INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: April 7, 2026

Country: Kyrgyzstan

Description of the assignment: Vegetation and Flora Assessment 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 Vegetation and Flora Assessment Consultant is responsible for providing technical expertise in vegetation survey methodology development, field assessment, and flora baseline reporting 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 botany and vegetation 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 (Botany & Vegetation Assessment)

- Reviewing the approved working methodology for field assessment of three indicator vegetation types and submitting it to MNRETS and other relevant state bodies for formal approval
- Leading vegetation field surveys across the Pamir-Alai landscape and synthesizing field data into a comprehensive vegetation baseline report

Knowledge Management & Capacity Development

- Identifying and ranking potential indicator flora species and vegetation types for long-term monitoring in SPNAs
- Preparing the flora component of science-based recommendations on indicator species monitoring as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System

Inter-Organization Collaboration

- Participation in expert-level round tables and final validation meeting in collaboration with the Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, MNRETS and other relevant state bodies
- Close coordination with the project Ecological Science Consultant and SLFK field teams to ensure integrated and consistent approach to fauna and flora baseline assessment

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 Botany, Geobotany, Plant Ecology, 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 botany, vegetation surveys, or plant ecology
- At least 5 years of experience working on biodiversity conservation projects, including design and implementation of vegetation monitoring programs and baseline assessments
- Direct field experience in the Pamir-Alai region or similar high-altitude Central Asian landscapes, with particular knowledge of juniper forests (*Juniperus hemisphaerica* and *J. zeravshanskyi*), wild hawthorne (*Crataegus knorringiana*), and degraded mountain pastures 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 vegetation survey methods and best practices for geobotanical study design, including monitoring plot establishment, species composition description, vegetation cover assessment, and ecosystem condition evaluation
- Familiarity with the flora of the Kyrgyz Republic and with relevant national institutions, including the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, the MNRETS and other relevant state bodies.
- 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 including field teams, government bodies, and scientific institutions
- 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)

Vegetation and Flora Assessment 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:

Activities	Deliverables/ Outputs	Percentage of Time	Expected Completion Date
Activity 1: Obtain approval of the working methodology for field assessment of three target ecosystem types: wild hawthorn (*Crataegus knorringiana*), juniper forests (*Juniperus hemisphaerica* and *J. zeravshanskyi*), and degraded mountain pastures.	Confirmation letter from MNRETS and other relevant state bodies approving the working methodology.	5%	May 1, 2026
Activity 2: Lead systematic geobotanical field surveys across all three target ecosystem types following the approved methodology, covering the Pamir-Alai landscape. Surveys document species composition, vegetation cover and condition by monitoring plot, extent of each ecosystem type, and key threats.	Field survey data for all three ecosystem types with GPS coordinates and monitoring plot documentation. Field report covering methods, surveyed areas, key findings, and data gaps.	40%	August 15, 2026
Activity 3: Based on field data, produce a comprehensive vegetation baseline report in Russian for all three indicator ecosystem types, including area maps, vegetation condition assessment, key threats, data gaps, and conservation recommendations. Report formally submitted to MNRETS.	Vegetation baseline report finalized and submitted to MNRETS. Acknowledgement letter confirming receipt.	25%	September 15, 2026
Activity 4: In coordination with the project zoologist, compile a shortlist and ranking of potential indicator flora species and vegetation types for long-term monitoring in SPNAs, based on agreed criteria including ecological importance, sensitivity to disturbance, and practicality of monitoring.	Shortlist and ranking of potential indicator flora species and vegetation types for SPNA monitoring, with justification based on agreed criteria.	10%	October 15, 2026

Activity 5: Participate in the expert-level round table on indicator species monitoring (1.4.4.), co-organized with the Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic. Present findings from the vegetation baseline report and flora shortlist.	Participation in round table; contributions to meeting minutes documented.	5%	October 15, 2026
Activity 6: Prepare the flora section of the final recommendations report on indicator species monitoring as input to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System.	Flora section of the final monitoring recommendations report submitted to the project team for integration into the consolidated report.	10%	November 15, 2026
Activity 7: Participate in the final validation meeting with project partners, the Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, MNRETS, and relevant stakeholders. Present the flora component of the monitoring recommendations.	Participation in validation meeting; flora monitoring recommendations validated and formally submitted to the National Biodiversity Monitoring System.	5%	November 30, 2026

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
1	Activity 1 completed: Confirmation letter from MNRETS approving the working methodology for three indicator vegetation types received.	June 30, 2026	20%
2	Activities 2, 3 completed: Field survey data and field report; vegetation baseline report submitted to MNRETS and other relevant state bodies	September 30, 2026	50%
3	Activities 4, 5, 6, 7 completed: Flora shortlist submitted to project team; participation and presentation at expert round table; flora section of final recommendations report submitted; participation in validation meeting and formal submission to National Biodiversity Monitoring System	December 15, 2026	30%
	TOTAL		**100%**

TRAVEL

Periodic domestic travel to field sites across the Pamir-Alai landscape is required to complete the deliverables listed in this document. All travel and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the Consultant and must be included in the financial proposal submitted at the time of application. No separate reimbursement for travel or accommodation will be provided by SLT.

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.