



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

European Topic Centre on biological diversity 2005-2008

Open call for proposals (Grant agreement): EEA/EAS/04/003
Project manager: Tor-Björn Larsson

1. Background information

The European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network

The European Environment Agency is the main source of information used by the European Union and its Member States in developing environment policies. The Agency aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy-making agents and the public. Established by the EU in 1990 and operational in Copenhagen since 1994, the EEA is the hub of the European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet), a network of around 300 institutes across Europe through which it collects and disseminates environment-related data and information. This information is made available through various report series, briefings and the EEA website¹.

The European Commission, the European Parliament, national and regional authorities in the member countries, and a wide range of non-governmental organisations are among the regular users of the databases and information products.

Institutionally, the European Environment Agency is one of the Agencies of the European Union. The functioning of the EEA and Eionet are described in the EEA founding regulation².

The Agency, which is open to all nations that share its objectives, currently has 31 member countries. These are the 15 EU Member States and the 10 Acceding countries that will join the Union on 1 May 2004; Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein, which are members of the European Economic Area; and the 3 EU candidate countries, namely

¹ <http://www.eea.eu.int/>

² EEC 1210/90 of 7 May 1990, amended by EC 933/1999 of 29 April 1999 and EC 1641/2003 of 22 July 2003, see <http://org.eea.eu.int/documents>

Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Negotiations on EEA membership are also under way with Switzerland.

Five European Topic Centres (ETCs) are currently part of Eionet. They cover the topics 'Air and climate change', 'Water', 'Terrestrial environment', 'Waste and material flows' and 'Nature Protection Biodiversity'. The last two are now opened up for proposals for new consortia to carry out the tasks.

Role of the European Topic Centres

The European Topic Centres (ETCs) are, according to the EEA founding regulation³ and in practice, an important instrument supporting the EEA through the execution of sizeable, continuous, well-defined tasks with the involvement of member countries. European Topic Centres are involved in the harmonisation of monitoring of the environment in the member countries, in the compilation of the resulting data in international databases, in the processing of the information including the use of models to describe and analyse the present and future state of the environment, and in the production of indicators to communicate the findings to various users.

European Topic Centres are part of the Eionet and a support to the Eionet. Their activities have an important component of networking with experts in the member countries. This happens in working on the harmonisation, the quality and exchange of data, in building capacities in the member countries through country visits and meetings with all country experts in the Eionet. Topic Centres are a sparring partner for countries in discussing options for improving national information systems. Networking with the countries also occurs when involving the member countries in the analyses of indicators and in assessments. The ETCs are expected to work together with the other European Topic Centres on crosscutting projects.

To perform these tasks European Topic Centres include the best expertise in Europe to handle data in their topic area, and to analyse the environmental data with regards to developments in society and economy and with regards to environmental and sectoral policies. European Topic Centres are also expected to have the expertise to cover the full geographical area of EEA member countries.

European Topic Centres are thus common resources for the EEA, its member countries and the Community institutions. The yearly work programme of the topic centres is decided upon by the EEA taking into account the requirements of all parts of the Eionet and other stakeholders. For the execution of the work programmes, ETCs receive several (mostly yearly) grants from the Agency and are co-financed by national and other contributions. Co-financing has in previous years typically covered 30 % or more of project costs, part of it by contributing staff to the project. ETCs may not generate profit for any of the participating institutions (see article I.6 and section II.17 in Annex I). Only tasks with a component of networking with the member countries can be supported under grant agreements.

It is the experience of the past years that the variety of tasks to be done by a Topic Centre and the variety of expertise needed, are usually found in a multi-national consortium of institutes and/or companies.

³ The EEA founding regulation, see footnote 2, describes in article 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 Topic Centres and their tasks as part of Eionet.

2. Biodiversity in the EEA strategy 2004-2008

The 'EEA strategy 2004-2008'⁴ is aligned with the EU 6th Environment Action Programme. The Agency works across four major priority areas: tackling climate change, tackling biodiversity loss/understanding spatial change, protecting human health and quality of life, use and management of natural resources and waste. Each of these is influenced by a range of societal and sectoral processes.

Over the next five years the Agency's priorities related to biodiversity⁵ will be to contribute to the achievement of the 2010 target of halting biodiversity loss⁶ through assessments of trends in biodiversity with respect to physical planning, including transport planning, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, climate change, environmental pollution (including nutrient flows, dispersion of hazardous substances and soil contamination) and management of the rural environment.

Specific EEA outputs over the next five years will include:

- distance to 2010 target assessments;
- performance indicators for biodiversity policies, especially Natura 2000 implementation and the link to sectoral policies;
- assessments of forest condition;
- support to Member States and the Commission on Natura 2000 and biodiversity action plans; bring together existing experience and knowledge across its networks to develop common methods for monitoring habitats and species and the pressures on them;
- maintenance of reference databases, portals, guidelines and networks;
- development of an early warning network of alien invasive species;
- sectoral policy integration and economic analyses.

The ETC on biological diversity will from January 2005 replace the ETC on nature protection and biodiversity⁷. In the period 2005-2008 the role of the ETC on biological diversity will be to support EEA in the realisation of its strategy mainly by performing tasks in data collection, indicator compilation and assessment, and member country support as described in the following section.

3. Specific tasks of the European Topic Centre on biological diversity

Main policy-related objectives for the ETC on biological diversity

The 6th Environment Action Programme with its parts on biodiversity, the EC Biodiversity Strategy⁸ and its relations to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) form the main policy context for EEA work. The ETC on biological diversity

⁴ <http://org.eea.eu.int/documents>

⁵ Biodiversity = biological diversity, for definition see www.cbd etc

⁶ See e.g. 'The Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community', <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/newprg/index.htm>

⁷ <http://nature.eionet.eu.int/>

⁸ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/home.htm> & http://biodiversity-chm.eea.eu.int/convention/cbd_ec/F1067953781

shall support EEA and its clients in providing information for the above policies, and for related conventions and international processes (e.g. the Bern Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the 'Environment for Europe' process, the Ministerial Process for Protection of Forests in Europe, etc.).

Main elements in the programme of work

The proposed consortium is expected to describe its competence, ability to synthesize scientific evidence and approach to produce relevant deliverables for the following main elements in a strategic work programme for the ETC on biological diversity 2005-2008 (four years):

Work area: 1 Monitoring and dataflows

The ETC on biological diversity is expected to work with EEA member countries and key international organisations to arrive at efficient structures of European data systems to deliver policy relevant biodiversity data and information. The ETC will need to play an active role in designing and establishing such systems:

- maintain the overview of monitoring activities in Europe relevant to populations of species, extent and quality of habitats and functioning of ecosystems;
- contribute to the design of integrated space/in-situ monitoring at different spatial scales, linked to initiatives as the global monitoring for environment and security (GMES) and infrastructure for spatial information in Europe (Inspire)⁹ to fill gaps;
- support the coordination of European biodiversity monitoring by giving expert advice and providing guidelines on the design of monitoring and the institutional cooperation structures (e.g. in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity);
- establish dataflow routines with countries, EU institutions and international organisations to maximise the use of available data in EEA indicators and assessments, and to assess quality of data, monitoring and reporting procedures.
- identify needs to establish and/or secure European scientific expertise and research on the state of Europe's biological diversity.

Work area 2: Reference databases and information systems

The ETC on biological diversity will use scientific knowledge and the data gathered to maintain a number of reference databases (containing information on European species, habitats and natural sites) and information systems for feeding EEA's indicators and assessments:

- maintain and as relevant further develop the European Information System on Nature (EUNIS) database¹⁰;
- maintain the Common Database on Designated Areas¹¹ and ensure coordination with UNEP-WCMC and the Council of Europe;
- assist EEA in maintaining and further developing the EC Clearing-House Mechanism¹².

And to be agreed in the future:

⁹ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2004/com2004_0065en01.pdf

¹⁰ <http://eunis.eea.eu.int/index.jsp>

¹¹ <http://dataservice.eea.eu.int/dataservice/metadetails.asp?id=642>

¹² <http://biodiversity-chm.eea.eu.int/>

- further develop databases and information systems as relevant for biodiversity-related indicators, with particular attention to spatial aspects. This needs to be done in close cooperation with member countries and international organisations.

Work area 3: Indicators

The ETC on biological diversity will take part in further EEA indicator development. The Agency strives to develop indicators within the DPSIR assessment framework¹³, to support specific policy processes. The last include high-level processes such as the EU Sustainable Development Strategy¹⁴. Indicators developed for this purpose require specific aggregations and presentation techniques.

The ETC will:

- maintain and further develop a set of ca 30 indicators;
- produce for these regularly indicator fact sheets¹⁵, which include an analysis of the trends. Quality assessment of the data is part of this task;
- elaborate policy relevant texts describing the environmental and policy context of the indicators as well as their analysis;
- develop new indicators in cooperation with member countries, other organisations or research projects. Specifically the ETC will analyse the state of knowledge and existing capacities as a basis for developing indicators and information on key ecosystem functions.

Work area 4: EEA assessment reports

For the assessments the EEA will produce, the ETC on biological diversity will provide the knowledge base on the role of species and habitats in ecosystem functioning. Upon request by the Agency the ETC on biological diversity is expected to, in an extent depending on the relative role of biodiversity, participate in environmental assessment processes by:

- participate in the establishment of specific biodiversity-related indicators to be used for the specific assessments and assess data availability;
- design, according to specifications agreed with the Agency, and when relevant with consultants contracted by the Agency, biodiversity related datasets to serve in the assessments. These data should be derived from databases the ETC has or could be given access to; the data should be validated and their quality documented in indicator factsheets;
- participate in the elaboration of 'storylines' accompanying the indicators and datasets, including performing reviews of literature and current research to assess causal links and possible scenarios for future developments;
- provide relevant biodiversity information to specific EEA projects. These may be sectoral studies (agriculture, forestry, transport) or integrated spatial assessments (e.g. on land use, biodiversity and water interactions in cooperation with ETCs on Water and Terrestrial Environment, or on climate change impacts with the ETC on Air and Climate Change);
- contribute to the elaboration of draft reports, e.g. as regards the drafting of figures, maps and tables according to EEA guidelines;

¹³ http://reports.eea.eu.int/TEC25/en/tech_25_text.pdf

¹⁴ http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/index_en.htm

¹⁵ See e.g. <http://themes.eea.eu.int/indicators/>

- support consultation processes with, as a rule, the EEA member countries through presentations at meetings, analysing comments and revising the draft reports accordingly;
- support the EEA in developing derived products (briefings, brochures, posters etc.) from assessment reports.

The ETC on biological diversity is expected to support EEA in the reporting of Forest Focus¹⁶, which will deal with the monitoring of forest condition in EU.

Work area 5: Support the development and implementation of EU policy

The ETC on biological diversity will provide technical assistance to EEA to support implementation processes of, in particular, the following EU policies:

- by providing input, e.g. based upon data from the reference databases mentioned in work area 2, in workgroups and meetings to support implementation and follow-up of the Birds and Habitats Directives¹⁷. This includes validation of data and input to the Commission Natura2000 database. The support will comprise the completion of the designation process for the EU15 countries with particular attention to marine designations. Support to the Commission on the final process of establishing Natura 2000¹⁸ network in the accession countries including assessment of proposal and preparation of biogeographic seminars. An increasing focus will be needed on monitoring and reporting on the conservation status of habitats and species covered by the Birds and Habitats directive¹⁹;
- by providing input in workgroups and meetings to develop the biodiversity module for the Regulation concerning monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community (Forest Focus)²⁰ and to harmonise this with other forest biodiversity monitoring and reporting activities;
- by giving support to other biodiversity-related issues raised by the European institutions or EEA member countries.

Work area 6: ETC management and capacity building in EEA member countries

The organisational set up and management procedures of the ETC consortium must meet the special and general conditions to the agreement (Annex I). To ensure this, the management of the ETC requires e.g. clear decision and communication structures within the consortium, and well-established links to the Agency and the EEA member countries, to the European Commission and to other relevant organisations. In response to the yearly work programme, which is the basis for the grant, the consortium shall produce an annual implementation plan.

The ETC management must also include procedures for quality assurance – inclusive language check - of all its deliverables.

The ETC shall maintain close links with Eionet and EEA member countries, through:

- strong communication effort with the countries, including networking and regular country visits;

¹⁶ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/forest-regulations.htm> Cf. Article 18 etc.

¹⁷ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/legis.htm>

¹⁸ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/home.htm>

¹⁹ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/legis.htm> Cf Article 1 etc

²⁰ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/forest-regulations.htm>

- in dialogue with the countries identifying barriers to optimally perform their tasks (e.g. monitoring capacities, staff resources, knowledge gaps) and developing proposals to solve any issues;
- carrying out outreach and information dissemination campaigns to the nature and biological diversity community;
- providing training and capacity building in the countries as appropriate;
- organising regular Eionet workshops and seminars to discuss the outcomes of the work and plan future activities with the member countries.

Furthermore the ETC on biological diversity must to a certain extent be able to assist the Agency on an ad hoc basis e.g.:

- provide advice to specific clients/users, in particular the European Commission, review and comment on draft notes or other reports, prepare data summaries and data assessments;
- deliver direct policy support and build up networks by participating in working groups, committees etc., particularly those formed under EU legislation or programmes such as the Framework programmes for research and technological development;
- information activities, for example through briefing notes, seminars etc.
- joint work with other ETCs.

4. Guidelines for the organisation of the European Topic Centre on biological diversity

The present and earlier ETCs are consortia of government organisations, private non-profit organisations and a few commercial firms. A major part of the work has been carried out by a relatively large ‘core team’ at the coordinating organisation but the other partners have provided additional competencies. Based upon the experiences of the Agency some guidelines can be given for a successful consortium applicable to the ETC biological diversity.

A. The ETC consortium:

- the work programme may be best addressed by a ‘core team’ located at the coordinating organisation, supported by partners with specific competences. It is the experience that it is difficult to manage many small partners in a consortium;
- the expertise needed in the core team is both topical and technical, including:
 - o coordinator, having excellent management and networking capabilities and a good understanding of main environmental policy frameworks for nature and biodiversity protection and of sectoral policies influencing biodiversity;
 - o administrative support, able to work in English and organise European meetings and consultations;
 - o data and metadata management with experience in QA/QC;
 - o expertise to design (web-based) biodiversity information systems.
 - o Expertise on EU-nature policies and technical/biological knowledge on habitats and species of Community interest (including especially the new Member States).

The core team at the coordinating organisation should have access to financial control services, to ensure proper financial management.

- in addition, within the consortium as a whole, the following capacities are needed:
 - o experience in biodiversity indicator development;
 - o capacities to perform reviews of scientific state of knowledge in relevant areas;
 - o capacities to translate knowledge on ecosystem functioning into policy relevant information
 - o experience in the implementation of Natura 2000 and Forest Focus
 - o institutional networking experience at national, EU and international level.
- the consortium is expected to work with all European terrestrial, limnic and marine ecosystems, in particular those related to the needs of supporting the Natura2000 and Forest Focus processes.
- the consortium as a whole should cover the main work areas but also have excellent links to the wider European expertise, being able to subcontract experts for specific projects;
- as an indication, the budget needed for the work will be ca 1 000 000 euro per year, of which EEA may grant ca 700 000 euro per year. Specific figures will be decided annually, based on the available budget and Annual Management Plan of the EEA.

B. The execution of the work programme:

- the working language of EEA is English. The ETC is expected to deliver texts (background notes, draft fact sheets etc.) in sufficiently good English to be processed further. The consortium must be able to deliver final drafts that do not need further language checking before publishing. The consortium shall establish a quality control procedure for this;
- ETCs report to the Agency. The primary link will be between the ETC coordinating organisation (coordinator) and the ETC leader at the Agency. Within the framework of the work programme, on a working basis, ETC staff is expected to closely cooperate also with other staff at the Agency. This puts several demands on the ETC, e.g. to ensure that draft documents will be delivered on time, even if requested in several stages of development, and according to technical standards provided by the EEA and in sufficiently good English;
- maintaining and improving the links to the European Environment Information and Observation Network²¹, i.e. the ‘eionet-nature’²² and in particular with the Primary Contact Points and National Reference Centres appointed by the member countries is the basic foundation under the work of the ETC. This means e.g. ad hoc technical support to member countries to make them able to contribute to the reporting of ‘priority data’. The ETCs also to a considerable extent assist the EEA in organising annual meetings with the Eionet partners;
- participation in integrated assessments creates the need to cooperate with the other ETCs²³ set up by the Agency.

5. Submission of the proposal

Natural or legal persons fulfilling the conditions stated that do not fall under any of the exclusion cases in the rules for participation, or in Article 114(2) of the Council

²¹ <http://www.eionet.eu.int/>

²² http://www.eionet.eu.int/Topic_Areas/Nature_Protection_Biodiversity

²³ see list in Section 1 and <http://www.eea.eu.int/>

Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities²⁴ are invited to submit to the Agency proposals for the European Topics Centre on biological diversity 2005-2008.

The consortium may include organisations from all EEA Members countries (see Section 1). The quality of coverage of the EEA Member countries area and the balance in the geographical distribution of the partners will be taken into account in the evaluation.

In drawing up the proposal, the consortium should bear in mind the provisions of the standard framework partnership agreement and the specific agreement for grants attached to this invitation to tender (Annex I).

The proposal must include all the information and documents required for the appraisal of tender on the basis of the selection criteria and the award criteria set out below.

The main text part of the proposals should include **in the following order**:

1. An executive summary of the proposal, **not exceeding 5 pages**:
 - ETC name as indicated in the title of these specifications
 - Title, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the (proposed) lead organisation
 - Name and short (one paragraph) CV of proposed ETC manager
 - Titles and addresses of other organisation(s) included in consortium proposal
 - Names and short (one paragraph) CVs of main experts proposed for ETC consortium and who would contribute at least 100 days/year to ETC
 - A summary of how it is proposed to organise and deliver the core work, in particular which partner(s) will be responsible for the main tasks and activities, how these will be coordinated by the core team and how the budget could be allocated across the tasks;
2. An appreciation of the vision and priorities for the ETC over the next four years (2005-2008); how the results will contribute to the development of policies in the area; how the priorities will be developed and how the expertise offered will provide a balanced team to provide the range of expertise required of an ETC and that will be able to contribute to the individual tasks and activities as specified. This appreciation should include an overview of which partner(s) will be responsible for, and/or contribute to, which tasks and activities and how this will be coordinated across partners.
3. An appreciation of how the proposed consortium takes into account the need to reflect the different geographic circumstances EEA member area.
4. An appreciation of the way the member countries will be involved in the work of the Topic Centre.

²⁴ Financial Regulation : <http://intracomm.cec.eu-admin.net/budg/lex/en/legis/rf2002/index.htm>
Implementing rules : www.cc.cec/budg/document/lex/mod-exec/JO-357-mod-exec-en.pdf

5. An appreciation of how the proposed consortium will offer some continuity to carry forward some of the experience, expertise and capacity developed to date in the ETC on nature and biodiversity protection.
6. A statement on the proposed approach to quality.
7. An overview of the experts in the consortium, including the description of a core team in the coordination organisation.
8. A proposal for the organisation of the Topic Centre, including a rationale for the chosen arrangement.
9. A proposal for technical/scientific review of progress and products through, for example, the Scientific Committee, peer review, EIONET workshops, etc.
10. A breakdown of expected costs for personnel and an indication of likely non-staff costs (travel/subsistence, equipment, report production and other materials), within the likely annual budget
11. CVs of experts contributing significantly to the ETC, including a statement on availability and the number of days they will likely provide to the project each year
12. Brief summary of the capacities and portfolio of relevant projects carried out by each member of the consortium.

Annex V is a checklist of all (supporting) documentation needed.

Five bound copies and one unbound signed original of the proposal must be submitted. If any ‘promotional material’ on any of the partners is included with the proposal then only one copy of such material should be submitted.

6. Exclusion criteria

The conditions of participation of the proposers will be verified within the framework of the negotiation of the framework agreement. Before that however, proposers will have signed a declaration stating that they do not fall under any of the cases given by Article 93(1) of the Financial Regulation (Annex IV). Before the agreement will be concluded they will also have given the Agency the information listed in Article 173 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, of 23 December 2002, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (see footnote 24).

Proposers' attention is drawn on the provisions of Article 173(4) of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002. However, taking in account the financial collective responsibility of the consortium, the Agency will not require external audit reports over the last two years for consortia including public bodies.

Exclusion following Article 93(1) of the Financial Regulation occurs if candidates are in any of the following situations:

- are bankrupt or being wound up, have suspended business activities, are having their affairs administered by the court, have entered into an arrangement with creditors or are in any analogous situation, or are the subject of proceedings of this nature;
- have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement, which has the force of res judicata;

- have been guilty of grave professional misconduct;
- have not fulfilled their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or taxes;
- have been subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- are subject to conflict of interest;
- have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority.

7. Selection criteria

The proposal must include evidence of the professional, technical and financial qualifications of each of the partner organisations by means of the following documentation:

- an identification sheet (name or business name, legal status, contact person, etc.) (Annex III);
- copy of the inscription on a trade or company register and of the inscription on the VAT-register; in case of universities, ngo's or similar organisations without a registration in such registers, the relevant part of an establishment agreement should be provided which allows verifying the legal status of the institute
- proof of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the 2005-2008 period
- detailed curriculum vitae of the personnel significantly involved in the proposed Topic Centre, including information on the candidate's working languages and those in which he/she is able to submit reports.
- notes confirming participation in the proposal by each of the partners
- letters stating the intention to provide national and/or other contributions to the project for at least a total of 100.000 Euro per year²⁵ across the consortium.
- For each partner a letter from the EEA management board member of the country in which the partner is based, identifying the institute as able to perform the function of a European Topic Centre within Eionet²⁶. For the contact addresses of EEA Management Board members, see <http://www.eea.eu.int/aboutus>.

²⁵ This amount is the required minimum of 10% of the estimated total eligible costs (see article I.6 in Annex I). Before signing the agreement for each individual grant the final confirmation of co-financing for that grant will be needed. Co-financing may include making available staff to the project. (see section II, 17.3 of Annex I, for eligible personnel costs).

²⁶ The EEA founding regulation art 4.4 requires that member countries identify the institutions that could be specifically entrusted (...) to act as a topic centre of the network for specific tasks. As the new ETC agreements will be partnership agreements this requirement holds for all partners, not only (as in the past) for the coordinating organisation. For international organisations the identification by the management board member of the country in which the headquarters is based, should be provided.

8. Awarding criteria

The framework agreement will be awarded to the most advantageous proposal taking into account:

	Max. award points
1) <u>Approach to the work programme</u> - capability to provide high quality information that addresses the needs of policy makers. The proposal should demonstrate the consortium's understanding of the objectives of the 'EEA strategy, and the policies to which the ETC on biological diversity should contribute. This should be reflected in the set up of the consortium, the design of the work programme and the products proposed	15
2) <u>Expertise on biodiversity and relevant data</u> - the capacity of the consortium of handling information on European biodiversity, habitats, species and ecosystems and the major pressures impacting on biodiversity (knowledge of relevant European data sets and monitoring programmes).	15
3) <u>Experience of biodiversity policy processes</u> - the capacity of the consortium in supporting firstly EU and pan-European but also global and national policy instruments related to biological diversity as evident from their previous projects and publications/reports; demonstrable experience of participation in the development and implementation of this policy by providing expert advice in working groups etc.	15
4) <u>Capacity in developing indicators and supporting assessment</u> - the proposal and previous projects and publications/reports should show the capacity to provide the required deliverables.	15
5) <u>Technical expertise in data management</u> – the expertise of the consortium as evident from their previous projects and publications/reports/internet sites as regards data flow management, including validation processes, data base development and management, data processing for indicators and presentation.	15
6) <u>Use of existing capacities in Europe</u> - sound approach to access of expertise in the member countries and in institutes external to the consortium, links with relevant scientific and administrative organisations in Europe as evident from previous projects and reports.	10
7) <u>Project management and networking capacity</u> – A balanced spread of partners across Europe. Sound arrangements for the management of the ETC consortium, and track record in implementing effective management procedures, enhancing cooperation between partners, and with countries and other stakeholders, transparent financial administration and quality assurance. Adequate level of manpower, resources and output corresponding to the indicative annual budget.	15
TOTAL	100

Each element will be scored according to the degree that the tenderer fulfils the requirements, as demonstrated by CV's of key staff, portfolio of relevant projects by each consortium member, geographical coverage, and track record in delivery of similar products.

9. Deadlines and procedure for submitting the proposal

Tenders are to be submitted (according the publication in the Official Journal) either by registered mail, posted not later than **21.06.04** (postmark); or by delivery (in person or by an authorised representative or private courier service) to Tor-Bjørn Larsson, The European Environment Agency, Kongens Nytorv 6, DK-1050 Copenhagen K **not later than 16.00 on 21.06.04**, in which case a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by an EEA official.

Proposals must be submitted in **five copies** (four bound and one unbound) and placed inside **two** sealed envelopes. The inner envelope, addressed to the person indicated above, should be marked: **“Reply to call for proposals ETC on biological diversity. Not to be opened by the internal mail department”**. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with tape and the sender must sign across the tape.

Submission of a proposal implies acceptance of the terms specified in the “Special and general conditions to the framework partnership agreement” in all matters not governed by this invitation and waiver your companies own terms of business.

Period of validity of the proposal: Six months from the closing date of this call for proposals.

You will be informed whether or not your proposal tender has been successful.

Annexes

- I Standard Framework Partnership agreement and specific grant agreement, including special and general conditions
- II Procedure for evaluating the proposals
- III Identification sheet
- IV Autodeclaration form exclusion criteria
- V Checklist for submitting the proposal

BRIEFING MEETING and further information

A briefing meeting to learn more about the EEA, the EIONET and the European topic centres will be organised on 3 May in Copenhagen. During the meeting background information will be provided on the expectations for the ETC and the procedure for submitting a proposal. This meeting also provides an opportunity to meet potential partners for your consortium. If you are interested please register by sending an e-mail to catherine.brytygier@eea.eu.int; we will send you the meeting details in response.

Any immediate questions regarding this call for proposals should be sent by E-mail to the European Environment Agency: jimmy.flindt@eea.eu.int, fax: +45-3336 7151

All applicants are encouraged to consult the section ‘contract opportunities’ on the EEA website regularly before the deadline.