

Tender specifications

Framework service contract for support to the implementation of ecosystem accounting

Open call for tenders No. EEA/BSS/07/007

1. Title of contract

Support to the implementation of ecosystem accounting.

2. Purpose and context of the contract

Ecosystem accounting is one of the key tools for assessing ecosystems services, potentials and values, and the European Environment Agency (EEA) is considering to use it in the ecosystems assessment for Europe by 2012, referred to as Eureka! (European ecosystem assessment).

The EEA has produced land cover accounts for Europe for 1990-2000, which will be updated for 2006. They form the infrastructure on which full ecosystem accounts will be developed by incorporating biological, hydrological, socio-economic, and other data. The EEA is exploring the possibility of producing worldwide land cover accounts on the basis of earth observations made by satellite at international (e.g. European Space Agency Globcover2005) and national levels.

Land & Ecosystem Accounts form part of the UN SEEA2003 (Integrated System of Environmental and Economic Accounting) endorsed in 2006 as a future international standard by the UN Statistical Commission. A revision of the SEEA2003 handbook, foreseen for 2010, gives an opportunity of broadening the scope of land and ecosystem accounts to provide a more complete coverage of ecosystem services and ecosystem integrity. Within this UN framework, the EEA has been asked to participate in related activities under the auspices of the London Group on Environmental Accounting.

The ecosystem approach to economic-environmental accounting provides an opportunity to define new aggregates (such as the Inclusive Domestic Product and the Full Cost of Goods and Services) connected to the conventional GDP and measuring sustainability gaps. This might serve as a contribution from the EEA to the ongoing European debate on the coverage of the GDP which will be addressed during the European Commission event 'Beyond the GDP' in November 2007.

Current EEA activities on land and ecosystem accounting cover cases studies (in particular on the Mediterranean Wetlands), nomenclatures (ecosystem services, land use), and methodological developments (ecological networks, biomass, valuation). However, interest in questions linked to ecosystems services, integrity and adaptability has increased dramatically with the awareness of the long-term

consequences of current agriculture and transport policies, the risks of inappropriate development of bio-fuels with the rising price of energy, the consequences of exporting our environmental burden, and, above all (see recent Eurobarometer (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb67/eb_67_first_en.pdf), the issue of adapting to climate change and its costs.

3. Subject of contract

3.1 Objectives

The role of the EEA is to provide scientific knowledge for policy making, primarily at the European level, but often also at the local level. To meet this objective, in close cooperation with Eurostat, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), and the European Commission (DG ENV), the EEA is developing a European data infrastructure. This data infrastructure is essential for guaranteeing minimum comparability of the data which will form the basis of European policies, at the same time as meeting short deadlines created by the policy agenda.

For both reasons – comparability and timeliness – simplifications are necessary. They need to be done under strict scientific control, upstream when the methodologies are defined and tested, and downstream when the findings are communicated to stakeholders. This will be ensured in consultation with the London Group on Environmental Accounting (sub-group on land and ecosystem accounting), Eurostat and its working group on environmental accounting (in relation to the implementation of a European Strategy for Environmental Accounting (ESEA)).

The main areas of support covered by this framework contract will be:

- Scientific reviewing and scientific editing;
- Organising expert consultation (either through meetings or electronically) of EEA documents;
- Making recommendations to the EEA team on further elaboration of the methodological approach;
- Computation of ecosystem accounts for case studies;
- Assisting the EEA in the preparation of workshops and conferences (e.g. preparation of agendas, identification of relevant participants, preparation of workshop documents, and processing of outcomes).

The contractor is expected to provide support to all of the above-mentioned activities, if and to the extent requested by the EEA. The exact service, timing for its provision, etc. will be specified in specific contracts which alone shall be binding. The reporting language is English. The word processor used is MSWord 2003. Data are exchanged as spreadsheets and/or as databases compatible with the EEA data IT system. All materials are to be delivered in a format compatible with the EEA's IT system.

3.2 Geographical area to be covered

Most of the EEA activities cover the EEA member countries, with an emphasis on EU policies. However, the scope of the work under this framework contract is expected to go beyond these geographical borders to include a Pan-European perspective covering the 38 members and collaborating countries, the 12 Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries, Mediterranean and indeed a worldwide perspective. For this reason, potential contractors are encouraged to form consortia to broaden the geographical coverage of their expertise. For a list of EEA member and collaborating countries, see:

<http://org.eea.europa.eu/documents/MemberstatesMap>

3.3 Place of performance

The work will mainly be performed from the contractor's premises. Any travel undertaken under Specific Contracts must be based on the EEA's rules, as per Annex 3 attached (Reimbursement of Travel Expenses).

3.4 Duration of contract

The framework contract will be awarded for a period of four years. On the basis of this framework contract, specific contracts will be issued detailing the subject, duration, price and implementing conditions.

3.5 Working language

The working language is English, unless otherwise specified, and deliverables under specific contracts shall be provided in English.

4. Documentation for tenderers

- Land accounts for Europe 1990-2000 - EEA Report No 11/2006
http://reports.eea.europa.eu/eea_report_2006_11/en
- Implementation of land and ecosystem accounts at the European Environment Agency - Jean-Louis Weber, in Journal of Ecological Economics Volume 61, Issue 4, 15 March 2007
http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6VDY-4MD46B8-1&_user=1577609&_coverDate=03%2F15%2F2007&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000053846&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=1577609&md5=c11c7732c29e6698a880e266b82be7f5
- Workshop on test accounts for wetlands: assessment of ecosystem goods and services - EEA-ETC/LUSI, Barcelona, 21-22 June 2007,
<http://terrestrial.eionet.europa.eu/activities/announcements/ann1182853719>

- UN Searchable Archive of Publications on Environmental-Economic Accounting <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/ceea/archive/Introduction.asp>

5. Volume of contract

The estimated yearly budget is EUR 100 000, but this figure may vary depending on the needs of the EEA.

6. Price

Prices must be quoted in EUR. The tenderer shall quote daily rates for: project leader, senior consultant, junior consultant and assistant which will be evaluated on the basis of a calculated average (as indicated under 8.3).

The price quoted shall be fixed and not subject to revision for implementation during the first year of duration of the Contract.

From the beginning of the second year of duration of the Contract, 80% of each price may be revised upwards or downwards each year, where such revision is requested by one of the contracting parties by registered letter no later than three months before the anniversary of the date on which it was signed. The EEA shall purchase on the basis of the prices in force on the date on which specific contracts are signed. Such prices shall not be subject to revision.

This revision shall be determined by the trend in the harmonised consumer price index, MUICP, published for the first time by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities in the Eurostat monthly bulletin at <http://www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>.

Revision shall be calculated in accordance with the following formula:

$$Pr = Po \left(0,2 + 0,8 \frac{Ir}{Io} \right)$$

where:

- Pr = revised price;
- Po = price in the original tender;
- Io = index for the month corresponding to the final date for submission of tenders;
- Ir = index for the month corresponding to the date of receipt of the letter requesting a revision of prices.

7. Contractual terms and guarantees

In drawing up his bid the tenderer should bear in mind the provisions of the standard contract attached to this invitation to tender

8. Criteria

8.1 Exclusion criteria

Tenderers shall be excluded from participation in a procurement procedure if:

(a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

(b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

(c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;

(d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

(e) they have been the subject of a judgment 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;

(f) 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.

Tenderers must provide a declaration on their honour, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in one of the situation listed above (see Annex 1).

Potential contractors might be requested, at a later stage, to certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above by providing:

i) For points (a), (b) and (e) a recent extract from the judicial record, or failing that, a recent equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied.

ii) For point (d) a recent certificate issued by the competent authority of the State concerned.

Where the document or certificate referred above is not issued in the country concerned and for other cases of exclusion, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or

administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

Contracts may not be awarded to tenderers who, during the procurement procedure:

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.

8.2 Selection criteria as indicated in Section III.2 (Conditions for participation) of the Contract notice

8.3 Award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer with the best price-quality ratio, taking into account the following criteria:

8.3.1 Technical merit (TM) (80 points maximum/50 points minimum)

- A.** Understanding of the objectives of the contract and the scientific complexities attached to the work to be carried out (40 points maximum/24 points minimum);
- B.** Quality and relevance of the proposed approach to meet the tender objectives (40 points maximum/24 points minimum).

Tenders reaching the indicated minima will be ranked according to:

$$TM = A + B$$

Offers scoring less than the required minima for technical merit will not be considered further.

8.3.2 Price (P) (20 points maximum)

Prices should be quoted in euro showing all-inclusive, daily rates for four different categories (Project leader _(PL), senior consultant _(SC), junior consultant _(JC), and assistant _(A)). The average $((P_{PL}+P_{SC}+P_{JC}+P_A)/4)$ will be used as the basis for the price comparison. Points will be awarded using the following formula:

$$P = P_{min}/P \times 20$$

The contract will be awarded to the technically compliant tender reaching the highest score Σ of TM + P.

9. Tenders

- The tender must comprise a technical offer and a financial offer, containing one original and two copies.
- Tenders should preferably be drafted in English.
- Tenders from consortiums of firms or service providers must specify the role, qualifications and experience of each of the members or of the consortium and contain a letter of intent to form a consortium from each partner. The same requirements apply for subcontracting.

10. Environmental Considerations

The EEA runs a certified environmental management system (EMAS) and aims to minimise the environmental impact of all its activities, including those carried out under contract. The future contractor will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in the implementation of the contract, in particular those relating to business travel/electronic means of communication, paper and energy consumption. Further information on the EMAS system can be found on the EEA homepage: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/documents/emas>.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that tenders are submitted in an environmentally friendly way, e.g., by choosing a simple and clear structure (list of contents and consecutive page numbering), double-sided printing, limiting attachments to what is required in the technical specifications (no additional material) and avoiding plastic folders or binders.

Submitting an offer implies acceptance by the tenderer of all terms and conditions of the draft contract and its Annexes.

Annexes

Annex 1: Declaration on exclusion criteria

Annex 2: Identification sheet

Annex 3: Reimbursement of Travel Expenses