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**Request for Quotation**

## Collation of evidence for a U.K. definition of Favourable Conservation Status for sandbanks and other sublittoral sediment habitat types

11/10/23

**Request for Quotation**

## Collation of evidence for a U.K. definition of Favourable Conservation Status for sandbanks and other sublittoral sediment habitat types

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:Lucy May [lucy.may@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:lucy.may@naturalengland.org.uk)

Date: 06/11/2023

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**

Lucy May 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.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 11/10/23 at 12:00 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 01/11/23 at 17:00 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 06/11/23 at 17:00 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 13/11/23 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 13/11/23 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 31/03/24 |

**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):

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| “Authority” | Means the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England |
| “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 Condensed Terms and Conditions provided as part of the RFQ will be included in 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, inclusive 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**

**Defining Favourable Conservation Status Project.**

Natural England’s Defining Favourable Conservation Status (DFCS) Project aims to produce definitions of favourable conservation status that will support the delivery of the biodiversity components of many aspects of Natural England’s work.

The project has developed an approach to defining Favourable Conservation Status in England and has published several definitions of favourable conservation status. For marine habitats, favourable conservation status definitions so far have been produced for reefs and seagrass beds (Natural England, 2021; Natural England 2023).

This project will begin the FCS process for sublittoral sediment habitats, including sandbanks. “Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time”, listed under Annex I of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), and its sub-types gravelly and clean sands, muddy sands, and maerl beds are the main focus of this project. MCZ broadscale habitats and features of conservation importance relevant to subtidal sediment /sandbanks should also be considered:

* Subtidal coarse sediments
* Subtidal sand
* Subtidal mud
* Subtidal mixed sediments
* Maerl beds
* Sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities
* Ocean quahog

The data collation exercise should consider sub-features independently, not just where they relate to Annex 1 sandbanks. The information provided in this review will be used by Natural England to inform the production of favourable conservation statuses for various sublittoral sediment habitats, including sandbanks.

**Requirement**

**Aims**

The Favourable Conservation Status definitions are based on the best available evidence and Natural England is seeking external support in the collation of the key evidence relating to sandbanks and other sublittoral sediment habitat types in inshore and offshore waters in England.

The main aim of this project is a literature search and data gathering exercise, identifying and using the most relevant sources, and then to draw out the key points demonstrated by the evidence. Outputs should be in the form of a report and spatial data layers provided in ESRI ArcGIS format compatible with ArcGIS 10.2 and have attached metadata (see Section 4 for more information on data standards).

**Objectives**

The Favourable Conservation Status definitions are set out in terms of three parameters: natural range and distribution; area; structure and function attributes (quality). The evidence review should include all features of conservation importance (FOCI) in MCZs and the SAC feature “Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time” and sub-types (as listed above), and consider any available data for similar habitats outside the existing MPA network. Objectives include gathering evidence and information on:

* Current situation in terms of distribution, extent, patch size and connectivity.
* Historical distribution, extent and quality; how this has changed over time and the reasons for change.
* Create an Annex I sandbank inventory, summarising key ecological information inside **and** outside the MPA network e.g., extent of sandbank, sub type of sandbank, mobility, water depth, range of biotopes present, anything relevant that makes a particular sandbank unique e.g. at limit of range, characterising species, presence and quantity of blue carbon habitats. Sandbanks inside and outside MPAs should be quantified by type, e.g., indicate if sandbanks are:

1) Sandy mounds; or

2) Tidal sandbanks that are either:

* Open shelf ridge sandbanks;
* Estuary mouth sandbanks; or
* Headland associated banks
* Create an additional sublittoral sediments inventory, summarising key ecological information inside **and** outside the MPA network e.g., extent of habitat, water depth, range of biotopes present, anything relevant that makes that particular habitat unique e.g. at limit of range, characterising species, presence and quantity of blue carbon habitats. This should be undertaken for all habitats set out in Section 1 that do not constitute as an Annex I sandbank or a subfeature thereof.
* The pressures and threats affecting the habitat/s and therefore how distribution, extent and quality may change in the future. This should build on the characterisation of main pressures/threats undertaken as part of Article 17 reporting and set out known impacts, and any management currently in place or proposed. Review all sandbanks across the network and assess what has been lost/ impacted or is in the most degraded condition and the category of sandbank feature or subfeature.

**Report standards**

The key evidence should be set out in a report and within text references should be used to indicate the evidence sources. All evidence from literature and data sources should be given one of three confidence levels (High, Moderate, Low), based on the quality of the evidence, its applicability to sandbanks or other sublittoral sediment habitats in England and the level of agreement. This is particularly important where interpretation of the data may vary. The assessment of the confidence level to be used is shown in the following matrix (after Mastrandea *et al*., 2010). White = High confidence; Light blue = Moderate confidence and Dark blue = Low confidence.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Limited evidence  Strong agreement | Medium evidence  Strong agreement | Robust evidence  Strong agreement |
| Limited evidence  Medium agreement | Medium evidence  Medium agreement | Robust evidence  Medium agreement |
| Limited evidence  Weak agreement | Medium evidence  Weak agreement | Robust evidence  Weak agreement |

Quality of evidence is defined as follows:

* Robust evidence is that which has been reported in peer-reviewed literature, or other reputable literature, from well-designed experiments, surveys or inventories that shows signs of being applicable generally.
* Medium evidence is that reported from well-designed experiments, surveys or inventories but from only one or a small number of sites, with uncertainty over its more general applicability, or is correlational or circumstantial evidence.
* Limited evidence includes ‘expert opinion’, based on knowledge of ecological factors that plausibly suggest an effect, but there is no circumstantial or direct evidence available.

Agreement is defined as follows:

* Strong agreement is consensus across the literature and amongst those with expertise on the habitat or species.
* Medium agreement is common consensus across the literature and amongst experts but there are some differing papers or reports and/or some differences of opinion.
* Weak agreement is little consensus across the literature and amongst experts and, possibly, many different findings and/or opinions.

All literature and data references should be listed in an Annex to the report, in a format consistent with British Standards, with any links if Open Access.

Natural England’s definitions of Favourable Conservation Status are published on the [Access to Evidence Catalogue](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6449642545086464?category=5415044475256832) under the Open Government Licence v3.0 for public sector information. We encourage our readers to use, and reuse, information subject to certain conditions. Therefore, you must ensure that full copyright information is included for any data, figures, photographs or maps used within your report and that Natural England has permission to use and publish this information.

You may also provide an initial authors view on favourable status for sandbanks and other habitats listed in Section 1 but the final definition of Favourable Conservation Status will be produced by Natural England.

Examples of completed favourable conservation status definitions, incorporating the key evidence points, can be found on Natural England’s [Access to Evidence](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5415044475256832) catalogue to show the level of detail required in the document. The Access to Evidence pages also provide a methodology document “[Defining Favourable Conservation Status in England](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6449642545086464?category=5415044475256832)” which outlines our approach and methods for defining Favourable Conservation Status.

**Data standards**

Data must be interpreted, analysed and presented in light of the aims and objectives as set out above. Contractors should pay particular consideration to the data and GIS required formats for information compatibility including MEDIN metadata standards. All datasets must have associated metadata, data licensing agreements in place and meet appropriate organisational metadata standards. Metadata should be supplied for any derived data. Relevant metadata standards are a requirement for data which Natural England publishes externally.

All interpreted products following data analysis should accompany the draft report; these will include:

* All GIS datasets need to be provided in ESRI ArcGIS format compatible with ArcGIS 10.2 and have attached metadata.
* All GIS files containing habitat data for each individual survey need to be produced to the [MESH translated habitat Data Exchange Format (DEF)](https://emodnet.ec.europa.eu/sites/emodnet.ec.europa.eu/files/public/step3_guidance_dataexchangeformats_v4_1.pdf) to the most detailed EUNIS habitat level possible. MNCR ([v15](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/MarineHabitatClassification).03) data should be added to the ORIG\_HAB column. The GUI provided by Natural England for each survey will be used, and as much information as possible (e.g. survey name, originally assigned feature/habitat name etc.) from the original dataset, as well as any documentation provided (where available) should be included in the resulting datasets to maintain a useful audit trail. As specified in the [MESH DEF,](https://emodnet.ec.europa.eu/sites/emodnet.ec.europa.eu/files/public/step3_guidance_dataexchangeformats_v4_1.pdf) data files must be provided as ESRI Shapefiles or as a feature class data within a geodatabase using the WGS1984 geographic coordinate system and lat/long coordinates.
* A MESH data confidence assessment for each habitat map should be calculated and provided in a ‘MESH confidence scoresheet’ \*.XLS file. The confidence assessment process is described and a template provided in the following MESH resources [The MESH Confidence Assessment Scheme](http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=1693).
* Accompanying metadata for the data set must meet the [MEDIN metadata discove](https://medin.org.uk/medin-discovery-metadata-standard#:~:text=The%20MEDIN%20Discovery%20Metadata%20Standard,Metadata%20Standard%20available%20to%20users.)ry standard. Metadata derived as part of this project must be submitted to Natural England in an XML file which Natural England will archive through Data Archive Centres (DACs). Guidance ‘MEDIN Evidence for Contractors’ will be provided to the winning contractor.

All data products and electronic files must be appropriately named so they sufficiently describe the contents and are not purely a numerical value. All products should be named appropriately so that they can be clearly linked to the report/project.

**Timeline for project delivery**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date** | **Payment schedule** |
| Contractor and NE meeting to discuss range of datasets identified | 30/11/2023 |  |
| Natural England to supply data to contractor | 22/12/2023 |  |
| Draft final report and associated products to be provided by contractor to Natural England | 15/03/2024 |  |
| Final report and data to be delivered | 29/03/2024 | Full payment |

**Other**

In support of this contract NE will provide the winning supplier with:

* Project support from dedicated Project Officer
* Opportunity to feedback and discuss progress and the project
* Supporting GIS datasets (if required) under licence for use in this contract:
  + Base map data from [Ordnance Survey](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/)
  + Aerial photography from [Next Perspectives](http://www.nextperspectives.co.uk/)
  + S-57 vector data from the UK Hydrographic Office (in ArcGIS format)\*
  + Raster charts from [Oceanwise](http://www.infoterra.co.uk/)\*

\*(Not to be used for Navigation)

Please see the following site for information on how to obtain access to the GI datasets listed above: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data>

In addition, Natural England has identified the following publicly available sources that are expected to be used by the winning supplier as part of this project. Please note this is not an exhaustive list and we would expect supplier to identify additional datasets/sources.

* Marine Habitats and Species Open Data (England) BNG (Natural England Open Data)
* EMODnet
* UKHO Seabed Mapping Service
* The Crown Estate Marine Data Exchange
* The BGS offshore index geology layers
* Cefas One Benthic

JNCC also have the following information that will be relevant:

* **JNCC Combined map V10 (Available upon request to JNCC)**
* **The Annex1 dataset is available on JNCC's Resource Hub** <https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/c80ad259-f346-4afc-b5ec-2a0b94e8ff6e>
* **A methods paper for Annex1 sandbank mapping is also available** [https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/f4891fa7-5f9e-417c-af88-073f276a4941](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhub.jncc.gov.uk%2Fassets%2Ff4891fa7-5f9e-417c-af88-073f276a4941&data=05%7C01%7Ctrudy.russell%40naturalengland.org.uk%7Ca1de9621b382476821d508db9408f74d%7C770a245002274c6290c74e38537f1102%7C0%7C0%7C638266538454519230%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=JcAxd0ircokvQ4pukj537ljCYGJ9I4LrQn6iT3Hgn3E%3D&reserved=0) .

Please note there will be overlap in the datasets and it is expected the contractor will identify and remove those as required.

The intellectual property rights and copyright for all products will lie with Natural England. All data should be made available by Natural England under the [Open Government Licence](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) at the end of the project via [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk) and the MEDIN Data Archiving Centres. If third party datasets are used which Natural England is not authorised to licence, these will be omitted from final reports published externally and redacted from data shared through the Open Government Licence.

It is anticipated that this contract will end no later than 31st January 2024. 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.

**References**

Natural England (2021). Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Reefs (RP2955). Available at: [Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Reefs - RP2955 (naturalengland.org.uk)](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5127115176673280)

Natural England (2023). Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Seagrass beds (RP2968). Available at: [Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Seagrass beds - RP2968 (naturalengland.org.uk)](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5765919683641344#:~:text=Favourable%20conservation%20status%20is%20the%20situation%20when%20the,available%20evidence%20on%20the%20ecology%20of%20seagrass%20beds.)

Mastrandrea, M.D., C.B. Field, T.F. Stocker, O. Edenhofer, K.L. Ebi, D.J. Frame, H. Held, E. Kriegler, K.J. Mach, P.R. Matschoss, G.-K. Plattner, G.W. Yohe, and F.W. Zwiers (2010). Guidance Note for Lead Authors of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on Consistent Treatment of Uncertainties. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Mousley, S., Van Vliet, W. Cork, C. (2023). Defining favourable conservation status in England: Natural England approach. Natural England Evidence Information Note EIN062. Natural England, York. Available at: [Defining Favourable Conservation Status in England - EIN062 (naturalengland.org.uk)](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6449642545086464?category=5415044475256832)

**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. Full Payment is to be made when the final report and data is delivered.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of approximately 5 months to end no later than 15/03/2024. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Evaluation Methodology**

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

Technical – 50%

Commercial – 50%

Evaluation criteria

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| **Technical** | **50%** | **Service / Product Proposal** | **Approach and understanding** | **1 Question**  **Q1 (70% of technical score available)** |
| **Experience and expertise** | **1 Question**  **Q2 (30% of technical score available)** |
| **Commercial** | **50%** | **Whole life cost of the proposed Contract** | **Commercial Model** | **1 Question**  **(100% of commercial score available)** |

**Technical (50%)**

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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Methodology** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q1. Provide details of the methodology and approaches proposed to deliver the requirements of this project.**  **Responses should not exceed four sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11.** | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Experience and expertise** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q2. Provide evidence of experience and expertise of key staff that will deliver the project, and the systems and procedures that would apply to the management of the project.** | Please provide details of systems and procedures in place that would apply to the management of this project.  You should include 1-2 page summary CVs for main people working on project, including evidence of relevant projects and experience. |

**Commercial (50%)**

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

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

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

Commercial

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

Technical

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

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

**Information to be returned**

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

Please complete and return the following information:

completed Commercial Response template

separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)

completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)

completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

**Award**

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

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

**Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements**

**Part 1 Potential Supplier Information**

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

**Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:**

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

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

**Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration**

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

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

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

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

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

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

**Part 2 Exclusion Grounds**

**Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion**

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

**Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion**

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

**Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

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

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

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

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

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

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