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Request for Quotation

**Countryside Survey data testing for a State of Natural Capital Report**

##

## Request for Quotation

**Countryside Survey data testing for a State of Natural Capital Report**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification below.

Please confirm, by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

5pm on the 30th of September 2022

Alice.lord@naturalengland.org.uk

Ensure you state the reference number and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timeline**

Alice Lord will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote pack or the process. Please submit any questions by email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | [dd-mmm-yyyy] at [hh:mm BST / GMT] |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 26th September at 17:00 BST |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 30th September at 17:00 BST |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 07-Oct-2022 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 10-Oct-2022 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration  | 31-03-2022 |

### Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| “Authority” | Means the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England |
| “RFQ” | Means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers |
| “Contract” | Means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |

###

### Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your response to the RFQ and related documents ensuring it is complete prior to submitting your completed quotation.

Your quotation must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your quotation fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

The supplier by submitting a quotation is deemed to accept the terms and conditions in the RFQ. Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RTQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this procurement.

### Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

#### Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

#### Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes mandatory requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated. All mandatory requirements are set out in Bravo.

#### Clarifications

The Authority reserves the right to discuss, confidentially, any aspect of your quotation with you prior to any award of Contract to clarify matters.

#### Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you in writing and may extend the deadline for receipt in order to give you a reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account.

#### Conditions of Contract

The terms and conditions (annex 6 attached), Standard Condensed Terms and Conditions (under EU threshold contracts), will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this RFQ process. The Authority will not accept any material changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

#### Specification

The Authority is Natural England. The Authority’s priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply. Further information about the Authority can be found at: [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/)

**Background**

Natural England is the Government’s statutory advisor for the natural environment, playing a vital role in delivering the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan. This describes an ambitious vision, bringing new opportunities to protect and enhance, and to achieve real outcomes for the environment.

Natural England is a delivery partner on the ‘[Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-capital-and-ecosystem-assessment-programme/natural-capital-and-ecosystem-assessment-programme) (NCEA) Programme. NCEA is a new Defra Group evidence programme which aims to deliver high quality national and local evidence to assess the state and condition of biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural capital assets across our terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments.

A State of Natural Capital Report (SONC), will be produced by Natural England in 2023/2024. This report will utilise the new data produced by the NCEA, as well as other available nationally consistent data sources to report on the State of England’s Natural Capital. A SONC report will consist of:

* A State of the Ecosystem Assets section, including reporting on the quantity, quality and where possible, location of broad ecosystems. If possible, some indicators will also be reported on to understand the flow of ecosystem services.
* A policy-focused section, the importance of ecosystems for the delivery of key policy areas will be outlined, with the links to key ecosystem attributes for each policy area highlighted.
* A risk register, to demonstrate how at risk our ecosystems are, and therefore the delivery of ecosystem services and achievement of policy areas.

In 2021/2022 a Scoping the State of Natural Capital Report was produced, outlining the proposed structure and content of a future SONC report. This report (annexes 2 and 3) outlines which indicators we propose to report on, and which data we aim to use. The SONC indicators are based on [Natural England’s Natural Capital Indicators](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6742480364240896?msclkid=88ea3747ab4611ec8f13fcb4df7fbaeb) (Lusardi et al., 2018).

**Requirements**

This contract will help to prepare for an initial SONC report in 2023/2024. The scoping report referenced above (annexes 2 and 3) assumes that NCEA data will be available to use in a State of Natural Capital Report. However, for the initial report, the England Ecosystem Survey (EES) will not have collected enough survey data to use.

The purpose of this contract is to test the use of Countryside Survey (2007) data for a selection of indicators. Both exploring what is possible to report on, as well as the differences between Countryside Survey and England Ecosystem Survey attributes.

This aims of this contract are to:

* Explore which of the indicators currently proposed to use EES data in the scoping report could be reported on using [Countryside Survey](https://countrysidesurvey.org.uk/data/survey-data) (2007) data (see Annex 1).
* Test the method for data analysis to ensure that the method is robust, possible to carry out for the whole of England, and enables us to report in the way we require (e.g. by broad ecosystem type).
* Provide repeatable methods for data analysis for each indicator, which can be followed by another analyst, likely to be using R.
* Share lessons learned from the project with the NE team.
* Complete a Natural England data tracker and ensure that data licences allow the use of the data in the way intended (see annex 4 for an initial exploration of the data licences for each Countryside Survey dataset).

**Outputs**

1. A report describing the exploration of the data, including:
2. which indicators the Countryside Survey (2007) can be used for, including a confirmation that the data licence allows the indicator to be reported on in the intended way,
3. any potential differences between using Countryside Survey and England Ecosystem Survey for each indicator and as a whole,
4. the metric to be reported for each indicator,
5. any indicators in annex 1 which cannot be analysed using Countryside Survey (2007) data and the reasons why,
6. Project lessons learned from the data testing – either within the report or separate presentation
7. Detailed methods for data analysis for each indicator, which could be followed by another data analyst using R. This should include:
8. Any pre-processing steps to make the data ready for analysis
9. Easy to understand steps for analysis (for example, through a process diagram)
10. Code used for analysis
11. Processed data and completed metadata form (blank form supplied by Natural England)
12. Data licenses and attribution statements recorded using Natural England’s data tracker template (annex 5).

**Data ownership and Intellectual Property Rights**

The Intellectual Property Rights resulting from the work shall belong to Natural England. The cover of all reports or drawings will include a statement © Natural England and the date of creation.

When using existing data the supplier should own, or be licensed to use, all Intellectual Property Rights that are necessary to provide the Services. You should seek advice from Natural England on responsibilities for obtaining a data licence for third party data. Note that Natural England requires to know the lineage of your output (i.e. all the datasets that went into the work) and be able to identify what the licence terms for each of the inputs is in order to be able to license the output for use.

The Supplier shall indemnify and keep indemnified Natural England against all actions, claims, demands, losses, damages, costs and expenses and other liabilities Natural England may suffer or incur arising from any infringement or alleged infringement of any third party Intellectual Property Rights except to the extent that they have been caused by or contributed to by Natural England’s acts or omissions.

**Obtaining Data and Licensing**

Natural England aspires to publish our outputs under the Open Government Licence. The first State of Natural Capital report will be published as an Open Government Licence product, although the report from this contract will not be published. This can only be done if third party data sources are chosen with care. Any data used in a Natural England project must be owned by or licensed to Natural England.

The data included in the scoping report, that this contract will test (annex 1), has already been approved by our internal data services team. If additional data is required the Supplier will need to ensure that the data can be used in the intended way. You will be responsible for accessing data which is available online and recording the data used. Data which needs to be supplied by Natural England can be requested by following the guidance online at [How to access Natural England's maps and data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data#request-data)

If you discover that additional data is needed, that isn’t already licensed to Natural England please use Natural England’s standard wording to explain our data licensing requirements (annex 7).

Before the data is used in the project you must have received a licence in Natural England’s name and sent it to data.services@naturalengland.org.uk for checking and signing, and been issued with a contractor’s licence for you to use it.

Contact data.services@naturalengland.org.uk if you need advice, or the project officer.

At the end of the project, a metadata form should be included with the analysed data and shapefiles. A metadata form will be provided by Natural England.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, inclusive of VAT. Please complete the following pricing schedule.

Please complete the pricing schedule below. Please indicate an **overall cost for the contract, separate costs for each task and a daily rate for personnel** included within the project.

Please detail any risks and assumptions made and exactly what has been included in the prices and list any additional expected expenses separately.

Please provide costs excluding VAT and indicate if VAT will apply to your services and at what rate. Please note that Natural England reserves the right to award all or some of the elements that make up the total contract.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item of work/task   | Staff name/Grade   | Day rate  | Number of days  | Total cost exclusive of VAT  |
| 1. Collation of data
 |   |   |   |  |
| 1. Investigation of Countryside Survey, data testing and recording of data licenses
 |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Production of report detailing the outcomes of data investigation and testing
 |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Creation of detailed method for future data analysis
 |   |   |   |   |
| 1. Provision of analysed data, code, metadata form and data tracker
 |   |   |   |   |
| Total  |   |   |   |   |
| Total inc VAT  |   |   |   |   |

**Quotation Submission**

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Price – 40%

Quality – 60%

**Quality Evaluation Criteria**

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| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | Weighting |
| **Quality** | 16 |
| **Experience and knowledge of key staff**  | 16 |
| **Methodology and quotation response** | 16 |
| **Capability and resource** | 12 |
| **Sustainability** | Pass or fail |

**Quality (16 %)** – 100 points available, minimum score of 50 required

Your response should indicate and evidence measures that will be put in place to ensure quality is maintained throughout the contract. Key quality requirements include:

* Appointment of a named contract manager authorised to act on behalf of the supplier.
* Key outputs are delivered on time and to the project officer’s satisfaction.
* Methods routinely adopted for quality assurance of data and contract outputs.
* The project officer is regularly informed of progress and is consulted when opportunities for innovation arise or deviations are required to the project specification.
* The contractors are in regular contact with the project officer – at least fortnightly updates by email and telephone.
* What systems and procedures are used to ensure quality control is maintained throughout the contract

The response to Quality must be a maximum of 4 sides of A4, font size 10.

**Experience & Knowledge of key staff (16%)** – 100 points available, minimum score of 50 required

Experience and knowledge of key staff in relation to evaluation:

* Demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements in the specification and the products we are seeking.
* Demonstrate previous experience of environmental data analysis, using large and complex spatial datasets from the UK.
* Experience of analysing, mapping or assessing the quantity, quality, and location of ecosystems, using natural capital indicators or frameworks.
* Experience of producing guidance or instructions for analysis
* Understanding of data licensing and experience of working with data with different license requirements
* Demonstrate experience of creating clear, concise reports.
* Demonstrate delivery of previous, relevant good quality products, to time and on budget.
* Demonstrate good project planning and management skills.

Please provide a link to, or excerpt of, a report, containing data analysis and written report content, which has been produced by the key staff.

The response to Experience & Knowledge must be a maximum of 4 sides of A4, font size 10, excluding the example.

**Methodology and Quotation response (16%)** – 100 points available, minimum score of 50 required

* Confirmation that your quotation proposal meets our specification. Please highlight any differences or provide alternatives with reasons/benefits of using those alternatives. Please ensure your response is clear and well presented.
* Clearly set out the methodology for the main components of the work with supporting literature references and exemplars if relevant.
* Please also provide a summary of what you believe to be the main risks and areas of uncertainty, their potential impact on the project and how significant they are, and how you would act to minimise and manage them. This should include contingency plans to cover the unexpected unavailability of staff.

The response to Methodology and Quotation must be a maximum of 4 sides of A4, font size 10.

**Capability and Resources (12%)** – 100 points available, minimum score of 50 required

* Adequate staff resources devoted to the project and with appropriate expertise
* The project will require knowledge and experience of work related to spatial data analysis, data handling, natural capital, and methodological report writing. **Please show clearly which key staff will be assigned to each of the tasks and outputs of the project** and the number of days each will provide.
* Please provide CVs of named staff who will work on the project.

Excluding the CVs, the response to Capability and Resources must be a maximum of 4 sides of A4, font size 10. Each CV must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, font size 10.

**Sustainability (Pass or Fail)**

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to Natural England’s objectives.

Please provide a copy of your environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO 14001 or EMAS which you have been awarded or are working towards.

Please explain what your organisation is doing to incorporate sustainability within its operations. This may include any details you are able to provide in relation to steps you may be taking to reduce your carbon footprint.

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| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Justification** |
| For a score of hundred (100):   | Excellent - Response is completely relevant and excellent overall.  The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full. |
| For a score of seventy (70):   | Good - Response is relevant and good.  The response demonstrates a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.  |
| For a score of fifty (50):   | Acceptable - Response is relevant and acceptable.  The response provides sufficient evidence to fulfil basic requirements. |
| For a score of twenty (20):   | Poor - Response is partially relevant and/or poor.  The response addresses some elements of the requirements but contains insufficient / limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled. |
| For a score of zero (0):   | Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate response.  Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement. |

**Contract Management**

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Alice Lord alice.lord@naturalengland.org.uk (07920 535028) and Fiona Bell Fiona.bell@naturalengland.org.uk (07867162107).

This contract will run from 10th October 2022 to 28th February 2023. The final outputs should be received by 28th February 2023.

Draft outputs for outputs 1-3 above should be sent to the project team by the 1st of February. These will be reviewed by the project team and returned for any changes needed in the final versions.

Once the contract has been awarded, a project initiation call will be arranged to discuss the project with the contract managers, followed by an initial steering group meeting to discuss the proposed method and timeframe for deliverables and tasks. This will be via Microsoft Teams and is booked for the 20th October at 2pm.

Following the initial meeting, bi-weekly meetings will be established to maintain contact throughout the contract to discuss progress and any issues, these will be held virtually. Before each meeting, an agenda should be provided by the Supplier.

A steering group meeting will be used to discuss progress and findings, including which indicators are suitable to include in an initial SONC, using Countryside Survey data, and which metrics could be reported. The date will be set by the project officer and the Supplier at the beginning of the contract.

We will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

**Payment**

50 % of the payment will be made when the draft products are submitted to Natural England, with the remaining 50% paid when the outputs are provided at the end of the contract.

### Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

By submitting a quotation you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

### Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the contractor must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be **held and destroyed within two years** of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within **seven years** of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

**Annexes**

Annex 1. Indicators proposed to use England Ecosystem Survey to be tested against Countryside Survey data (below)

Annex 2. Scoping a State of Natural Capital Report (attached)

Annex 3. Scoping report: Indicator and datasets spreadsheet (attached)

Annex 4. Countryside Survey Datasets and License exploration (attached)

Annex 5. Natural England’s data tracker template (attached)

Annex 6. Standard condensed terms and conditions (attached)

Annex 7. Requesting data from third parties (attached)

**Annex 1:** State of Natural Capital Report - Indicators to explore using the Countryside Survey. *(MMH – mountain, moorland and heath)*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Broad ecosystems**  | **SONC indicator category**  | **SONC indicator**  | **Metric**  |
| Semi-natural grasslands MMH Farmland Freshwater  | Nutrient (& chemical) status  | Soil nutrient status  | Average soil nitrogen concentrations in habitat samples - % (tbc): i) semi-natural grassland ii) MMH iii) farmland iv) wetland (Freshwater)  |
| Semi-natural grasslands MMH Farmland Freshwater  | Nutrient (& chemical) status  | Soil nutrient status  | Average soil phosphorous concentrations in habitat samples - mg/kg (tbc): i) semi-natural grassland ii) MMH iii) farmland iv) wetland (Freshwater)  |
| Semi-natural grasslands Urban MMH Farmland Freshwater  | Soil/sediment processes  | Soil compaction (absence of)  | Bulk density - metric to be developed: i) semi-natural grasslands ii) urban iii) MMH iv) farmland v) freshwater  |
| Semi-natural grasslands Urban MMH Farmland Freshwater  | Soil/sediment processes  | Soil biota  | Earthworm count and/or microbial activity - metric to be developed for: i) semi-natural grasslands ii) urban iii) MMH iv) Farmland v) Freshwater  |
| Semi-natural grasslands MMH Farmland Woodland and scrub Freshwater Marine and Coastal Margins  | Soil/sediment processes  | Soil carbon/organic matter content  | Average soil organic carbon density in habitat samples - mean tonnes/ha:  i) semi-natural grassland  ii) MMH (tbc) iii) farmland (tbc) iv) scrub (Woodland and Scrub) (tbc) v) wetland (Freshwater) (tbc) vi) sand dune (Marine and Coastal Margins) (tbc)  |
| Semi-natural grasslands MMH Farmland Woodland and scrub Freshwater Marine and Coastal Margins  | Soil/sediment processes  | Soil carbon/organic matter content  | Total estimated tonnes of soil carbon stored in:  i) semi-natural grasslands ii) MMH iii) farmland iv) scrub (Woodland and Scrub) v) fen, marsh and swamp (Freshwater) vi) sand dunes sediment (Marine and Coastal Margins) *This indicator would need combining with other data to produce the statistic (SSONC dataset 15).*  |
| Semi-natural grasslands Urban MMH Marine and coastal margins  | Vegetation  | Vegetation structure  | Average number of vegetation surfaces present across habitat stands: i) semi-natural grasslands ii) urban iii) MMH iv) sand dunes (Marine and Coastal Margins)  |
| Semi-natural grasslands MMH Farmland Freshwater Marine and Coastal Margins  | Species Composition  | Absence of invasive non-native species  | Invasive plant species - average % cover on:  i) semi-natural grassland stands ii) MMH habitat stands iii) farmland stands (Vegetation SONC indicator) iv) wetland habitat stands (Freshwater) v) sand dune and saltmarsh sands (Marine and Coastal Margins)  |
| MMH  | Vegetation  | Proportion of peat mass actively forming peat  | Average cover of 2m X 2m bog samples with Sphagna moss (% or Domin scale tbc)  |
| Farmland  | Vegetation  | Extent of small woodlands  | Metric to be developed  |
| Farmland  | Vegetation  | Extent and condition of hedgerows and lines of trees  | Metric to be developed  |
| Farmland  | Species Composition & Cultural: Nature  | Plant species diversity: arable and horticulture  | Average number of plant species in 2m x 2m plots  |
| Farmland  | Species Composition & Cultural: Nature  | Plant species diversity: improved grassland  | Average number of plant species in 2m x 2m plots  |
| Freshwater  | Vegetation  | Vegetation next to water bodies  | Average width (m) of vegetation between waterbody (rivers and streams) and cultivated or disturbed edge for: waterbodies under 1 m wide, waterbodies 1-2.5 m wide and waterbodies more than 2.5 m wide  |
| Freshwater  | Hydrology and geomorphology  | Pond number/density  | Metric to be developed  |
| Freshwater  | Hydrology and geomorphology  | Pond condition  | Metric to be developed  |