

CALL FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

Growing opportunities for Non-Timber Forest Products in Prespa

Overview

The Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT) is a foundation established under German Law, supporting Protected Areas (PAs) and Environmental Actors (EAs) in the Wider Prespa Area (WPA) in North Macedonia, Greece and Albania, with the mission to “provide long term financing for the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity, natural processes and ecosystem services in Prespa and its wider area for the benefit of nature and people in the region.” PONT implements its mission through two main grant programmes: (1) co-financing operational costs of PAs, and (2) co-financing the work of EAs. The EAs include Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), municipalities, and scientific or academic institutions. For more information about PONT, its mission, approach and programme please visit: www.pont.org.

In 2017, in close cooperation with PAs, EAs and national authorities responsible for managing PAs, PONT has identified a set of 40 priority actions to be addressed by the EAs over the period from 2018 to 2027, that complement the actions included in the Management Plans for the PAs and together constitute the Strategic Framework that informs PONT’s financing decisions. The priorities are grouped into 5 Focus Areas: 1) capacity development; 2) improved PA & forest management; 3) sustainable use of PAs (incl. recreation; traditional grazing; Non-Timber Forest Products); 4) conservation of species; and 5) conservation of habitats & landscapes. The actions under the last four Focus Areas are classified as related to either (1) applied research, studies and experimentation directly linked to real measures; or (2) real measures/implementation of conservation actions.

PONT has identified two topics among the funding priorities¹ that are not being adequately addressed by its current grants or actions supported by other donors: Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and Sustainable Nature-Based Tourism. This call for grant proposals addresses only the first subject i.e. NTFPs, whereas the second one will be addressed in a separate call to be published in the second half of 2019.

On behalf of PONT, the Connecting Natural Values and People Foundation (CNVP) conducted an assessment of the opportunities, and associated challenges, for local small-scale production, processing and marketing of NTFPs in the Wider Prespa Area in Albania and North Macedonia.

¹ PONT Funding Priorities are available at: <http://pont.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2017-PONT-Funding-Priorities.pdf>

CNVP prepared a draft analysis², which summarizes the findings from the review of past initiatives and actions, as well as interviews with numerous stakeholders. A number of issues and challenges were identified as well as a set of recommendations on how to address them by the NTFPs sector. The draft analysis was discussed in a transboundary workshop held in Stenje on 8 April 2019.

Purpose

Taking into account the results of the Analysis mentioned above PONT is opening this Call for Grant Proposals (*hereinafter*: “the Call”) to bolster the production and marketing of NTFPs in the Wider Prespa Area. The Call builds upon previous successful interventions so that EAs improve their contribution to biodiversity-conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in selected areas of Albania and North Macedonia for the benefit of nature and people in the region.

It is not possible to start the support for collection and sustainable harvesting of NTFPs in the PAs at this stage having in mind that the collection of NTFPs in the wild is not yet clearly regulated in the PA Management Plans. Consequently, this Call focuses only on NTFPs that are cultivated/planted or are not directly harvested (e.g. honey).

Eligible applicants

This Call is opened to Environmental Actors that are active in the Wider Prespa Area in Albania, North Macedonia or in both countries and have interest in the cultivation, production, processing and marketing of NTFPs. Only EAs that are based in or have an antenna office in the Focus Area and/or with a main purpose to strengthen locally based organisations (e.g. local associations on fishery, tourism, medicinal plants, etc.) are eligible to submit grant proposals.

The WPA includes the entire Prespa basin, including the entire territory of Galicica and Pelister national parks. The term “Environmental Actors” includes Non-Governmental-Organisations (NGOs), municipalities, scientific or academic institutions, but no private persons or businesses.

The Environment Actor is a legally established and tax registered organisation (for at least the last 3 years) and disposes of basic staff, infrastructure, financial systems and a basic financial budget. PONT expects from its potential grantees that they follow a systematic procedure and maintain a policy on managing the organisations’ finances and human resources as this is a strong indicator of a well-managed organisation. PONT prefers to render funding support to organisations which have systematic and transparent policies in place for effective financial and HR management such as operational or administrative manuals on conducting day-to-day financial transactions, code of conducts, no conflict of interest, procedures manual, employee handbook, etc.

² <http://www.pont.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Assessment-of-Challenges-and-Opportunities-Related-to-NTFP-in-the-WPA.pdf>



Eligible activities

The following activities aiming at supporting local individuals and small-businesses involved in cultivation, production, processing and/or marketing of NTFPs or their cooperatives and associations, on a cost-sharing basis, are eligible under this Call:

- training and knowledge sharing;
- awareness raising;
- promoting producer associations and cooperatives;
- policy development and development and/or strengthening of governance arrangements;
- applied research, studies and experimentation concerning cultivation/production, storage, processing, and marketing of NTFPs.

Taking the recommendations from the Analysis mentioned above into account, the proposed activities should contribute to value chain development for the NTFPs concerned and involve transboundary cooperation, where necessary.

How it works

“NTFP Grants” are available for organisations meeting the following conditions:

- up to a maximum of € 50.000 for applications submitted by several partners together, with one organisation being the lead partner. The lead partner must be an eligible Environmental Actor, as defined above.
- up to a maximum of € 25.000 for applications submitted by one individual organisation (an eligible Environmental Actor, as defined above).

The overall budget available for this first Call is € 75.000.

After the submission deadline (28 June 2019), PONT will review the concept note applications and decide on the selected proposal(s) by 15 July 2019. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to submit a full grant application using the PONT Grants Manual and PONT application templates.

A minimum of 25% of co-financing/matching funds is required. PONT will review the full applications and sign a grant agreement with the winning applicants.

Under the Grant Agreement the funds will be transferred in at least two disbursements to the applicant to implement the activities as outlined in the full grant application. The work must be completed within a maximum 12 month-period from the date of the contract signature. Only one proposal per organisation may be submitted, either as a partner or a sole applicant.

The detailed budget in the full application may include:

- staff time, travel, meetings, training;



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- consultant fees;
- small equipment (<20.000 per item);
- a maximum of 10% management fees/overheads of the overall budget (within the limit of the total € 25.000 / € 50.000).

Application for a Grant

To apply for a “NFTP Grant”, please complete the [application form](#) available here.

Interested applicants are to direct any queries and questions regarding the content or process of this Call to the PONT Grants Coordinator, Oliver Avramoski at oavramoski@pont.org. No other PONT personnel are to be contacted in relation to this Call unless directed to do so by the PONT Grants Coordinator.

Proposers may submit their queries relating to this Call no later than 10 June 2019. Any queries should clearly reference any appropriate paragraph in this Call and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually. As far as is reasonably possible, PONT will respond to all questions submitted before 17 June 2019.

PONT reserves the right to issue the responses to any questions to all interested applicants unless the interested applicant asking the question expressly requests, at the time the question is posed, for it to be kept confidential. If PONT considers the contents of the question and/or the answer not to be confidential, it will inform the interested applicant, who will then have the opportunity to withdraw the question.

Deadline for Submission of Application

Interested applicants should submit their concept note proposals no later than 28 June 2019 at 14:00. Applications are to be sent to Oliver Avramoski by email (oavramoski@pont.org).