

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

RFT: 2023/062
File: AP_2/46
Date: 18 December 2023
To: Interested Service Providers
Contact: Maraea S. Pogi (maraeap@sprep.org)

Subject: Request for tenders (RFT): Consultancy services to conduct Blue Carbon Ecosystems Assessments for SPREP component of the MACBLUE project.

Question 1:

How many priority sites are anticipated?

Response:

There are no pre-determined or anticipated number of sites.

Question 2:

What is the scale of these sites?

Response:

Variable in scale depending on relative scale of country and extent of SAM ecosystems. E.g., there will be differences of scale, but not necessarily differences in importance, between these systems in PNG and Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands.

Question 3:

Is there a minimum sample number of locations that are required – or is it upto the consultant to determine an appropriate, statistically robust sampling methodology?

Response:

Up to the consultant but in consultation with SPREP, GIZ and SPC

Question 4:

Can the elected consultant choose the representative sites?

Response:

This has to be done in consultation with SPREP and SPC

Question 5:

Can the existing MACBLUE data, maps and supporting information be provided enable clear assessment of scope and to minimize duplication.

Response:

All available data will be provided to successful bidder (mapping in progress).

Question 6:

Will the selection process for sites include an assessment of the varying conditions of ecosystems, factoring in their differing levels of degradation and preservation? Additionally, will the sampling strategy be designed to be sufficient and representative to accurately identify the potential for carbon stock in these varied conditions?

Response:

Sites will be identified in consultation with national government and project partners, based on recommendations from the ecosystems assessments.

Question 7:

Given that SPREP, SPC, and GIZ will be involved in finalizing the criteria for site selection, we anticipate considerable variation in the sizes of the sites and the number of samples required to provide a statistically robust data set. What is the minimum number of sites required per country. What is the approximate scale of each of the sites that need to be assessed (both mangrove and sea grass)

Response:

This will be determined in consultation with SPREP, SPC and national counterpart agencies. The scale of the sites will vary from country to country reflecting the geographic scale of each country and the relative extent and importance of SAM ecosystems.

Question 8:

When can we expect SPC to specify the requirements for georeferenced data necessary for their mapping and remote sensing tasks? Additionally, please provide the anticipated timeline for when SPC needs this information and when they can deliver the remote sensing products. This information is crucial in planning the timeline for our technical proposal, in line with the requirements outlined in item 13 of the Request for Tender (RFT).

Response:

Planning of the field calibration/validation and testing and improvements to the remote sensing products will be co-designed at the beginning of the engagement with SPC. SPC will provide requirements at the beginning of the engagement. Potential preliminary timeline (to be confirmed):

1. Beta testing / calibration and validation of Mangrove products from now until April.
2. Beta testing / calibration and validation of Seagrass products from May-August.

Question 9:

Given the inherent complexity of the project, multiple countries, and involved corresponding RFT development, and given the pending Christmas holiday period (ie business shut down period), would it be possible to extend the deadline to the end of January?

Response:

No, the deadline remains as it is.

Question 10:

It is important for us to determine whether Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have restrictions on the export of samples to Australia. We have done a similar project in Indonesia, where the government does not allow export of sediment samples without a permit. In the case of this tender, it would be essential that we can export the samples to Australia. If we cannot, we'll need to think of an alternative approach.

Response:

That is up to the tenderer to determine.

Question 11:

Did some of the priority sites have been already identified in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands or Vanuatu, if so, how many there are in total (pre-identified or minimum expected). This will be critical to estimating a budget.

Response:

No, they haven't already been pre-identified.

Question 12:

Is the remote sensing mapping work of the Blue Carbon Ecosystems, being carried out by SPC in the four countries, completed and able to be made available at the outset of the project commencing?

If the remote sensing component is not yet completed, what is the date that this work will be completed by and available?

Response:

Mapping by SPC is in progress, expect the following indicative timeline:

1. *Beta testing / calibration and validation of Mangrove products from now until April.*
2. *Beta testing / calibration and validation of Seagrass products from May-August.*

Question 13:

Task 2 mentions that *".....close collaboration in developing the data collection methods and in collecting the field data with SPC needs to be ensured. The in-country work will also be conducted in collaboration with the in-country coordinator in each country to include local contractors or government officers to build local capacity for the techniques."*

- a. Are all SPC's time, travel and per diems associated with field data collection covered by SPC or do we need to accommodate these in the project proposal?

Only travel costs for Contractor's personnel need to be included in proposal.

- b. Are the in-country coordinators already in place in each of the four countries?

Adviser in PNG and Fiji are already in place, coordinators in Solomon and Vanuatu are currently being recruited.

- c. Do we need to identify further in-country support to deliver this component of the project, or are the in-country coordinators, local contractors and/or government officers anticipated to fully provide the local support required for the field/community activities?

Support will be provided by the project partners, however any local connections and support networks that are required will be assisted by SPREP.

- d. Do we need to accommodate any travel or per diem costs associated with the in-country coordinators, local contractors or government officers in our bid?

Only travel costs for Contractor's personnel need to be included in proposal.

Question 14:

The requirement for measurement of Above ground Biomass (AGB), Below Ground Biomass (BGB) and Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) is specified but greenhouse gas emission measurements are not explicitly mentioned in the RfP. Since Tier 2 Emissions factors are specified in the RfP, would direct measurements of emissions via flux method be required or would estimates of emissions factors via the gain-loss method suffice?

Response:

This is to be determined by Contractor in proposal based on best practices.

Question 15:

Given this is both the Christmas holiday and summer holiday period in New Zealand with many staff on leave, could we respectfully request a 2 week extension to the RFP due date to 26 January 2024 please?

Response:

No, the deadline remains as it is.

Question 16:

Any existing mapping work done of Mangrove and Seagrass Ecosystems.
Dates, Resolution and Type of Imagery Used.

Response:

Yes, existing maps are available for mangrove and seagrass ecosystems, however, if there are no existing maps, the consultant will work with SPREP, SPC and national partners.

Question 17:



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Will new/ Additional Remote Sensing Data be required for each of the priority sites? If so should this be budgeted for by the consultant?

Response:

Yes, if none are available for the project sites, then these costs would need to be budgeted for by the consultant.