

CALL FOR CONSULTANCY N°4/2021_SPA/RAC IMAP MPA

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR THE PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

**“ELABORATION OF MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT
ELEMENTS FOR THE IMAP COMMON INDICATORS ON
MARINE HABITATS”**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1- Background

The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC) was created in 1985 and established in Tunis through a decision of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention). It functions within the framework of the Action Plan for the Mediterranean – Barcelona Convention (UN Environment/MAP). SPA/RAC's main aim is to contribute towards the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of Mediterranean coastal and marine areas of special cultural and natural value and of threatened and endangered species.

In line with

- Decision IG.24/17 on the UNEP/MAP 2020-2021 Programme of Work and Budget (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019);
- Decision IG.22/7 on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP) (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016);
- Decision IG.23/06 on the 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017);
- Decision IG.24/7 on the Roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019);

the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have updated/developed their national monitoring programmes based on the IMAP Common Indicators per each cluster namely Biodiversity and Non-indigenous species (NIS), Pollution and Marine Litter, and Coast and Hydrography. The 23 Common Indicators of IMAP cover mainly state and impact indicators.

The project "Towards achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast through an Ecologically Representative and Efficiently Managed and Monitored Network of Marine Protected Areas" (hereinafter IMAP-MPA project) aims to support the national implementation of IMAP, and for the delivery of reliable data for IMAP common indicators on three clusters: (i) biodiversity and NIS, (ii) pollution and marine litter (iii) and coast and hydrography.

The IMAP-MPA project will also enable the development and implementation of integrated monitoring programmes at the sub-regional level which address the same above-mentioned IMAP clusters, and particularly in areas which are known to be under human activity pressure.

This project also includes another important aspect which is the elaboration of monitoring and assessment scales as well as assessment elements (i.e. assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values) per each IMAP cluster with a focus on biodiversity and hydrography.

In this regard, regional expertise is required to develop monitoring and assessment scales as well as assessment criteria and to establish a baseline and threshold values based on the available data for the biodiversity IMAP common indicators (CI) (i.e. marine habitats (C11 & C12), marine species (C13, C14 & C15) and NIS (C16)).

2. Objective and scope of the assignment

The main objectives of the assignment are to develop for the IMAP CIs related to marine habitats:

- scales of monitoring
- scales of assessment and assessment criteria; and
- threshold and baseline values based on the available data.

The IMAP Common Indicators related to marine habitats are:

- C11: Habitat distributional range; and
- C12: Condition of the habitat's typical species and communities.

The marine habitats concerned are the habitats included in the *Updated Classification of benthic marine habitat types for the Mediterranean region and the Updated Reference List of Marine Habitat Types for the Selection of Sites to be included in National Inventories of Natural Sites of Conservation Interest in the Mediterranean*¹.

¹ Decision IG.24/7 (2019): Strategies and Action Plans under the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, including the SAP BIO, the Strategy on Monk Seal, and the Action Plans concerning Marine Turtles, Cartilaginous Fishes and Marine Vegetation; Classification of Benthic Marine Habitat Types for the Mediterranean Region, and Reference List of Marine and Coastal Habitat Types in the Mediterranean

3. Tasks to be undertaken

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Prepare a detailed work plan and timetable;
2. Revise the existing and develop the adequate scale of monitoring for the IMAP CIs related to marine habitats;
3. Develop scales of assessment and assessment criteria for the IMAP CIs related to marine habitats;
4. Develop the baseline and thresholds values for IMAP CIs related to marine habitats;
5. Contribute to the work of the CORMON Biodiversity and the related Online Working Group (OWG) regarding marine habitats.

4. Deliverables

The consultant shall deliver the following outputs:

- **Deliverable 1:** Work plan and timetable;
- **Deliverable 2:** Scales of monitoring, scales of assessment and assessment criteria developed;
- **Deliverable 3:** Baseline/reference and thresholds values developed; and
- **Deliverable 4:** Technical inputs provided to SPA/RAC, CORMON and Online Working Group on IMAP EO1/Habitats, upon request.

5. Supervision and collaboration

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the SPA/RAC IMAP-MPA Project Officer, Ecosystems Conservation Programme Officer and the overall supervision of the SPA/RAC director and in close collaboration with the regional consultants working on the other CIs on biodiversity, hydrography and pollution.

6. Time schedule

The contract implementation will need about 25 (twenty- five) working days (WD) starting from the date of the contract signature, until the completion of all tasks no later than October 30th, 2021 with the following tentative schedule:

Deliverables		Deadline	
		Draft*	Final**
Deliverable 1: Work plan and timetable Production of 1 document detailing the work plan and timetable	Document detailing the work plan and timetable	<i>One week after the contract signature</i>	
Deliverable 2: Scales of monitoring, scales of assessment and assessment criteria Production of 1 document (Word) in English on scale of monitoring, scale of assessment and assessment criteria	Document is prepared to establish for CI1 & CI2 related to marine habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the scale of monitoring; ➤ the assessment scales and assessment criteria. 	3 May 2021	15 October 2021
Deliverable 3: Baseline/reference and thresholds values	Document is prepared to establish baseline/reference and thresholds values of the EO1/marine habitats.	3 May 2021	15 October 2021

Production of 1 document (Word) in English on baseline and thresholds			
Deliverable 4: Technical support	Technical inputs provided to SPA/RAC, OWG on marine habitats** and CORMON on IMAP EO1/ Habitats, upon request	<i>Will be specified once the CorMon is fixed.</i>	

* *These documents will be elaborated in close collaboration with the experts of the Biodiversity Online Working Group on marine habitats via email and virtual meetings.*

***These documents must be reviewed and endorsed by several governance meetings (i.e. Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CorMon), SPA/BD Focal Points, EcAp Coordination Group (EcAp CG) and MAP Focal Points). Thus, the draft deliverables will be updated following SPA/RAC reviews as well as the comments from Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention presented during the above-mentioned meetings.*

7. Skills and experience required of consultant(s)

The expert should meet the following criteria:

- Advanced experience in marine habitats studies and conservation is required;
- Relevant experience in developing (i) monitoring and assessment studies of the marine environment and habitats and (ii) indicators-based assessment of the impacts and pressures on the status of Mediterranean marine environment and marine habitats, is required;
- Good knowledge of the implementation of the Barcelona Convention Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process /Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) is required;
- Good knowledge of the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive – MSFD (2008/56/EC), or having experience in its implementation, is an asset.

ADMINISTRATIVE CLAUSES

Article 1 - Conditions for participation in the consultancy

Participants to this consultancy should be individual consultants.

Individual consultants may associate with each other to form a consultant association to complement their respective areas of expertise, or for other reasons. They must clearly identify the lead consultant, who will be the legal representative of the consultant association. The consultant association cannot exceed two experts.

Article 2 - Composition and presentation of offers

The submitted offer must include separately: (i) a technical offer, (ii) administrative documents, and (iii) a financial offer.

The services provided as part of this assignment consist of an overall fixed and non-revisable cost.

2.1. Technical offer

It must contain:

1. CV of the expert(s) with their qualifications, experience/references; indicating all experience in the field of marine habitats' studies and environmental conservation, particularly for the Mediterranean;
2. A methodological note on how to approach and complete the assignment;
3. Planning and detailed time schedule (including a chronogram of intervention);
4. Proposed budget.

The selection process may include interviews (through a teleconferencing platform), as well as a pre-selection phase followed by requests for complementary information / negotiation if required.

2.2. Administrative documents

The administrative folder should include the following administrative documents:

1. A cover letter outlining the consultant's suitability for the job;
2. A sworn statement that the bidder is in no situation that could in any way be incompatible with the mission or compromise independence in carrying out the mission; and
3. Terms of reference signed (date, signature and stamp of the provider at the end of the document).

2.3. Financial offer

The financial offer must be expressed in Dollars, in both tax-free and all tax-included prices. It should include all the costs connected to the provision of the service.

Should any administrative documents be missing, the consultant will be contacted to complete the offer documents. If after a period of seven (07) days, the documents are still not completed the candidate will be rejected even if already chosen as best positioned.

Article 3 - Submission

Proposals must be received electronically at the following e-mail address:

car-asp@spa-rac.org, before **19 February 2021, at 23:59 UTC+1 (Tunis Time)**.

E-mails should have the following subject:

"Call for consultancy n°4/2021_SPA/RAC - "Elaboration of monitoring and assessment elements for the IMAP common indicators on marine habitats" - Applicant name."

Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

Article 4 - Additional information

Should questions or need for clarification related to these terms of reference and their content arise, bidders may submit a written request by e-mail to: mehdi.aissi@spa-rac.org ; asma.yahyaoui@spa-rac.org ; cc: car-asp@spa-rac.org, no later than five (5) calendar days before the deadline for the proposal submission.

Article 5 - Terms of payment

Payment for the mission will be made as follows:

1. The 1st Instalment of 50 % will be paid upon submission of the draft version of deliverable 1,2 & 3 and after the review and approval of SPA/RAC; and
2. The 2nd and final Instalment of 50 % will be paid upon submission of final version of all deliverables, taking into consideration comments raised during technical meetings (i.e. CORMON, SPA/BD focal points, EcAp Coordination Group) and after the review and approval of SPA/RAC.

All payments will be made by bank transfer after the receipt of an invoice from the contractor. Payments shall be made to a bank account held by the contractor.

Article 6 - Evaluation procedure

The evaluation will be based on combined technical and financial criteria as follows:

6.1. Technical evaluation

The technical offers will be first examined, while the financial offers remain sealed.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- (i) Profile (experience and diploma) of the consultant in relation to the subject of the present mission (60 points); and
- (ii) The methodology proposed for conducting the mission, the Planning and detailed time schedule (including a chronogram of intervention) (40 points).

Technical evaluation grid				
Criteria			Scoring	
			Application by one consultant	Application by a consultant association (2 consultants)
Lead consultant	Experience	Experience and knowledge of the Mediterranean context of marine habitats as well as studies of monitoring and assessment of habitats	55 points maximum (12 points/study + 2 additional points/study including the Mediterranean region and/or countries)	40 points maximum (8 points/study + 2 additional points/study including the Mediterranean region and/or countries)
		No similar studies	0 points <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>	0 points <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
	Diploma	Post-graduate university degree in marine biology or environmental sciences, geography, economics, social sciences, political science, law, development studies or related discipline	5 points maximum	5 points maximum
University degree in the above-mentioned or related disciplines		3 points	3 points	

		No university degree in the above-mentioned or related disciplines	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
Associate consultant	Experience	Experience and knowledge of the Mediterranean context of marine habitats as well as studies of monitoring and assessment of marine habitats	N/A	10 points maximum (5 points/study + 1 additional point/study including the Mediterranean region and/or countries)
		No similar study	N/A	0 point
	Diploma	Post-graduate university degree in marine biology or environmental sciences, or related discipline	N/A	5 points maximum
		University degree in the above-mentioned or related disciplines	N/A	3 points
		No university degree in the above-mentioned or related disciplines	N/A	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
The methodology proposed for conducting the mission, the planning and detailed time schedule (including a chronogram of intervention)	a. The methodology proposed for conducting the mission	Methodology clearly presented, well developed and meets the study terms of reference and objectives	20 points maximum	
		Methodology clearly presented, fairly well developed and meets the study terms of reference and objectives	10 points	
		Methodology not well developed but meets the terms of reference and objectives	5 points	
		Methodology not clearly presented and does not meet the study terms of reference and objectives, or No methodology presented	0 point	
	b. the planning and detailed time schedule (including a chronogram of intervention)	Realistic planning clearly presented, coherent with the time schedule considering the requested time for reports validation and with the chronogram of intervention	20 points maximum	
		Realistic planning but more or less well presented, fairly coherent with the time schedule and with the chronogram of intervention	10 points	
		Planning unclearly presented, doesn't respect the deadline, or no planning, or no time schedule or no chronogram of intervention	0 points	
Total score (100 points maximum)			... points	

Any offer that has not attained the minimum score of 80 points will be eliminated.

In the event of no offer obtains 80 points or more, the call for consultancy process will be declared unsuccessful.

6.2. Financial evaluation

Once the technical evaluation has been completed, the financial offers of applicants that have not been eliminated during the technical evaluation will be examined.

The evaluation committee will check that the financial offers do not contain any obvious arithmetical errors. Any possible obvious arithmetical errors will be corrected, and the corrected figures will be taken into consideration.

The evaluation committee will then proceed to a financial comparison. The lowest financial offer that is judged acceptable will receive 100 points. The other offers will be attributed a score based on the following equation:

$$\text{Financial score} = (\text{amount of the lowest accepted offer} / \text{amount of the offer in question}) \times 100$$

6.3. Conclusions of the evaluation committee

The choice of the best offer is achieved by weighting the technical and financial scores using a distribution key of 80/20 basis. To this end:

- The technical score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0.80.
- The financial score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0.20.

The weighted technical - financial scores thus calculated will be added to ascertain the offer with the best technical and financial score.

If two offers obtain the same weighted technical-financial scores, preference will be given to the applicant in the following order:

- having obtained the best technical score.
- having obtained the best score for methodology.
- having obtained the best total score for experience and qualifications of experts.

Note: The selection process may include interviews (through a teleconferencing platform), as well as a pre-selection phase followed by requests for complementary information / negotiation if required.

Article 7 - Monitoring, control and validation of the work

The consultant will work under the supervision of SPA/RAC. The consultant will submit draft version of each deliverable. The consultant will submit the final version of deliverables as indicated in section 4 (Deliverables) and section 6 (Time schedule) of the technical specifications.

Article 8 - Deadline for the execution of the mission

The maximum time allocated for carrying out the study is about twenty-five (25) working days (WD)) as from the date of signature of the contract, including the deadlines for handing in the final documents and deliverables according to the following timeline:

Deliverables		Deadline	
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Article 9 - Penalty

In the absence of completion by the consultant of the services at his/her charge within the contractual deadlines envisaged in section 7 of the technical specifications (Time schedule), and Article 9 (Deadline for the execution of the mission), it will be applied as of right and without notice, a penalty of one two hundredth (1/200) of the total amount of the contract (All Taxes Included - ATI) for each calendar day of delay.

The amount of the late penalties will be deducted from the accounts. The amount of the penalties is capped at 10% of the total amount of the contract in ATI. When this threshold is reached, SPA/RAC reserves the right to terminate the contract at the holder's fault, in accordance with Article 15 (Cancellation conditions) below, without that the holder cannot raise disputes or claim any compensation.

Article 10 - Copyright, ownership of document

All the plans, drawings, software, photos, videos, data, presentations, study reports and any other documents, elaborated and submitted by the consultant to SPA/RAC for the execution of the contract, will become and remain the property of SPA/RAC, and the consultant will submit them to SPA/RAC. The names and logos of UNEP/MAP - SPA/RAC must be displayed appropriately in the documentation to be produced in the framework of this consultancy.

Article 11 - Arbitrage, dispute settlement

Every dispute arising from or in connection with this contract execution shall be solved by way of amicable negotiations by the parties. The contract is deemed to have been made in Tunisia and to be subject to Tunisian law. In case of dispute, the Court of Tunis is competent.

Article 12 - Liability and insurance

SPA/RAC does not accept any liability for acts of third parties, accidents, sickness, losses of any kind, however caused arising during the implementation of the specific actions and the production of the relative outputs expected. The bidder confirms that themselves or any involved staff will be covered by appropriate insurance.

Article 13 - Force majeure

Force majeure means any event outside the control of a party so that it is impossible for one party to carry out his obligations or the implementation of these obligations becomes so difficult that it is considered to be impossible to carry them out under such circumstances.

The party which invokes force majeure must inform its co-contractor within seven (7) days of its occurrence so that the contractual deadline will be suspended with a joint agreement between the parties for the period which is covered by the case of force majeure.

SPA/RAC has a right to assess the circumstances of the impediments invoked by the holder as a case of force majeure to see if they are convincing, and if this should not be the case, then the days of discontinued work will be accounted for as days of delay.

Failure by either party to fulfill any of its contractual obligations does not entail a contract termination or failure to fulfill its contractual obligations if such a failure is due to a case of force majeure, if the party that finds itself in such a situation has done the following:

- a. has taken all the reasonable precautions and measures to allow it to comply with the terms and conditions of the contract; and
- b. has informed the other party of the event, as soon as possible. Any timeline given to a party for the execution of its contractual obligation will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that party was prevented from fulfilling its obligations.

Any timeline given to a party for the execution of its contractual obligations will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that party was unable to fulfill its obligations due to the case of force majeure.

Article 14 - Cancellation conditions

SPA/RAC could cancel the contract in case of non-respect of the deadline of execution (Article 9: Deadline for the execution of the mission) or of non-conformity to the content of the service listed in the technical specifications of the present consultancy (section 4 of the technical specifications: Tasks to be undertaken), and in the case described in the Article 10 (Penalty), when the amount is capped at 10% of the total amount of the consultancy. In case of cancellation, the payment will be done in proportion to the tasks already carried out and judged satisfactory.