



Tender specifications

Framework contract(s) for support on implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System

Open call for tender EEA/SES/10/001

1. Title of contract

Framework contract(s) for support on implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System

2. Purpose and context of the call

The purpose of this contract is to provide the European Environment Agency (EEA) with support in the implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS¹). The support is envisaged to contribute to broad scale projects being undertaken by the EEA, in particular within the policy frameworks set out below.

Providing support for SEIS will facilitate the regular/systematic exchange of data and information as a basis for improved assessment and reporting on the state of the environment, monitoring of progress in compliance and enforcement of international agreements as well as for assessments of effectiveness of existing legislation.

The work is envisaged to be executed in three lots, each covering a specific geographic area. In non-EEA member countries the work on SEIS is at a much earlier stage of development and whilst the range of services required is expected to be the same for all geographical areas, this differentiation in maturity should be reflected in the approach and expertise offered for supporting the extension of SEIS to non-EEA member countries. The work to be carried out will provide specific country-based support to the EEA and will be used to complement expertise and capacities available in the EEA, in the Eionet (in particular European Topic Centres) as well as in other international organisations.

The work will be based on the priorities identified in SEIS in combination with priorities identified in the EEA strategy² and other relevant EU policies such as: Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)³, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)⁴, in particular the Horizon 2020 (H2020) Initiative⁵ and the Eastern Partnership⁶, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive⁷ (MSFD), and others.

2.1 Policy context

The EU's Sixth Environmental Action Programme⁸ recognises that information for policy makers and the general public has to be relevant, transparent, up to date and easily understandable. The four thematic priorities included in the 6 EAP (2002-2012) are: climate change; nature and biodiversity; environment, health and quality of life; natural resources and waste. The Programme sets out a key role for the European Environment Agency (EEA) alongside other relevant EU bodies in supporting the production and provision of information.

¹ COM(2008) 46 Final - Towards a Shared Environmental Information System;

² EEA Strategy 2009–2013 <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/eea-strategy-2009852013-multi-annual-work-programme> ;

³ COM(2008) 748 final – “Global Monitoring for Environment and Security: we care for a safer planet”;

⁴ COM(2004) 373 final – “European Neighbourhood Policy”;

⁵ COM(2006) 475 final – “Establishing an Environment Strategy for the Mediterranean”;

⁶ COM(2008) 823 final – “Eastern Partnership”;

⁷ Directive 2008/56/EC, establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive).

⁸ 6th EAP: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/intro.htm>

In February 2008, the Commission adopted a Communication⁹ on establishing a "Shared Environmental Information System" (SEIS) for Europe to improve and streamline the European system for collecting, analysing and reporting environmental information. The Commission Communication sets out objectives and principles, including: "data stored as close to source as possible"; and "produce once, use many times". SEIS is a decentralised but integrated web-enabled information system based on public information providers sharing environmental data and information. It is built upon existing e-infrastructure, systems and services in Member States and EU institutions. The focus is on improving integration of existing capacities and facilitating the re-use of all environmental data and information.

The underpinning infrastructure, principles and objectives for SEIS have been widely explored in EEA member countries¹⁰ through pilot and research projects and numerous country visits as well as through high profile events. This groundwork is further built on through practical steps such as through the production of the EEA five year state of the environment report in 2010.

The SEIS initiative reflects also a changing approach towards open data exchange and partnership, elements in relation to the EU Neighbours¹¹ in the framework of ENP/Horizon 2020 initiative (H2020), The "Union for the Mediterranean" (UfM¹²) policy and the Eastern Partnership.

The success of the SEIS initiative is strongly dependant on INSPIRE implementation which will result in the creation of a European spatial information infrastructure that will provide measures and standards for exchange, sharing, access and use of interoperable spatial data and services in Europe. The INSPIRE directive¹³ will make geographic data and information much easier to discover and re-use, especially in a Community and transboundary context. INSPIRE communities are in the process of defining and agreeing standards, which will be used to form the basis of proposals for the implementing rules (on Metadata, Data Specifications, Network Services, Data and Service Sharing and Monitoring and Reporting). 2010 is a key year with expert discussions on appropriate standards to underpin the themes listed in annex 2 and 3 of the Directive.

GMES, as a joint initiative of the European Commission and European Space Agency, aims at achieving an autonomous and operational Earth observation capacity. The Commission emphasises that GMES rests in three elements – space observation, in-situ observation, and information services; but its major added value will be in supporting and harnessing sustainable space-based observation resources. GMES pilot services (Marine, land, emergency response, atmosphere) are in a pre-operational phase, funded jointly by ESA operational budget and the EU FP7 Space Programme. GMES services are likely to complement the planned activities under Horizon 2020 and also SOER 2010, in addition to which EEA also has a role in coordinating the in-situ component.

Environmental issues are incorporated into the portfolio of actions of both the UfM, with its H2020 aim to de-pollute the Mediterranean by 2020, and the Eastern Partnership, as part of which the European Commission suggested to promote good environmental governance as one of the flagship initiatives.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, formerly known as the Barcelona Process, was re-launched in Paris in July 2008¹⁴ as the "Union for the Mediterranean" (UfM), reinforcing the political dimension of de-polluting the Mediterranean and facilitating the financial leverage for pollution reduction investments, and capacity building projects. Support to the implementation of the Horizon 2020 Initiative and to the Promotion of Sound Environmental Governance will be provided also by setting up a Mediterranean Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)¹⁵.

The objective of combating pollution and achieving good environmental status of all seas around the EU, including the Mediterranean, has become enshrined in EU law through the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), which came into force in summer 2008. This Directive calls for enhanced cooperation between EU Member States sharing a marine region and where possible neighbouring countries, notably through regional sea conventions such as the Barcelona and Black Sea Conventions. It gives particular importance to monitoring activities, the development of indicators and, finally, the adoption of adequate programmes of measures and realistic targets. Therefore, there is a gradual convergence between the

⁹ See footnote 1, Link: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008DC0046:EN:NOT>.

¹⁰ EEA member countries <http://eionet.europa.eu/countries> .

¹¹ The new EU policy towards its neighbours - the European Neighbourhood Policy – launched in 2004 is setting in place a coherent and consistent approach towards all EU neighbours. The ENP policy is assisted by a unique funding instrument, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), aiming to facilitate the implementation of the policy in a consistent and streamline way across all neighbours.

¹² COM(2008) 319 Final - Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

¹³ Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE).

¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/pdf/038%20joint%20declaration_en.pdf

¹⁵ COM(2008) 319 Final – pag.11.

environmental objectives of the initiatives being undertaken in the context of regional fora, such as those under the UfM or the Barcelona Convention, and the latest EU legal framework in marine issues.

In early July 2009 the Eastern Partnership initiative was endorsed by initiating concrete steps for enhanced EU cooperation with: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. This would imply new association agreements including comprehensive free trade agreements with those countries willing and able to enter into a deeper engagement and gradual integration in the EU market, as well as an enhanced platform under ENP policy for cooperation with EU Eastern neighbours. One of the main focuses of the partnership is to strengthen environmental governance in the region creating a Regional Shared Environmental Information System, making available reliable and relevant data and information as basis for decision making.

At pan-European level Environmental monitoring and information management were identified as key objectives and areas for action, as confirmed once more during the 6th Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in 2007 in Belgrade. The environmental monitoring and information management was also recognised by the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Cairo 2006 to be an integral part of the Horizon 2020 initiative to reduce the most significant pollution sources focussing on industrial emissions, municipal waste and urban waste water, responsible for up to 80% of pollution in the Mediterranean Sea.

2.2 Organisational context

A collaborative initiative between DG Environment (DG ENV), Eurostat¹⁶, Joint Research Centre (JRC)¹⁷ and the EEA underpinned by a technical agreement (Group of Four agreement) sets out the role of these partners in relation to SEIS and European data centres.

European Environment Agency (EEA) and European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet)

The Regulation¹⁸ establishing the EEA and Eionet sets out the objectives as to provide the Community and Member States with:

- (a) objective, reliable and comparable information at European level enabling them to take the requisite measures to protect the environment, to assess the results of such measures and to ensure that the public is properly informed about the state of the environment, and to that end;
- (b) the necessary technical and scientific support.

The tasks set out in article 2 of the EEA Regulation include promoting the incorporation of European environmental information into international environment monitoring programmes as well as publishing a report on the state of, trends in, and prospects for, the environment every five years, supplemented by indicator reports focusing on specific issues; and also ensuring the broad dissemination of reliable and comparable environmental information, in particular on the state of the environment, to the general public and, to this end, promote the use of new technology.

Eionet is a partnership network of the EEA and its member and cooperating countries¹⁹. It consists of the EEA itself, a number of European Topic Centres (ETCs) and a network of around 900 experts from 38 European countries in over 300 national environment agencies and other bodies dealing with environmental information²⁰. The Eionet partnership is crucial to the EEA in supporting the collection and organisation of data and the development and dissemination of environmental information. Information technology infrastructure (sometimes referred to as e-Eionet or ReportNet) supports the organisations and individuals in the network and facilitates the exchange.

DG Environment (DG ENV)

DG Environment is the specialized EC directorate responsible for developing and monitoring the implementation of the EU environmental policy. DG ENV is also coordinating the work of EEA in order to better assist the policy development process through reliable and relevant environmental information and supporting services. DG ENV is also a key coordinator in the SEIS implementation process strongly supported by EEA and Eionet.

In cooperation with other Commission services (DG EuropeAid, DG Relex, DG Research) DG ENV has the overall thematic coordination of the Horizon 2020 Initiative, for the de-pollution of Mediterranean by

¹⁶ Eurostat: Statistical Office of the European Communities - <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

¹⁷ Joint Research Centre - <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm>

¹⁸ <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/documents/mandate.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/countries>

²⁰ <http://eionet.europa.eu>

2020. EEA is facilitating in this respect the implementation of H2020 priorities across EEA member and cooperating countries and furthermore to EU southern neighbours. In doing so a strong partnership and cooperation is envisaged with relevant key players in the region such as UNEP/MAP²¹.

Concerning the recently launched EU Eastern Partnership, DG ENV is responsible for thematic aspects such as environment and climate change, the implementation of multilateral environment agreements and the support to the improvement of the environmental governance. An Environmental Panel on climate change activities will be launched in March 2010.

DG Joint Research Centre (JRC)

The Joint Research Centre is a research based policy support organisation and an integral part of the European Commission. The JRC is providing the scientific advice and technical know-how to support a wide range of EU policies. The mission of the JRC is to provide customer-driven scientific and technical support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of EU policies. By way of example, JRC is currently involved in the review, monitoring and research activities under Horizon 2020 (Work group 3) in integrating new research results with regular monitoring for the review and monitoring of "progress" with Horizon 2020.

Eurostat (DG ESTAT)

The statistical office of the European Commission (Eurostat) collects and disseminates socio-economic and environment statistics on natural resources, products and waste, hazardous substances, water use, air pollution, biodiversity, soil, forest and land use. This information are used both within EC by various institutions and bodies (EEA, JRC, DG ENV) but also coordinated with the UN and OECD statistical services. DG Eurostat is also responsible for the Structural Indicators under the Lisbon Agenda and the EU Sustainable Development Indicators (Eurostat, 2005).

Eurostat is also coordinating the MEDSTAT programme²². Within the MEDSTAT programme, a specific module was dedicated to the Environmental Statistics. Despite considerable progress in the ENPI South countries towards production of better statistics during MEDSTAT I (1996-2003) and MEDSTAT II (2006-2009), a lot remains to be done to bring these countries up to international and EU standards. MEDSTAT III (2010-2011) will focus on six priority thematic sectors - agriculture, energy, migration, social statistics, transport, trade and balance of payments. Environment statistics will not be covered in this new programme, but in order to retain and build further some key elements of the work done, a close cooperation between EEA and Eurostat is envisaged for the coming years.

Furthermore, in ENP East region, Eurostat was also involved over time in capacity building activities and support to the national statistics (i.e. Moldova, Russia). Having a clear overview of the work done, institutional networks involved and main results achieved, especially in relation with key transboundary issues (such as air, water, waste, etc.) will ensure a more targeted approach towards the tasks foreseen under the present project.

In extending the SEIS elements to EU neighbours, other international partners need to be considered, based on their experience and regional focus, such as:

- For the Southern neighbours

UNEP/MAP (United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan²³) and its operational structures (Regional Activity Centres - RACs²⁴)

The Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), together with the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, form part of the Regional Seas Programme under UNEP's umbrella. MAP activities are coordinated and carried out by a Secretariat assisted by 7 RACs. UNEP/MAP is expected to be one of the key partners in the implementation of the ENP/South component as responsible for the environmental information in the region (including H2020 initiative priority areas).

²¹ United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan, <http://www.unepmap.org/>

²² MEDSTAT programme was launched by the European Commission in 1996 for reinforcing production capacities and leveraging statistics in the twelve southern and eastern countries or authorities participating in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Agreement.

²³ Since UNEP/MAP does not have legal personality, possible contracts will be made through UNEP. DG AIDCO and EEA will jointly identify the best legal ways to ensure a simplified procedure for UN bodies' involvement in the execution of the project.

²⁴ Regional Activity Centres (RACs): MEDPOL, Athens; Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), France; Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), Croatia; Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), Tunisia; Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Malta; INFO/RAC, Italy; Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC), Spain;

- For the Eastern neighbours

UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe)

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. Its major aim is to promote pan-European economic integration, bringing together 56 countries from Europe, Central Asia, U.S., Canada and Israel. All these countries dialogue and cooperate under the aegis of the UNECE on economic and sectoral issues including environment. Of particular interest is the work of the Joint intersectoral task force between Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) and the European conference of statisticians. The task force is currently working on indicator production for the EECCA region building on the previous EEA and UNECE/WGEMA work. EEA will ensure a strong cooperation with UNECE while working with the countries from the ENP East region, Balkans and Central Asia. To the extent possible and considering the ENP project geographical coverage, cooperation links will be maintained with UNECE/WGEMA and its activities in the field of indicators and assessments particularly in the context of the "Assessment of Assessments" EEA is leading for the next conference of European environmental ministers to be held in Astana in 2011. Furthermore, EEA will investigate with UNECE concrete possibilities for cooperation with relevant UNECE conventions' secretariats (e.g. Transboundary water convention and environmental and health protocol, LRTAP, etc.).

Regional Environmental Centres (RECs)

RECs are a network of independent international environmental organisations. Their mission is to assist in solving environmental problems in Central and Eastern Europe by providing information on the environment, promoting public participation and encouraging cooperation among regional stakeholders on the environment, including non-governmental organisations, governments, and businesses. Their involvement in the ENP SEIS project might focus on networking, regional and country-based support in the organisation of various project activities, translation and dissemination, communication and access to information etc.

2.3 EEA previous work beyond EEA member countries

The EEA has a long standing tradition in working with the EU neighbouring countries and beyond. Under the TACIS programme, activities in the field of assessment and indicators with countries to the East, date back to the year 2000. The work led, among others, to the production of two pan-European assessment reports (Kiev 2003²⁵ and Belgrade 2007²⁶) as well as to the production of a methodological guide for the production of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) core set of indicators²⁷. A wide network of governmental organisations and experts from EECCA countries was involved in this cooperation. The areas addressed ranged from water, air, waste areas till assessment and reporting. No direct contacts were established with the statistical networks from this region, the focus being kept on environmental related networks.

The Commission has assigned EEA to implement a project "Towards a shared environmental information system (SEIS) in the European neighbourhood" covering both East and South Neighbours during the next four years (2010-2014).

In this context and concerning the ENP East neighbours, EEA is expected to continue its work, building on previous results (indicators, assessment, networking, capacity building etc) and focusing in particular on the gradual and consistent extension of SEIS concept and principles.

Concerning the ENP South cooperation, of particular relevance are the two already published joint EEA-UNEP/MAP reports²⁸. As a result of these assessments, three main priority areas have been recognized as causing the majority of pollution in the Mediterranean Sea, namely municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial emissions. In 2006, EEA, in cooperation with relevant partners, particularly UNEP/MAP and the Parties to Barcelona Convention was requested to build an indicator process and monitor the progress of the Commission-led Horizon 2020 initiative. Furthermore EEA was requested to produce a biennial synthesis progress report focusing on the three priorities as well as to develop a five-yearly reporting process on the state of the environment in the Mediterranean Sea. The expertise to be provided through this framework contract should support EEA in responding to this political demand.

²⁵ http://reports.eea.europa.eu/environmental_assessment_report_2003_10/en

²⁶ http://reports.eea.europa.eu/state_of_environment_report_2007_1/en

²⁷ <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2007/ece/ece.belgrade.conf.2007.inf.6.e.pdf>

²⁸ EEA Report 5/2000 (State and pressure of the marine and coastal Mediterranean environment); EEA Report 4/2006 (Priority issues in the Mediterranean);

In terms of target groups, EEA will liaise primarily with ministries, government agencies and statistical offices as well as with other relevant bodies with responsibilities in the production, storage, and dissemination of environmental data in all participating countries.

3. Objectives

The general SEIS objectives, as stated in the Impact Assessment²⁹ for the SEIS Communication from 2008, are:

1. to improve the availability and quality of information needed to design and implement Community environment policy;
2. to reduce administrative burden on Member States and EU institutions and modernise reporting;
3. to foster the development of information services and applications that all stakeholders can use and profit from.

Within this framework, a number of specific objectives are further defined for SEIS, relevant for the purpose of this call, such as:

1. to continue rationalising the 'knowledge base' through the assessment and streamlining of existing reporting requirements within environmental legislation while implementing information and communication technology solutions for electronic reporting;
2. to establish and implement data and information sharing agreements in addition to an efficient information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure to facilitate the discovery, assessment, access and sharing of environment-related data and information;
3. to reinforce and, where necessary, establish monitoring infrastructures and surveys for the collection and archiving of 'fit-for-purpose' environment-related data that are cost-effective and flexible and can be sustained over the long term.

Lastly, the final section of the SEIS Communication foresees that action will be required in a number of areas, of relevance to this call, as follows:

- INSPIRE and GMES
- Environmental information requirements
- Data and information priorities
- Harmonization of monitoring
- EEA and Eionet implementation of SEIS
- SEIS beyond the EU

A key element of the work to be covered by this call is the gradual implementation of SEIS beyond the EU and in this context, the following activities are foreseen:

- Providing specific support in the identification of relevant data and information flows available in ENP countries and the institutional networking behind, as part of extended SEIS;
- Support assessment of country-specific monitoring and reporting needs in ENP regions and in defining the technical and institutional aspects to be addressed in line with SEIS principles;
- Support improving national performance on monitoring, collection, storage, assessment, and reporting of environmental data in compliance with reporting obligations to international agreements and in coordination with regional initiatives. The national networks will cover the relevant environmental authorities as well as the national statistical structures;
- Support for development and production of indicators and scorecards in response to the key environment policy requirements and based on EEA (and other relevant organisations) expertise and available methodologies. In particular to assist ENP countries in developing relevant tools to measure progress of regional environmental initiatives (e.g. H2020) and multilateral environmental agreements (e.g. LRTAP, water conventions, etc);
- Support developing and strengthening existing national and regional environmental information systems to become SEIS compliant.

In practical terms, the implementation of the ENP project and its expected outputs (indicators, scorecards, capacity building) is expected to contribute to:

- Biennial reports under Horizon 2020³⁰;
- Regular 5-year EEA Environment State and Outlook Report process (SOER);

²⁹ Commission staff working document – Impact Assessment for SEIS Communication SEC(2008)112;

³⁰ EEA is aiming to bring the SOER2010, Mediterranean and pan-European exercises etc. under a single EEA-Eionet assessment strategy. Thus, it is expected that the work done to develop the Mediterranean and pan-European 5-yearly assessments will be closely coordinated with the work on SOER2010.

- Europe's environment Assessment of Assessment'(2011);
- 5-year regular SOE report under H2020 (2013)

Furthermore the effective implementation phase of SEIS, as well as the coordination of GMES in-situ data, represents an important component of the EEA strategy for the coming period (2009-2013).

4. Tasks

The services will provide specific country-based support to EEA, in the implementation of SEIS. Furthermore, by working with both EEA and non-EEA member countries, the contractor will provide to EEA a flexible and tailor-made support combined with a good knowledge of the countries' environmental and statistical information networks. The main tasks foreseen are to:

1. Provide a pool of experts familiar with environmental information systems, with relevant knowledge of environment and statistical networks in the listed countries, having a demonstrated ability to support the EEA in undertaking activities such as:
 - identification of relevant national/regional institutional partners responsible for environmental data management to be engaged in the work, their expertise and technical capabilities;
 - identification and access to the relevant data flows available at national/regional level, their consistency and comparability across regions as basis for the development of indicators , scorecards, regional assessments;
 - identification of data and information gaps as well as institutional gaps necessary to be addressed and provision of alternative options in a SEIS compliant system;
 - facilitating partnerships with national/regional partners involved in activities related to indicator production and assessments activities (environmental networks, statistics, others);
 - identification and assessment of the monitoring capabilities and reporting tools available, QA/QC procedures etc. in order to assess the compliance with SEIS principles in the countries;
 - identification of existing initiatives for setting up a Spatial Data Infrastructure in countries and the evaluation of the use of GMES /GEOSS for monitoring transboundary environmental issues.
2. Support thematic and SEIS relevant missions to countries (visit preparation, contact with national authorities, local organisations and networks, preparation of short country-based information reports on the topic of the mission/meeting etc.);
3. Organise meetings and workshops (preparation of content and logistics handling – including facilitating translation services);
4. Support the production of relevant indicators and country profiles driven by the needs of the specific assessments and ensuring that the relevant data flows behind are in place and accessible;
5. Input to the production of a SEIS manual and exchange of information on best practice or "cook book";
6. Support the negotiation and conclusion of data policy agreements for data and information exchange as well as the development of data policy related documents;
7. Support maintenance of inventories and content in information systems;
8. Support the organisation or undertaking of advocacy and user oriented related activities for use of modern information systems (such as GMES) in support of environmental management and policies.

The work to be performed is divided into three lots, according to the geographical scope as follows:

- I. Lot 1: ENP East³¹ region including Russia
- II. Lot 2 ENP South³² region, South East Europe³³ and Turkey (with focus on Mediterranean region);

³¹ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russian Federation. Pending availability of EU funding the work under this lot can be also extended to the countries from Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan).

³² Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia;

³³ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia;

III. Lot 3 EEA member³⁴ countries.

Tenderers must submit their proposals per lot (respectively two or three separate bids in case they submit offers for more than one lot). A proposal represents an offer to undertake all tasks for a geographic lot. The offers for each lot will be evaluated separately.

Most of the tasks are interrelated, building on each other and running over the period 2010-2014. More detailed task descriptions as well as respective timetables will be defined in each specific agreement. The volume and nature of tasks are linked to the geographic area covered by the respective lots, existing capacities in place and policy objectives.

5. Expertise

To support the above tasks, tenderers are expected to provide a wide range of expert capacity, including:

- legal expertise (data policy, service level agreements partnerships and institutional networking);
- IT (infrastructure, architecture, information systems);
- Thematic and sectoral expertise. The priorities are:
 - o lot 1: air quality and air pollution, climate change, water, biodiversity, energy
 - o lot 2: marine environment, municipal waste, industrial emissions, waste water treatment;
 - o lot 3: atmosphere, climate change, land, marine, emergency response.
- Environmental indicators and scorecards
- Data management and environmental monitoring
- Event management, including arranging provision of translation and interpretation services.

6. Organisation and location of work

The main part of the work will be executed in the contractors' offices (subsidiaries, regional offices) in the countries covered by the lots. Extensive travelling in the regions covered by the lots is expected in order to assist EEA experts and to connect with the relevant local networks. Regular contacts with the relevant EEA project managers are envisaged as well as visits to EEA premises. It is possible that some activities involving close and constant interactions with EEA staff will require the work to be done also intra muros for shorter or longer periods. For any work carried out elsewhere than the contractor's premises and EEA premises, travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed according to EEA's standard rules and rate, as per Annex 3 attached (Reimbursement of Travel Expenses).

7. Time schedule – duration of contract

The framework contract will run over a period of two years (24 months) following its signature, with tacit renewal once for a further period of two years, the maximum contract duration being limited to four years (48 months).

8. Working language

The working language for all lots is English. All members of the proposed project teams should have good English writing and communication skills. For lot 1, an additional working language, Russian, is required. For lot 2, an additional working language, Arabic, is required. The additional working language is required at minimum for the project lead and one other member of the proposed team. Communication in local languages covered by each lot is an advantage.

9. Reports and documents to be submitted

The reports and other outputs to be provided by the contractor, and their timing, will be detailed in the specific technical agreements concluded, based on the framework contract(s).

The reporting language is English. Documents delivered must be in a format compatible with the EEA's IT system and tools. The documents to be produced (guidelines, workshop materials, presentations) are expected to be translated in Russian or French/Arabic in order to increase their accessibility to the local target audiences.

EEA shall provide the contractor with guidelines on writing styles and formatting of the outputs required.

³⁴ EU27 + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey;
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10. Volume of contract

The estimated value of the framework contract(s) over a maximum period of four years is EUR 1.800.000, with a yearly budget of approximately EUR 150 000 per lot; this figure may vary depending on the needs of the EEA.

11. Price

Prices tendered must be all-inclusive (inter alia of administrative and travel costs, with the exception specified in section 6 above) and expressed in Euros, including for countries that are not part of the Euro zone. For tenderers in countries that do not belong to the euro zone, the price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to select an exchange rate and assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.

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 13.3.1).

Under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities and the Headquarters Agreement between the Agency and the Government of Denmark of 17 August 1995, the Agency is exempt from all charges, taxes and dues, including value added tax; such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted; the VAT amount must be indicated separately.

The price quoted shall be fixed and not subject to revision 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:

$$P_r = P_o \left(0.2 + 0.8 \frac{I_r}{I_o} \right)$$

Where:

P_r = revised price;

P_o = price in the original tender;

I_o = index for the month in which the validity of the tender expires, as specified in section 7 of the invitation to tender to which these specifications are attached;

I_r = index for the month corresponding to the date of receipt of the letter requesting a revision of prices.

12. 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.

13. Criteria

13.1 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 service provider/s 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.

Subcontracting is allowed with prior written approval of the EEA. Those services entrusted to a sub-contractor by the contractor cannot be entrusted to third parties by the sub-contractor. The proportion and tasks anticipated to be sub-contracted should be estimated in the response to this call and also for each specific agreement concluded. The contractor will be responsible for the quality of the work provided by the subcontractor(s). The contractor must undertake to ensure that the provision on checks and audits specified in Article II.17 of the draft framework contract (attached as Annex 5) are applicable to the subcontractor(s).

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

a) Legal capacity

Any tenderer will be asked to prove that he is authorised to perform the contract under national law, as evidenced by inclusion in a trade or professional register, or a sworn declaration or certificate, membership of a specific organisation, express authorisation, or entry in the VAT register. The tenderer should provide an identification sheet (Annex 2) duly filled out and signed, a copy of inscription in a trade register, where applicable, and a copy of inscription in VAT registers.

b) Economic and financial capacity

Proof of economic and financial capacity may be furnished by (one or more of) the following documents: appropriate statements from banks or evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance; the presentation of balance sheets or extracts from balance sheets for at least the last two years for which accounts have been closed, where publication of the balance sheet is required under the company law of the country in which the economic operator is established; a statement of overall turnover during the last three financial years. If, for some exceptional reason, which the contracting authority considers justified, the tenderer is unable to provide the references requested by the contracting authority, he may prove his economic and financial capacity by any other means which the contracting authority considers appropriate. An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links, which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the contracting authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

c) Technical and professional capacity

Evidence of technical and professional capacity should be specified for each of the activities listed in section 3 and be furnished on the basis of the following documents:

- a) CVs covering educational and professional qualifications of the team responsible for providing the services indicating the required minimum professional experience as follows:
 1. Project leader (2 CVs documenting a minimum of 3 years relevant management experience and 5 years in any of the expert fields mentioned in section 5 as senior expert or project lead. In addition, at least working knowledge of working languages (section 8) for lots on which an offer is made);
 2. Senior consultants (minimum 3 CVs documenting a minimum of 5 years relevant experience in any of the expert fields mentioned in section 5);
 3. Junior consultants (minimum 3 CVs documenting minimum of 3 years relevant experience in any of the expert fields mentioned in section 5);
 4. Assistant (2 CVs documenting a minimum of 3 years relevant experience in event management and administrative support).

Relevant experience is considered to be professional or academic activity in the areas listed in section 5 in the countries covered by the lots or in international organisations working in the regions covered by the lots.

- b) Information on the tenderer's working languages (as an overview table and in each individual CV). The working language for all lots is English. All members of the proposed project teams should have good English writing and communication skills. For lot 1, an additional working language, Russian, is required. For lot 2, an additional working language, Arabic, is required. The additional working language is required at minimum for the project lead and one other member of the proposed team. Communication in local languages covered by each lot is an advantage.
- c) a list of principal services provided in relevant or related areas during the past three years, with sums, dates and recipients, public or private;
- d) a description of the measures employed to ensure Quality Assurance/Quality Control of services provided;
- e) an indication of the proportion of the contract which the tenderer may intend to subcontract;
- f) a description of the tenderer's environmental policy.

13.3 Award criteria

A framework contract will be awarded to tenderers with the best price-quality ratio in each lot, taking into account the following criteria:

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

A. Understanding of the objectives of the contract, scientific complexities and the proposed methodological approach for organising the work to be carried out in the geographical area covered by the lot for which an offer is being made. (40 points maximum/25 points minimum);

B. Composition and structure of the proposed team of experts with regard to the range and level of expertise (See section 5) as well as international experience, language skills and geographical coverage in relation to the tasks and area covered by the lot – (40 points maximum/25 points minimum);

Tenders reaching the indicated minima will be ranked according to:

Technical Merit (TM) = A + B

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

13.3.2 Price (P) (20 points maximum)

Tenderers must quote all-inclusive daily rates (in Euro) for each of the required profiles (Project leader_(PL), senior consultant_(SC), junior consultant_(JC), and assistant_(A)), as defined in section III.2 of the contract notice (technical and professional capacity). The total calculated average of which will be taken into account for the price evaluation. For that purpose the tenderers shall complete the price quotation attached as Annex 4 to these tender specifications.

Points will be awarded using the following formula: $P = (P_{\min} / P_{AVG}) \times 20$

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose tender achieves the highest total score for technical merit and price. Should tenders obtain the same final score and tie for first place, the winning tender will be decided on the basis of the highest score achieved for technical merit.

Role	Profile ³⁵	Daily rate (EUR)
Project leader (PL)	See section 13.2 – (Technical and professional capacity), section 5 (expertise) and section 8 (languages) for requirements for each role	
Senior consultant (SC)		
Junior consultant (JC)		
Assistant (A)		
TOTAL (average) $P_{AVG} = (P_{PL} + P_{SC} + P_{JC} + P_A) / 4$		(EUR)

All fields are compulsory, non-compliance will lead to exclusion.

Legend:

- P: price
- P_{AVG} : average price
- $P_{PL} + P_{SC} + P_{JC} + P_A$: prices respectively of project leader (P_{PL}), senior consultant (P_{SC}), junior consultant (P_{JC}), and assistant (P_A)
- P_{min} : the price of the lowest offer/bid received for the respective lot.

14. Tenders

- The tender must comprise a technical offer and a financial offer (drawn up in accordance with the price quotation attached as annex 4 to these tender specifications), 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.

15. 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 service provider/s 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.

16. ABBREVIATION LIST

2007 Belgrade report	Fourth pan-European assessment report for the Belgrade Conference in 2007
CISTAT	Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States
CP/RAC	Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production
CRLTAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
EEA - CSI	Core Set Indicators (EEA)

³⁵ It is expected that overall, each profile will contribute with an equal amount of person days in the provision of services.

DABLAS	Danube and Black Sea Task Force
DG ESTAT	European Commission - DG Eurostat
DG MARE	European Commission - DG Maritime Affairs
DG ENV	European Commission - Directorate General for Environment
EEA	European Environment Agency
EECCA	Countries from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan)
EfE	Environment for Europe process
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENP East	Countries covered by the ENP policy (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine)
ENP South	Countries covered by the ENP policy (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia)
ETC	European Topic Centre
EU	European Union
EUWI	EUWI - European Water Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environmental Outlook
GEO	Global Earth Observation
GEOSS	Global Earth Observation System of Systems
GMES	Global Monitoring for Environment and Security
H2020	Horizon 2020
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMS	Indicator Management System (EEA)
INSPIRE	Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe
JRC	European Commission - Joint Research Centre
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MED	Mediterranean region
MEDPOL	Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean Region
MEHSIP	Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme
MEHSIP-PPIF	Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme - Project Preparation & Implementation Facility
MSSD	Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAP/RAC	Priority Action Programme Regional Activity Centre
QA/QC	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
REC	Regional Environmental Centre
Reportnet	Eionet's infrastructure for supporting and improving data and information flows
RMR	Review, Monitoring and Research sub-group (under H2020)
RAC/SPA	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas
SEIS	Shared Environment Information System

SOER 2010	European Environment State and Outlook Report 2010
TACIS	EU assistance programme Technical Assistance Community of Independent States
ToR	Terms of Reference
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP/MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
WB	World Bank
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WGEMA	Working Group for Environment Monitoring and Assessment (under UNECE)
WSSD Johannesburg	The World Summit for Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002

Annexes

Annex 1: Declaration on exclusion criteria

Annex 2: Identification sheet

Annex 3: Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

Annex 4: Price quotation

Annex 5: Draft framework contract and draft specific contract