

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### PROJECT COORDINATOR FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM (PMT) CLEAN AND RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT FOR BLUE SEA (CARE4BLUESEA) - ALBANIA

#### 1. BACKGROUND

Albania, a constitutional republic with a democratically elected parliament, is situated in south-eastern Europe on the Balkan Peninsula. Divided into 12 regions and 61 municipalities, with Tirana as the capital, it borders Greece to the south, Montenegro and Kosovo to the north, and the Ionian and Adriatic seas to the west. With a land area of 28,748 km<sup>2</sup>, 70% of the terrain is mountainous, contributing to an average altitude of 708 m above sea level. Abundant water resources, primarily flowing into the Adriatic Sea, play a crucial role in hydropower generation and irrigation. The Mediterranean climate features mild winters and hot summers, with a potential shift toward increased temperatures, heat waves, decreased precipitation, and more frequent extreme events by 2050. The 2022 population stands at 2,793,592, reflecting a 1.3% decline from the previous year.

Renewed focus on Albania's natural environment presents a promising opportunity for the country's core economic sectors, particularly tourism. With its untouched coastal expanses and free-flowing rivers, Albania stands out in Europe, poised to allure discerning high-value tourists. The tourism industry, already a crucial force in economic growth, directly sustained 20% of total employment in 2021 and is anticipated to maintain its role as a primary driver of Albania's economic prosperity.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, Albania's tourism industry made a direct financial impact of US\$3 billion, constituting approximately 17.4% of the country's GDP<sup>2</sup>. The sector demonstrated a robust annual growth rate ranging between 10-15 percent.<sup>3</sup>

Albania recognizes the crucial role its coastal and marine resources play in the national economy, constituting 37% of GDP in 2017. The Government of Albania has identified the South Albania's Coastal Belt<sup>4</sup> as a priority for regional development. Despite progress in promoting growth and reducing poverty, the full economic potential of these assets remains untapped. Pollution and resource depletion pose challenges, especially as tourism relies on sustainable management. With aspirations for EU accession, Albania aims to align with the Green Deal, emphasizing environmental stewardship and climate action. Significant legislative strides have been made since 2011, but implementation lags due to regulatory gaps and limited

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<sup>1</sup> WWTC (2022). *Albania 2022 Annual Research: Key Highlights*

<sup>2</sup> WWTC (2022). *Albania 2022 Annual Research: Key Highlights*

<sup>3</sup> International Labour Organization (2020), *Towards sustainable tourism in Albania's Vjosa River Region* An analysis of the key constraints and opportunities to create more and better jobs in the region around Europe's last wild river

<sup>4</sup> The south of Albania, as referred to in this project, does not correspond to a specific administrative region. It is a geographic area that has been recognized for its tourism potential and includes several of Albania's most attractive and diverse tourism assets. The south of Albania comprises the area between Fier-Vlora and Saranda and covers both the coast and the hinterland, including Berat, Permet, and Gjirokaster and the Vjosa River.

capacity. The focus is on realizing economic benefits while ensuring the long-term health of coastal and marine ecosystems.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MoTE) and the World Bank (WB) have finalized a new investment operation to enhance Albania's mitigation of land-based sources impacting the aquatic environment in specific areas of the South-West Coastal Belt, with the official approval of the "Clean and Resilient Environment for Blue Sea Project" on December 1st, 2023.

The Project focus on pollution reduction and prevention measures will include investments in grey and green infrastructure and in human capital for behaviour change to address: (i) pollution risks from construction/inert waste and municipal waste - including plastic waste leakages - as specific solid waste streams in the Vlora South Waste Zone within an integrated SWM framework; and (ii) water pollution from point sources, specifically untreated sewage, and non-point sources (NPS), such as sediment and runoffs from manure in the Vjosa River Basin.

The project is structured around **three components**.

- *Component 1: Promote Integrated and Circular Approaches for Protection of Landscapes and Water Resources*

This component will support the implementation of local solutions for protection of valuable landscapes and water resources within the Vlora South-Gjirokaster Waste Zone. The project applies an integrated approach to SWM investments, considering circular economy principles, and supports a system that is more environmentally, financially, and operationally sustainable.

- *Component 2: Reduce Water Pollution in the Vjosa River*

This component tackles point source and non-point source pollution in municipal wastewater and stormwater, safeguarding aquatic ecosystems. It prioritizes climate resilience in all investments. Funding covers construction, consulting, goods, and training for sewer systems, trucks, and treatment plants.

- *Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation*

This component will provide support for project management, implementation, and monitoring, covering financial management, procurement, environmental and social risk management, project audits, financing of operating costs, and training for MoTE PMT and AKUM PCU.

**The project is envisioned to have two Implementing Agencies (IAs).** MoTE is responsible for overall project coordination, reporting and monitoring and, to fulfil those roles, it will establish a dedicated Project Management Team (PMT) responsible for day-to-day supervision of Project implementation for the MoTE Parts of the Project (component 1, and subcomponents 2.3 and 3.1) and other responsibilities as set forth in the POM. At the same time, AKUM will establish a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) which will also manage the World Bank-funded Program-for-Results on National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Modernization Program. The PCU will be responsible for day-to-day supervision of Project implementation for the AKUM Parts of the Project (subcomponents 2.1, 2.2, and 3.2) and other responsibilities as set forth in the POM. MoTE and AKUM, through their project teams, will closely collaborate with four key local

partners: (a) National Environment Agency (NEA) for Component 1, (b) Regional Directorate of Water Utilities for Component 2, (c) National Agency for Protected Areas for Component 2, and (d) municipalities for all three components.

The timeline for the project extends from December 1, 2023, to March 29, 2029. This span encompasses the approval date, marking the project's official commencement, to the projected closing date.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

Against this background, the PMT Coordinator will provide project management, coordination and administrative support to MoTE which is one of the two implementing agencies for the Clean and Resilient Environment for Blue Sea Project. He/She will lead the team that will include inter alia: a procurement expert, a financial management expert, an Investment manager, a monitoring and evaluation/communication expert, a full-time environmental and social expert.

## **3. SCOPE OF WORK**

While undertaking the assignment, the PMT Coordinator is anticipated to employ suitable project management tools, adhere to best practices, leverage insights from analogous endeavors whenever possible, and adopt a collaborative approach. This is to ensure the achievement of the project objectives through the effective execution of responsibilities. In order to facilitate the delivery of the project objectives, the PMT Coordinator is expected to engage the collaboration of key stakeholder in the sector, including with the PCU of AKUM, as well as other Government agencies

In specific, the PMT Coordinator will perform the following tasks:

1. Familiarise with the Clean and Resilient Environment for Blue Sea Project, project agreement, reporting templates, guidelines and systems of the World Bank (including for financial management, procurement e.g., STEP<sup>5</sup>, environmental and social framework (ESF), monitoring and evaluation) and the Government of Albania as well as other reporting requirements relevant to the successful implementation of the project.
2. Oversee PMT staff, manage day-to-day operations of the PMT, including the project budget. Maintain up-to-date financial, inventory, contracts, and other records to facilitate audits and evaluations aligned with Government of Albania and World Bank requirements.
3. Collaborate with the Project's Financial Manager, Procurement Officer, and key stakeholders to develop Annual Work Plans, Terms of References (TORs), budgets, and procurement plans in accordance with the Project Operational Manual. Submit these plans for approval to the Project Steering Committee and the World Bank.
4. Collaborate with pertinent partners (including PCU at AKUM, MTE, Project Steering Committee (PSC), National Environment Agency, Regional Directorate of Water Utilities, National Agency for Protected Areas, municipalities and the private sector and other relevant entities) to coordinate the implementation of project activities, ensuring alignment

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<sup>5</sup> Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement

with the project agreement, Project Operational Manual, Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Annual Operating Plan, and other project documents. Address potential bottlenecks with the relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies to facilitate smooth project implementation.

5. Provide an overall guidance and monitor an implementation of all procurement of consulting services, Goods and Works planned in the procurement plan, in accordance to the relevant government's and WB's regulations;
6. Establish and oversee the accuracy of data and information gathered from diverse sources, as outlined in the M&E Plan of the Results Framework. Ensure timely production of reports. Develop a mechanism for data quality assurance and extend technical support to the PMT.
7. Monitor project implementation against indicators outlined in the Project Operations Manual, preparing monitoring/progress reports (technical and financial). Submit these reports to the Project Steering Committee and the World Bank and integrate them into the PPCR Results Framework.
8. Coordinate mid-term and final reviews, by preparing the TORs for their delivery and collaborating closely with relevant stakeholders.
9. Represent the Project at local and international meetings, conferences, seminars, and workshops., including by effectively collaborating with other international partners, local governments, civil society organizations and private sector, involved in the environment and tourism sector;
10. Identify gaps in project design and propose changes, if necessary, to the Project Steering Committee and the World Bank;
11. Carry out any other duties as required.

#### **4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES**

Considering the scope of the assignment, the PMT Coordinator will be tasked with delivering the following outputs, ensuring attention to detail and adherence to project guidelines

- Finalization and revisions to the Project Operations Manual (POM)
- Annual Work Plan, Procurement Plan, and Budget
- Quarterly, and Annual Reports (Progress implementation, Financial)
- Presentations and Briefs, as needed
- Applicable reports based on the Project's ESMF
- Stakeholder Consultations, Workshops, and Reports
- Terms of Reference for Consultants; Technical Specifications for Goods, Works, and Services
- Terms of Reference for mid-term and final project review.
- Project Final Accounts/Report and Closing Documents

## **5. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE**

### *Education:*

- A Master's degree or equivalent qualification in Law, Economics, Engineering, Waste Management, Water Management. Experience, training and/or certification in project management are desirable.

### *Experience:*

- A minimum of seven years of experience in the coordination and management of projects, preferably in an area related to the environment, tourism and agriculture.
- Minimum of seven years' experience in donor funded development - international projects;
- Work experience with Albanian public central and local institutions.

## **6. CORE COMPETENCIES**

The PMT Coordinator will possess the following competencies:

- Coordination and management, critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Driven by a results-oriented approach.
- Effective facilitation skills
- Exceptional interpersonal skills
- Good analytical writing, facilitation, and communication skills;
- Excellent communication and reporting skills in English. Fully proficient in the Albanian language (native speaker level);
- Excellent computer skills in particular full proficiency in Microsoft Office 365 applications;
- Ability to work in a multinational, multicultural environment, and proactive working style;
- Familiarity with Government of Albanian policies and procedures.

## **7. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Applicants that fulfill the qualification requirements will be further evaluated based on the below criteria:

- General Qualification – 30 points
- Adequacy for the assignment – 60 points
- Language – 10 points

## **8. SPECIFICATIONS OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

**Duration:** The duration of the contract is initially for one year with the possibility of extension to six years, subject to the satisfactory performance of the consultant.

**Location:** The PMT Coordinator will be assigned to work in the office of the MoTE, Albania.

## **9. REPORTING**

The PMT Coordinator will report to the Project Team Leader and MoTE, Program Steering Committee (PSC).