



# Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

**Title:** Assessing the successful conservation outcomes of the fauna, flora, and avifauna of KSA's three protected areas: King Salman Royal Reserve, King Abdulaziz Royal Reserve, and Sharaan protected area

## **Objective of the Consultancy**

This consultancy is conducted for three protected areas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: King Salman Royal Reserve, King Abdulaziz Royal Reserve, and Sharaan Protected Area. Collectively referred to as the '**Reserves**' in this TOR, the consultancy aims to achieve the following objective(s):

1. Ensure the performance measures and thresholds for the Reserves' **flora** are assessable, aligned with the site's natural values, and in compliance with the IUCN Green List Standard.
2. Ensure the performance measures and thresholds for the Reserves' **Fauna** are assessable, aligned with the site's natural values, and in compliance with the IUCN Green List Standard.
3. Ensure the performance measures and thresholds for the Reserves' **Avifauna** are assessable, aligned with the site's natural values, and in compliance with the IUCN Green List Standard.
4. Assessing the effectiveness of conservation management strategies in each reserve, as well as the Flora, Fauna and Avifauna monitoring of the reserves.
5. Define thresholds of the flora, fauna, and avifauna ecological condition within Reserves.
6. Identifying areas for improvement and recommend necessary actions to meet or exceed the Green List Standard for each Reserve.

## **Background**

### **The Reserves:**

#### **Sharaan Protected Area**

Project Reference: P04042

Donor reference: CW7283 A

#### **King Salman Royan Nature Reserve (KSRNR)**

Project Reference: P04135

Donor reference: AVRO-00089

#### **King Abdulaziz Royal Reserve (KARNR)**

Project Reference: P04554

Donor reference: AVRO-00091

### **About IUCN**

IUCN is a membership Union composed of 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 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is embarking on a new era with its 2030 ambitious vision, which recognizes natural and cultural heritage as important key assets of the Kingdom. For the successful and efficient implementation of this vision, Saudi government has taken serious steps to align with international biodiversity goals and standards and to enhance nature conservation through the establishment of different types of protected areas in KSA including The Royal Reserves. Therefore, there has been an increasing momentum for protected areas authorities, and the Royal Reserves in particular, to bring in the best available knowledge in biodiversity conservation and protected area management to KSA.

The AIUa Protected Areas Network (APAN) project aims to establish and initiate a well-connected, fairly governed, and effectively managed network of protected and conserved areas that adheres to international standards and best practices, shares lessons, brings successful regional and global approaches, and demonstrates initial success in nature conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of ecosystems and natural resources for people and biodiversity.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature—Regional Office for West Asia (IUCN ROWA) seeks to evaluate the performance measures identified for the flora, fauna, and avifauna of Sharaan Nature Reserve in AIUa, KSRNR, and KARNR. Additionally, it aims to define monitoring protocols, performance standards, and thresholds for the protection of major values. This includes assessing the current ecological conditions through a desk review of relevant documentation, reports, and data for each reserve separately.

Determining natural values' thresholds is crucial for setting baselines and targets, informing adaptive management, standardising assessments, maintaining ecosystem integrity, guiding policy development, and allocating resources effectively. The Reserves aims to obtain the IUCN Green List Standard certification. In this regard, evaluating performance measures and thresholds must be fully aligned with the IUCN Green List Standard criteria to ensure that conservation efforts are scientifically grounded, consistent, and effective in preserving biodiversity.

The experts' team is expected to engage with the reserves' site managers, stakeholders, and local communities to gather information and perspectives. Furthermore, the experts' team will identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers to effective flora, fauna, and avifauna conservation, and will highlight findings, recommendations, and action plans for effective conservation for each reserve separately.

## **Description of the Assignment**

1. Conduct a desk review of the reserves' current flora, fauna and avifauna monitoring activities and conservation strategies.
2. Assess threats to flora, fauna, and avifauna including but not limited to habitat destruction, invasive species, and climate change, and recommend management strategies to address them.
3. Produce a comprehensive report summarising findings, recommendations, and management priorities for the conservation efforts of the flora, fauna and avifauna in each reserve separately.
4. Develop action plans to align the flora, fauna and avifauna conservation thresholds and performance measures with the IUCN Green List Standard in each reserve separately.

5. Facilitate learning, capacity building and training by sharing best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to empower site managers and stakeholders in each reserve separately about flora, fauna, and avifauna conservation actions.

### Duration of the Assignment

From August 15<sup>th</sup> to February 28, 2025.

### Deliverables and Activities

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

<b>Deliverable/Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>D.1</b> Inception	Inception report and detailed assignment plan for each reserve separately including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work plan.</li> <li>• Requirements of the IUCN Green List Standard</li> </ul>	within 10 days from the contract signature
<b>D.2</b> Initial assessment and conservation management strategies report	First evaluation report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review of previous studies and available flora monitoring data</li> <li>• Assessment of the current flora monitoring programme/activities and their effectiveness in maintaining the site's natural values</li> </ul>	15 September 2024
<b>D.3</b> Flora, Fauna, and Avifauna conservation report	Findings and recommendations on management priorities for flora, fauna, and avifauna conservation for each site separately.	15 November 2024
<b>D.4</b> Action plan for flora, fauna, and avifauna thresholds	Specific actions to enhance the flora, fauna, and avifauna biodiversity in each reserve separately include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thresholds identification plan and proposed methodology.</li> <li>• Threshold for the performance measures of the flora.</li> </ul>	30 November 2024
<b>D.5</b> Monitoring and evaluation plans	Design for each reserve a long-term monitoring and evaluation programme specialized for flora, fauna, and avifauna.	10 December 2024
<b>D.6</b> Capacity building plan and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building plan on flora biodiversity reporting and monitoring</li> <li>• Introductory training on flora monitoring techniques (3 in-person days). This should include material, photos, evaluation and feedback.</li> </ul>	10 January 2025

## Payment Schedule

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

Deliverable	Milestone payment
5 July 2024 – <b>D.1</b> Inception report and assignment plan	20%
30 July 2024 – <b>D.2</b> Initial assessment and conservation management strategies report	30%
15 August 2024 – <b>D3 &amp; D4</b> conservation report & action plan for flora, fauna, and avifauna thresholds	30%
30 September 2024 – <b>D.5 &amp; D6</b> Monitoring and evaluation plans and capacity building	20%

## Skills and Experience

The expert must have the following skills, education and experience as a minimum:

- Master's degree in biology, ecology, environmental science, or a related field, with postgraduate qualifications preferred for more advanced training roles.
- Proficiency in biodiversity assessment methodologies.
- Demonstrated experience conducting monitoring and evaluation activities in desertic and semi-arid environments is highly desirable.
- Familiarity with conservation principles and practices, including habitat assessment and management strategies.
- Practical experience in designing and implementing biodiversity monitoring programs.
- Experience in communicating and collaborating with management agencies, academic institutions, and local, national, and regional stakeholders to achieve agreed collective outcomes.
- Proven understanding of IUCN's Green List Standard and principles.
- Excellent communication and training skills, including engaging with diverse stakeholders and facilitating collaborative discussions.
- A team player who is able to contribute effectively to collaborative issues and demonstrate innovation and leadership.
- A good understanding of IUCN's mission and a general attitude of serving others.

## Supervision and Coordination

The consultant will report to and work under the supervision of the Programme Manager\ Protected Areas, World Heritage & Biodiversity Programme, and in coordination with the relevant project team.

## Important Notes

IUCN will cover separately the costs related to the training, the training venue, meals, and coffee breaks during the training.