



Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

Title: Consultancy for an International Expert for the finalization of the protected area system plan for Jordan

Objective of the Consultancy

This consultancy has the following objective(s):

1. Finalize the protected area system plan for Jordan based on the results of the Marxan analysis and field validation
2. Support the local consultant who will conduct the field validation.

Background

Project Reference: **P04285**

Donor reference: **P011547-001.**

About IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and around 15,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being.

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About the Project

The initiative "Enhancing Climate Resilience of Biodiversity Hotspots in Jordan " aims to improve the resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change of vulnerable ecosystems and vulnerable communities dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. Protected areas, when well designed, well-connected, and effectively managed, deliver important ecosystem services to human populations in general, and specifically to neighbouring communities. In Jordan, local communities living around protected areas are benefiting from employment opportunities, eco-tourism development options, the provision of healthy rangelands and medicinal plants, and the development of socio-economic projects that provide economic benefits. Climate change is one of the major threats to biodiversity, accelerating the loss of species, degradation of habitats, and the well-being of local communities, while well-designed protected areas are one of the main Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to mitigate the impacts of climate change, sustain ecosystem services for human societies, and generate economic benefits for local communities that rely heavily on them.

The ecosystem vulnerability assessment conducted through Jordan's Third National Communication (TNC) Report showed that forests and water ecosystems are among the most vulnerable, highlighting the priority need to perform adaptation interventions within these two kinds of ecosystems. The TNC proposed to adopt a national-wide protected area system, using diverse conservation governance forms including protected areas (PAs), "Hima", and special conservation areas (SCAs), that empower local communities to conserve natural resources and improve their livelihoods by enhancing their adaptive capacity, in addition to involving them in restoration actions of degraded ecosystems and encouraging the establishment of community forests to control soil erosion. Currently, Jordan's protected areas network covers only 5.3% of the country, while the international conservation community is trying to promote the adoption of the 30x30 initiative by conserving 30% of terrestrial and marine ecosystems globally by 2030. Critical gaps in the current national network of protected areas include the lack of integration of the current and projected impacts of climate change on ecosystems, as well as the lack of comprehensive representation of some ecosystems.

Based on this, the project will contribute to enhancing the resilience of vulnerable ecosystems and vulnerable communities on two geographic scales:

1. National scale: by aiming to increase the "percentage of critical climate-vulnerable ecosystems into the National Protected Areas Network". The project will also integrate climate change metrics within the design of the protected areas management effectiveness tracking tools to help track and achieve an effective protected areas network that is better resilient to the impacts of climate change.
2. Sub-national scale: by applying pilot interventions in Shoubak and Petra Districts from Ma'an Governorate, southern Jordan, that aim to achieve "increased areas of restored forest ecosystems in Shoubak and Petra, southern Jordan", and an "increased percentage of women, youth, and marginalized groups engaged in and benefiting from the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Shoubak and Petra districts". The project will focus on pilot interventions targeting forest ecosystems in Shoubak and Petra, in southern Jordan, which are some of the most vulnerable ecosystems. It also tackles the impact of climate change on vulnerable local communities, especially women, girls, and youth, sectors of society most affected by the degradation and reduced productivity of these ecosystems.

The project's ultimate outcome will result in conserved and sustained ecosystem services for the benefit of local communities dependent on protected areas and the ecosystems conserved through these protected areas, which will contribute to poverty reduction across all sites where protected areas exist. The project's pilot interventions, including Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in the target locations in Petra and Shoubak, will have a direct impact on enhancing the livelihoods and income of vulnerable communities through an extensive capacity-building program that will target

women, girls, and youth, and by engaging them in the FLR and NbS activities. This will not only enhance their income but will also improve their skills to achieve sustainable financial income.

Description of the Assignment

Under the supervision of the Protected Areas, World Heritage, and Biodiversity Programme Manager at IUCN ROWA, the selected service provider shall contribute to and support the implementation of the following tasks:

1. The consultant shall deliver a three-days in-person practical training on systematic conservation planning and Marxan for local stakeholders.
2. The consultant shall review the results of the systematic conservation planning assessment that was conducted to review and update the protected areas network for Jordan; including; the Marxan scenarios, the connectivity models, the site prioritisation and the field validation.
3. The consultant shall co-lead and co-facilitate stakeholder discussions to compare the different protected areas scenarios.
4. The consultant shall develop prioritisation criteria to help guide the discussions on the selection of the final site boundaries that will be included in the final revised protected areas network.
5. The consultant shall advise on finalizing the boundaries of protected and conserved areas and connectivity corridors and buffer zones with the support of the project team and the technical committee.
6. The consultant shall support and advise the local sub-contractor who will be leading the field validation and gap filling surveys.
7. The consultant shall draft and develop the final national protected areas system plan report with the support integrating inputs from the Marxan and connectivity analysis, field validation and other resources. The report shall include, but not limited to; the gap analysis of the current network, the review and prioritisation methodology, the final resulting network.

Duration of the Assignment

From signing the contract date to the 28th of February 2025

Deliverables and Activities

The consultant will provide the following deliverables and carry out the following activities:

Deliverable Activity	Description	Deadline
D1	Inception report: including a detailed workplan for the assignment with proposed methodology.	1 week after signing the contract
D2	. Analysis report of the four protected area network scenarios resulting from the Marxan Analysis	31, May, 2024
D3	Training workshop report, presentations and material	30, June, 2024
D4	Criteria for prioritisation of the proposed protected and conserved areas building on previous studies and aligning with International standards and guidelines in consultation with stakeholders	15, July, 2024

D5	Review report, notes and recommendations on the field validation report	31 December, 2024
D6	Final protected areas system plan report; including, but not limited to; the gap analysis of the current network, the review and prioritisation methodology, the final resulting network.	31, January, 2025

The consultant will have 3 working days replying to the comments and feedback remarks on the above-mentioned deliverables by GAC or IUCN.

Payment Schedule

The Timetable below summarises the chronological order of deliverables and indicates milestones at which IUCN will pay the Consultant.

Deliverable	Milestone payment
Upon submission and approval of the inception report (D1)	10%
Upon the completion and approval of the deliverables (D2)	30%
Upon the completion and approval of the deliverables (D3)	30%
Upon the completion and approval of the remaining deliverable (D4), and all tasks and delivery of all relevant deliverables and reports.	30%

If the consultant is subject to tax in the territory of Jordan in respect of the consideration received under this agreement, the consultant hereby acknowledges that IUCN is entitled to deduct 5% for residents of Jordan and 10% for residents outside Jordan, in addition to 1% as national contribution for non-residents, as income tax arising or made in connection with this agreement.

If the requested deliverables are not submitted within the timeframe stated in this ToR, the payments will be withheld.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature – Regional Office for West Asia (IUCN-ROWA) reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work / outputs is incomplete, not delivered, or for failure to meet deadlines. All materials developed will remain the copyright of IUCN, and IUCN will be free to adapt and modify them in the future.

Skills and Experience

The consultant should have the following skills:

- MSc degree in ecology, environmental sciences, biodiversity conservation, or any other related fields. A PhD degree in the above-mentioned field would be an asset.
- 15+ years of practical experience in systematic conservation planning, system planning and Marxan.
- Extensive experience in the ROWA region is an asset
- Extensive experience with international standards and guidelines on protected areas
- Excellent facilitation and coordination skills, with the ability to manage the timely and effective delivery of both quantity and quality work on time.
- Strong reporting and analytical skills.
- Excellent writing and speaking literacy in English (Arabic is an asset).

Supervision and coordination

The consultant will report to and work under the supervision of the Protected Areas, World Heritage, and Biodiversity Programme Manager at IUCN ROWA.

Important notes:

1. All the deliverables from the consultant, whether reports, presentations, documents, etc. should include (IUCN, GAC), and the two institutions should be mentioned whenever an activity is mentioned.
2. Any pictures, figures, charts, etc. used in this consultancy must include the copyrights.
3. The final compiled reports for this assignment will need to follow IUCN's visual identity and publication guidelines, which will be provided by IUCN.
4. All field visits costs needed for conducting the survey will be covered by the selected local NGO.
5. All costs related to training, including the training venue, catering, and accommodation of the participants and trainers are included in the contract (the contract is inclusive of all these expenditures).