

Terms of Reference
for
Expert for Local Products' Branding Strategy

Project name:	Conservation of biodiversity in mountain grazing areas of Shara
Location:	Skopje and Shara region, Republic of Macedonia
Description of the agreement:	Local Product Branding and Business Plan expert
Period of duration of agreement/services:	2 months after signing the Agreement
Application Deadline:	08.10.2018

Introduction:

Shara Mountain has a rich diversity of geological and geomorphological forms, glacial lakes and mountain streams, which support a large variety of endemic, rare and relict biodiversity species, as well as autochthonous livestock breeds, that inhabit diverse habitats. Sustains a characteristic and diverse landscape which has been shaped through the millennia of traditional grazing and forest use.

It stands out in the category of highest evaluated landscape areas in the country with high mountain pastures on carbonate and silicate substrates, as well as landscape of hill pastures on granite stones and hilly rural landscape.

There is a growing trend in abandoning traditional farming practices due to depopulation and migrations from mountain villages to lowland areas - cities or abroad, during the last few decades. The remaining traditional farming is further challenged by the lack of infrastructure (including roads and access to electricity, water and sanitation), competition for labor with the growing commercial and industrial sectors of the Polog Region, as well as the insufficient governmental support targeted to animal husbandry in economically deprived rural mountainous regions. This lack of practice caused disappearance of pastures and meadows along with an array of valuable biodiversity. It further results in loss of plant species, habitat size reduction of several birds of prey, and desertion of grazing areas for the hoofed animals; in turn, it reduces populations of bird and large carnivore species.

Location of the project:

The Shar Planina (Shar Mountains) is located between the Gostivar and Tetovo valleys, with Mavrovo Lake to the south and the Mal Korab mountain range to the west. The Shar range extends as far west as Albania and as far north and northwest as the Kosovo border. It covers roughly 1,600 kilometers (994 miles). Its highest point is Titov Vrv at 2,747m (9,012 ft).



Background:

Majority of pastures in Shara Mountain are managed by the Public Enterprise (PE) on Pastures. A comprehensive strategy on pasture development is not in place. There are annual investment plans intended to improve road infrastructure and auxiliary services required by both the farmers and herds, but limited funds have been invested so far in these improvements. There is no cadaster plan of pastures, nor is there any information about the actual quality (nutritional value) of pastures in use.

Expected results of the project:

The proposed Project is intended to reconcile biodiversity conservation and economic development. The ultimate goal of the Project is to restore biodiversity of Shara Mountain pastures, generate new employment and opportunities.

The proposed “Pasture Management Plan” and the “Guidance and Toolkit on Sustainable Pasture Management” are intended to optimize pasture growth and utilization and restore the pasture

ecosystems. A pilot investment program will be implemented to demonstrate sustainable pasture management practices. Especially the cleanup programme in conjunction with improvement of plant composition may positively impact both quality of pastures and biodiversity restoration.

To support the economic viability of the traditional farming and restore biodiversity, the project proposes product branding and enrichment of agri-eco-tourism offers.

The proposed awareness programme will be linked to sensitization of the local community on the need for biodiversity conservation in mountain pastures and enhance management effectiveness of pastures.

Specific Objectives of the Project:

1. Strengthen capacity on sustainable pasture management
2. Demonstrate sustainable pasture practices
3. Improve local livelihoods
4. Communication, education and public awareness raising
5. Capacity building programme for pasture management
6. Successful Project Management and implementation

Task/engagement objective:

The Expert will be required to design and manage branding of the local products so that both goals:

1. Restoring the economic viability of the traditional farming and
2. Enrichment of agri-eco tourism

take place. Furthermore, this expert will be in charge of preparing a business plan that supports these goals and at the same time supports a sustainable pasture management strategy.

Scope of work:

- Local market study and analysis to understand the current formation of branding, marketing and communication state in a business context, brand context, target market context and the competitor context.
- Undertake a research on which the branding, marketing and sales of the project will be covered.
- Based on the stakeholder questionnaire, develop a Local Products' branding strategy for the range of products characteristic for the assigned area of this project.
- Use the market study to develop an appropriate pricing of all products ensuring the pricing is attractive to the buyer and feasible for the seller.
- Initiate a link with entities interested in branding stakeholders' products and who offer convenient/acceptable conditions for both parties, as well as assist during the branding execution and implementation of the agreed marketing plans.

- Indicate why these products are needed, what makes them special, what feature/s they offer that the other products don't. Point out if their production process or the production area is unique.
- Undertake research on customer perceptions of the products from the designated area and propose strategies to further improve that.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive marketing strategy and sales plan detailed activities, which should be based on competition and customer analysis of the market.
- Develop and execute a communication strategy required for the marketing and sales of the project.
- Deliver a Local Product branding strategy report and business plan report, as well as recommendations for the further sustainable management of restoring the economic viability of the traditional farming and enrichment of agri-eco tourism.

Methodology and Approaches:

The content of Local Products' Branding Strategy with business plan, should:

- Define and explain the term branding and difference between brand and trade mark;
- Define the aims of the brand and branding of the local products;
- Provide guidelines how to choose and define the brand;
- Provide guidelines how to create a successful brand;
- Explain connection between brand and business model;
- Emphasize and focus to the relevant target groups;
- Establish communication with clients;
- Find model to overcome the potential or current barriers;
- Provide guidelines for Brand management;
- Define indicators for measurement and monitoring of the implementation and monitoring of successes;

Working Schedule – Timeframe:

Step	Deliverables	Total duration of Activity
1.	Data and information Collecting	14.5 days (field+desk work)
2.	All activities of the expert duration	2 months
3.	Delivery of draft Local Products' Branding Strategy with business plan due date	30 th of October 2018
4.	Delivery of final Strategy	16 th of November 2018

Required Qualifications and Experience:

The expert involved in this assignment should have the following qualifications, skills and competences:

- A university degree in Business, Management, Agriculture, Management of Ecological Resources, Natural Resources Sciences or other thematic area relevant for this assignment. Please provide documentation accordingly.
- Minimum two years of experience in producing stakeholder or firm business plans.
- Minimum two-year experience on Product Branding Strategies.
- Knowledge on pasture habitats, the area in question and its stakeholder structure, possible firms to cooperate with, business management, statistical data analysis and questionnaire analyses.
- Good interpersonal communication and coordination skills.
- Available during the term of the contract.

Payment Terms:

100% payment after completion of all expected deliverables.

Evaluation criteria:

All applications will evaluate based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
<u>CV, Reference letter</u> , including the years of relevant expertise; experience and skills required for this consultancy.	30 points max
<u>Work methodology, Technical approach</u> , demonstrating and explaining an understanding of the scope of work	30 points max
<u>Financial offer</u>	40 points max
Total	100

How to apply:

To apply, please send an e-mail with your CV, Reference letter, letter of interest, work methodology along with the financial offer for the engagement to the e-mail address: info@mkm.mk using the subject line: "Local Product Branding and Business Plan expert".

Deadline for submissions of documents is 08.10.2018 (Monday), 15h. We encourage applicants to submit the application well before the deadline date.

If you need help, or have queries, please contact: info@mkm.mk or aleksandra.s@mkm.mk
Only the e-mails sent during three (3) days upon the announcement of the vacancy will be replied to.