

<b>Terms of Reference</b>	
<b>Position: SENIOR NON-KEY Birds Expert</b>	
<b>1. Results' chain and description of the assignment:</b>	
1.1 Project title	STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IN NATURE PROTECTION SECTOR AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF NATURA 2000 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
1.2 Beneficiary	Main beneficiary of the activity is the Ministry of Environment (MEP) in Serbia
1.3 Result's chain	<p>The overall objective of 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.</p> <p>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 Outcome 2: To strengthen the regulatory framework for nature protection and biodiversity conservation in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements</p> <p>Output 1: A finalised list of all potential Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) across Serbia Output 2: Comprehensive SDFs with harmonized data on species, and site boundaries for all proposed Natura 2000 sites Output 3: Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans of the potential Natura 2000 Sites Output 4 - 23: Detailed management plans for at least 20 potential Natura 2000 Sites, outlining conservation priorities, actions, monitoring methods, and stakeholder roles Output 31: An upgraded and fully functional national Nature Information System integrated with GIS Output 32: A detailed Legal Gap Assessment related to nature protection legislation Output 33: A national plan outlining priority ecosystems and measures for restoration, in line with the EU Nature Restoration Regulation Output 39: A digital system for issuing, tracking, and managing CITES permits</p>
1.4 Activity title	<p>AI.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%</p> <p>AI.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</p> <p>AI.4 Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 sites</p> <p>AI.5 Development of a minimum 20 Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 Sites</p> <p>AI.7 Upgrade of the Nature Information System with GIS integration</p> <p>All.1 Conducting a Legal Gap Assessment related to nature protection legislation</p> <p>All.2 Development of a draft National Restoration Plan (NRP)</p> <p>All.8 Development of software for CITES permits and training for using those tools</p>
1.5 Background and purpose	<p>The primary purpose of this assignment is to support the further identification, validation, designation and management planning of Natura 2000 sites in Serbia, with a specific focus on bird species and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The expert will contribute to completion of the SPA network through review of existing bird datasets and monitoring results, gap analysis, identification of missing data, targeted field verification where required, harmonisation of datasets, preparation and revision of bird-related Standard Data Forms (SDFs), and technical support to Natura 2000 management planning.</p> <p>A particular focus of the assignment will be the development of bird-specific methodological approaches for management planning. This will include principles and criteria for site-level assessment of bird populations and their habitats, identification and classification of pressures and threats, formulation of conservation objectives, selection of management and restoration measures, monitoring requirements and relevant zonation approaches to be incorporated into the Guideline for the Preparation of Management Plans.</p> <p>The expert will contribute to selected Management Plans by applying the agreed methodologies, assessing available ecological and spatial data, supporting field verification, identifying pressures and threats, defining conservation objectives and proposing practical measures for bird species and their habitats.</p> <p>The expert will also contribute bird-related requirements and quality-control inputs to the upgrade of the Nature Information System, provide Birds Directive related technical inputs to the Legal Gap Assessment, and contribute bird-related expertise to the draft National Restoration Plan.</p> <p>If required, the expert may contribute bird species related inputs to the development of software for CITES permits and related training, including relevant taxa information, permit related data needs, practical user requirements and training content.</p>
1.6 Requested services	<p>AI.1: Contribute to validation of previously identified SPAs and completion of the Natura 2000 network. Review available bird datasets and monitoring results, support application of SPA selection criteria, identify remaining data gaps and priorities for targeted surveys or field verification, and provide technical inputs on site justification and boundaries. Assist in harmonisation of bird datasets, maps and technical documentation contributing to the final national list of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>AI.2: Support the review, revision, harmonisation and completion of bird related Standard Data Forms (SDFs). Contribute to quality control of species records, population estimates, site assessments, pressures and threats, and consistency between SDF information, mapped data and site boundaries in line with the Birds Directive and Natura 2000 requirements.</p>



	<p>AI.4: Contribute bird specific technical and methodological inputs to the Guideline for the Preparation of Management Plans, including methods for site-level assessment of bird species and their habitats, identification of pressures and threats, formulation of conservation objectives, selection of management measures, monitoring requirements, zonation and practical bird-related tools and annexes.</p> <p>AI.5: Contribute to the preparation of Management Plans for selected potential Natura 2000 sites through assessment of bird species and habitats based on available data, GIS outputs and field information. Apply the methodologies developed under AI.4 and provide inputs on conservation objectives, management and restoration measures, monitoring needs, zonation and management planning documentation.</p> <p>AI.7: Provide bird-related inputs to the upgrade of the Nature Information System, including data models, mandatory attributes, validation rules, GIS layers, links to SDFs, monitoring and reporting requirements, and quality control of migrated or newly integrated bird datasets. Test and comment on relevant system functions and user workflows.</p> <p>All.1: Provide bird-related technical inputs to the Legal Gap Assessment concerning transposition and practical implementation of the Birds Directive, including SPA designation, conservation obligations, species protection, monitoring, reporting and enforcement. Review relevant draft findings and recommendations.</p> <p>All.2: Contribute bird-related expertise to the development of the draft National Restoration Plan, including identification of priority bird habitats and ecosystems, restoration needs and measures, relevant indicators, monitoring requirements and links with obligations under the Birds Directive and Natura 2000.</p> <p>All.8: If required, contribute bird species related expert inputs to the development of software for CITES permits and related training, including relevant taxa information, permit-related data needs, validation and reporting requirements, practical user needs and review of training materials.</p>
<p>1.7 Implementation modalities</p>	<p>The expert will directly report to the Deputy Team Leader (DTL) and will cooperate closely with the Team Leader (TL) and relevant non-key experts.</p> <p>Performance of the assignment will be assessed by the TL and DTL based on timely delivery, technical quality and effective cooperation with the project team and beneficiaries.</p>
<p><b>2. Expert inputs</b></p>	
<p>2.1 Deliverables</p>	<p>For Output 1 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution to Validation of Potential SPAs: Technical inputs for validation, ecological assessment and delineation of proposed SPAs, including application of SPA selection criteria and review of site justification and boundaries.</li> <li>▪ Gap Analysis and Additional Survey Inputs: Identification of missing bird data, priority species and priority areas for targeted surveys or field verification.</li> <li>▪ Draft Bird Data Contributions: Harmonised bird datasets, maps and expert assessments contributing to the final national list of Natura 2000 sites.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 2 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution to Review and Completion of SDFs: Technical inputs for review, revision, harmonisation and completion of bird-related Standard Data Forms.</li> <li>▪ Bird Data Quality Control Inputs: Expert verification of species records, population estimates, ecological information, pressures, threats and mapping outputs in line with Natura 2000 standards.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 3 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution to the Guideline for the Preparation of Management Plans: Bird specific technical inputs to methods for site level assessment, pressures and threats, conservation objectives, management measures, monitoring and zonation.</li> <li>▪ Practical Tools and Management Measures: Bird related recommendations, examples, tables, checklists and potential management measures for inclusion in the Guideline and its annexes.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 4–23 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution to Management Planning Documentation: Bird related technical inputs to selected Management Plans, including species and habitat assessments, ecological evaluations and conservation planning recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Conservation and Restoration Measures Proposals: Proposals for conservation objectives, management and restoration measures, monitoring requirements and zonation related to bird species and their habitats.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 31 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bird related Information System Requirements: Technical inputs on bird data models, mandatory attributes, validation rules, GIS layers, SDF links, monitoring and reporting functions.</li> <li>▪ System Review and Quality Control Inputs: Expert testing and comments on bird-related datasets, workflows and system outputs.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 32 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Birds Directive related Inputs to the Legal Gap Assessment: Technical comments on SPA designation, conservation obligations, species protection, monitoring, reporting and enforcement.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 33 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bird related Inputs to the Draft National Restoration Plan: Identification of priority bird habitats and ecosystems, restoration needs and measures, indicators and monitoring requirements.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 39 the expert will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bird species related Inputs to CITES Software Development: Technical inputs on relevant bird taxa, permit data needs, validation and reporting requirements and practical user needs.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inputs to CITES Training Materials: Expert comments and bird related inputs for training materials and guidance for competent authorities and other relevant users.</li> </ul>
2.2 No of missions	<p>Up to 10 missions for field verification and mapping of bird species of European interest, including species listed in Annexes of the Birds Directive and regularly occurring migratory species, in selected Natura 2000 candidate sites and, where required, in other areas with missing data, depending on project needs and subject to prior approval by the project team.</p> <p>The missions are expected to take place during the periods July–October 2026 and February – October 2027 and, if necessary, also during February–August 2028.</p>
2.3 Indicative starting day	07/2026
2.4 Completion	10/2028
2.5 Location	Serbia, including Belgrade and selected Natura 2000 candidate sites
<b>3. Requested qualifications</b>	
3.1. Qualification and Skills:	Completed university studies of at least three years in a relevant field, or in the absence of formal education six years of professional experience in addition to the minimum requested general professional experience.
	Proficient in English language.
	Excellent communication and analytical skills
	Proficient in report drafting
3.2. General Professional Experience	Excellent team working abilities
	At least 6 years of general professional experience in ornithology, bird ecology, nature conservation or a closely related field
3.3 Specific Professional Experience	Proven experience in bird identification, bird inventory, monitoring and field survey work, preferably including at least two relevant projects.
	At least 6 years of experience relevant to the nature conservation sector in the Western Balkans, or equivalent experience in comparable European contexts.
	Proven experience in collection, systematization, validation and interpretation of bird data, demonstrated through projects, studies, publications or technical reports.
	Experience with Natura 2000, the EU Birds Directive, SPA identification and selection, Standard Data Forms, bird monitoring or management planning will be considered a strong advantage.
3.4 Added value	Previous experience in the environment and nature protection sector, and/or previous cooperation with state administration or public institutions, will be considered an advantage.
3.4 Added value	Knowledge of the local (Serbian) language will be considered as an asset
<b>4. Reporting</b>	
4.1. Language	English
4.2 Report type/content	Short monthly reports in English describing ongoing and completed activities and outputs, following the format provided under the Article 1.6 Requested services.
4.3 Submission date	End of each calendar month

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.