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EU4Rivers

 Austrian
Development
Agency

EU4Rivers Project

ADA Contract Number: 6532-00/2023 SUB 09/2025

Terms of Reference

National Expert on Assessment of Nitrates Pollution

- **Objective:** The primary objective of the consultancy is to support the development of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) through assessment of use of fertilizers application/use and their environmental impact.
- **Commissioner:** EU4Rivers Team Leader
- **Timeframe:** April 2025 – December 2025 (60 days)
- **Location:** Albania, Tirana

1. Background

Austrian Development Agency (ADA), as the Operational Unit of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), has been delegated by the European Union (EU) to implement the "EU4Rivers" project in Albania from October 2023 to September 2028. The lead Beneficiary is the Albanian Water Resources Management Agency (AMBU).

The general objective is to enhance the implementation of the National Water Reform and Albania progress towards meeting EU water legislation requirements, resulting in increased capacities for managing the sector in line with EU policies. The specific objective is to increase Albania's approximation with the EU water acquis.

The project Outputs are:

- **Output 1:** The overarching Integrated Water Management legal and institutional framework is substantially enhanced in accordance with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and other water-related directives.
- **Output 2:** The Implementation of River Basin Management (RBM) is increased in all river basins in line with the requirements of the WFD.
- **Output 3:** Water monitoring, reporting and enforcement are sustainably enhanced in line with the requirements of water-related EU Directives.

2. Objective and description of the assignment

This assignment's objective is to support the development of RBMPs which are required under the implementation of EU WFD. The Contractor is expected to provide expertise on assessment of use of fertilizers and their environmental impact. The assignment will contribute toward the achievements of project Outputs 1, 2 and 3.

3. Approach and Methodology

The Contractor shall operate under the overall guidance of the EU4Rivers project Team Leader (TL). The work will be performed in cooperation with a group of international and national experts, with EU4Rivers PMT and key staff from relevant monitoring institutions.

The Contractor shall support the beneficiary(s) through data/information acquisition, collection (desk work and field sampling) and preparation of reports as specified below.

This assignment is structured in two main Tasks:



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Task 1: focus on developing secondary legislation for water management and specifically related to adaptations of specific technical requirements of the Nitrates Directive into the secondary legislation. This would imply refining the technical provisions and providing, as much as information allows, details related to the designation of vulnerable zones, running a compliance check of the elements/process for defining a code of good agricultural practices, etc.

Task 2: focus on the preparation of a preliminary report which will feed the Directive Specific Implementation Plan for the Nitrates Directive.

The tasks will be performed in parallel starting both with the collection of information as necessary relevant for the Nitrates Directive and also supporting the finalization of secondary legislation on that matter. The highest availability from the side of the Contractor is expected during April – June in particular regarding Task 1.

All the actions and activities shall be discussed and agreed upon with EU4Rivers PMT, the group of experts contracted by the project and the AMBU staff.

Task 1 – Support the legal development process for water

The Contractor shall provide technical input to support the improvement of the draft bylaw(s) related to nitrates pollution prevention originating from agriculture, which transposes the requirements of the EU Nitrates Directive. He/She shall be involved and contribute on:

- setting the criteria for identification of waters affected by nitrates pollution;
- setting the list of items to be included in the code of good agricultural practices;
- defining as much as possible the requirements for reference methods for nitrogen compounds and nitrate concentration.

The Contractor shall also support the technical discussions of the inter-institutional legal working group under AMBU leadership.

Task 2 – Support the preparation of implementation plans

The Contractor shall contribute to the preparation of the Directive Specific Implementation Plan for the EU Nitrates Directive. He/She shall be responsible and expected to:

- Identify and screen information related to the current agricultural practices and their impact on the environment (soil/water) in Albania;
- Screen information about fertilizer import and their distribution in Albania (type, quantities, seasonality of application, crop-fertilizer demand);
- Identify the main gaps regarding the institutional responsibilities of the authorities involved in the implementation of the Nitrates Directive;
- Review the procedures for the application of fertilizers, respective application periods and identification of areas of excess use;
- Perform an assessment of the loads of fertilizers applied in the vicinity of the watercourses (*downstream sections of the important rivers*) in the country;
- Perform an overview of the multiannual monitoring data for both surface and groundwater about the content of nitrates;
- Provide input to the identification of the vulnerable zones (nitrate contaminated areas) as far as data allows;
- Identify the potential areas where agricultural run-off is present for all river basins, especially in steep slopes, as far as the data/information allows;

A Technical Report shall be prepared and delivered including at least:

- Overview of the existing situation regarding the application of fertilizers;
- Gaps regarding the implementation of Nitrates Directive;
- A tentative plan of measures including also the relevant associated (preliminary) costs.



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4. Deliverables

The Contractor shall provide the respective deliverables as per the timelines given below:

	Deliverable	Submission date
1	Improved secondary legislation related to nitrates pollution prevention originating from agriculture	September 2025
2	Technical Report on implementation of the EU Nitrates Directive in Albania	December 2025

5. Location and Duration of the assignment

The assignment is planned to commence in April 2025. The duration of the assignment is 60 working days over a period of 9 months.

A detailed draft of the work plan for the assignment shall be prepared.

In case of changes in the overall project implementation and changes to the work plan in line with project needs/requested by the TL, this will not affect the total number of working days for the assignment.

6. Reporting

A draft work plan shall be submitted for approval to the TL within two weeks of the contract's entry into force. The work plan describes the tasks, activities, meetings/workshops, reports/deliverables, and any other inputs to be performed during the assignment. All the tasks shall be discussed and agreed upon in advance with the TL.

Progress Report(s) will be prepared monthly and submitted to the TL, which describe the accomplished work, and the progress achieved towards the agreed tasks/outputs, and any risks that may compromise project implementation. Each report should also include the number of working days performed in the preceding month.

A Final report shall be submitted at the latest two weeks after the end date of implementation of the services as defined in the Service Contract. The report includes a description of the delivered outputs, all tasks carried out as well as recommendations / observations made related to the project implementation.

All reports and any other documentation to be produced as part of this assignment shall be submitted in **English**.

7. Contacts

EU4Rivers Project - Contacts:
Rr. Pjeter Budi, P. Klasik. Shk. 1, Ap 11, Tirana
Phone: +355 (0) 4 450 3200
e-mail: eu4rivers@ada.gv.at

8. Requirements for the contractor

Qualifications and skills

- Master degree in environmental sciences, natural resources management or equivalent or five (5) years above the General Professional Experience required.
- Fluency in written and spoken English;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Excellent problem-solving, negotiation, and influencing skills.



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General Professional Experience

- Ideally, seven (7) years of general professional experience with the environmental assessment.
- Good understanding of the EU environmental acquis and its provisions.

Specific professional experience

- Ideally, seven (7) years of significant experience working with pollution studies, quality assessments and analysis of soil/water pollution.
- Proven experience with data and information assessment, which are linked to water and environmental quality assessments.

The Contractor must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities defined by the Terms of Reference.

9. Evaluation Criteria

Every eligible offer submission will be evaluated according to the following award criteria and the associated weights.

Criterion 1 ⁱ	Criterion 2 ⁱ	Criterion 3 ⁱ	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Qualifications and Skills	General Professional experience	Specific Professional experience	Methodology and approach	Offered Price
10%	20%	35%	15%	20%

i) Wherever years of experience are requested, the bidder with the preferred experience will receive the full points under this sub criterion, all other bidders scores will be scaled accordingly.

Criteria 1-4 are applied to the technical proposal (total weight 80%), Criterion 5 is applied to the financial proposal (total weight 20%). Evaluation of offers will be made in accordance with the best bidder principle. The quality related award criteria will be applied by an Evaluation Commission consisting of 3 members. For each quality criterion a maximum score of 10 points can be achieved.

Criteria 1-5: offers are scored in a manner that the offer with the highest score in the criterion obtains the maximum number of points (100 points multiplied with the respective weight) and each next offer the proportionally lower number of points according to the following formula:

Points Criterion 1/2/3/4 = (Individual score of the offer/ score of the offer with the highest score) x maximum points

Points Criterion 5: offers are scored depending on their price (offered total price) in the manner that the offer with the lowest total price obtains the maximum number of points (20 points) and each next offer the proportionally lower number of points according to the following formula:

Points Criterion 5 = (Lowest total price/ total price of offer) x maximum points



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Calculation of total points:

Total points = Points Criterion 1 + Points Criterion 2 + Points Criterion 3 + Points Criterion 4+ Points Criterion 5

The best offer is the offer with the highest number of total points. If the number of total points is the same for more than one bidder, the offer with the lowest total price (amongst these bidders) shall be the most favourable offer.

10. Representation

Any kind of representation of ADA / the EU4Rivers Project and EU Delegation by the Contractor is excluded from this agreement.

11. Publication

The Contractor agrees that the following information will be made public as required by the General Conditions to the European Community Delegation Agreement: title and type of the contract, name, address and nationality of the contractor, and amount of the contract.