

# Technical Advisor (TA) – 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 TA position

The TA will provide advice and support on management and operations to the Project Manager, the Project Steering Committee, and the National Project Director, based on his/her experience and knowledge of the Khazar Nature Reserve and the Protected Areas System in Turkmenistan, as well as best practice globally.

## 3. Key tasks and responsibilities

Under the general supervision of the National Project Director and the UNDP to whom he/she will report, and under guidance of the Project Manager to whom he/she is accountable for operational matters, the TA will provide the necessary technical advice for the successful achievement of the Project Objective and Outcomes. More specifically, the TA will perform the following duties:

### **A) Planning, monitoring and reporting**

A.1 Assist the PM and Project Team with the annual and quarterly planning of project activities to ensure that specified tasks are undertaken in as organized and planned a manner as possible.

A.2 Assist with the necessary planning and reporting functions for the Project, including:

- the Project Implementation Review (PIR)
- implementation reports for UNDP (such as Atlas reports etc.)
- quarterly and annual project plans and reports

A.3 Assist the PM with the monitoring of performance and progress.

A.4 Facilitate the adaptive management process within the Project Team.

### ***B) Technical advice***

B.1 Attend the PSC as required, report on technical aspects of the project and provide required technical advice.

B.2 Provide overall technical guidance, advice and support to the Project Team.

B.3 Provide advice to the PM in strategic planning for project coordination and implementation so as to achieve the project Objective, including the proper planning of workflow and efficient utilization of project resources.

B.4 Provide policy advice to the NPD and the PSC.

B.5 Actively liaise with Project personnel, including Consultants and Experts, on matters pertaining to the implementation of project interventions and provide advice as necessary.

B.6 Provide advice and guidance for effective outreach activities by the Project.

### ***C) Other implementation advice***

C.1 Provide the necessary technical advice and assistance in the organization of key project events in accordance with the quarterly and annual plan.

C.2 Support the work of consultants and contractors and provide technical input where appropriate.

C.3 Provide advice to the PM on the technical aspects of ToRs for key personnel in order to improve performance and facilitate the achievement of the Objective.

C.4 Assist the Project Team with the mobilization of co-financing.

C.5 Facilitate the building of effective working relationships with the Project's key partners at the local level: (i) Municipalities; (ii) Village leaders and communities; (iii) private sector, resource users, etc, to ensure that project activities proceed with the full support and involvement of local stakeholders.

C.6 Work with co-funding partners to ensure that their activities/programmes are integrated and complementary with those of the GEF project.

## **4. Time-frame**

The TA position is not full-time. Subject to revision by mutual agreement, the position is envisaged as being 50% of full time. The initial contract will be for a period of 12 months renewable, following satisfactory performance assessment, for a further year or until project closure, whichever comes first. The combination of the scope of work and UNDP salary scale (service contract or other) will be applied

to determine TA's quarterly remuneration. Quarterly workplans and progress reports will serve as basis for quarterly payments.

## **5. Duty station and travel arrangements**

The TA will operate from the Project Office in Ashgabat and the sub-Office in Turkmenbashi. He/she will also be expected to travel to project field sites along the Caspian Coast.

## **6. Project inputs**

The project will provide the TA with office space in Ashgabat and Turkmenbashi, a valid ID card, domestic transport, and access to electronic mail and the Internet.

## **7. Required skills and competencies**

- A postgraduate degree in one of: Environmental Policy, Environmental or Natural Resource Management, or Protected Areas Management
- At least 5 years experience in PA management projects or equivalent, preferably within the UN system or other development agencies
- High level of technical expertise in the management of PAs; high credibility among scientific and technical colleagues
- Broad experience working at the central and local levels in Turkmenistan
- Decisiveness, independence, good judgment, ability to work under pressure
- 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
- 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