Protected Area Competence Assessment Tool (PA CAT)

Introduction and user guide

The platform uses the 300 competences in the IUCN WCPA Global Register of Competences for Protected Area Practitioners (called hereafter ***The Competence Register)*** to generate customised job descriptions, course curricula, capacity needs assessments and reports for protected area personnel. The platform can be used by individuals, team leaders and managers. It can generate reports for sites, networks, specific groups of workers, or entire protected area systems and networks. Please consult the competence register while learning to use the PA CAT

This platform helps you to sort and filter the 13 Competence Categories, 4 levels and 300 competences of the competence register to

- Create customised profiles/position descriptions for individuals or for particular jobs (e.g. ranger, senior biologist, PA Director) and create job descriptions.
- Create training course curricula and learning objectives.
- Create competence assessment questionnaires based on the profiles to be completed by individuals and/or managers.
- Analyse the results of the questionnaires for groups of individuals, for several groups or for sites and networks in order to identify strengths, weaknesses and capacity needs and to create capacity building plans.

The platform is designed to be quite simple and robust, to be undemanding on computing power and to work on older model computers and operating systems. The offline option means that it can be used almost anywhere with a copy of MS Excel.

Once you are used to the full screen version it is quite easy to use on mobile phones, but the graphics are not specially designed for mobiles. You will need to download the MS Excel Platform to use the offline version.

This platform has been developed by Propark in collaboration with IUCN- WCPA and Re:wild. The Administrator is Propark Foundation for Protected Areas (see contact info on the Home page.

It is a comprehensive redesign and upgrade of the PA Competence Assessment Tool originally developed with the support of IUCN and the 11th European Development Fund through the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme.

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Using the PA CAT Step by Step – Content

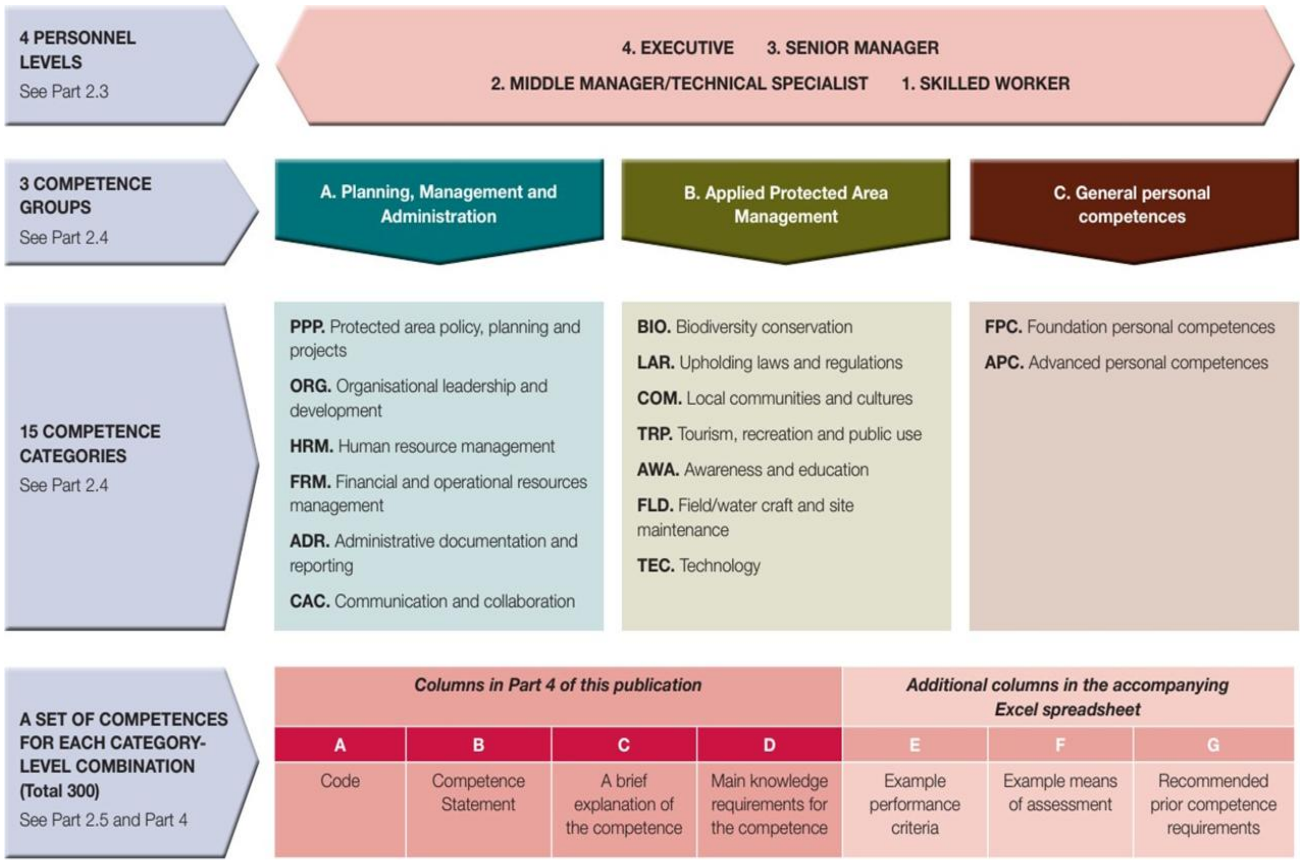
1 Using the Platform: an introduction

1.1. Overview

Link to the Platform: https://conservation-cat.com/protectedareas/

The platform i.e. the PA CAT uses the 300 competences in the **IUCN WCPA Global Register of Competences for Protected Area Practitioners** (called hereafter ***The Competence Register)*** to generate customized job descriptions, course curricula, capacity needs assessments and reports for protected area personnel. The platform can be used by individuals, team leaders and managers. It can generate reports for sites, networks, specific groups of workers, or entire protected area systems and networks. Please consult the competence register while learning to use the PA CAT.

T*he Competence Register* organises the 300 competences into 4 job levels and 13 competence categories as shown in the table below.



Each competence category contains several competences. Each of the 300 competences in the tool contains the three main parts as shown in the example below. *The Competence Register* contains further details.

Code	**Competence.** The individual should be able to:	**Details, scope and variations.** **A brief explanation of the competence.**
BIO 2.4	**Propose justified management measures for conservation of species.**	● Using survey, monitoring and research results to prepare evidence-based recommendations for conservation of important species. ● Preparing detailed management recommendations and prescriptions for inclusion in management plans, project proposals, etc. ● Ensuring that recommendations are science- and evidence-based and/or based on established traditional knowledge and experience. ● Recommended measures may vary greatly according to local conditions and need, but should be clearly justified and make use of accepted best practice.

This platform, i.e. the PA CAT, helps you sort which of the 300 competences are relevant to a job profile and to assess the current competence of individuals for the selected competences.

1.2. How the PA CAT works

1. It registers **Assessors** who will lead and manage competence assessments.

2. It enables Assessors to define and manage **Assessment Groups**, within which individuals will be assessed (e.g. A Protected Area, an Agency, a Project, or a Protected Area System).

3. It enables Assessors to create and define specific **Job Profiles** relevant to sets of individuals doing similar work within an Assessment Group (e.g. ranger, park director, biological surveyor, middle manager).

4. The platform automatically selects which of the 300 Competences are likely to be most relevant to the position/job defined in each Profile. Assessors can then use this list of competences to create detailed job descriptions and to identify specific elements of a training course or programme of learning. Customized profiles and sets of competences can also be created by the assessor.

5. The platform creates a **Competence Assessment** questionnaire for each individual who matches the Profile. Participants/Respondents invited by the Assessor can then be assessed using the questionnaire, either through a Self Assessment, or Negotiated Assessment process. Each competence is assessed by choosing which of 5 responses is most relevant to the individual. Questionnaires can be completed online or offline or on paper if necessary. By default all questionnaires are stored anonymously; names of Respondents are not stored with the results.

6. The platform presents **Results** of the assessments in a range of standard formats and graphics, and can be further analyzed by the Assessor. Results can be accessed for specific job profiles (e.g. all rangers) or across entire Assessment Groups (e.g. all personnel of a protected area), or for all responses within a group (but without identifying the names of the respondents). Individual results are also available, but only to the relevant respondent.

7. The results can be used in many ways for entire teams or across multiple groups. They can help identify areas of good competence, capacity gaps and training needs for every job profile, enabling focused design of training and learning programmes. They can help define course curricula and/or adapt current course contents to specific needs. Regular assessments can be used to monitor changes in overall capacity over time and track the impact of training and learning programmes.

8. The platform also allows analysis of competences across several assessment groups. For example, you can analyze results of competence assessments conducted for all national parks in your country or for all the protected areas for which assessment groups were set up with this platform. This function can help, for example, designing capacity building plans for certain PA categories in your country or defining course curricula and/or adapting course contents to specific needs of people with similar job profiles from several PAs.

1.3. How the assessment system works

1.3.1. General overview

Following an invitation by the Assessor and using a list of competences generated by the platform, individuals complete an assessment questionnaire is for each competence presented as relevant to their job, using a scale of 0 to 4 as follows:

0 = This competence is not required in my job and is not needed in or relevant for my work

1 = This competence is required for my job. **I have little or no ability in it**. I need extensive training and development

2 = This competence is required for my job. **I have limited ability in it**. I need advanced training and development

3 = This competence is required for my job. **I have good ability in it**. I need only periodic updating

4 = This competence is required for my job. **I have excellent ability and could train others in it**

1.3.2. Methods of assessment

Assessments can be conducted in a number of ways:

- **Self-assessment**. The individual assesses herself/himself, ideally with guidance from a trained assessor. <u>This is the recommended method.</u>
- **Negotiated assessment**. The individual works with colleagues or with his/her supervisor to complete and agree the assessment. <u>This is also a recommended method.</u>
- **Manager assessment**. An immediate supervisor conducts the assessment based on his/her judgement of the individual.
- **Peer assessment**. The individual is assessed by his/her colleagues.
- **Upward assessment**. A supervisor or manager is assessed by his/her subordinates.

1.3.3. Online and offline assessments

Online Assessments can be done directly using the PA CAT, either entered by the respondent, or entered by the Assessor following discussion with the respondent. The "interview" method works best for very small groups or with individuals who might need assistance.

Offline The offline method is designed especially for individuals in areas with no internet connection, or where the Assessor cannot be present. The platform can generate an Excel competence questionnaire sheet for the Job Profile you have created. Copies of this can then be loaded onto computers for respondents to complete or distributed by email. Once completed, the Excel sheets can be uploaded into the platform for processing.

On paper The Excel sheets can be printed and completed by the respondents or persons assisting them; the Assessor will then have to transpose the results into the electronic version. This paper-based version works very well for groups in remote areas and for those unfamiliar with using computers.

Mixed Combining online, offline and on paper is also an option.

1.3.4. Tips for conducting assessments

For the *Self-assessment* approach, the Assessor should always provide guidance to participants/respondents. The tips below should help in facilitating the assessment.

a. Preparing for an assessment

It is recommended that Assessors work with managers in the organization to invite only participants with job profiles corresponding to the one defined in the platform. See **Before you start** section on the platform, point *3. Key concepts and terms that you need to know to properly use the platform*. Also, there might be competences in the lists generated by the platform considered as not relevant for certain individuals. These can be prefilled on the offline Excel version with the response '0' (not relevant).

Assessments can be successfully conducted in a guided process in face-to-face or online meetings. This allows all participants to be briefed together, to ask questions. The Assessor is available to answer questions and provide clarifications while the self-assessment is being performed by respondents. This approach helps respondents to understand better some of the competences or how they apply to their specific situation.

Participants normally need between **60 and 180 minutes** to complete the assessment, depending on how many competences are to be assessed. It is important to allocate enough time and prepare participants for a lengthy self-assessment exercise. It is worthwhile the effort if there is a desire for using the results for effective planning and implementation of capacity building programmes / activities.

b. Conducting/facilitating the assessment

The process should be carefully explained to respondents. If there is no possibility to have respondents in the same room (physical or virtual) during the self-assessment, it is recommended to have at least a short online briefing session when possible.

The following should be presented during the briefing session or the face-to-face or online meetings:

- The purpose of the assessment and the overall competence-based approach to capacity building.
- How the assessment works: what is the competence statement and how the assessment scale works.
- The importance of being very honest in responses, not overestimating or underestimating individual competences. If for some competences respondents are in doubt regarding the score (3 or 4, 2 or 3, etc.) they should be advised to select the lower of the two;
- How the results will be used? Respondents should be assured that the assessment is intended to help identify capacity development needs. It is not a test and the results will not be considered in the staff performance evaluation. The results should help finding the best approaches for capacity building.
- Anonymity. Participants / Respondents should be reassured that the assessment is anonymous, i.e. they do not need to put their names on their responses. This greatly increases the confidence of respondents to enter accurate assessments. When the assessment is associated with an e-mail address the Assessor will have to find a way to reassure participants that there will be no possibility on the platform to track individuals (no names will be associated with the assessments). However, if the Assessor needs to analyse individual results, he/she should ask each Participant to share their results. If the Assessor asks for individual results, he/she should explain for what purpose are individual results used. Results of individuals can be shared only as screen captures; the Assessor cannot access the individual information on the platform.

Respondents should be given time to complete the assessment. The Assessor may answer questions related to the competences and provide clarifications but ***should never however tell or advise respondents what option to choose and should not give the impression that he/she is monitoring the Respondents' answers***.

Once everyone has finished, they should be thanked and reminded of how the results will be used and reassured that these are anonymous.

c. Self-assessment approaches

Possible approaches for the Assessor to set the framework for self-assessments are presented below.

First of all, the Assessor has to decide which approach is suitable/possible for the group.

c.1. **Guided on-line self-assessment during an online or face-to-face meeting**.

Critical condition: all participants/respondents have good internet access and can work directly on the platform.

If you decide to organize a face-to-face or online meeting for your group, you should consider the following steps:

- Invite participants to the meeting including a brief presentation of the meeting objectives in your invitation;
- Prepare the meeting room for face-to-face meetings to provide appropriate conditions:
    - check the internet connection and if the link to this platform is functional.
    - make sure that respondents have appropriate working conditions in the meeting room to perform their self-assessment (they will need somewhere to sit, access to computers or to have pens and the forms ready, maybe clipboards for completing the assessments on paper).
- During the meeting (face-to-face or online):
    - present the objectives of the assessment,
    - present / explain what is a competence and the list of PA competences (the categories, how a competence is defined / explained, how they are selected by job levels),
    - present the online platform and how it works,
    - stay in the room whilst participants are doing the self-assessment. If there are questions that might be of interest for the entire group, discuss them with all participants.
- Suggested meeting structure:
    - up to 30 minutes allocated to facilitator to explain the objectives, the competence approach and how the self-assessment works;

- up to 15 minutes for Participants to register on the PA CAT platform. For this part the Assessor sends the automatic invitation to the Participants using the platform. The email includes the link for accessing the PA CAT. The Registration process for Participants is straight-forward, should take only a few minutes (*see Section 2.5.2*);
- 1-3 hours individual work (self-assessment). If the meeting is online, keep the meeting platform open for this part of the meeting. Respondents might have questions / need clarifications related to the competences as they go through the list. The facilitator answers questions for the benefit of all those present at the meeting.

c.2. **Participants complete the self-assessment on-line, on their own, without guidance in a meeting**.

The Assessor informs the Participants about the upcoming self-assessment via email or during a team meeting sends the email invitation generated by this platform (*see Section 2.5.2*) and follows progress on the platform.

The disadvantage of allowing Participants to conduct the self-assessment on their own (with no preliminary explanations and support during the process), is that they need more time and patience to understand the competences and they would have to contact the Assessor via email or phone if they need clarifications. In this case Participants might *have to allocate more time (roughly up to 4-5 hours) for this activity,* depending on the time needed to figure out how the PA CAT works.

c.3. **Off-line self-assessments**

If Participants have no access to good internet connection, they can complete the self-assessment offline, either on their own or in a face-to-face meeting (same structure of the meeting as described at point b.2)

The assessment can be done using an Excel Workbook provided by the Assessor. In this case each Participant would need a computer or phone with a copy of Excel. Alternatively a printed version of the form can be supplied and completed manually, as described in *Section 2.5.5-2.5.7*

If Participants are doing the off-line self-assessment on their own, they should be aware of what they are supposed to do in this situation:

- allocate about 30-40 minutes to read about the competence approach and about this platform (for this the Assessor should provide a document with a copy of the content from the *"Before you Start"* section of the PA CAT);
- allocate 1-3 hours to perform the self-assessment (depending on the number of competences to be assessed)
- send by email the completed self-assessment Excel form to the Assessor.

- **! IMPORTANT !: If Participants have the translated text of the competences and the assessment form, follow the instructions from *Section 20. Offline Assessment* of this document.**

d. Processing the assessments

If the assessment is completed online, the processing is automatic. The Results section provides a report.

If the assessment is completed offline, the completed Excel forms will be collected by the Assessor and checked if each of them are complete. If necessary, respondents should be asked to complete missing assessments.

! IMPORTANT !: the online platform is not uploading Excel forms if there are un-assessed competences!

If the assessment is paper based, the assessor will have to transfer the responses to the PA CAT from the paper Excel workbooks. See ***Section 20 Offline Assessments*** for details.

1.3.5. Translation of the competences

You will need to translate the Competences for protected Areas Practitioners into the language used for your group. If you want to be able to conduct assessments in other languages than English, the PA CAT can be translated and your language can be used for assessments. Please contact the ***Administrator at office@propark.ro*** , who will guide and support developing the PA CAT in another language.

For this to happen, you may have to allocate resources for the translation. However, the *A Global Register of Competences for Protected Area Practitioners* has already been translated and published in French and Spanish and other languages, so you may not need to translate the competences yourself. Consult the IUCN website for the translated versions.

2. Detailed user guide

The following sections of this document provide a more detail step-by-step guide on how to use the Platform

2.1. Register / Sign In as an Assessor

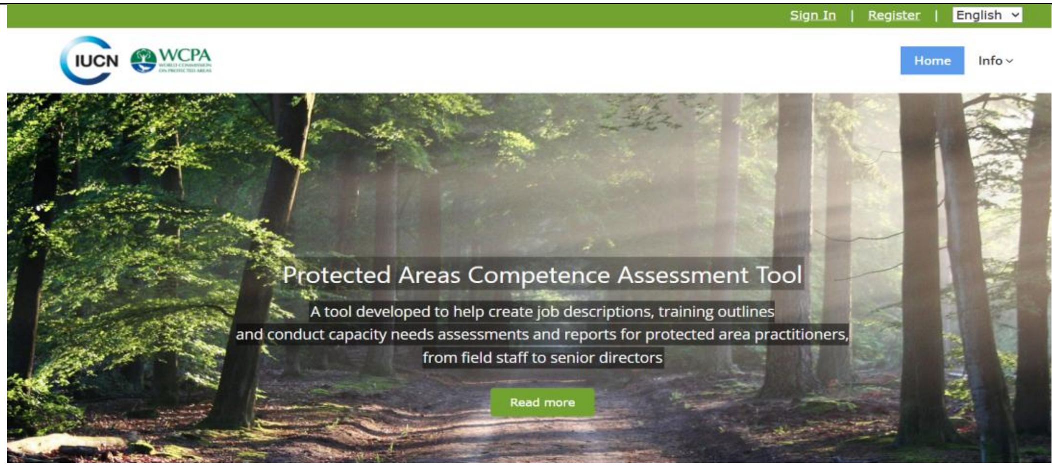
Go to the Home page:

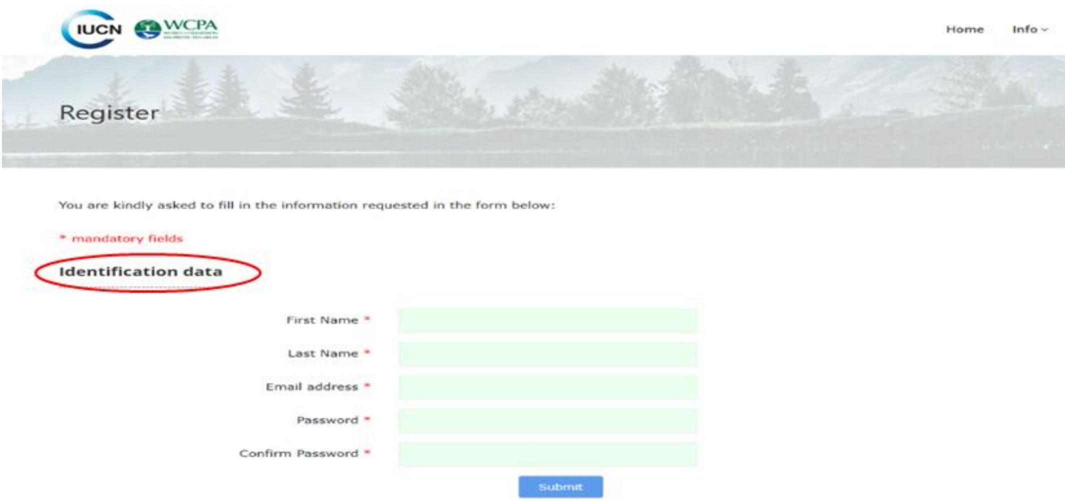
https://conservation-cat.com/protectedareas/

You can register here (create your account) or sign in (access existing account):

- ✓ **Register** by filling out the form on this page (using your email address and creating a password)
- ✓ Agree to the Terms and Conditions
- ✓ You will receive a message in your email account inviting you to sign in.
- ✓ **Sign in i**f you already have an account,

As Lead Assessor you will have ***access to all the functions of the platform***: you can create assessment groups, conduct and analyse multiple assessments or see results of group assessments conducted by you.

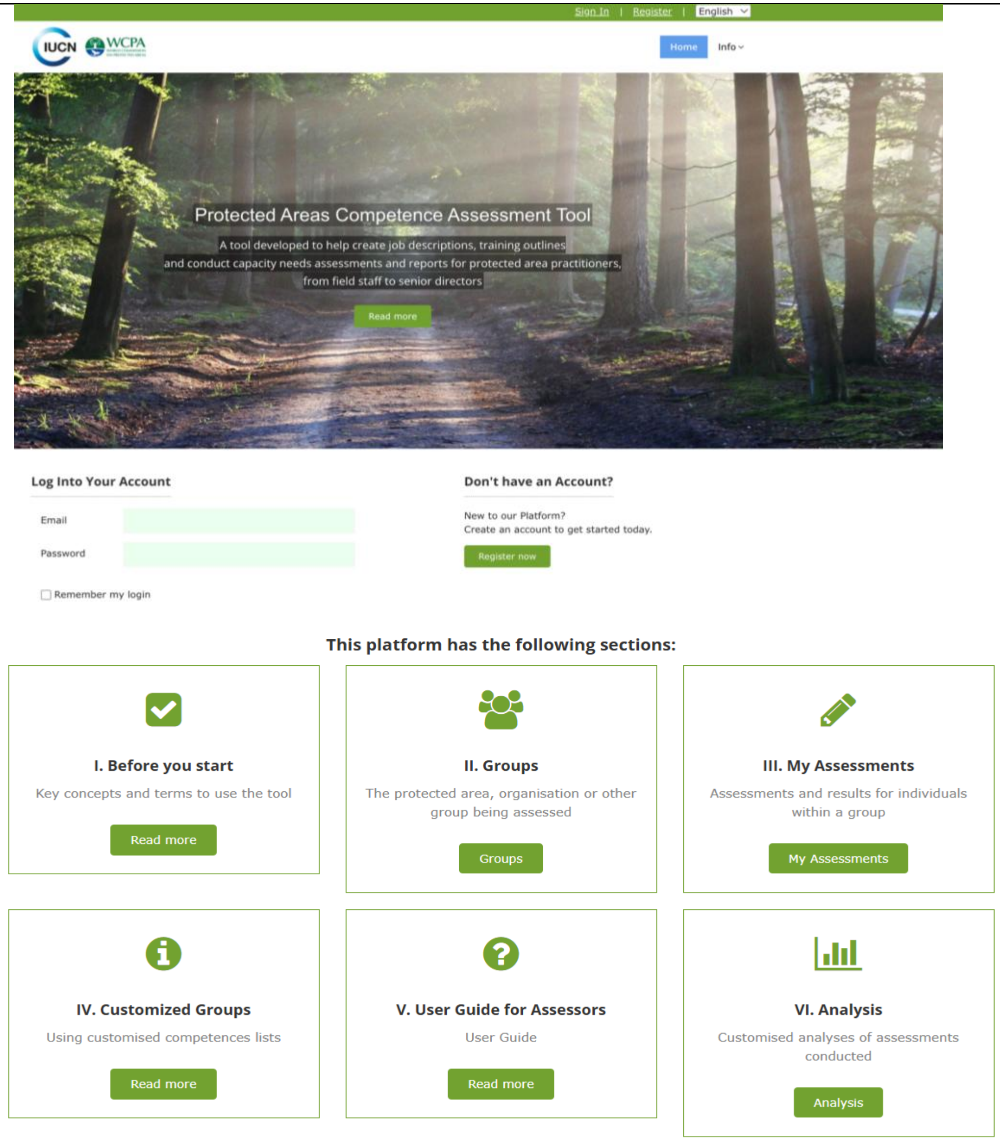




2.2. The Home Page

After signing in, the Home page offers various information, including a brief description of the platform under the **'Before you start**' section and provides access to the *Assessors' Guideline*.

The **'Before you start**' section provides useful information for anybody who participates in a competence assessment process. You, as an Assessor, should recommend Participants to read it.



1.1 Assessment Groups

1.1.1 Adding an Assessment Group

Click on II. Groups, and then **+Add Assessment Group to** register a group. You will be asked to provide some details of the group and to save this information.

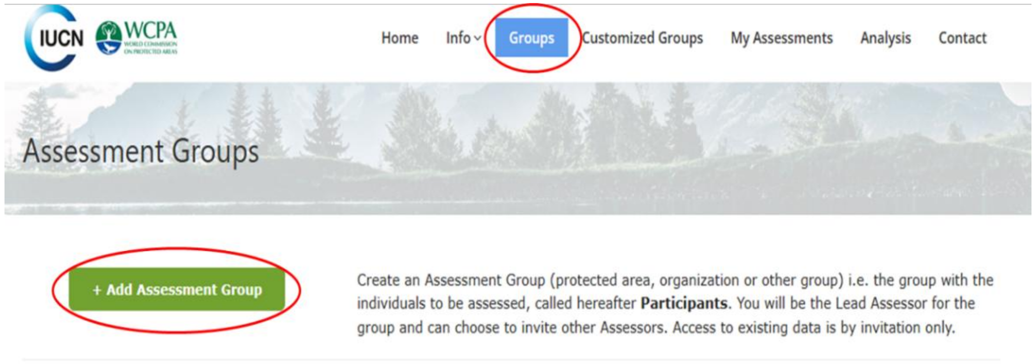
Assessment Group is the term given to any group of people for which you are assessing PA competences. Examples of an Assessment Group be a single protected (e.g. 'Personnel of Big Mountain Nature Reserve) or an entire organisation (e.g. 'Personnel of National Forest Agency'). A group can also cover multiple sites, organisations or other entities for which you are assessing a range of personnel (for example 'All National Education Personnel', 'Personnel working under the International Capacity Building Project').

Later, you will be able to define subsets of the **Assessment Group** by creating **Job Profiles** within it.

- ✓ Enter the **name** of your Group, as you want it registered on the platform.
- ✓ Select the **country** of your group or indicate if the group is a **multicounty** group.

! IMPORTANT !: Please choose the Multi-country Group only if your Participants are working in/for PA/CAs in different countries.

- ✓ Select **Type of the group** from the drop-down list
- ✓ Add information as requested after selecting the type of the group.
- ✓ Write the name of **Parent organization** if relevant. The Parent Organization is the responsible entity for the people being



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- ✓ Enter the **location** if relevant (optional): may be entered where the Assessment Group is based at a specific location (e.g. a protected area office or a ranger station). Relevant for single sites.
- ✓ **Other info** - you can write any other relevant info about your group, that might be useful in the report or might help you when analysing the results.
- ✓ **Set the deadline** for completing the assessment if you wish to do so. This will be communicated in the invitation email sent to participants. You can change the deadline whenever you wish by editing the group information.

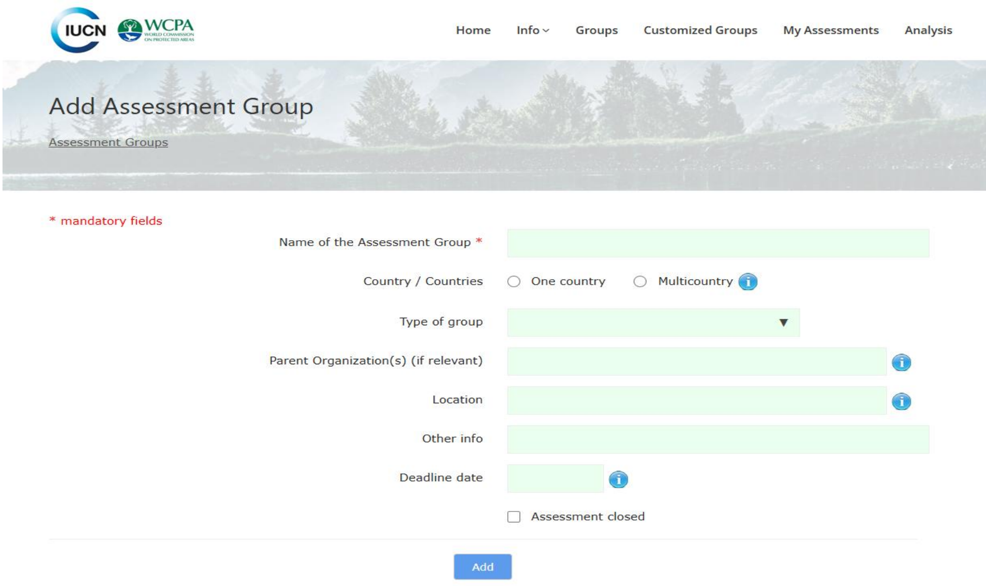
You have the possibility to close the assessment after the deadline When you tick '**Assessment closed'**, those participants who did not conduct the self-assessment in due time, cannot access the group anymore.

- ✓ You can add and manage multiple Assessment Groups.
- ✓ Finalize this step by clicking on **Add.**

! IMPORTANT !: You can delete an Assessment Group, but only if there are no completed assessments.

All your Assessment groups are organized on the dashboard – See Section ***6. Your Dashboard for Group Assessments.***

By setting up an Assessment Group, you automatically become the 'Lead Assessor' for it. You can add and invite other assessors if you wish (see ***Section 7 Invite Assessor***).



1.1.2 The Dashboard for Assessment Groups

Once you have created an Assessment Group, it will be added to your Dashboard for Group Assessments. You can access this dashboard by going to **'Groups'** on the main menu.

Here you can add new groups or manage existing Assessment Groups.

You will find here also the groups for which you were invited as Assessor.

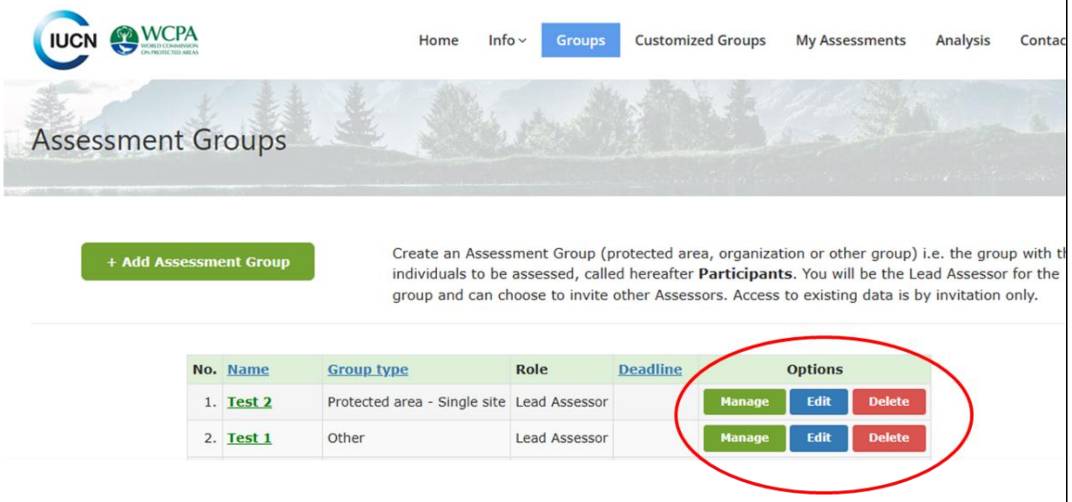
The '**Edit'** function allows the Lead Assessor to go back to the previous step i.e., edit or update the information about the group (name, country, type etc.). Once the assessment is closed this command is not available anymore.

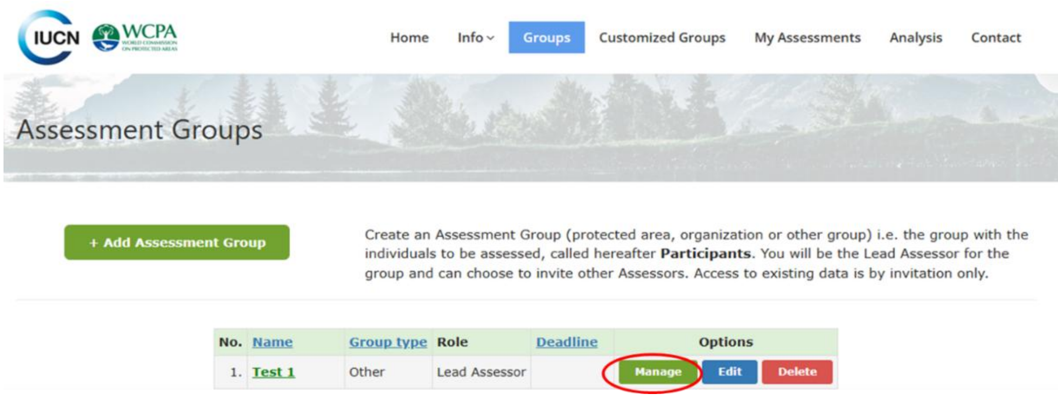
The **'Manage'** function allows you to set up, modify and view information about the participants. This command is available also to invited Assessors.

The **'Delete'** function allows Lead Assessors to delete a group, but only if there are no assessments performed yet. Once you have assessments performed in your group, this function will not be available anymore.

Should you need to Delete a group after assessments are registered, you will have to contact the platform ***Administrator*** via the ***Contact*** section on the platform.

Once you have defined an assessment group, go to the dashboard and click on **'Manage'** for the next steps.





1.1.3 Inviting Assessors

Before creating job profiles, decide if you will need to work with other assessors. For example, if the Lead Assessor is the head of a PA, he/she may like to work with the human resource manager. Adding other assessors is also necessary when the assessments are conducted in an "interview mode" by superiors or peers.

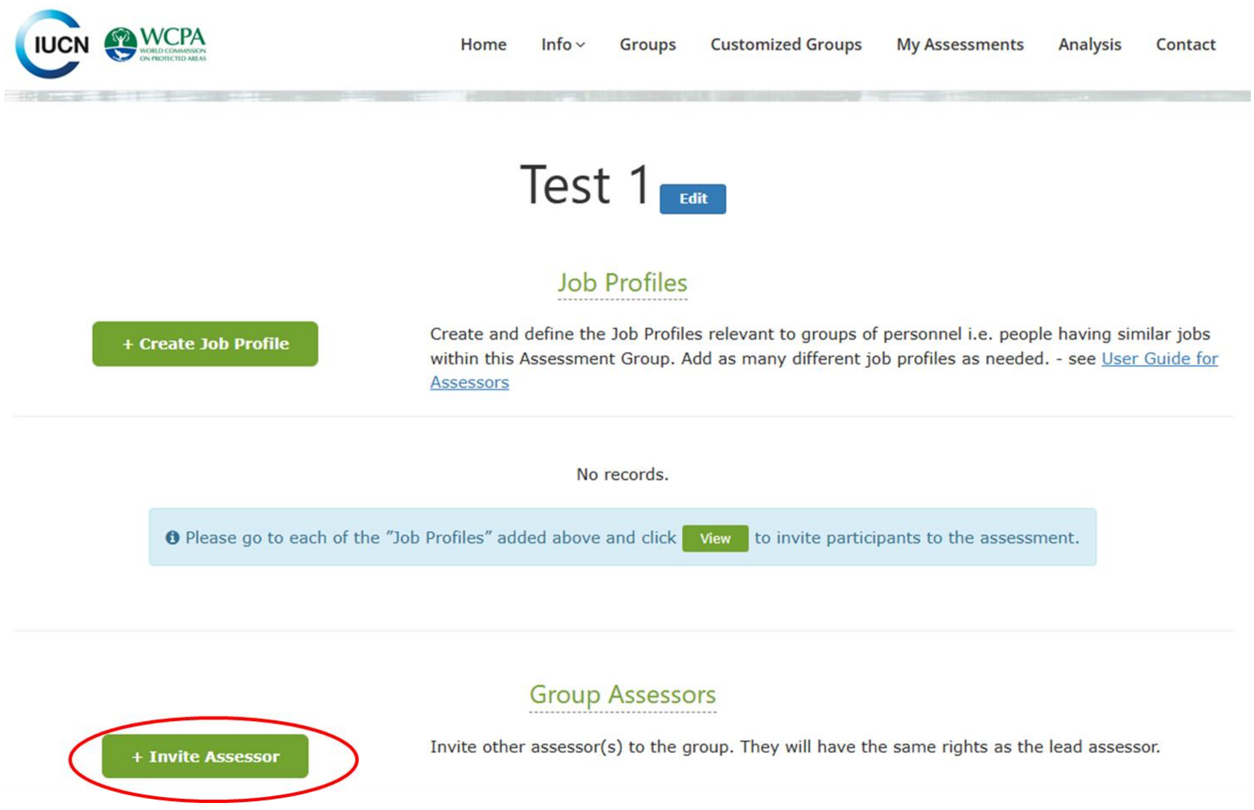
As Lead Assessor, you can invite others to work with you on an Assessment Group. You will need to enter the email address of invitees. An automatic email generated by the platform. Invited Assessors will need to follow the instructions in the email they receive.

! IMPORTANT !: Before sending the invitation email, **notify the invited Assessor** about your intention to include him/her in the competence assessment process. This helps them recognise the invitation when it arrives and prevents them blocking the sender, or considering the email a spam or scan

After accepting the invitation, invited Assessors will have access to the data in the Assessment Group and work with you on it.

The invited Assessor will have the same rights as the Lead Assessor, except rights related to the Delete functions of Groups and individual respondents.

You can see the text of the automatic email in ***Annex 1.***

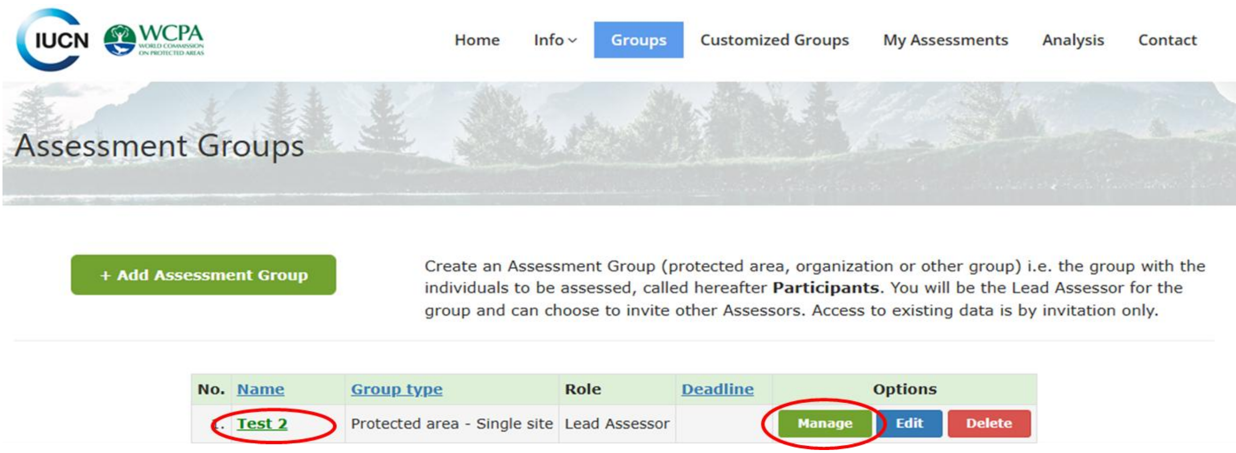


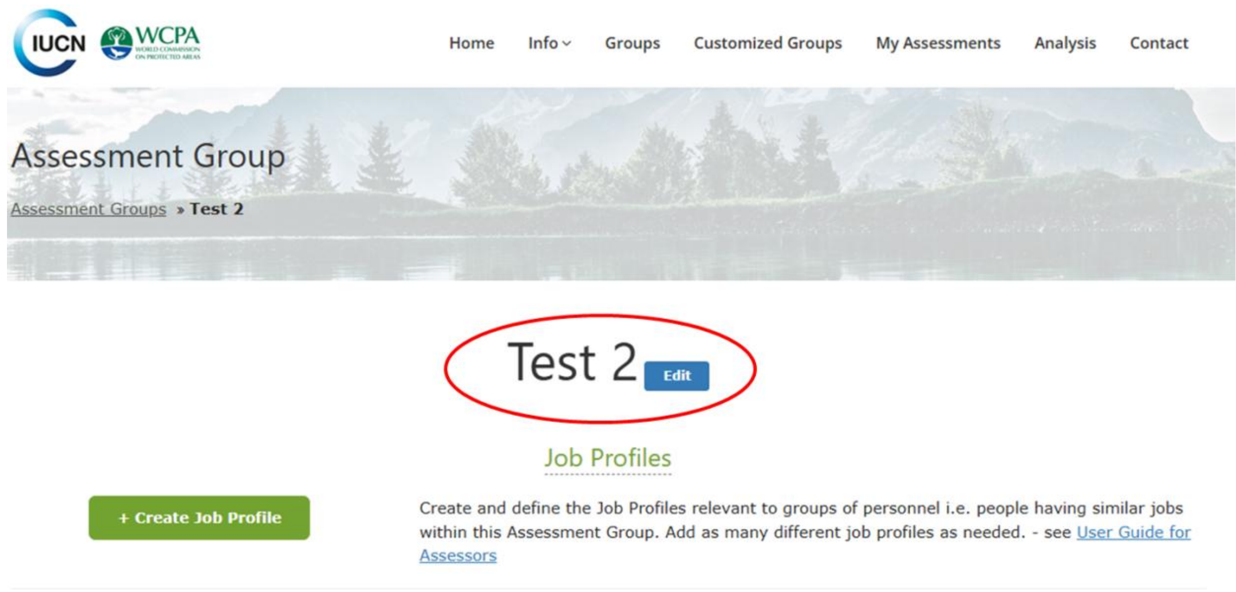
1.1.4 Managing an Assessment Group

Click on the **name** of the Group or on the **Manage** tab to set up your assessment group.

with the **'Manage'** command you can edit/view or update the information about job profiles, participants, status and results of the assessment any time.

After clicking 'Manage' the platform takes you to a new window, with the name of the group on the top of the screen and takes you to the first step required for setting up the group: creating the **Job Profiles.**





1.2 Job Profiles

1.2.1 Overview

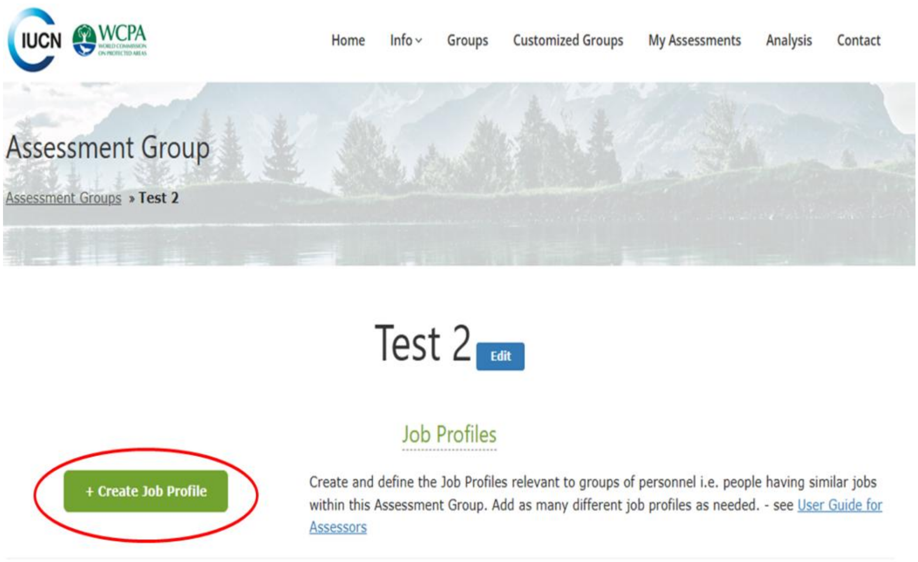
The next step is to generate **Job Profiles** within an Assessment Group. This is where the one-off assessment process starts.

Job Profiles are general job descriptions for individuals or groups of personnel within an Assessment Group who do similar work (e.g. rangers, senior managers, biological survey and monitoring workers)

It is important to take time over profiles, as your choices will influence the competences selected by the Platform as being relevant to the person or position.

When you click on **'+Create Job Profile'** you can create and add, one by one, all the job profiles relevant for your Group. You will have to indicate the job level, the position title/titles used locally, the number of people in the position, if known, their department and the place of work if relevant. Steps are described in the sections that follow.

The first step is to choose the relevant job level for the profile you wish to create



1.2.2 Understanding Job Levels

The platform uses the **four job levels** from the competence register, as shown in the table below.

You need to select which one is the best fit for the job or person you are profiling. Think carefully and do not rely on the job title alone to decide the level. A ranger in one country may be at Level 1 and in another country may have more leadership and supervisory responsibility and be at Level 2. Select the level that is the best overall fit for the job (not the highest possible level). If in doubt' select a lower rather than a higher level.

The level you assign will determine the initial range of competences associated with the position, but these can be customised later in the process.

Level	Title	Scope of work and responsibility	Examples of positions at the level in the Protected Area Sector
LEVEL 4	**EXECUTIVE**	● Central direction and management of large organisations. ● National and regional policy development, spatial and strategic planning. ● Cross sectoral coordination. ● Direction of complex programmes and plans across a PA system	● Director of national or subnational protected area system. ● Ministerial level executive responsible for protected area systems. ● Senior national or subnational planner (land use, resource use, development).
LEVEL 3	**SENIOR MANAGER**	● Direction and management of medium sized organisations and departments ● Planning and management of projects and programmes within strategic frameworks. ● Directing and leading complex and technical programmes	PA director/deputy, chief park warden, Senior management team member, Head of a large department in the PA
LEVEL 2	**MIDDLE MANAGER, TECHNICAL SPECIALIST**	● Leadership, organisation and supervision of technical sections and teams implementing plans and projects. ● Providing technical expertise and completing specific and complex technical assignments (according to technical speciality).	Senior ranger, section leader, scientific officer, tourism officer, community outreach officer, educational and interpretive officer, administrative officer.
LEVEL 1	**SKILLED WORKER**	● Completing practical field or administrative tasks under regular supervision	Patrol ranger, tourism ranger, community ranger, field assistant, administrative assistant, accounting assistant/bookkeeper, junior technician.

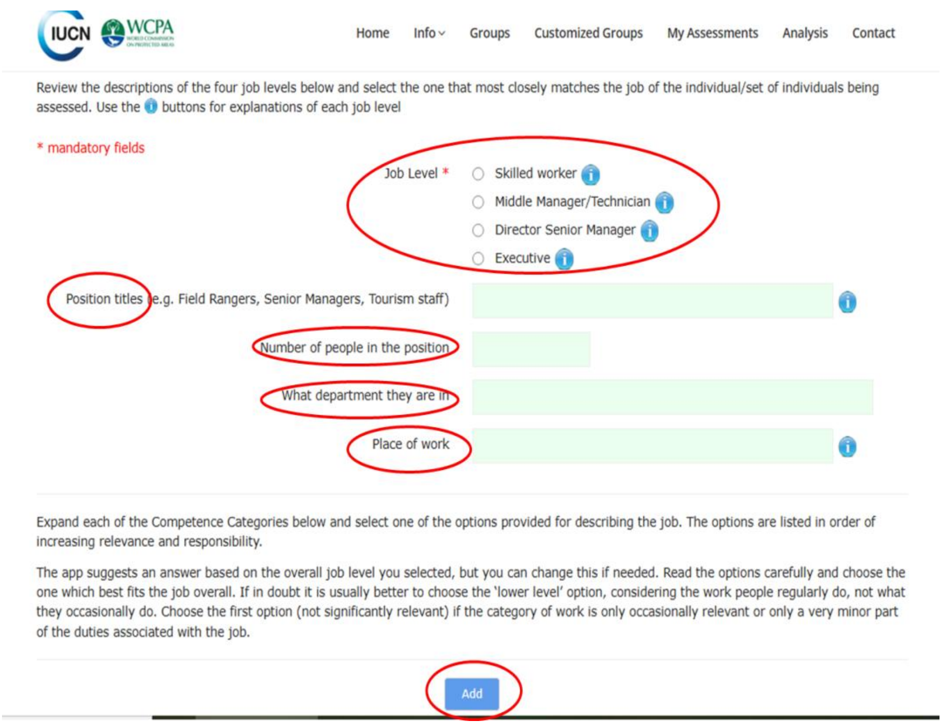
1.2.3 Selecting the relevant Job Level

For each Job Profile, you will have to select the relevant **Job level** by selecting one of the following:

- Job Level 1 - **Skilled worker**
- Job level 2 - **Middle Manager/Technician**
- Job level 3 - **Director/ Senior Manager**
- Job level 4 - **Executive**

Add the **Position title** for the generic job level i.e. the name of the job as used in the country or by the managing entity e.g. Ranger, Senor Ranger, Tour Guide, Senior Manager.

Then add further information about the job level / position, as requested and click on **'Add'**.



1.2.4 Creating a job profile

When you select the Job level your window will expand, showing the 13 Competence Categories.

You now need to determine how relevant each Category is to the Profile.

Click the **'+'** next to each one opens a set of 3 or 4 options for describing the job.

The options are listed in order of increasing relevance and responsibility.

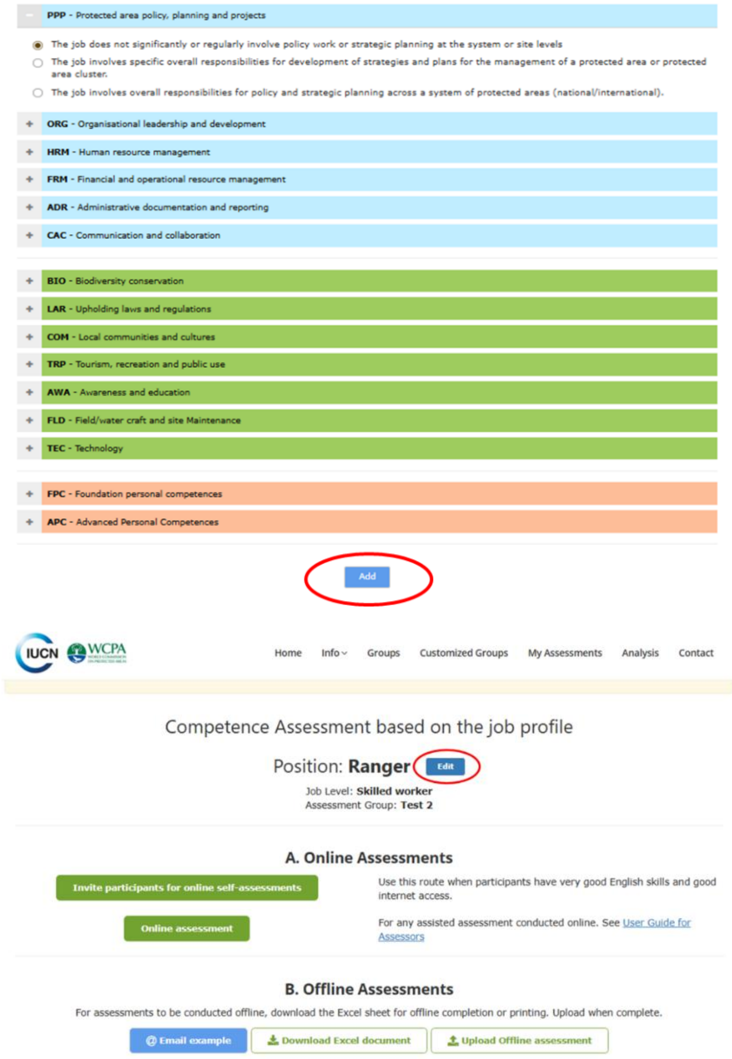
The platform suggests an answer based on the overall job level you defined, but you can change this if needed. Read the options carefully and choose the one which best fits the job overall. If in doubt it is usually better to choose the 'lower level' option, always considering the work people regularly need to do as part of their job, not what they occasionally do.

Choose the first option (not significantly relevant) if the category of work is only occasionally relevant or only a very minor part of the duties associated with the job.

When you have finished a page, click **'Add'**. The dashboard will show the title of the position, the job level and the name of the Assessment Group.

If you need to review your job profile, click on **'Edit'** next to the Profile name. This takes you back, so you can review the job profile under any of the 13 Competence Categories.

! IMPORTANT !: When the first assessment is saved, you will no longer be able to change the job profile!

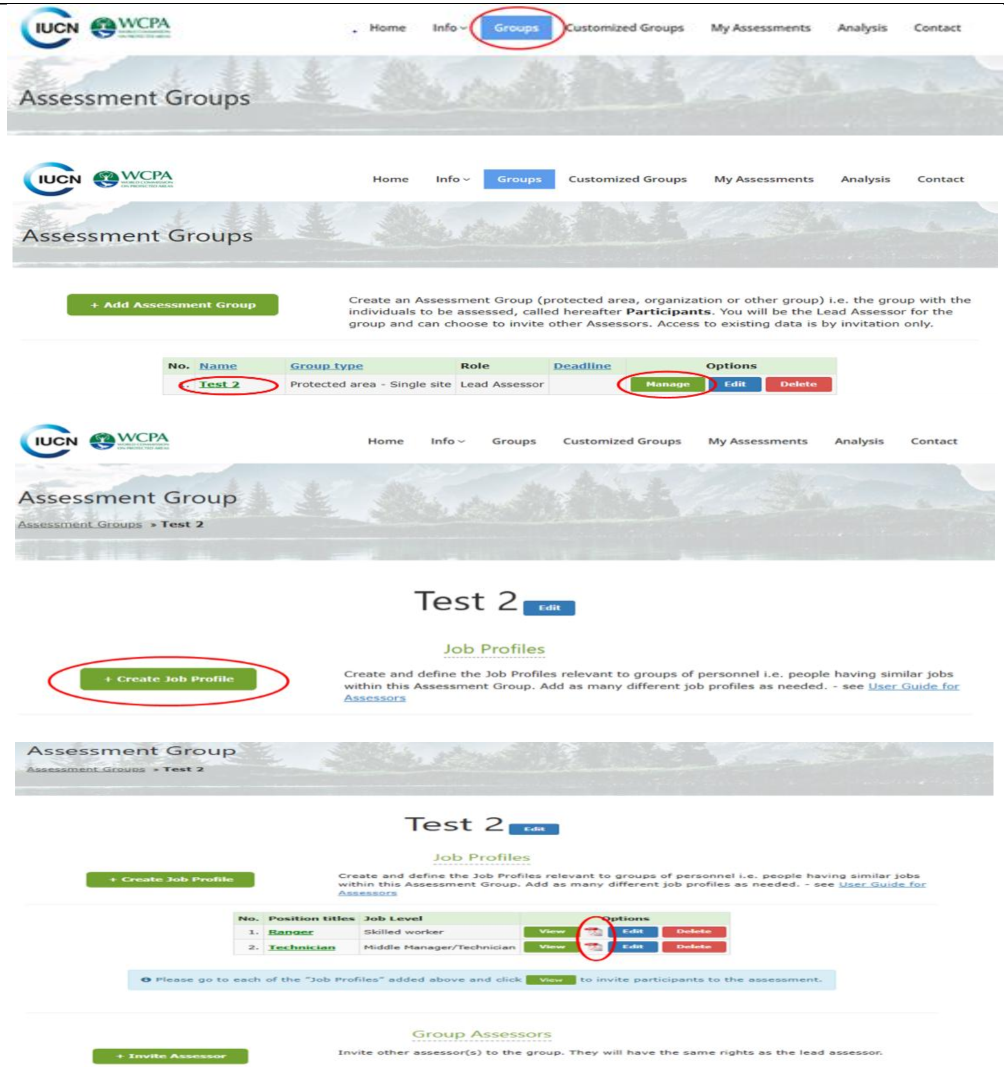


1.2.5 Adding additional Job Profiles

To add a **new Job Profile,** you go to **'Groups'** on the main menu bar. This will take you back to the dashboard with the group(s) for which you are Assessor.

Click on the **name** of the Group or on the **Manage** tab. You will land on the page which allows you to set up a new Job Profile.

Clicking on the 'pdf' icon allows downloading of the selected job profile for you to view and save This can be used as a basic job description for the position or individual.



1.3 Assessments

1.3.1 Starting the assessment process

After setting up your group and defining the Job Profile(s) within the group, your dashboard will show all the job profiles of your group.

The next step is to invite Participants by job profiles.

Go to the position (Profile title) for which you want to invite participants and click on the Position title or on the **'View'** tab to start the assessment process.

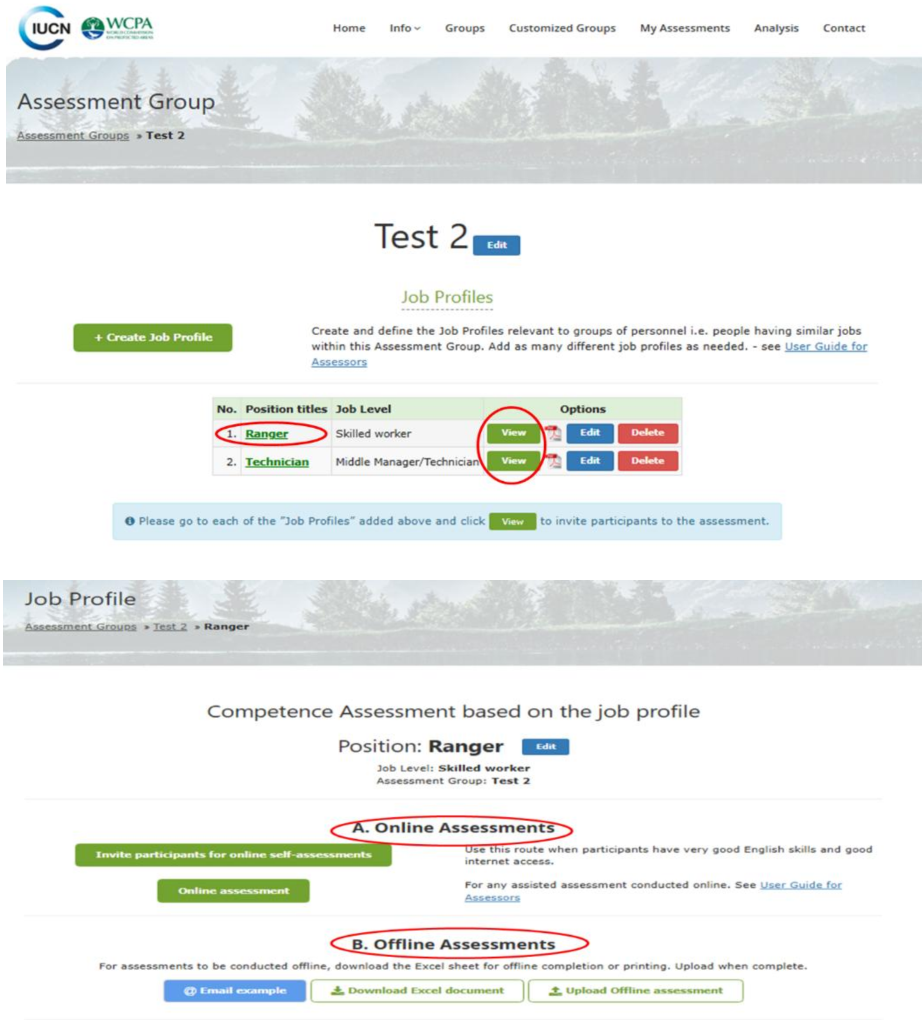
You now have the options of conducting assessments via (as shown on the dashboard):

A. Online assessments

A1. Online self-assessments – participants conduct self-assessments online, saved directly to the PA CAT platform.

A2. Online assisted assessments, other than self-assessments, such as manager assessment, peer assessment, upward assessment, negotiated assessment (see Section 1.3.2. Tips for conducting assessments), saved directly to the PA CAT platform.

B. Offline assessments – conducted offline, on paper or computer, which will have to be uploaded by the Assessor to the PA CAT.



1.3.2 Inviting Participants for online self-assessment

This section and the next one describe the **online route for self assessments.**

! IMPORTANT !: online assessments are recommended for Participants with very good reading and comprehension skills in the language used (by default English)! If this condition is not fulfilled, please follow the offline route - see ***Sections 18 - 21.***

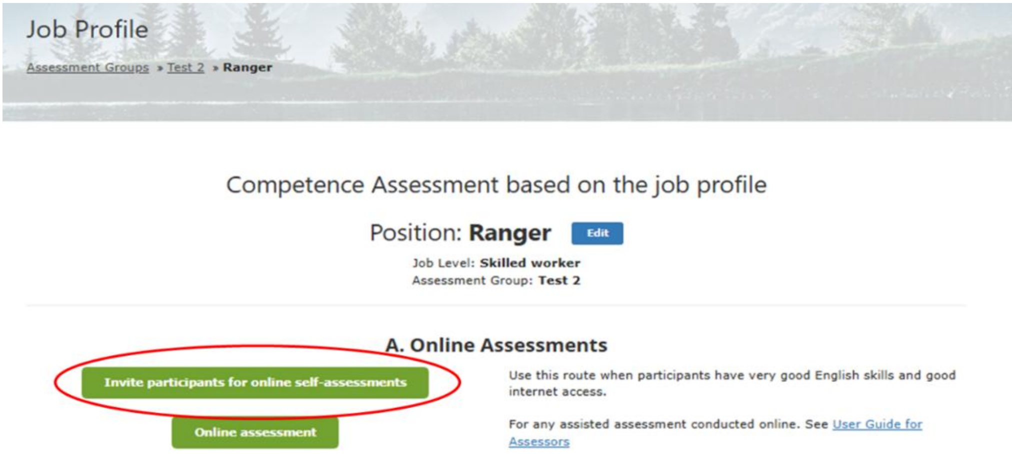
If you wish to translate the platform into the language needed for your assessments, please contact the Administrator at *office@propark.ro* .

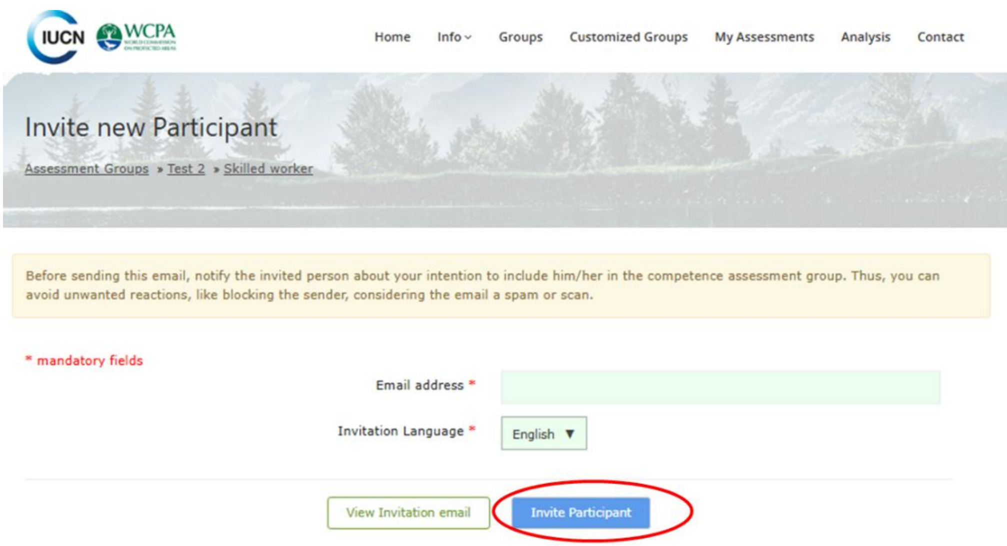
Click on **'Invite participants for online self-assessment'**.

Enter the **e-mail address** for the participant you invite. An automatic e-mail will be sent to the participant.

! IMPORTANT !:

- **<u>Translate the email</u>** if you have to use another language than English. See the email text in ***Annex 1***.
- **<u>Before sending this email, notify the invited person about your intention to include him/her in the competence assessment group.</u>** Thus, you can avoid unwanted reactions, like blocking the sender, considering the email a spam or scan.
- If you are planning to have face-to-face or online meetings with the group to explain the procedure, we recommend you **<u>send the invitation email during the meeting, not before.</u>**



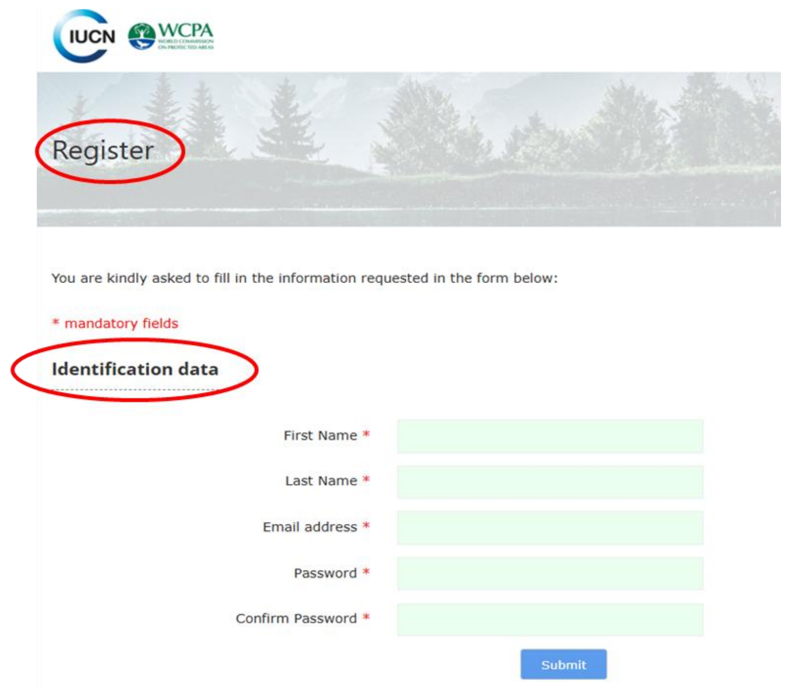


1.3.3 Conducting the online Self-assessment

This section presents the steps to be followed by the **PARTICIPANTS for the online self-assessment**, which you, as an Assessor have to understand very well in case you receive questions.

Participants can access information about the self-assessment in the *Before you start* section, which is reproduced below:

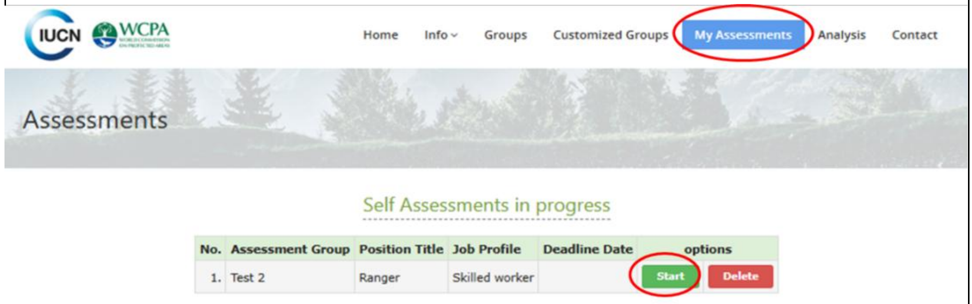
Once they register by accessing the link in the invitation email, they land on the assessment page, which has a brief introduction to the assessment process. This is where Participants are invited to access the **Before you start** section for more information.



Before you start

"Steps for completing your self-assessment without guidance from an Assessor:

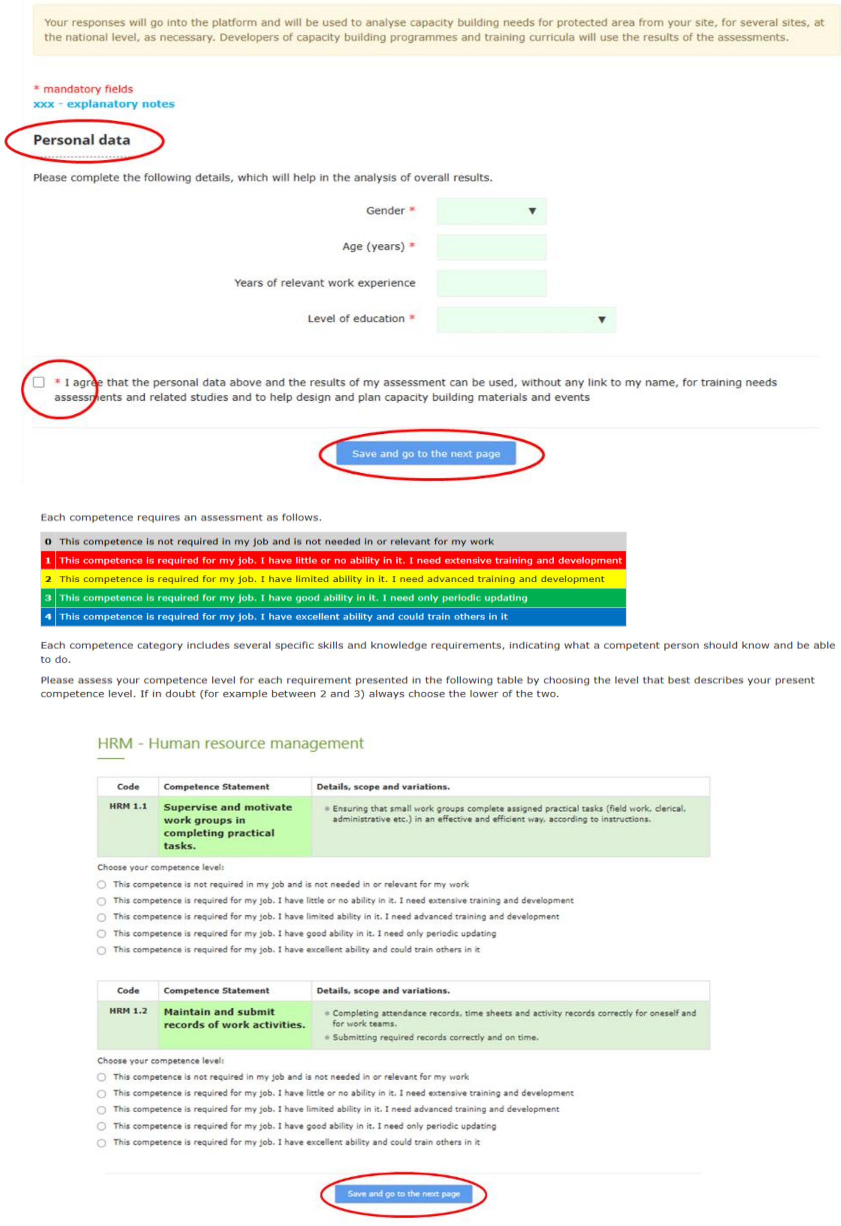
- In the invitation e-mail click register an account or accept invite if you already have an account.
- After registering the new account go back to the invite e-mail and accept invite
- Go to My Assessment to start the self-assessment and click Start to begin the assessment.
- Read the information on the first page of your assessment. Please read carefully the COMPETENCE ASSESSMENTS SCALE! You are going to use this scale for the self-assessment; it is important for you to understand it well.
- Enter the required personal data in the form and give your permission for the results of your assessment to be used, without using your personal data, for training needs assessments and related studies and to help
- design and plan capacity building materials and events.
- If you completed a self-assessment recently (in the last year) you have the



possibility to duplicate your answer and allocate it to the new group where you were invited. After entering your personal data you can allocate your previous self-assessment- not older than 12 months! - to the new group, you don't have to complete it again.

- Click on Save and go to the next page to start the assessment.
- You will see the first page of competences from the list of competences potentially relevant to your job/position. There are explanatory notes and/or examples described for each competence to help you better understand it. Please carefully read each competence and the associated explanatory notes!
- Assess your level of competence for each competence using the options from the drop-down list (this list is based on the Competence Assessment Scale provided on the first page of your assessment).
- Once you completed the page, click 'Save and go to the next page' at the bottom and move to the next page. You will be reminded if you missed any assessments.
- Your assessment progress will be saved automatically after each step, so if you do not finish the self-assessment in one go, you can come back any time later to complete the assessment. Please make sure to complete it before deadline indicated in the invitation email. When you return to your assessment click continue.
- You will be able to edit and revise your choices at any point before submitting the self-assessment. However, once submitted, you will not be able to change your answers.
- When you completed your self-assessment Submit it.
- You can see your own results at My Assessment -> Completed Self Assessments."

! IMPORTANT !: Please indicate to Participants / Respondents that by reading the **'Before you start'** section they will learn important information.



1.3.4 Assisted online assessments

This section describes the **Assisted Online assessment** route.

! IMPORTANT !: online assessments are recommended for Assessors and Participants with very good reading and comprehensions skills in the language used (default English)! If this condition is not fulfilled, please follow the offline route i.e. the steps indicated under *sections 2.5.5. – 2.5.8.*

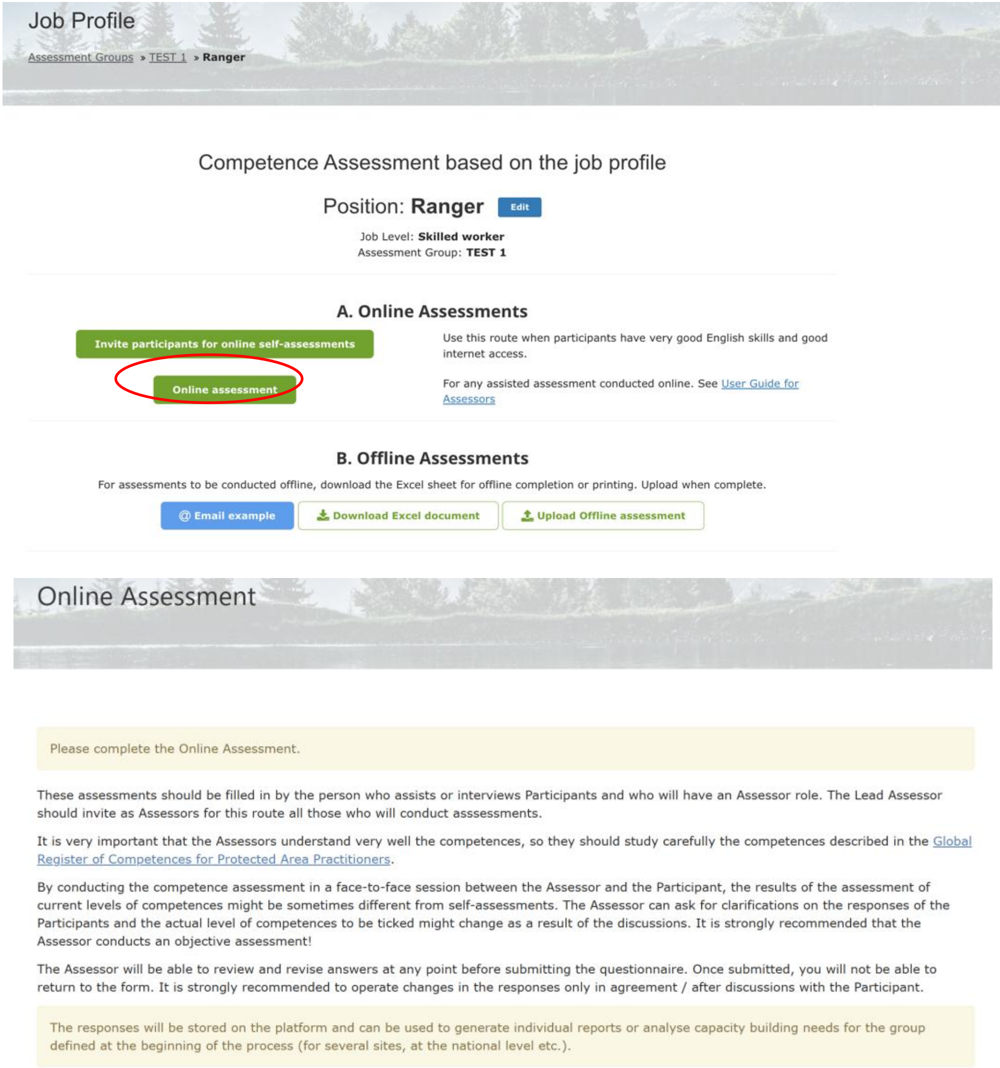
If you chose the assisted online route go to the Job profile and click on **'Online assessment'.**

You will find important information on the next screen **Online Assessment**. Please read carefully.

! IMPORTANT ! The Assessor should describe / explain to the Participant at the very beginning of the process how the information from this form will be used and for what purposes (to analyse capacity individual building needs, design / recommend training courses / learning plans and/or to conduct competence analysis for the protected area team, etc).

Create a **unique code** for the Participant and add the **information** requested by the platform (gender, age, year of experience, level of education).

! IMPORTANT! You will work with unique codes associated with each Participant in order to maintain anonymity in the system.



Ask for the agreement of the participant for the use of personal data and of the assessment results for training needs assessments and related studies and to help design and plan capacity building materials and events. **<u>It is the Assessor's responsibility to observe legal obligations</u>** in this respect and have signed forms from the Participant, if required. See the box at the bottom of the page – you'll have full responsibility for complying with the text next to it: *I, the Assessor, confirm that the Participant agreed for his/her personal data and the for the results of the assessment to be used, without any link to the name, for training needs assessments and related studies and to help design and plan capacity building materials and events.'*

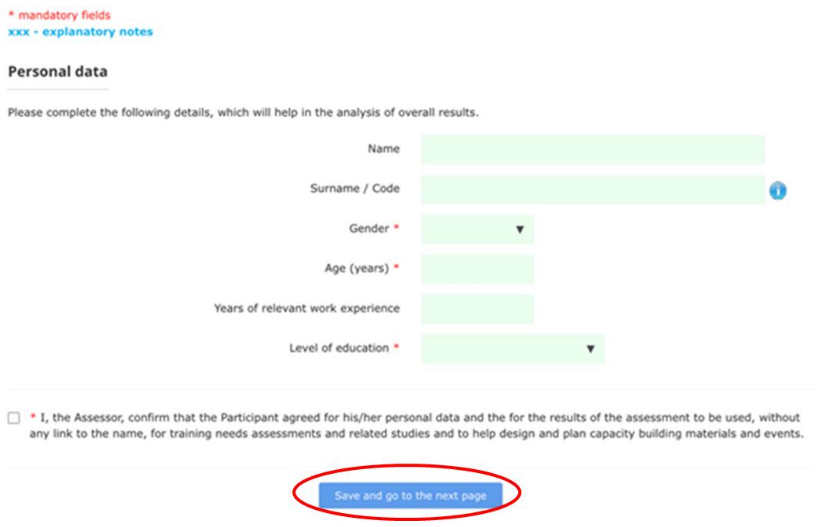
Click on **'Save and go to the next page' to continue**.

Conduct the assessment by clicking in the competence levels after explaining the competence to the Participants and discussion about his/her level for each competence.

You can navigate the competence list by going to the top of the page and clicking on **'previous category'** or **'next category'** if you wish.

You have to assess all the competences presented! The platform does not allow you to submit the form with unassessed competences.

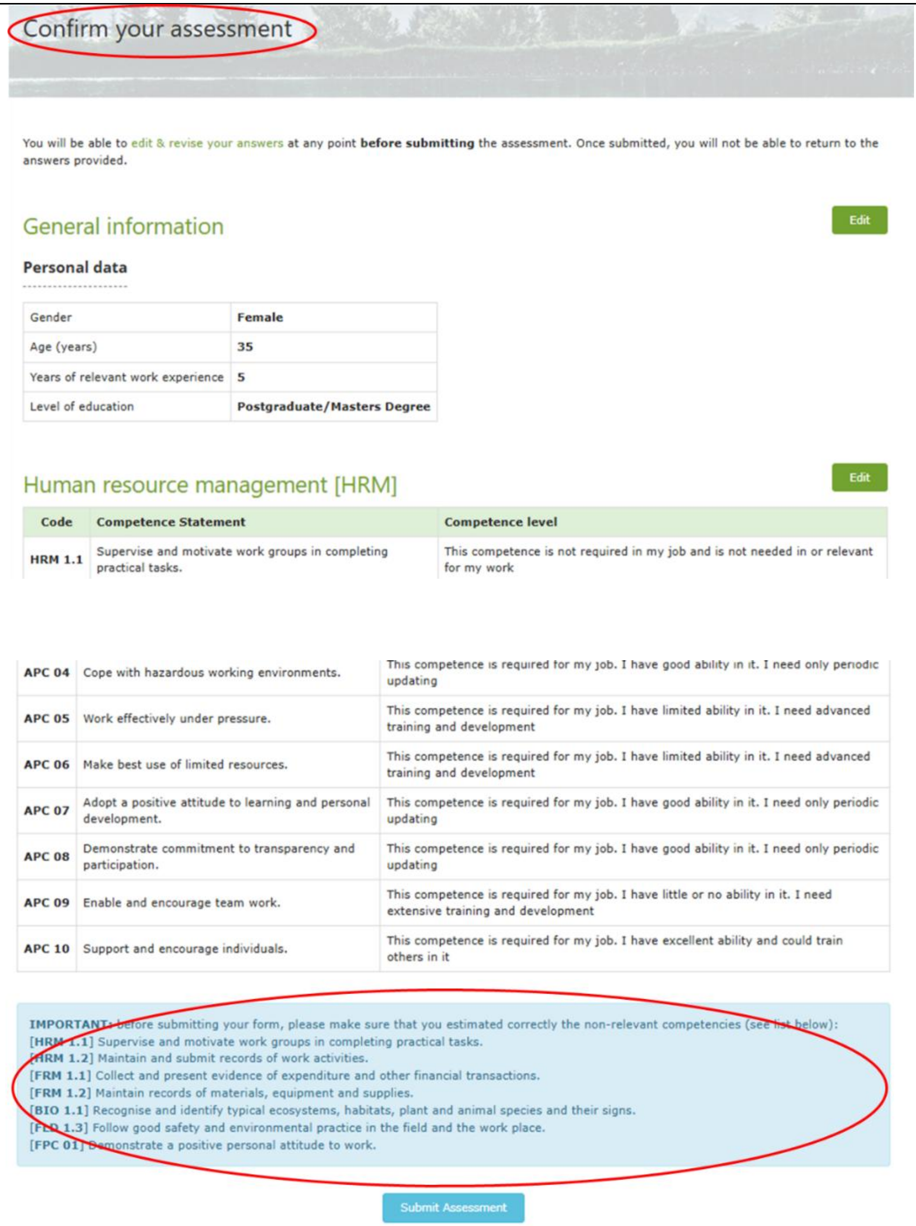
In the next step you will be asked to **'Confirm the assessment'** and, if needed, **review and revise answers** at any point **before submitting the final form.**



Go to **'Edit'** for any parts of the form where you would like to operate changes.

At the bottom of the last screen with of this section window you will find a list of competences that were scored 0 – not relevant for the job of the Participant.

Click **'Submit Assessment'.** Once submitted, you will not be able to return to the form. It is strongly recommended to operate changes in the responses only in agreement / after discussions with the Participant.



Confirm your assessment

You will be able to edit & revise your answers at any point **before submitting** the assessment. Once submitted, you will not be able to return to the answers provided.

General information

Edit

Personal data

Gender	**Female**
Age (years)	**35**
Years of relevant work experience	**5**
Level of education	**Postgraduate/Masters Degree**

Human resource management [HRM]

Edit

Code	Competence Statement	Competence level
HRM 1.1	Supervise and motivate work groups in completing practical tasks.	This competence is not required in my job and is not needed in or relevant for my work

APC 04	Cope with hazardous working environments.	This competence is required for my job. I have good ability in it. I need only periodic updating
APC 05	Work effectively under pressure.	This competence is required for my job. I have limited ability in it. I need advanced training and development
APC 06	Make best use of limited resources.	This competence is required for my job. I have limited ability in it. I need advanced training and development
APC 07	Adopt a positive attitude to learning and personal development.	This competence is required for my job. I have good ability in it. I need only periodic updating
APC 08	Demonstrate commitment to transparency and participation.	This competence is required for my job. I have good ability in it. I need only periodic updating
APC 09	Enable and encourage team work.	This competence is required for my job. I have little or no ability in it. I need extensive training and development
APC 10	Support and encourage individuals.	This competence is required for my job. I have excellent ability and could train others in it

IMPORTANT: before submitting your form, please make sure that you estimated correctly the non-relevant competencies (see list below):
[HRM 1.1] Supervise and motivate work groups in completing practical tasks.
[HRM 1.2] Maintain and submit records of work activities.
[FRM 1.1] Collect and present evidence of expenditure and other financial transactions.
[FRM 1.2] Maintain records of materials, equipment and supplies.
[BIO 1.1] Recognise and identify typical ecosystems, habitats, plant and animal species and their signs.
[FLD 1.3] Follow good safety and environmental practice in the field and the work place.
[FPC 01] Demonstrate a positive personal attitude to work.

Submit Assessment

1.3.5 Preparing the Offline Assessment

From the Job Profile screen you can also enable offline assessments by generating and downloading an Excel document with the competence list and scoring system. This document includes, on the first sheet, requirements for general information about the person invited to perform the self-assessment.

The Excel document can be loaded onto computers, distributed by email or printed out and used in hard copy format for completion by hand.

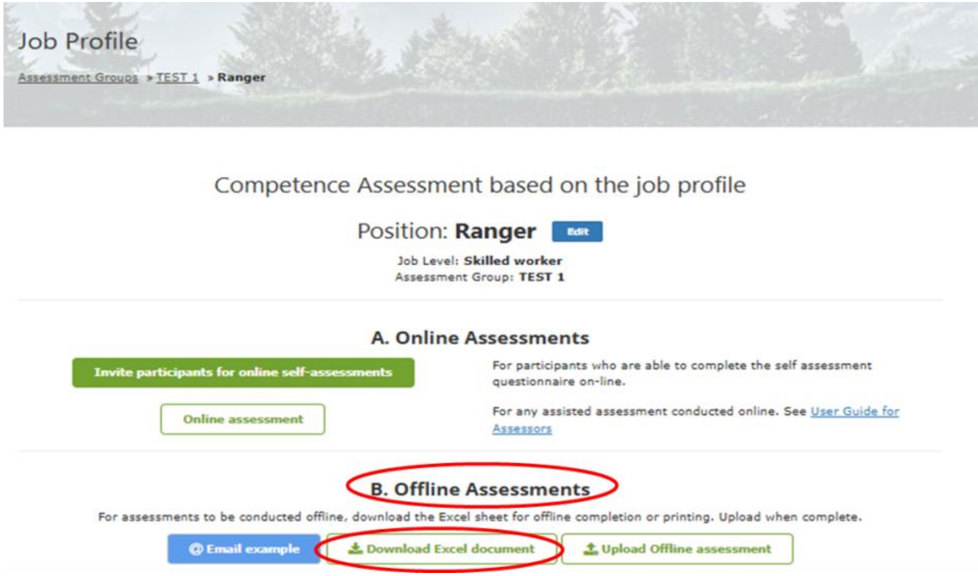
If you send the Excel document via e-mail you have a pre-prepared text for this e-mail under the **Email example** tab.

This method is designed to enable assessments if participants are in remote places or without internet and/or computers/computer skills.

Click on **Download Excel Document** for offline assessment.

! IMPORTANT !: if you are conducting the **assessment in another language than English** you have the possibility to do so, by following the instructions provided below:

- Download the Excel Workbook.
- Add columns to the right of each English text column and translate each cell in the desired language. **DO NOT DELETE ANY LINE / COLUMN or CELL from the original Excel!!!** It is important to keep the Excel document in the format generated by the platform for uploading the information from respondents!
- **Hide** the columns with the English texts **DO NOT DELETE!**
- **Lock the text columns**, so that participants cannot delete any information. Participants should have only the option to select the responses from the drop-down list.



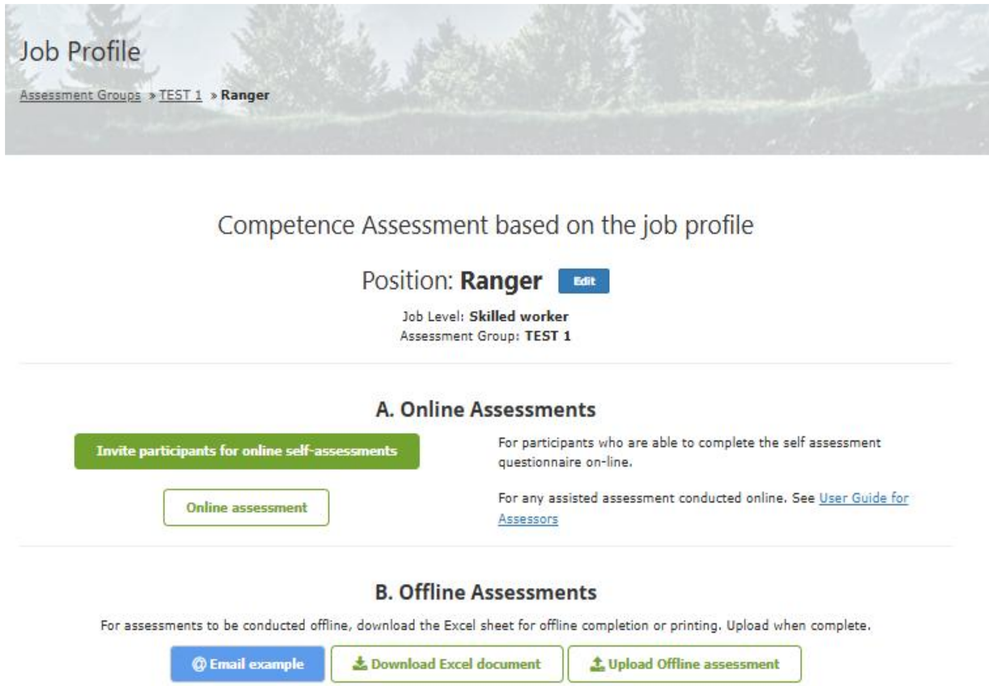
- **<u>Customize the Information Sheet, if needed/useful.</u>** This sheet contains brief details on the Job Profile and instructions for respondents. You can customize this page with logos, other information and additional instructions.

- **<u>On the Information Sheet hide the Code line.</u>** The code is a “respondent code” for the respondent is allocated by you, the Assessor. You can choose to allocate the code only when you receive the self-assessment from the respondent. In this case,

Save the Excel document with a logical file name that includes the Group name, and the Job Profile + a code/number for the Participant and send it by email and/or print it for the face-to-face guided assessment meeting.

Example of file name for the Excel document to be sent to a Participant: *TEST _Ranger _24.07.2023_01*.xls (*Group name_Job profile_Date_Participant Code*)

You’ll find the recommended text for the email at the **‘@Email example button’.**



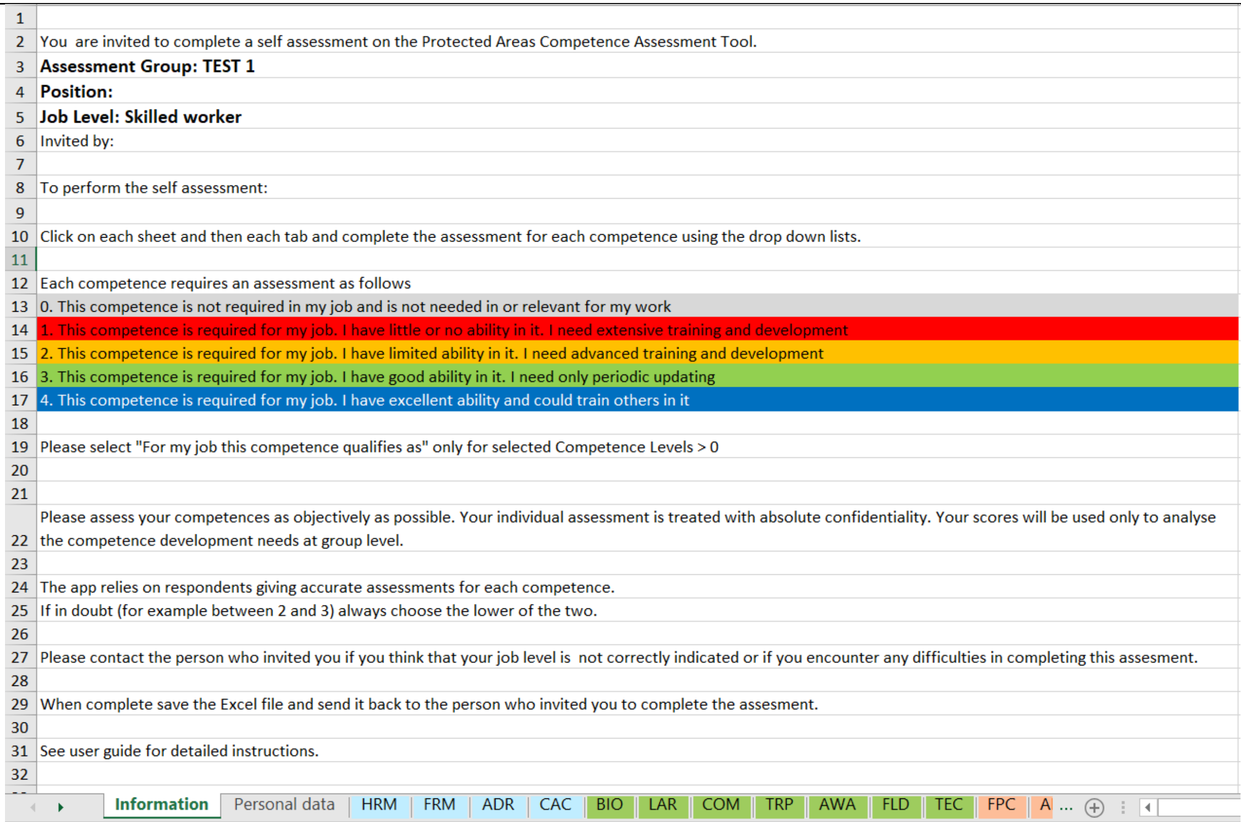
1.3.6 The Excel Form for offline assessments

The Competence Assessment Excel Workbook contains the Information sheet, a Personal Data sheet and Sheets named using the competence category code. Each of the competence sheets contains a set of competences, i.e., those relevant for the associated Job Profile. Assessments are done in the right-hand column using the dropdown list.

The **Personal Data Sheet** is for collecting the following information:

- Gender
- Age
- Years of relevant work experience
- Level of education

When you upload to the platform the self-assessments coming from the respondents, you will be asked to enter this information for each respondent.



You are invited to complete a self assessment on the Protected Areas Competence Assessment Tool.
Assessment Group: TEST 1
Position:
Job Level: Skilled worker
Invited by:

To perform the self assessment:

Click on each sheet and then each tab and complete the assessment for each competence using the drop down lists.

Each competence requires an assessment as follows
0. This competence is not required in my job and is not needed in or relevant for my work
1. This competence is required for my job. I have little or no ability in it. I need extensive training and development
2. This competence is required for my job. I have limited ability in it. I need advanced training and development
3. This competence is required for my job. I have good ability in it. I need only periodic updating
4. This competence is required for my job. I have excellent ability and could train others in it

Please select "For my job this competence qualifies as" only for selected Competence Levels > 0

Please assess your competences as objectively as possible. Your individual assessment is treated with absolute confidentiality. Your scores will be used only to analyse the competence development needs at group level.

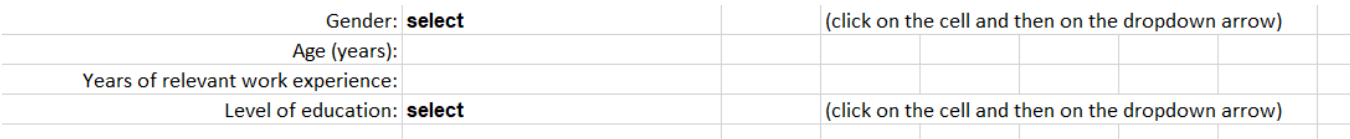
The app relies on respondents giving accurate assessments for each competence.
If in doubt (for example between 2 and 3) always choose the lower of the two.

Please contact the person who invited you if you think that your job level is not correctly indicated or if you encounter any difficulties in completing this assesment.

When complete save the Excel file and send it back to the person who invited you to complete the assesment.

See user guide for detailed instructions.

Information | Personal data | HRM | FRM | ADR | CAC | BIO | LAR | COM | TRP | AWA | FLD | TEC | FPC | A ...



Gender: **select** (click on the cell and then on the dropdown arrow)
Age (years):
Years of relevant work experience:
Level of education: **select** (click on the cell and then on the dropdown arrow)

1.3.7 Offline Assessments using the Excel Form

The self-assessments or the assisted assessments are conducted by the Participants in the same way as the online assessments, by indicating competence scores for all the competences in all sheets of the Excel Workbook. The scores are selected from the drop-down list in the right-hand columns or written in (if using printed assessment sheets).

Each Participant should send to you a complete Excel Workbook via email as an attachment or submit the completed paper form.

Paper forms have to be introduced into Excel Workbooks by the assessor

Each workbook should be saved and prepared for uploading onto the PA CAT platform:

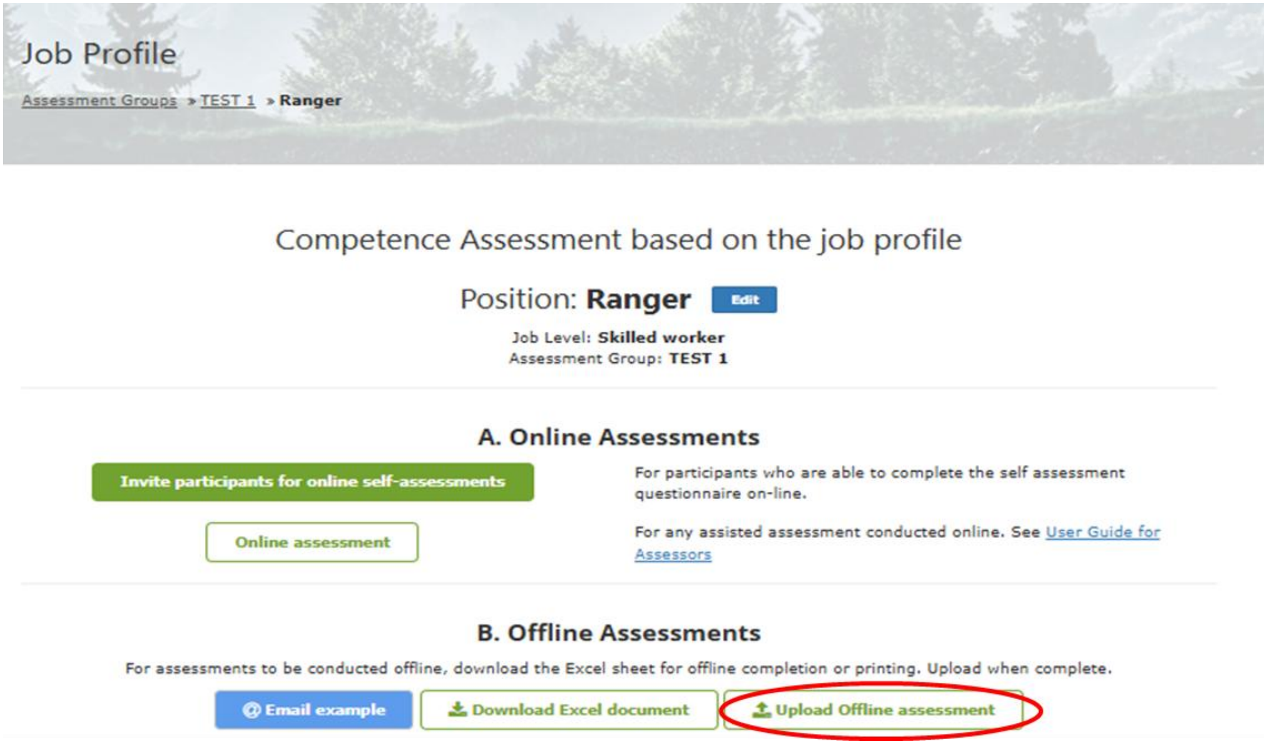
- If a participant did not keep the name of the workbook as sent to him/her, we recommend you to re-name the Excel received by using a name that includes the Group name, Job profile, date and a code/name for the respondent.

  e.g. *TEST _Ranger _24.07.2023_01*.xls

- -**! IMPORTANT !** check the Excel for each respondent and see if participants scored each competence, otherwise the platform will not accept the form when you want to upload it.

COM	**Local communities and cultures**	**Establishing systems of PA governance and management that address the needs and rights of local communities.**	
Code	**Competence Statement. The individual should be able to:**	**Details, scope and variations. A brief explanation of the competence.**	**Competence Level Click on the cell and then on the dropdown arrow**
COM 1.1	Communicate and interact appropriately with local community members.	Demonstrating awareness of and sensitivity to local cultures and practices. Complying with policies and guidance on relations with local people. Providing basic information to local people about a protected area, its functions, regulations and approaches for working with local communities. Demonstrating awareness of and sensitivity to cultural issues in all aspects of work. See also CAC Level 1, FPC.	**select**
COM 1.2	Conduct extension field work with local communities.	Working under supervision on practical joint implementation of community outreach and extension activities. Relevant activities include basic surveys, agriculture, construction, health and welfare, sustainable use, education, etc. Working in a participatory, inclusive and sensitive manner. Recording and reporting on activities and results.	0 1 2 3 4

1.3.8 Uploading the Excel Form

Upload the completed Excel form for each participant to the platform by clicking on 'Upload offline assessment'. You will be asked to give the file name for the upload, and then asked to enter the personal **details of each participant**. We recommend you do not generally include real names. Include instead a code. If you wish you may keep a list of names for each code in your own files. It is not compulsory to add the other details, but can help with overall analysis. If some of the competences were not assessed by the respondent, you will receive an error message and the file will not upload. Go back to the Excel form, fill in the missing assessments (call the respondent or send back the form via email), and try again when you have the complete form.	

2 Customized Groups

This option allows you to select a specific custom set of competences for your group (instead of using the competence set automatically generated when creating a Job Profile).

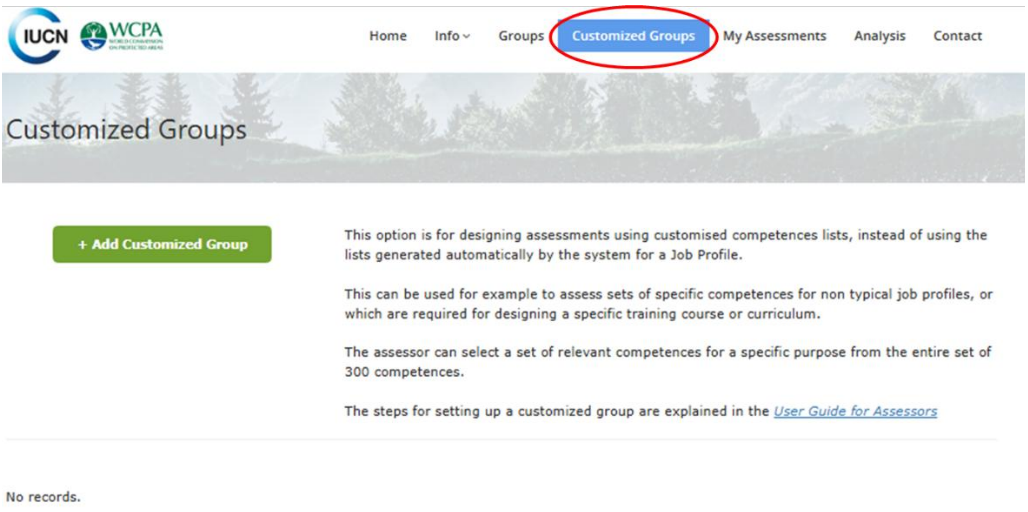
This might be the case, for example, if you are designing targeted **training events** for developing certain competence categories or competences. You can use this option to analyse specific training needs of the trainee group. Or if you want to assess a staff member or group of staff members with specific sub-set of competences in the job description.

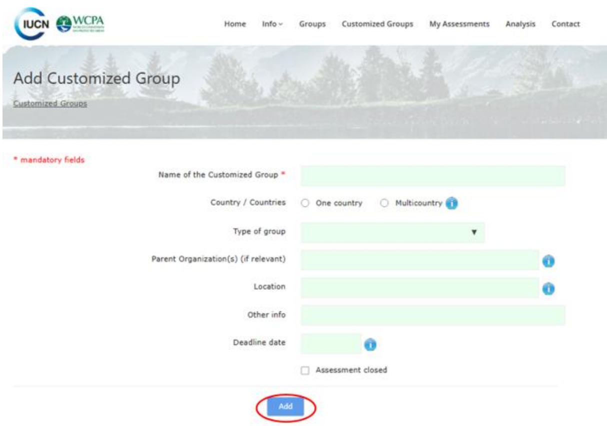
The steps for setting up a customized group are the same as those for ***Setting up the Group* - see Section 2.3.**

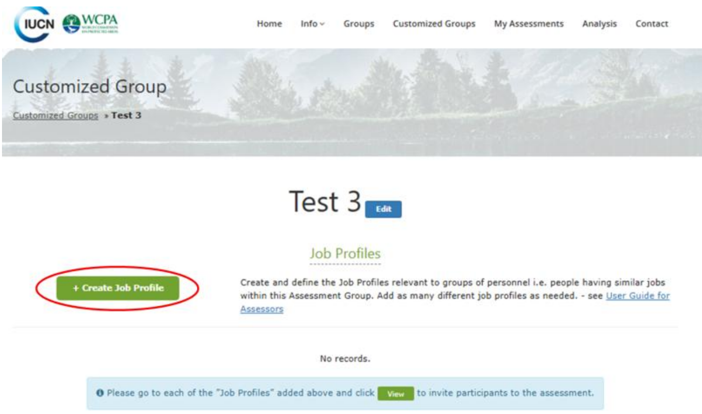
When adding the Job Profile the trainer has the possibility to decide & choose the competences wanted for the assessment.

- Go through each category and click the competence you want to assess through your customized list of competences assessment
- After selecting all the competences, click '**Add'.**

! IMPORTANT !: The results of the Customized Groups **will not be included in the overall analysis of group assessments** (presented under the Analysis tab). These results will be available only for the group defined for the training event.







Expand each of the Competence Categories below and select one of the options provided for describing the job. The options are listed in order of increasing relevance and responsibility.

The app suggests an answer based on the overall job level you selected, but you can change this if needed. Read the options carefully and choose the one which best fits the job overall. If in doubt it is usually better to choose the 'lower level' option, considering the work people regularly do, not what they occasionally do. Choose the first option (not significantly relevant) if the category of work is only occasionally relevant or only a very minor part of the duties associated with the job.

PPP - Protected area policy, planning and projects

PPP 4.1	Coordinate development and updating of national protected area policy and legislation.
PPP 4.2	Coordinate reviews of protected area policies, strategies and plans.
PPP 4.3	Coordinate processes for designing and establishing protected area systems.
PPP 4.4	Coordinate processes for gazetting, categorising, establishing and modifying protected areas.
PPP 4.5	Coordinate processes for establishing and maintaining the status of internationally designated protected areas.
PPP 4.6	Coordinate processes for establishing ecological networks and connectivity between protected areas.
PPP 4.7	Coordinate processes for recognising and establishing indigenous peoples' and community conserved areas.
PPP 4.8	Coordinate trans-boundary protected area and conservation initiatives.
PPP 4.9	Coordinate protected area system-wide responses to climate change and associated impacts.
PPP 4.10	Coordinate Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) affecting protected areas.
PPP 4.11	Coordinate measures for offsetting or securing compensation for damage to protected areas.
PPP 4.12	Coordinate initiatives to determine the value of the services provided by the ecosystems of protected areas.

3 Group Results

Once the Participants have completed the assessments you can analyse the group results on the Results page.

Once the assessment is completed, you can access the results of your group.

Go to **'Groups'** on the main menu to access your Dashboard.

Select the **'Name'** of the group or **'Manage':** this will take you to the main page of that group.

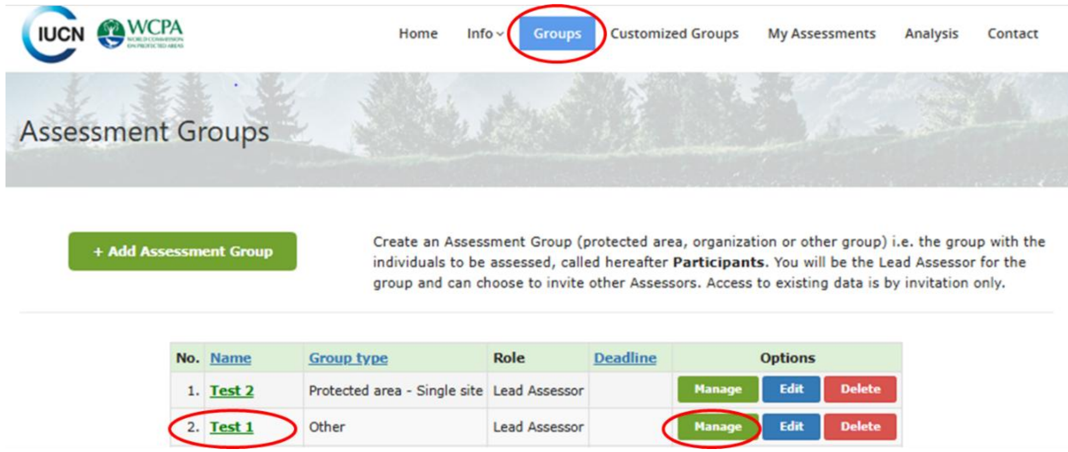
Go to the bottom of the page and select **'View results for the Assessment Group'**

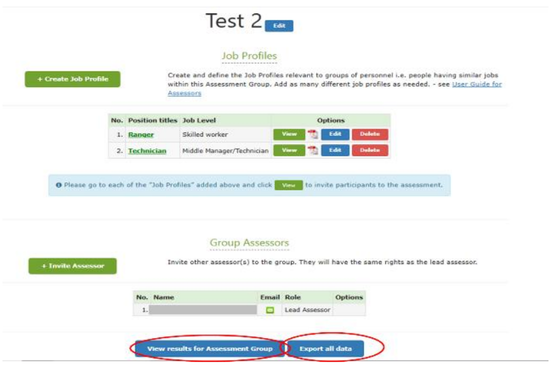
On this page you also have the possibility to **Export all data** into an Excel worksheet to enable you to conduct your own analyses.

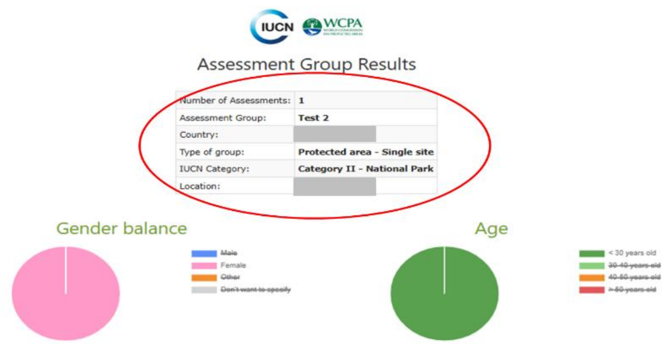
You will land on the **'Assessment Group Results page'**. The first part will show the information introduced when adding up the group and the legend for the competence categories and the colour codes used in the graphics.

There are five result tabs available here>

1. Results Overview
2. Results by Job profiles
3. Results by Each Competence Category and Job profiles
4. Detailed results
5. Priority capacity building







Results - Overview

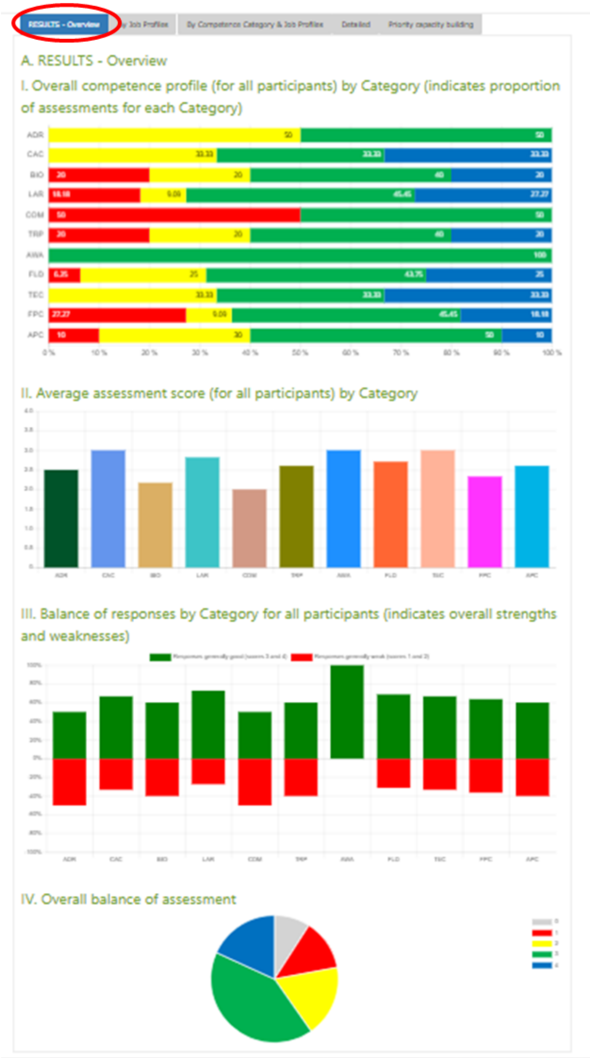
This gives an overall picture of the results by category, presented in 4 different ways.

Graph I shows the proportions of total 1,2,3 and 4 responses, colour coded for each category. It provides a comparative indication of strength and weakness in each category (but not for each individual competence).

Graph II shows the average score for all the assessments made for each category

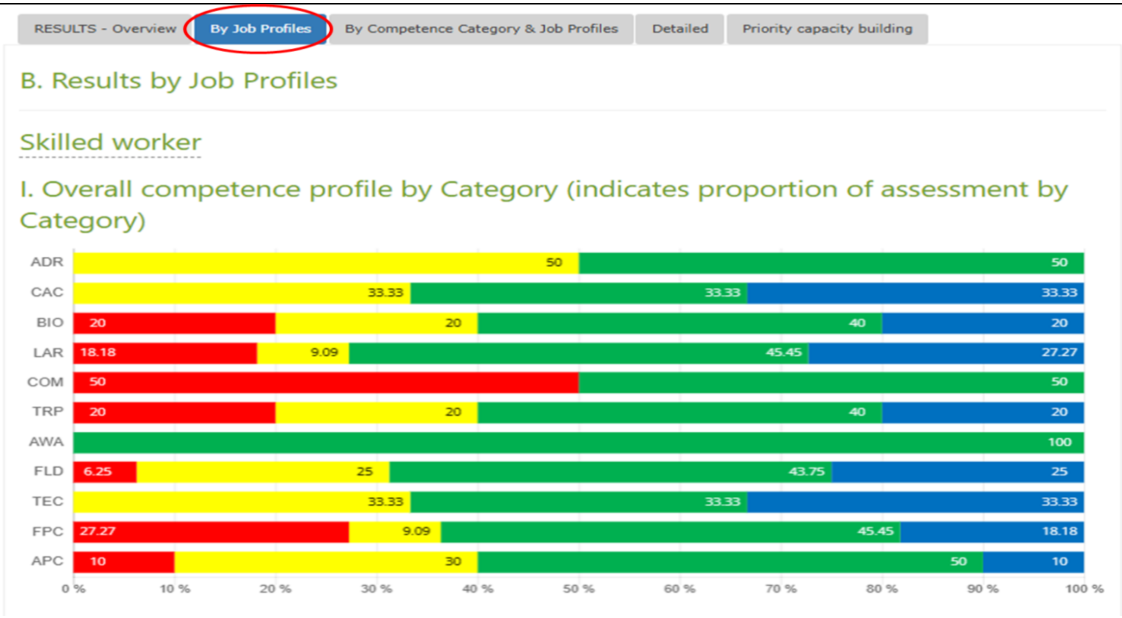
Graph III shows the relative proportions of responses for each category that are generally weak (1 and 2: below the line, in red) and generally strong (3 and 4: above the line in green). It provides an indication of overall strengths and weaknesses.

Graph IV shows the overall proportions of all assessments in all categories, indicating the overall competence of the respondent.



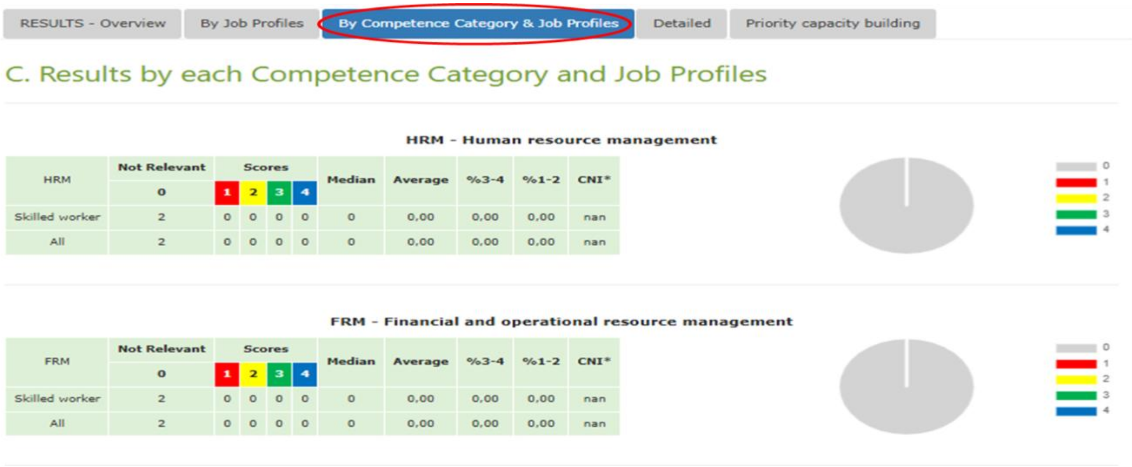
Results by Job profiles

This provides an overall view by categories for each Job profile defined for the group. The graphics are reflecting similar information to those from Tab A by Job profiles.



Results by each Competence Category and Job profiles

This provides more details for each competence category, indicating the numbers of responses for each assessment (1,2,3,4) at each level, providing medians and averages and calculating capacity needs indices (CNI). The CNI is the proportion of assessments that are weak (1 or 2). The higher the CNI, the greater the capacity need.



HRM	Not Relevant	Scores				Median	Average	%3-4	%1-2	CNI*
	0	1	2	3	4					
Skilled worker	2	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0,00	nan
All	2	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0,00	nan

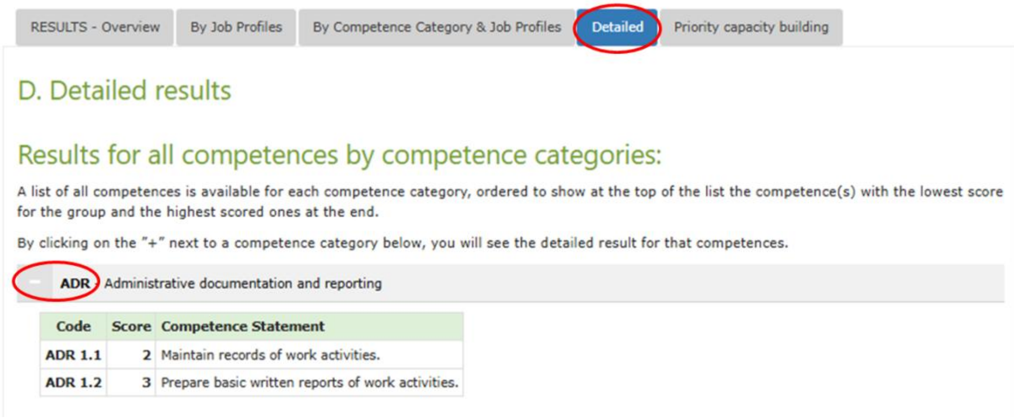
FRM	Not Relevant	Scores				Median	Average	%3-4	%1-2	CNI*
	0	1	2	3	4					
Skilled worker	2	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0,00	nan
All	2	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0,00	nan

Detailed results

Lists of detailed results are available for each competence category.

Click on the ”+” next to the category.

The competences from each category are ordered in these lists, having at the top the competence(s) with the lowest score for the group.



RESULTS - Overview | By Job Profiles | By Competence Category & Job Profiles | Detailed | Priority capacity building

D. Detailed results

Results for all competences by competence categories:

A list of all competences is available for each competence category, ordered to show at the top of the list the competence(s) with the lowest score for the group and the highest scored ones at the end.

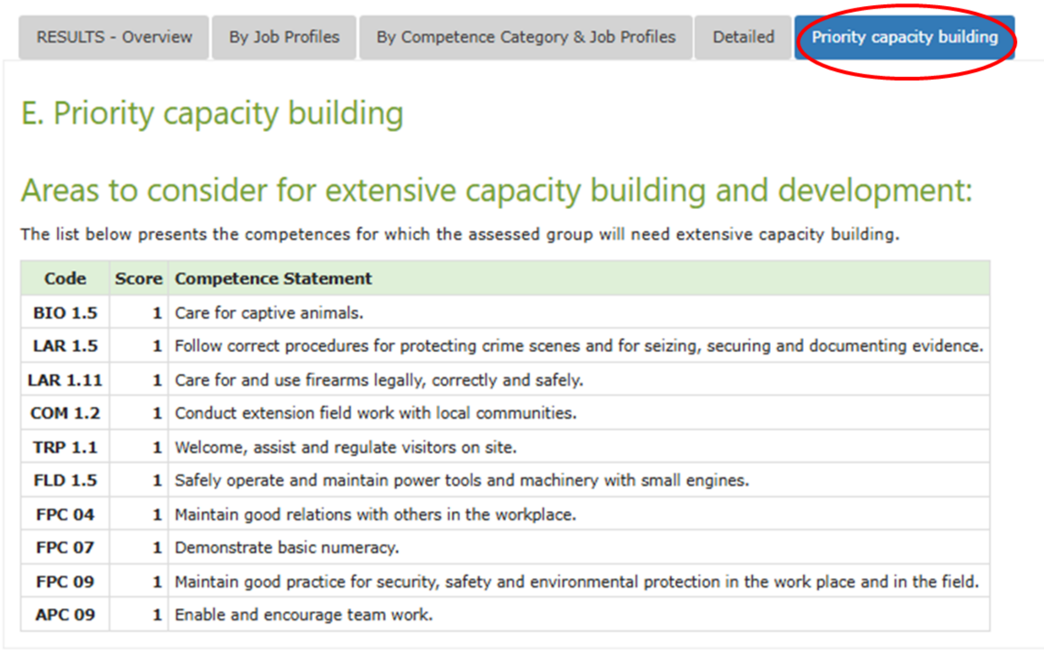
By clicking on the "+" next to a competence category below, you will see the detailed result for that competences.

ADR Administrative documentation and reporting

Code	Score	Competence Statement
ADR 1.1	2	Maintain records of work activities.
ADR 1.2	3	Prepare basic written reports of work activities.

Tab E. Priority capacity building

This is a report presenting the list of competences for which the assessed group had an average low score and would need extensive capacity building.



RESULTS - Overview | By Job Profiles | By Competence Category & Job Profiles | Detailed | Priority capacity building

E. Priority capacity building

Areas to consider for extensive capacity building and development:

The list below presents the competences for which the assessed group will need extensive capacity building.

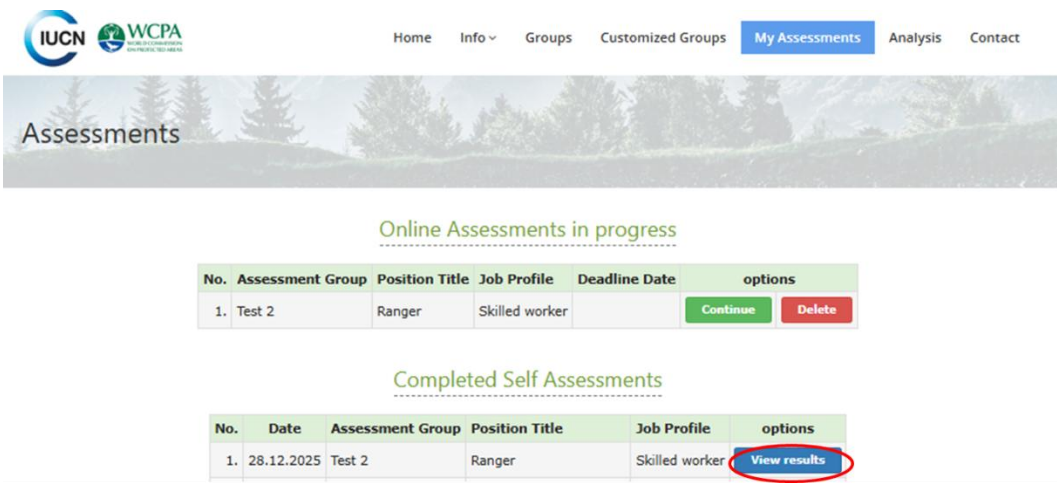
Code	Score	Competence Statement
BIO 1.5	1	Care for captive animals.
LAR 1.5	1	Follow correct procedures for protecting crime scenes and for seizing, securing and documenting evidence.
LAR 1.11	1	Care for and use firearms legally, correctly and safely.
COM 1.2	1	Conduct extension field work with local communities.
TRP 1.1	1	Welcome, assist and regulate visitors on site.
FLD 1.5	1	Safely operate and maintain power tools and machinery with small engines.
FPC 04	1	Maintain good relations with others in the workplace.
FPC 07	1	Demonstrate basic numeracy.
FPC 09	1	Maintain good practice for security, safety and environmental protection in the work place and in the field.
APC 09	1	Enable and encourage team work.

4 Individual Results

As an Assessor, you cannot access the individual results of the participants in your group.

Only the participant is able to access and view his/her own individual results, and if he/she agrees, they may share them with you.

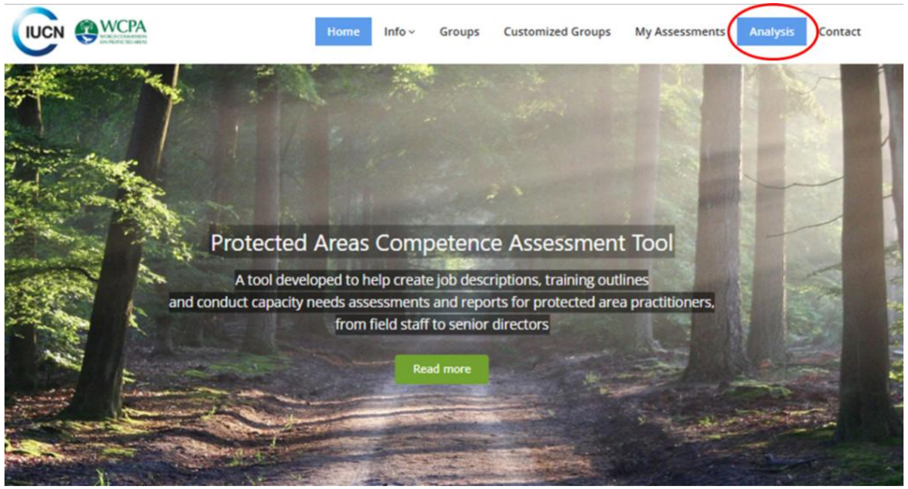
If you need to advise a participant on how to access their individual results, they should go to:
My Assessment → Completed Self-Assessment → View Results



5 Analysis of results from multiple assessment groups

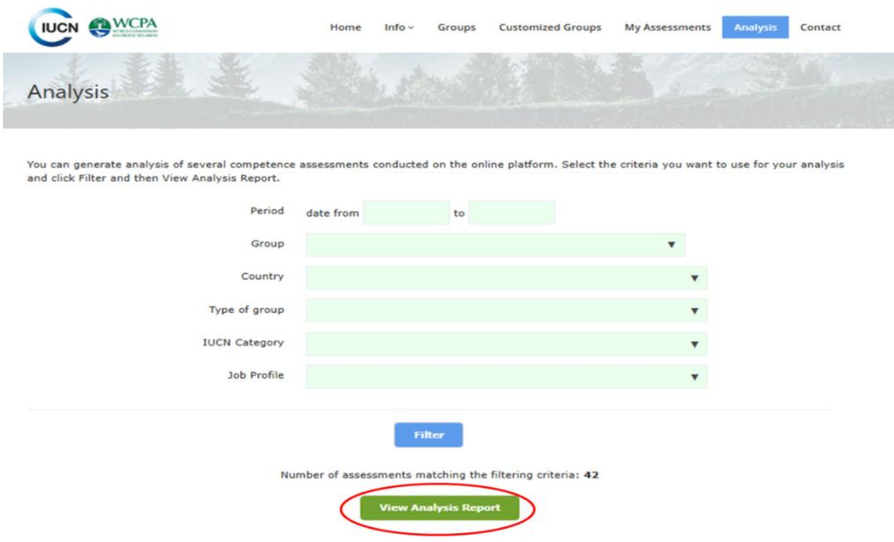
As an Assessor, you can also generate analysis of several competence assessments conducted on the online platform.

Go to the **Analysis** tab on the main menu.



Select the criteria you want to use for your analysis and click Filter and then **View Analysis Report**. A Report will be provided, with the same type of graphics as the Results presented at ***Section 23 Group Results.***

For example, if you select the Group criteria and choose one of the Groups from the drop-down list of all Groups registered on the platform, you will obtain the Report for the selected Group. If you select only the country, a report with all the Groups from the respective country would be generated.



ANNEX 1

Text of the email sent by the platform:

Assess your competences with the Protected Areas Competence Assessment Tool
https://conservation-cat.com/protectedareas/

Hello,

As previously notified, you are invited by .... to complete a self-assessment of your competences using the Protected Areas Competence Assessment Tool.

The results will be used to analyse the overall competence development needs of the your team and will help in designing capacity building events which are relevant to your group and useful for you as individual. Individual results will not be published; only combined group results will be used.

You are invited as participant in the following Assessment Group:

Name of Assessment Group: ....
Your Job Profile for the assessment: ....
You are invited by: .... Please contact this person if you if you think that your job level is not correctly indicated, if you encounter any difficulties to access the platform or you have questions / need additional information.

For performing the self-assessment, please follow the instructions below:

1. If you are not yet registered to the platform please first register an account here. You might have been invited in the past to this platform. If you already used your current email address to register, all you need is to use the password. If you lost it, please follow the instructions on the platform.
2. Once you have registered or accessed your account, please follow this link to accept the invitation for the self-assessment: Accept invite

Before starting the self-assessment read carefully the introduction and fill in the form!

Please assess your competences as objectively as possible. Individual assessments are not associated with personal data on the platform (not associated with the name / email address). Only you can access your assessment results!

If you have received this message by error, we apologize and please ignore this email.
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Kind regards,
Protected Areas
https://conservation-cat.com/protectedareas/