Request for Quotation

Using natural capital risk evidence in strategic risk management

July 2024

Request for Quotation

**Using natural capital risk evidence in strategic risk management**

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: miriam.dobson@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: 02/08/24

Time: 17:00

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

Miriam Dobson 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 | **5th July 2024** at 12:00 BST |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 26th July 2024 at 17:00 BST |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 2nd August 2024 at 17:00 BST |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 9th August 2024 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 12th August 2024 |
| Intended Delivery Date | 31st March 2025 |

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 Authority’s

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

can be located on the [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

Specification of Requirements

Background to Natural England

Natural England is the Government’s statutory advisor for the natural environment, playing a vital role in delivering the Government’s [25 Year Environment Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan). This describes an ambitious vision, bringing new opportunities to protect and enhance, and to achieve real outcomes for the environment.

Natural England was formally established on 1st October 2006 following the successful passage of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 through Parliament. We are an independent statutory Non-Departmental Public Body. 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.

Natural England's priorities aim for thriving nature for people and planet, with people connected to the natural environment for their own and society’s wellbeing, enjoyment and prosperity. It also prioritises improvements in the natural capital that drives sustainable economic growth, healthy food systems and prospering communities. Further information about the Authority can be found at: [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/).

Background to this work

Natural England’s forthcoming *State of Natural Capital Report* (SONC) uses the best available evidence to report on the state of, and risks to, England’s natural capital. It is specifically aimed at an audience across UK government departments, which includes both environmental and non-environmental professionals. The report sets out the risks to England’s ecosystems, and the benefits they provide, and the consequences of further environmental degradation for six specific policy areas: economic resilience, Net Zero, food security, health and wellbeing, climate adaptation, and water security. This is further supported by the Natural Capital Risk Register technical report, which details the methodology behind assigning risk levels to natural capital assets and benefits from nature, based on past and current/ongoing drivers of change.

The SONC presents ‘natural capital risk evidence’. This involves assigning risk ratings (one of low, medium, medium-high or high) to our ecosystem assets (e.g. woodlands; freshwaters and wetlands) and the benefits they provide (e.g. pollination; timber; climate regulation). These risks ratings are informed by the impact to date, and current/ongoing impact, of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)’ direct drivers of change to biodiversity and ecosystems. These are land/sea-use change, resource use and exploitation, pollution, invasive species, and climate change. For the six policy areas outlined above, the SONC highlights how the delivery of their objectives is dependent on benefits from nature, and sets out which of these benefits are at highest risk from the drivers of change. It sets out the consequences of losing these benefits, and opportunities to protect and enhance those benefits and thereby build resilience into policy delivery. We want this evidence to have an impact on decision-making, so decisions take account of nature and nature-related risks, using and influenced by the evidence in the SONC.

**Aim**

The aim of this contract is twofold. We would like to understand how the SONC’s natural capital risk evidence (on risks to ecosystems, and risks to benefits from nature) fits into the national risk space (e.g., guidance like the Orange Book, work on acute risks including the National Risk Register, ongoing work on [chronic risk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/integrated-review-refresh-2023-responding-to-a-more-contested-and-volatile-world)). We also want to investigate how natural capital risk can be best presented for application in strategic risk management frameworks, for those who use risk evidence in their decision-making.

Risks to natural capital assets, and risks arising from the degradation of natural capital assets, are not consistently included in strategic risk management. Opportunities exist to improve the use of this evidence. This contract will develop recommendations for ways in which natural capital risk evidence can best be framed, for use by those working on risk across different scales. The contractor will use the evidence presented in the SONC and the Natural Capital Risk Register alongside relevant external frameworks, reports and expertise to develop this.

It will also develop Natural England’s understanding of the opportunities and barriers to using natural capital risk evidence in strategic risk management, providing Natural England with the information needed to instrumentalise the use of the evidence in SONC going forward. It will point to ‘hooks’ in existing guidance and frameworks, and who we would be best placed to partner with to achieve the integration of natural capital into risk management. It will develop Natural England’s understanding of the risk landscape, ways of thinking about risk at different scales, and effective communication with risk professionals to engage on the topic of natural capital risk evidence.

There are two key sets of stakeholders we would like to engage with – risk professionals who work with risk at a national or strategic level and develop risk assessment methods, guidance, and the theoretical frameworks relevant to risk; and those that apply risk in their decision-making and appraisal of projects, policies, and programmes.

Topics and materials to be investigated throughout the contract will include (but not be limited to):

* Guidance including The Orange Book, National Audit Office’s *Good practice guide – Overcoming challenges to managing risks in government*, the Government Risk Profession’s [Risk Management Strategy and Delivery Plan](https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8802/documents/88969/default/).
* Risk management in policy appraisals – including The Green Book and Green Book Climate Change supplementary guidance.
* National acute risks e.g., the National Risk Register.
* National chronic risks (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/integrated-review-refresh-2023-responding-to-a-more-contested-and-volatile-world>).
* Environmental risk assessment e.g., the Climate Change Risk Assessment, Green Finance Institute’s UK Nature-Related Risk Inventory.
* The National Adaptation Plan published in response to the Climate Change Risk Assessment.
* Corporate environmental disclosures e.g., the Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosures, Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive’s European Sustainability Reporting Standards.
* Decision-making in business (e.g., [\*Business-Decision-Templates\_FINAL2024.pdf (capitalscoalition.org))](https://capitalscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Business-Decision-Templates_FINAL2024.pdf)
* Departmental risk management frameworks related to the six SONC policy areas.

The contract will provide recommendations for Natural England to effectively communicate and present externally the SONC evidence on natural capital risk in a way that facilitates its integration into risk management frameworks. This will involve identifying where natural capital risk evidence can be integrated, what the barriers are to doing this, and how it needs to be presented to overcome these barriers. These recommendations will be a product of contractor expertise and research, knowledge exchange activities, and detailed case studies.

Objectives

* Understand how the SONC natural capital risk evidence fits into existing guidance, frameworks, and work on risk (chronic, acute, and strategic), in the development of policies, programmes and projects.
* Via knowledge exchange activities, collaborate with the risk community/risk experts to identify robust ways to use natural capital evidence to assess and manage risks to society, the economy, and national security.
* Develop case studies for three examples of existing guidance, frameworks, or work on risk, across different scales (i.e. national acute and/or chronic risk; nature-related risk; departmental risk management), where there is potential for the SONC risk evidence to impact how risk is approached and considered, to take account of natural capital-related risks and dependencies. Within each case study, explore the barriers and opportunities for integrating the SONC risk evidence into risk management.
* Using information from the other contract outputs, develop a set of recommendations for Natural England on how to make the SONC risk evidence effective and usable in strategic risk management (including risk management for policies, programmes and projects) at the three scales outlined above.

Outputs

The table below provides a summary of outputs and expected deliverables. A detailed breakdown can be found below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Output | Ref | Deliverable | Format | Date for submission of 1st draft |
| Review of the risk management and assessment landscape | 1 | Review of government and non-government guidance, frameworks, and work on risk | Review | 27 Sep 2024 |
| Knowledge exchange activities with i) national experts who develop risk guidance and frameworks, ii) decision-makers who apply risk management in decision-making where the SONC has identified high dependencies on nature (including, but not limited to, the six SONC policy areas). Activities will focus on where natural capital risk could impact on risk management. | 2a | Knowledge exchange activities plan | Proposal presented to the steering group | 14 Oct 2024 |
| 2b | Organisation and facilitation of knowledge exchange activities | Knowledge exchange activities | Nov 2024 |
| 2c | Post-activities report, including participant feedback | Report | 29 Nov 2024 |
| 3 case studies on the integration of natural capital risk evidence at different scales | 3a | Organisation and facilitation of workshops | Online workshop for each case study | Dec 2024/Jan 2025 |
| 3b | Case studies report | Report | 10 Jan 2025 |
| 3c | Discussion of commonalities and transferable learnings from case studies | Facilitated discussion; report | 21 Jan 2025 |
| Recommendations to Natural England for using SONC natural capital risk evidence in strategic risk management | 4a | Synthesis report | Report | 14 Feb 2025 |
| 4b | Recommendations and next steps for Natural England | Written recommendations | 14 Feb 2025 |

**OUTPUT 1 – Review of the risk management and assessment landscape**

1. Identify c.12-15 examples across different sectors and scales, where SONC natural capital risk evidence is able to fit into or inform existing guidance, frameworks, and work on risk.
2. Divide the list into two categories:
   1. **Government –** to comprise UK Government risk assessment, and risk management guidance and processes (e.g., The Orange Book, Climate Change Risk Assessment, National Audit Office, National Risk Register, government approaches to chronic risk and resilience, departmental guidance or risk management, risk assessment in policy appraisal).
   2. **Non-government –** to include work on wider environmental risk assessment and management (e.g., Green Finance Institute’s Nature-related Risk Inventory, Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosures, European Sustainability Reporting Standards).
3. For each example, produce a short (~1 page) summary, structure to be agreed with the project steering group, to include answers to the points below (where relevant):
   * Identify if the guidance/framework/process etc. is subject to rapid change or is stable (e.g., will it likely still be in place for 2030).
   * Identify points where evidence is used in each example, and where natural capital risk evidence could be usefully integrated.
   * Identify if risks to natural capital are also risks to the societal outcomes of the framework.
4. Develop prioritisation criteria, to be agreed with the project steering group, to establish where there is the greatest potential for natural capital risk evidence to be impactful in its use.
   1. Apply these criteria to produce a prioritised list.

**OUTPUT 2 – Knowledge exchange activities with i) people who work on risk strategically and/or nationally, and ii) people who apply risk management in their decision-making**

1. In collaboration with the project steering group, identify two sets of stakeholders:
   1. People who work on risk strategically and/or nationally and develop risk assessment methods, guidance, and theoretical frameworks relevant to risk; academic/institutional experts in the topic.
   2. Decision-makers who apply risk management in decision-making (e.g. appraisal of policies, programmes and projects) where the SONC has identified high dependencies on nature (including, but not limited to, the six SONC policy areas)
2. Develop a plan for one knowledge exchange session with each group of stakeholders (total: two sessions), focusing on exploring opportunities and barriers to using natural capital risk evidence in assessing and managing risks to society, the economy, and national security.
   1. The plan must include a proposal of activities, invitees, timings, and communications (pre- and post-activity). This includes a proposal for how to maintain relationships with stakeholders for input into knowledge exchange activities in Output 3.
   2. The plan will be co-developed with, and ultimately signed off by, the project steering group.
3. Organise and facilitate knowledge exchange activities in accordance with agreed plans.
   1. Evaluate knowledge exchange activities to inform development of workshops in Output 3.
4. Produce a report on the outcomes and participant feedback from the knowledge exchange activities, to meet the requirements of the project steering group. This should be shared with participants once signed off by the steering group.
5. Follow up with stakeholders after activities at appropriate intervals, agreed with the project steering group. For example, to include in Output 3 activities, and to inform Output 4.

**Output 3 - Case studies and knowledge exchange activities on the integration of natural capital risk evidence into existing guidance, frameworks, or work on risk**

1. Identify three examples across different scales where there is highest potential impact from incorporating SONC risk evidence.
   1. These examples to be drawn from the review and prioritised list produced in Output 1, informed by information gathered in Output 2 relating to opportunities and barriers, and decided in collaboration with the project steering group.
   2. The case studies must cover a breadth of topics and scales to explore how SONC natural capital risk evidence can inform: national-scale risk (e.g. National Risk Register); nature-related risk assessments (e.g. Green Finance Institute); and risk management for policies, programmes or projects (in government departments).
2. Develop a plan for workshops (in person or online) for each case study, to explore how natural capital risk evidence can be used within these examples. This plan will be signed off by the project steering group.
   1. Attendees will be drawn from Output 2 and any other recommended contacts from the project steering group and the contractor.
3. Coordinate and facilitate knowledge exchange activities.
4. Produce written case studies for these three examples. These must be written to a standard which could be published by Natural England, following internal writing and style guidelines.
   1. To be developed using expert opinion, contractor expertise, research, and engagement, including gathering input from knowledge exchange activity attendees and any other relevant stakeholders.
   2. The content of the case studies must include:
      1. How natural capital risk evidence could be presented for application in this topic area.
      2. Barriers or challenges, for integrating SONC evidence into risk management. These challenges could be cultural, value-related or capability and skills based as well as the evidence per se.
      3. Opportunities for integrating SONC evidence into risk management.
      4. Input from stakeholders. Insight as to how guidance is applied and how they want to receive evidence to use in these processes.
      5. Learning which could be applied to similar types of guidance, frameworks, or work on risk.
5. Facilitate a discussion with the project steering group, wider project team, and key Natural England colleagues on commonalities and transferable learning identified from these case studies.
   1. Prior to the discussion, draft versions of the written case studies should be shared with the project steering group.
   2. Following on from this discussion, produce a written synthesis of commonalities and transferable learning.

**Output 4 – Recommendations for using natural capital risk evidence to inform decision-making**

1. Produce a report, synthesising learnings from the contract, to include:
   1. Synthesis and discussion of learnings from across Outputs 1-3, pulling together common themes and insights.
   2. End of contract report on overall process and development of outputs.
2. Produce a set of recommendations for Natural England to take forward, based on learnings from research, contractor expertise, the case studies, and knowledge exchange activities.
   1. These recommendations for next steps for Natural England to be co-developed with experts from knowledge exchange activities and the project steering group.
   2. The synthesis to non-exclusively include discussion and consideration of the following:
      1. How can the SONC natural capital evidence be formatted, designed, delivered and/or communicated to maximise impact in risk management?
      2. How can we overcome the challenges identified in outputs 2 and 3 in terms of using natural capital risk evidence?
      3. How can we develop the natural capital risk evidence we have, to be better integrated into strategic risk management?
      4. What are the priority opportunities for future focus for integration of natural capital risk into strategic risk management?
      5. What is the best way to represent natural capital-related risk for its inclusion in risk assessment and management for policies, programmes, and projects?
      6. What are the priority, actionable next steps for Natural England to bring the SONC natural capital risk evidence into decision-making?
      7. Who are the key people that Natural England should prioritise engagement with?

Sustainability

Natural England protects and improves the environment and is committed to reducing the sustainability impacts of its activities directly and through its supply chains. We expect the Contractor to share this commitment and adopt a sound, proactive sustainable approach in keeping with the 25 yr environmental plan/our commitments compliant with all applicable legislation. This includes understanding and reducing direct and indirect sustainability impacts and realising opportunities, including but not restricted to; resilience to climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water use and quality, biosecurity, resource efficiency and waste, reducing the risk of pollution, biodiversity, modern slavery and equality, diversity & inclusion, negative community impacts.

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring the Contracting Authority is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to the Contracting Authority’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project

Contract Management

Once let, the contract will be expected to meet the following key milestones:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Milestone | Description | Date |
| MS1 | Inception meeting (w/c 12th August 2024) and submission of project inception plan | 23rd August 2024 |
| MS2 | Submission of first draft of output 1 | 27th September 2024 |
| MS3 | Knowledge exchange activities and submission of first draft of post-activities report (output 2) | 29th November 2024 |
| MS4 | Submission of first draft of output 3 | 21st January 2025 |
| MS5 | Submission of first draft of output 4 | 14th February 2025 |
| MS6 | Final draft of all outputs | 14th March 2025 |

The contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Miriam Dobson, miriam.dobson@naturalengland.org.uk

This contract will run from 12th August 2024 to 31st March 2025. Drafts and final outputs should be sent to the project team by the dates indicated in the output and milestone tables above. Drafts will be reviewed iteratively by the project team and returned for any changes needed until the final report meets the satisfaction of the steering group.

The project will be managed through regular meetings between the supplier and Natural England Project Manager. The contract will be managed through the following process:

* A project inception call (using Microsoft Teams) between Supplier and project steering group to discuss the proposed method and timeframe, and set-up of processes including communication and risk management. To take place w/c 12th August 2024.
* Fortnightly meetings (using Microsoft Teams) to maintain contract to discuss progress and any issues. 1 working day before each meeting the Supplier should provide an agenda, updated risk register, and bulleted update on progress on the outputs, highlighting any issues with progress.
* Steering group meetings expected to be held every six weeks.

Any delays to the delivery of the timetable during the contract should be immediately raised via email and discussed with the Natural England Project Manager.

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. 25% of the payment will be made following completion of MS1-3, 25% of the payment will be made following completion of MS4, and the remaining 50% will be made following completion of MS6, when the final outputs are provided at the end of the contract.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 8 months to end no later than 31st March 2025. 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 – 70%

Commercial – 30%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 70% technical and 30% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 70% | Service Proposal | Methodology | 2 Questions  Q1.1 (40% of technical score available)  Q1.2 (10% of technical score available) |
| Expertise and experience | 1 Question  Q2 (20% of technical score available) |
| Capability and resource | 1 Question  Q3 (20% of technical score available) |
| Quality assurance | 1 Question  Q4 (10% of technical score available) |
| Commercial | 30% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | 1 Question  Q5 (100% of commercial score available) |

Technical (70%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores 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.

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.

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| Methodology | Detailed evaluation criteria |
| Q1.1. Provide details on how you propose to deliver the project, and how this meets our specification.  Responses must be a maximum of 4 sides of A4, Arial font size 11.  100 points available, minimum score of 50 required. | Responses should include:   * An outline proposal of how you plan to deliver the project, addressing each output/deliverable in turn.   + Responses to Output 1 to include an estimated number of frameworks to include in the long-list, with examples, and example prioritisation criteria.   + Responses to Output 2 to include a proposed outline for knowledge exchange activities, to include detail on format and proposed number of invitees and activities.   + Responses to Output 3 to include a proposed outline for developing case studies via contractor expertise and knowledge exchange activities.   + Responses to Output 4 to demonstrate how to identify actionable next steps for Natural England to use the SONC evidence following from the synthesis of Outputs 1-3. * A proposal which is clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective. * A clear statement of any modifications proposed to our methodology and specification. * A summary table of what you believe to be the main risks and areas of uncertainty, their potential impact on the project and how significant they are, and how you would act to minimise them. This should include contingency plans to cover the unexpected unavailability of staff. | |
| Q1.2. Provide a Gantt chart presenting milestones, deliverables, timelines and any inter-dependencies.  **Responses must be a maximum of 1 side of A4.**    **100 points available, minimum score of 50 required.** | * To include appropriate feedback timelines, clear progression of activities and contingencies. * Any options for which milestones or activities may need to move based on dependencies should be included here. | |

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| Expertise and experience | Detailed evaluation criteria |
| Q2. Provide details on the experience and knowledge of staff identified to work on the contract.  Responses should include an example of similar previous project work and evidence of experience relating to our essential criteria.  CVs are not required and any submitted CVs will not be considered in the evaluation.  Responses must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, Arial font size 11.  100 points available, minimum score of 50 required. | Key staff must demonstrate understanding and experience of:   * UK policymaking * Strategic risk in government * The wider non-governmental landscape of nature-related risk * Thorough and quality research and knowledge synthesis * Critical thinking and analysis of complex questions * Knowledge exchange * Creative engagement with decision-makers, organising and facilitating participatory workshops and interviews * Delivery of previous, relevant good quality products, to time and on budget * Good project planning and management skills.   Responses must include examples of similar work where the same named staff have been involved, demonstrating suitable and relevant experience across the project team. |

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| Capability and resource | Detailed evaluation criteria |
| Q3. Provide details on staff capability and resource, including the role of each staff member in the project team.  Responses should include a breakdown table of which staff will be assigned to each output and deliverable, and the number of days each will provide.  Responses must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, Arial font size 11.  100 points available, minimum score of 50 required. | Responses will be evaluated based on:   * Adequate staff resource devoted to the project * Capability of staff assigned to roles, informed by responses to Q2. * If a consortium of sub-contraction is proposed, please provide a diagram showing organisation roles and responsibilities of each member and how they will be managed to ensure coordinated delivery. |

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| Quality assurance | Detailed evaluation criteria |
| Q4. Provide details on the measures that will be put in place to ensure quality is maintained throughout the contract.  Responses should include plans for setup of project management, communication, and risk management processes.  Responses must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, Arial font size 11.  100 points available, minimum score of 50 required. | Key quality requirements include:   * Appointment of a named contract manager authorised to act on behalf of the supplier. * Proposed systems and procedures to ensure quality is maintained throughout the contract. * Identification of risks and how they will be managed/mitigated. * Procedures for handling, storing, and sharing data. * Practical, achievable project timeline which ensures successful delivery of milestones. * Proposed communication plans, to include how the contract will be managed and how the Natural England project manager will be informed of progress. * Processes for consulting the Natural England project manager when opportunities for innovation arise, or when deviations from the specification may be required. |

Commercial (30%)

The Contract is to be awarded as 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 each deliverable 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 30% (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 70% (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:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 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.

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_