

<b>Terms of Reference</b>	
<b>Position: JUNIOR NON-KEY EXPERT - Plant 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	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.
	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
	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 39: A digital system for issuing, tracking, and managing CITES permits, coupled with training for MEP staff – why needed: To modernise CITES administration, improve traceability and reporting, and ensure Serbia meets international obligations for wildlife trade control.
1.4 Activity title	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% 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 AI.3 Biogeographical seminars AI.4 Guideline for the preparation of Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 sites AI.5 Development of a minimum 20 Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 Sites All.8 Development of software for CITES permits and training for using those tools
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 plant species<sup>1</sup>. The expert will contribute to the completion of the Natura 2000 network through gap analysis of plant species, identification of missing species data, targeted field verification where required, harmonisation of datasets, preparation and revision of Standard Data Forms (SDFs), participation in biogeographical seminars, and technical support to the development of Natura 2000 management planning documentation.</p> <p>A particular focus of the assignment will be the development of methodological approaches for management planning of plant species. This will include the definition of principles and criteria for site-level conservation status assessment of plant species, identification and classification of pressures and threats, development of approaches for setting conservation objectives, and preparation of a potential management measures for plant species to be incorporated into the Guidelines for the Preparation of Management Plans.</p> <p>The expert will further contribute to the preparation of management plans by applying the agreed methodologies to selected Natura 2000 sites, including field mapping of gaps, assessment of the conservation status of plant species, identification of pressures and threats, formulation of conservation objectives and proposal of appropriate management measures based on available data and field knowledge.</p> <p>The expert shall provide scientifically sound technical expertise, practical field experience, quality control of plant species data, mapping support, and technical inputs to consultations, reporting, management planning and decision-making processes related to Natura 2000 implementation in Serbia.</p> <p>If required, the expert may also contribute species-related input to All.8 Development of software for CITES permits and training for using those tools, in particular by supporting the definition of practical user needs, relevant species and taxa information, consistency of permit-related data, and training content for competent authorities and other relevant users involved in CITES procedures in Serbia.</p>
1.6 Requested services	AI.1: Contribute to the validation of previously identified Natura 2000 sites and support gap analysis and additional field surveys related to plant species. Assist in the integration and harmonisation of

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this ToR, references to plants, mammals, bats, fish, amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, Lepidoptera species (Odonata sp.), beetles (Coleoptera sp.), grasshoppers (Orthoptera sp.), Lepidoptera, butterflies, moths, molluscs, crayfish and other taxonomic groups shall be understood as referring exclusively to species listed in Annexes II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive, unless stated otherwise

	<p>species datasets, preparation of maps and technical documentation, and contribute to the preparation of the draft national list of Natura 2000 sites. Participate, where relevant and required, in stakeholder consultations and dissemination activities related to Natura 2000 site identification and designation.</p> <p>AI.2: Support the review, revision, and completion of Standard Data Forms (SDFs) for proposed Natura 2000 sites, with a focus on plant species. Contribute to quality control, harmonisation of plant species data, mapping consistency, and verification of conservation-relevant information in line with EU Natura 2000 requirements.</p> <p>AI.3: Contribute technical expertise and scientific inputs for the preparation and implementation of biogeographical seminars, including presentation and discussion of plant species data, site selection rationale, conservation priorities, and ecological coherence of the proposed Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>AI.4: Contribute to the development of the Guideline for the Preparation of Management Plans of Natura 2000 sites in Serbia, with a specific focus on plant species. Support the <b>development of methodologies for site-level conservation status assessment of plant species</b>, identification and classification of pressures and threats, definition of conservation objectives, and selection of appropriate management measures. Contribute to the preparation of practical tools and annexes to the Guidelines, including a potential management measures for plant species.</p> <p>AI.5: Contribute to the preparation of Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 sites through assessment of plant species based on available ecological data, mapping results and field information. Apply the methodologies and criteria developed under AI.4 for conservation status assessment, identification of pressures and threats, definition of conservation objectives, and selection of management measures. Contribute to species mapping, ecological evaluation, zonation and preparation of management planning documentation.</p> <p>AI.8: If required, contribute species-related expert inputs to the development of software for CITES permits and related training, including support to the definition of relevant species and taxa information, permit-related data needs, practical user requirements, and training materials for competent authorities and other relevant users involved in CITES procedures in Serbia.</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 Natura 2000 Sites: Technical inputs for the validation, ecological assessment, and delineation of potential Natura 2000 sites related to plant species.</li> <li>▪ Gap Analysis and Additional Survey Inputs: Identification of missing data and priority areas for additional surveys related to plant species, including species distribution, conservation status, pressures, and threats.</li> <li>▪ Draft Species Data Contributions: Technical species datasets, maps, and expert assessments contributing to the preparation of the draft 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 the review, revision, harmonisation, and completion of Standard Data Forms (SDFs) related to plant species.</li> <li>▪ Species Quality Control Inputs: Expert verification and quality control of plant species data, species interpretation, ecological consistency, and mapping outputs in line with Natura 2000 standards.</li> <li>▪ Contribution to Biogeographical Seminars: Participation in biogeographical seminars and related expert discussions, including presentation and clarification of plant species data, ecological justification of proposed Natura 2000 sites, and technical support during the evaluation of site completeness and coherence of the proposed Natura 2000 network.</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: Technical inputs related to plant species for the development of the Guideline for the Preparation of Management Plans of the Ecologically Important Sites.</li> <li>▪ Plant species-specific Methodological Inputs: Contributions to methodologies and criteria for site-level assessment of plant species, including assessment of conservation status, identification and classification of pressures and threats, definition of conservation objectives, and selection of appropriate management measures.</li> <li>▪ Practical Tools and Management Measures: plant species-specific recommendations, examples and potential management measures for plant species to be incorporated into the Guideline and its practical 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: Technical inputs for the preparation of Management Plans for potential Natura 2000 sites, including plant species assessments, ecological evaluations, and conservation planning recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Missing Data Collection and Assessment Inputs: Gathering and assessment of missing ecological data related to plant species, including species condition and biotopes, conservation status, pressures, and threats.</li> <li>▪ Conservation and Restoration Measures Proposals: Proposals for conservation objectives, restoration measures, species management recommendations, and zonation related to plant species.</li> </ul> <p>For Output 39 the expert will deliver:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Species-related inputs to CITES software development: Technical inputs on relevant species and taxa information, permit-related data needs and practical user requirements to support the development of the CITES permit software.</li> <li>▪ Inputs to CITES training materials: Expert comments and species-related inputs for training materials and guidance for competent authorities and other relevant users involved in CITES procedures in Serbia.</li> </ul>
2.2 No of missions	<p>Up to 8 missions for field verification and mapping of plant species of European interest (in particular species listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive) in selected Natura 2000 candidate sites and, where required, in other sites 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–September 2026 and April–September 2027, and, if necessary, also during April–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 3 years of general professional experience in plant ecology, nature conservation or a closely related field
3.3 Specific Professional Experience	Proven experience in species identification, plant species inventory, and field survey work, preferably including at least one relevant project.
	At least 3 years of experience relevant to the nature conservation sector in the Western Balkans, or equivalent experience in comparable European contexts.
	Proven experience in data collection, systematisation, validation and inventory of plant species, demonstrated through projects, studies, publications or technical reports.
	Experience with Natura 2000, the EU Habitats Directive, Standard Data Forms, pSCI/SCI site selection, biogeographical seminars 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.