

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES - FIRMS SELECTION)**

Republic of North Macedonia

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy

**ZLETOVICA PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH IRRIGATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT
(PIREP)**

Grant No.: TF-D2152

**Assignment Title: Update of the (i) technical studies and bidding documents for irrigation and hydropower;
(ii) economic and financial project assessment (Phases II and III); and (iii) transboundary water analysis**

Reference No.: PIREP-CS-QCBS-01

The Republic of North Macedonia has received World Bank financing through the Grant Facility for Project Preparation (GFPP) to prepare the Zletovica Productivity through Irrigation and Renewable Energy Project (PIREP), and intends to apply part of the grant proceeds to these consulting services. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE), through its Project Implementation Unit (PIU), implements the preparation grant in partnership with PE HS Zletovica.

The main objective of the consulting services (the "Services") is to validate and update the available feasibility studies and prepare construction-ready final detailed designs, statutory and permit documentation, and technical components of bidding packages for Phase 2 Irrigation and Phase 3 Hydropower of the Zletovica Hydro-System. Both components shall be prepared concurrently, with equal priority, as an integrated Project.

The Services include review and gap analysis; supplementary surveys and investigations; updated hydrology, water balance, reservoir-operation and climate-resilience analyses; verification of existing Phase 1 assets and HPP B; irrigation and hydropower feasibility assessments; component-level and integrated economic and financial analysis; the OP 7.50 transboundary-waterways technical assessment; jobs and financing-readiness assessments; dam-safety review, remedial measures and instruments; final detailed designs and technical bidding packages; and preparation and submission of applications and follow-up through issuance of the construction permits and prerequisite approvals for both phases.

The Consultant shall coordinate with the separately engaged environmental and social consultant and incorporate accepted requirements into its outputs. The PIU's independent procurement expert is responsible for the procurement strategy and non-technical procurement documentation. Formal riparian communications and notifications remain the responsibility of the Client, Government and/or the World Bank, as applicable.

The assignment shall be completed within a period of ten (10) months from the Commencement Date, and no later than December 20, 2027, whichever occurs earlier, unless amended in accordance with the Contract. If commencement occurs after 20 February 2027, the Consultant shall submit a compressed, resource-loaded program for the Client's written approval at inception, in accordance with Section 9 of the Terms of Reference. The program shall preserve preparation of both phases, the full scope and acceptance requirements, and adequate time for technical, statutory and World Bank reviews; neither the scope nor the final completion date shall change automatically.

The indicative staffing inputs are 76 Key Expert person-months and approximately 39 Non-Key Expert person-months, excluding translation, language support, administrative support and additional specialist inputs. The staffing requirements and provisions for a justified alternative staffing approach are set out in Section 7.4 of the TOR.

More details about the assignment are provided in the Terms of Reference, which are issued together with this REoI and form an integral part of it. The complete Terms of Reference may also be obtained from the contact address below.

Note: If approval of the Infrastructure Project remains outstanding when the Request for Proposals (RFP) is prepared, the TOR may be revised following shortlisting to include additional services required to complete or update the urban planning documentation and obtain such approval. The scope and requirements of these additional services will be specified in the RFP, allowing shortlisted Consultants to address them in their technical proposals and include the corresponding costs in their financial proposals.

MAFWE now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to express their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants are required to submit information demonstrating that they meet the necessary qualifications and possess the relevant experience to carry out the Services. The shortlisting criteria and the information required to assess the capability and experience of the Consultants are set out below.

- *General Qualifications:*

- ❖ At least ten (10) years of relevant technical, operational, and managerial experience in the planning and design of complex hydropower and irrigation infrastructure.
- ❖ The Consultant shall have an average annual turnover of at least USD 1,000,000, or its equivalent, over the last three (3) completed financial years preceding the deadline for submission of expressions of interest. As proof of compliance, the Consultant shall provide audited financial statements or verified financial statements showing its annual turnover for each of those years. For a joint venture, this requirement shall be met by the members collectively, by adding their average annual turnovers for the relevant three-year period; each member shall provide its corresponding financial statements.
- ❖ Demonstrated capacity to address North Macedonian design, licensing, permitting, and regulatory requirements, through appropriately qualified personnel, association with firms with suitable national experience, or other clearly defined arrangements.
- ❖ A valid license for preparing design documentation for Category I structures (License A), or the relevant recognition of foreign qualifications and licenses, as required under the applicable legislation of North Macedonia. The Consultant shall describe how the applicable licensing requirements will be met before undertaking activities requiring such authorization. Further information on recognition of professional authorizations is available at <https://mtc.gov.mk/>.
- ❖ For any urban planning activities included in the assignment, the Consultant shall demonstrate compliance with the applicable national licensing requirements. A foreign legal entity shall undertake such activities under a technical cooperation agreement with a domestic legal entity holding a valid license to perform urban planning activities in the Republic of North Macedonia. The domestic legal entity shall act as the lead entity for those activities and shall be responsible for ensuring that the urban plans and other urban planning outputs prepared through this cooperation comply with the applicable law and implementing regulations. As evidence of compliance, the Consultant shall submit a copy of the domestic legal entity's valid urban planning license and, where the Consultant is a foreign legal entity, the technical cooperation agreement specifying the parties' respective roles and responsibilities.

- *Specific Qualifications relevant for the assignment:*
 - ❖ Successful completion of at least five (5) comparable contracts during the last ten (10) years. These contracts shall collectively demonstrate experience in feasibility studies, final detailed design, and preparation of bidding documentation for multipurpose water resources systems, irrigation infrastructure, hydropower facilities, dams, and associated works.
 - ❖ Experience in Europe, the Western Balkans, Central Asia, or countries with comparable legal, regulatory, institutional, hydrological, and permitting conditions. Experience in North Macedonia or neighbouring countries shall be considered an advantage.
 - ❖ Experience in assignments financed by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, EBRD, EIB, ADB, or comparable institutions. Experience with World Bank-financed operations, including procurement, appraisal, dam safety, and preparation of investments for financing, shall be considered an advantage.

The credibility of the above experience shall be demonstrated by a list of relevant assignments. Each reference shall include the assignment title, location and country; the client or contracting entity; a description of the infrastructure and services provided; the contract value and implementation period; the status and date of completion; and the Consultant's role and scope of services. For assignments undertaken through an association or sub-consultancy, the reference shall identify the Consultant's share of the services and the activities it directly performed. References shall be supported by client-issued completion certificates or other client confirmations of satisfactory performance.

Key Experts will not be evaluated individually at the shortlisting stage. Instead, the Consultant's overall capacity, qualifications and relevant experience to mobilize and manage the required team of experts will be assessed. The qualifications, responsibilities and staffing provisions for Key Experts and supporting personnel remain as specified in Sections 7.2–7.5 of the TOR. No technical or financial proposal is requested at this stage.

The Consultant and its associated firms shall disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest relating to the assignment or the proposed Zletovica investments, in accordance with the applicable Procurement Regulations.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs 3.15, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers", Seventh Edition, September 2025 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest and unfair competitive advantage.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. Interested Consultants shall clearly indicate the form and structure of their association, identify all participating firms, and specify their respective roles and responsibilities in the expression of interest. The arrangements shall cover coordination, quality assurance and delivery of the Services.

In the case of a joint venture (JV), all members shall be evaluated jointly against the firm qualification and relevant experience requirements, taking into account the services to be performed by each member. Each member shall individually meet the applicable eligibility requirements and disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest. All members of the JV shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract if the contract is awarded to that JV.

The JV shall identify its lead member and authorized representative and submit either a JV agreement or a letter of intent signed by all proposed members, specifying their intended roles and their commitment to enter into a JV agreement if selected. The requirements concerning design licensing and the domestic entity leading the urban-planning activities shall be met in accordance with the arrangements specified above and in Section 7.1 of the TOR.

Relevant experience shall be assessed on the basis of the services actually performed by the Consultant or the relevant JV member. A contract cited by more than one member of the proposed JV shall be counted only once towards the minimum number of comparable contracts, while each member's actual contribution shall be assessed. Years of experience shall not be added arithmetically across members.

For the turnover requirement, only the turnover of the Consultant submitting the expression of interest and, where applicable, its JV members shall be counted; the turnover of proposed sub-consultants shall not be included. The qualifications and roles of proposed sub-consultants shall be identified separately and shall not be presented as the Consultant's own corporate experience. Participation at the proposal stage shall be governed by paragraph 3.19 of the Procurement Regulations and the provisions of the Request for Proposals.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations, through an open international selection process. Shortlisted firms will be invited to submit proposals using the applicable World Bank Request for Proposals - Consulting Services (Non-supervision) Standard Procurement Document.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours from 08:00 to 16:00, Skopje local time, on working days.

Expressions of interest shall be submitted in English and delivered in written form to the address below (in person, by mail or by e-mail) by **Wednesday, November 11, 2026, at 15:00 (Skopje local time - CET, UTC+1)**.

Please quote "PIREP-CS-QCBS-01 - Expression of Interest" in the e-mail subject line or on the envelope.

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy
Zletovica Productivity through Irrigation and Renewable Energy Project (PIREP)
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