

Request for Quotes (RFQ)

Date: October 8, 2025

Field	Details
Assignment	Legal/institutional expert to support the establishment of the Eko-Kolkheti Association (EKA) – an inter-municipal structure for economic cooperation and sustainable tourism management around Kolkheti National Park (KNP)
Contract	Service Contract
Duration	Working days as per proposal in the period November 2025 - December 2025
Starting date	November 10, 2025
Duty Station	Georgia (Zugdidi, Poti, Senaki, Khobi, Abasha, Lanchkhuti) with hybrid remote/field work
Application Deadline	Friday, October 31, 2025 – 18:00 CET
Submission Email	procurement.geo@helvetas.org

1. Background and Context

Kolkheti National Park (KNP), covering the municipalities of Poti, Zugdidi, Khobi, Senaki, Abasha (Samegrelo) and Lanchkhuti (Guria), represents one of Georgia's most significant ecological and cultural landscapes. Its wetlands, lakes, and Colchic forests form part of the country's UNESCO World Heritage and Ramsar-listed natural areas, recognized internationally for their biodiversity and environmental importance.

Through the Local Economic Development Project (LEDP) - funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation - the six municipalities have established a Joint Coordination Committee and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote coordinated development around KNP. This cooperation aims to enhance the region's economic resilience by fostering sustainable ecotourism, shared infrastructure management, and joint promotion of the Kolkheti area as a unified tourism destination.

To operationalize this collaboration, the municipalities intend to establish the Eko-Kolkheti Association (EKA) - a joint legal entity (expected form: NNLE) that will coordinate tourism marketing, infrastructure maintenance, and public-private cooperation around KNP. The association is envisioned as a joint inter-municipal platform that will bring together municipalities and other local actors to strengthen collaboration around the park's economic potential. The specific model of governance, financing, and membership structure will be discussed and defined collectively by the municipalities, with expert support, to ensure an effective, inclusive, and sustainable framework for cooperation.

To support this process, LEDP seeks a qualified legal and institutional expert to guide the participating municipalities through the establishment of EKA - including its legal design, governance structure, founding documentation, and registration - ensuring full compliance with Georgian legislation, the Ministry of

Regional Development framework for inter-municipal cooperation, and the requirements of the Agency of Protected Areas (APA). The expert will also consider international best practices in inter-municipal governance and sustainable destination management, ensuring that the new entity is established with a financially sustainable model based on balanced public funding, membership contributions, and potential self-generated revenues.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to provide legal, institutional, and procedural support for establishing the Eko-Kolkheti Association (EKA) as an operational and sustainable inter-municipal entity.

The expert will assist the six municipalities and the Kolkheti National Park Administration in:

- Selecting the most appropriate legal form and governance model;
- Drafting all founding and operational documentation;
- Assisting municipalities in legal acts and budgetary procedures required by each municipality;
- Facilitating decision-making for selecting proposed options;
- Ensuring compliance with Georgian laws and regulation.

3. Scope of Work

The expert will work in close collaboration with the Joint Coordination Committee around Kolkheti National Park (KNP), the legal and financial departments of the six participating municipalities – Poti, Zugdidi, Khobi, Senaki, Abasha, and Lanchkhuti – as well as the KNP Administration and the LEDP team. All coordination will be maintained with the Ministry of Regional Development to ensure full compliance with national legislation on inter-municipal cooperation and decentralization.

Objective: Develop and validate the complete legal, institutional, and financial framework for the establishment of the **Eko-Kolkheti Association (EKA)**, so that municipalities can formally adopt the required resolutions and allocate budget contributions for 2026.

Task 1 – Legal and Institutional Framework Review

The expert will undertake a comprehensive analysis of the legislative and institutional environment relevant to inter-municipal cooperation and the creation of joint legal entities in Georgia. This task will include:

- **Assessment of comparable institutional models**, including:
 - DMO Samegrelo and other Georgian inter-municipal or regional associations;
 - Relevant European examples (e.g., Polish inter-municipal tourism associations).
- **Identification of legal pathways and options** for EKA establishment (NNLE, consortium, joint agency) based on all relevant legal frameworks in Georgia, outlining pros, cons, and compliance requirements.
- **Recommendation of the optimal legal form** balancing:

- Ease of registration and autonomy;
- Equal representation of all municipalities;
- Inclusion of private and other members;
- Models of expansion of membership;
- Governance structure and accountability of members;
- Eligibility for sustainable financing, including the ability to receive public funding (e.g. municipal budget transfers based on per-capita formulas) and other sources such as membership fees, grants, sponsorships, and own-generated revenues;
- Legal capacity to generate own revenue through provision of services, joint marketing activities, or infrastructure management fees.

Deliverable 1: *Legal Options and Recommendations Report* - summarizing findings of the legal and institutional review, recommended legal form for EKA, and financing options, and presented at a validation workshop with the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) for discussion and endorsement.

Task 2 – Founding Documentation and Procedural Roadmap

Based on Task 1 findings and endorsements, the expert will prepare a full package of founding documents and a clear roadmap for municipal approval and registration.

2.1 Draft Founding Documents

- Charter (Statute) defining legal basis, purpose, structure, membership categories, governance bodies (Assembly, Board, Director), decision-making, financial rules, and accountability.
- Internal Rules of Procedure for meetings and financial control.
- Financial Management and Operational Guidelines for budgeting, expenditure, and reporting.

2.2 Develop Step-by-Step Roadmap

- Sequence of actions from municipal approval to registration, with responsibilities and deadlines.
- Guidance on Sakrebulo decisions, budget inclusion, and endorsement by the Ministry of Regional Development.
- Visual timeline (Gantt-style) showing all procedural milestones.

2.3 Assist Municipalities in Elaboration of Legal Instruments

- Standard municipal resolutions approving participation and contributions.
- Budget justification notes for 2026.
- Inter-Municipal Agreement template defining cooperation principles and joint governance.

Deliverable 2: *Draft Founding Package and Procedural Roadmap*

Task 3 – Governance and Financing Model

To enable municipalities to make informed budgetary and policy decisions, the expert will design a proposed governance and financing system for EKA.

- **Develop an inclusive governance model** defining the composition, powers, and election procedures of governing bodies (Assembly, Board, Secretariat) and clarifying KNP Administration and private-sector advisory roles.
- **Design a transparent and sustainable financial framework**, including:
 - A per-capita-based municipal contribution formula (e.g. 1 GEL per resident);
 - Membership-fee structure for private entities and others;
 - Mechanisms for accessing grants, sponsorships, and service-based revenues (licensing, promotion, infrastructure maintenance);
 - Annual budgeting, financial management, and audit procedures.
- **Outline preliminary staffing and management roles** (staff plan and summary function profiles).
- **Propose first-year priorities and indicative budget structure** for integration into 2026 municipal budgets.

Deliverable 3: *Governance and Financing Framework Proposal* (December 2025).

Task 4 – Consolidation and Municipal Adoption

This task ensures that all municipalities have the final, complete documentation package ready for approval and inclusion in their 2026 budgets.

- Integrate Tasks 1–3 outputs into a single consolidated *EKA Establishment Package* (legal documents, governance and financial model, roadmap, and explanatory brief).
- Recommend each municipality in the formal adoption process: sakrebulo resolutions, mayoral decrees, and budget line inclusion.
- Coordinate cross-municipal alignment so that all decisions are harmonized before year-end.
- Deliver final versions of documents and advisory letters confirming readiness for registration.
- Organize and facilitate a second validation workshop with the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) and Mayors of all six municipalities to review, discuss, and endorse the full EKA Establishment Package (covering Tasks 2–4) prior to municipal adoption and budgeting.

Deliverable 4: *Validated EKA Establishment Package for Municipal Adoption* - comprising all final legal, governance, and financial documents, accompanied by a summary of feedback and decisions from the second JCC validation workshop, confirming readiness for formal municipal approval and inclusion in 2026 budgets.

4. Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable	Content	Due
Deliverable 1 – Legal Options and Recommendations Report	<p>Results of Task 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of legal pathways and options for EKA establishment (NNLE, consortium, joint agency), outlining advantages, constraints, and compliance requirements. • Recommendation of the optimal legal form balancing ease of registration, representation, inclusion of private/associate members, governance and accountability, and financial sustainability (public funding, membership fees, grants, sponsorships, and own-revenue potential). • Summary of key legal procedures required for municipal approval. • Presentation of results at the first validation workshop with the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) for discussion and endorsement. 	November 19, 2025
Deliverable 2 – Draft Founding Documentation and Procedural Roadmap	<p>Results of Task 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a complete draft package of legal and operational documents required for the establishment of EKA. • Draft Charter (Statute) defining legal basis, purpose, structure, membership categories, governance bodies (Assembly, Board, Director), decision-making procedures, financial rules, and accountability mechanisms. • Draft Internal Rules of Procedure for meetings, elections, and financial control. • Draft Financial Management and Operational Guidelines detailing budgeting, expenditure, and reporting principles. • Step-by-step procedural roadmap from municipal approval to registration, specifying responsibilities, deadlines, and required coordination with the Ministry of Regional Development. • Standard legal templates for sakrebulo resolutions, mayoral decrees, budget justification notes for 2026, and an inter-municipal cooperation agreement defining cooperation principles and shared governance. • Visual Gantt-style timeline summarizing all procedural milestones for approval and registration. 	December 5, 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documents prepared in Georgian, ready for official municipal and ministerial review. 	
Deliverable 3 – Governance and Financing Framework Proposal	<p>Results of Task 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual design of EKA’s governance and financial system prepared for municipal decision-making. • Description of governing bodies (General Assembly, Board, Secretariat), composition, and election principles. • Proposed financial framework including: • Per-capita-based municipal contributions; • Membership fees for private entities and other members; • Access to grants and service-based revenues. • Preliminary staffing plan (Executive Director, Finance Officer, etc.) and indicative first-year operational budget for inclusion in 2026 municipal budgets. • Integrated recommendations ensuring transparency, equity, and long-term sustainability. 	December 5, 2025
Deliverable 4 – EKA Establishment Package for Municipal Adoption	<p>Results of Task 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated and finalized package of all documents required for municipal approval and 2026 budget inclusion. • Components include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Final Charter (Statute) and Internal Rules; ◦ Financial and Governance Framework Summary; ◦ Step-by-step Procedural Roadmap and Timeline; ◦ Templates of sakrebulo resolutions and budget justifications; • Advisory notes per municipality confirming readiness for adoption. • Presentation and endorsement of the complete package at a second validation workshop with the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) and mayors of all six municipalities. • Compiled as a single EKA Establishment Package in Georgian for submission to municipal and ministry authorities. • This deliverable confirms that all legal, institutional, and financial documents have been validated and are ready for formal municipal adoption and budget allocation for 2026. 	December 5, 2025

5. Qualifications and Experience

The assignment requires qualified expertise with the following profile:

- Advanced university degree in Law, Public Administration, or Governance, with specialization in local self-government and decentralization;
- At least 7 years of professional experience in municipal law, institutional development, or inter-municipal cooperation in Georgia;
- Proven experience in drafting legal and organizational documents (charters, statutes, decrees, or agreements) for municipalities or NNLEs;
- Familiarity with the Budget Code, Law on Local Self-Government, and related national legislation governing municipal funding and cooperation;
- Experience engaging with municipal councils, ministries, and public agencies on legal and administrative reforms;
- Strong facilitation, drafting, and coordination skills with multiple stakeholders;
- Excellent communication skills in Georgian and working knowledge of English.

6. Submission Requirements

Interested candidates should submit the following documents electronically to procurement.geo@helvetas.org by the deadline:

- Updated CVs of expert highlighting relevant experience and qualifications;
- Financial Offer indicating a daily fee rate in GEL, inclusive of all taxes, travel, accommodation, and incidental costs.

Proposals will be scored on Technical Expertise (70%) and Financial Proposal (30%).

7. Contracting Authority

HELVETAS Georgia

Project: Local Economic Development Project (LEDP), Georgia

Application Deadline Friday, October 31, 2025 – 18:00 CET

Submission Email procurement.geo@helvetas.org