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Request for Quotation

## 

## Request for Quotation

**Review of impacts of cutting on peatlands and heathlands**

**: An Evidence Review**

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:

Email: alistair.crowle@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: 31 October 2022

Time: 18:00

Ensure you state the reference code IMPCUT and “final submission” in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timeline**

Alistair Crowle 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.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 10 October 2022 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 28 October 2022 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 31 October 2022 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 9 November 2022 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 01 December 2022 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | First draft – TBC  Final report – 15 March 2023 |

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period to end no later than 31 March 2023. 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 advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

### 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):

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| --- | --- |
| “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 attached [Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) (under European Union threshold contracts - standard condensed terms and conditions) 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. Please note that this includes clause 12 which details that all Intellectual Property Rights for the work shall be vested in the Authority.

#### 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/)

**The Chief Scientists Directorate (CSD)**

The Chief Scientist Directorate provides scientific and evidence leadership, services and support to help Natural England operate as an evidence-led organisation. The Team provides access to evidence and services to others in Natural England; particularly the management of a range of evidence projects which include Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) Pilot, Long Term Monitoring, People and Nature Survey and a range of data and analytical services. We provide specialist advice across NE’s delivery remit and lead work to implement our Monitoring Strategy and develop new approaches and tools. We also provide evaluation, capability building, communications and programme management functions for the organisation’s Science & Evidence Programme.

1. Background to the project

Managing vegetation by cutting it with machinery has been in use for many years but the impacts of this practice upon upland habitats has not been quantified. Natural England has a requirement for understanding the impact on ecosystem services of the management of vegetation on heathland and ombrotrophic (blanket bog and raised mire) peatland by cutting.

2. Scope of the work

1. Conduct a review of literature to assess the level of available information.
2. If 1. above concludes that there is a meaningful body of evidence to draw upon, then carry out a rapid evidence review based upon the following questions:
3. What is the effect of cutting upon composition and structure of vegetation on heathland and ombrotrophic peatland?
4. What is the effect of upon the hydrological function and water quality of ombrotrophic peatland and heathland, of cutting vegetation?
5. What is the effect of cutting of vegetation on ombrotrophic peatland and heathland upon carbon budgets of these habitats?
6. What is the effect of cutting of vegetation on ombrotrophic peatland and heathland upon the associated fauna of these habitats?

3. Method

The evidence review will use an appropriate standard literature review method that is similar to the Natural England Evidence Reviews: guidance on the development process and methods ([Natural England Evidence Reviews: guidance on the development process and methods - NEER001](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5724390?category=5968803)) to ensure:

* it is rigorous
* it is repeatable
* the information within is trusted
* it can become a document within the Natural England Evidence Catalogue.

It is expected that the contractor will describe the method they use, with deviations from NEER001 justified and fully detailed. Similar upland evidence reviews can be found here: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4993022171283456>

1. Project Initiation

Once Natural England has awarded the contract, a meeting will be convened to discuss outstanding issues and to ensure the contractor is clear on the project requirement and time-frame.

6. Project Outputs

The project will begin with the production of a literature review that will be used to determine whether an evidence review is an appropriate next step.

If the project moves to the evidence review phase, the project will deliver a fully referenced single report (with executive summary and appendices) that will gather and evaluate the strength of the existing evidence on the impacts of cutting vegetation upon peatland and heathland and what can be implemented to mitigate these impacts. The report will also identify any outstanding evidence gaps.

This report will be delivered as an initial draft for comment. Natural England staff will return comments. A final report will be produced that takes account of / incorporates these comments. A meeting to discuss the initial draft and comments can be requested by the contractor.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, provided as a net amount excluding VAT, stating the relevant VAT rate you will apply to your invoice (e.g. standard, outside scope, exempt, zero), the separate VAT amount in £ GBP if appropriate, and a gross value (inclusive of any VAT).

**Quotation Submission**

Key staff working on this contract must be detailed in the quotation along with their experience in the undertaking evidence or literature reviews clearly identified.

Please also include the following information in your quotation:

* Proposed method;
* Timeframes for achieving the project described in the specification;
* Recent experience of carrying out similar contracts;
* How you will access academic literature;
* Internal quality assurance measures; and
* Insurances and accreditations.

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

Price – 50%

Quality – 50%

The quality criteria, as bullet-pointed above, will be scored in accordance with the below scoring system.

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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 Alistair Crowle ([alistair.crowle@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:alistair.crowle@naturalengland.org.uk)) who will be in touch to arrange a kick off and scoping meeting with the successful contractor as soon as possible after contract award. A further meeting can be requested by the successful contractor to discuss comments and feedback provided by Natural England staff on the draft report.

We will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award. A single invoice for the works will be paid upon submission of the final agreed report.

### 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.