

EU4Rivers Project

ADA Contract Number: 6532-00/2023 SUB 24.2025

Terms of Reference

National Expert for supporting the preparation of management plans for two selected River Basins

- **Objective:** The primary objective of the consultancy is to support the development of two draft river basin management plan reports.
- **Commissioner:** EU4Rivers Team Leader
- **Timeframe:** December 2025 – April 2026 (50 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.
- **Output 4:** The strategic and institutional framework for the implementation of the MSFD is established.

2. Objective and description of the assignment

This assignment's objective is to support the implementation of EU WFD and water Acquis through supporting the preparation and finalisation of the main reports of River Basin Management (RBM) Plans, for the Drin-Buna and Seman RBs. The Contractor is expected to support and work closely with the Coordinator of Output 2 and the key international expert on RBM.

The assignment will contribute to the achievements of project Output 2.

3. Approach and Methodology

The Contractor shall operate under the overall guidance of the EU4Rivers project Team Leader (TL) and the key international expert for RBM.

The Contractor shall work under the guidance of the key international expert for RBM to provide continuous support with the information compilation and data processing, in order to develop the final draft of the respective individual river basin management plans for the Drin-Buna and Seman river basins. The work shall be conducted in close communication with AMBU staff involved in the RBM process to ensure a step-by-step transfer of information and knowledge.

The existing framework/methodology applied in the recently adopted RBMPs for Mat, Ishem and Erzen RBs, related to the structure and main chapters of the main reports, including also economic assessment/baseline scenario and programme of measures, shall serve as the basis for the work. Additional documentation prepared under previous actions shall also be taken into consideration as necessary to be adequately incorporated into the respective draft RBMP reports.

Task 1 – Support the RBM development Process

The Contractor **shall be responsible and is expected to:**

- Harmonise the data and information, as collected in accordance with the requirements of the EU WFD by respective technical experts.
- Apply the relevant assessments and analysis of characteristics of delineated surface waters, groundwaters and protected areas as per the definition of the EU WFD in analogy with existing RBMPs,
- Harmonise the information gathered by various technical experts and complete the river basin overview description chapter part in the RBMPs in analogy with existing RBMPs.
- Cooperate with the group of technical experts and AMBU staff to complete the analysis on pressures and impacts in the Drin-Buna and Seman river basins.
- Contribute and finalise the status description of the water bodies identified and delineated for each individual river basin, as part of the status assessment for the river basin management plan preparation.
- Structure data and information collected on water quality and quantity, including the recent data provided from reconnaissance surveys by various experts.
- Support the identification and definition of relevant measures for each respective river basin management RBMP in response to improving the status assessment, at the water or groups of waterbodies.
- Contribute to completing and improving the finalisation of technical chapters to be an integral part of the final draft RBMP for Drin-Buna and Seman RBs, based on the draft prepared by respective national experts (individual) river basin management plans for Drin-Buna, Shkumbin and Seman.

Task 2 – Support the inter-institutional consultation process

The Contractor is expected to provide technical assistance and support for AMBU staff during the consultation process with the inter-institutional RBM working group for the selected RBMPs.

4. Deliverables

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

	Deliverable	Submission (tentative) date
1	Text contribution on various chapters of the two draft RBMPs	March 2026
2	Completed specific tables for status assessment linked with pressures for the two draft RBMPs	March 2026
3	Identified list/summary of waterbodies at risk for achieving environmental objectives for the two draft RBMPs	March 2026
4	Completed analysis of measures for individual or group of waterbodies for the two draft RBMPs	March 2026

5. Location and Duration of the assignment

The assignment is planned to commence in December 2025, and the expert will be based in Tirana. The duration of the assignment is 50 working days over a period of 5 months.

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

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's degree in Environmental Management, Biology, Engineering 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.

General Professional Experience

- Ideally, seven (7) years of general professional experience working with central and local authorities, professional bodies and associations, CSOs in the environment sector.
- Good knowledge and understanding of the EU WFD and other related Directives for the environment/water management sector.
- Good knowledge and understanding of the governance policy and strategy framework regulating the water sector in Albania.
- Good knowledge of biodiversity elements, ecosystem management and services.

Specific professional experience

- Proven experience in performing economic analysis of environmental elements and environmental economic assessment compliant to EU WFD principles.
- Proven experience in preparation of environmental assessments, analysis of issues and identification/mapping of the protected areas in compliance with the requirements of the EU WFD principles/approach.
- Proven experience in working with river basin management documents/reports in compliance with EU WFD principles.
- Proven experience in mapping ecoregions, protected areas, habitats/species, etc.

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
<i>Qualifications and Skills</i>	<i>General Professional experience</i>	<i>Specific Professional experience</i>	<i>Methodology and approach</i>	<i>Offered Price</i>
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

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.