Terms of Reference for

an Expert in Sustainable Agriculture

to conduct a Training on Sustainable Agricultural Practices for improving Dojran Lake quality

Project name:	Enhancing Dojran Lake Unique Biodiversity through Engagement of all Stakeholders and Implementation of Ecosystem-Based Approaches
Location:	Dojran Lake, Republic of North Macedonia
Description of the agreement:	Expert in Sustainable Agriculture
Period of duration of agreement/services:	3 months after signing the agreement
Application Deadline:	01.07.2020

Introduction

Dojran Lake is one of the most important biodiversity spots in North Macedonia, which is also highly valued because of its natural beauty, hydro(bio)logical and geomorphological characteristics, and its importance to science. The lake hosts several endemic species and subspecies of fish as well as eleven endemic invertebrates and many protected bird species.

Dojran Lake has been also recognized internationally for its rich biodiversity and abundance of species, and thus has been proclaimed as an important area for the conservation of European species and habitats. To date, Dojran Lake has been included in many different international networks and initiatives for the conservation and protection of nature, such as: the Emerald network of areas of special conservation interest (2002; Bern Convention), North Macedonian important plant areas (2004), the Balkan Green Belt (2004; IUCN), Ramsar site – Wetlands of International Importance (2008; Ramsar Convention), Important Bird Area (2010; BirdLife International), candidate Natura 2000 site (EU Birds and Habitat directives). Since 1977 Dojran Lake has been protected with national law and holds a protected status of a Monument of Nature (Official Gazette of SRM N° 45/1977, Official Gazette of NM N° 51/2011).

Today, Dojran Lake's ecosystem and biodiversity are under big threat mainly from anthropogenic activities (enhanced by climate change) that cause pollution, eutrophication, habitat loss and fragmentation, species disturbance and loss, depletion of fish stocks and introduction of invasive species, deterioration of the water quality and excessive water fluctuations. The degradation of the lake ecosystem has started in the late 80's of 20th century when excessive quantities of water were abstracted, which put the whole lake system out of its natural balance. As a consequence of this

ecological catastrophe as well as the continuous increasing anthropogenic pressures, today the lake is highly eutrophic and has completely lost its ecological resilience and the capacity for self-recovery.

The system will face irreversible and fatal damages to its biota unless conservation actions are undertaken and a proper sustainable management focusing on restoration and protection of the lake is established. Inaction will further have large negative consequences on the tourism, fisheries, and the regional economic situation as well as the livelihood of the local communities.

Location of the project

Dojran Lake is one of the three natural tectonic lakes in North Macedonia and is located in the southeastern part of the country (41°23' N 22°45' E). The lake occupies an area of 43.2 km^2 of which 27.2 km^2 belong to North Macedonia, while the smaller part lays within the territory of Greece. Dojran Lake is a shallow lake with the deepest point of 10 m found in the southeastern part. The lake is located in a topographic depression (148 m altitude) surrounded by the mountains Belasica in the north, Krusha in the southeast and Mechek in the west. The project activities will take place in the North Macedonian part of the Lake Dojran.

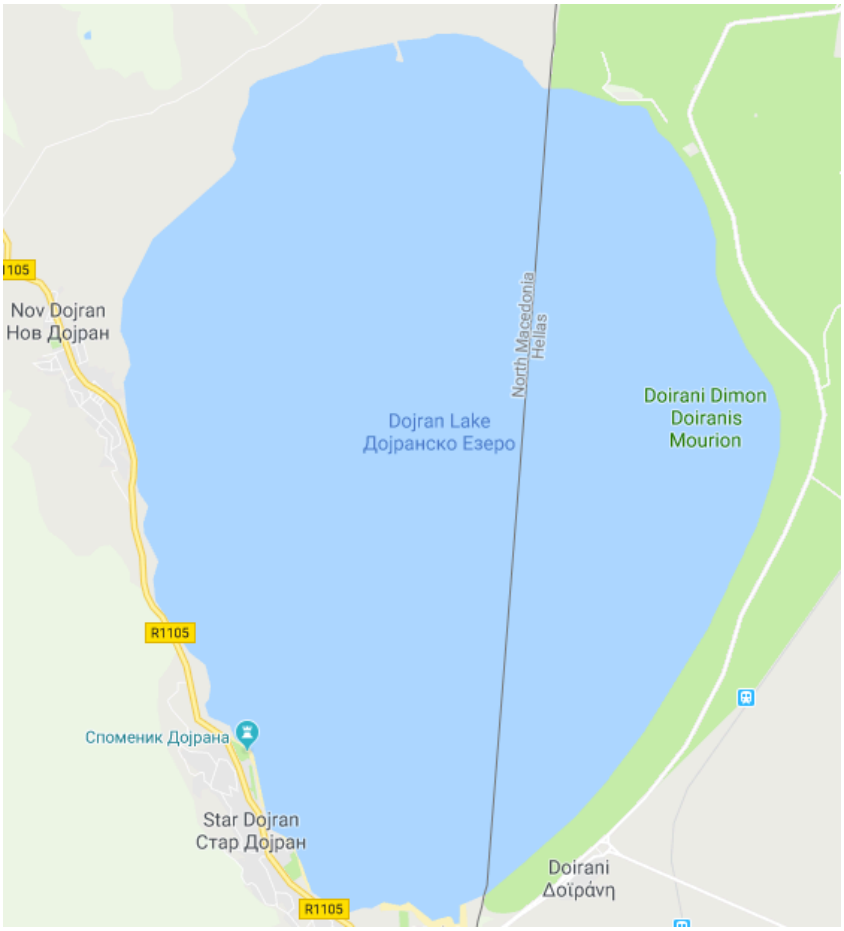

Figure 1 Location of Dojran Lake. Source www.google.com/maps

Background

Municipality of Dojran is the responsible authority for the management of the Monument of Nature Dojran Lake. However, so far neither conservation actions to save the lake have been undertaken nor a management plan has been developed, leaving this protected area under no active management. This is a result mainly of the lack of knowledge, managing capacities and financial means.

Expected results of the project

The Project focuses on achieving two main results: (1) Strengthening governance of the catchment management zone, and (2) Achieving sustainable management, conservation and restoration of the lake through implementation of ecosystem-based practices.

Within the project all relevant stakeholders, such as the local management authority, local community, land owners and the lake concessioner will be engaged to develop the first Protected Area Management Plan with Action Plan for Dojran Lake. During this process the stakeholders will be informed of the most pressing issues that negatively impact the lake ecosystem and will receive intensive trainings on best Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) practices with the aim to ensure long-term sustainable provision of ecosystem services and improvement of the lake status and its biodiversity. In order to achieve continuous sustainable management of Dojran Lake, the project will focus on capacity strengthening of the responsible authority for planning, implementation, monitoring and review of management activities that influence the lake.

The project encompasses also conservation activities that aim to directly mitigate the anthropogenic impacts on the lake, to stabilize the shoreline, improve the water quality through biomanipulation by fish removal and restore the ecosystem balance through ecosystem-based approaches.

Specific Objectives of the Project

1. Strengthen capacities for sustainable lake management
2. Develop a lake management plan
3. Develop monitoring protocols and guidance for lake protection and sustainable management
4. Initiation of trans-boundary lake basin governance
5. Improvement of water quality of Dojran Lake through ecosystem approaches
6. Develop a plan for prevention of anthropogenic pollution of the lake water
7. Rehabilitation and stabilization of the lake shoreline
8. Education on sustainable agricultural practices

The project if funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Dèveloppement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

Scope of work

- As part of this assignment it is expected from the contractor/expert to deliver and execute a:

  Training in Sustainable Agriculture

The objective of the Training is to introduce Good Agricultural Practices/Sustainable Agriculture practices to the local agricultural community of Dojran Municipality, with the aim to reduce the agricultural pressures on Lake Dojran and improve its water quality and the native freshwater biodiversity. The Training should be composed of both theoretical and on-field lectures and practices, respectively.

The Training curriculum should at minimum cover the following topics and subjects:

- The causes and effects of agricultural pollution of water, focusing on Dojran Lake
- Introduction of the rationale and principles of Good Agriculture Practices and sustainable agriculture
- The positive environmental, economic and social effects of sustainable agriculture, as well as its benefits
- Sustainable agriculture methods and practices e.g. land preparation, soil nutrient management, composting, crop rotation, cover crops, minimum tillage, crop pest management, timely planting, managing field crops, efficient usage and management of irrigation water, reduction of fertilizer application, precision agriculture methods, post-harvest management, organic farming and etc.
- The training curriculum should be adapted and applicable for the local conditions at Dojran Municipality
- Promotion of new business avenues based on sustainable agriculture.

The Sustainable Agriculture Expert is expected to provide the following deliverables:

- To deliver a **Work plan** i.e. time frame for realization of working activities;
- To develop and deliver a **Training curriculum;**
- To **Convey the Training;**
- To provide **Documentation of the Training** i.e. presentation, photos, meeting minutes, attendees' lists and etc.

Methodology and Approaches

The scope of this task requires the use of wide variety of methods, tools, instruments and techniques.

The following approaches need to be strictly adhered to:

- The Sustainable Agriculture Expert shall work in a close interaction with the project team and shall report to the project coordinator;
- The Sustainable Agriculture Expert shall work in a close interaction with the Municipality of Dojran;
- The Sustainable Agriculture Expert shall consult with key stakeholders: Municipality of Dojran, local farmers, the local private agriculture sector and etc.;
- The Sustainable Agriculture Expert shall develop the Training curriculum in accordance with the FAO's concept of Good Agricultural Practices and the principles of sustainable agriculture.

Working Schedule – Timeframe

The period of consultancy should be completed with the period of eleven (3) months upon signing of the contract.

Step	Deliverables	Timeline	Total duration of activity
1.	Theory and on-filed training of sustainable agricultural practices	5 working days	3 months

Required Qualifications and Experience

The expert involved into this assignment shall have the following qualifications, skills and competences:

- A university degree and/or international certification in Agriculture, Sustainable agriculture/farming, Good Agricultural Practices, Natural sciences, Nature protection as well as other thematic discipline relevant for this assignment. Please provide documentation accordingly;
- At least 5 (five) years of relevant working experience in the field of sustainable agriculture, natural sciences or nature protection;
- Experience in providing consultancy;
- Experience in providing training in sustainable agriculture, both theoretical and on-field;
- Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, Power Point);
- Excellent communication skills in Macedonian and English;
- Proven experience in writing reports in English and Macedonian, and evidence or list of publications;
- Ability to work independently as well as in cooperation with stakeholders;
- Availability during the term of the contract.

Evaluation criteria

All applications will be evaluate based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
CV, Reference letter, including the years of relevant expertise; experience and skills required for this consultancy.	30 points max
Work methodology, Technical approach, demonstrating and explaining an understanding of the scope of work	30 points max
Financial offer	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: **"Expert in Sustainable Agriculture".**

Deadline for submissions of documents is 1st July 2020 (Wednesday), 17.00 p.m. We encourage applicants to submit the application well before the stated deadline date.

If you need help, or have queries, please contact: info@mkm.mk or petra@mkm.mk

E-mails sent only during three (3) days upon the announcement of the vacancy will be replied to.