

Terms of Reference

For the recruitment of a Consultant responsible for writing the Project Document and the GEF CEO Endorsement Request for the Lake Ohrid GEF Project, and ensuring these and all related Annexes are complete and aligned with GEF requirements.

In the framework of the “Improving Transboundary Water Security and Biodiversity through Integrated Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Restoration in the Lake Ohrid Watershed” GEF PPG.

Funded by the GEF

September 2026

1. Introduction – Background

The “*Improving Transboundary Water Security and Biodiversity through Integrated Water Resources Management and Ecosystem Restoration in the Lake Ohrid Watershed*” Project is currently in its Project Preparation Grant (PPG) phase, with the PIF having been approved by the GEF Executive Coordinator on 15 June 2026. It is implemented by UNDP and executed by Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med).

Lake Ohrid, shared by North Macedonia and Albania, is a globally significant biodiversity hotspot and a UNESCO World Heritage site. However, it faces severe and accelerating anthropogenic degradation. The primary threats and environmental pressures identified include water pollution & eutrophication, hydrological instability, impacts from the Sateska river diversion, ecological and fishing pressures, unregulated tourism and deficits in related infrastructure, as well as systemic barriers including fragmented scientific datasets, weak enforcement, and lack of technical experience in nature-based solutions.

The Project Objective is to protect and sustainably manage the Lake Ohrid watershed by improving transboundary governance of resources, accelerating targeted pressure-reduction measures, and strengthening bilateral cooperation. The project's transformative potential lies in shifting transboundary cooperation from isolated, unenforceable planning to legally binding, integrated governance.

It accomplishes this based on a "Science-to-Policy-to-Action" Theory of Change structured in five components:

- **Component 1 (Science - Enabling Environment):** Establishes a unified transboundary evidence base. It performs investigative monitoring to define EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) reference conditions, develops downscaled hydrological/hydraulic models for a climate-informed water balance, establishes an operational transboundary monitoring program, and conducts a joint fish stock assessment.
- **Component 2 (Policy - Governance Regimes):** Translates data into binding frameworks. It updates the transboundary Lake Ohrid Watershed Management Plan, designs a Joint Fishery Management Plan, harmonizes adjacent protected area regimes, and establishes three legally binding transboundary Protocols (covering monitoring, fisheries, and tourism) to empower the Lake Ohrid Committee.
- **Component 3 (Action - Pollution Control & Ecosystem Resilience):** Implements localized, scalable solutions through demonstration activities. This includes constructing a constructed wetland for rural wastewater treatment, demonstrating precision agriculture practices (prioritizing women-led farms), implementing nature-based erosion control to stabilize the Sateska catchment, maturing investment packages for Ohrid town's port infrastructure, and equipping enforcement bodies to control illegal fishing.
- **Component 4 (Knowledge Management & Communications):** Advances a culture of shared stewardship of the basin's natural resources, also through capacity building and outreach, while engaging in global learning through the GEF IW:LEARN network.
- **Component 5 (Monitoring & Evaluation):** Implements a gender-responsive M&E system and a transparent grievance redress mechanism to support inclusive, adaptive project management.

For more details, the approved PIF is available here: <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/12251>

A structured consultation process is currently underway with multi-stakeholder consultation workshops to be held in September 2026 engaging key stakeholders both at the local (Ohrid and Pogradec) and national (Skopje and Tirana) levels. This consultation process is vital to ensure that the project's activities

are realistic and implementable, technically sound and socially accepted, and may lead to adaptations in the project design at the Outputs level.

2. Description of the Assignment

The consultant will be responsible for quality assurance and timely preparation of all reports and documentation, including the finalized GEF CEO Endorsement or Approval Request, and UNDP Project Document (ProDoc), with all mandatory and project specific Annexes and supporting documentation. S/he will be in coordination with the PPG Team who will be responsible for preparing individual Annexes to the ProDoc.

3. Tasks – Requested services

The following lists key responsibilities and deliverables of the consultant:

1) Overall

Verify and ensure that all project components are technically sound and cost effective.

2) Preparatory Technical Studies and Reviews: With inputs from the national consultants, as detailed in their respective TORs:

- a. Compile baseline/situational analysis for the full-size project (FSP). This will include a precise definition of baseline projects, activities, budgets, goals, and co-financial links to GEF outcomes; a definition of GEF incremental value per outcome and output; and a presentation of results of the incremental cost-analysis in matrices as appropriate;
- b. Ensure that the gender analysis and its findings are meaningfully integrated into the project's strategy, theory of change, and results framework;
- c. Ensure that the updated SES and SESP integrates as appropriate the findings and results of the Stakeholders Analysis and Stakeholders Engagement Plan as well as the findings and results of the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan; ensure that the SEP and SESP analysis and results are meaningfully integrated as appropriate into the project's strategy, theory of change, results framework and risk framework;
- d. Ensure the design of appropriate project knowledge management processes and platforms, ensuring appropriate linkages to existing mechanisms and knowledge sharing in project landscapes;

3) Formulation of the ProDoc, CEO Endorsement Request and Mandatory and Project Specific Annexes: With inputs from the team members and experts, as detailed in their respective TORs, and based on international best practice:

- a. Develop, present, and articulate the project's theory of change;
- b. Develop the Results Framework in line with UNDP-GEF policy;
- c. Develop a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget;
- d. Ensure that the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the Gender Action Plan and Budget are complete and aligned with requirements;
- e. Oversee and ensure the updating of the SESP based on assessments undertaken during Component A;
- f. Oversee the preparation of the required GEF tracking tools (if required) and GEF Core Indicators and ensure these are supported by robust and validated data;

- g. Synthesize all analyses, studies, etc. that are prepared by the PPG Team to produce the draft UNDP-GEF ProDoc, GEF CEO Endorsement, and all mandatory and project specific Annexes.
 - h. Do the above securing and coordinating with the team so as comments of the GEF Secretariat during PIF stage are met.
- 4) Validation Workshop:
- a. Lead the validation workshop to present, discuss and validate the final draft ProDoc and mandatory and project specific annexes, with a special focus on the SESP and any management plans;
 - b. Do all necessary revisions that arise from the discussions during the workshop; and
- 5) Final Deliverables:
- a. Consolidation of all technical and consultation inputs and comments including from national stakeholders, UNDP, GEF Secretariat, STAP and GEF Council, into a well written and concise UNDP ProDoc with all required sections and Annexes, in line with the standard UNDP-GEF ProDoc template and annotated guidance;
 - b. Completion of the GEF CEO Endorsement Request;
 - c. All documentation from GEF PPG (including technical reports, meeting minutes, etc.); and
 - d. Validation Workshop Report.

4. Reporting, Deliverables and Milestones

The Successful Consultant(s) are expected to provide the following deliverables, which are directly related to the tasks outlined in detail under Section 3, based on the below timeline (expressed in months after the contract is signed). The schedule for submission may be adjusted as necessary during the contract preparation period. All deliverables should be submitted in English, unless otherwise specified.

Deliverable:	Target due date (months after contract signature)
1. Detailed work plan based on the objectives and approaches outlined above, as well as target dates for delivering outputs.	1
2. Inception report, following consultation meetings, including an outline of all required preparatory technical studies and reviews.	2
3. Stakeholder validation workshop report following final field mission.	3
4. Draft GEF CEO Endorsement Request documentation including Annexes submitted to UNDP RTA for final review.	3
5. Initial draft project document accompanied by finalized technical studies submitted to UNDP RTA for review.	3
6. Address comments received from GEF Secretariat and/or Council members (if any), and prepare package for resubmission, until receipt of endorsement from the GEF	8
7. Finalize Project Document and annexes based on final version of CEO Endorsement Request endorsed by the GEF.	8

Logbook of activities

The consultant will maintain a logbook of activities regarding the progress of the assigned tasks. The logbook will be filled in on a weekly basis and will be available to the project team prior to each meeting and/or upon request.

Reporting Line

The successful consultant will work under the direct supervision of / and communicate directly with the Project Manager and the PPG Team.

Coordination meetings between the consultant and the Project Team shall be scheduled on a weekly basis to effectively monitor the progress pertaining to the workplan. The rendering of services shall be executed, and completion thereof shall be determined, upon the satisfaction and approval of the deliverables by the Project Manager and GWP-Med team.

Confidentiality

All information supplied by GWP-Med in connection with this tender to date, and any further information supplied during the tender process shall be regarded as confidential and must not be shared with any other organization without written permission of GWP-Med.

5. Payment modalities

Payment Schedule:

Completion and delivery of deliverable 1: 20% of total contract amount

Completion and delivery of deliverables 2-5: 50% of total contract amount

Completion and delivery of deliverables 8-9: 30% of total contract amount

Each payment will be issued after the quality assessment and approval of each deliverable by the Contracting Authority. Then, the awarded consultant will issue the respective invoices.

6. Contract price and duration.

The maximum fee for this assignment is **34,800 USD**. This amount includes all other costs, including income taxes and any other amount payable or cost that may be required for the completion of the work/service, including VAT.

The completion of the Assignment is expected to require 35 working days. The overall duration of the contract will be for a maximum of **8 months** after the contract signature. Payments will be made upon acceptance and verification of the related deliverables, as laid out in section 4 "Reporting, deliverables, and Milestones".

7. Disqualification criteria ON/OFF

For details on the ON/OFF disqualification please refer to the Call for Offers

8. Qualification and Experience

Participants in the call are required to have solid experience in the preparation of GEF Project Documents, and overall related to the tasks described in the ToR. The required qualifications are presented below. Failure to provide the minimum required qualifications is considered ground for disqualification **The titles, details of the projects and description of the role of the expert that sufficiently demonstrate compliance**

with the required criteria should be clearly specified. Qualifications additional to the minimum requested per category will receive additional score under the evaluation process as described in the section Awarding Criterion and Evaluation process.

Table 1 – Required qualifications

- 1) University Degree (BSc or equivalent) in natural resources management, or environmental engineering/management, or a directly related field **(Required). On/Off**
- 2) Excellent oral and written communication skills in English **(Required). On/Off**
- 3) Minimum of 15 years' experience in the design of programs, projects and proposal management services to multilateral agencies, including the GEF **(Required). Evaluated**
- 4) A proven track record of developing a minimum of 10 PIFs and/or Project Documents for GEF in the field of International Waters, Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Climate Change Adaptation, sustainable management of natural resources, or directly related field. **(Required). Evaluated**

9. Evaluation Process and Awarding Criterion

AWARD CRITERION: The most economically advantageous offer based on the best price/quality ratio.

Offers shall be evaluated as follows:

Offers qualified in terms of exclusion grounds and selection criteria will be further evaluated on the basis of the requirements presented under section "Qualification and Experience", as follows:

(1) Criterion	(2) Weighting (w)	(3) Points of criterion (c)	(4) Score= (2) x (3)
Participants are required to have a record of minimum of 15 years' experience in the design of programs, projects and proposal management services to multilateral agencies, including the GEF (Required – Evaluated).	20%		
Participants are required to have a proven track record of developing a minimum of 10 PIFs and/or Project Documents for GEF in the field of International Waters, Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Climate Change Adaptation, sustainable management of natural resources, or directly related field. (Required – Evaluated).	80%		

Failure to provide the minimum required qualifications is considered ground for disqualification.

Scoring for each evaluation criteria starts from 100 points (when minimum requirements are met) up until maximum 150 points (100p Base +10p for extra criteria over base up to 50 additional points).

Each Section/evaluation criterion is evaluated autonomously. The final scoring of each evaluation criterion is the outcome of its scoring multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor. The overall score of the technical offer is the sum of the final scoring of all the Sections/evaluation criteria.

The overall score of the technical offer is calculated on the basis of the following formula:

$$B_i = w_1 \times c_1 + w_2 \times c_2 + \dots$$

For the overall score which will determine the ranking of offers, technical evaluation will be weighted with 80%, and the financial offer with 20%.

The final listing of the most advantageous offers will be made on the basis of the following formula:

$$\Lambda_i = 0.8 * (B_i/B_{max}) + 0.2 * (K_{min}/K_i).$$

Where:

- Bmax: the max score received by the best of the technical offers received
- B_i: the score of the technical offer
- Kmin: The cost of the financial offer with the minimum price offered.
- K_i: The cost of the financial offer

The most advantageous offers is the one with the greater value of Λ .

In case of equality of overall scores, the winning proposal is the one whose corresponding technical proposal received the highest rating.

10. Monitoring and Progress Controls

Mr. Tassos Krommydas, Senior Programme Officer at GWP-Med, will be providing oversight and guidance from the side of the Project Team.

Coordination meetings between the consultant and the Project Team shall be scheduled on a bi-weekly basis in order to effectively monitor the progress pertaining to the workplan that was submitted with the Inception Report. The rendering of services shall be executed, and completion thereof shall be determined, upon the satisfaction and approval of the deliverables by the Project Manager and GWP-Med Executive Secretary.

11. Place of Performance

The tasks will be carried out from a place of the Consultant's preference.

This assignment is home based, with field missions for consultations / validation workshop.

12. Terms and Conditions

• Language

The language of the key deliverables/outputs is English.

- **Data and information**

The Consultant(s) is responsible to collect all information and data necessary for the completion of this assignment. Missing information (from any side) would not be considered as eligible reason for not completing the tasks. GWP-Med can assist in communicating with relevant institutions and stakeholders to verify the availability of needed data or information.

- **Submission of data, reports and other material produced**

All primary data, reports, and other documentation produced during this assignment shall be made available to GWP-Med and to the relevant institutions in electronic format. All data acquired, and products developed during the assignment will be in the ownership of the Project and cannot be used by the Consultant and its team without prior written permission.

- **Cooperation requirements**

The Consultant is expected to work closely with GWP-Med and the beneficiaries (visited during the consultation missions).

- **Review and quality assurance**

A thorough evaluation of the Consultant's work conducted during the course of the assignment implementation, as well as a comprehensive review of the deliverables, may be conducted by an independent external expert or team of experts. The Consultant is expected to thoroughly consider and incorporate any relevant observations or recommendations provided by the reviewer(s) into the final versions of the deliverables.

- **Public consultations / meetings**

The responsibility for organizing any required workshops or working meetings will be shared between the Consultant(s) and the Project Team. The Consultant(s) shall be responsible for: preparation of working material, technical specifications etc. ensuring participation of the key team members as required, preparation of minutes etc. The Project Team will be responsible for: preparation of agenda, invitations, distributing the invitations and enabling participation.