

## ToRs for

### Supporting the development of Concept Note for a multi-country GCF Programme Proposal

#### in the framework of the

#### **MedProgramme SSCF Project : “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”**

### **1. Background**

The “Mediterranean Sea Programme: Enhancing Environmental Security ”, aka MedProgramme, is a regional programme financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by UNEP and EBRD, and executed by regional organisations (UNEP/MAP, EIB, UNESCO IHP, GWP Med, WWF MedPO, UNIDO and IUCN-MAP). The MedProgramme aims to accelerate the implementation of agreed upon priority actions to reduce the major transboundary environmental stresses affecting the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas while strengthening climate resilience and water security and improving the health and livelihoods of coastal populations.

The MedProgramme is composed of 8 Child Projects. Among these, the Child Project entitled “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas ”, co-funded by the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), is devoted specifically to climate change adaptation. The project (aka SCCF Project) aims to enhance capacities of countries in the Mediterranean region to adapt to climate change with a view to influencing wider development processes in the region. The project is executed by UNEP and implemented by UNEP-MAP, PAP/RAC, Blue Plan and GWP-Med. The beneficiary countries are Albania, Algeria, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia.

Component 3 of the SCCF Project aims at facilitating access to international climate change adaptation financing. A key deliverable of that (Output 3.2) is the development, through a consultation process with beneficiary countries and pertinent partners, of a multi-country (with at least 2 countries) project proposal to be submitted to climate funds to enhance climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean coastal zone. Component 3 is executed by the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med).

In the process of exploring options for contents of a multi-country project proposal, and as part of a regional consultation process, a set of selection criteria for the project proposal’s countries and contents was presented and agreed at the SCCF Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of June 2023, in Rabat. A screening of key national strategy documents, like the National Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) strategies, development plans, sectoral strategies, prioritized coastal adaptation actions including by SCCF project activities, and Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus solutions identified through assessments and stakeholder consultations conducted under GEF UNEP/MAP MedProgramme, etc., was done. Furthermore, options of suitable international climate funds were screened. Based on these, brief technical options were elaborated by GWP-Med aiming to match possible contents of a multi-country project proposal and the international climate funding instrument to which this could be successfully submitted, and were discussed with UNEP as the aimed Accredited/Implementing Entity. The agreed selection criteria for the project proposal’s contents and countries, have been fully considered in these.

Consultation advanced at the occasion of the UNFCCC COP28 (Dubai, November 2023) in the margin of side-events where some of the countries presented their priority climate actions in connection with

their sectoral strategies. Further focused discussions were held to identify common project ideas that could be incorporated in a multi-country project. The preliminary project idea was presented during the SCCF Steering Committee of April 2024, in Podgorica. Exploratory technical discussions with climate financing agencies have taken place. The results of these consultations were taken into consideration in the design of a Program idea to be submitted by UNEP to the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

In this framework, GWP-Med is launching a call for the recruitment of an international expert for the preparation of a GCF Concept Note for a multi-country Programme.

## 2. Multi-country Programme Description

The multi-country GCF Program proposal would aim to address the high vulnerability of the Mediterranean coastal areas linked to water scarcity and ecosystems degradation. It would contribute to both adaptation and mitigation objectives. Mitigation potential emerging from the adaptation solutions would be estimated and highlighted in the proposal preparation.

To better fit GCF requirements and investment criteria, it is suggested to develop a *Program* that will encompass *two Projects* tackling distinct climate impacts occurring in the region. The first Project is suggested to focus on enhancing the beneficiary countries' adaptive capacity to ensure water security while protecting coastal and marine ecosystems. The second Project is suggested to be dedicated to the protection and restoration of the emblematic *Posidonia oceanica* ecosystem.

The suggested title for the Programme is "*Sustainable Source to Sea solutions for Mediterranean coastal resilience: Enhancing blue carbon ecosystems and water adaptation capacity*". The suggested Programme proposal to GCF could comprise activities to be implemented at national and local level in a selected number of countries (at least two) as well as regional activities. Below are examples of possible interventions that may be included in the suggested Programme proposal to GCF, based on the two Projects:

### ***Project 1: Enhancing countries' adaptation capacity for water resilient coastal areas***

Project 1 suggested aim is to enhance countries capacities to adapt to the increasing water demand accentuated by the impacts of climate change in rapidly developing coastal areas. The sustainable and low-carbon use of non-conventional solutions can contribute to secure access to adequate quantities of quality water for the population and the socio-economic activities, while protecting water resources (degradation caused by overexploitation) as well as natural coastal and marine ecosystems (reduction of the negative impacts of brine discharge, treated wastewater discharge, protection of the biodiversity and the *P. oceanica* meadows, etc). Investment planning for non-conventional water resources use in the framework of the comprehensive water climate resilient investments will ensure its financial sustainability beyond the project. The following adaptation solutions are examples of the interventions that can be included in the project under three components:

- ***Component 1: Advancing adaption action mainstreaming and enhancing resilient water investment planning at coastal watershed level in the beneficiary countries.*** Water, including the ecosystems it supports, is affected by climate change in ways that are often dramatically different from the situation experienced until recently. Coordinated action to transform water management systems is needed to adapt to the emerging dynamic normal, and to mobilize the additional investments that would enable effective responses. Depending on the current water planning, management and investment priorities in beneficiary countries, transformational approaches may include:
  - Enhancement of the institutional and coordination frameworks to ensure mainstreaming of water adaptation solutions through non-conventional water resources in development and ecosystem protection processes,
  - Development of integrated coastal zone management and water resources management plans at watershed level,
- Development of resilient Water Investment Plans to narrow down financing gaps. ***Component 2: Extension/upgrade of desalination towards low-carbon and environmentally friendly infrastructure.*** Under water scarcity conditions aggravated by climate change, sea water

desalination emerges among inevitable non-conventional solutions to serve human needs, including reducing pressure to natural water systems. The most common used technology is reverse osmosis. This adaptation solution presents environmental risks, like related to high energy consumption and brine's discharge impact on water salinity and seagrass meadows. It is crucial that adaptation solutions under this component ensure sustainability and protection of natural resources and ecosystems. Examples of such solutions are provided below:

- Increase of the capacity of desalination plants.
- Installation of renewable energy production equipment within or outside the vicinity of the desalination plants to reduce operational cost, carbon emissions, and water production costs,
- Application of brine management techniques and technologies to reduce the impacts of brine discharge in the marine environment.
- Assessment of the supply chain for the valorisation of brine and engagement of relevant stakeholders.

**1. Component 3: Extension/upgrade of wastewater treatment plants towards low-carbon and environmentally friendly infrastructure.** The large number of treatment plants in the SCCF countries are of secondary treatment, posing a strong barrier to the reuse of the treated water to multiple purposes: agriculture, industry, groundwater recharge, municipal use, etc., including reducing pressure to natural water systems. The adaptation solution will aim to increase the quantity and the quality of treated wastewater and to reduce the energy footprint of wastewater treatment. Possible interventions include:

- Extension of wastewater collection to reduce the water resources pollution threatening humans and ecosystems and increase the flow to the wastewater treatment plants,
- Upgrading of the treatment technologies to a tertiary treatment to produce treated wastewater that meets national quality standards and encourage potential consumers to reuse it,
- In the case of the reuse of treated wastewater in industries, facilitate a consultation process to identify possible uses of treated water by the industries in the treatment plant area and define the corresponding water quality required to inform the technologies needed for the upgrade of the plant.
- Installation of renewable energy equipment within or outside the vicinity of the treatment plants to reduce carbon emissions as well as production costs,
- Assess and enhance the institutional, regulatory and financial framework to overcome existent barriers for wide treated wastewater reuse,

**2. Component 4: Knowledge management and regional experience sharing:** This component aims to generate and disseminate scientific knowledge and lessons learnt to promote the replicability and scalability of the adaptation solutions in the beneficiary countries and the wider mediterranean region. The following activities may be included in the project:

- Development of guidelines for science-based evidence evaluation of adaptation alternatives considering climate change uncertainties, the selection of the optimal adaptation solutions, and the estimation of incurred costs,
- Develop training material and build the capacity of local experts through the organisation of Training of Trainers (ToT) to support the internalisation of the expertise in the countries,
- Capacity building and knowledge sharing to promote good resilient practices. Capacity building activity could cover governance and managerial aspects, technical skills, etc.

### **Project 2: Enhancing blue carbon ecosystems**

Project 2 suggested aim is the protection, preservation and sustainable management of *Posidonia oceanica* meadows for their adaptation benefits against coastal erosion and marine biodiversity

preservation, as well as for their mitigation benefits and carbon sinking capacity. Examples of activities include:

- Building, regionally and nationally, the case to promote the integration of *Posidonia* beds' restoration into climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.
- Establishment of a regional monitoring framework and information system to monitor anthropogenic and climate change impacts on *Posidonia* meadows,
- Identification of hotspots of highly vulnerable *Posidonia* beds, localisation of degraded ones and identification of potential restoration sites based on technical as well as cost-effectiveness considerations.
- Restoration of degraded *Posidonia* beds in prioritised hotspots by the beneficiary countries to improve coastal ecosystem health and carbon sequestration.
- Expanding Marine Protected Area (MPA) in critical areas for protection to safeguard existing *Posidonia* beds,
- Development of national and regional sustainable financing strategies for long-term *Posidonia* restoration efforts
- Awareness campaigns at regional and national level,
- Knowledge development, lessons harvesting and sharing experience at regional level.

### 3. Objective of the assignment

The objective of this assignment is to develop a high-quality Concept Note for a GCF Proposal for the multi-country Programme that is described above.

The expert will:

- Provide technical input and facilitate the consultation process among beneficiary countries under the guidance of GWP-Med for further identification and refinement of the Programme scope to meet GCF criteria, including the identification of the national projects sites/locations and the definition of the activities,
- Identify executing entities to support the submission of the GCF concept note in consultation with the countries' NDAs, GWP-Med and UNEP,
- Elaborate the concept note of the multi-country programme in accordance with GCF requirements and format, accompanied by available material (like project pre-feasibility studies, including preliminary environmental and social risk assessment and preliminary gender analysis),

### 4. Specifications of requirements and expected results

The steps shared below provide a guide to the expert for the process of developing the GCF concept note. He/She is expected to suggest the necessary adjustments to address the requirements outlined in these steps.

The delivery of the assignment will pay particular attention to gender equity and social inclusion issues in order to ensure that: (i) the process of developing the concept note ensures gender equity and social inclusion, and (ii) the developed concept note incorporates a gender-transformative approach.

**Step 1: Inception:** This step will involve online meetings of the expert with the GWP-Med team to: discuss the Programme ideas that have been elaborated so far and have been received by the countries in previous regional and bilateral consultations; provide recommendations for their adjustments to ensure they meet GCF criteria; and develop a brief workplan. UNEP and the MedProgramme managers would be consulted, as needed.

Deliverable: *A brief inception report after 1 week of the start of the mission.*

**Step 2: Identify Executing Entities:** Considering the multi-country dimension and the separate two Projects within the Programme, more than one executing partners can be engaged. Potential executing partners will be involved in the consultation with the countries for the project's activities selection and technical elaboration. In collaboration with GWP-Med, the expert will conduct exchanges with potential executing partners to secure their commitment to serve as such for the Programme. For this step, the expert is expected to do the following:

- Identify potential executing entities,
- Support GWP-Med, the NDAs and key country counterparts/stakeholders for exchanges with potential executing entities to obtain their commitment,
- Explore with executing entities, possible sources of co-financing,

Deliverables:

- *Brief note on the identification of the executing entities explaining the motivations, roles and contributions, including possible co-financing as pertinent, of these entities.*

**Step 3: Preparation of high-quality concept note** in accordance with GCF requirements, accompanied by available material (like high-level pre-feasibility studies, early-stage ESS screening reports, and preliminary gender analyses). Based on the Programme scope and the selected national activities, and in close collaboration with the beneficiary countries' NDAs and prime counterparts/stakeholders, GWP-Med, UNEP, MedProgramme, and executing partners, the expert is expected to undertake the following:

- Collect data and information necessary for the development of the GCF concept note for the multi-country project, including climate rationale and theory of change, and accompanying high-level pre-feasibility studies and early-stage screening of environmental and social risks
- Collect gender-related information that makes it possible to conduct the preliminary gender analyses and to integrate gender into the theory of change of the Programme,
- Engage potential programme executing partners,
- Describe institutional set-up and the implementation arrangements for the Programme implementation and the responsibilities of each of the actors,
- Prepare detailed budget for the activities, including possible co-financing sources, and the financial structure of the Programme,
- Develop draft concept notes for the programme, and their revised and final versions having integrated inputs of different key actors during the consultation process, including comments of the beneficiary country NDAs and prime counterparts/stakeholders, executing partners UNEP, MedProgramme, and GWP-Med. These will include high-level draft and final versions of pre-feasibility studies, early-stage environmental and social risk screening reports, and preliminary gender analyses

Deliverables:

- *Programme concept notes in GCF format (draft, revised, final versions), including high-level pre-feasibility studies, early-stage environmental and social risk screening, and preliminary gender analyses*

**Step 4: Consultation process:** This step is a horizontal one and will be carried out throughout the development of the Concept Note. The consultation process will combine bilateral meetings, regional consultation workshops and, if needed, field visits. The expert will adjust and enhance the process

according to the state of maturation of the projects and the available studies and information. However, the expert is required to facilitate at least the following consultation meetings:

- a. Organization of bilateral technical online and/or in-person meetings with representatives of the MedProgramme countries. The expected output is the selection and adequate technical description of the national activities to be included in the Programme by the beneficiary countries,
- b. Participation at the SCCF Steering Committee Meeting, scheduled for 4-5 December, in Athens, to present and further discuss the draft concept note
- c. An online final consultation meeting for the validation of the concept note before the end of December 2024, by presenting in detail to the relevant key stakeholders the Programme activities, the budget allocated, the responsibilities of the actors involved in the implementation, etc.

The expert should consider in its consultative approach, the country's non-objection procedure to facilitate the rapid obtaining of the no-objection letter for the submission of concept notes to the GCF.

Deliverables:

- *Concept notes, agendas, relevant material and report for each of the key consultations, like the minimum the validation meeting,*

Notes :

- The costs of the workshops including travel and accommodation of the expert will be covered by GWP-Med and/or SCCF partners.
- The expert will be supported by GWP-Med team for the coordination with the country focal points for the MedProgramme, the NDAs and the national stakeholders, the organisation of the bilateral and multilateral meetings, and the data collection.

Table 1 : Deliverables table

<b>Task</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Indicative Timetable</b>
<b>Step 1: Inception</b>	<i>A brief inception report after.</i>	<i>1 week after contract signing</i>
<b>Step 2: Identify Executing Entities</b>	<i>Brief note on the identification of the executing entities explaining the motivations, roles and contributions, including possible co-financing as pertinent, of these entities.</i>	<i>2 weeks after contract signing</i>
<b>Step 3: Preparation of high-quality concept note</b>	<i>Programme concept notes in GCF format (draft, revised, final versions), including high-level pre-feasibility studies, early-stage environmental and social risk screening, and preliminary gender analyses</i>	<i>31 December 2024</i>
<b>Step 4: Consultation process</b>	<i>Concept notes, agendas, relevant material and report for each of the key consultations, like the minimum the validation meeting</i>	<i>Throughout contract</i>

## **5. Contract Price, Duration and Schedule of Payment**

The maximum fee for this assignment is 33.100 USD. This amount includes all costs, income taxes and any other amount payable or cost that may be required for the completion of the work/service, including VAT.

The consultancy will run from Contract signature to 31st December 2024.

Payment Schedule: 100% of contract value after the successful completion of all deliverables.

## **6. Disqualification criteria ON/OFF**

For details on the ON/OFF disqualification please refer to the Call for Offers

## **7. Selection Criteria, Qualification and Experience**

Successful participant (Natural or Legal Person or Entity) must have:

- Master or advanced degrees in natural resources management, water management, engineering, economics, social studies, climate finance, or related (Required).
- At least 2 GCF concept note developed, including pre-feasibility studies, ESS screenings, gender analyses (Required).
- Demonstrated understanding of GCF, Adaptation Fund and other climate funds proven through the organisation of at least 2 training workshops on Mobilizing access to Climate Funds (Required).
- Proven work on climate change adaptation in GCF eligible countries in the Mediterranean region. Minimum 10 years of experience (Required).
- At least 7 years of similar experience on leading national and/or regional consultation processes (Required).
- Languages: English, French, Arabic (Required).

**Failure to provide the minimum required qualifications is considered ground for disqualification.**

## **8. Awarding Criterion and Evaluation process**

The Most Economically Advantageous offer with criterion the lowest price for the offers satisfying the requirements described herein.

## **9. Monitoring and Progress Controls**

Mr. Vangelis Constantianos, Project Manager of MedProgramme SSCF Project, will be providing oversight and guidance from the side of GWP-Med.

Services will be rendered and will be considered completed upon approval of the deliverables by the Project Manager/ Executive Secretary Mr. Vangelis Constantianos.

## **10. Place of Performance**

This assignment is home based. The tasks will be carried out from a place of the Consultant's preference

## **11. Terms and Conditions**

- *Language*

The language of the deliverables/outputs is English.

- *Data and information*

GWP-Med can assist in the identification of related policy documents, projects and/or stakeholders.

The Consultant is responsible to collect all additional information and data necessary for the completion of this assignment. Missing information (from any side) would not be considered as eligible reason for not completing the tasks.

- *Submission of data, reports and other material produced*

All primary data, reports, and other documentation produced during this assignment shall be made available to GWP-Med in electronic format. All data acquired, and products developed during the assignment will be in the ownership of GWP-Med and SCCF Project and cannot be used by the Consultant and its team without prior written permission.

- *Cooperation requirements*

The Consultant is expected to work closely with GWP-Med and the key SCCF partners and beneficiaries.

- *Review and quality assurance*

Review of the work carried out by the Consultant throughout the implementation of the assignment as well as review of the deliverables may be carried out by an independent external expert or expert team.

Review of the project final deliverables may be carried out by relevant experts and the SCCF beneficiaries.

All relevant comments and suggestions made by the reviewer(s) will have to be taken into consideration by the Consultant and integrated in the final versions of the deliverables.

- *Public consultations / meetings*

The responsibility for organizing any required workshops or working meetings will be shared between the Consultant and GWP-Med. The Consultant shall be responsible for: preparation of working material invitations, agenda, technical specifications etc. ensuring participation of the key partners as required, preparation of minutes etc. As will be assigned, GWP-Med and the Consultant will be responsible for: distributing the invitations and enabling participation.