

Project Manager (PM) – Terms of Reference

1. Background

The project on *Conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biological diversity in Khazar Nature Reserve on the Caspian Sea Coast* will strengthen Turkmenistan's National System of Protected Areas by demonstrating effective protected area management and biodiversity conservation in Turkmenistan's Khazar Nature Reserve on the Caspian Sea coast. Two of the world's major flyways - the Central Asian-Indian Flyway and the East African Flyway, converge on Turkmenistan's Caspian coastal region. This fact makes the coastal wetlands of the Khazar Reserve especially important for migratory birds as they move north from Africa and India and south from Europe and arctic Russia.

The conservation and sustainable use of such a wide range of biological diversity requires more integrated approaches to conservation and coastal resource management in Turkmenistan. It requires increased involvement by local communities, more cross-sector collaboration among government and civil society institutions, a deeper understanding of coastal ecosystem function and coastal zone management practices, increased capacity of resource management organizations, improved PA and financial management, and applied incentives for conservation and sustainable use. This project is designed to provide the tools, the expertise, and the arena for stakeholders to adopt these new practices in ways that are appropriate for Turkmenistan and that strengthen Turkmenistan's National System of Protected Areas. In so doing, the project will generate substantial global environmental and national sustainable development benefits.

The project is a partnership between Central Government, Local Government, communities, civil society, the UNDP and the GEF. The project seeks to conserve globally significant biological diversity by implementing a cross-sectoral programme of integrated activities that generate specific and meaningful results on the ground. To do this, the project will need to create and to follow successfully a path of coordinated action among these stakeholders.

2. Objective of the PM position

The ultimate Objective of the PM is to achieve the Project Objective and Outcomes through leadership of the Project Team and effective use of Project resources.

3. Key tasks and responsibilities

Working under the supervision of the National Project Coordinator and the UNDP National Programme Officer to whom he/she will report, and in partnership with the Project Administrator, the PM will be responsible for leading the Project Team in the day-to-day implementation of the Project and managing Project resources effectively and efficiently so as to achieve the Project Objective and Outcomes within the set timescale and available budget. More specifically, the PM will perform the following duties:

A) Project personnel management

A.1) Assume responsibility for all professional staff directly, and for all support staff indirectly (through the Project Administrator); this includes all Consultants and Contractors

A.2) Endeavour to create a strong team spirit, cohesive and mutually supportive; encourage collaboration between individuals, the sharing of experiences and the solving of problems as a group; organize regular (weekly or fortnightly) staff meetings for this purpose

A.3) Assign specific duties and tasks to specific individuals according to their Job Descriptions or Terms of Reference; ensure their full understanding of what is expected through agreement on deliverables and timescales; and agree on the resources and support that will be provided by the Project

A.4) Undertake individual performance assessments on an annual basis (or other period for Consultants/Contractors), acknowledging achievements and providing analysis and advice on problem aspects

A.5) While giving all professional personnel the “space” to carry out their professional duties, ensure that guidance and support are available whenever needed

A.6) Ensure that Project staff enjoy the conditions of employment as stipulated by UNDP, together with the responsibilities of their positions

A.7) Require regular (as agreed), formal and informal reporting on progress with the achievement of assigned tasks

B) Financial resources management

B.1) Support the Project Administrator in her role as financial manager but retain the ultimate responsibility for financial resources for accountability purposes

B.2) Ensure total accuracy and the highest level of transparency in the management of the Project financial resources in accordance with UNDP and national regulations and procedures

B.3) Work with the Project Administrator to prepare all necessary financial reports to accompany Project quarterly and annual work plans and reports

C) Project outreach

C.1) Serve as the Project’s ambassador and advocate within the broader Central and Local Government systems and with communities of the Khazar coastal region

C.2) Create and foster a good working relationship with the media (print, radio and television)

C.3) Represent and promote the Project at national and international meetings

C.4) Contribute to the production and publication of public information material

C.5) Establish and maintain good working relationships and cooperation with peer project managers from other related projects within Turkmenistan and the Central Asia region

D) Project planning and implementation

D.1) Lead the process of quarterly and annual planning of project activities, with the participation of all Project personnel; retain the ultimate responsibility for the finished plans and submit them to the NPD and UNDP for their concurrence

D.2) As noted under A.5 above, professional staff should be given the “space” to carry out their assigned tasks; but be alert to needs for support and advice; require progress reporting and accountability for resources used

D.3) In cooperation with relevant Project personnel build effective working relationships with the Project's key partners at the local level (Local Government, village leaders, communities, locals NGOs, the private sector, etc)

D.4) Work closely with co-funding partners to ensure that their activities/programmes are integrated and complementary with those of the GEF project

E) Monitoring and adaptive management

E.1) Lead the implementation of the Project M&E Plan

E.2) Carry out monitoring visits to Project sites on a regular basis; survey (informally) the intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders

E.3) Collate the results of monitoring, analyze them, and formulate proposals for adaptive management measures for consideration by the PSC

E.4) Implement the decisions and advice of the PSC

F) Reporting and accountability

F.1) Provide a report to each PSC meeting noting progress and achievements, acknowledging difficulties and proposing possible solutions for consideration and guidance by the PSC

F.2) Assume the lead responsibility for the preparation and content of the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR), with the full participation of relevant Project personnel

F.3) Delegate to the Project Administrator the task of preparation of implementation reports for UNDP (such as Atlas reports) but retain a supportive role

F.4) Jointly with the Project Administrator, prepare quarterly and annual project plans and reports and present them to the PSC

F.5) Respond to request for reports on Project management and performance from any key stakeholders, through the NPD

F.6) Report to the NPD and the UNDP on any aspect of Project management whenever required

4. Time-frame

The PM is a full time employee of the Project and the initial contract will be for a period of one year. The contract will be renewed, subject to a satisfactory performance assessment, for a further year or until project closure, whichever is the earliest.

5. Duty station and travel arrangements

The PM will share his/her time between the project office in Ashgabat and the equivalent in Turkmenbashi. In addition, he/she is expected to travel as necessary to Essenguly region, Khazar town and other locations in the Turkmen coastal region.

6. Project inputs

The Project will provide the PM with office space in Ashgabat and Turkmenbashi, a notebook computer, valid ID card, transport for duty travel, and access to electronic mail and the Internet.

7. Required skills and competencies

- Good manager of people and resources to obtain best results and be accountable
- Technical expertise to appreciate project aims, ability to speak the “language” with experts
- Dedicated and committed to aims of the project
- Good analytical and planning skills; ability to set forecasts and refine/review them in the light of experience and further analysis
- Excellent inter-personal skills; good communicator at all levels from political decision-makers to grassroots communities
- A postgraduate degree in any of the following areas: Environmental Policy, Environmental or Natural Resource Management, Public Administration
- At least 5 years management experience in implementing development projects in the field of environment, preferably within the UN system or other development agencies
- Broad experience working at the central and local levels in Turkmenistan
- Strong managerial skills, results-orientation, team-building and leadership skills
- Decisiveness, independence, good judgement, ability to work under pressure
- Excellent networking and partnering competencies and negotiating skills
- Ability to use information technology as a tool and resource
- Fluency in written and spoken Russian and English. Knowledge of Turkmen will be an asset
- Demonstrable skills in office computer use - word processing, spread sheets, etc