



INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: April 7, 2026



Country: Kyrgyzstan

Description of the assignment: Ecological Science Consultant

Period of assignment/services (if applicable): through December 31, 2026

Proposals should be submitted by email to procurement@snowleopard.org no later than April 17, 2026. Any request for clarification must be sent in writing or by standard electronic communication to the email listed above.

1. BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND

Through funding from the Global Environment Facility (“GEF”) and the UNDP TRAC funds, and as implemented by the Kyrgyz Republic’s Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision (“MNRETS”) with assistance from UNDP, the objective of the project is to secure high value mountain ecosystem biodiversity and associated ecosystem services, while ensuring resilient and sustainable livelihoods in Kyrgyzstan’s Pamir-Alai landscape. The project addresses key threats to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation in mountain forest and pasture ecosystems, including Key Biodiversity Areas (“KBAs”). It will deliver global environmental benefits through a participatory approach, promoting equitable participation opportunities for women, youth, and vulnerable groups. The project aligns with the Land Degradation Neutrality (“LDN”) conceptual framework, applying the avoid-reduce-reverse principle. Strengthening Protected Area (“PA”) management and improving spatial land use planning embody the "avoid" principle, while enhanced forest and pasture management reflects the "reduce" principle.

Expected outcomes include improved management and biodiversity conservation within six KBAs covering 866,000 hectares. The project will contribute to establishing four new national-level protected areas (PAs) covering 281,083.79 hectares and support improved management effectiveness of five existing PAs covering 153,250 hectares. Additionally, it will improve the management of 563,949 hectares of high conservation value forest (HCVF) lands, including 500 hectares of degraded forest, and 621,905 hectares of pastures, including 19,500 hectares of degraded pastures. These efforts are expected to benefit 94,883 people while enhancing the conservation status of globally significant biodiversity and supporting Kyrgyzstan's progress toward LDN.

The project comprises four components:

- Component 1: Integrated Landscape Planning and Management for Sustainable and Resilient Livelihoods in the Pamir-Alai and LDN. This component focuses on ensuring ecosystem services and sustainable livelihoods in the Pamir-Alai landscape through improved land use planning and management.
- Component 2: Strengthening Key Biodiversity Areas. This component aims to secure the sustainability of critical Pamir-Alai mountain ecosystems.
- Component 3: Knowledge Management and International Engagement. This component emphasizes enhanced cooperation and knowledge sharing, supporting Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), and building the conservation community of practice nationally and regionally.
- Component 4: Project-Level Monitoring and Evaluation. This component ensures project activities are monitored and evaluated in accordance with UNDP and GEF requirements.

Under this project framework, SLT is responsible for certain project outputs:

- Output 1.1 Landscape-level integrated land use management approaches for Pamir-Alai landscape designed and under implementation
- Output 1.4 SFM and LDN-focused enabling environment through amendment of local rules and regulations on forestry and land use
- Output 2.4 Community-based conservation mechanisms established and implemented, including wildlife monitoring, enforcement and awareness raising
- Output 3.1 Modules on biodiversity conservation and integrated land management for LDN integrated in publicity, vocational training, and higher education systems



- Output 3.2 International coordination and information sharing, including support for future development of transboundary biodiversity conservation in Pamir-Alai

2. SCOPE OF WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED WORK

Under the supervision of, and in collaboration with, the SLT Project Manager, the Ecological Science Consultant is responsible for providing technical expertise in fauna species assessment, monitoring methodology development, and capacity building in support of the UNDP-GEF project "Integrated Community-based Management of High Value Mountain Ecosystems in Southern Kyrgyzstan for Multiple Benefits." The successful candidate will have demonstrated expertise in wildlife ecology and fauna survey methods, be highly organized and detail-oriented, able to manage multiple workstreams independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team.

This is an independent contractor position, meaning the selected candidate will not be an employee of SLT. This consultancy will expire at the end of 2026 with opportunity for renewal dependent on performance, ongoing need, and availability of funding.

The scope of work includes, but is not limited to:

- **Technical Consultation (Ecology)**
 - Developing and finalizing standardized working methodologies for field assessment of 8 indicator fauna species in consultation with the project team and MNRETS
 - Synthesizing field data into a comprehensive fauna baseline report establishing the initial conservation status of all indicator species across the Pamir-Alai landscape
 - Reviewing and critically assessing existing national survey methodologies against current international standards and best practices
- **Knowledge Management & Capacity Development**
 - Identifying and ranking potential indicator species for long-term monitoring in SPNAs
 - Preparing science-based recommendations on indicator species monitoring as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System
- **Inter-Organization Collaboration**
 - Participation in multi-stakeholder working groups and expert-level round tables
 - Collaboration with national scientific institutions and international project partners to ensure scientific rigor and knowledge transfer

For more detailed information, please refer to Annex 1

3. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS



I. Academic Qualifications:

- Master's degree or its international equivalent in Wildlife Ecology, Zoology, Conservation Biology, or a related field
- Doctoral degree or its international equivalent preferred

II. Years of Experience:

- At least 5 years of professional experience in wildlife ecology, fauna species assessment, or a closely related scientific field
- At least 5 years of experience working on biodiversity conservation projects, including design and implementation of fauna monitoring programs
- Direct field experience in the Pamir-Alai region or similar high-altitude Central Asian landscapes is a strong advantage
- Experience participating in multi-stakeholder projects, technical working groups, and contributing to round table outputs
- Experience with UNDP or other international donor administrative procedures is an advantage

III. Competencies:

- Strong knowledge of fauna survey methods and best practices for ecological study design, with particular familiarity with methodologies used for key indicator species (snow leopard, ungulates, raptors, reptiles)
- Familiarity with the body of ecological research in the Kyrgyz Republic and with relevant national institutions, including the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic and MNRETS
- Excellent technical writing and reporting skills in Russian; knowledge of Kyrgyz is an advantage
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills; ability to work effectively across disciplines and with diverse institutional partners
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail, with ability to manage multiple deliverables under tight deadlines

4. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING PROPOSAL/APPLICATION:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal (written in Russian, in the form of a cover letter addressed to SLT) including:
 - (i) Explanation of Consultant's relevant qualifications and skills;
 - (ii) Explanation on how Consultant will approach and conduct the work;
 - (iii) A financial proposal specifying the applicant's proposed total contract value for the full scope of work described in this Terms of Reference, structured according to the Payment Schedule.
2. Personal CV including past experience in similar projects
3. List of 2 professional references



TERMS OF REFERENCES (TOR)

Ecological Science Consultant, GEF-UNDP Project:

SCOPE OF WORK

The “Ecological Science Consultant” will provide support in the design and implementation of the following activities and deliverables:

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Deliverables/ Outputs</u>	<u>Percentage of Time</u>	<u>Expected Completion Date</u>
Activity 1: Develop a standardized working methodology for field data collection for 8 indicator fauna species: snow leopard, Central Asian ibex, Marco Polo argali, Severtsov's mountain sheep, desert monitor, golden eagle, snow pigeon, and river otter. (Note: the river otter survey protocol is already established and will be formally documented and adopted under this activity). Methodology submitted to MNRETS for preliminary agreement prior to field implementation.	Approved methodologies and data collection protocols for key project fauna species submitted for formal approval	10%	May 1, 2026
Activity 2: Produce a baseline report for all project indicator fauna species, including distribution, population abundance as appropriate, and highlighting of data gaps. Based on field data collected by SLFK following the approved methodology (Activity 1), the consultant synthesizes all incoming data into a comprehensive fauna baseline report establishing the initial status of all indicator species across the Pamir-Alai landscape.	Baseline report on indicator fauna species, including distribution, population abundance, and identified data gaps	20%	August 15, 2026



<p>Activity 3: Expert in consultation with the project team, review existing national methodologies for the assessment of the abundance of key project fauna species . The report identifies gaps and shortcomings in existing official survey methods against current international standards and best practices, and serves as the scientific basis for recommendations to improve official methods (1.4.3.).</p>	<p>Provide a report summarising existing methodologies for assessment of key species abundance, with citations for each methodology.</p> <p>Review a report on national recommended survey methods for key fauna species</p>	<p>20%</p>	<p>June 15, 2026</p>
<p>Activity 4: Review existing research to create a shortlist and ranking of potential indicator species for monitoring in SPNAs based on agreed criteria (which may include: practicality of monitoring and ecological importance of species, among others). Identify other groups working on species monitoring. (1.4.4.) (The shortlist covers fauna species only; flora indicator species are reviewed separately by the project botanist and incorporated into the final consolidated shortlist.)</p>	<p>Shortlist and ranking of potential fauna monitoring species with justification based on agreed criteria; map of other organizations working on species monitoring in the region</p>	<p>15%</p>	<p>June 15, 2026</p>
<p>Activity 5: Based on findings and lessons learned from the preparation of the fauna baseline report (Activity 2), review and revise the preliminary working methodology to reflect actual field conditions, species detectability, and data availability across the Pamir-Alai landscape. Revised and finalized methodology submitted to MNRETS for formal approval.</p>	<p>Finalized working methodology on key 8 species; formal MNRETS approval letter confirming acceptance of the methodology.</p>	<p>10%</p>	<p>September 1, 2026</p>
<p>Activity 6: In collaboration with the Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, co-organize and facilitate a round table meeting at expert level on indicator species monitoring, including discussion of which species to monitor, methods, timing, and data sources.</p>	<p>Round table meeting conducted; meeting minutes and summary of key decisions documented</p>	<p>10%</p>	<p>October 15, 2026</p>
<p>Activity 7: Based on round table outcomes, prepare final recommendations report on indicator species to be monitored, monitoring levels, data sources, and verification methods, as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System. (1.4.4.) (Flora section of the report prepared by the project botanist and integrated into the final consolidated document.)</p>	<p>Final recommendations report on species monitoring</p>	<p>10%</p>	<p>November 15, 2026</p>
<p>Activity 8: Co-organize and facilitate a final validation meeting with project partners, the</p>	<p>Final validation meeting conducted;</p>	<p>5%</p>	<p>November 30, 2026</p>



<p>Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, and relevant stakeholders. Present final recommendations for validation and formal submission as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System. (1.4.4.)</p>	<p>recommendations presented and validated; findings formally submitted as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System; meeting minutes documented</p>		
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REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant will report to the SLT Project Manager and collaborate with the assigned SLT Science Team on a regular basis, who will support the direction and approach to project management for SLT. The Consultant will provide brief oral or written progress updates to the Project Manager on a weekly basis. Upon completion of each activity, the Consultant will submit the relevant deliverable for review and approval by the Project Manager, which will serve as the basis for the corresponding payment instalment in accordance with the Payment Schedule. The Consultant will also work with the SLT Contracts Manager to support any required contractual documentation.

TERM & TERMINATION

The term of engagement under this contract shall be effective upon the date of signature by both parties and will continue until December 31, 2026. Either party may terminate this contract with or without cause upon giving thirty (30) days prior written notice to the other party. Termination or expiration of this contract shall not affect any rights or obligations which have accrued prior thereto or in connection therewith. Upon mutual written agreement of both parties, this contract may be renewed for an additional period subject to satisfactory performance, ongoing project need, and availability of funding.

PAYMENT TERMS

Payment for this consultancy will be made in four instalments upon satisfactory completion and SLT's written approval of deliverables, as outlined in the Payment Schedule. The total contract value is proposed by the applicant based on the scope of work described in this Terms of Reference. Payments will be issued as a percentage of the total agreed contract value upon completion of each payment milestone. All payments will be payable to Consultant via wire transfer through SLT's contractor payment system based on the wire instructions provided by Consultant to SLT. The payment currency is United States Dollars (USD\$). All income or other taxes or fees levied on payments to the Contractor under this contract are the sole responsibility of the Contractor.

Payment Instalment	Activities Completed	Payment Date	% of Contract Value
2	Activities 1, 3, 4: Working methodology submitted to MNRETS; methodological review and assessment report; shortlist and ranking of monitoring species	June 30, 2026	30%



3	Activities 2, 5: Fauna baseline report; finalized and MNRETS-approved working methodology	September 30, 2026	45%
4	Activities 6, 7, 8: Expert round table; final monitoring recommendations report; validation meeting and formal submission to National Biodiversity Monitoring System	December 15, 2026	25%
	TOTAL		100%

TRAVEL

No travel is anticipated or budgeted under this consultancy. All work will be conducted remotely or locally without reimbursement for travel or accommodation expenses.

INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR

The Consultant’s employment status is that of an individual contractor. Consultant shall not be deemed an employee, agent, partner or joint venture of SLT for any purpose whatsoever, and Consultant shall have no authority to bind or act on behalf of SLT. Consultant will not be able to participate in any employee benefit plan or program of SLT. Consultant shall be responsible for and agrees to comply with all obligations under all local and relevant tax laws for payment of income, proper registrations and, if applicable, self-employment tax or the equivalent statutory requirements for Consultant’s location.