



Attachment 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy for "Implementation of Resolution XIV.20 - Assessment report of environmental damage on Ramsar Sites in Ukraine resulting from the Russian invasion"

LEAD WETLAND EXPERT

1. BACKGROUND

The Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national and regional actions and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of wetland biodiversity and services. It was the first of the modern global multilateral environmental agreements and is devoted to a specific critical ecosystem.

At the 14th meeting of the Conference of Contracting Parties (COP14, Wuhan-Geneva, 2022), Resolution XIV.20 *The Ramsar Convention's response to environmental emergency in Ukraine relating to the damage of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression* was adopted.

In paragraph 12 of Resolution XIV.20, the Contracting parties of the Convention recognized the devastating impact of the Russian Federation's aggression on the environmental situation in Ukraine, including the disruption of the ecological status of 16 Ramsar Sites and potential damage to another 15 Ramsar Sites within Ukraine.

In paragraph 18 of the Resolution XIV. 20 the Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands to coordinate actions with the Contracting Parties and relevant national and international organizations to conduct assessments of the Ramsar Sites in Ukraine affected by aggression of the Russian Federation and advise on appropriate mitigation and restoration measures.

The Resolution further requests the Secretariat to provide a report on the assessed damage and mitigation measures for the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

At SC62, the Secretariat provided an [update](#) on the implementation of this Resolution including coordination and consultation, assessments of environmental damage resulting from the Russian invasion of Ukraine and methodological considerations.

The Standing Committee took note of the update of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution XIV.20 at SC62 in September 2023.

2. THE CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Under the supervision of the Team Lead, the Lead Wetland Expert will provide strong wetland expertise within the consultancy team to contribute to:

1. developing assessment methodology for evaluating the ecological character changes of Wetlands of International Importance in the context of the war,
2. conducting the assessments for the Ukrainian affected or potentially affected Ramsar Sites,
3. developing proposed mitigation and restoration measures for these Sites, considering immediate, mid-term and long-term approaches.

The services required skills and experience in:

- Research and analysis,
- Facilitation, engagement, and networking,
- Clear and concise writing.

The consultancy team will also comprise the following members: a Team Lead, an Earth-Observation and GIS Expert, and a National Consultant.

Consultancy timeline

Phase 1 of the Consultancy is to commence as soon as possible and will conclude upon satisfactory and timely completion of all tasks to be undertaken, but no later than 31 January 2024. Timeline for Phase 2 is from February to August 2024, and for Phase 3 from September 2024 to December 2024.

Detailed task description

Phase 1. Preparation Phase / December 2023- January 2024

- Contribution to the drafting of the ToRs for the National Consultant, in close liaison with the Secretariat.
- Contribution to the team elaboration of the strategic and methodological approach of the assessment, considering available assessments and data and the specific limitations due to the war context in Ukraine.
- Contribution to providing responses to the Advisory Board members' comments.

The Lead Wetland Expert will participate in four to six online meetings during Phase 1: one inception meeting, two to four internal team meetings, one meeting with the Advisory Board members.

The meeting with the Advisory Board should take place by mid-January 2024.

Outputs for Phase 1 (under the responsibility of the team lead)

- ToRs for the National Consultant – before 10 January 2024.
- Draft report 'Assessment strategy and methodology' – to be shared with Advisory Board members before 12 January 2024.
- Written responses to all comments made by Advisory Board members, within two weeks of receipt.
- Final report 'Assessment strategy and methodology' (maximum 10 pages, annexes and illustrations not included) – before end of January 2024.

Phase 2. Implementation phase / February 2024- August 2024

- Participation in the organization and implementation of the team fieldwork, as per the recommendations of the strategy and methodology of the mission.
- Elaboration and finalization of the 'Fieldwork conclusion report' that will analyze the collected field data in relation to the assessment of the environmental damage on the Ramsar Sites (from the Ramsar Sites or from proxy Sites).
- Contribution to the team elaboration of the draft 'Earth Observation conclusion report' that will establish baselines and assess specific dimensions of the environmental damage on the Ramsar Sites thanks to Earth observation imagery.
- Contribution to providing responses to the Advisory Board members' comments.

If security conditions allow, the Lead Wetland Expert will participate in 10-14 days of fieldwork in Ukraine that will include (physical and/or online) meetings with local authorities and stakeholders. In addition, four to six online meetings will be required in Phase 2: three to four internal team meetings, one to two meetings with the Advisory Board members.

For security reasons, the travel plan will be carefully elaborated in close liaison with the Secretariat, and subject to the Secretariat's approval.

The meetings with the Advisory Board should take place within two weeks after sharing draft reports with the Advisory Board members.

Outputs for Phase 2 (under the responsibility of the team lead)

- Organisation and implementation of fieldwork in relation to the assessment – before end of June 2024.
- 'Fieldwork conclusion report' (maximum 20 pages, annexes and illustrations not included) – before end of July 2024.
- Draft 'Earth Observation conclusion report' – to be shared with Advisory Board members before end of August 2024.
- Written responses to all comments made by Advisory Board members, within two weeks of receipt.

Phase 3. Conclusion and recommendation phase / September 2024- December 2024

- Identification and description in writing of the appropriate mitigation and restoration measures, considering immediate, mid-term and long-term approaches.
- Contribution to the team elaboration of the 'Assessment report' that encompasses the assessment of environmental damage on the Ramsar Sites and advise on appropriate mitigation and restoration measures. The 'Assessment report' will notably draw on the two internal team reports ('Fieldwork conclusion report' and 'Earth Observation conclusion report').
- Contribution to providing responses to the Advisory Board members' comments.

The Lead Wetland Expert will participate in four to six online meetings during Phase 3: two to three internal team meetings, one to two meetings with the Advisory Board members, and one concluding meeting.

The meetings with the Advisory Board should take place within two weeks after sharing draft reports with the Advisory Board members.

Outputs for Phase 3 (under the responsibility of the team lead)

- Final 'Earth Observation conclusion report' (maximum 20 pages, annexes and illustrations not included) – before end of September 2024.
- Draft 'Assessment report' – to be shared with Advisory Board members before end of October 2024.
- Written responses to the comments made by Advisory Board members, within two weeks of receipt.
- Final 'Assessment report' (maximum 20 pages, annexes and illustrations not included) – before 5 December 2024.

3. EXPERTISE AND THE PROFILE OF THE CONSULTANT

The Consultant should have the following qualifications, experience, and skills:

Education

Postgraduate degree in ecology, natural resources management, environment policy or another relevant field.

Required Experience

- Minimum 20 years of experience in working in the environmental field at international or European level, with specific experience in environmental impact assessment, ecological monitoring and ecosystem restoration.
- Proven experience in conducting wetland assessments and providing appropriate recommendations for mitigation and restoration of wetland habitats, and ecosystem services.
- Work experience in Ukraine is required.
- Experience in similar projects is desirable.

Required Skills

- Excellent knowledge of wetland ecology.
- Excellent knowledge of the policy frameworks as well as the scientific and technical underpinnings of the Convention on Wetlands, in particular in relation to ecological character of Wetlands of International Importance
- Demonstrated ability to analyze and interpret both qualitative and quantitative data.
- Demonstrated experience in developing methodologies and writing concise reports on complex subjects.
- Ability to give and receive effective feedback.

Fluency in spoken and written English is required.

4. DATA SOURCES

The Consultant should consider, among other things, the following:

- Grey literature and academic papers, including existing assessments related to Ukraine environmental damage.
- Standards / guidelines / legal documentation from the Convention on Wetlands, and relevant ones in Ukraine.
- Relevant national data including Ukraine National Reports to the Convention, data in the RSIS system (<https://rsis.ramsar.org/>) related to Ukrainian Ramsar Sites and other national data related to the Ramsar Sites.
- Interviews with competent international organizations' representatives, local authorities, and stakeholders, as per the need.

5. SECRETARIAT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Secretariat of the Convention is responsible for:

- Organizing the Consultant recruitment process for the four consultancy team members.
- Providing material requested and/or comments on deliverables to the Consultant in a timely manner.
- Facilitating engagement with Ukraine national Ramsar Administrative Authorities.
- Administering this consultancy and managing payments.

6. CONSULTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Consultant is responsible for:

- Contributing to all outputs of the consultancy team as per the deadlines, see section 2.
- Elaborating and finalizing the 'fieldwork conclusion report'.
- Identifying and describing the appropriate mitigation and restoration measures, considering immediate, mid-term and long-term approaches to feed into the 'Assessment report'.
- Regularly updating the consultancy team lead about work progress and notifying him/her as soon as practicable of any issues in carrying out the responsibilities of this consultancy or any unforeseen delays.