

CLARIFICATIONS No. 2

To the REoI for the assignment for

Environmental and Social Due Diligence and ESF Instruments for the Bitola CHP Plant and District Heating Network Expansion

Dear all,

Related to the questions received from interested Companies and the need for clarification of some parts of the published letter of interest (ReoI) on our part, we are providing You with the answers to the questions sent to us in the past period.

Questions	Answers
1. CHP/CCHP Feasibility Study Experience Requirement The request for EOI states that consultants need to provide a reference demonstrating experience in the preparation of a feasibility study for a CHP or CCHP plant with a minimum installed capacity of 100 MW. However, such a request is not identified in the ToR. Could you please confirm whether this is a mandatory qualification criterion for this assignment?	However, the request is contained in the text of the ToR for Environmental and Social Due Diligence and ESF Instruments for the Bitola CHP Plant and District Heating Network Expansion, at page 9 under item No.5...and it is mandatory 5. KEY EXPERT REQUIREMENTS • <i>Specific Qualifications relevant for the assignment:</i> <i>At least 2 assignments in preparation of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) studies for thermal power generation projects (natural gas, coal, biomass or combined heat and power plants) with an installed capacity of at least 100 MW</i>
2. Subconsultant Participation Is it necessary to identify and include all proposed subconsultants at the EOI stage, or may subconsultants be introduced and confirmed at the proposal stage?	Ideally, subconsultants should be identified at this stage. However, if not all subconsultants are known, they may be introduced during the preparation of the Request for Proposals, if the consultant is shortlisted. Please note, however, that if the consultant decides to participate in association in the form of a joint venture, it is mandatory to provide information on the members or partners. We would also like to reiterate the following requirement, as indicated in the REoI and the TOR: <i>"Consultants may associate with other firms to strengthen their qualifications; however, they must clearly indicate whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a subconsultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all members will be evaluated jointly for shortlisting purposes, shall be jointly and severally liable for the assignment, and shall sign the contract in the event of award".</i>

3. Location of Expert Inputs Section 5 of the ToR (key expert requirements) states that "100% of the experts' time will be spent at the base of operations. No home-based work is possible unless prior approval is obtained from the Client, and this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis." Could you please clarify the meaning of "base of operations" in this context? Specifically, does this requirement mean that all experts are expected to be physically based and work from North Macedonia for the duration of their inputs?	The term "base of operations" refers to the location from which the Consultant organizes and performs the assignment, including the Client's premises whenever required for meetings, site visits, workshops, inspections, data collection, or other activities requiring physical presence. The purpose of this requirement is not to require all Key Experts to be permanently based in North Macedonia or to be physically present at the Client's premises for 100% of their allocated input. Rather, it is intended to ensure that the Key Experts are fully available and dedicated to the assignment and attend all activities that require their presence on site. Accordingly, the requirement should be understood as follows: the Key Experts shall be available for on-site activities whenever required by the assignment. Activities that do not require physical presence (such as analysis, modelling, calculations and report preparation) may be performed from the Consultant's offices, subject to maintaining the agreed schedule and quality of the deliverables. Any arrangements regarding remote work will be considered by the Client on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the nature of the activity and the needs of the assignment. Consultants will be required to specify their proposed work plan, team composition, and key experts' inputs, including whether they are home- or field-based, in the Request for Proposals if shortlisted. These requirements will also be reflected in the contract. As this is a lump-sum assignment, this information will be used for reference purposes only and to support the rationale for the respective financial proposal.
4. Conflict of interest Could you please confirm if there is any conflict of interest for participation of one company in both the feasibility study and ESIA bids? In particular, can one company implement both projects?	The same legal entity may not participate in both procurement procedures as a member of different Joint Ventures. In accordance with ESS1 of the ESF requirements on the independence of environmental and social assessment, the same legal entity should not participate in both the ESIA and the Feasibility Study/basic design assignments, even though different Joint Ventures and regardless of whether it acts as lead or non-lead partner. The existence of separate teams,

	consultants, or management structures would not by itself eliminate the conflict of interest, because independence is assessed at the level of the legal entity.
5. Number of ESIA(s) to be prepared Could you confirm whether the assignment is to prepare <u>one ESIA</u> including both the CHP plant development and the enlargement of the DHN, and which needs to be compatible with the preparation of one national EIA study.	The assignment requires the preparation of two separate Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework: 1. one ESIA for the Bitola CHP plant (including the gas connection and any associated facilities); and 2. one ESIA for the Bitola District Heating (DH) network expansion or You may also consider one ESIA with two sections, one section on CHP and one section on DH expansion Each ESIA shall include the corresponding Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). In addition, project-level instruments (such as the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labour Management Procedures (LMP), and, where applicable, the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF)/Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs)) shall be prepared in accordance with the Terms of Reference. Following the completion of the above ESIAs, the Consultant shall prepare one Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study in accordance with the Law on Environment of the Republic of North Macedonia and the applicable secondary legislation. This national EIA Study shall be based on the findings of the ESIAs and shall cover the project in the form required by the competent national authority, including all documentation and support required for the national EIA procedure. Accordingly, the Consultant is expected to prepare two World Bank-compliant ESIAs and one national EIA Study, ensuring consistency and compatibility between the World Bank ESF requirements and the national EIA process.

6. Following our previous message with certain questions for clarification regarding the REoI for ESIA for the CHP and DHN expansion in the city of Bitola, we would like to ask additional one. This question is related to the amended version of the REoI. <i>Question No.6 “Signed and Stamped” reference</i> <i>In the section “Specific Qualifications relevant for the assignment” it is requested to be provided “ESIA for CHP or CCHP plant with a minimum installed capacity of 100MW, evidenced by signed and stamped references from the previous clients/employers.”</i> <i>Please clarify what is the meaning and purpose of signed and stamped references from previous clients. We may not be able to obtain this in the timeframe of the EOI response.</i> <i>We would like to suggest that “signed and stamped” references are not needed since every single ESIA/EIA developed is recognized by any IFI or national environmental authority organization and accordingly available on their websites.</i>	Thank you for your question and suggestion. The purpose of requesting signed and stamped references is to enable ESM to verify that the submitted ESIA experience has been successfully completed for the stated client and project. However, in case signed and stamped references cannot be obtained within the timeframe for submission of the REoI, consultants may instead provide the contact details of the relevant previous clients (name of organization, contact person, e-mail address and/or telephone number). ESM reserves the right to verify the submitted references directly with those clients, where deemed necessary.
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