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Request for Quotation

Seagrass sub-feature within Annex 1 Habitats within two Special Areas of Conservation: Recommendations from Condition Assessments after restoration and pressure removal.

28/05/2024

Request for Quotation

Seagrass sub-feature within Annex 1 Habitats within two Special Areas of Conservation: Recommendations from Condition Assessments after restoration and pressure removal.

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

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

Email: Luke Marsh, [Luke.Marsh@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Luke.Marsh@naturalengland.org.uk)

Date: 30/06/2024

Time: 23:59

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

Luke Edwyn Marsh will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via 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 | 10/06/2024 at 12:00 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 23/06/2024 at 23:59 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 30/06/2024 at 23:59 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 12/07/2024 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 15/07/2024 |
| Intended Delivery Date | 18/10/2024 |

Section 1: General Information

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 Natural England who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

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

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

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.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

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 via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The terms and conditions: [Condensed Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) 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.

The Authority’s

* Standard Good and Services Terms & Conditions (used for purchases under £50k)

can be located on the [Defra Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/about/procurement) / [Natural England Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement)

and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT.

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.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority' with a publication threshold of '£12,000' inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, 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 supplier 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.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Section 2: The Invitation

## Natural England

Natural England is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

## The ReMEDIES Project

The LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES: ‘Reducing and Mitigating Erosion and Disturbance Impacts affecting the Seabed’ project (LIFE 18 NAT/UK/000039) runs from July 2019 - Oct 2024 and will improve the condition of seagrass beds in five Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) between Essex and Isles of Scilly. This will be achieved by restoration, demonstration and reducing recreational pressures. Promoting awareness, communications and inspiring better care of sensitive seabed habitats will be key. See [Save Our Seabed](https://saveourseabed.co.uk/) for further details.

Natural England, as lead partner, is working with [Marine Conservation Society](https://www.mcsuk.org/), [Ocean Conservation Trust](https://oceanconservationtrust.org/), [Plymouth City Council](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/)/[TECF](http://www.plymouth-mpa.uk/home/managing-the-mpa/tamar-estuaries-consultative-forum/) and [The Royal Yachting Association](https://www.rya.org.uk/) to achieve these goals. The project is financially supported by the [LIFE Programme](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en), a financial instrument of the European Commission.

## Seagrass Conservation

Seagrass beds occur in shallow sheltered marine environments, both subtidal and intertidal, with a wide but patchy distribution across England. Seagrass beds have also been recorded as declining in extent and health nationally. This has been attributed to high levels of anthropogenic activity pressures, with some beds in unfavourable condition for several protected sites, such as the Solent (Natural England, 2022a), The Isles of Scilly (Natural England, 2022b), and Plymouth Sound (Natural England, 2022c).

Apart from being a functional habitat supporting marine biodiversity and connectivity between other marine habitats, including supporting commercial fish species, seagrass have a role as a blue carbon sink. Through photosynthesis, seagrass will transfer dissolved CO2 from seawater to plant matter, storing and sequestering the subsequent carbon by burial in substrates. Seagrass also traps detritus other organic particulate matter storing this carbon transported from terrestrial and other marine habitats. From these processes, seagrass beds in the UK are estimated to have stored up to 11.5 mega-tonnes of carbon historically (Gregg et al., 2021), and are a future ‘nature-based solution’ for carbon offsetting.

As a nature and environmental asset, the Government in its 25-Year Environmental Plan for ‘securing clean, healthy, productive, and biologically diverse seas and oceans’, has seagrass beds as a priority habitat. Natural England is therefore committed to support the increase the scale and rate of implementation of estuarine and coastal restoration of seagrass.

Focus Sites within the ReMEDIES Project

Overview of Restoration and Methods

The focus of restoration has been subtidal seagrass beds and the species Zostera marina, sometimes named common eelgrass, or as hereafter common seagrass. However, intertidal seagrass, Zostera noltii or dwarf seagrass, does appear as a conservation feature at one of the restoration sites.

Five sites make up the project suite under the auspices of ReMEDIES, with two being targeted for active interventional seagrass restoration. Each of the five sites have their own combination of restoration techniques under a variety of (passive) indirect and broader educational actions, and (non-passive) proactive, targeted intervention measures.

The proactive measures were applied in Marine Management Organisation (MMO) licenced restoration areas of seabed and involved the addition of seagrass material in either seed or plant form into the present substrate. It was considered that proactive restoration would play a key role in moving sites toward Favourable Condition, as planting in these locations common seagrass would increase their extent and help to rebuild connectivity between seagrass beds improving their ability for sexual reproduction. These newly created seagrass areas would then be managed to grow into established beds. Additionally, a combination of Advanced Mooring Systems (AMS), Voluntary No-Anchor Zones (VNAZ), and swim markers were used to change behaviour and improve educational awareness. VNAZ used marker buoys to notify boat owners that they are in risk of mooring onto present seagrass, and targeted public engagement which sought to educate the recreational boating community and boating industry about boating impacts to common seagrass habitats. Lastly, Advanced Mooring Systems or AMS were used to prevent and reduce direct mooring-based impacts to current beds. AMS technology reduces seabed damage that can occur from the anchoring and mooring of recreational boats. A wider methodology for applied techniques in restoration can be found in the [Seagrass Restoration Handbook](https://researchportal.port.ac.uk/en/publications/seagrass-restoration-handbook-uk-and-ireland) (Gamble et al., 2021).

All the five sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in England and Wales. These techniques for restoration were carried out where seagrass beds had been lost, fragmented, or degraded by historic loss from either wasting disease, or anthropogenic activity such as mooring, anchoring, trampling, and certain demersal fishing practices such as potting or bottom-set gill and tangle nets within the SACs.

As sub-features of SACs, Natural England has a statutory duty to report on the condition of the seagrass bed communities within a SACs every six-years. In these reports, seagrass within the SACs is recorded by the EUNIS habitat classification system (see Moss, 2008), as either, in subtidal:

* A5.53, sublittoral seagrass beds
* A5.5331, Zostera marina [angustifolia] beds on lower shore or infralittoral clean or muddy sand

Or, intertidal:

* A2.61, seagrass beds on littoral sediments

This information provides a baseline understanding of the habitats, which ReMEDIES has been able to build on.

ReMEDIES Monitoring Site: Isles of Scilly Complex SAC

The Isles of Scilly are a granite archipelago south-west of the British mainland, with around 140 islands encompassing a rich diversity of marine habitats. Seagrass is listed as a sub-feature of the Isles of Scilly SAC, with the most recent Condition Assessment in 2020 recording it as ‘Unfavourable’/’Declining’.

A map of the world

Description automatically generated

Figure 1. Seagrass distribution in Isles of Scilly Complex SAC. Map shows the long-term monitoring sites by Project Seagrass of Broad Ledges Tresco (blt), Old Grimsby Harbour (ogh), West Broad Ledges (wbl), Higher Town Bay (htb), and Little Arthur (la).

ReMEDIES partner, [Project Seagrass](https://www.projectseagrass.org/), uses Isles of Scilly as one of their long-term monitoring sites, with five sampling location within the archipelago. This provides a baseline monitoring reference location.

## Active Restoration Site: Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC

Located on the south coast of England, Plymouth Sound and its associated tributaries comprise a complex mix of marine inlets with rich communities, some with unusual features representative of ria systems. Seagrass beds are fragmented within the SAC, with the largest bed at Cawsand Bay, whilst there are smaller beds to the north of Drake’s Island, Jennycliff Bay, and the mouth of the Yealm. The most recent Condition Assessment in 2021 has recorded all these common seagrass beds as ‘Unfavourable’/’Declining’, with Jennycliff Bay having 0.67 hectares of common seagrass in 2018.

A map of the ocean

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Figure 2. Seagrass distribution in Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC, with areas of OCT restoration, VNAZ and AMS. Ocean Conservation Trust’s Restoration Site of Jennycliff Bay and Cawsand on the southern border of the SAC are shown for reference.

Ocean Conservation Trust (OCT) used a combination of three main active methods of restoration, deploying up to 2023; 2 ha of seed bags (at 20,000 seeds per ha), 300 plant pillows/mats (600 per ha), and 1 ha of seed injection (at 10,000 activations per ha) within the restoration zone at Jennycliff Bay. This was applied in combination with VNAZ to exclude where possible impacts from recreational boaters. Across the bay, at Cawsand, AMS were applied on a dozen moorings using two designs of AMS; [Seaflex](https://www.seaflex.com/), and [Stirling](https://oceanconservationtrust.org/project/seagrass-moorings/) by OCT.

## Active Restoration Site: The Solent Maritime SAC

The Solent Maritime SAC incorporates inlets which have uncommon tidal regimes of double tides and long periods of tidal stand when at high and low. The Solent therefore provides equally distinctive maritime habitats. In 2019, Natural England’s Condition Assessment for seagrass recorded it as ‘Unfavourable’/’Unknown’. Common seagrass, though extensive in certain areas, is under pressure from a variety of anthropogenic activities including commercial fishing, recreational boating and boating-based activities, navel shipping, and water sport activities.

A map of the river

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Figure 3. Seagrass distribution in the Solent Maritime SAC, with areas of OCT restoration, VNAZ and AMS. Ocean Conservation Trust’s Restoration Site west of the mouth of the Beaulieu River, and the location of AMS at Cowes and VNAS east of that, at Osborne Bay are shown for reference.

Outside of the AMS at Cowes on the Medina River, Yarmouth to the west has four AMS, and VNAZ also has been installed in Osborne Bay, all to help manage anthropogenic pressure on the seagrass beds. Ocean Conservation Trust have two areas utilising two methods for restoration. Up to 2023, 1 ha of seed bags, and 0.36 ha by seed injection were positioned within the zones. This makes between Falmouth and Solent; Ocean Conservation Trusts have created 5.52 ha of common seagrass restoration potential.

For 2024, Ocean Conservation Trust were deploying another 0.33 ha of mats, and another 2.15 ha of seed injection to bring their total up to 8 ha of common seagrass planted for the ReMEDIES project.

## Recovery and Pressure Reduction Site: Fal and Helford SAC

The Fal and Helford SAC is complex system of rias returning into Falmouth Bay, including some of the deepest natural channels in Europe. As a result, it is rich in marine biodiversity, supporting many marine biotopes and habitats, with associated marine flora and fauna. This includes the slow growing calcareous algae Maerl (Rhodolith). In 2018, the common seagrass in the Fal and Helford SAC was recorded as ‘Unfavourable’/’No Change’, with large beds found at Durgan and St. Mawes under pressure from boating.

A map of the world

Description automatically generated

Figure 4. Seagrass distribution in the Fal and Helford SAC, with locations of VNAZ.VNAS locations in the Helford River at Durgan are shown for reference.

Initially, mitigating impacts to common seagrass at Durgan, in the Helford Estuary Marine Conservation Zone, were achieved by the deployment of VNAS. In 2020, Natural England conducted baseline surveys to observe the ongoing pressures the seagrass faces in Falmouth and Helford, to suggest how recovery could be supported. This gave a baseline for activities, and pressures that would impact common seagrass and adjoining species such as Maerl. More recently, [Falmouth Harbour Commissioners](https://www.falmouthharbour.co.uk/) have added a small amount of AMS to their moorings and are also monitoring their performance towards conservation common seagrass within the SAC (see, Spooner, 2023).

## Engagement and Recovery Site: Essex Estuaries SAC

As the second largest estuarine site on the east coast of England, the Essex Estuaries SAC is an example of a coastal plain estuary system. Supporting a range of estuarine and marine communities, it provides habitats on sediments ranging from the finer estuarine muds and muddy sands to the coarser sands and gravels. Recorded as ‘Unfavourable’/’Declining’ in 2022, with trampling (Howard-Williams, 2022), and predation from birds (Unsworth et al., 2021), as pressures on seagrass.

A map of the ocean

Description automatically generated

Figure 5. seagrass distribution in Essex Estuaries SAC. The location of seagrass on the Blackwater River is shown for reference.

The Essex Estuaries SAC is part of the ReMEDIES project as it contains seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and 15 other protected areas, including five special protected areas focusing on the protection of internationally important bird species.

Specification of Requirements

# Technical requirements for the contractor

The requirement of this contract is to produce an account and evaluation of the ReMEDIES project outcomes, by making an evidence-based ‘Recommendation for Condition Assessment’ of the sub-features of seagrass where pressures have been removed and seagrass restored areas in the SACs. This will be primarily focused on restoration in the sites of, 1; Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC, and 2; Fal and Helford SAC. The contractor will also have to refer to and incorporate some detail from the other ReMEDIES project SAC sites, and their restoration and pressure removal achievements for consistency. Drawing on broader habitat-based restoration/recovery benefits will support any recommendations made, but the contractor will only focus on the two SACs of Falmouth and Helford, and Plymouth Sound and Estuaries, to achieve the main requirements for the contract.

## Report Scope

To make the ‘Recommendation for Condition Assessment’, the contractor will be required to answer questions using the ReMEDIES reports library and the associated data from them to support the evidence for the answers provided. The contractor must provide:

* ‘Recommendation for Condition’ of the common seagrass within the SACs of Plymouth Sound and Estuaries and Fal and Helford, with mearl in the latter SAC, over and towards post-ReMEDIES operations.
* Recommendations for the drivers in the gains made from the pressure removal/restoration work undertaken within the SACs over the project duration.
* Recommendations to how other habitats, and specifically maerl, benefited from these interventions.
* Recommendations for the future towards lesson learnt, and key information to be shared for seagrass restoration and conservation identified from this project.

Note: The active restoration site of the Solent SAC is not to be included in the report outside of forming part of the background information and context for the ReMEDIES project generally, as this SAC is being addressed in a dedicated Solent SAC reporting stream.

## Outputs Required

The aim is for Natural England to have a publication for in-house use and to be shared between partner organisations for improving and managing future restoration/nature recovery work, potential Marine Net Gain, and benthic compensation opportunities. Within the timeframe provided, the contractor is to provide to Natural England:

Part 1

* A written (word doc) report within the scope outlined in Report Scope, page 18. This should be completed on the [Natural England Report Template](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5790636781600768).
* A method for how the contractor’s recommendations, following Report Scope, page 18, were established.
* An analysis of the project’s restoration achievements, that is based on the literature documenting the changes in the seagrass published by the ReMEDIES project, Natural England, and its project partners. Any analysis used should be repeatable and transparent. Any statistical modelling element in the analysis should be completed in R programming language, and the associated scripts with their library packages used, stated, and provided to Natural England.
* Any spatial modelling or mapping in GIS are required to be compatible with the GIS software of Esri’s ArcGIS, or QGIS. The process should be documented to ensure it is repeatable. Any contractor created layer files for use in presentation or spatial analysis in the publication should be provided to Natural England.

Part 2

* An overview presentation (PowerPoint/.pptx) of the initial method and results, following Part 1.

Note: the contractor is not expected to present the PowerPoint, only to supply the slides for use by Natural England in upcoming conferences, by the 23/09/2024. The content of this, can be agreed with Natural England.

## Supporting information

The contractor will be provided with the full library of the reports carried out by Natural England and its partners through the ReMEDIES project no earlier than 31st July. There will also be the associated data for these reports provided, and together these will form the basis for meeting the outputs required. An initial library of reports is provided in the suggested library, page 22.

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Gardiner, T., Pullen, J., & Cameron, T.C., (2023), Seagrass in the Stour, Orwell and Blackwater 2020/21, Natural England Commissioned Report, NECR481, Natural England

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Moss D., (2008), EUNIS habitat classification – a guide for users, European Topic Centre on biological diversity, 2008, European Environment Agency, available [HERE](https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/eunis-habitat-classification/documentation/eunis-habitat-classification-users-guide-v2.pdf/file#:~:text=The%20EUNIS%20habitat%20classification%20is,at%20the%20first%20three%20levels.)

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Natural England, (2022b), Seagrass Natural Capital Assessment: The Isles of Scilly Complex SAC, Natural England Commissioned Report NECR419, <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4678565814861824>

Natural England, (2022c), Seagrass Natural Capital Assessment: Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC, Natural England Commissioned Report NECR420, <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6641642760306688>

R Gregg, J. L. Elias, I Alonso, I.E. Crosher, P Muto & M.D. Morecroft, (2021), Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence (second edition), Natural England Research Report NERR094, Natural England, (2021), York

Spooner, V., (2023), Falmouth Harbour Advanced Mooring System (AMS) Trial Report, Falmouth Harbour Commiosiners, TEVI, 2023

Unsworth, RKF., Butterworth, E., Freeman, AS., Fox, AD., & Priscott, (2021), The ecosystem service role of UK Seagrass meadows, Project Seagrass, May, 2021, Bridgend, Wales

Suggested ReMEDIES literature - monitoring reports, to date

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Publication | Method | epiphyte cover/presence | infection cover/presence | canopy height | leaf area index | flower presence | extent | coverage % | shoot count/density | substrate type | INNS presence |
| Bull & Kenyon, 2020 | quadrates | y | y | y | y |  |  |  | y |  |  |
| Bull & Kenyon, 2021 | quadrates | y | y | y | y |  |  |  | y |  |  |
| Kenworthy, 2021 | DDV quadrates/  echosounder |  |  |  |  |  | y | y |  |  |  |
| Doggett & Northen, 2024 | quadrates | y | y | y |  | y |  | y | y | y | y |
| Bunker & Green, 2019 | DDV quadrates/  quadrates | y | y | y |  |  |  | y | y | y |  |
| Gardiner et al., 2023 | Transect/  drone |  |  |  |  |  | y | y |  |  |  |
| Bull & Keynon, 2015 | quadrates | y | y | y | y |  |  |  | y |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Note: this library forms the foundation to the reports provided through ReMEDIES by Natural England, to meet the reporting criteria.

Payment

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

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. This should be submitted to Natural England at the end of the project, following the dates provided Intended Delivery Date.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 1-month, to end no later than [insert dd/mm/yy]. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

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

Technical – 50%

Commercial – 50%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 50% technical and 50% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 50% | Product Proposal | Methodology | 2 Questions  Q1.1 (40% of technical score available)  Q1.2 (10% of technical score available) |
| Commercial | 50% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model and value | 1 Question  Q2 (40% of commercial score available) |

Technical (50%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Sco res for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Technical | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1.1 Quality of proposal for report content and data analysis. | 1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |
| Q1.2 Ensuring delivery | 1) Demonstrate the work is achievable within the timeframe provided.  2) Have information in sufficient detail to ensure a full appraisal of the ability to deliver for the project. |
| Responses should not exceed four sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. | |

Commercial (50%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a 'fixed price' which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against 'objectives' used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

* Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x 50% (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 50% (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted  If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_