# **WWF UK Wholescape Programme**

# **Review and Evaluation of Large-scale Conservation Initiatives in the UK and Europe**

WWF UK invitation to tender, April 2023.

**INTRODUCTION**

WWF-UK seeks an academic partner and/or research consultancy to inform the development of a new Wholescape Programme, which ultimately will direct our investment in on-the-ground work across the UK.

The Wholescape Programme represents a change in strategic direction for WWF-UK driven by the ever-worsening environmental and societal crises, and a decision to review our current portfolio of work. Until now, WWF-UK’s work on land and rivers has focused on generating evidence on solutions in areas including sustainable agriculture, river catchment management and nature-based solutions. Our coastal and marine work has taken a more integrated approach but has been delivered as separate from our terrestrial and freshwater portfolio.

Our goal is to create a new programmatic framework that drives commonality in approach and uses the Triple Challenge framing (see Background section below for a definition) to balance the needs of nature and people, against a backdrop of mitigating for, and adapting to the worsening impacts of climate change.

One of the most comprehensive reviews of ‘large-scale conservation’ (LSC) to date is the 2016 [Natural England publication](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5762035722223616), which looks at initiatives across England, Scotland, and Wales. Whilst the report is incredibly useful and informative there is an opportunity to introduce an alternative descriptor of LSC, expand the scope to include Northern Ireland and Europe and review initiatives through the lens of WWF-UK’s Wholescape Framework.

**BACKGROUND**

*A note on terminology:*

By wholescape we mean a collection or amalgam of functional ‘scapes’ (land, river, coastal and marine) defined by biophysiological processes, but within an area delineated by the most relevant social construct. Pilot wholescapes in Pembrokeshire and Norfolk are defined by the local authority area, but within each designated area are the societal and environmental systems needed to develop a wholescape approach and critically include lived and worked in seascapes, riverscapes and landscapes. The wholescape approach therefore encourages a system of ‘nested’ scapes or smaller areas where WWF can apply secondary, localised, decision making in line with science and evidence, stakeholders and systems of governance and deployment of resources.

When LSC is used in this document note that we expect the researchers to automatically include coastal and marine work too, plus consider urban and peri urban LSC as well as initiatives with a rural focus.

*The Triple Challenge*

“Humankind faces a Triple Challenge: averting dangerous climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and supporting the wellbeing of a growing population. Action to address each of these issues is inherently dependent on action to address the others” (Baldwin-Cantello et al, 2019, available [here](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14693062.2023.2175637)). WWF UK is establishing a Wholescape Programme that will develop an integrated approach to the management of the UK’s land, rivers, coasts, and seas by designing and testing methodologies that address the three interlinked pillars of the Triple Challenge, whilst creating space to consider any trade-offs and unintended consequences.

The Wholescape Programme aims to deliver impact on the ground at three chosen locations[[1]](#footnote-2), however the process of design and decision making is just as critical as the delivery, as we work to broker a common understanding of the Triple Challenge in the UK at ‘scape-scale’. WWF’s Wholescape Conceptual Framework sets out the problem, the theory of change and a set of principles and criteria and will be WWF UK’s ‘north star’ as we operationalise the framework and apply the concept practically. Critically, the three pilots will include establishing an understanding of the positive synergies and negative trade-offs that will arise in seeking to address the three pillars of the triple challenge in an integrated way, making choices that our best for minimising trade-offs and maximising positive synergies.

**REQUIREMENTS**

WWF requires the expertise of an academic partner and/or research consultancy to build on existing reviews of LSC across the UK, plus drawing on European best practice where possible, following a set of specific activities as set out below. The Triple Challenge pillars provide the scope for the work and WWF UK is particularly interested in LSC initiatives that work well on one, two or all three of the pillars so nature, climate, people (and in particular farming and food production). Learnings from other projects and initiatives, will inform the development of the Wholescape Framework and subsequent approach in our pilot areas.

The contractor should already have an extensive knowledge and ideally a network of LSC initiatives across the UK and be able to point to and explore examples from the European context too. An excellent understanding of the role landowners, land managers, Not for Profit/Non-Governmental Organisations, Agencies and Local Governments have in each of the UK nations restoration, conservation, and protection space. An understanding of the need for greater interconnectedness of terrestrial, freshwater, transitional and marine ecosystem restoration at national and local level. People and their livelihoods are central to the wholescape approach and we are looking for examples of where communities have been holistically included through co-design; therefore, a good understanding of the integrated nature of social and natural capital will be helpful.

This is a fast-paced project, and the contractor will be expected to work to time, with any subsequent adaptations addressed within the timeframe provided below under ‘Expected Deliverables’.

**SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

The primary objective is to acquire and review new evidence of good practice generated through LSC initiatives since the last major review of landscape-scale initiatives (Eigenbrod et al. 2016) [here](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5762035722223616). An increased focus on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is essential, and relevant examples from Europe are welcome too. The work will be framed around WWF-UK’s emerging Wholescape Framework (a draft of which will be available at inception phase), that will guide three pilot wholescapes across the UK.

Study objectives are:

1. Undertake a desk-based review of LSC projects framed by government policy in NI, Scotland, Wales and England, using reports/updates and grey and white evaluation material to share examples and if appropriate provide as a case study.
2. Through desk-based research and using your own networks of contacts and if appropriate WWF UK’s too, spotlight initiatives that have positively demonstrated one, or more of the following:
* Contribution to national targets in Scotland, Wales, NI and/or England (this may fit within Task III below).
* Ecosystem integration and in particular landscape, riverscape and seascape.
* Inclusive conservation and/or high-quality community engagement and/or integration of social history/local issues e.g., addressing climate change vulnerability or supporting livelihoods.
* Initiatives that specifically address land tenure and have found solutions to short-termism driven by land-ownership systems in each country e.g., community ownerships, conservation covenants. The Scottish context is of particular relevance as systems of landownership including by communities differs significantly from other UK countries and could help inform our LSC work elsewhere.
* Effective integration of farming and nature conservation – both in policy and practice.
* Governance that integrates multiple-stakeholders, specifically landowners / land managers and communities, with examples of the most effective arrangements and agreements such as MOU’s, partnership agreements and/or advisory groups.
* Effective use of volunteers beyond practical conservation tasks and with a focus on citizen science approach to environmental monitoring.
* Fundraised according to established long-term goals and objectives i.e., not funder led.
* Designed delivery using science and evidence, differentiating between knowledge held within organisations and academic research.
* Integration and consideration of climate change vulnerability and/or initiatives that are planning to or are successfully addressing nature’s decline and climate adaptation together e.g., coastal realignment.
* Focused specifically on ecological connectivity and complexity through either dynamic processes or a managed approach, or combinations of both.
* Effective integration of physical health benefits into delivery and measured through health-benefit accounting.

III Provide examples of LSC initiatives delivered at different scales, including at least one very large-scale initiative that has demonstrated success, and highlighting any governance arrangements and partnership characteristics that led to success and any challenges noted in evaluation.

The project will be structured around the following tasks:

**Task 1:** work with WWF-UK to finalise a research framework and areas of research that will form the basis of the consultancy.

**Task 2:** undertake desk-based research, providing monthly updates on progress to WWF-UK.

**Task 3:** provide between 5 and 8 detailed case studies of initiatives that have either planned or delivered work that incorporates at least two pillars of the Triple Challenge e.g., climate and nature, nature and people, taking into account the need for examples at multiple scales (Study Objective III). Separately signposting to key project staff and stakeholders to enable WWF UK to build on desk-based research later.

**Task 4:** delivery of a report that synthesizes findings from tasks 2 and 3 into a document that can be used to ‘mine’ information to inform the development and delivery of the Wholescape. The report will provide an evaluation of the case studies in terms of what worked well and what didn’t, enabling WWF UK to integrate findings into the Wholescape Programme. The report will be no more than 50 pages in total, but accompanied by a summary with headline findings.

**Task 5:** final presentation of findings delivered either in person at one of the three WWF-UK offices (Edinburgh, Cardiff or Woking) or virtually.

**Expected Deliverables**

* Inception meeting to include build-out of research questions and agreed schedule by end of April 2023, plus four weekly ‘check-in’ meetings between 30thApril 2023 and 30th September 2023. Report format to be agreed within this timeframe.
* First draft of final report by mid-September 2023.
* Review of WWF feedback on the first draft of the report by mid-October 2023 and final report drafted and presented by 31st October 2023.

**Timeframes & PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

The contract will be for a 6-month period from the period 30th April 2023 to 31st October 2023. The tasks and deliverables will be implemented over the course of these 6 months as outlined above.

The successful contractor will be issued with a contract and/or purchase order through WWF’s Panda Purchasing system. Payments will be made to the contractor according to the following schedule:

30% of contract value following inception meeting and delivery of the project structure and research questions (approx. mid-May 2023).

50% of contract value following provision of first draft report (approx. mid-September 2023 or earlier if possible).

20% of contract value by 31st October 2023 following approval of final report.

**Tendering process**

Please provide an overview of relevant skills, knowledge, and experience by Friday 28th April 2023 in-line with all the detail provided in this Terms of Reference. Note that WWF is particularly interested in academics and/or research consultancies that can demonstrate an excellent understanding of the policy environment and LSC initiatives across all four of the UK’s countries.

**Note that all submissions longer than 8 pages will be automatically discounted, therefore link or signpost to any additional information e.g., policies, statements etc.**

**BUDGET**

The approximate budget for this contract is £30,000 - £45,000 inclusive of VAT.

The contractor’s budget should include any expected travel and accommodation costs. The consultant will be expected to provide all their own office and communication facilities.

**Tendering process**

Please provide a written tender for the work described above by **Friday 5th May 2023** outlining the approach you would take to deliver the required activities, the relevant experience of the proposed contractor(s), the breakdown of costs per task in-line with the tasks, expected deliverables and delivery of key milestones.

Please confirm your acceptance of the following:

* the WWF-UK T&C’s
* to abide by the WWF Supplier Code of Conduct
* to adhere to the WWF 3rd Party Expenses Policy
* If successful, to register on Panda Purchasing (the WWF PO & invoice platform)

Please email your responses to Emma Martin at eemartin@wwf.org.uk

**TENDER EVALUATION**

The process of evaluation of responses/tenders will be carried out by a suitably competent panel and a contract award made on the basis of:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Criteria** |  | **Sub-Criteria** |  |
| Quantitative | 25% | Value for money  | 25% |
|  |  |  |  |
| Qualitative – Capability & Competency | 75% | Understanding of requirements | 25% |
|  |  | Methodology | 25% |
|  |  | Previous Experience/resourcing | 25% |

For further information and submission of budget for tender consideration email:

Emma Martin, WWF-UK, eemartin@wwf.org.uk

1. Norfolk, Pembrokeshire and a third location in Scotland TBC. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)