**Terms of References (ToR)**

**Small Grants Programme Buna Phase II**

1. **Background information**

The IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECARO), along with the partner organizations – PAP/RAC and INCA is in charge of the implementation of the Small Grants Program (SGP) for NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, University and local communities residing within the Buna River-Velipoje Protected Landscape (BRVPL) located in the Shkodra Municipality of northwestern Albania. The program is financed by the MAVA Foundation.

The SGP is a part of the Buna Delta Protection Project (www.livingbuna.org). The overall goal of the project is to ensure the long-term conservation of species and habitats in the Buna River Velipoje Protected Landscape with particular emphasis on halting or significantly reducing unsustainable development and water abstraction. In order to address these threats, site-based measures are planned to be carried out within the frames of the Small Grants Program.

1. **The objective of the Small Grants Programme**

The aim of the Small Grants Program is to support sustainable practices by funding local green business initiatives, ecosystem and habitat restoration that contribute to the sustainable development of the region while supporting the conservation of the protected landscape. All actions should be in line with the objectives of the Protected Landscape and thus assist the implementation of the Management Plan. All actions should be aimed at preserving the Protected Landscape’s ecological and cultural values, while developing untapped potential of socio-economic activities directly linked to the sustainable use of the services granted by the existing ecosystem.

1. **Outputs of the Small Grants Programme**

The main outputs of this activity are:

* Awarded and implemented projects
* Small Grants program implementation report

1. **Evaluation of proposals and selection criteria**

After the call for receiving project proposals is announced, potential applicants will have **21 days** to submit their proposals. The committee will evaluate the proposals and inform all applicants about the selection in **2 weeks** from the submission deadline. Following the Evaluation Committee’s decision to award the project, the applicant will be notified about the positive decision on financing and subsequently offered to sign the small grant’s agreement.

* 1. **Selection and evaluation committee**

Applications will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee. The committee will be composed of project partners: IUCN (Chair of the Committee), PAP/RAC and INCA. The Municipality of Shkodra and RAPA will act as observers.

The Evaluation Committee members are selected and approved by the project partners.

Project partners are responsible for ensuring that each Application receives an objective and fair treatment by the Evaluation Committee and that all applicable regulations and policies are followed.

The Evaluation Committee will assess and evaluate applications against the mandatory selection criteria using a specially designed assessment table with scores. If the mandatory criteria are met, successful applicants will be selected by the Committee, and results will be sent to the observers (Municipality of Shkodra and RAPA) for their final approval.

Evaluation Committee is composed of the following members:

* IUCN (2 representatives)
* PAP/RAC
* INCA

Throughout the process of implementation, the newly established management committee of the BRVPL will be informed about progress and selection results.

* 1. **Step 1: Eligibility check**

It is done to ensure that the proposal satisfies all the criteria specified in SGP IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS. It also includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the proposal will be rejected on that sole basis and will not be evaluated further.

* 1. **Step 2: Technical review**

Consists of the:

- Review of eligible applications taking into account the predefined criteria presented in the scoring table and according to the guidelines; and

- Assignment of a numerical score in the scoring table developed by IUCN (from 1 to 5, where 1 being the poorest and 5 being the best) for each of the Applications and each evaluation criteria, including written evaluation for each Application assigned.

1. **Scope of Work**

The role and responsibilities of the Evaluation Committee members are as follows:

* Sign the Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest disclosure statements as provided by the lead project partner IUCN;
* Examine the Small Grants Guidelines and instructions;
* Review received applications and discuss each application’s merits during the preselection meeting, taking into account the predefined criteria presented in the scoring table and according to the guidelines;
* Assign a numerical score in the scoring table supplied by IUCN (from 1 to 5, where 1 being the poorest and 5 being the best) for each of the Applications and each evaluation criteria, including written evaluation for each Application assigned;
* After the finalization of the scoring table, the Evaluation Committee will confirm the Applications, which will advance to the next phase of the review process, which is the Financing decision phase;
* Select the winner applications, in the financing phase, according to the scorekeeping of the total amount of all projects below the total budget of the Small Grants fund; and
* Prepare a written evaluation (filled-in form) with the list of wining applications and the scores given.