

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Consultancy
For the
Final Evaluation of:
Project “Leopard Conservation in the Southern Caucasus”

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Project location: Armenia, Azerbaijan (including Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic) and Georgia

Project Duration: Jun 2016-Dec 2019

1. Background of the programme

The Caucasian also named the Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana*) is one of the subspecies of Leopard. It is a charismatic animal entitled as "Europe's last leopard", which is driving and demonstrating conservation efforts in the Caucasus ecoregion. Once native to almost the entire Caucasus ecoregion, today there are only small and isolated (sub-) populations with less than 60 leopards left in the ecoregion. Poaching of leopard and its prey species, human-wildlife conflicts, habitat destruction and fragmentation (e.g. illegal timber cutting, mining or unsustainable grazing), insufficient management of protected areas, inadequate law enforcement, and the lack of awareness of the local population are the main threats. Although the conservation measures implemented during last year's brought some positive results in terms of stabilization of prey population (e.g. Bezoar Goat, Armenian Mouflon; both globally threatened species) and an increasing sighting and records of breeding of leopards in main target areas of the WWF Leopard Conservation Program in the Southern Caucasus. In order to ensure viable population of Leopard in the Caucasus, the reduction and elimination of above-mentioned threats is necessary. WWF has already a broad experience in addressing these topics from other projects in the Caucasus. This project is built on that experience, but also include some new and innovative elements.

In particular the project includes following activities:

- Establish, train, equip and run leopard caretakers' network
- Implement feasibility study on mitigation/compensation of human-leopard conflict and carry out respective measures
- Strengthen capacity of the anti-poaching unit (southern Armenia) outside of the Protected Areas
- Strengthen target Protected Areas located within key areas of leopard distribution

- Carry out socio-economic assessment in the target communities and implement small-scale community development projects
- Improve methodology of field camera-trapping and tracking monitoring through relevant training and better equipping as well as run regular field monitoring, establish and run WWF database
- Carry out modelling exercises for identification of leopard corridor and map the corridor
- Implement awareness raising and educational campaigns for local communities and government officials

1.1 Expected Impacts:

- Positive trends in population numbers of leopards and prey species
- Important landscapes in Southern Caucasus remain as a habitat for the critically endangered Caucasian leopard and its prey

1.2 Project Area

The project key sites are territories of southern part of Armenia, Nakhchivan (in particular Zangezur area) and Talysh Mountain areas of Azerbaijan. Information on target communities and protected areas will be provided to selected consultant.

2. Objectives of the Consultancy:

- Conduct a participatory end-of-project evaluation focusing on aspects identified in the evaluation criteria i.e. relevance and quality of design, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and adaptive management of the project and,
- Provide recommendations for the next phases of the project directing at maximizing impact and meeting the needs of target communities.

3. Scope of work

The external evaluation consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- Assess the implementation of WWF Leopard Conservation project in the South Caucasus with emphasis on the Project's relevance and the quality of its design, impacts & sustainability and adaptive management.
- Produce a report outlining findings of the evaluation and recommendations for the next phases.

4. Evaluation Methodology

Evaluation methodology is opened to consultant to propose. Nevertheless, the selected methodology should ensure that feedbacks from programme beneficiaries and other stakeholders regarding the outcome, impact and sustainability of the project (and changes

that could be made to improve and apply to the project's upcoming phases) are taken into account when addressing the questions identified in section 5.

5. Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions

This evaluation will primarily seek to answer the following key questions:

5.1 Relevance and Quality of Design

Assessments of relevance and quality of design must consider:

- To what extent has the project design been adapted over time to a changing environment?
- To what extent does the project focus on and remain relevant to issues of highest priority?
- Is the project's strategy to get a better leverage clear?
- Has the project taken the best, most efficient strategic approach to get the impact?

Final evaluation should make recommendations regarding the future design/approach, taking into account changes in key contextual factors or status of targeted biodiversity issues that have occurred since the project start.

5.2 Effectiveness

Evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention involves:

- How functional and effective are caretaker networks? Are caretakers satisfied with existing network setting and support, and are they willing to continue their engagement as leopard conservation project caretakers?
- Has the project taken the right measures to improve the performance of Environmental Inspectorate (E.I. of southern Armenia)? Is the performance of the Inspectorate effective regarding leopard conservation? Is the effectiveness measured/documented clearly?
- What measures can be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Inspectorate in the next project phase?
- Is the selected staff of target Protected Areas (supported via the project's capacity building component) satisfied with trainings and what kind of capacity they would like to develop in future?
- Is management of target Protected Areas generally satisfied with received support and what are the main needs of support in the next phase of the project?
- Are the various approaches/devices tested during the project effective?
- What has/has not been achieved with the community development projects against the planned outcomes? What lessons can be taken and help to improve the next phase of the project?
- To what extent has the coordination between the two implementing teams been effective? What could be done differently to improve the coordination and communication?

5.3 Impact

Impact is a measure of the broader consequences of the intervention at local, national and regional levels. Impact can be measured through the following areas of question:

- To what extent do the authorities responsible for biodiversity conservation and/or protected areas in the countries appreciate the support of the WWF in the area of conservation of leopard and its prey species? What would have happened if WWF's intervention had not taken place?
- Did the communities, where small-scale rural development measures were implemented, change their attitude towards leopard conservation? What could be done differently to improve the support of the community members?
- Could anything has been done differently to avoid any unforeseen consequences?
- What kind of influence has caretaker network on awareness of villagers from respective communities? E.g. are the cases of poaching or illegal logging decreased because representatives of the communities take care of wildlife and habitats?
- Are the schoolchildren and teachers in the communities where school campaigns conducted well aware about importance of leopard conservation? Do they support it?

5.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is a measure of whether the benefits of an intervention are likely to continue after external support has ended. These sustainability factors should be taken into account all along the design and implementation cycle in addition to being assessed in the evaluation. Key questions to be answered during evaluation shall be:

- To what extent does the project include key sustainability factors in its design such as support of local and national authorities; involvement of local communities, financial sustainability of activities, etc?

5.5 Adaptive Management

Adaptive Management is a measure of the extent to which the project regularly assesses and adapts its work and thereby ensures continued relevance in changing contexts, strong performance. Key questions to be answered during evaluation shall be:

- Is the project managed adaptively? Which kind of changes happened during the course of project? Did these changes contribute to better performance?

6. Time schedule

The duration of field evaluation is 14 days and it should be completed during October 2019. The work will be organised in the following time frame:

Steps	What	Until when, 2019
1.	Submission of proposal	Sep 16
2.	Selection of the candidates	Sep 23
3.	Signing the contract and finalising the ToR	Sep 30
4.	Document review	Oct 7

5.	Organising the data collection (schedule and development of tools)	Oct 14-28
6.	Data collection: Field Visit in Azerbaijan Visit in Georgia (WWF CauPO office) Field visit in Armenia	Oct 14-19 Oct 20-22 Oct 23-28
7.	Draft evaluation report	Nov 11
8.	Final evaluation report	Nov 25
9.	Presentation of the final evaluation report to WWF CauPO and its partners	Dec 2

7. Deliverables

The final report, in English language, to include, but not limited to, the following:

- Cover page;
- Table of contents;
- An executive summary;
- The objectives of the evaluation;
- Methodology;
- Eventual limitations of the evaluation;
- A presentation of the findings and the analysis thereof (including unexpected, relevant findings if any);
- Conclusions;
- Recommendations: should be practical and if necessary divided up for various actors or stakeholders.

8. Requirements for Consultant:

- At least Master degree in the field of nature conservation/environment
- Minimum 3 years' experience in monitoring and evaluation;
- Experience in project management, project development, management consulting or related field;
- A proven track record of delivering similar assignments;
- Experience in programmes supporting nature conservation;
- Excellent command of English language (written and spoken); knowledge of Russian language is advantage.

8. Application procedure

The applicant should submit the application no later than September 16, 2019.

The application package should include the following documents:

- Signed CV of consultant and at least two reference letters;
- Proposal letter;
- Proposed methodology;
- Financial proposal (how many days of work per evaluation steps are required, fee per day, travel cost, etc.)
- Evaluation work plan
- Other related documents (if applicable)

9. Ownership

Consultant shall provide all materials that are created in the course of providing the consultancy services to WWF. Any disclosures to be made upon approval of WWF.

10. Instalment payment

Budget must not exceed CHF 14'000. Payment schedule:

50% upon submission and approval of final evaluation work plan.

50% after approval of final report.

11. Annexes

- Project proposal (in German).

Note: Project Technical Reports (in English Language) are available at WWF Caucasus Programme Office and will be sent to applicants as needed.