

DRAFT – TSCC Reporting Template (2025-2026)

Name of the TSCC: Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre for West Asia

Period covered by the report: December 2025 – April 2026 (reporting to date)

Date of submission: 29 April 2026

Purpose and general instructions for completing the report:

As per the operational modalities in decision 16/3, the TSCCs are requested to submit their biennial activity reports to the global coordination entity who will report to the COP through the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. For this reporting cycle, SBI will review progress made by the TSCCs to identify possible gaps and solutions for improving the delivery of technical and scientific cooperation for consideration by the COP at its seventeenth meeting.

Please do not exceed 10-12 pages.

- An indicative word count is specified in each section.
- Upload the final draft of the report in a Word file onto the TSCC space on SharePoint. In case of a technical issue, please send the report to mea-cbd-technicalcooperation@un.org.

Part I. Background on the TSCC

Instructions: Please provide a succinct introduction to the report. Relevant introductions from the workplans can be used here, but please ensure to also include the following elements:

- Official launch date
- Parties served by the TSCC
- Key results of needs assessment and areas of focus

- IUCN Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA) was formally designated as the host of the Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) for West Asia following COP decision 15/8. The TSCC was formally constituted through a Memorandum of Agreement signed in Nairobi, Kenya, on 11 December 2025, with an operational period extending to December 2030.
- West Asia's TSCC serves 12 countries: Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. The TSCC is hosted and coordinated by IUCN ROWA, drawing on its four programmes: Protected Areas, World Heritage and Biodiversity, Drylands, Livelihoods and Gender, Water and Climate Change, and Marine programme. The Steering Group is a LAS West Asia sub committee composed of CBD national focal points from the 12 mandate countries.
- Key results of the needs assessment: a regional capacity needs assessment survey was launched on 22 April 2026. As of 29 April 2026, 16 responses have been received from 7 countries, namely Jordan (7), Syria (3), Saudi Arabia (2), Lebanon (1), Bahrain (1), Oman (1), and Iraq (1). The highest-priority support needs identified across responses are: OECMs identification and registration, IUCN Green List, GIS and spatial planning, biodiversity finance and access to international funds, Red List of Species, METT tool, nature-based solutions, biodiversity monitoring, and support for national reporting to the CBD. Arabic-language tools and knowledge products are identified as essential or highly useful by the majority of respondents. Five countries: Kuwait, Qatar, Palestine, Yemen, and UAE have not yet responded and are being followed up with. Final results will be integrated into the endorsed workplan following a meeting with the official TSCC Steering group.

300 words

Part II. Report on outcomes

Instructions:

- Please list the actual outcome(s) included in the workplan of the TSCC under each area of work.
- In the first column, list the output(s) included in the workplan and provide further information in the corresponding “Details” column. For example, you may provide a brief explanation of why an output has not been completed yet.
- Add as many rows as necessary in each table.
- Attach relevant supporting documentation in annex.

1. Operationalization of the TSCC

Outcome 1: The TSCC achieves operational milestones and is established as a functional support centre

Outputs	Status	Details
1.1 Memorandum of Agreement signed (Host Agreement)	Completed	The TSCC MoA was signed at a formal ceremony in Nairobi, Kenya, on 11 December 2025, between IUCN and the CBD Secretariat. The agreement is effective until December 2030 and formally establishes IUCN ROWA as the host of the West Asia TSCC. <i>150 words</i>
1.2 Steering Group / Governance structure initiated	In progress	The steering group is a LAS West Asia sub-committee of CBD national focal points, with the GCE attending in an observer capacity. The sub-committee is currently being formed. On 16 March 2026, IUCN ROWA held the first TSCC coordination meeting with CBD focal points from all 12 countries and Dr. Mahmoud Fathallah (LAS). The meeting covered the TSCC mandate, the draft 2026–2027 workplan, and each country's technical priorities. Workplan endorsement is expected following the needs assessment and the steering group side meeting. <i>150 words</i>
1.3 Formal letters sent to CBD focal points in all 12 mandate countries	Completed	Formal letters were dispatched to CBD focal points in all 12 countries. An email coordination group for West Asia Arab country focal points was also established to facilitate ongoing communication. <i>150 words</i>
1.4 TSCC document folder / shared operational system	Completed	A shared TSCC document folder has been established to ensure document continuity and efficient staff handover. <i>150 words</i>
1.5 Staff assigned to TSCC coordination	In progress	TSCC coordination tasks are currently being absorbed within existing IUCN ROWA programme activities pending formal staff assignment. A discussion with Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Regional Director (Dr. Hany) is underway to nominate cross-programme representatives and formalize a dedicated focal point by June 2026. <i>150 words</i>
1.6 TSCC website and communications strategy	In progress	A communications strategy is under development. The strategy aims to position the TSCC as the primary regional reference point for KMGBF technical support in West Asia by establishing a visible and consistent brand, defining stakeholder communication pathways (including CBD focal points, LAS, donors, and regional partners), developing Arabic-language knowledge products, and ensuring the Centre's activities and outputs are regularly communicated through IUCN ROWA digital channels and regional platforms. Website development and initial communications materials are being considered.

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Additional result(s)	Include results other than the outputs mentioned in the workplan, if any <i>150 words</i>
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What has worked well, ongoing challenges and possible solutions

<p>The formal signing of the MoA in December 2025 is considered an institutional milestone that provided the legal and operational foundation for the TSCC. The speed with which outreach to all 12 CBD focal points was completed including formal letters and an email coordination group reflects strong early momentum.</p> <p>The organizing of the first TSCC coordination meeting on 16 March 2026, which brought together all mandate countries and LAS, represents a major achievement for a centre that had only been formally constituted three months prior. The meeting included essential conversations on national priorities and indicated a genuine demand from the region.</p> <p>The missing puzzle at the moment is the yet to be formalized and endorsed workplan along with a fully constituted Steering Group, both of which are prerequisites for the Centre’s direction and resource mobilization.</p> <p>This is being addressed through the following: the needs assessment will provide the evidence base for the refined workplan. The workplan will be presented to the TSCC members during the planned steering group meeting, for their discussion, input and validation. This will also serve as a chance to activate the steering group in a first kick off meeting.</p> <p>On another hand, regional political instability adds pressure and poses some limitations to the centre’s activities’ execution, with some countries requiring alternative engagement modalities (virtual first, bilateral missions rather than regional workshops).</p> <p><i>500 words</i></p>

2. Visibility and responsiveness

Outcome 2: the TSCC is recognized as a visible and responsive support centre for technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer for the region.

Outputs	Status	Details
TSCC introduced and positioned at regional events	Completed	<p>On 15 April 2026, IUCN attended the regional workshop organized by Saudi Arabia’s National Center for Wildlife alongside UNEP, the Ministry of Environment Water and Agriculture, the CBD Secretariat, and representatives of West Asian countries. At this event, IUCN formally introduced the TSCC, its role, governance structure, geographic mandate, priority areas, and the differentiation between its mandate and other regional initiatives.</p> <p><i>150 words</i></p>
TSCC represented at UfM Working Group on Environment	Completed	<p>IUCN ROWA and IUCN MED represented the TSCC at the 10th UfM Working Group on Environment on 15 April 2026, establishing the TSCC’s presence within the broader Mediterranean environmental architecture and positioning it alongside other CBD TSCCs at a high-level intergovernmental forum.</p> <p><i>150 words</i></p>
Regional needs assessment survey launched	In progress	<p>A regional capacity needs assessment survey was launched on 22 April 2026. As of 29 April 2026, 16 responses have been received from 7 countries: Jordan (7), Syria (3), Saudi Arabia (2), Lebanon (1), Bahrain (1), Oman (1), and Iraq (1). Responses are still pending from Kuwait, Qatar, Palestine, Yemen, and UAE. The survey covers NBSAP status, 7th National Report status, KMGBF target priorities, capacity self-assessment across 14 domains, and preferred modes of support. Results will directly inform the workplan and its validation by the steering group.</p> <p><i>150 words</i></p>

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Communications strategy under development	In progress	See output 1.6 above. <i>150 words</i>
Additional result(s)	Include results other than the outputs mentioned in the workplan, if any <i>150 words</i>	

What has worked well, ongoing challenges and possible solutions

The needs assessment has generated good engagement, with Jordan being the most active. Gulf countries (Kuwait, Qatar, UAE) and conflict-affected countries (Palestine, Yemen) have not yet responded.

Gulf countries tend to have stronger national institutions and may see less need for regional support. Conflict-affected countries face real operational barriers. Both groups require targeted follow-up, bilateral outreach for Gulf countries, and alternative contact channels for conflict-affected countries. Some of these gaps may not close within this biennium.

500 words

3. Partnership development and resource mobilization

Outcome 3: the TSCC initiates partnership development and begins the process of identifying and developing sustainable, long-term resource mobilization.

Outputs	Status	Details
LAS partnership established	In progress	The League of Arab States is the primary governance and strategic partner. The March 2026 coordination meeting included Dr. Mahmoud Fathallah of LAS Environment and Meteorology Affairs, confirming active LAS engagement. The formal West Asia sub-committee structure is being finalized, which will unlock the institutional basis for LAS co-financing conversations. <i>150 words</i>
Partnerships with regional institutions initiated	In progress	Existing IUCN ROWA project partnerships (including with national environment ministries in Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia) provide an informal partnership base that the TSCC can formalize over the biennium. <i>150 words</i>
Resource mobilization plan	Not started	No dedicated TSCC resource mobilization plan exists as of April 2026. Development is planned by June 2026, pending steering group formation. Current contributions are entirely in-kind from IUCN ROWA programme activities (staff time, office infrastructure, institutional systems). The internal resource mobilization plan also depends and will be tailored around the master resource mobilization plan currently under development by GCE. <i>150 words</i>
Funding proposals in pipeline	In progress	Several proposals and concept notes aligned with KMGBF are under development. These include: Red List of Ecosystems assessments, Natural Heritage inscription processes, Seascape Restoration Grants, Enhancing Climate Resilience for Biodiversity Hotspots in Jordan and the GFCR Gulf of Aqaba programme. These projects and initiatives may contribute directly or indirectly to TSCC objectives and provide early donor entry points. In parallel, opportunities for in-kind contributions from Parties, the private sector, and academia will be explored through the needs assessment and matchmaking process, with the aim of formalizing contributions by December 2026. <i>150 words</i>

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Additional result(s)	<i>150 words</i>
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What has worked well, ongoing challenges and possible solutions

The LAS relationship is the most strategic asset for the TSCC's long-term sustainability, and early engagement has been productive. However, the absence of a formal resource mobilization plan and no secured external funding beyond in-kind contributions remains the most significant systemic risk to the Centre's operational future. This is an early stage two year period, the priority is establishing the institutional evidence base (needs assessment, workplan, steering group) before approaching donors. The current resource targets are achievable but require at least one external grant award in 2026.

500 words

4. Technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer

Outcome 4: The TSCC promotes and facilitates technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer to support KMGBF implementation in West Asia

Outputs	Status	Details
Regional OECMs Workshop (first for West Asia)	Completed	In Q4 2025, IUCN ROWA organized the first ever regional introductory workshop on OECMs for West Asia, held in Amman, Jordan. The workshop convened 40 participants from 7 countries: Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Lebanon. This represents the first systematic, regionally coordinated capacity-building event on OECMs in the region, directly supporting KMGBF Target 3. <i>150 words</i>
Jo-METT: Jordan adapted METT tool	Completed	In Q3 2025, IUCN ROWA developed and produced the Jo-METT (Jordan-adapted Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool), available in both printed hardcopy and online formats. This is a regionally adapted tool strengthening protected area management effectiveness assessment under Targets 3 and 4. (Number of copies/downloads to be confirmed.) <i>150 words</i>
Arabic translations of KMGBF guidelines	Completed	In Q3 2025, IUCN ROWA completed Arabic translations of KMGBF relevant guidelines and knowledge outputs, distributed via the IUCN ROWA website. Arabic language materials are identified as essential by the majority of the needs assessment respondents and will remain a priority knowledge product stream. <i>150 words</i>
Ecosystem restoration in Petra and Shoubak	Completed	In Q1–Q4 2025, 350 hectares were restored in Petra and Shoubak (Jordan) using the ROAM methodology, contributing to KMGBF Targets 2 and 3. <i>150 words</i>
First TSCC Coordination Meeting with CBD focal points	Completed	On 16 March 2026, IUCN ROWA organized the first formal TSCC meeting with CBD national focal points from all 12 mandate countries and the LAS. The meeting served as both an introduction to the Centre's mandate and an active listening session to capture each country's technical priorities. These inputs are being integrated into the final workplan.
TSCC represented at UfM Working Group on Environment	Completed	On 15 April 2026, IUCN ROWA (Natalia Boulad) and IUCN MED (Carla Danelutti) presented on the coordination of CBD TSCCs at the 10th UfM Working Group on Environment, ensuring alignment between the West Asia

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		TSCC and TSCCs covering the Mediterranean region. The session also covered CBD COP17 preparation and regional biodiversity cooperation.
Target 3 Online Workshop planned	Upcoming	An online Target 3 workshop is planned for 6 May 2026, targeting the Middle East and West Asia (MEWA) national focal points of the CBD, convened in support of the regional TSCC. A steering group side meeting is planned in parallel, which will serve as the first formal steering group session and is expected to move forward the workplan endorsement.
Additional result(s)	<i>150 words</i>	

What has worked well, ongoing challenges and possible solutions

The OECMs workshop stands out as first of in the region, with strong multi-country participation and alignment with KMGBF Target 3. The Jo-METT and Arabic translation work demonstrate the TSCC's comparative advantage in producing regionally adapted tools which is an area with consistently high demand in the needs assessment.

The March 2026 coordination meeting demonstrated that demand is real across the mandate countries, including from conflict-affected countries (Syria expressed strong interest in re-engagement after years of isolation).

Key gaps: dissemination metrics (downloads, reach) are not being systematically tracked for any knowledge product. A lightweight tracking mechanism should accompany each knowledge output going forward. The T3 workshop on 6 May is the next critical milestone and should generate both substantial T3 outputs and the formal launch of the steering group.

Significant considerations should be also put towards engaging with academia and private sector, in addition to CSOs and CBOs.

500 words

5. Additional information (optional)

Instructions: Please provide a succinct summary of any additional information that you would like to share that is not captured in the previous sections. Additional details and examples may be submitted via annex(es).

The TSCC West Asia is operating in a region defined by two distinct realities starting with Gulf countries who have strong national institutions and growing conservation ambitions like Saudi Arabia and UAE, and on the other hand we have countries with significant capacity constraints due to conflict, economic fragility, or political isolation (Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon). Unfortunately, this asymmetry is not a problem to be resolved but a characteristic we need to plan our programme around.

The TSCC's most effective position is differentiated support and not uniformity, and intensive technical missions and matchmaking for weaker capacity countries, and peer-exchange and knowledge-product dissemination for stronger-capacity countries.

The needs assessment confirms that Arabic language is either essential or highly useful for the overwhelming majority of respondents, reinforcing the strategic importance of Arabic-language knowledge products as a core TSCC value-add relative to global IUCN outputs.

Biodiversity finance and access to GEF mechanisms is the second most-cited need, pointing to a support modality that the TSCC should develop concrete capacity to deliver, including orientation sessions on GEF Small Grants, BD Fund, and UNDP-GEF project cycles

500 words

Part III. Summary of key achievements and challenges

Instructions:

- Based on the information reported above, use this space to highlight the top 2-3 accomplishments and the top 2-3 challenges faced by your TSCC during the biennium and suggest a way forward where possible.
- Include, where relevant, suggestions on how the GCE can assist in supporting the TSCCs to address challenges.
- Use both qualitative and quantitative metrics when possible.

1. Key achievements during the 2025-2026 biennium

Achievement 1: TSCC formally established and operationalized

The TSCC was established in December 2025 and became operational within four months across all 12 countries.

150 words

Achievement 2: First regional OECMs workshop for West Asia

IUCN ROWA held the first regional OECMs workshop for West Asia in Q4 2025, with 40 participants from 7 countries in West Asia.

150 words

Achievement 3: Regional needs assessment launched with multi-country engagement

A regional needs assessment was launched on 22 April 2026, with responses from 7 countries feeding directly into the workplan and first Steering Group meeting.

150 words

2. Main challenges during the 2025-2026 biennium and way forward

Challenge 1: Workplan endorsement and Steering Group formalization delayed

The LAS sub committee is still being formed, delaying workplan endorsement and resource mobilization. This is due to institutional scheduling, LAS coordination complexity, and the decision to wait for needs assessment results. The T3 Workshop (6 May 2026) includes a steering group side meeting to address this. GCE support in facilitating LAS coordination would be helpful.

150 words

Challenge 2: No dedicated budget secured

The TSCC has no dedicated budget and runs entirely on IUCN ROWA in-kind contributions. A resource mobilization plan will be developed by June 2026 after steering group formation. Existing ROWA projects provide some in-kind coverage and donor entry points. GCE support in flagging accessible funding mechanisms would be valued.

150 words

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Challenge 3: Uneven country engagement due to political context and capacity asymmetry

Five of 12 mandate countries have not yet responded to the needs assessment, and several conflict affected countries (Syria, Yemen, Palestine, Iraq) face structural barriers to participation in standard regional programming. This risks concentrating TSCC activities in a few countries while the highest need countries remain under-served.

The envisioned way forward from our perspective is to carry out targeted bilateral engagement modalities for conflict-affected countries including virtual expert missions and country specific matchmaking. For Gulf countries, peer-exchange formats and knowledge products are likely to generate stronger uptake than direct technical assistance.

150 words

Report prepared by: Shahad Zuhair

Date: 29 April 2026