Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

www.gov.uk/Defra

Call-Off Contract

The Research, Development and Evidence Framework 1 – Lot 6.3

Atamis Project Ref:	**C25004**
Atamis Contract Ref:	**C25587**
Atamis Project Name:	**Allonby Bay Highly Protected Marine Area's (HPMA) Fish Surveys**
Commission Code:	**RDE587**

Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Your ref:
Our ref: C25004/C25587
Date: 25 July 2024

[redacted]

Dear [redacted]

Supply of Allonby Bay HPMA Fish Surveys on behalf of the Natural England

Following your tender for the supply of **Allonby Bay HPMA Fish Surveys** on behalf of Natural England, we are pleased to confirm our intention to award this contract to you.

The attached contract details:

0. Defra Framework Terms and Conditions (as a separate attachment on Atamis).
1. Our request for proposal (detailing our requirements - enclosure).
2. Your proposal in response (enclosure).
3. Order Form (enclosure)

This forms the call off contract between the parties, under the Research, Development and Evidence Framework - Lot 6.3.

The Contract will be between the Authority and Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd, as the Lead Contractor but we understand that your sub-contractor Ocean Ecology will be the ones delivering the contract. We would ask that any changes to staff working on the contract are discussed with our Project Manager and that CVs of such staff are shown to her, before such staff commence work, to ensure matching skills and experience. Please ensure that Ocean Ecology have a copy of the contract to hand.

We thank you for your co-operation to date and look forward to forging a successful working relationship with you, resulting in a smooth and successful delivery of the deliverables. Please confirm your acceptance of the Contract terms by signing the Order Form through ***DocuSign*** within **7** days from the date of this letter, which will create a binding contract between us. No other form of acknowledgement will be accepted. Please remember to include the reference number above in any future communications relating to this contract.

We will then arrange for the Order Form to be countersigned so that you have a signed copy of the Order Form for your records.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]
DgC Category Officer and Commercial Lead
Land Use & Biodiversity Services (LUBS) - Environmental Goods & Services
Email: [redacted]

1.0 Request for Proposal

1.1 The following document is to be used as a Call-Off template to be sent to all Contractors on a sub-lot by the Project Manager of the Contracting Authority for completion and return in accordance with the Call-Off procedures detailed in the Form of Agreement.

Research, Development and Evidence Framework **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**			
Project title:	Allonby Bay Highly Protected Marine Area's (HPMA) Fish Surveys		
Call off Reference:	**RDE587**		
Atamis project ref (if applicable): **Atamis Contract ref:**	**C25004** **C25587**		
Cost Centre Code **(for admin purposes only)**	[redacted]		
Date Issued to bidders:	10/06/2024		
Contracting Authority (Defra and its arms-length bodies etc)	Natural England (NE) [redacted] Commercial Lead working for Defra Group Commercial, is procuring this requirement on behalf of Natural England (the Contracting Authority).		
Project Manager:	[redacted]	**Phone:** **Email:**	[redacted] [redacted]
Authorized by: **Budget Holder:** **Responsible Officer:**	[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]	**Email:**	[redacted]
Commercial Contact:	[redacted]		
Project Start Date	29/07/2024		
Project Completion Date – Initial term	31/03/2025		
Initial Period and Extension Options	The contract will start on 29/07/2024 and run until 31/03/2025, at which point it will stop. The		

	Authority will then request further funding and if further funding is granted and approved, this will be communicated to yourselves and will form a contract extension. If funding permits, the contract may be extended for a maximum of two further 12-month periods (as annual increments). This will be at the discretion of the Authority. All extensions will be communicated to the successful Contractor via a change control note (CCN). All costs quoted under this call-off will be fixed for the duration of the contract and any extension periods granted thereafter.			
For any projects over the direct award threshold, full competition is required (i.e. all contractors on the Sub-Lot are invited to quote).	**Direct Award**		**Mini-comp**	Yes
Call off from: **Sub-Lot**	Lot 6: Marine and Fisheries 6.3 Productive seas and freshwater system			
Proposal return date:	By 12:00 noon on Tuesday 2nd July 2024			

Evaluation criteria:		
Contractors: Failure to meet any minimum score threshold stated will result in the bid being removed from the process with no further evaluation regardless of other quality or price scores.		
Quality	**Weighting**	**70%**
Price	**Weighting**	**30%**
Quality Sub-Criteria Weightings: (Indicative only)		
E01 - Approach & Methodology **(minimum score threshold 50)**	Please provide details of the methodology and approaches proposed to deliver the requirements of this project. 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.	**40%**

E02 - Proposed Staff (inc Pen Portraits) and Contractor's experience/accreditations. **(minimum score threshold 50)**	Please provide details of the proposed project team and team structure evidence of experience of key staff that they intend to use to deliver this project, including any sub-contractors and/or associates. Could be demonstrated in providing CVs, staff profiles or evidence of completed relevant projects. Please upload a single document containing CV's of all staff (except administrators) who will work on the project. Each CV should be a maximum of 2 A4 pages each, font size Arial 11.	**30%**
E03 - Project Management and Availability (including project plan) **(minimum score threshold 50)**	Please provide details on project management arrangements including day to day working for the project, the proposed timetable for the project, risk log and mitigation actions and A Gantt chart presenting milestones, deliverables, timelines and inter-dependencies. Provide a statement on your availability and capacity to carry out the work.	**10%**
E04 - Quality Assurance **(minimum score threshold 50)**	Please provide evidence of the quality assurance methods used during the survey and the analysis and list any relevant company quality management systems and/or accreditation. The audit trail required and sufficient data for building a baseline dataset, the QC procedure for samples.	**10%**
E05 - Health & Safety **(minimum score threshold 50)**	Provide a statement on how you ensure Health and Safety requirements are met. Please supply a proposed health and safety plan and how you mitigate the risks of surveying the intertidal/ subtidal area of Allonby Bay.	**10%**

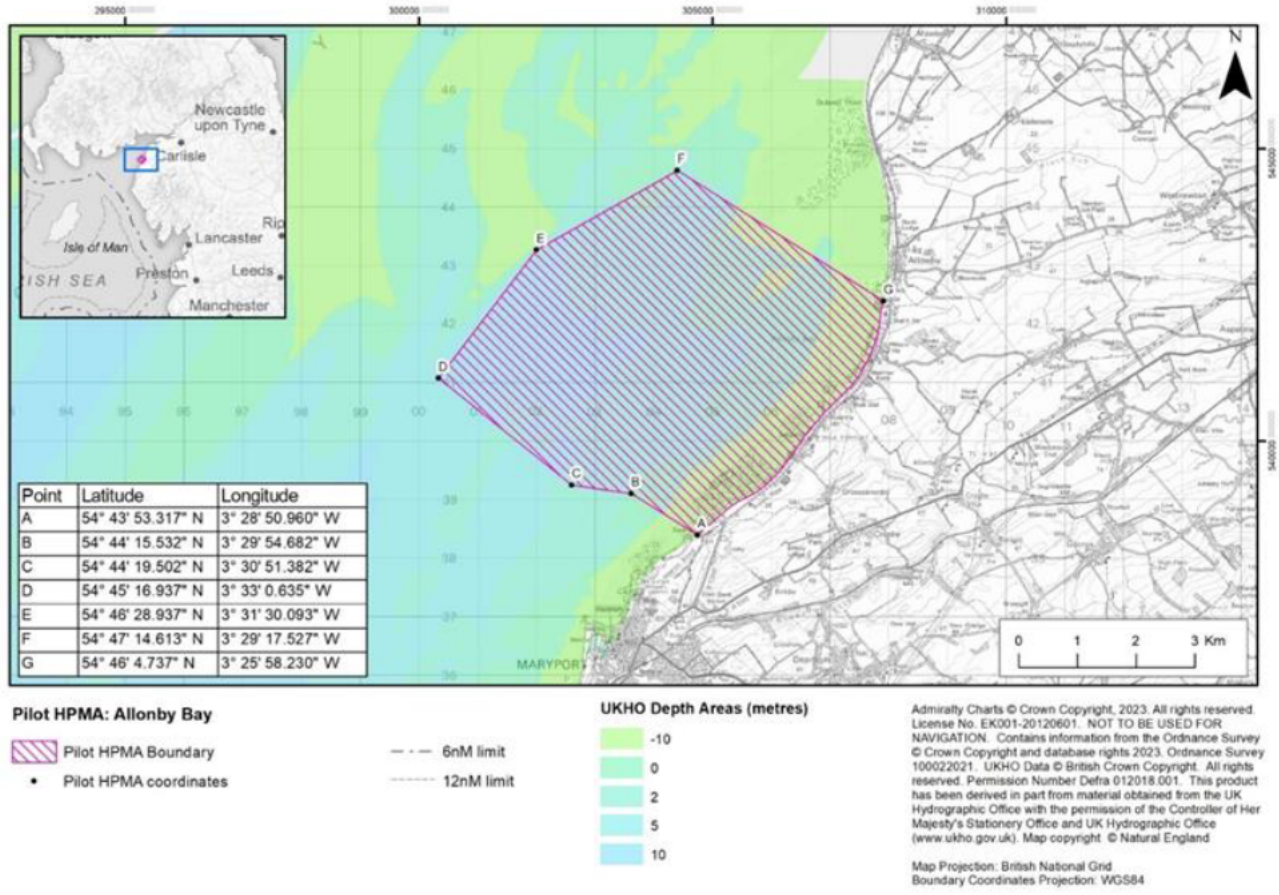
Specification
1. Description of work required – overall purpose & scope (including reporting requirements)
Specification of Requirements **1. Introduction** Natural England is the government's advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England's natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England's rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

This survey will contribute to evidence gathering of the Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) pilot project. HPMAs are areas of the sea that allow for the protection and full recovery of marine ecosystems. By designating areas of sea with high levels of protection, HPMAs will allow nature to fully recover to a more natural state, allowing the ecosystem to thrive. They prohibit extractive, destructive and depositional uses, allowing only non-damaging levels of other activities to the extent permitted by international law. HPMAs will protect all species and habitats and associated ecosystem processes within the site boundary, including the seabed and water column. This means gathering comprehensive evidence of the effectiveness of the HPMA in delivering biodiversity recovery will be critical.

The ecological monitoring of this Defra-funded programme will be led by Natural England and JNCC. Natural England's marine remit includes biodiversity extending from the intertidal zone out to 12 nautical miles. Natural England will therefore gather baseline data and continue to monitor the inshore HPMA site Allonby Bay throughout the pilot project.

2. Survey Area

Allonby Bay HPMA covers 27.6 km^2 of the southern region at the mouth of the Solway Firth (Figure 1). The boundary follows the Mean High Water line along the shore from the western most building of Bank End Farm, Maryport to Christ Church south of Allonby and then extends seaward to approximately 5.6 km off the shore at its maximum width. The site has a maximum depth of 6.6m at lowest chart datum (Figure 2). The area is located within the 12 nm territorial sea limit of the Irish Sea region. It overlaps with Allonby Bay MCZ and the Solway Firth SPA and there is a very small overlap with the Solway Firth SAC and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes SSSI along the northeastern boundary.



Point	Latitude	Longitude
A	54° 43' 53.317" N	3° 28' 50.960" W
B	54° 44' 15.532" N	3° 29' 54.682" W
C	54° 44' 19.502" N	3° 30' 51.382" W
D	54° 45' 16.937" N	3° 33' 0.635" W
E	54° 46' 28.937" N	3° 31' 30.093" W
F	54° 47' 14.613" N	3° 29' 17.527" W
G	54° 46' 4.737" N	3° 25' 58.230" W

Figure 1. HPMA Allonby Bay proposed boundary and coordinates

Allonby Bay consists of a mix of habitats, characteristic of an environment that is subject to dramatic currents and tides. The seabed consists of a range of rocky habitats and sediment dominated habitats, including mudflats, sandbanks, reefs, peat and clay exposures, and biogenic reefs (Figure 3).

The nutrient-rich sediments, dense mussel beds and intertidal rocky habitats in this area attract large densities of shore birds including species such as curlew and oystercatcher. The biodiverse subtidal habitats here provide a food source for fish species, such as flat fish and nursery areas for other species such as bass, cod and herring. In turn, these fish species attract diving, foraging seabirds including guillemots, gannets and razorbills. There is also one of the best examples of honeycomb *Sabellaria alveolata* reefs in the UK within the site, creating a complex sediment network of tubes attached to rock creating vital habitat for crustacea and molluscs.

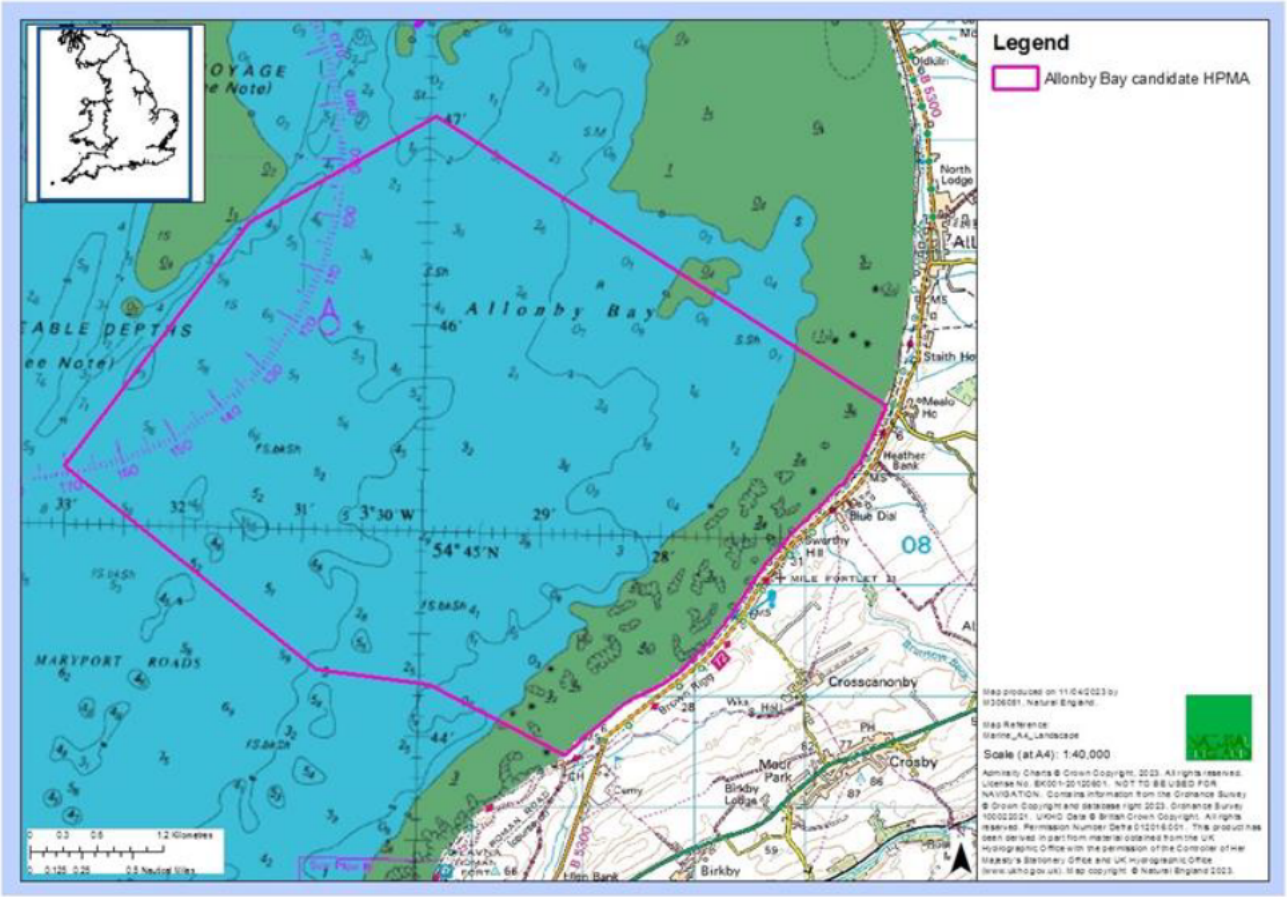


Figure 2. HPMA Allonby Bay chart datum

Previously recorded habitats in the Allonby Bay MCZ include:

- Blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) beds
- Honeycomb worm (*Sabellaria alveolata*) reefs
- Moderate energy littoral rock
- Low energy littoral rock
- Features of littoral rock (rockpools/ ephemeral algae)
- Littoral sand and muddy sand
- Littoral biogenic reefs

- Features of littoral sediment (ephemeral algae)
- High energy infralittoral rock
- Moderate energy infralittoral rock
- Moderate energy circalittoral rock
- Sublittoral coarse sediment
- Sublittoral sand
- Sublittoral mud
- Sublittoral mixed sediments
- Sublittoral biogenic reefs

Previously recorded fish species of conservation importance or commercial in Allonby Bay MCZ:

- Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*)
- Thornback ray (*Raja clavata)*
- Bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax)*
- Sole (*Solea solea)*
- Atlantic cod (*Gadius morhua)*
- Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa)*

For full site details please see: Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

A designation order covering a HPMA will set out the protected features and the conservation objectives applicable within the HPMA site boundary. The protected feature is: "The marine ecosystem, habitats and species of flora and fauna, abiotic elements, and their supporting ecosystem function and processes, including the seabed, water column and sea surface, within the site boundary." The proposed conservation objective for all pilot HPMAs, including Allonby Bay is: "To achieve full natural recovery of the structure and functions, features, qualities and composition of characteristic biological communities present within HPMAs and prevent further degradation and damage to the marine ecosystem subject to natural change."

Natural England and JNCC advise within an HPMA:

1. The ecosystem is allowed to fully recover in the absence of damaging activities such that:

   • The ecosystem structure consists of a diverse range of benthic and pelagic communities, habitats and species, including biotic and abiotic components of the ecosystem. These fulfil a variety of functional roles, including supporting key life cycle stages and/or behaviours of marine species.
   • The physical, biological and chemical ecosystem processes and functions proceed unhindered, so that the site realises its full ecological potential to deliver goods and services, including habitats and species considered important to the long-term storage of carbon, and habitats and species important for flood and erosion protection.
   • The ecosystem is resilient to change and stressors.

2. Any ecosystem changes brought about by the process of removing anthropogenic pressures should be considered in the context of a naturally recovering ecosystem.
3. The HPMA supports our understanding of how marine ecosystems change and recover in the absence of impacting activities

Whilst the HPMA has been designated since 5th July 2023 management from the MMO will be introduced over Summer 2024. There was minimal fishing pressure in Allonby Bay HPMA area. The current fishing activity was predominately recreational rod and line as well as some recreational longlining (pers comms). Commercial fishing included potting for crab and lobster, netting (skate and place in summer, cod and skate in winter) and bass anglers. Bottom trawling is non-existent in this area and therefore Natural England aims to avoid the introduction of additional pressures for the purpose of monitoring. For this reason, survey methods must be as low impact as possible.

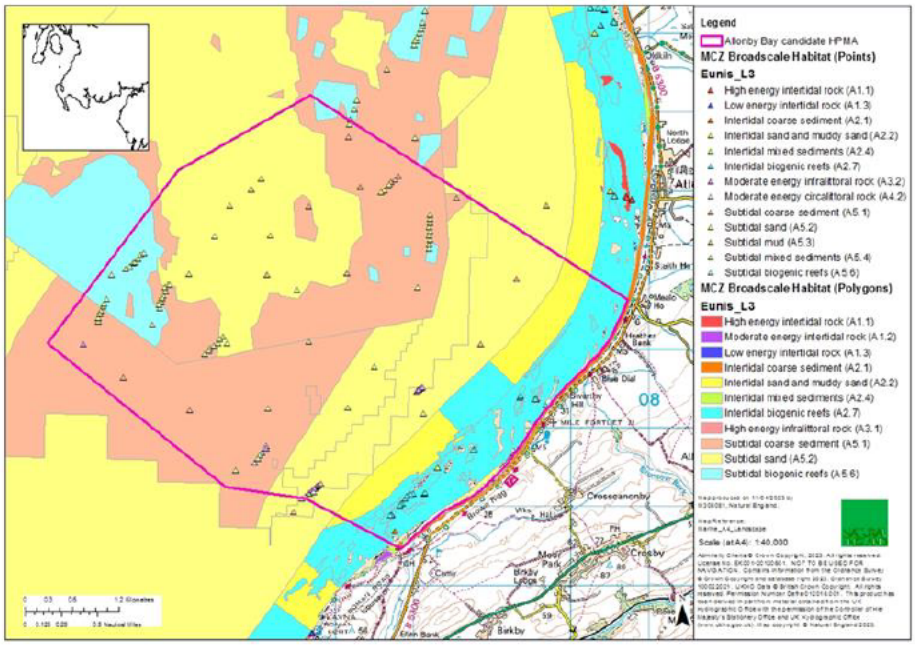


Figure 3. Current map of the broadscale habitats in Allonby Bay with the HPMA boundary

3. Previous surveys

An acoustic survey was conducted in early 2024, using side-scan sonar. An updated habitat map for the HPMA is currently being produced, which will be provided if it is completed in time.

A fish survey was conducted by Ecospan in March 2024, commissioned by Natural England to provide:

- Comprehensive estimation of fish community structure
- Biomass of fish, identified at species level where possible
- Highlight species using the area to breed / or use during other life stages within the HPMA

Ecospan used four different fishing methods within the HPMA itself and repeated at a control site, located 300 m to the south of the HPMA. The four fishing methods were seine netting, fyke netting, longlining, and baited fish traps (Figure 4.). In each area, six fish traps, six longlines, 3 baited fykes, and 3 seine nets were set. Please refer to Section 5.3 for specific survey methods.

Figure 4. Allonby Bay HPMA and control site, including nearby protected areas - *Map created by Ecospan, 2024*

4. Aims & Objectives

4.1 Aims

Natural England wishes to commission ecological survey work between July - December 2024 to gather robust evidence on the on abundance, diversity, and distribution of fish species important for conservation and ecosystem services to contribute to the monitoring dataset. Data will be collected over two sampling events (preferably one in August/September and one in October/November) with reporting to be delivered by 31st March 2025. It should be noted that this is intended to be part of a multi-year monitoring programme so methods should be repeated following the baseline data completed in March 2024 (methodology from section 5.1).

This survey should achieve where possible the following aims:

- Provide a comprehensive estimation of fish community structure.
- Provide biomass data from the sample population of fish, identified at species level where possible.
- Highlight species using the HPMA to support specific life-stages, including breeding / use during other life stages within the HPMA. Fish communities within the major habitats present must be represented by the monitoring.
- Use all data collected to assess spatial and temporal changes in abundance, diversity and distribution of fish communities. Although it is acknowledged that the ability to detect change

may be undermined by the timescales and the site's environmental variability, sampling effort and analytical rigour should be considered.

Proposals should follow methodology in section 5.1 and provide clear rationale of how each of these have been considered and mitigated:

- Minimize mortality (animal husbandry methods intended)
- Environmental conditions (e.g. turbidity, currents, depth)

Natural England are also commissioning an eDNA survey (planned to occur quarterly, sampling both water and sediment samples) and monthly zooplankton sampling for the Allonby Bay HPMA area. Proposals should specify how this data will be used to enhance the survey data within the subsequent technical report.

4.2 Objectives

Natural England will provide fully detailed methodology for the work undertaken to ensure that the contractor can repeat the methods. Under this specification the successful contractor(s) must:

- In collaboration with Natural England, plan, undertake and report on intertidal and subtidal sampling techniques covering the abundance, diversity, and distribution of fish species important for conservation and ecosystem services to contribute to the monitoring dataset.
- Agree and implement, in collaboration with Natural England, a survey plan to collect data suitable for undertaking assessment of the direction of ecological change within the communities identified under this specification, integrating, and interrogating previously obtained relevant data in the analysis.
- Ensure that newly collected data is compatible (analytically) with historical survey data.
- Agree a statistically robust survey design with Natural England to enable future collection of compatible data, permitting quantitative long-term analysis. This should seek to build on any previous work and, where possible, enable temporal comparisons to be made with previous datasets.
- Ensure that anthropogenic influences, potentially impacting the feature, are identified, and where possible quantified, allowing analysis to focus on investigation of the potential impacts of these pressures.
- Provide an assessment of the community structure, diversity, and biomass of fish species within Allonby Bay HPMA, clearly stating how the proposed data collection methods contribute to this assessment. This should note any observed differences between the HPMA and control site (locations will be provided by Natural England).
- Produce a concise field report.
- Produce an evidence based technical report detailing the work undertaken, reporting the survey and analytical findings, discussing these in the light of any previous data and providing condition.
- Engage in discussions around the project findings and observations made regarding condition and draw upon "expert judgement" to clearly identify and present expert inferences separately from the core results of the survey work.

- Provide all outputs (including appropriate GIS, Marine Recorder and MEDIN outputs) in specified formats (see below).

5. Methods

5.1 Pre-survey deskwork

Before the survey is carried out, the successful Contractor will discuss any pre-survey work with the Natural England contract manager, including:

- Clarification of roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Acquisition and checking of sources of relevant information and gathering of local advice in preparation of a project plan.
- Review existing information provided by Natural England or any datasets known to the contractor.
- Ways of working and close collaboration with NE in developing project plan, particularly reviewing pre-selected survey sites, following survey design and methodologies.

5.2 Sampling design

Where a marine project will be conducting surveys and collecting data, it is important to ensure that the collected data will deliver on the evidence need identified. It is reasonable to request the contractor designs the survey, but it should be in alignment with the objectives as defined in the specification and guided by the appropriate monitoring standards. The survey design will need to consider:

- Enabling comparisons with available previous data sets. This should incorporate the relevant standard operating protocols for previous surveys to ensure compatible time series data.
- Whether there is a need to improve on previous sampling design in order that robust temporal statistical comparisons can be made as data is collected during repeat surveys. Consider the different habitat types present and the most appropriate monitoring techniques. An updated habitat map of the HPMA will be provided by Natural England to assist with this.
- Methods that target herbivorous species, small-bodied species, and juveniles. These may have been under-represented in the previous survey due to baited nets attracting the more piscivorous species.
- How results from previous surveys can be utilised to inform current sampling plan. This includes the use of power analysis where appropriate.
- The overall level of resources available to Natural England to deliver monitoring and survey work.
- The ability of monitoring the survey strategy to facilitate distinguishing between natural change and anthropogenically driven change within a realistic timescale and budget.
- How the data collected as part of this survey will augment the eDNA species lists held by NE and how this will be incorporated into the reporting phase(s). How the methodology will

consider spatial and temporal variability (where possible using historic data) and be replicable to enable continued future monitoring of the site.

It should be noted that the use of trawls or trammel nets will not be considered for this study within the HPMA. The visibility is usually too poor for diver, camera or BRUV survey techniques. A survey strategy and sampling methodology has therefore already been developed for this work. Target fishing stations will be provided by Natural England. Surveys will be carried out in accordance with the technical specification provided above. Alternative approaches will be considered if they meet the aims and objectives of the contract, demonstrate efficiencies, and are agreed with NE prior to survey commencing.

Survey work under the contract should be scheduled to be completed by the end of 31/12/2024, however potential contractors should provide contingency dates should the planned survey be affected by factors beyond the control of the contractor e.g. weather downtime.

Contractors must clearly state their availability and capability to carry both this single contract and any other projects they may consider bidding for in combination within the given timescales.

5.3 **Survey methods**

Prior to the deployment of any fishing gear, a visual check for the presence of marine mammals must carried out by a trained Marine Mammal Observer. If there is an encounter, Natural England must be informed, and fishing gear not deployed until the animal had left the area.

Four fishing methods below will be repeated within the HPMA itself and at a control site, located 300 m to the south of the HPMA (Figure 4).

Fyke nets

Three double ended fyke nets deployed in the subtidal zone, along the intertidal transition zone, baited with a combination of pilchard and squid. The nets will be 0.5 m high and 2.5 m long with a 10 mm mesh cod end, joined by a 3 m long leader and a 15 mm mesh size. Fyke nets should be fitted with otter guards to prevent diving birds entering the nets. Nets will be deployed perpendicular to the longshore current to direct fish such as mullet, juvenile bass, and flatfish into the netting cones. Fyke nets will be left overnight, anchored and buoyed as per local regulations.

Longlines

Six longlines set in the subtidal zone, each 100 m in length with 30 hooks baited with squid. Left anchored overnight with surface buoys as per local regulations. This method targets a wide variety of demersal fish including plaice, thornback ray, and cod. Two hook sizes (one and 4/0) will be alternately tied on each line to target different sized individuals of a variety of species (e.g. smaller hook size used for sole).

Fish traps

Six fish traps set in the subtidal zone, 100 cm high, 62 cm wide, and 96 cm long. Deployed for a soak period of approximately 24 hours. Each pot will be constructed from 10 mm knotless mesh with two soft eyes and baited with bags of pilchard and squid. The pots will be weighted using anchors, then secured to surface buoys for retrieval, as per local regulations. Set close to pre-identified rocky areas (avoiding biogenic reef) to target species such as pollack, pouting, coalfish, conger eel, and potentially wrasse.

Seine netting

Seine nets deployed at three different locations within the intertidal zone of the HPMA and the control site. Two replicates taken at each location, avoiding *Sabellaria* sp. reefs or peat exposures. The net will be 45 m long, 4 m deep (to ensure when it is hauled it does not lift off the seabed) and have a 10 mm mesh size with 6.5 mm in the bunt of the net, with a weighted ground rope to ensure that the bottom of the net is always in contact with the seabed. The smaller mesh at the bunt end will ensure juvenile life-stages are not missed.

Additional methods

Please consider/propose any additional methods that target herbivorous species, small-bodied species, and juveniles in both the subtidal and intertidal zones. Intertidal surveys could include:

- Trapping in rockpools
- Boulder search transects - a timed search within a 5m x 5m quadrat
- Netting in rockpools with long-handled push nets (~40cm x 40cm net head)
- Netting along the infralittoral fringe at low water with long-handled push nets (~40cm x 40cm net head)

5.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis should include as a minimum:

- As complete a species list as possible, combining eDNA results (provided by NE) and species from this survey.
- The application of univariate and, where appropriate, multivariate analytical techniques which are in alignment with the project objectives (i.e. spatial and temporal analysis of abundance, diversity and distribution of important fish populations).
- Spatial analysis/presentation of population distribution data.

5.4 Project administration and legal compliance

Site access and requirements for permissions, licencing, assessments and dispensations

The Nominated Officer should be contacted prior to commencement of any fieldwork.

Natural England will obtain permission from seabed owners or leaseholders for survey work on the seabed and will supply a copy of this permission to the contractor. Each member of the survey team must carry a letter from Natural England to confirm that they are doing this work on the behalf of Natural England. Survey work will not be able to begin until access permissions have been obtained by Natural England.

Contractors should allow for the inclusion of Natural England staff on surveys wherever feasible. The Project Officer will liaise with the contractor regarding the availability of Natural England staff to join the survey, where available.

SSSI permissions and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and HPMA assessments may be required for the project. Where contractors intend to use either a vessel or hovercraft to access sites this requirement should be made clear in the tender submission and any use of these vehicles will be subject to SSSI consent and HRA. This should be discussed from the outset with the Project Officer and site leads.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) require notification of any exempted activities occurring; Natural England will be responsible for submitting the relevant information to the MMO for this.

Natural England will be responsible for obtaining permissions from the Crown Estate.

5.5 Weather Downtime

Weather downtime should be defined as those periods during Marine Monitoring Operations where the influence of weather conditions results in a halt to any monitoring due to the impact on data quality and/or operational safety.

To ensure the safety of the Contractor and integrity of the project, transparent documented communications with Natural England is essential. Natural England requires that the contract be assigned through an all-inclusive single price agreed at the outset of the project. Any permission to accrue weather downtime costs given must be in writing or by email from a nominated person within Natural England to the Contractor (the nominated person will be confirmed at the point of contract award). Any charges for weather downtime where no evidence of prior approval exists will not be approved and will not be reimbursed. Approved weather downtime may be charged to Natural England at an Operational Weather Downtime Rate, as agreed in the contract.

Survey windows should be allocated in accordance with the best tides available. If weather forecasts predict weather conditions with the potential to result in extended (>1 day) impacts on data quality and/or operational safety, up to 48 hrs prior to mobilising, then Natural England will not pay weather downtime unless expressly agreed in writing. In the event of uncertainty or other unforeseen events that impact upon the ability of the contractor to undertake the survey according to the planned schedule, the Natural England Project Officer should be contacted at the earliest opportunity, and surveys rescheduled.

5.6 Invasive Non-Native Species

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are considered to be one of the top five pressures directly driving biodiversity loss globally. Prevention is the key focus, particularly in marine environments. The contractor shall be aware of and work in accordance with standard good practice biosecurity measures to avoid spread of INNS:

- Equipment, clothes and boots should be clean before carrying out any work on site
- When on or near water it is important that equipment is drained after use and as far as possible dried
- Boats to be used in survey work should have their hulls cleaned on a regular basis. Best practice guidelines should be followed as outlined by The Green Blue.
-

A list of INNS species considered as a priority under the UK marine strategy can be found on the Great Britain Non-native species secretariat website. This list includes species that might be considered as high risk and horizon species which are also relevant from an impact on designated sites perspective as well.

The contractor must report any records of INNS observed on site against the UK Marine Non Indigenous Species Priority List on Marine Recorder and to the Natural England Project Officer as part of the survey report. Any species currently listed as 'alert' species should be flagged immediately to the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat (Species alerts » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)). More information and guidance including ID guides can be found at www.nonnativespecies.org and https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/341301316.pdf.

6. Outputs

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Katie Pryor.

6.1 Deliverables

Data must be interpreted, analysed and presented considering the overarching hypotheses stated above. The following deliverables should be produced:

- Survey report, including survey narrative, standard operating protocols used, issues encountered
- Quarterly progress reports
- Field report outlining:
    1. The survey methodology used.
    2. A timeline of events and actions.
    3. Any difficulties encountered.

4. A discussion and interpretation of the data i.e. species identified, any patterns in the site use, seasonal variations, life stages encountered.

- Final technical report:
  1. Detailed analysis protocols used (if these do not conform to a standard protocol)
  2. Evaluation of method
  3. Indicative view of condition
  4. Power analysis to inform future sampling design
  5. Maps
  6. Discussion of evidence of impacts
- All raw and analysed data

6.2 Data standards and formats

Contractors should pay particular consideration to the data and GIS required formats for information compatibility including MEDIN metadata standards and Marine Recorder provision:

General data specifications

- 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.
- All data should be supplied with a MEDIN metadata record which meets the MEDIN metadata discovery 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 Guidance for Contractors' will be provided to the winning contractor.
- Copies of the original data spreadsheets or databases are to be provided in the appropriate Microsoft Office format. However please be aware that using MEDIN marine biodiversity data guideline spreadsheets (available online under the marine biodiversity tab at MEDIN data guidelines) will ensure that biological taxon data is prepared correctly for entry into Marine Recorder and will facilitate the efficient entry of data into this system and the data archiving process in general. Natural England welcomes and supports the provision of raw data spreadsheets in the MEDIN format and expects that all raw datasheets will contain the mandatory fields in the MEDIN guidelines, regardless of their format.
- Any species lists submitted will be compliant with current taxonomic names and synonyms (e.g. Marine Species of the British Isles and Adjacent Seas (MSBIAS), World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS)

GIS data

- All GIS datasets need to be provided in ESRI ArcGIS format compatible with ArcGIS 10.2 and have attached metadata. 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) to the most detailed EUNIS habitat level possible. MNCR (v15.03) 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. Where MESH GUI references are identical, the datasets should be combined and treated as a single survey record. As specified in the MESH data exchange format, data files must be provided as ESRI Shapefiles using geographic coordinates (lat/long) and the WGS84 datum. If the datasets supplied are in other projections, transformation using the appropriate petroleum (EPSG) transformation should be carried out as part of the data formatting procedure.
- If not included in the GIS data layers listed above all sampling locations, vessels tracks, and links to data obtained should also be included as a single GI layer.
- 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.

Analysed sample data

- All sample data must be entered into Marine Recorder Online (grab sample analyses, video/still photography analyses, diver survey species, PSA analysis and biotope lists etc). The Natural England Project Officer will create the survey in MRO and grant access to the contractor to input survey data. Natural England will supply a 'Marine Recorder guidance for contractors' document to successful contractors. Contractors should inform the Project Officer when the dataset has been entered, who will QA the survey before signing off
- The Contractor must report any records of Invasive and Non-Native Species observed on site on Marine Recorder and to the Natural England project officer as part of the survey report. Any species currently listed as 'alert' species should be flagged immediately to the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat Species alerts. More information and guidance including ID guides can be found at GB non-native species secretariat.

Reports

- Draft reports should be provided in electronic MS Office Word *.DOCX format for comment. A template and guidance exists for writing Natural England commissioned reports and will be sent to the contractor upon award of the tender. All reports should retain a clear suggested citation stating that it is a 'Report to Natural England'.

6.3 Intellectual property

The intellectual property rights and copyright for all products (including photographs) will lie with Natural England. All data will be made available by Natural England under the Open Government Licence at the end of the project via www.data.gov.uk and the MEDIN Data Archiving Centres.

6.4 Expected timeline

Activity	Date
Call off form issued to suppliers under sub lot 6.3	**10/06/2024**
Deadline for supplier clarification questions	**25/06/2024**
Deadline for Tender responses to be returned	**02/07/2024**
Evaluation period	**02/07/2024 - 08/07/24**
Moderation Meeting	**09/07/2024**
Successful contract awarded	**29/07/2024**
Inception meeting with Natural England	**30/07/2023**
Produce final project plan	**06/08/2024**
Surveys and brief field/survey reports to be completed by	**31/12/2024**
Draft final report and associated products to be provided by	**28/02/2025**
Final report, maps and output to be delivered	**21/03/2025**

Natural England would expect to discuss and review timelines with the successful contractor in the start-up meeting and throughout the duration of the contract. Any delays to this timetable should be discussed with the Natural England Project Officer and delays not outside the control of the contractor will be penalised.

6.5 Contract management

This contract shall be managed on behalf[redacted]

In support of this contract, Natural England will provide the successful contractor with the following:

- Project support from dedicated project lead
- Opportunity to feedback and discuss progress and the project
- Additional survey staff if required
- Supporting GIS datasets (if required) under licence for use in this contract:

1. Base map data from Ordnance Survey
2. Aerial photography from Next Perspectives
3. S-57 vector data from the UK Hydrographic Office (in ArcGIS format)*
4. Raster charts from Oceanwise*

*(Not to be used for Navigation)

- Additional reports to help with the analysis and report

Guidance on how contractors can access GI data can be found at https://www.gov.uk/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data.

2. Required skills / experience from the contractor and staff. Include any essential qualifications or accreditations required to undertake the work.

Essential skills

It is essential that the project team has experience with:

1. This type of survey work
2. Fish biology for fish ID
3. Univariate and multivariate analysis of fish community data packages

3. Proposed program of work and payment table (Detailing specific tasks, key milestones, deliverables & completion date where appropriate)

Task no.	Task and deliverable	Completion date	Payment schedule
1	First field survey and field report	31/08/2024	30%
2	Second field survey and field report	31/10/2024	30%
3	Analysis, mapping and technical report	31/03/3025	40%

All costs for tasks 1-3 above and including any expenses (such as travel and accommodation etc.) will be used to assess your commercial weighting. This total cost figure (excluding VAT) will be inputted into the commercial envelope on the Atamis e-Sourcing system.

Costs requested for information purposes only ie for the Third field survey and field report and the Analysis, mapping and technical report and any further costs

The contract will start on 29/07/2024 and run until 31/03/2025, at which point it will stop. The Authority will then request further funding and if further funding is granted and approved, this will be communicated to the successful contractor via a Contract Change Note (CCN) and will form a contract extension. If funding permits, the contract may be extended for a maximum of two further 12 month periods (as annual increments) at the discretion of the Authority.

All extensions will be communicated to the supplier by way of a change control note (CCN).

All costs quoted under this call-off will be fixed for the duration of the contract and any extension periods granted thereafter.

4. Quality Assurance

Relevant company quality management systems and /or accreditation would need to be given. Evidence of such quality assurance methods used during surveys and analysis would also need to be thoroughly and clearly detailed. We'd also expect to see a thorough audit trail, with baseline datasets being built and QC procedure for sampling.

[redacted]

Research, Development and Evidence Framework 2

2.0 - PROPOSAL

Contractor's Name:	**Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd - (Sub-contractor delivering the work, Ocean Ecology)**
Atamis Reference:	**C25004 / C25587**
Atamis Title:	**Allonby Bay HPMA Fish Surveys**
RDE Call off Reference:	**RDE587**
Sub-Lot Number:	**6.3 - Productive seas and freshwater system**
Date:	**01/07/2024**

E01. Approach & Methodology

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

E02 - Proposed Staff (inc Pen Portraits) and Contractor's experience/accreditations.
[redacted]

[redacted]

E03 - Project Management and Availability (including project plan)

[redacted]

Task	Subtask	1 29-Jul	2 05-Aug	3 12-Aug	4 19-Aug	5 26-Aug	6 02-Sep	7 09-Sep	8 16-Sep	9 23-Sep	10 30-Sep	11 07-Oct	12 14-Oct	13 21-Oct	14 28-Oct	15 04-Nov	16 11-Nov	17 18-Nov
1. Contract awarded	Inception meeting with Natural England																	
2. Project Plan	Produce																	
	Submit																	
	Preparation																	
3. Summer survey	Conducting survey		**9-19th August**		or	*24th Aug - 3rd Sep*												
	Field report																	
	Preparation																	
4. Autumn/ Winter survey	Conducting survey													*Oct 23rd 31st*				
	Field report																	
5. Draft deliverables	Data analysis/ report writing																	
	Data deliverables (Marine Recorder, GIS)																	
6. Final report	All comments addressed																	
Key																		
Preffered dates *(backup dates)*	Action underway																	
	Draft submitted/Review period																	
	Meeting																	

Task	Subtask	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
		25-Nov	02-Dec	09-Dec	16-Dec	23-Dec	30-Dec	06-Jan	13-Jan	20-Jan	27-Jan	03-Feb	10-Feb	17-Feb	24-Feb	03-Mar	10-Mar	17-Mar	24-Mar
1. Contract awarded	Inception meeting with Natural England																		
2. Project Plan	Produce																		
	Submit																		
3. Summer survey	Preparation																		
	Conducting survey																		
	Field report																		
4. Autumn/ Winter survey	Preparation																		
	Conducting survey	Nov 21st - 30th																	
	Field report																		
5. Draft deliverables	Data analysis/ report writing																		
	Data deliverables (Marine Recorder, GIS)																		
6. Final report	All comments addressed																		

E04 - Quality Assurance

[redacted]

E05 - Health & Safety 10/70

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

By signing this form (*Ocean Ecology Ltd.)* agree to provide the services stated above for the cost set out in the Cost Proposal and in accordance with the Research, Development & Evidence Framework 1 Conditions of Contract.

Contractor Project Manager:	[redacted]
Signature:	[redacted]
Date:	01/07/2024

Please complete Table 1 (which will be used for the commercial weighting) and table 2 which will be for information purposes only at this stage but if the Authority is granted further funding once the initial contract period ends (31/03/2025) will form a contract extension.

All costs quoted should be exclusive of VAT and will remain fixed for the contract period and any extension period thereafter.

6. Cost Proposal

Please use day rates, including any applicable discounts, as agreed under the framework contract. Information detailed in Table 1 will be used for the Commercial weighting.

Table 1

Task No.	Name	Framework grade	Day rate	No. of Days or part	Cost
[redacted]					

		[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]		[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
			Total Staff Costs for table 1		[redacted]

Expenses (please detail type i.e. travel, accommodation etc.)	**Unit**	**Cost (for both surveys)**
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	-
Overall Costs for table 1 (Exclusive of VAT) **Please enter this figure into the commercial envelope on Atamis**		[redacted]

By signing this form *Ocean Ecology Limited* agree to provide the services stated above for the cost set out in your Cost Proposal and in accordance with the Research, Development & Evidence Framework 1Conditions of Contract.

Contractor Project Manager:	[redacted]
Signature:	[redacted]
Date:	01/07/2024

6. Cost Proposal

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

Please note that when the contract ends on 31/03/2025, the Authority will then request further funding and if further funding is granted and approved, this will be communicated to the successful contractor and will form a contract extension. The below costs will for this extension. All extensions will be communicated to the supplier by way of a change control note (CCN). All costs quoted under Table 1 and 2 will be fixed for the duration of the contract, included any extension periods granted thereafter.

Table 2

Task No.	Name	Framework grade	Day rate	No. of Days or part thereof	Cost
[redacted]		[redacted]	[redacted]	1	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]	8	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]	8	[redacted]
[redacted]		[redacted]	[redacted]	3	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]	4	[redacted]
			Total Staff Costs for table 2		[redacted]

Expenses (please detail type i.e. travel, accommodation etc.)	Unit	Cost
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	-
Overall Costs for table 2 (Exclusive of VAT)		[redacted]

By signing this form *Ocean Ecology Limited* agree to provide the services stated above for the cost set out in your Cost Proposal and in accordance with the Research, Development & Evidence Framework 1Conditions of Contract.	
Contractor Project Manager:	[redacted]
Signature:	[redacted]
Date:	01/07/2024

3.0 Order Form

3.1 The following document is to be completed by the Contracting Authority and sent to the Contractor for counter signature to form a Call-Off contract.

Research, Development and Evidence Framework 2 **ORDER FORM**	
Contractor's Name:	**Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd - (Sub-contractor delivering the work, Ocean Ecology)**
Atamis Reference:	**C25004/C25587**
Atamis Title:	**Allonby Bay HPMA Fish Surveys**
RDE Call off Reference:	**RDE587**
Sub-Lot Number:	**6.3 - Productive seas and freshwater system**
Date:	**25/07/2024**

THE Contracting Authority: [redacted]

THE CONTRACTOR: [redacted]

Contracting Authority guidance: This Order Form, when completed and executed by both Parties, forms a Call-Off Contract. A Call-Off Contract can be completed and executed using an equivalent document or electronic purchase order system.

APPLICABLE FRAMEWORK CONTRACT

This Order Form is for the provision of the Call-Off Deliverables and dated 06/09/2023. It's issued under the Research Development & Evidence Framework Agreement reference 30210 for the provision of **Allonby Bay HPMA Fish Surveys (C25004/C25587).**

CALL-OFF SUB-LOT: **6.3 - Productive seas and freshwater system**

CALL-OFF INCORPORATED TERMS The following documents are incorporated into this Call-Off Contract. Where numbers are missing we are not using those schedules. If the documents conflict, the following order of precedence applies:

1. Defra Framework Terms and Conditions (as a separate attachment);
2. Request for Proposal;
3. Proposal;

No other Supplier terms are part of the Call-Off Contract. That includes any terms written on

the back of, added to this Order Form, or presented at the time of delivery.

CALL-OFF CONTRACT START DATE: 29 July 2024

CALL-OFF CONTRACT EXPIRY DATE: 31 March 2025

CALL-OFF PERIOD: The contract will start on 29/07/2024 and run until 31/03/2025, at which point it will stop. The Authority will then request further funding and if further funding is granted and approved, this will be communicated to yourselves and will form a contract extension. If funding permits, the contract may be extended for a maximum of two further 12-month periods (as annual increments). This will be at the discretion of the Authority.

All extensions will be communicated to the successful Contractor via a change control note (CCN).

All costs quoted under this call-off will be fixed for the duration of the contract and any extension periods granted thereafter.

Commission Code: RDE587.

Signed for and on behalf of the **Supplier:**
Signed for and on behalf of the **Buyer:**