Service Procurement Notice:
Monitoring and Database Experts

Location: Home based and Albania
Estimated number of total man/days: 760 man/days
Duration: until August 2013
Type of contract: Consultancy to IUCN Regional Office for Europe
Deadline for applications: 19 February 2012
Preferred starting date: 1 March 2012

1. BACKGROUND
IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Regional Office for Europe, is seeking a Team of 4 Experts and 1 Technician to provide technical assistance services for a protected areas and waste management project in Albania. The project is supported by the Government of Italy through DGCS, the DG for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Project, “Institutional Support to the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forest and Water Administration (MoEFWA) for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation and Use in Protected Areas and the Management of Waste”, will help enhance the Ministry’s capacity in addressing these two important governmental national and sub-national priorities. More specifically, this Project will improve national capacity in conserving biodiversity by improving the capacities of MoEFWA in planning and managing protected areas and in implementing concrete actions on the ground.

The project’s specific objectives are to:
1. **Develop the technical capacities of MoEFWA** to adopt systemic approach and methods to:
   (i) increase biodiversity conservation effectiveness of protected areas, and (ii) their pivotal role in the development of communities living within the relevant ecosystems user and service areas;
2. **Enhance the planning capacity of MoEFWA**, i.e. in preparing participatory management plans consistently with technical capacities acquired as per Objective 1;
3. **Enhance the capacity of MoEFWA in the implementation** of participatory systemic plans and establish effective adaptive management practices for protected areas.

This Project will support the MoEFWA in the realization of the foregoing objectives by developing and implementing a systemic and replicable model to plan and manage protected area. As agreed with counterparts, the project will work at both central and local level, training and working with MoEFWA officials in Tirana and with the district staff responsible of the
management of two pilot protected areas: the Buna River and surrounding wetlands Protected Water and Ground Landscape in Shkodra Region and Shebenik-Jablanica National Park in Elbasan Region.

The Project includes a component for the establishment of an integrated management network between national and local protected areas administrations, through the activation of a central coordinating unit in Tirana and two peripheral nodes in the pilot sites mentioned above. Key responsibility of the central coordinating unit will be that of managing spatial, ecological and information links and flows between the various protected areas, while the mandate of the two peripheral nodes will focus the direct management of the protected area sites. In this framework, the Project will also support the preparation of a Management Plan for both Protected Areas (a description of the two sites is given in Annex I), following the systemic and objective approach adopted by the Project and consistently with IUCN Management Plan development guidelines (http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/PAG-010.pdf). Such management plans will be aimed at increasing conservation effectiveness of the said protected area sites, as well as at boosting their pivotal role in the development of neighbouring communities living within relevant ecosystems user areas and service areas. The management plans will tackle all dimensions of sustainable development (social, institutional, economic and environmental) in an integrated fashion, with the ultimate goal of promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as fostering a harmonic socio-economic development. Consistently, the plans will:

a) be developed with the active participation of all relevant stakeholder and local communities, according to a bottom-up participatory approach;
b) focus on ecosystem structure, functions and services, as well as on their interaction with the socio-economic system, in the light of making the necessary balancing or trading-off between different development objectives;
c) be supported by quantitative data;
d) be targeted at defining and implementing adaptive management practices.

The entire process for the preparation of the management plans will be carried out with the full and active participation of key institutional, economic and social stakeholders, and will follow a three-phase logical transitional path as outlined here below:

Phase 1. assessment and modelling of key ecosystem conservation and community development dynamics of the two sites’ social, economic and ecosystem user and service areas framework;
Phase 2. collection of quantitative data to support the analyses functional to the definition of the most appropriate planning measures;
Phase 3. definition of planning measures and drafting of the Management Plans.
The project will have a central coordination unit based in Tirana composed by the Project Manager, an administrative assistant and an accountant, and a scientific and technical supervision unit composed by a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and a Technical Coordinator (TC).

2. TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

The required team of experts will be responsible for carrying out following tasks:

- **Develop tabular and spatial databases for the integrated management of the Albanian protected areas network mentioned in Section 1;** in view of the effective transfer of the technical competences, this task will be executed jointly with the relevant Albanian institutional staff. The said databases will include:
  - all the data needed to support the technical tasks of the protected areas management network central coordination unit in Tirana. The related datasets will be defined in close collaboration with the project’s Protected Areas and Ecological Network expert in charge of developing the project activities for the establishment of the Albanian protected areas network;
  - all data needed for the quantitative modeling of the structure and functioning of the social, economic and environmental systems characterizing the two protected areas. The related datasets will be defined on the basis of a list of specific indexes and indicators to be prepared in the process for the preparation of the two protected areas Management Plans mentioned in Section 1.

A first version of the database is foreseen to be delivered by March 2012, while the revision and updating of the database applications (e.g. new dataset structure, handling of primary data for the construction of indicators) is scheduled to be delivered by August 2013.

- **Define a theoretical and practical training plan** to be delivered by the experts to the institutional Albanian staff responsible for the monitoring and management of the Albanian Protected Areas (PAs); this task is expected to be completed by the experts by May 2012. The training plan will be targeted at providing to relevant institutional staff with the adequate technical capacity to:
  - understand and analyze key social, economic and ecological dynamics involved in the management of both central coordinating unit and the two the pilot protected area sites mentioned in Section 1;
  - understand and manage the data collection procedures and implement data collection campaigns mentioned in the point below;
  - implement the management plans for the two protected area pilot sites mentioned in Section 1;
- Each expert will draft, for his/her specific field of expertise, a set of data collection operational procedures for the monitoring of the Velipoje and Shebenik-Jabllanice PAs. This task will be executed according to the following schedule:
  - Drafting of the manual on data collection procedures (by thematic sector), to be delivered by June 2012
  - Field testing of draft data collection procedures (by thematic sector), to be completed by June 2013
  - Final version of manual on data collection procedures (by thematic sector), to be delivered by September 2013.

- Each expert will coordinate and execute in both PAs, based on the drafted operational procedures, the related field data collection campaigns, carrying out the field work activities as needed. Field data collection campaigns will tentatively start during spring 2012 and will be continued if necessary in the year 2013 season. It is estimated that each expert will spend approximately 30 days in each protected area in each field collection campaign (2012 and 2013). The first field data collection campaign is expected to start during spring 2012 and the second to be completed by August 2013.

- In order to transfer to the country the capacities on how to carry out data collection and analysis for the monitoring of PAs, all data collection and analysis will be carried out in teamwork with a group of selected local experts and institutional staff, to whom each expert will deliver on the job training; it is expected that the selected experts will constructively interact and collaborate with the selected local experts, cooperating with them during all phases of the work (planning, data collection, data analysis).

- The experts will timely define the needs, in terms of equipment (e.g. computers, GPS, data collection instruments etc.), to carry out the above mentioned data collection and analysis for the management of the PAs.

The above mentioned tasks will directly contribute to the development of the management plans of Buna River Protected Landscape and Shebenik-Jablanica National Park; moreover this work, through the increase in the planning and management capacities of MoEFWA, is intended for the development and the implementation of a systemic and replicable model to plan and manage other protected areas in Albania.

For the implementation of these tasks the experts will respond directly to the IUCN SEE Project Coordinator and the IUCN SEE PM in Tirana and will work in close collaboration with the CTA and TC, supporting their work as required.
3. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXPERTS

The 5 experts may be contracted either individually or through an association of persons or through a private or non-governmental organization providing equivalent services to the Project.

Considering the need of working in close collaboration for the above mentioned tasks, a joint candidature of a Team of 5 experts is encouraged and will be considered an asset. In such case the experts shall submit their candidature jointly, indicating the expert Team Leader that will act as focal point with the project.

The required experts will have the following profiles:

**Plant ecology Expert**

A plant ecologist with a proven knowledge of:

- Flora and vegetation of coastal and mountain areas of the Mediterranean region.
- Quantitative indicators for the assessment of the conservation status of plant species and habitats.
- Elaboration and implementation of conservation strategies for plant species and habitats.

The plant ecologist will also have a practical and theoretical knowledge of:

- Use of GIS/GPS and remote sensing tools for mapping plant species and habitats.
- Sampling procedures of flora and vegetation data.
- Multivariate statistical analysis of plant species, vegetation and ecological data.
- Modelling spatial ecological niche of plant species and habitats.

The estimated number of man/days for this expert is 160 of which, tentatively, 20 will be dedicated to the digitalization of existing data, 10 to the drafting of the data collection procedures, 120 to the field data collection (approximately 30 days in each protected area for each field collection campaign - 2012 and 2013) and 10 to the final editing of the capacity building programme.

**Animal Ecology Expert**

A zoologist with a proven knowledge of:

- Techniques for monitoring the fauna of the Mediterranean region, including the mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates taxa.
- Quantitative indicators for the assessment of the conservation status of animal species.
- Elaboration and implementation of conservation strategies for animal species.
The zoologist will also have a practical and theoretical knowledge of:

- Use of GIS/GPS and remote sensing tools for mapping animal species distribution;
- Sampling techniques and procedures for animal species distribution and abundance;
- Multivariate statistical analysis of animal species and ecological data;
- Modelling spatial ecological niche of animal species.

The estimated number of man/days for this expert is 160 of which, tentatively, 20 will be dedicated to the digitalization of existing data, 10 to the drafting of the data collection procedures, 120 to the field data collection (approximately 30 days in each protected area for each field collection campaign - 2012 and 2013) and 10 to the final editing of the capacity building programme.

**Water management and Hydrogeology Expert**

A hydrogeologist with a proven knowledge of:

- hydrogeology and hydrogeochemistry of coastal and mountain aquifers of the Mediterranean region;
- interpreting technical data and information from maps and historical documents to build a conceptual model of groundwater flow and hydrogeochemistry quality;
- designing and completing an investigation (which may include environmental measurement and sampling or an ongoing monitoring regime) in order to confirm or develop the hydrogeology and hydrogeochemistry model;
- using modeling techniques to enable predictions to be made about future trends and impacts on groundwater flow and quality;
- sampling and interpretation of hydrogeochemical and isotopic analyses;
- analysis of water reservoir vulnerability (both deep and shallow reservoirs);
- water budgets, assessment of seepage coefficients.

The estimated number of man/days for this expert is 160 of which, tentatively, 20 will be dedicated to the digitalization of existing data, 10 to the drafting of the data collection procedures, 120 to the field data collection (approximately 30 days in each protected area for each field collection campaign - 2012 and 2013) and 10 to the final editing of the capacity building programme.
**Socio-economic Expert**

An expert in socio-economic development with a proven track record of professional experience in:

- integrated analysis of social, economic and institutional dynamics within the framework of natural resources management and/or sustainable development projects;
- institutional decentralization and community empowerment;
- systemic planning and multi-governance mechanisms for local economic development and income generation activities;
- public policies in support to private sector with particular reference to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The estimated number of man/days for this expert is 160 of which, tentatively, 20 will be dedicated to the digitalization of existing data, 10 to the drafting of the data collection procedures, 120 to the field data collection (approximately 30 days in each protected area for each field collection campaign - 2012 and 2013) and 10 to the final editing of the capacity building programme.

**Database and Geographical Information System Technician**

A database and Geographical Information System (GIS) technician with a proven experience in the development of tabular and spatial integrated databases for: (i) the ecosystem based management of protected areas and, (ii) systemic natural resources management project to support sustainable development. The technician will also have a good knowledge of environmental science related matters, as well as an in-the-field experience in the collection and spatial analysis of environmental data.

The estimated number of man/days for this expert is 120.

### 4 - SELECTION CRITERIA

**Education**

All the four Experts will have an advanced University Degree (Master’s degree or equivalent) in studies appropriate for each specific expert’s profile, while Technician’s education will have at least a secondary school level.

**Work Experience**

All Experts will have:

- an extensive and proven professional track record of at least 5 years in the fields related to the mentioned above profiles and within the framework of sustainable development
projects implemented consistently with the ecosystem approach paradigm;
- a proven experience in the professional use of methodological tools, as well informatics
instruments, for the systemic analysis and quantitative assessment of key social,
economic and environmental dynamics involved in the management of the PAs by
focusing on ecosystem structure, function and services, as well as on their interaction
with the socio-economic system.

Previous experience in capacity building of institutional staff is considered to be an advantage.
Previous joint experience of the 5 Experts in working as a team in similar projects will also be
considered an asset.

Languages
Complete fluency in English is essential. Knowledge of Albanian or Italian is considered to be
an asset.

5. MAXIMUM BUDGET: 272.000 Euro

The daily fees of the single experts will be defined on the base of their actual competences and
professional experience.

6. APPLICATIONS

Interested teams of experts are invited to submit their application, comprising an introductory
letter and CV to see@iucn.org by 19 February 2012.

In case of a joint application by a pool of 5 experts, the application will be sent by the Team
Leader (see Section 3 above) and will comprise of:

- filled in Application form attached as Annex II to this notice
- the individual CVs of the five experts.
ANNEX I - Project Site Descriptions

Buna River and surrounding wetlands Protected Water and Ground Landscape

Part of the original Velipoje Managed Reserve is now the core zone of the Velipoje Protected Landscape (IUCN Category V protected area) that is situated on the coast in the District of Shkodra at the Albania and Montenegro border. It is a picturesque and environmentally sensitive area that is surrounded by mountains on three sides. Its border follows the lower reaches of the Buna River and it possesses 8 km of coastline. Its present area is 694 ha, of which approximately 250 ha are disconnected small wetlands. The reserve includes the Buna River delta. Its vegetation is typically Mediterranean. The reserve provides habitat for the rare Pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), and its oak-ash forests are considered endangered. In VPL it is also possible to find species of European importance, such as the Pygmy cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*), European otter (*Lutra lutra*), and Golden jackal (*Canis aureus*). The reserve possesses a nice sandy beach and has been experiencing growing numbers of summer users.

Velipoje village is the closest settlement with a year-round population of approximately 15,000 people. The visitation to the area grows in the summer to between 60,000 to 250 000 during the peak season due to the recreational use of the area. Since there is no waste collection, refuse accumulates throughout the reserve. Roadside heaps of household garbage are not only an environmental risk, but also a human health and safety risk. From an economic viewpoint, the polluted streets give a poor image to the city that depends on tourism for its revenues. When waste is collected, it is transferred and dumped into a local open dumping ground that has no specific management. Financial barriers prohibit the municipality from transporting its waste to the newly constructed regional landfill in Bushat.

Aside from waste, other stresses in the reserve have the potential to significantly reduce the value of the ecosystem services that VPL can provide to a large number of people. These include i) changes in the water regime, with alluviuma often filling up the river mouth presenting an obstacle to fish migration, ii) the lasting effects of former marsh draining, iii) the upstream discharge of polluting materials (detergents, chemicals) from the town of Shkodra that flows from the Drin to the Buna River and then downstream to the delta, iv) damage to forest vegetation primarily along river banks resulting in increased erosion, v) damage to reed beds resulting in the loss of bird habitat, and vi) the poorly regulated construction of touristic and commercial (small hotels) infrastructure. The reserve has an Administration building and is supervised by one forestry technician and four guards. The staff has 2 motorcycles and radios. There is an office in the reserve that is equipped with a telephone.

The Viluni Lagoon, directly adjacent to the Velipoje Reserve, is another environmentally significant area that has been identified as one of the most Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the country. The National Biodiversity Strategy proposed placing this area under protection as part of the Velipoje Reserve complex. Subsequent inclusion of this area in the Buna River Protected Landscape has added 950 ha to the original Velipoje Reserve.
The Viluni Lagoon area is important for migratory wintering waterfowl and water birds, a number of which are protected under the Bonn Convention. The Viluni Lagoon itself covers 390 ha and is connected to the sea via the Viluni canal which is 500 m long and 30-40 m wide. Sand beaches with scarce vegetation bordered by white dunes covered by marram grass (Ammophila arenaria) separate the lagoon from the sea. The lagoon is important for biodiversity for it hosts species sensitive to different gradients in salinity. The shallowness of the lagoon and the mudflats provide optimal habitat for numerous species of birds. Many passerines, including the lark (Alauda arvensis), pipit (Anthus pratensis), White wagtail (Motacilla alba), Goldcrest (Regulus regulus) and European blue tit (Parus caeruleus) use the lagoon when migrating or nesting. It is also a potential habitat for curlews (Numenius tenuirostris), which are presently a rare species. The area is also important for Dalmatian pelicans (Pelecanus crispus) as a feeding and migration site. It also provides suitable habitat for several species of amphibians and reptiles including the Large whip snake (Coluber jugularis), and the European pond turtle (Emys orbicularis).

The vegetation is mainly composed of sub-Mediterranean xeric broadleaf forest. The coastal vegetation consists of associations of Mediterranean grasses and reeds. The coast is partly covered by replanted pines and elms and partly by the Viluni Lagoon that is fringed by large reed fields. Here one also finds several poplar plantations. Inland, the plain has been reclaimed from extensive marsh and is presently only partly exploited, with most of the abandoned fields being grazed by cattle. The catchment basin of the Viluni Lagoon includes 500 ha of farmed lands, 389 ha of forests and 20 ha of grazing lands. The channels, often invaded by water plants, are experiencing eutrophication as a result of farming activities and the input of nutrients from nearby settlements.

Shebenik-Jablanica National Park

The National Park is located in Librazhdi District, in the region of Elbasan. It is one the most beautiful and visited areas in the Eastern part of the country. It possesses high ecological, landscape, biodiversity and ecosystem service values, and eco-tourism, leisure, research and study are the most important uses of the area.

The area was designated as a National Park (IUCN Category II) by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 640, date 21.05.2008. Total area is 33927.66 ha and is situated between Bushtrica Valley, Shkumbini river, the national road Librazhd-Çermenike and the state border with FYROM in the District Elbasan, Under-prefecture: Librazhd, Communes: Stebleve, Lunik, Librazhd Qender, Hotolisht, Qukes and Rrajce.

Villages within and near the National Park include Stebleva, Borova, Zabzuni, Llanga, Letmi, Zagoshti, Kosoarsht, Dorezi, Kutermani, Gizaveshi, Luniku, Qarishta, Librazhd-Katundi, Serecti, Kozhduk, Kokreva, Vulcani, Buzgara, Skroska, Nermolla, Dragoshtuni, Hotolisht, Skenderbeu, Sutani, Bardhaj, Rrajca, etc.. The human population is stable in number and is mostly engaged in traditional activities such as agriculture, forestry and livestock breeding.
The Administration responsible for the National Park is the Directorate of Forestry Service of Librazhd and communes according to the ownership and administrative division.

The area of Shebenik-Jablanica is part of the physical-geographical South-Eastern units of the country. Its elevation ranges from 300 to 2200 m above the sea level. Generally it lies on the direction North West-South East, length 30 km, and in the direction East-West, length 3-12 km. To the North this region lies up to Qarrishta Valley and Kryqi gorge, to the west to upper Shkumbini Valley, to the South it borders with Prrenjasi and Qafe Thana, whilst to the East it borders with Ohri Gropa and Black Drini.

From the phyto-climatological point of view, it is possible of distinguish 3 areas: Quercetum, Fagetum, pastures and livadheth (subalpine and alpine). Main natural areas are forests, even virgin forest areas, dominated by beech forests (*Fagus sylvatica* L.), fir (*Abies abies alba*), Bosnian pine (*Pinus leucodermi*), Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris* L.), Durmast oak (*Quercus petraea*), hophornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia* Scop.) and Sycamore maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus* L.).

The region of Shebenik-Jablanica is distinctive for its rich diversity of flora and fauna. It provides a number of habitats that are crucial for certain fauna species that feed and find shelter in these habitats. Among the numerous mammals species, 5 are listed in Annex II of the Bern Convention requiring strict protection; 9 other species are listed in the Red Book of Albanian fauna, of which special conservation interest have: brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), wolf (*Canis lupus*), lynx (*Lynx lynx*), chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), and otter (*Lutra lutra*).

The Shebenik-Jablanica region is a refuge for a diverse bird community, characteristic of forest and high mountain areas. More than 70 % of the bird species are resident and more than half of them are of special conservation interest.

10 species of amphibians and 15 species of reptiles are found in the Shebenik-Jablanica region. Some of the rare species of herpetofauna are: *Testudo hermanni*, *Algyroides nigropunctatus*, *Coronella austriaca*, *Coluber jugularis*, *Coluber najadum* and *Natrix tessellat*. 4 species of amphibians and 11 species of reptiles belong to the Bern Convention’s Annex II list of species.

Fresh waters of the rivers Shkumbin, Rrapun, Qarrishte and Bushtrice and those of mountain rivers are home to brown trout (*Salmo trutta fario*), a species listed in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Librazhd is the main city in the vicinity of the national park. Around 65 % of the population is categorized as working force. The population is dominated by youngsters. The road infrastructure is improving as well as other infrastructural facilities.

Agricultural activity and agricultural and livestock products are most important in the economy and social life of the communities. Agricultural land is under the ownership of the farmers’ families.

Livestock and poultry numbers are increasing, by using modern technology and means interlinked with the traditional ones. Livestock breeding is dominated by goat and sheep, whilst gjedhi cattle play an important role in the flattest areas. The pasture capacity of the region does not fulfill the needs of livestock.
Forests and other biological resources contribute to community welfare. The Shebenik-Jablanica region, due to suitable ecological conditions, is very rich in medicinal, aromatic and nutrition plants. These products are collected from both natural and cultivated plants. In some areas, employment in forestry sector and in relation to the collection and treatment of medicinal and aromatic plants is an essential economic activity. The forest area is also used for livestock grazing. Wood and timber from natural forests are the primary energy source and the source for rural construction.

The local economy is in harmony with the development of the free market and to this end efforts have been made to set up the agribusiness industry in accordance with the products and the needs of the population, aiming at both national and international markets.

Environmental protection and nature conservation are the main challenges related to the planning and proper administration of the rural and natural environment. Pollution increase caused by human activities has negatively affected the ecosystem and its biological productivity. This is a continuous serious threat to the natural environment of rivers as well as for mountainous, forest, and pasture ecosystems.

Possible negative impacts include:

- Throwing of solid and inorganic waste. The major part of waste consists of items used for picnics (bottles, bags, papers, glasses, cans, tins, plates).
- Risks from fire, grazing, illegal hunting and fauna disturbance.
- Construction of hotels and restaurants that are not in harmony with the natural landscape.
- Construction waste.
- One uncontrolled local dumping zone is an environmental menace.
- Collection of firewood as well as wood material.
- Lack of infrastructure and of touristic, leisure and sport activities’ management.
- Water pollution due to the discharge of waste water from surrounding villages, waters with pesticides from agriculture and waters with high content of detergents as well as hydrocarbons.
ANNEX II – Statement of temporary association

IN RELATION TO THE IUCN “SERVICE PROCUREMENT NOTICE FOR TEAM OF 5 EXPERTS TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES FOR A PROTECTED AREAS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT IN ALBANIA”

We, the undersigned, hereby declare that we agree to participate jointly and exclusively with the other applicants listed in the table here below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional profile</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plant ecology Expert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Ecology Expert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water management and Hydrogeology Expert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic Expert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database and Geographical Information System Technician</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Team Leader will be: .................................................................

in the above-mentioned vacancy announcement for technical assistance services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Team Leader</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>