**WWF-UK Request for Proposal**

**WWF-UK research proposal – systematic data analysis exploring ‘better’ protein**

WWF-UK is currently looking for a consultancy to work with Life Cycle Assessment data and upload pre-identified studies to [Hestia](https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/food-sustainability-analytics/)[[1]](#footnote-2) in order to conduct an analysis to explore ‘better’ protein. This role is a major opportunity to contribute to improving the environmental sustainability of both the UK and global food systems.

**Background**

Our dietary choices are driving a system of food production that is destroying the planet; global meat consumption went up by 350% between 1961 and 2013 (and is projected to increase by another 50% by 2050)[[2]](#footnote-3), with livestock production contributing to almost a third of the total emissions and covering 82% of land used for food production[[3]](#footnote-4). Within this context it is becoming more and more urgent to understand what sustainable protein is, focusing on ‘better’ animal and plant protein.

Although data exists to tell us that the environmental impact of one product can differ 50-fold[[4]](#footnote-5), we’re still not able to use this information to fully establish what ‘better’ looks like.  Data is currently collected and held separately by various actors – such as private companies, research and technical organisations (e.g., FAO), and academic institutions – and environmental impacts are calculated differently by every project or digital tool.

This means stakeholders – including food businesses and policy makers – have access to a plethora of data and methods and are confused about which methods to choose; thus they can't precisely measure the environmental impact of food, manage progress, and make decisions accordingly.

Many have set ambitious net zero targets that include their supply chain (scope 3) emissions and are struggling to know how to robustly track progress against these – or if actions being taken are translating into emissions reductions. Businesses also increasingly have a desire to help their customers make better food choices, and to be promoting the production and consumption of products that are better for the planet. But understanding the environmental impact of individual products coming from global food systems is a complex task.

There’s therefore a growing consensus that data inadequacy and inaccuracy need to be addressed and that standarised data and harmonised methods are needed. In the Food Strategy White Paper, the Government commits to the establishment of a Food Data Transparency Partnership. We welcome this, and our vision is a national data programme that provides a robust underpinning for mandatory corporate reporting and eco-labelling.

From a sustainable diets perspective, we know that dietary change is a necessary and significant part of food systems transformation. Rebalancing the consumption of animal and plant protein and understanding how impacts differ within food groups according to location and method of production​ are fundamental aspects of this dietary change. To achieve this, we need to understand *how* we can rebalance consumption, not just in terms of eating ‘less’ animal source foods (ASF), but also ‘better’.

**Main purpose and scope**

In order to support a shift to ‘less and **better**’, we need to understand what, where and how to produce animal and plant protein. This requires access to and the availability of accurate, granular and credible protein data – however, this data doesn’t currently exist in adequate quantity or quality. We need to be able to use aligned metrics and standardised data stored in a harmonised format to explore what should be produced, under which production systems, in which geographies; and explore local/national/regional/global comparative advantage to guide domestic production as well as trade.

The aim of this project is to conduct a systematic data analysis to understand routes to ‘better’ protein sources by delivering research that:

* Identifies the availability of and gaps in necessary protein data;
* Supports the expansion of infrastructure to capture and access consistent data[[5]](#footnote-6);
* Explores how impacts differ within food groups according to location and method of production​.

*Activities*

* To upload approx. 75 studies already identified to HESTIA
* To use data analysed through HESTIA to explore ‘better’ products – to include beef; lamb; pork; chicken; eggs; legumes, beans and pulses; meat alternatives; milk and alternatives (what, and where and how its produced)

*Deliverables*

* An updated database of life cycle impact factors for pre-identified protein products
* A report that illustrates the difference in impact within protein groups (according to production systems and geography) and the characteristics of 'better' protein (meat, dairy, plants), and showcases the role of improved data quality in supporting good decision-making and accurate impact reporting
* Presentation of findings at industry convening meeting

*Outcomes*

* A database that can serve multiple purposes, including aid business scope 3 reporting and underpin/support eco-labelling schemes
* A better understanding of how the database can remain updated enabling the path to more robust and accessible data in food and drink supply chains
* More detailed insight to better understand how and where to best focus efforts to reduce the global impact of the UK food system – including where there might be trade-offs between different types of environmental metric
* More insights on key drivers of impact for key food items, and how these differ by geography and production practice
* More insight to shape requests and/or collection of data from suppliers to help drive and encourage the adoption of best practice actions, and enable progress monitoring
* More insight into how HESTIA can form a meaningful part of the Food Data Transparency Partnership

**The requirements of a consultancy**

In line with our procurement process, we require at least 3 supplier responses to the brief. A panel comprising a members from across Science, and Policy (Consumption) will consider the responses and make a decision based on the following criteria, with approximate weightings shown:

* 25%: The organisation’s proposed approach
* 20%: Depth and breadth of expertise as evidenced by recent client work
* 20%: Values, partnership, inclusivity, sustainability – alignment with WWF
* 35%: Price – value for money

**Timelines and next steps**

* Date issued: w/c 5 September 2022
* Closing date: 27 September 2022
* Project start: October 2022
* Delivery: May 2023
* Budget: ~£75,000 incl. VAT
* Commissioned by: WWF-UK, Living Planet Centre, Brewery Road, Woking, GU21 4LL
* Contact person: Sarah Halevy, Food Systems Sustainability Manager WWF-UK, shalevy@wwf.org.uk
* Alternative contact: Procurement Team, procurement@wwf.org.uk

*Proposal requirements*

In your response, you must be able to demonstrate and evidence:

* Understanding of the brief and propose options for the approach.  *Please outline possible time frames and requirements of us in a high-level project plan*
* Depth and breadth of expertise in this field in the charity /not for profit / NGO and commercial / private sectors. *Please include names of recent clients for who you have delivered similar work*
* A strong team that can provide responsive service – i.e., not key person dependent – continuous service available. *Please provide short biographies for all those who would be involved on the project*
* A strong alignment with WWF’s vision and mission with values that respect diversity, equality and inclusivity and evidence of partnership working.  *Please provide a short statement on this and how you evidence your values in your work*
* Value for money; competitive pricing for expertise.  We need fees to be clear and structured in a flexible way. *Please state day / hourly rates and price per project element, ideally with capped fees*
* Confidentiality and Data protection. *Please provide your confidentiality statement and GDPR principles*
* Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity (DE&I). *Please share your approach to DE&I and how you would approach the project in this respect*
* Please complete the Supplier Sustainable Procurement Questionnaire

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Thank you for expressing an interest in working with and supporting WWF-UK with this important piece of work. We look forward to receiving your response.

1. The Hestia website allows users to upload and download data on farming, food processing, and other processes in the agri-food system, detailing the sustainability and productivity of different food products and production practices. These data are stored using Hestia’s standardised format, have been validated, and are open access. The data are available in their original form and in a form with added extra data fields and recalculated environmental impacts using harmonised methods <https://www.hestia.earth/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/global-meat-projections-to-2050> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pVpYTNQKAE_izp8tsVK3tQ4fNWPgoQIz/view> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaq0216> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Notably HESTIA [↑](#footnote-ref-6)