

# Short Term Assignment

## Criteria for Establishing New Protected Areas

### SULTANATE OF OMAN

### Summer/Fall 2012

**OPPORTUNITY:** The U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP) is seeking qualified experts on criteria for the establishment of new protected areas for short-term assignments to take place in the Sultanate of Oman.

**BACKGROUND:** DOI-ITAP provides technical assistance on a reimbursable basis to other countries on subjects of Departmental expertise. The program is currently operating in approximately twenty countries on a wide variety of natural and cultural resource management issues with support from organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the State Department, World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

The DOI-ITAP program in Oman is supported by the U.S. Department of State, under the auspices of the U.S. – Oman Free Trade Agreement and associated agreement on environmental cooperation. Oman has a long history of promoting the conservation of its unique natural resources. Several protected areas have already been established in Oman, and the Sultan recently issued a royal decree that would require the creation of several more within the coming years. Oman is also rapidly developing, including in the tourism sector, putting additional pressure on the protected areas and the natural resources they are intended to safeguard. To date, DOI-ITAP has provided technical advice and assistance to key Omani partners on the development of strong planning mechanisms to support enhanced management of Oman's protected areas.

DOI-ITAP's key partners in Oman include:

- Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs (MECA)
- Environment Society of Oman (ESO)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Marine Turtle Conservation Act Program (MTCA)

**ASSIGNMENT:** ITAP is seeking experts on establishing protected areas to provide short-term technical assistance to the Sultanate of Oman. The DOI-ITAP team will travel to Oman to conduct an assessment of current policies for establishing protected areas and to learn the full breadth of Oman's plans for future protected areas. The team will develop and deliver three day training to MECA headquarters staff on the process, best practices, and international standards of establishing protected areas through a formal lecture presentation. The training will include topics such as criteria for establishing a protected area, developing policies and management plans to govern the protected area, staffing and budgeting, and community outreach. The team then will work consultatively with relevant MECA personnel to compare Oman's current

practices with the international standard and will develop a list of recommendations for strengthening MECA's program for establishing new reserves. The team will prepare an action plan with concrete next steps for MECA to take in the short and long term.

**SCHEDULE:** This assignment will involve two weeks of in-country work, to be scheduled with a high degree of flexibility for setting dates amenable to selected candidates and their supervisors. The assignment will likely occur in summer/fall of 2012.

**PRE- AND POST-TRIP DUTIES:** All travel and in-country logistics will be handled by DOI-ITAP or our in-country counterpart. Background material and briefings will be provided to the selected individuals prior to departure. The selected individuals will be expected to work in collaboration with the DOI-ITAP manager on the preparation and follow-up for the technical assistance over phone and email. The preparation will include communicating with ESO and MECA to discuss technical aspects of the project.

Within three weeks of the completion of the trip, the team will provide the DOI-ITAP manager a brief draft trip report of the trip events, evaluations made, and recommendations for future related training and technical assistance in Oman.

**COSTS:** The International Technical Assistance Program will cover all travel costs associated with this assignment (round-trip airfare, lodging, meals, immunizations, per diem, etc.). **The salaries of the team members, however, will be paid by their employing DOI agency for the duration of the international assignment, including pre- and post-trip obligation. No stipends or other compensation is available for retiree candidates.**

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Competitive applicants for this assignment will:

- Preferably be a current or retired employee of DOI;
- Have demonstrated and expert experience in advising senior government officials on the establishment of new protected areas and international standards for the establishment of new protected areas;
- Have demonstrated ability to work with and adapt to the needs and abilities of agencies and professionals of different ethnic or cultural groups;
- Previous international experience is desirable and experience in the Middle East is an advantage;
- Arabic proficiency is welcomed, but not necessary for this assignment.

Upon selection, candidates must submit a current physician-signed letter or medical review form indicating fitness for duty.

**If you are selected for this assignment you will be responsible for obtaining your supervisor's approval to participate in this program, as well as additional approvals up your supervisory chain of command as necessary.**

**Employees of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement are required to have supervisory approval prior to submitting an application.**

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Persons interested in being considered for this international assignment must:

- Send a resume and cover letter summarizing direct, relevant work experience, related to the skills listed under application requirements. Please submit electronically to Colleen Castle ([colleen\\_castle@ios.doi.gov](mailto:colleen_castle@ios.doi.gov)) with the subject: "Protected Areas Assistance, Oman"
- If your supervisor has already given approval, please indicate this.
- All applications should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than **23 December 2011**. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Any and all questions can be directed to Colleen Castle, the DOI-ITAP Oman Project Assistant, at 202-208-5160 or [colleen\\_castle@ios.doi.gov](mailto:colleen_castle@ios.doi.gov).

All NPS applicants should also copy their applications to Rudy D'Alessandro ([rudy\\_dalessandro@nps.gov](mailto:rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov)) in the NPS Office of International Affairs. *As per NPS policy, NPS employees who have traveled with DOI-ITAP within 12 months of the departure are ineligible.*

## **Application Process**

A short list of candidates will be interviewed by telephone. The entire selection process may take several months. All candidates will be notified of the results of the selection process by telephone or email.

The position is open to all applicants that meet the stated requirements. Every effort will be made to select applicants who have not yet had the opportunity to participate on an ITAP assignment.