framework and the requirements of the EU acquis. Additionally, the contractor will evaluate the practical challenges associated with the implementation and enforcement of this legislation.

Based on the assessment, the contractor shall develop a Legal Gap Assessment Report including a plan for the preparation of missing legal acts or the adjustment of existing ones.

Based on the analysis of the legal framework, the contractor will propose a prioritized list of legal acts that need to be prepared or amended to close the gaps, outlined in a Plan for the Preparation of missing Legal Acts. This may include categorizing the legal acts by their urgency, significance, and complexity.

### **Activity 2.2. Development of a draft National Restoration Plan (NRP)**

The adoption of the EU Nature Restoration Law on 24 June 2024 marks a significant milestone in European environmental policy. This regulation, now directly applicable across all EU Member States, establishes legally binding targets for restoring degraded ecosystems and mandates the creation of comprehensive National Restoration Plans (NRPs) by each country.

Each Member State must submit its draft National Restoration Plan to the European Commission by 1 September 2026—24 months after the regulation's entry into force.

Given Serbia's status in the EU accession process, and its ambition to align with EU Acquis by end of 2026, the Contractor will analyse the Republic of Serbia's readiness for a National Restoration Plan. This analysis will examine the strategic, legal, and institutional frameworks.

Based on analyses and best practices in nature-based solutions, the Contractor shall draft the initial version of the National Restoration Plan, including a roadmap for future steps in the negotiation process and key recommendations, based on the following:

**Plan Content:** the NRP must detail how the country intends to meet the restoration targets, including the specific measures, timelines, and funding mechanisms. It must also address monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and socio-economic impacts.

**Stakeholder Involvement:** The law emphasizes the need for proactive engagement with stakeholders such as farmers, landowners, foresters, hunters, and local communities to ensure successful implementation and long-term sustainability

Key Requirements of the EU Nature Restoration Law are:

- **Restoration Targets:** Member States must put measures in place to restore at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.
- **Ecosystem-Specific Measures:** The law sets out detailed requirements for various ecosystem types—including agricultural land, forests, urban areas, peatlands, and rivers. For example:
  - Restoration of at least 30% of degraded habitats by 2030, 60% by 2040, and 90% by 2050.
  - No net loss of urban green spaces and tree canopy cover by 2030, with a 10% tree cover target in cities by 2050.
  - Restoration and partial rewetting of drained agricultural peatlands (30% by 2030, 40% by 2040, 50% by 2050, with a portion rewetted at each stage).
  - Removal of barriers to enable at least 25,000 km of rivers to become free-flowing by 2030.
  - Measures to reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Member States must monitor progress using EU-wide biodiversity indicators and report regularly to the European Commission.

### **Activity 2.3: Transposition and alignment of Serbian legal framework with EU nature protection acquis**

The following EU acquis shall be considered: Habitats and Birds Directives, CITES, IAS, ABS regulation and ZOO Directive, Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on Nature Restoration and Amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869) and international conventions in nature protection.

The contractor will draft new legal acts or will propose amendments in line with the Plan for the preparation of legal acts. The number of legal acts to be drafted under this contract will be determined in collaboration with the MEP and EUD, considering the Project's budget. It is anticipated that the contractor will need to deliver at least three draft legal acts.

The contractor will be responsible for submitting draft legislation to MEP for discussion with the relevant staff and revising it according to the comments and inputs.

If needed, the contractor shall assist the MEP in preparing supporting documents for the adoption of the legal act, provide support during the public consultation process, and be responsible for reviewing relevant feedback on the draft legislation and making necessary improvements.

To facilitate the approval process and enhance understanding and consultation, the draft legislation should be prepared in Serbian language.

### **Activity 2.4. Development of Feasibility Study for appropriate assistance and care for injured, distressed, or confiscated wild animals**

The feasibility study aims to enhance the care and rehabilitation of injured, distressed, or confiscated wild animals in the Republic of Serbia, ultimately contributing to wildlife conservation and protection efforts.

Therefore, the contractor shall conduct of assessment of the existing facilities, resources, and procedures for the care and rehabilitation of wild animals in the Republic of Serbia, and identify the gaps and areas for improvement.

Also, in this study, the contractor shall present the specific needs of injured, distressed, or confiscated wild animals in terms of medical treatment, rehabilitation, and long-term care and assess the financial, human, and material resources required to provide adequate care and assistance.

The contractor shall conduct research and present best practices in wildlife care and rehabilitation, drawing on successful models from other regions or countries.

The contractor shall propose measures for establishing or improving facilities and programs for wildlife care, considering factors such as location, funding, and capacities. Also, the contractor shall ensure all measures comply with local, national, and international wildlife protection laws and regulations.

Also, recommendations which can guide decision-making and investment in wildlife care and rehabilitation shall be a part of the study.

#### **Activity 2.5. Development of 2 guidelines (for strengthening prevention of illegal activities, support to rescue centres for injured, captured species and Appropriate Assessment procedure )**

The contractor will collect and review existing documents, case studies, and regulations related to the topics and identify best practices. To gather input and ensure the guidelines address practical needs, the contractor shall organize consultation with stakeholders. Draft guidelines shall be clear and user-friendly, specific and aligned with national/international standards.

The contractor will be responsible for revising the guidelines based on feedback from the stakeholder inputs as well as developing training materials and conducting workshops to educate relevant personnel on the new guidelines.

#### **Activity 2.6. Development of Guidelines and Instructions for enforcement of the Law on Nature Protection**

The contractor will review the Law on Nature Protection and relevant by-laws to identify key areas that require clarification for relevant sectors, expert institutions, local self-government units and managers of protected areas regarding implementation procedures related to ecological network and appropriate assessment. To ensure that the document addresses practical challenges, the contractor will organize consultations with stakeholders.

The draft procedure shall clarify all obligations of local self-government units and managers of protected areas, including specific steps, roles, responsibilities, timelines, and reporting mechanisms for implementing the law. The contractor will be responsible for revising the procedure based on stakeholders' input to enhance clarity and effectiveness.

#### **Activity 2.7. Development of software for CITES permits and training for using those tools**

The contractor will be responsible for engaging experts to develop **CITES software as an online web application**, with hierarchy access. MEP will be the administrator while the external users are the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina, representatives of the Custom administration, environmental inspectors and police but also applicants for permits/certificates.

This software as a functional web application will be a tool for issuing permits and certificates for cross-border trade and trade in wild species, which are prescribed by the Law on Nature Protection and the Rulebook on Cross-Border Trade and Trade in Protected Species, as well as for the preparation of annual reports on international trade in wild species for the Republic of Serbia that are submitted to the CITES Convention.

This application will enable the storage of all data on permit holders, issued permits, certificates and solutions, types and quantities of copies of permits and other data, as well as on imported/exported quantities, in one place. In this way, data will be available at any time to all authorities in the Republic of Serbia. Also, this will enable the submission of reports to the CITES Convention.

**Outputs related to Outcome 2: Output 32.** Legal Gap assessment Report This Report shall be developed within the first 6 months from the commencement date This document shall outline the identified gaps, provide a rationale for their significance, and include recommendations for transposition and alignment of the national legal framework with the EU acquis. This document shall include the Plan for preparation of the legal acts, including as a minimum the following elements: type of legal act, timelines for preparation of necessary amendments/adjustment, responsible institutions and authorities that need to be involved in the process institution responsible for adoption and required resources.

**Output 33. Development of a draft National Restoration Plan** Draft National Restoration Plan shall be prepared in Serbian language two months before the end of the contract at the latest. Five (5) copies in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.

**Output 34.** At least 3 legal acts drafted/amended Legal acts shall be prepared in Serbian language two months before the end of the contract at the latest.



**Output 35.** Feasibility Study for appropriate assistance and care for injured, distressed, or confiscated wild animals

Feasibility study shall be completed within 24 months from the commencement date. Five (5) copies of the Feasibility study in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.

**Output 36.** Guideline for the implementation of the Appropriate Assessment procedure for the ecological network

The guideline shall be in Serbian and English language 6 months before the end of the contract, at the latest. Ten (10) copies of the Guidelines in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.

**Output 37.** Guideline for functioning of rescue centres or facilities for injured and captured species

The guideline shall be in Serbian and English language 6 months before the end of the contract, at the latest. Five (5) copies of the Guidelines in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.

**Output 38.** Guidelines and Instructions for enforcement of the Law on Nature Protection

This Guidelines will be developed for the relevant sectors, expert institutions as well as local self-government and managers of the protected area. The aim of this guideline is to explain and provide instructions on the enforcement of the Law on Nature Protection. In particular, it aims to clarify procedures and offer guidance on enforcing provisions related to ecological networks and linked with the appropriate assessments.

This Guidelines shall be developed in Serbian and English language within 34 months from commencement date. 50 copies in Serbian language shall be printed and delivered to MEP together with electronic version submitted on flash/CD.

**Output 39.** Software for CITES permits created (to be maintained by the MEP) and relevant staff trained.

Software for CITES is a web application that is accessed through a web browser and is connected to a database that is entered into it.

Software for CITES permits shall be completed within 18 months from the commencement date.

### **Outcome 3: Capacities of authorities and other relevant institutions for implementation of nature protection legislation and international conventions strengthened and consultation process facilitated**

Non-exhaustive list of potential activities:

#### **Activity 3.1: Preparation of institutional and administrative gap assessment and recommendations for improvement**

The contractor shall analyze the competencies and responsibilities related to the implementation of policies and legislation on nature protection within government institutions (MEP, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, and Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina), as well as among managers of protected areas and relevant local self-government units. The analysis will identify gaps and areas for improvement.

Additionally, new responsibilities and tasks that will arise from obligations imposed by the EU acquis will be identified, along with corresponding gaps in the current institutional framework of the Republic of Serbia.

The contractor will review all relevant documents produced in the past related to administrative capacities in the nature protection field.

The contractor shall assess structures and/or organizational units in all mentioned institutions and evaluate their administrative capacity in terms of sufficient and qualified staff as well as technological capabilities. The assessment of administrative capacity should be presented for each main task related to nature protection.

The contractor shall evaluate the mechanisms already in place for coordination among relevant institutions and the effectiveness of these mechanisms and identify any challenges and areas of improvement.

The report on institutional and administrative gap assessment shall contain, among others, the following elements:

- mapping of institutions and description of the current state in terms of functions performed and responsible organizational units and linkage to the EU nature protection acquis,
- identification of institutional gaps and competencies that have to be established to meet legal obligations as well as future EU requirements,
- recommendations for addressing identified gaps and institutional adjustment of the Republic of Serbia to ensure compliance with EU requirements,
- administrative capacity of the structures and/or organizational units in each institution relevant to the nature protection field – in general
- recommendations for improving administrative processes, enhancing workflow efficiency, optimizing resource allocation, and strengthening internal controls.
- mechanisms in place for coordination among relevant institutions and their effectiveness
- recommendations for the improvement of mechanisms for cooperation between institutions.

### **Activity 3.2: Development of TNA for implementation of policy and law enforcement in the field of nature protection and Capacity Building Programme including Training program and Plan**

The purpose of the TNA is to ensure that the training needs of staff are identified against job requirements including the tasks that will be imposed by the improvement of the legal framework. The target group will be staff from national, provincial and local level whose jurisdiction includes tasks linked with nature protection.

The skills and competencies of staff in relevant national institutions should be assessed concerning their job descriptions and functions. The results of the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) will provide the contractor with the necessary input to identify training topics aimed at enhancing staff competence and professional capacity.

The contractor will review all relevant documents produced in the past related to capacity-building activities in the nature protection field.

The contractor shall organize communication with relevant institutions related to the findings on TNA.

Based on TNA, the contractor shall design a Capacity Building Program which shall include a staffing plan for the relevant institution, physical resources necessary for the institutions to carry out the expected tasks as well as the Training Program and Plan.

Capacity Building Programme with Training program and Plan shall be developed for short (period cover duration of this contract), medium (5 years) and long-term period (10 years).

The Training Program shall include the training topics identified for all relevant institutions, to address at least the following topics: Implementation of Natura 2000, Introduction of the Appropriate Assessment procedures, Invasive Alien Species eradication and control, wildlife crime prevention and prosecution, strengthening capacities for management of Natura 2000 at all levels.

For each training topic, the training objective, learning outcomes, target groups, general description of the module and its duration, training techniques, and trainers' profiles shall be described.

Formal training courses, technical workshops and information seminars as well as on-the-job training should be considered.

### **Activity 3.3. Delivery of Training program**

Following approval of the TNA and Capacity Building Program with the Training program and Plan, the contractor will be responsible for organizing and delivering training sessions identified in the short-term Training Plan in order to increase the knowledge of the targeted staff.

Each training module shall be evaluated by participants while the trainers will be responsible for the preparation of a training report for each training module (individual training report). The Contractor will need to summarize the findings in the Training and Study Tour Report.

The Contractor shall deliver at least 30 training events for at least 20 participants each. Training shall be delivered in the Serbian language or translation into Serbian shall be provided. Electronic version of training material shall be delivered to participants.

### **Activity 3.4. Organisation of at least 2 study visits per year to EU Member States' institutions and administrations**

Each study tour will last 5 days and shall be attended by at least 10 participants each. The study tour shall relate to Natura 2000 designation and implementation, enforcement of nature protection legislation including IAS eradication and control, implementation of WT regulation, implementation of management measures in protected areas which overlap with Natura 2000 sites and investments for biodiversity protection.

All conclusions and recommendations from study tours shall be summarized in the Training and Study Tour Report.

### **Activity 3.5 Organise at least 7 consultation meetings about the integration of nature protection in sectoral policies**

At least 7 sectors - infrastructure, energy, mining, tourism, agriculture, water management, and forestry will be involved in the consultation process.

The contractor shall organize bilateral or multilateral meetings with representatives from these sectors and nature protection authorities. These meetings will be designed to foster open dialogue and enable the contractor to identify actions and measures for integrating nature protection into sectoral policies.

The contractor must define clear objectives for the consultations, taking into account the interests and influence of all relevant sectors. Following an analysis of the current situation, the contractor shall develop a draft Roadmap for Integrating Nature Protection Measures into Sectoral Policies. This Roadmap will outline specific steps each sector must take to align with nature protection objectives and may include amendments to existing laws, the creation of new policies, or the introduction of incentives for sectors that effectively integrate nature protection.

The contractor shall organize meetings with stakeholders to discuss and gather feedback on proposed measures.

Based on stakeholder inputs, the contractor shall revise the Roadmap for Integration of Nature Protection Measures into Sectoral Policies and prepare a report summarizing the consultation process, feedback received, and how it was incorporated into the output.

### **Outputs related to Outcome 3:**

- **Output 40.** Institutional and Administrative Gap Assessment Report with recommendations for improvement shall be developed within the first 5 months.

- **Output 41.** TNA for implementation of policy and law enforcement in the field of nature protection and Capacity Building Programme with Training Program and Plan shall be developed within first 9 months.
- **Output 42.** Training and Study Tour Report shall be delivered in month 36. The report shall include data and information regarding all training modules and study visits.
- **Output 43.** A Roadmap for the Integration of Nature Protection Measures into Sectoral Policies shall be developed within 30 months from the commencement date.

#### **Outcome 4: Investment planning for nature protection enhanced**

Non-exhaustive list of potential activities:

##### **Activity 4.1. Development of criteria for selection and prioritization of investments in the nature protection field**

The contractor will develop criteria for the selection and prioritization of investments in the nature protection field. This will require consideration of several factors:

- ❖ Biodiversity Impact
- ❖ Ecological Urgency
- ❖ Cost-Effectiveness
- ❖ Alignment with Legal and Policy Frameworks
- ❖ Sustainability
- ❖ Climate Change Resilience
- ❖ Social and Economic Benefits
- ❖ Feasibility and Maturity

The criteria and prioritization shall ensure that nature protection investments are strategic, effective, and impactful, making the most of available resources to achieve meaningful conservation outcomes.

##### **Activity 4.2. Continue the process of identification of investment needs**

The contractor shall identify investment needs specified in the Management Plans and other projects identified within pipeline of potential projects in the field of biodiversity through IPA 2016 „EU for Natura 2000 in Serbia, project as well as investment prescribed in Serbian legislation for ecological network and other relevant sources of information.

The contractor shall propose an approach on how the identified needs could be further developed into projects. Using the approach, the contractor shall develop a long pipeline of potential projects.

This project pipeline for the nature sector will include infrastructure projects (such as construction works and equipment supply) as well as service-oriented projects, which may be implemented by various service providers.

Based on criteria developed as a part of activity 4.1, the contractor shall prepare the prioritized list of project proposals (nature protection projects pipeline) with estimated costs for each proposed project. Nature protection projects pipeline will be presented to MEP and EUD for discussion.

In developing the project pipeline, the contractor will analyse previous approaches and results including as developed by the ENVAP4 project.

##### **Activity 4.3. Development of technical documentation for at least one priority investment (infrastructure) project in the nature protection sector**

Upon approval of MEP and EUD, the contractor will develop technical documentation for the priority investment for infrastructure projects from the nature protection projects pipeline.

#### **Activity 4.4. Development of Action plans for at least 10 selected priority projects from the nature protection projects pipeline.**

The contractor will be responsible for the development of an Action Plan for at least 10 selected priority projects from the nature protection projects pipeline, specifying necessary steps for implementation of the investment project and identifying potential financing sources, taking into account mechanisms for financing management plans and establishing the NATURA 2000 network (output 48).

#### **Activity 4.5. Development of proposal of mechanisms for financing implementation of nature protection projects pipeline**

The contractor will analyse funding opportunities for the nature protection sector in EU member states and in the Republic of Serbia.

Based on the analysis and identification of available programs and funds for the nature protection sector, the contractor should propose financing mechanisms for the implementation of the nature protection projects pipeline. These mechanisms may include state budget, own sources, grants, subsidies, tax incentives, and low-interest loans. The proposed mechanisms should be discussed with various stakeholders in consultation with the MEP.

If necessary, the contractor shall propose policy, legislative changes and institutional reforms for implementing effective financing support mechanisms.

The contractor will be responsible for the preparation of a report which includes findings regarding the current state and recommendations for the establishment of financing mechanisms supporting nature protection in Serbia.

#### **Outputs related to Outcome 4**

- **Output 44.** Criteria for selection and prioritization of investments in the nature protection field shall be established within 6 months from the commencement date.
- **Output 45:** Prioritised nature protection projects pipeline. The project pipeline shall be established within 26 months from the commencement date.
- **Output 46:** Relevant technical documentation for at least one investment (infrastructure) priority project from the nature protection project pipeline developed two months before the end of the contract.
- **Output 47.** Action plans for at least 10 identified priority projects from the nature protection projects pipeline delivered two months before the end of the contract.
- **Output 48.** A proposal for financing mechanisms for the implementation of the nature protection projects pipeline shall be produced within 24 months from the commencement date.

#### **Outcome 5: Public awareness on nature conservation increased**

Non-exhaustive list of potential activities:

##### **Activity 5.1 Development of Communication plan for public Awareness national, provincial and local level**

The contractor shall develop a Communication Plan for raising awareness of nature protection in the Republic of Serbia. The aim is to provide the overall strategic direction for all necessary communication activities (campaign) required to support raising awareness of target groups.

The Communication Plan should include, but not be limited to:

- a) Executive Summary;
- b) Communication objective(s) for each target group;

- c) Key messages for each target group;
- d) Communication tools and channels identified;
- e) Visibility plan;
- f) Key performance indicators and how/by whom they will be measured;
- g) Action plan covering the proposed activities and identifying who will take action, by when and with what resources;
- h) Budget for production of communications materials.

The contractor is to produce the core communications materials for a campaign that will be launched by the contractor in cooperation with MEP and EUD. The list of the types and expected quantities of communication material will be defined in the Communication Action Plan.

Communications materials have to be submitted for approval by MEP and EU Delegation.

## **Activity 5.2: Implementation of public awareness campaign for nature protection on the territory relevant to 20 Management Plans**

The aim of the campaign is mainly to influence the attitudes, opinions and actions of the target groups through education and awareness-raising.

The contractor will provide technical assistance and support the implementation of the Communication Plan for Public Awareness and provide reports about the implementation of the campaign to EUD and MEP.

This activity will last a minimum of 18 months.

Outputs related to **Outcome 5**:

- **Output 49.** Communication plan for Public Awareness developed within 8 (eight) months from commencement day and Communications materials developed within 12 months from commencement day.
- **Output 50.** Report on the Implementation of the Public awareness campaign and visibility actions shall be prepared no later than 2 months before the end of the implementation of the contract.

Tasks to be carried out during the Final phase (2 months):

- Organization the final meetings and wrap-up conference to present the final outputs and lessons learnt and to explain the impact of the project on the work of involved institutions for at least 50 participants
- Finalisation of the final outputs and Final report.

Within its Organisation and Methodology, the Contractor shall identify the precise timetable for deliverables.

The contractor must also comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission. The compliance with this shall be made an output of the contract and the contractors shall include in its reporting what have been accomplished.

## **4.3. Project management**

### **4.3.1. Responsible body**

The Contracting Authority is the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia.

#### **4.3.2. Management structure**

The contracting authority is responsible for the contract management inter alia final approval of the reports/outputs and payments to the Contractor.

The Main Beneficiary is the Ministry in charge of environmental protection (MEP).

A working group (WG) for each component (or combined for several if decided so) will be established during the inception phase by MEP.

The structure of the WGs will be discussed in the Inception phase and approved by the PSC.

WGs will be chaired by the official of the MEP (Heads of Units/Departments or their duly authorized representatives). The timeframe of the meetings will be defined during the Inception phase.

#### **Project Steering Committee**

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established by MEP during the Inception phase of the project. It will be chaired by the senior officials or any other duly authorised representative of the MEP responsible for the thematic areas concerned by this project. The PSC will include core members (representatives of the MEP, EUD, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina and as well as observers.

The role and main functions of the PSC will be:

- to assess progress and monitor implementation of all activities of the contract;
- to review and make comments on all relevant reports and outputs submitted by the contractor;
- monitoring of the progress of the implementation of the contract by reviewing, discussing and providing prior agreement before the approval by the contracting authority of the inception, interim and final reports ;
- to ensure close cooperation among the relevant ministries and institutions involved;
- providing strategic guidance and support in resolving problems affecting the proper implementation of the contract, including fulfilling assumptions and mitigating risks;
- to closely coordinate with other EU projects related to this field and with other relevant donors' projects to promote synergies and integration including regional and transboundary context of cooperation.

The PSC will meet at least every 3 months and for the first time at the end of the inception period to review the Inception report and agree on working arrangements for this contract. More often meetings can be organised as necessary for proper implementation of the contract under the request of members of the PSC or Contractor and upon the decision of the Chairmen of the PSC.

The secretarial function for the PSC, and facilities required for its work will be provided by the contractor as defined under point 6.3 below.

The language of the PSC meetings will be English.

The contractor has to provide and cover the costs for premises, equipment for presentations and interpretation, presentations and printing materials having in mind that the event will usually last approximately half of working day with up to 25 participants. The contractor shall prepare Minutes of PSC and WG meetings as well as other meetings that EUD or MEP may request within 5 working days following the relevant meeting.

#### **4.3.3. Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties**



No facilities will be provided by the Contracting Authority.

The Ministry in charge for environmental protection will:

- Appoint a National Project Coordinator of adequate seniority, qualification and skill as a direct counterpart to the contractor's team leader, and who will be responsible for coordination of all beneficiary activities with those of the project;
- Create an effective counterpart structure that ensures that all project activities have a dedicated beneficiary staff member assigned to it by function/and or name. This arrangement will be reflected in the inception report's work plan;
- Provide free of charge to the Contractor access to all relevant documents, including legislation, regulations, reports, policies, plans and programmes, which are needed for the implementation of the project;
- Depending on availability, provide free of charge meeting rooms for the PSC meetings;
- Facilitate contacts for the contractor's staff with key stakeholders and notably those in public institutions;
- Provide support for training in terms of selection of participants.

## **5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING**

### **5.1. Location**

The place of performance for this contract is Belgrade, Serbia.

Due to the inherent work to support the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Serbia, frequent activities within the country (outside Belgrade) are foreseen.

These activities may include visits to selected sites, fieldwork on specific locations, capacity-building activities, public awareness campaigns and cooperation with local stakeholders and will require travel throughout Serbia.

Several study tours are foreseen outside Serbia, and these may entail travel of the relevant contractor's staff.

Provision of office space for the work of experts is the responsibility of the contractor, as stated under point 6.2 below.

### **5.2. Start date & period of implementation of tasks**

The intended start date is November 2025 and the period of implementation of the contract will be 36 months from this date. Please see point 3 of the main conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS**

### **6.1. Personnel**

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be able to provide input as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well on any potential interference or conflict of interest of the proposed expert in his/her function as expert and his/her present or previous functions working as civil servant. Moreover proof should be submitted that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

The selection procedures used by the contractor to select the experts who provide input to the contract must be transparent, must guarantee the absence of professional conflicting interests and the absence of

any discrimination based on former or current nationality, gender, place of residence, or any other ground. The findings of the selection panel must be recorded.

The Organisation & Methodology must include a paragraph demonstrating that a gender sensitive experts' selection procedure has been applied.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

#### **6.1.1. Key Experts**

All experts mobilised under this contract must:

- Be proficient in English;
- Have excellent communication and analytical skills;
- Be proficient in report drafting;
- Have excellent team working abilities.

The minimum requirements covered by the team of experts as a whole are detailed below:

- Excellent knowledge of European legislation and international conventions on nature protection including EU Birds and Habitats Directives;
- Strong knowledge of Serbia's national nature protection legislation;
- Experience in establishment and implementation of Natura 2000 in an EU Member State or candidate country. Experience in Natura 2000 site designation, habitat/species assessments, and conservation planning;
- Experience in filling Standard Data Forms (SDFs) for potential NATURA 2000 sites;
- Knowledge and practical experience on the conservation status, monitoring systems of habitats and species including birds, network Natura 2000 and in reporting to the EU. Experience with EU procedures for pSCI and pSPA proposing, at the EU level;
- Experience in conservation planning including identification of conservation goals and conservation measures for target habitat types and species;
- Experience in desktop inventories, data gathering, data evaluating, building information systems in nature protection, site selection implementation and/or mapping of species and habitat;
- Experience in preparation and/or implementation of management plans for Natura 2000 sites;
- Experience in mapping and data management for Natura 2000 in EU member states;
- Expertise in GIS-based spatial analysis, ecological referenced monitoring, and database management;
- Experience in integrating biodiversity data into information systems and updating GIS platforms;
- Knowledge to develop software solutions for CITES permit management;
- Knowledge of financing mechanisms for nature protection projects;
- Experience in developing prioritization criteria and planning for investments in nature protection and biodiversity conservation;
- Expertise in preparation of feasibility studies and technical documentation for nature-based investment projects;
- Expertise in developing Training Needs Assessments (TNA) and capacity-building programs for public administration;
- Experience in developing training curricula and delivery of training sessions;
- Experience in organizing study tours;

- Expertise in developing public awareness campaigns, communication strategies, and visibility materials;
- Experience in Team Leadership and Project Management of managing projects related to nature protection and Natura 2000..

The Organisation and Methodology should demonstrate how the contract will comply with these requirements to accomplish the desired outputs. The Organisation and Methodology may include the name of an expert and his profile. Compliance (yes/no answer) of the team (as a whole) with the requirements will be checked, but there will be no marks given to the experts.

**The annex III “Organisation and Methodology” should ideally be less than 25 pages (without the Logical Framework Matrix, the Timetable of Work and the Activities Matrix), in font size 12.**

#### **6.1.2. Support facilities & backstopping**

The costs for support facilities, including backstopping, are included in the tenderer's financial offer.

#### **6.2. Office accommodation**

Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the Contractor, and when possible by Serbia, for instance during fieldwork.

#### **6.3. Facilities to be provided by the contractor**

The contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

#### **6.4. Equipment**

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority/partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority/partner country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

### **7. REPORTS**

#### **7.1. Reporting requirements**

The Contractor will submit the following reports in English language in one original and two copies:

- **Inception Report** of a maximum of 12 pages to be produced after 8 weeks from the start of implementation. In the report, the contractor shall describe e.g. initial findings, progress in collecting data, any difficulties encountered or expected in addition to the work programme and staff travel. The contractor should proceed with work unless the contracting authority sends comments on the Inception report.

The report shall clearly define the objectives, results including quantified indicators of achievement of the results and methodology of the project; set out a detailed work plan for the provision of each activity and list of deliverables per activity; the management of the project and any possible commitments required from the beneficiary. Inception Report will include a revised ToR as an annex to the report. Inception Report shall contain an executive summary in English and Serbian.

- **Progress reports** will be prepared quarterly (every three months) during the implementation phase to be presented at the PSC meeting. It must include a short description of problems encountered

and recommendations, relevant outputs attached, as well as planned work for the next period. These reports shall consist of narrative section and relevant outputs.

- **Draft final report** of a maximum of 30 pages (main text, excluding annexes) with the following content: short description of progress (technical and financial) including problems encountered and final recommendations. This report shall be submitted no later than one month before the end of the period of implementation of tasks. This report should include a complete overview of all activities implemented during the performance of the Contract. The report will also contain an assessment of the impact of the project measured against the stated project objectives, elaborate on lessons learnt and make recommendations for future projects to be considered in Serbia, and the indicators of achievement included in the Log-frame Planning Matrix.

- **Final report** with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report together with the final invoice and the final financial report. The deadline for sending the final report is 14 days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The detailed analyses underpinning the recommendations will be presented in annexes to the main report. The final report must be provided along with the corresponding invoice. The Final Report shall include the supporting documentation (original documents) necessary for verification of each output foreseen in this ToR.

The Contractor will be entirely responsible for timely meeting the Contractual obligations and fulfilling the results and tasks foreseen in the Contract to the satisfaction of the Beneficiary and the standards of the Contracting Authority, as well as to present all the documents, which may be required for the verification of the results and the tasks in the Final Report.

The Contracting Authority or beneficiary may request ad-hoc reports on the progress of individual activities or key other issues as they emerge. These shall be provided within 5 work days of the request.

## **7.2. Submission and approval of reports**

The report referred to above must be submitted to the Contracting Authority Project Manager identified in the contract. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports.

Drafts of reports along with relevant outputs are to be submitted electronically to all members of the PSC at least 1 week before PSC meeting. In its session, PSC will endorse the reports or give suggestions for their improvement.

The Beneficiary will be involved in the comments and the approval of the reports prior to official approval by the Contracting Authority. In the absence of comments or approval by the partner country within the set deadline, the reports are deemed to be approved.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **8.1. Definition of indicators**

In order to assess progress, identify difficulties and take rapidly appropriate measures to overcome them, it is essential to design at an early stage of project implementation a system giving a clear picture of the situation of the activities and the results achieved.

This requires the identification of key information sources and information providers, the selection of relevant quantitative and qualitative indicators, and the development of meaningful information materials, to be utilised and updated regularly (questionnaires, annexes to mission reports, minutes of meetings with stakeholders, end of seminar evaluation sheets, etc). To aim that, the contractor will propose a set of relevant indicators in its technical proposal (organisation and methodology section) and which may be updated during the inception period and periodically during project implementation as may be required.

## 8.2. Special requirements

In order to facilitate the processing of the documents handed to the Contracting Authority, the Contractor shall also submit a digital version of the documents. The electronic version shall be identical to the original (printed) version, however in case of any discrepancies between the electronic version and the original (printed version), the latter will prevail.

### Annex 1. The National Legal Framework

Law	Decree	Rulebook
Law on Nature Protection (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 36/09, 88/10, 91/10, 14/16,95/18-other law and 71/21)		
	Decree on Ecological Network (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 102/2010), a new Decree on Ecological Network is being currently drafted	
		Rulebook on proclamation and protection of strictly protected and protected wild species of plants, animals and fungi (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 5/10, 47/11, 32/16 and 98/16), which will be amended in parallel to the work on the new Decree on Ecological Network
		Rulebook on habitat types, the criteria for the selection of habitat types, sensitive, endangered, rare and priority for protection habitat types (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” No. 35/2010), which will also be amended in parallel to the work on the new Decree on Ecological Network
		Rulebook on compensatory measures (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 20/2010)
		Rulebook on special technical-technological solutions which enable unobstructed and safe communication of

		wild animals (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 72/2010)
		Rulebook on conditions of keeping, method of marking and registration of wild animals in the captivity (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 86/2011)
Law on Game and Hunting (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 18/2010, 95/18-other law and 92/23- other law) and the relevant by laws		
		Rulebook on Proclamation of Protected Game Species by Closed Hunting Season (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 9/12, 97/13, 55/15, 67/15 and 75/16)
		Rulebook on special technical-technological solutions that enable unobstructed and safe communication of wild animals (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 72/2010)
Law on the Protection and Sustainable Use of Fish Stocks (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia “, No. 128/2014 and 95/18)		
	Order on measures for the conservation and protection of fish stocks (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia “, No. 56/2015 and 94/18)	
Law on SEIA (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 135/2004, 36/2009);		
Law on EIA (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 135/04, 88/10)		
	Regulation on transboundary traffic and trade of protected species (“Official Gazette of	

	the Republic of Serbia”, No. 99/09 and 6/14)	
	Special decrees on the proclamation of protected areas.	