

## Terms of Reference

for

### Tourist Tours execution

Project name:	Conservation of biodiversity in mountain grazing areas of Shara
Location:	Skopje and Shara region, Republic of Macedonia
Description of the agreement:	Tourist Tours execution
Period of duration of agreement/services:	2 months after signing the Agreement
Application Deadline:	25.07.2019

### 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 proposed Shara Mountain National Park:

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 implementer of the touristic tours in Shara Mountain should organize and implement daily tours for tourists interested in rural tourism and agricultural pasture practices in the area covered with the pastures: Lera, Dufska Planina and Vrbensko Brdo.

The tour should be prepared in cooperation with a tour operator and in full accordance with the available documents produced in the frame of the project. It should contain at least five visiting points and specific activities characteristic for the area and related to agricultural and/or ecological, as well as sustainable practices. The tour program should be delivered for approval at least one week before the first pilot tour takes part. The hired implementer should organize and execute at least two (2) pilot tours and the coordination body of the project keeps the right to change the number of tours depending on the necessities of the project, the budget, weather conditions etc. Depends on financial offer and weather circumstances might be organized more than two (2) tours, but maximum five (5) tours.

Number of the participants in each tourist tour will be maximum 10 (including project team). The number of participants in each tour might be changed (smaller or bigger), and it depends on financial offer.

### Scope of work:

- Arrangement for a tour plan for visiting pastures: Lera, Dufska Planina and Vrbensko Brdo. It should be in full accordance with the available documents, prepared in the project. The tour plan should be prepared by the tour operator in consultations with project team and it should be approval by the contractor. Suggestions for other sightseeing in abovementioned pastures are allowed and they will be reviewed for potential acceptance by the contractor.
- The tour plan should be delivered for a checkup latest one week before the first tour takes part, with a fully specified time schedule. The length of the tour should be maximum 8 hours (including time for transportation, breaks, meals, etc).
- Organizing a tour with at least five exact visiting points and activities in the designated area of Shara Mountain.
- Among seeing particular characteristic spots of the pastures, the tour program should include trying out food products that are specific for the area, learning/getting involved in agricultural/farming/shepherding activities, interact with the farmers and villagers, etc.

- Specifications on: the minimum and maximum number of persons/participants per tour, the itinerary, age specific content of activities, the beginning and end point of the tour.
- Provision of paper sheet for each participant with short information on the pastures, each point of the tour, potentials and values of the area, foods, cultural traditions, etc.
- Provision of first aid medical kit for the participants

### Methodology and Approaches:

This engagement should provide a tour plan and organization of visiting the abovementioned area along with credible and useful information for the visitors. The tour plan should be based on the available documents prepared in the frame of project and should take part in August 2019.

### Working Schedule – Timeframe:

This engagement should be completed in 2 months after signing the Assignment.

Organization and execution of the tours is planned to be completed in 1 month.

Daily tourist tour will be last maximum 8 hours (including time for transportation, breaks, meals, etc).

Step	Deliverables	Total duration of activity
1.	<u>Tour plan</u> The tour plan should contain the detailed route and schedule of the trip (in accordance with above mentioned scope of work)	2 weeks after sign of the contract
2.	<u>Execution of the tours:</u> Execution of five tours in Mountain Shara pastures	1 month
4.	Duration of all activities	2 months

### Required Qualifications and Experience:

Offers for this engagement will be accepted by Tourist/Travel agencies or independent consultant who could provide cooperation with travel/tourist agencies/operators.

Tourist/Travel agencies should appoint relevant person, familiar with organization of tourist tours.

- Postgraduate university degree in Tourism/ related field or accredited Tour guide, Tour operator or a Travel agent.
- Strong interpersonal, communication, management and organizational skills.
- Fluent Macedonian and English language speaking. Knowledge in Albanian will be considered an asset.
- At least three-year work experience as a Tour guide, Tour operator or a Travel agent. Please, provide reference list.
- Familiarity with rural tourism, environmental and agricultural issues.
- Knowledge on pasture habitats, ecological resources and sustainable development.
- License B for organization of tourist tours/traveling or Contract with another tourist agency
- Proof on transport vehicle (minibus) or Contract with another tourist agency

### Payment Terms:

- Initial payment of 30% on acceptance of tour plan.

- Final payment of 70% on execution of all tourist tour.

### Evaluation criteria:

All applications will evaluate based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
<u>Tour plan/program</u>	20 points max
<u>Financial offer</u>	80 points max
Total	100

### Financial offer:

Financial offer should contain price per one tour (max. 10 persons).

The price should exclude VAT.

Travel costs should be included in financial offer.

Destination for travel is Skopje–Gostivar–Shar Planina (Lera, Dufska Planina and Vrbensko Brdo).

The length of one tour will be maximum 8 hours (including time for transportation).

### How to apply:

To apply, please send an e-mail with your tour plan/program and financial offer for the engagement to the e-mail address: [info@mkm.mk](mailto:info@mkm.mk) using the subject line: “Tourist Tours execution”.

Deadline for submissions of documents is 25.07.2019 (Thursday), 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](mailto:info@mkm.mk) or [aleksandra.s@mkm.mk](mailto:aleksandra.s@mkm.mk)

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