

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR

THE CONSULTANT TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT
“Sustainable use of natural resources for transboundary socio-economic development of protected areas in North Macedonia and Albania (Korab-Sharra and Albanian Alps)”

Purpose of Consultancy: *Develop Tourist Products with thematic working group and assist Organization of Familiarization Trip in Korab Koritnik natural park and Albanian Alps national Park to promote the tourism products*

1. Introduction and background

CNVP Foundation is implementing **“Sustainable use of natural resources for transboundary socio-economic development of protected areas in North Macedonia and Albania (Korab- Koritnik, Sharr and Albanian Alps)”** project with the financial support of PONT. PONT-Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust is the only transboundary conservation trust fund working in the Balkans dedicated to conserving the rich natural heritage of the Prespa -Ohrid, Korab -Sharr and Albanian Alps regions, by providing long term funding support to the parks and conservation organizations in the region. The project is being implemented in several protected areas in Albania, North Macedonia and Kosovo such as: Korab-Koritnik Nature Park; Sharr Mountain National Park, Mavrovo National Park and Albanian Alps National Park and the ecological corridors between them and other protected areas in the PONT Focus Region. In Albania the project is being implemented in the protected areas of 5 municipalities respectively; Kukes, Tropoja, Shkoder, Malesi e Madhe and Diber.

This project will support local communities in Protected Areas in Albania and North Macedonia to use natural resources in a sustainable way for their socio-economic development. It aims at establishing sustainable models for nature conservation and economic development of the areas, capacity building for the environmental actors, and ensuring government mechanisms are in favour and enable sustainable local development, supporting income generation activities from natural products and services, employment at local businesses, tourist sites and services etc This will be achieved through applying new *Sustainable Use practices*; supporting local organizations, businesses and households; development of *Nature Based Tourism* products and services; marketing and selling techniques; coordinating and involving stakeholders; advocating & lobbying; new governance procedures for Sustainable Use of natural resources; cooperation in transboundary area and Ecological corridors. The priority actions in this project are related to the crosscutting themes such as monitoring and management of important habitats and species; good governance; building of partnerships (in nature-based tourism or the sustainable use of Non-Timber Forest Products); climate change resilience;

transboundary cooperation as well as gender mainstreaming and women economic empowerment.

Promoting sustainable use of the natural resources, through provision and support to local communities for creating a better socio-economic life in harmony with nature is **the main objective of the project**.

Specific objectives and outputs of the project:

- Sustainable use (SU) of NTFPs in Sharri; Korab-Koritnik and Albanian Alps protected areas contributes to both nature conservation and local community development in these Pas.

1.1 Priority biodiversity components benefit from new practices for SU of NTFPs

1.2 Revenue to local stakeholders increases through application of new systems and practices for SU of NTFPs

- Nature-based tourism (NBT) in Sharri; Korab-Koritnik and Albanian Alps protected areas contributes to both nature conservation and local community development in these Pas.

2.1 Priority biodiversity components benefit from new products and services for NBT

2.2 Revenue to local stakeholders increases through new products and services for nature-based tourism

- Governance mechanisms of Sharri, Korab-Koritnik and Albanian Alps enable development of nature-based tourism and other ways of sustainable natural resource use in these Pas.

3.1 Governance mechanisms for PAs enable effective and equitable SU of natural resources

3.2 Transboundary cooperation enables exchange of best practices and multiplies the effects

3.3 Actions in the ecological corridors (EC) benefit the selected species and habitats in the PAs

Practices and lessons learned under this project will be used to increase local knowledge and inform and influence policy in local level and beyond. The long-term aim is that this model of participatory stakeholder strategic management of protected areas will be disseminated outside the direct target areas of the project. Additionally, the project will draw on experiences gained from activity implementation during previous projects and influence local policy making including Kosovo. This policy advocacy will be accomplished through ongoing efforts of the participation of different stakeholders with support of the project.

In order to facilitate the successful implementation of the project, CNVP Albania is seeking to engage an external consultant, who is expected to

have the below mentioned expertise and qualifications as well as to fulfil the following tasks:

2. Tasks, responsibility and activities

The Consultant will be required to fulfil the following detailed tasks:

1. Development of Tourist Products:

- Establish and coordinate thematic working groups comprising local stakeholders, experts, and community representatives.
- Review research and analysis to identify potential tourist products based on the region's cultural, historical, and natural assets.
- Develop detailed plans and itineraries for new tourist products, ensuring they are market-ready and sustainable.
- Propose promotional channels/materials, including brochures, itineraries, and multimedia content, to support the launch of the new products.

2. Organization of Familiarization Trips:

- Plan and execute familiarization trips in the three targeted areas to showcase the newly developed tourist products.
- Identify and invite key stakeholders, including tour operators, travel agents, and media representatives.
- Coordinate logistics, including transportation, accommodation, and guided tours, to ensure a seamless and engaging experience for participants.
- Collect feedback from participants to refine and improve the tourist products and overall visitor experience.

Primary **beneficiaries** of the project are: -Regional Administrations of Protected Areas, Municipalities, Local Environmental NGOS, Forest and pastures Users Associations, producer groups, private businesses and communities. Tour Operators

The project's **target group** includes also: Local NGOs, government units, small enterprises, informal citizen groups, particularly women and youth and the marginalized groups in general.

Target area includes: Korab-Koritnik Nature Park; and Albanian Alps National Park.

The Consultant should develop the tasks and achieve the following deliverables:

- Evaluate and propose improvement of Tourist Products in cooperation with service providers
- Review Research and Analysis done by CNVP (A summary report /profile containing regional attractions, potential tourist products, and target potential market, for the Tour Operators)

- Tourist Products Development Plan, together with CNVP advisors and tourism service providers
- Propose the group to Create Promotional channels /materials
- Plan and Execute Familiarization Trips Detailed itineraries and schedules for familiarization trips, including objectives and expected outcomes for each trip.
- Ensure Compliance and Quality Assurance of tourism products and services, in line with Tour operators' requirements
- Facilitate Capacity Building on the market requirements and expectations during Familiarization trip (combined with CNVP trainings in the areas)
- Collect and Analyze Feedback after familiarization trip, propose required improvement

Detailed Plan of activities:

| No | Interventions/Activities | Deliverables |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Initial Planning and Coordination: Define project goals and objectives for the assignment to link tourism offer with market demand, engage stakeholders, conduct stakeholder mapping to identify key local stakeholders. | Comprehensive project plan with defined goals, objectives, and identified key stakeholders. |
| 2 | Review Research and Analysis: Analyze market trends and demand to align proposed products with current tourism interests (interview of TO national and international in Albania). | Market analysis report detailing trends, demands, and alignment with proposed products (including TO list and contacts). |
| 3 | Development of Tourist Products: Brainstorm and generate ideas for new tourist products with thematic working groups. Develop guidelines and best practices for sustainability. | Tourist product development plan including sustainability guidelines. |
| 4 | Promotional channels/ Material Creation: Ensure all promotional content aligns with the overall marketing strategy and brand identity. | Marketing and promotional strategy / proposal document with sample materials. |
| 5 | Capacity Building and Sustainability: Conduct training sessions for local stakeholders on product management and marketing in cooperation with CNVP advisors. | Training modules and workshop summaries focusing on product management and sustainable practices (combined with CNVP trainings). |
| 6 | Familiarization Trip Planning and Execution: Plan and execute trips, including itineraries, logistics coordination, and stakeholder engagement. Conduct briefings and facilitate interactions for feedback. | Detailed itineraries, logistics arrangements, execution report, and participant feedback compilation. |
| 7 | Feedback Collection and Analysis: Distribute feedback forms, conduct follow-up interviews, and analyze the feedback to identify strengths and areas for improvement. | Feedback analysis report with improvement recommendations. |
| 8 | Recommendations and Evaluation: Monitor the implementation of products, prepare progress reports, and establish KPIs. Propose continuous improvement methodologies and present findings at a national event. | Final recommendations report, established KPIs, and continuous improvement plan. Presentation of results in the Regional Tourism Conference |

3. Reporting requirements & deliverables

The Consultant will be required to prepare reports and gather data in the field per each specific task accordingly.

4. Time frame

The total day input for this Consultancy contract input is set for 35 days.

5. Expertise required

The ideal consultants will possess the following qualifications:

1. A minimum of 10 years of proven experience in tourism development, product development, TO, tourism service providers or related fields.
2. Proven experience in organizing familiarization trips or similar events.
3. Strong research and analytical skills.
4. Excellent organizational, communication, and interpersonal skills.
5. Ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.
6. Proficiency in project management software and tools.
7. Fluent in English (both written and spoken).

6. Period of Consultant engagement

The Consultant shall be engaged for the period of **25 July 2024 – 30 of September 2024**

CNVP operates in the Balkan region. It focuses on natural resource management, forestry, agri-rural development and renewable energy, as well as the impact of climate change on the environment.

As a civil society organisation, CNVP acts as a facilitator to:

- Strengthen community capacity to achieve local development goals;
- Maximize the production and service potential of rural areas through sustainable and locally controlled natural resource management;
- Promote the use of natural resources to improve socio-economic development and rural livelihoods; and
- Conserve the bio-diversity of natural resources at a time of serious environmental and climate change.

Core Values

- **Green** - intervening to build a greener economic environment within the ongoing process of climate change
- **Clean** - promoting renewable energy and improved household/industrial waste management
- **Seen** - operating in the Balkans and the European Neighborhood Space
- **Lean** - improving the efficiency of service delivery continuously and systematically

Connecting Natural Values & People

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Active in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro,
Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina