Groundwater management, use and protection programme
BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT!

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Republic of North Macedonia
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

Republic of North Macedonia
Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy

Terms of Reference
Expert for Development of Baseline Analysis for Republic of North Macedonia under the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health

Programme title:	Groundwater Management, Use and Protection Programme (GWP)
Position title:	**Expert for Development of Baseline Analysis for Republic of North Macedonia under the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health**
Budget line code:	2.2-1 Preparing recommendations for improved water governance
Type of contract	Individual Consultant Contract
Duty Station:	Home based /Skopje, North Macedonia
Duration of contract:	Up to 35 working days in period of February – July 2026
Start date:	23 February 2026
Application deadline	16 February 2026

A. BACKGROUND

The Swiss-funded ***Groundwater Management, Use and Protection Programme (GWP)*** aims at supporting North Macedonia in establishing a sustainable long-term, multi-level, and systematic groundwater management that enables collaborative, effective, and more transparent use of the groundwater resources.

The GWP stakeholders/partners include institutions at central governmental level, research and academia as well as local institutions (e.g. municipalities, public utilities), civil society organisations and the private sector. The **consortium of Skat Consulting and PointPro Consulting** has been mandated by the **Swiss Embassy** in the Republic of North Macedonia to implement Phase 1 of the GWP from Jan 2024 – Dec 2027. Two additional subsequent phases may follow subject to successful implementation of the Programme's first phase and fulfilment of the overall commitment of its main national partners.

Skat Consulting Ltd. Is a owner-operated leading Swiss company specialising in international cooperation and is dedicated to making available basic services and ensuring dignified living conditions and a healthy environment for all. Skat Consulting supports governments, the private sector and civil society around the globe in improving people's lives by facilitating lasting solutions in water, building, energy and governance.

PointPro Consulting d.o.o. is a leading management consulting company based in Skopje since 2006 incorporating two business areas: (a) Infrastructure and Sustainable Development and (b) Management Consulting and Corporate Finance.

To facilitate the implementation of the Programme, on a day-to-day basis, a so-called **Programme Facilitation Unit** (PFU) will be hosted together by the Skat Consulting Branch in Skopje and PointPro Consulting. The PFU is responsible for direct implementation of activities.

Groundwater Management, Use and Protection Programme (GWP) aims to increase the effectiveness of the legal framework by supporting the drafting of amendments to existing laws and regulations. This is all about **creating an enabling environment** with appropriate policies, strategies and laws for the management, use and protection of groundwater. Increasing legal effectiveness will be achieved by **supporting the harmonisation of the national legislation** with the objectives of the relevant EU directives and by consolidating the existing legal framework. GWP aims to remove some of the main barriers inhibiting better water resources management at different levels in the country, stemming mostly from incomplete and/or inconsistent

legal and regulatory frameworks, including different interpretations of laws by key institutions; bottlenecks caused by the current institutional model, including limited capacity of key institutions in terms of access to funding and the required number of staff with certain skills; and limited cooperation between key institutions at technical, policy and education levels.

The **Protocol on Water and Health** to the **1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes** is a unique international legal instrument designed to protect human health and well-being through improved water management and the prevention, control, and reduction of water-related diseases. It emphasizes the importance of safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, and the protection of water ecosystems as essential components of sustainable development and public health.

The Republic of North Macedonia became the 28th country in Europe to ratify the Protocol, in 2023 (Official Gazette No. 155/23) and entered into force on 21 July 2023. The Protocol builds upon earlier ratification of the 1992 Water Convention in October 2015. To implement the Protocol, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Health submitted to the Government a formal information note with a draft decision in accordance with the Law on Ratification of the Protocol, pursuant to Article 7 of the Protocol. The Protocol obliges Parties to establish national and local targets for water, sanitation, hygiene, and health (Article 6), and to monitor and report progress (Article 7) based on agreed indicators. Within two years of becoming a Party, each country must set intersectoral targets across the full scope of Article 6(2)(a)–(n), covering key areas such as drinking water quality, wastewater discharge and treatment, sanitation services, protection of bathing and source waters, and prevention of water-related diseases. In addition, Parties commit to:

- Establish or strengthen surveillance and early warning systems (Article 8) within three years of ratification to prevent and respond to water-related incidents and outbreaks;
- Participate in three-year reporting cycles, reporting on the implementation of targets and progress made;
- Contribute to regional and international dialogue through data sharing, experience exchange, and joint activity planning.

The Protocol requires the identification and involvement of key stakeholders, in accordance with Article 6(5)(a), which calls for the establishment of national or local coordination mechanisms among competent authorities. The target-setting process must be led by the responsible authorities, the Ministry of Health and/or the Ministry of Environment and physical planning—in close cooperation with other actors involved in the implementation of the Protocol.

Key stakeholders to be involved include national public administration bodies; local self-government units; existing inter-institutional working groups or commissions related to water and health; associations and organizations of public and private service providers (public water supply/wastewater utilities); research institutions and academic or professional associations in health, environment, and water management; representatives of sectors such as finance, tourism, agriculture, economy, and development; civil society organizations, including consumer associations and NGOs. For the successful implementation of the Protocol in the Republic of North Macedonia, it is essential to establish a functional coordination mechanism that involves all relevant institutions and ensures coherent public policy and effective implementation of the Protocol's obligations. The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia adopted a decision establishing such a coordination mechanism in March 2025.

In this context, the development of **baseline analysis** is the first strategic and technical step. It will provide a comprehensive diagnostic of the current situation, identify priorities, inform the development of national targets, and support dialogue and cooperation across sectors. Therefore, to create a more efficient legal framework, the Programme will support the development of the Development of baseline analysis and prioritization of issues to be carried out for each specific target area of paragraph 2(a) to (n) under the under the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health's article 6.

To support above mentioned goals, the GWP Programme is looking for **Expert to develop the Baseline Analysis for the Republic of North Macedonia under the UNECE/WHO Protocol**

on Water and Health.

The baseline analysis will be based on existing sources of information to be compiled for the purposes of the Protocol, to encompass a systematic and thorough review and assessment of the legislation, policy documents, relevant activities, projects and research, data and information that describe prevailing conditions and provide expert judgments and linkages between connected areas. Analysis of data on the water, sanitation and health situation should help to identify specific problematic areas that require focus and attention. A preliminary assessment of key issues and problems should be made for each specific target area, based on the results of the baseline analysis. The baseline analysis should consider also the level of alignment with the provisions of the 2020 revised Directive on the Quality of Water Intended for Human Consumption (Drinking Water Directive)[1].

B. SCOPE OF WORK

The overall objective of this assignment is to: develop a Baseline analysis for the Republic of North Macedonia in line with the Target-Setting Guidelines of the Protocol on Water and Health, which will:

- Systematically review the current legal, institutional, policy, and operational frameworks;
- Assess the current status of water, sanitation, hygiene, and health;
- Identify key challenges, gaps, and priorities across all target areas of Article 6(2)(a)–(n);
- Provide an evidence base for setting national targets and indicators,
- Promote dialogue on implementation and reach consensus on the next steps.

C. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the guidance of the Outcome Manager and the Team Leader, the Expert will implement a comprehensive series of activities designed to produce a high-quality baseline analysis fully aligned with the requirements of the Protocol on Water and Health.

Task 1: Establish a clear framework for baseline analysis, ensuring alignment with the Protocol and national priorities.

Activities:

1.1. Develop a **detailed work plan** outlining activities, milestones, and timelines. It is expected that the Expert will develop a detailed work plan that specifies the sequencing of activities, milestones, and deadlines including a methodological approach outlining the techniques to be used for collecting and assessing information, the strategy for engaging stakeholders, and clear criteria for identifying gaps and priorities. The deliverables will be validated with the lead ministries / within the national coordination mechanism to ensure a shared understanding and agreement. The expert will prepare a **methodological note** describing sources of information to be used; approach to assessing each target area under Article 6(2)(a)–(n); data collection techniques (desk review, interviews, surveys); stakeholder engagement plan; criteria for identifying gaps and priorities.

1.2. **Desk Review and Data Collection.** The expert will gather, systematize, and critically review all relevant data and information, including national legislation, regulations, and policy documents (related to drinking water safety; sanitation; water resource management; environmental protection; public health monitoring and disease surveillance); statistical and survey data (such as Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys; demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme other survey data;

[1] Screening Report North Macedonia - Cluster 4: Green Agenda & Sustainable Connectivity, 7 July 2025 available at Screening report North Macedonia - Cluster 4: Green Agenda & Sustainable Connectivity - European Commission

Reports under EU Directives; Report on monitoring the progress of countries in the implementation of the Protocol from April 2025; national census or monitoring reports; SDG Indicators, national and regional water strategies; environmental performance reviews.

Task 2: Analysis and Synthesis-The Expert will then carry out an in-depth baseline analysis and synthesis of the information collected. This process will assess the current status of all thematic areas defined under Article 6, paragraph 2 of the Protocol including:

(a) Drinking water quality.
(b) Reduction of water-related disease.
(c) Drinking water supply coverage.
(d) Sanitation coverage.
(e) Performance levels of water supply and sanitation systems.
(f) Good practice application in management.
(g) Occurrence of untreated wastewater and stormwater discharges.
(h) Quality of wastewater discharges.
(i) Reuse of wastewater and sludge.
(j) Quality of source waters and bathing waters.
(k) Bathing water management.
(l) Contaminated sites remediation.
(m) Management effectiveness of water resources.
(n) Frequency of information publication.

The analysis will take into account disparities between urban and rural areas, differences across regions, and conditions affecting vulnerable groups. In addition, the Expert will evaluate institutional capacities, funding mechanisms, monitoring systems, and the adequacy of current indicators. The expert shall assess the current status in a structured, evidence-based manner.
The expert shall disaggregate data by urban/rural areas; vulnerable populations; regional disparities; assess institutional and human capacity; financial resources taking into account the donor programs and technical partners, as well as existing monitoring systems and indicators and identify good practices; existing programmes to build upon; gaps and inconsistencies and immediate priorities and long-term needs.

Task 3: Identification of Gaps and Priorities. The objective of this task is to highlight challenges and define a basis for target-setting.

Activities include:
- synthesizing findings into:
    - Thematic gap analyses (per Article 6 area).
    - Cross-cutting challenges (e.g., intersectoral coordination, funding, monitoring).
- developing criteria for prioritization, such as public health impact; feasibility and cost-effectiveness; alignment with SDGs and EU requirements, etc.;
- proposing recommendations for immediate and longer-term targets; data gap-filling (e.g., rapid assessments), strengthening monitoring and reporting;
- validating the proposed priorities with stakeholders.

Task 4: Drafting the Baseline Analysis Report Prepare a clear, structured, and actionable report, including:
- Executive Summary
- Methodology
- Analysis per Article 6 thematic area
- Gap analysis
- Identification of priorities, and
- Recommendations for target-setting and performance indicators.

The expert shall submit draft for review by the lead ministries/coordination mechanism and facilitate review session and collect feedback.

Task 5: Dissemination and Presentation
The expert shall ensure transparency and stakeholder buy-in. He/she may conduct bilateral interviews with key institutions; focus group discussions for thematic areas (e.g., sanitation, disease prevention) and at least one validation meeting/ workshop to present the methodology and data and one to present the report to national coordination mechanism/ Inter-ministerial working groups/ Key stakeholders and incorporate feedback and finalize the report review findings.

D. MAIN DELIVERABLES AND PAYMENTS SHEDULE

Deliverable No	Description	deadline
Deliverable 1.	Detailed work plan and methodology for development of the baseline analysis, and data inventory that includes sources, reference periods, and data quality notes including data sources and initial observations	end of March 2026
Deliverable 2.	Validation meeting - to present and validate the scope and methodology with the MH/MoEPP (or within the coordination mechanism for the Protocol) by end of March 2026	end of March 2026
Deliverable 3	Draft- Baseline Analysis for Republic of North Macedonia under the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health	end of June 2026
Deliverable 4.	Validation meeting/ workshop to present the Draft Baseline Analysis	end of July 2026
Deliverable 5.	Final Draft Baseline Analysis	end of July 2026

The payment for the services will be carried out in instalments upon submission and acceptance of the deliverables.

E. REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS

- Advanced degree in medical sciences, health/public health sciences, natural sciences, engineering and technology (technology engineering, medical engineering; environmental engineering, environmental biotechnology, biotechnology; civil engineering or related);
- Professional Experience of Minimum 10 years of professional experience in one or more of the following: water, sanitation, and hygiene sector (WASH), public health, environmental health, water governance and policy;
- Professional Experience in implementation or assessment of international environmental arrangements (UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health, EU directives such as Drinking Water Directive, Bathing water, Urban Wastewater treatment Directive);
- Experience in conducting baseline studies, gap analyses, or national assessments related to water, health, or environmental policy; multi-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and stakeholder consultation;
- Strong knowledge of the UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health and its target-setting methodology and knowledge/experience in water safety plan and/or risk-based management; EU water and environmental directives (e.g., WFD, DWD, UWWTD, BWD), SDG 6 monitoring indicators and relevant UN frameworks (e.g., JMP, GLAAS) is considered as an asset.
- Experience with assessment and analysis of legal, policy, and institutional frameworks, evaluation of health and environment-related data, including interpretation of statistical datasets (from surveys like MICS, DHS, or JMP or Developing structured methodological approaches for baseline assessments) is considered as an asset.

F. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- *Contract modality and duration*

The expert will be hired under IC (Individual Contract) modality until end of July 2026. A maximum of 35 expert-days is anticipated for the entire period of the assignment.

- *Reporting*

The expert will report to the Outcome Manager, and the produced documentation needs to be submitted in English.

- *Travel and other associated costs*

The expert is expected to be present North Macedonia to participate in presentations of the work/reports/deliverables which will be agreed in prior with the Programme staff. Costs for the international travel and accommodation for such events[2] will be organized and covered by the Programme. Meetings can also be organised remotely/ home country.

- *Payments schedule*

The payment for the services will be on a regular basis, based on the number of used expert-days in line with previously assigned timetable/mission plan and approved time sheets (to be certified by the Outcome Manager prior to the payments of the instalments).

- *Ownership and submission of data, reports and other material produced*

All primary data, reports, visual elements and other products during this assignment shall be made available to Program in electronic format. The Program keeps the right to use all products without any restrictions (e.g., in various publications, websites, presentations).

G. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested offerors are invited to submit the following documents (in pdf format):

- Brief description of the approach to work and workplan
- Offeror's letter pertaining the expert confirmation of availability.
- Financial proposal[3] in the form of a lumpsum of all-inclusive cost in EUR/MKD.
- Most updated CV with focus on required qualification as well as the details of relevant professional experience.
- At least two favourable references

to the following address:

Skat Consulting Ltd. St. Gallen Switzerland - Branch Office Skopje
address: Maksim Gorki no. 16, 1000 Skopje
e-mail: northmacedonia@skat.ch
web: www.skat.ch

Contact for more information

Biljana Puleska Janushevska, GWP Programme, Outcome 2 Manager
address: Maksim Gorki no. 16, 1000 Skopje
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phone: +389 70 363 700

[2] Up to 1 such event is expected for the duration of the contract
[3] National expert submits proposal in MKD, international expert submits proposal in EUR

ANNEX 1: OFFEROR'S LETTER CONFIRMING INTEREST AND AVAILABILITY FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Dear Sir/Madam:

I hereby declare that:

A) I have read, understood and hereby accept the Terms of Reference describing the duties and responsibilities of [*indicate the purpose of the assignment as per TOR*] under the "Groundwater Management, Use and Protection Programme in North Macedonia - Phase 1";

B) I have also read, understood and hereby accept SKAT Consulting's General Conditions of Contract for Consultancy Services;

C) I hereby propose my services and I confirm my interest in performing the assignment through the submission of my CV which I have duly signed and attached hereto as Annex 1;

D) In compliance with the requirements of the Terms of Reference, I hereby confirm that I am available for the entire duration of the assignment, and I shall perform the services in the manner described in my proposed approach/methodology which I have attached hereto as Annex 3 [delete this item if the TOR does not require submission of this document];

E) I hereby propose to complete the services based on the following payment rate: *[please check the box corresponding to the preferred option]:*

☐ An all-inclusive daily fee of [*state amount in words and in numbers indicating currency]*

☐ A total lump sum of [state amount in words and in numbers indicating currency*]*, payable in the manner described in the Terms of Reference.

F) For your evaluation, the breakdown of the abovementioned all-inclusive amount is attached hereto as Annex 2;

G) I recognize that the payment of the abovementioned amounts due to me shall be based on my delivery of outputs within the timeframe specified in the TOR, which shall be subject to SKAT Consulting's review, acceptance and payment certification procedures;

H) This offer shall remain valid for a total period of _____ days [*minimum of 90 days*] after the submission deadline;

I) If I am selected for this assignment, I shall sign a Contract for Consultancy Services with Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje;

J) I hereby confirm that *[check all that applies]*:

☐ At the time of this submission, I have no active Contract for Consultancy Services or any form of engagement with Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje;

☐ I am currently engaged with Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje or Skat Consulting Ltd. St. Gallen Switzerland and/or other entities for the following work:

Assignment	Contract Type	Name of Institution/Company	Contract Duration	Contract Amount

☐ I am also anticipating conclusion of the following work from Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje or Skat Consulting Ltd. St. Gallen Switzerland and/or other entities for which I have submitted a proposal:

Assignment	Contract Type	Name of Institution/ Company	Contract Duration	Contract Amount

K) I fully understand and recognize that Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje is not bound to accept this proposal, and I also understand and accept that I shall bear all costs associated with its preparation and submission and that Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the selection process.

L) ***If you are a former employee of the Skat Consulting Ltd. St. Gallen Switzerland recently separated, please add this section to your letter:*** I hereby confirm that I have complied with the minimum break in service required before I can be eligible for an Individual Contract.

M) I also fully understand that, if I am engaged as a Consultant, I have no expectations nor entitlements whatsoever to be re-instated or re-employed as an employee.

O) Do you have any objections to our making enquiries of your present employer?
YES ☐ NO ☐

P) Are you now, or have you ever been a permanent civil servant in your government's employ?
YES ☐ NO ☐ If answer is "yes", WHEN? _____

Q) REFERENCES: List three persons, not related to you, who are familiar with your character and qualifications.

Full Name	*Full Address, including E-Mail Address and Telephone Number*	*Name of Organization Business or Occupation*

R) Have you been arrested, indicted, or summoned into court as a defendant in a criminal proceeding, or convicted, fined or imprisoned for the violation of any law (excluding minor traffic violations)?

YES ☐ NO ☐ If "yes", give full particulars of each case in an attached statement.

I certify that the statements made by me in answer to the foregoing questions are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any misrepresentation or material omission made in the CV or other document requested by the Company may result in the termination of the contract without notice.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

NB. You will be requested to supply documentary evidence which support the statements you have made above. Do not, however, send any documentary evidence until you have been asked to do so and, in any event, do not submit the original texts of references or testimonials unless they have been obtained for the sole use of Skat Consulting Ltd. - Branch Office Skopje.

Annexes *[please check all that applies]*:

- ☐ CV shall include Education/Qualification, Processional Certification, Employment Records /Experience
- ☐ Breakdown of Costs Supporting the Final All-Inclusive Price as per Template
- ☐ Brief Description of Approach to Work (if required by the TOR)

ANNEX 2: BREAKDOWN OF COSTS[4] SUPPORTING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

A) **Breakdown of Cost by Components:**

Cost Components	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Rate for the Contract Duration
I. Personnel Costs			
Professional Fees			
Life Insurance			
Medical Insurance			
Communications			
Land Transportation			
Others (pls. specify)			
II. Travel*			
Round Trip Airfares			
Living Allowance			
Travel Insurance			
Terminal Expenses			

B) **Breakdown of Cost by Deliverables****

Deliverables *[list them as referred to in the TOR]*	**Percentage of Total Price (Weight for payment)**	**Amount**
Deliverable 1		
Deliverable 2		
Total		

**If needed, costs for international travel and accommodation for such events will be organized and covered by the Programme. Those costs should not be included in the daily fee. Meetings can also be organised remotely/ home country*
***Basis for payment tranches*

[4] The costs should only cover the requirements identified in the Terms of Reference (TOR)