

Terms of Reference

Project Assistant

Project Title:	Sustainable Land and Forest Management in the Greater Caucasus Landscape (Project 1), Increasing representation of effectively managed marine ecosystems in the protected area system (Azerbaijan) (Project 2)
Position:	Project Assistant
Grade:	SB-2/2
Duty Station:	Baku, Azerbaijan; international and/or domestic travel may be required
Duration:	12 months
Remuneration:	Gross \$ 1211 per month (subject to income tax), plus social security package
Deadline to Submit application:	February 26, 2018

Project Background:

Project 1. The objective of the SLFM project is to secure the flow of multiple ecosystem services, including carbon storage and sequestration and water provisioning services, while ensuring ecosystem resilience to climate change. The project will engineer a paradigm shift from the current unsustainable practices to sustainable land and forest management practice. The SLFM project envisages enhancing carbon storage potential of forests and pastures integrated into forestry and pasture land-use planning and decision making. The project(s) shall address barriers to sustainable pasture and forest management. In doing so they will support measures to mitigate CC such as managing natural forests to emphasize natural regeneration through improved grazing and wood collecting in forests. It will avoid GHG emissions caused by degradation, increase sequestration through enhanced biomass and improve the productivity of forests and pasturelands. This would result in short and long-term global benefits.

Project 2. The Government of Azerbaijan has established a network of seven protected areas (3 National Parks, 2 State Nature Reserves and 2 State Nature Sanctuaries) located within the coastal zone of the Caspian Sea, covering an area of 175,575ha. A lack of adequate investment in sustaining a professional staff, modernizing the planning and management systems, and developing and maintaining infrastructure and equipment in these coastal and marine protected areas is however diminishing the Government's capacity to effectively secure the conservation values of these protected areas. The largest of these marine and coastal protected areas - the Gizil-Agaj State Nature Reserve (88,360 ha) and adjacent Lesser Gizil-Agaj (10,700 ha) State Nature Sanctuary - is considered one of the most important wetlands for wintering and breeding waterbirds in the Western Palearctic and thus forms the spatial focus for project interventions.

Respectively, the project has been organized into *two components* and will be implemented over a period of four years.

The first component of the project is focused on improving the management capacity of Gizil-Agaj Complex to address the external threats to, and pressures on the conservation values of the reserve complex, including *inter alia*: pressures from building/agricultural encroachments; environmental impacts of livestock grazing/browsing; effects of illegal bird hunting; threats from inflows of pollutants; and effects of illegal fishing activities. The outputs under this component will be specifically directed towards: (i) Exploring the possibility of establishing a new Gizil-Agaj Coastal National Park on the basis of the Gizil-Agaj Complex; (ii) the preparation of an integrated management plan for the newly established Gizil-Agaj Complex; (iii) demarcation of the boundary of, and renovation/construction of access control infrastructure in, the Gizil-Agaj State Nature Reserve ; and (iv) the procurement of critical equipment for improving the enforcement and compliance capacities of the complex staff in Gizil-Agaj State Nature Reserve

The second component of the project is focused on: (i) creating the enabling conditions for increasing, diversifying and establishing the financial flows to all coastal and marine protected areas; and (ii) developing

and implementing a long term monitoring system to ensure that the integrity of ecosystems are not pushed over critical thresholds in the commercialization of, and natural resource use in, marine and coastal protected areas. The outputs under this component will be specifically directed towards: (i) the preparation of a sustainable financing plan for the network of coastal and marine protected areas; (ii) strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources to pilot priority activities identified in the financing plan; and (iii) the design and implementation of a long-term monitoring system to track the health of ecosystems in coastal and marine protected areas.

Organizational Context:

The Project Assistant (PA) will be locally recruited based on an open competitive process. S/He will be responsible for the overall administration and additional support of the projects (contractual, organizational, financial, logistical, etc.). The Project Assistant will report to the UNDP Project Managers.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Project Assistant will work in close collaboration with the Project teams, Programme, Operations, Communications and other project teams in the Country Office (CO) for effective achievement of results, anticipating and contributing to resolving complex programme/project-related issues and information delivery. The incumbent is expected to exercise full compliance with UNDP programming, financial, procurement and administrative rules, regulations, policies and strategies, as well as implementation of the effective internal control systems.

Administrative management:

- Collect, register and maintain all information on project activities;
- Contribute to the preparation and implementation of progress reports;
- Monitor project activities, budgets and financial expenditures;
- Advise all project counterparts on applicable administrative procedures and ensures their proper implementation;
- Maintain project correspondence and communication;
- Support the preparations of project work-plans and operational and financial planning processes;
- Assist in procurement and recruitment processes;
- Assist in the preparation of payments requests for operational expenses, salaries, insurance, etc. against project budgets and work plans;
- Follow-up on timely disbursements by UNDP CO;
- Receive, screen and distribute correspondence and attach necessary background information;
- Prepare routine correspondence and memoranda for Project Managers signature;
- Assist in logistical organization of meetings, training and workshops;
- Prepare agendas and arrange field visits, appointments and meetings both internal and external related to the project activities and write minutes from the meetings;
- Maintain project filing system;
- Maintain records over project equipment inventory; and
- Perform other duties as required.

Financial management:

- Implement financial record-keeping and prepare financial reports required in line with NEX financial rules and procedures;
- Assist with recruitment and procurement processes, checking the conformity with UNDP and the Government rules and procedures;
- Assist in the preparation of payments requests for operational expenses, salaries, insurance;
- Support the preparations of project work-plans and operational and financial planning processes;
- Monitor project activities, budget and financial expenditures, maintain proper record of approved project budgets and their revisions and prepare proposals for budget revisions;

- Prepare and submit expenditure and programme budget status reports;
- Prepare recurring reports as scheduled and special reports as required for budget preparations and audit;
- Assist in project related procurement issues;
- Undertake other financial and administrative tasks on an ad hoc basis.

Competencies:

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrate commitment to UNDP's mission, vision and values;
- Display cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Facilitate and encourage open communication in the team, communicating effectively;
- Have consistent approach to work with energy and positive, constructive attitude;
- Present ability to work under pressure;
- Show will to learn and develop professional skills;

Functional Competencies:

Knowledge Management and Learning

- Share knowledge and experience;
- Actively work towards continuing personal learning, act on learning plan and apply newly acquired skills

Development and Operational Effectiveness

- Demonstrate proven ability to problem-solving and creative thinking, to develop and implement smart business solutions in a challenging socio-economic environment;
- To be able to establish and maintain contacts with senior-level officials of the host government required. Excellent interpersonal skills are essential part of the job.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, is required to obtain, evaluate and interpret factual data and to prepare accurate and complete reports and other documents.

Leadership and Self-Management

- Focus on result for the client and responds positively to feedback;
- Remain calm, in control and good humored even under pressure;
- Demonstrate openness to change and ability to manage complexities

Job Knowledge/Technical Expertise - In-depth knowledge of the subject-matter

- Understands more advanced aspects of primary area of specialization as well as the fundamental concepts of related disciplines;
- Keeps abreast of new developments in area of professional discipline and job knowledge and seeks to develop him/herself professionally;
- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of information technology and applies it in work assignments;
- Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the current guidelines and project management tools and utilizes these regularly in work assignments;
- Have effective interpersonal and negotiations skills and ability to coordinate complex, multi-stakeholder projects and be able to think in a strategic manner on complex and difficult projects.
- Strong drafting, presentation and reporting skills;
- Excellent written communication skills.

Recruitment Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree with technical specialization, such as economics, business administration, mathematics, ICT and other related fields;
- At least 3 years of relevant work experience with international organizations; experience in UN/UNDP will be an advantage
- Proved knowledge of procurement and financial reporting procedures;
- Excellent computer skills, in particular mastery of all applications of the MS Office package;
- Fluent English and Azeri is required; knowledge of Russian will be an advantage;