

C21744 ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FRAMEWORK 4 (EcoSF4)

**PROJECT FORM AND CONFIRMATION OF INSTRUCTIONS
PART 1
PROJECT DETAILS, SPECIFICATION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**

To be completed by Contracting Authority Project Manager

Project title: tNCEA - Morphology Condition Assessment – Phase 1

Atamis Project Ref: C32637

Date: 09/01/2026

Name of Contracting Authority:	Environment Agency (EA)
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Project Manager:	██████████	Project manager's phone number:	██████████
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Budget Holder:	██████████	Cost code:	██████████
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Commercial Contact:	██████████	Project Manager's email:	██████████
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Project Start Date	12/01/2026
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Project Completion Date	31/03/2026
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For any projects over £10k, full competition is required (i.e. all suppliers on the appropriate Lot invited to quote).	Direct Award		Mini-comp		x	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call off from Lot number (please tick)	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	x	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Proposal return date: (no less than 10 working days from current date)	05/01/2026 @ 12:00
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Evaluation criteria: (for work over £10k project managers need to prepare and complete an evaluation model on receipt of tender submissions). Please note price and quality weightings are flexible within the following range: Quality 70% - 30% and Price 30% - 70%, and you may alter the quality sub-criteria weightings. Optional: If a minimum score threshold is set for any criteria this must be stated in the table. If not used, please delete the wording.

Contractors: Failure to meet the minimum score threshold stated will result in the bid being removed from the process with no further evaluation regardless of other quality or price scores.

Price	Weighting	30%
Quality	Weighting	70%

Quality Sub-Criteria Weightings:

A01 - Approach & Methodology:	<p>Demonstrate your understanding of the importance and extent of the required task.</p> <p>Set out in detail each element of the methodology and how this will be carried out, including the approach, design, analytical strategy.</p> <p>Any input required from the Authority should be outlined, as well as the approach to dissemination and review of the findings.</p> <p>Your response must not exceed 3 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. Links to other documents will not be considered as part of your response e.g. links to published documents online. Please upload a document with the filename: 'A01_Your Company Name'</p>	40%
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A02 - Proposed Staff (inc Pen Portraits) and Contractor's experience/accreditations:	<p>Provide details of the proposed project team and team structure, including any sub-contractors and/or associates.</p> <p>CVs for all staff should be submitted to support the response and include a table showing the staff days expected to be spent on the project per task, this table should match the staff days in the cost proposal.</p>	40%
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	<p>Our aim would be to get a good sense of how many people would be allocated to this task as well as their knowledge and experience in this area.</p> <p>Please do not include costing in your response.</p> <p>Your response must not exceed 2 side of A4, Arial font size 12 plus upto eight (8) CVs. Links to other documents will not be considered as part of your response e.g. links to published documents online, etc. Please upload a document with the filename: 'A02_Your Company Name'</p>	
A03 - Project Management (including project plan)	<p>CVs for all staff submitted in A02 to support this response and include a table showing the staff days expected to be spent on the project per task, this table should match the staff days in the cost proposal.</p> <p>Submit proposed project management arrangements including day to day working for the project, the proposed timetable for the project, risk log and mitigation actions and a Gantt chart presenting milestones, deliverables, timelines and inter-dependencies.</p> <p>Specify how you will engage in the task and how it will be completed within the required timeframe.</p> <p>Please do not include costing in your response.</p> <p>Your response must not exceed 2 side of A4, Arial font size 12 plus Gantt chart. Links to other documents will not be considered as part of your response e.g. links to published documents online. Please upload a document with the filename: 'A03_Your Company Name'</p>	20%
Health & Safety		N/A
Sustainability Considerations (e.g. Travel management, reduction of carbon footprint, bio-security etc.)		N/A
Quality Assurance		N/A

The Technical (Quality) evaluation will account for 70% of the total score. All responses will be scored in accordance with the detailed guidance within the Authority's eSourcing System and detailed evaluation criteria below.

Tenderers must achieve a minimum Descriptor of 50 (the 'Technical Threshold') in order to progress to the Commercial evaluation. Tenderers who fail to achieve the stated Technical Thresholds will not proceed to the Commercial evaluation.

Evaluation Stage 2 (Commercial)	Evaluation Criteria	Question Scoring / Weighting (%)
	B01 (Pricing) - Prices will be evaluated in accordance with criteria set out in the Pricing Schedule and eSourcing System.	Scored
<p>The Commercial evaluation will account for 30% of the Total Score. No threshold - Include all costs and VAT clearly itemised within Pricing Schedule breakdown document (B02). Please download, complete and upload the breakdown document unto the eSourcing system. All responses will be scored in accordance with the detailed guidance within the Authority's eSourcing System and detailed evaluation guidance are below.</p>		
Evaluation Stage 3	Section Reference	Calculation

	Final score	<p>The final score is calculated by adding the total Technical weighted score with the total Commercial weighted score.</p> <p>The most economically advantageous tender will be the Tender with the highest final score.</p>
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For each of the Strategic Themes, the score attributed will reflect the relative scoring which means that all individual scores are normalised against a maximum score (i.e. the weighting).

The highest score achieved by any single supplier will be ranked number 1 and shall receive the maximum possible weighted marks, with all other scores being a percentage of the maximum.

Evaluation of Responses

Evaluation of Responses will be undertaken by a panel appointed by the Authority. Each panel member will first undertake an independent evaluation of the Responses applying the relevant evaluation criteria for each question. Then, a moderation meeting will be held at which the evaluation panel will reach a consensus on the marking of each question.

During the consensus meeting, the decision may be taken that a Response will not be carried forward to the next evaluation stage if the consensus view is that the Tenderer has failed to meet any minimum or mandatory requirements, and/or provided a non-compliant response.

Scoring Criteria

The following scoring criteria is to be used when evaluating responses to Stage 1 Technical Questions. A Tenderer's response will be assessed against the detailed criteria provided for each question **A01 – A03** and be assigned a Descriptor and score from the table below:

Descriptor	Score	Definition
Very good	100	Addresses all the Authority's requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the Bidder Pack. 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 Bidder Pack. 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 Bidder Pack. 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.

Calculation Method

Providing the bidder has met any mandatory criteria and minimum quality thresholds, the total weighted scores are calculated as follows:

Technical (WT)

First divide **Bidder's Total Technical Score** by the **Highest Technical Score**, then multiply by the **Technical weighting** to get the **Technical weighted score**.

$$\frac{\text{Bidder's Total Technical Score}}{\text{Highest Technical Score}} \times \text{Technical Weighting (70\%)} = \text{Technical weighted score}$$

Commercial (WC)

First divide **Lowest Commercial Score** by the **Bidder's Total Commercial Score**, then multiply by the **Commercial weighting** to get the **Commercial weighted score**.

$$\frac{\text{Lowest Commercial Score}}{\text{Bidder's Total Commercial Score}} \times \text{Commercial Weighting (30\%)} = \text{Commercial weighted score}$$

For example, if three Tenders are received and Tenderer A has quoted £3,000 as their total price, Tenderer B has quoted £5,000 and Tenderer C has quoted £6,000 then the calculation will be as follows:

Tenderer A Score = £3000/£3000 x 30% (Maximum available marks) = 30%

Tenderer B Score = £3000/£5000 x 30% (Maximum available marks) = 18%

Tenderer C Score = £3000/£6000 x 30% (Maximum available marks) = 15%

Final Score

The Total Score (weighted) is then calculated by adding the Total Weighted Technical Score to the Total Weighted Commercial Score: **WT+ WC**.

Specification (Details to be provided by the Contracting Authority Project Manager)
Please detail the Contractor's required Limitation of Liability. If no sum is stated, the Contract Price for the Services performed or to be performed under the Contract or five million pounds whichever is the greater will apply.
1. Description of work required – overall purpose & scope (including reporting requirements)
<p>Background</p> <p>England's rivers are fundamental to the country's natural capital, supporting biodiversity, regulating hydrology, and delivering a wide range of ecosystem services. Their physical structure plays a critical role in determining habitat quality, ecological condition, and resilience to environmental change. However, centuries of human intervention have significantly altered these systems. Channel straightening, embankments, dredging, and impoundments have disrupted natural processes, simplified habitat structure, and contributed to widespread ecological degradation, making them one of the most pervasive pressures on freshwater ecosystems. Despite this, there is currently no holistic national approach for assessing and classifying river morphology across the entire river network in a way that links physical form to ecological function. Existing approaches are fragmented across disciplines and agencies, limiting the ability to compare river systems, monitor change, or target restoration effectively. This gap in evidence and differing methodologies presents a major challenge, particularly in the context of the UK's commitments to improving the condition of its natural assets.</p> <p>The development of a Riverine Morphology Condition Assessment (MCA) for England responds to a clear business need and various technical challenges faced by the Environment Agency (EA). The proposed MCA directly supports the goals of the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) programme to build a robust, spatially explicit baseline of England's natural environment by 2029. Morphology is a critical layer in this evidence base. Without a</p>

consistent understanding of physical river condition, it is difficult to interpret ecological status, detect degradation or recovery, or model ecosystem service delivery. Traditional monitoring techniques involve recording morphological features in the field. The coverage these field surveys provide, while extensive, is only a fraction of the river network. River Habitat Survey (RHS) is by far the most well used technique in EA and is rightly an integral part of NCEA river monitoring programmes. New technologies do however provide an opportunity for innovation with greater spatial coverage of the river network and ability to develop new measurements tailored to meet current business needs. These technologies include use of artificial intelligence / deep learning models to analyse newly available earth observation data, proliferation of remote sensing data such as LIDAR and improved modelling and interpolation techniques. Previous NCEA funded projects have shown that these emerging technologies cannot yet create habitat data at the granularity of field surveys such as RHS or MoRPh. They can however produce a range of different and complimentary measurements of river morphology and process indicators that are potentially highly useful to augment field surveys and meet the wider needs of the NCEA programme.

Recent developments in European river assessment frameworks provide a strong foundation and key starting point for this proposal. The REstoring rivers FOR effective catchment Management (REFORM) project and CEN guidance standard on determining the degree of modification of river hydromorphology (BSI CEN/TR 17005) should be used as a basis from which to build the proposed morphology evidence hub and condition metrics. While the proposed approach outlined in this scope may adopt different metrics or data sources to REFORM or CEN, utilisation of these standards and tools will be a key starting point for the proposed work, ensuring it is grounded in established science, compatible with wider European practices, and capable of delivering robust, business relevant outputs.

Aim

This proposal is for a Phase 1 in the development of the River Morphology Condition Assessment (MCA). Phase 1 will be delivered by March 2026. In recognition of this limited timeframe, Phase 1 will focus on three key aims:

1. The conceptual development and stakeholder engagement around a single morphological assessment metric as a 'proof of concept' approach. This metric will be 'river connectivity', and we are interested in longitudinal, lateral and vertical components of this.
2. Development of options and prototype for a morphological evidence hub tool. For phase 1 this would be in the context of input and output data linked to the connectivity metric. This would serve to display and demonstrate how a future morphology evidence hub encompassing data to derive multiple metrics could work and function.
3. Defining an appropriate list of additional metrics that can underpin a future MCA and / or Morphological Classification, beyond 'river connectivity', and including an assessment of data needs and availability.

This approach will lay the groundwork for longer term development of an integrated MCA and classification utilising multiple metrics and providing a scalable, consistent, evidence-based approach to assessing river morphology across the entire English river system. Collectively it is envisaged these outputs will meet NCEA requirements and also be scalable and adaptable such that they can meet the full and diverse range of EA business needs. Further technical detail of the proposed MCA system and how this Phase 1 project fits into wider the wider delivery context is outlined in Appendix 1 (provided).

2. Information to be returned by the Contractor and the section of Part 2 the information should be provided in.

Approach and Methodology (including Health & Safety, Sustainability and Quality Assurance unless being evaluated separately):

1. Literature review report covering existing data sources and analysis approaches used to understand and measure connectivity in river systems. We are interested in all aspects of connectivity including, lateral, longitudinal and vertical. This review should include all data sources and analysis techniques currently in use.
2. Arrange, hold and report stakeholder workshops and feedback sessions to fully identify EA business needs across multiple functions to guide and steer project.

3. Technical report that outlines options and recommendations for development of a draft connectivity metric/s for MCA. This should include identifying input data, proposed data synthesis, outputs and scoring options. This will incorporate outputs from the literature review on current practices and also include assessment of the potential for use of new data sources or approaches such as machine learning / AI. We would also expect recommendations on how to combine or nest data from different spatial scales into a morphological evidence hub.
4. Produce a prototype mapping and visualisation tool to display connectivity metric outputs and provide a basis for an interface for a future 'morphology evidence hub'. It is expected this product will be a 'proof of concept' and include test outputs on an agreed area which will outline possible display and functionality options. It is not envisaged this prototype will be fully operational after Phase 1.
5. Produce recommendations and proposals for a Phase 2 project development including other metrics to include in a future MCA.

Project Management (including programme plan):

- Phase 1 Completion Date: March 2026
- Submit proposed project management arrangements including day to day working for the project, the proposed timetable for the project, risk log and mitigation actions and a Gantt chart presenting milestones, deliverables, timelines and inter-dependencies.
- CVs for all staff should be submitted to support the response and include a table showing the staff days expected to be spent on the project per task, this table should match the staff days in the cost proposal.
- Specify how you will engage in the task and how it will be completed within the required timeframe.

2. Required skills / experience from the contractor and staff. Include any essential qualifications or accreditations required to undertake the work. Please provide details for any sub-contractors being used.

The project team must include fluvial geomorphologists with extensive applied experience and proven project delivery. The project team should include geomorphology specialists with:

- expert knowledge of geomorphological and other relevant data and evidence to characterise the operation of natural processes at a range of scales
- prior experience in the development of metrics to describe river morphological condition applicable at a range of scales
- applied experience of the range of potential applications for morphological condition assessment at a range of scales
- data & information management and geospatial data expertise

The project team should also be able to access expertise on remote sensing, modelling and machine learning / AI technologies in the context of application to geospatial and geomorphological data and processes.

Information to be returned by the Contractor in Part 2 Section 3

3. Proposed programme of work and payment table (Detailing specific tasks, key milestones, deliverables & completion date where appropriate) Payment schedule should detail the % amount that will be paid after delivery of each task (We always hold back a minimum of 30% until the project is complete. Set out how you want the Section 7 cost proposal table broken down (eg. by key task/sub-tasks; deliverable etc).

Task no.	Task and deliverable	Completion date	Payment schedule
1.1	Present update on literature review options considered and findings around connectivity metric at progress review to be approved by EA project steering group	13/02/2026	10%
1.2	Produce final connectivity metric literature review report	31/03/2026	10%
2.1	Arrange and hold a series of workshops with potential stakeholders (EA end users of system) to ensure full support and that their needs are met and reflected in prototype connectivity metric.	13/02/2026	20%
2.2	Produce report on workshop findings to such that this can inform future phases of MCA development.	31/03/2026	10%
3.1	Present update on progress on technical report that outlines options and recommendations for development of a draft connectivity metric/s for MCA. To be approved by EA Steering Group	13/02/2026	10%

3.2	Produce final technical report on options and recommendations for development of a draft connectivity metric/s for MCA.	31/03/2026	10%
3.1	Present progress update on production of prototype morphological evidence hub interface/tool for connectivity metric, to be approved by EA steering group.	13/02/2026	10%
3.2	Produce prototype product that shows proof of concept for how a morphology evidence hub and MCA might look in relation to a connectivity metric.	31/03/2026	10%
4.0	Produce detailed plan with recommendations and proposals for a Phase 2 project development including other metrics to include in a future MCA	31/03/2026	10%

Note: The following information is managed at framework level and should not be repeated unless there are specific requirements that relate to your project. General requirements should be covered in Section 1 and be included in the Contractors reply to the Approach and Methodology section unless you are using the optional evaluation criteria. Delete sections if not required.

4. Health and Safety Requirements	
<i>Note: Only include if high risk activities being undertaken e.g. working at height, near or over water). Do not request RAMS or similar risk assessments are returned with submissions. These should only be requested at contract award.</i>	
NA for this phase of work which will be desk based, any meetings to be held remotely.	
Information to be returned by the Contractor in Part 2 Section 4	
5. Sustainability Considerations	
<i>Note: Only include if project has high risk/impact sustainability considerations e.g.travel, carbon footprint, specific bio-security risks etc. that need to be managed.</i>	
NA for this phase of work which will be desk based, any meetings to be held remotely.	
Information to be returned by the Contractor in Part 2 Section 5	
6. Quality Assurance	
<i>Note: Only use if there are specific QA requirements that need to be evidenced e.g. specific UKAS accreditations, chain of custody, reporting protocols etc. Do not request details of standard ISO accreditations. .</i>	
Quality Assurance for Phase 1 outputs will be provided via ongoing review of work by an EA steering group comprised of relevant subject matter experts. The contractor delivery schedule should include provision for regular review and input from EA expert steering group.	
Information to be returned by the Contractor in Part 2 Section 6	

**C21744 ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FRAMEWORK 4 (EcoSF4)
SCHEDULE B PROJECT FORM AND CONFIRMATION OF INSTRUCTIONS**

**PART 2
TASK QUOTATION SHEET**

To be completed by Framework Contractor

Framework Contractor Name		Ove Arup & Partners Limited Primary	
Contractor Project Manager Name		[REDACTED]	
Contractor project manager phone number	[REDACTED]	Contractor project manager e-mail address	[REDACTED]

Note: Your proposal must not exceed 6 sides of A4 plus the Costs Proposal in Section 4 (unless otherwise indicated in project client’s specification above). Attachments must not be included unless requested with the exception of a programme diagram and full cost schedule if you consider these would support your proposal.

Do not make or append Caveats and Assumptions in your proposal – any points of uncertainty must be raised as a clarification point prior to submitting the proposal. Where assumptions are to be made, these will be stated by the Authority’s Project Manager.

1. A01 - Approach & Methodology

Response attached separately.

2. A02 - Proposed Staff who will do the work and briefly state previous relevant qualification/experience. Contractors experience of undertaking similar projects and accreditations (if requested)

Response attached separately.

3. A03 - Project Management (inc Project plan).

Response attached separately.

4. Health & Safety (only complete if requested in defined evaluation criteria)

N/A

5. Sustainability (only complete if requested in defined evaluation criteria)

N/A

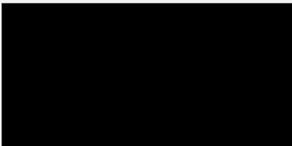
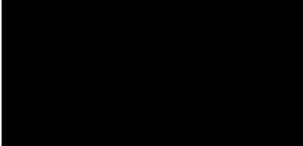
6. Quality Assurance (only complete if requested in defined evaluation criteria)

7. Cost Proposal

Please use day rates, including any applicable discounts, as agreed under the framework contract. A full cost schedule may be attached to support the costs summarised below.

Task No.	Name	Framework Grade	Day Rate	No. of Days or part thereof	Cost
■	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Total staff costs					£42,115.00
Expenses:					
1. Mileage					
				Total miles (at 45p per mile)	N/A

2. Accommodation and meals	Number of days	Number of people	N/A
3. Other expenses	Detail		N/A
Total expenses cost			£0.00
Total overall cost			£42,115.00
8.-Terms & Conditions			
Note to contractor – All call off contracts under the Ecological Services Framework are subject to the terms and conditions agreed at framework award, including the Prior Rights Schedule and GDPR Schedule completed at award of the call-off contract.			
Notes	You must have a purchase order number from the Contracting Authority before you start any work in connection with this proposal. If you have carried out a protected species survey, data collected must be uploaded onto the NBN network. Please take account of this in your quote.		
By signing this form (<i>Insert Contractors Name</i>) agree to provide the services stated above for the cost set out in your Cost Proposal and in accordance with the Ecological Services Framework 3 Agreement Terms and additional appendices (if used).			
Contractor Project Manager:	Submitted via Atamis		
Signature:	Submitted via Atamis		
Date:	05/01/2026		

9. Confirmation of Instructions (Contracting Authority Project Manager to complete)	
Notes	All agreed post submission amendments to scope, proposal, timetable or costs must be updated in the sections above prior to accepting the proposal. A commission code (also known as an approval reference number) must be obtained from the Framework Manager prior to confirming award and must be quoted on your purchase order. An Atamis reference should be obtained from Commercial if the project has been issued via Atamis, and quoted on your purchase order.
Supplier_Signature	
	
Full Name:	
Job Title/Role:	
Date Signed:	09-01-2026
Authority_Signature	
	
Full Name:	
Job Title/Role:	
Date Signed:	09/01/26

Commission Code (i.e. 'approval reference number')	TBC
Purchase Order No.	TBC
Atamis Ref (if applicable)	C32637

The completed Project Form should be returned to the Contractor as authorisation to commence work. A copy must be provided to the named Commercial Lead if the award has been conducted via Atamis.

**C21744 ECOLOGICAL SERVICES FRAMEWORK 4 (EcoSF4)
SCHEDULE B PROJECT FORM AND CONFIRMATION OF INSTRUCTIONS**

**PART 3
CHANGE CONTROL SCHEDULE**

Notes	<p>To be completed by Contracting Authority Project Manager Any extensions, price changes or amendments to existing orders need to be discussed with the Framework Manager and Defra group Commercial before being agreed with the Contractor. Please remember to amend your Purchase Order in SOP if necessary.</p> <p>The table below should be used to record and authorise the agreed changes throughout the project. A Change Control Notice (CCN) should be completed for substantial changes to the project and a summary provided in the table below.</p> <p>Send a copy of the revised Project Form and CCN (if used) to the Contractor once the change has been agreed and approved. A copy should also be sent to your Commercial Lead if an Atamis reference has been provided.</p>
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10. Change Control All amendments to project scope, timetable or costs must be submitted to and approved by the Contracting Authority PM prior to implementing the change.				
Change Details	CCN Ref. (if applicable)	Revised completion date (if applicable)	Revised Project Cost (if applicable)	Approved by (Contracting Authority's PM) / Date