



TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

Open Call for Tenders EEA/EAS/06/002

Support for agri-environmental analysis at the EEA

1. Background

The current knowledge on the link between agriculture and the environment in the EU-15 is summarised in the IRENA indicator report (see http://reports.eea.eu.int/eea_report_2005_6/en). Important agri-environmental issues as well as past and current agriculture-related projects at the EEA are listed below. The last section reviews key areas of work for EEA agriculture activities over the coming years. All this provides the background for the tasks listed under chapter 2.

Environmental issues with important links to agriculture:

- Water quality (diffuse pollution from agriculture affects ground and surface waters, e.g. contributing about 50% of total nitrogen load in European rivers),
- Water quantity (the agriculture sector is the main water user in southern Europe, mainly linked to irrigation)
- Climate change and greenhouse gas emissions (agricultural soils are a potential sink for CO₂; the sector produces around 10% of total EU greenhouse gas emissions; changed weather/rainfall patterns will have a strong impact on agricultural production and net fluxes of greenhouse gases)
- Air pollution (agriculture accounts for 94% of all ammonia emissions in the EU-15; agricultural crops can be severely affected by high ozone levels)
- bio-energy production (provides potential environmental benefits if well-planned; can increase land use competition and potentially also land use intensity)
- biodiversity (farmland is a key habitat but intensification brings negative impacts, strong link to EU 2010 biodiversity target and management of Natura 2000 sites)

Past and current EEA work related to agriculture:

- 1) IRENA operation (development of 42 agri-environment (sub-)indicators in the domains of water quality, water quantity, land use and soils, air and climate change, and biodiversity; IRENA indicator report and IRENA assessment report on environmental integration in the CAP)
- 2) Report on 'Agriculture and environment in EU accession countries – implications of applying the CAP'
- 3) Study and report on 'High Nature Value Farmland – characteristics, trends and policy challenges' –follow-up work ongoing together with JRC and UNEP
- 4) Analysis of the implications of biofuel production on agricultural land use and farmland habitats; project on estimating an environmentally compatible potential for renewable energy production from agricultural biomass
- 5) Analysis of diffuse water pollution from agriculture (LARA project); nutrient source apportionment study; development of environmental accounts for the water area

- 6) Land cover change analysis on basis of CORINE land cover: urbanisation processes, ecological connectivity, context of and land cover in Natura 2000 sites; linked to this development of environmental accounts for selected agricultural habitats
- 7) Agricultural scenarios for State and Outlook report 2005 + PRELUDE stakeholder process on rural futures
- 8) CIFAS project on implementation of cross-compliance, environmental farm management standards/indicators and future farm advisory systems

Likely key areas for environmental analysis:

- 1) ***Support implementation of the water framework directive (WFD)*** by providing information on spatial patterns of diffuse pollution from agriculture (-> develop regional gross nutrient balances), key factors for limiting agricultural nutrient pressures (farm structure and/or farm management as most important variables?) and evaluation of different policy responses.
- 2) ***Input to debate on bio-energy production on farmland:*** EEA is currently carrying out a comprehensive study on the ‘environmentally compatible bio-energy potential’ from the agriculture, forestry and waste sectors. This work needs to be built upon, particularly with regard to evaluating the actual environmental impacts of agricultural bio-energy production and potential farm management responses.
- 3) ***Reaching the 2010 biodiversity target/support Natura 2000 implementation:*** knowledge and indicators on the agriculture-biodiversity interaction developed in IRENA and in other projects can be combined with Natura 2000 reporting and improved spatial data (CORINE land cover + Natura 2000) to identify key trends on (high nature value) farmland and analyse (farm) management options for agricultural Natura 2000 habitats.
- 4) ***Climate change and water use (adaptation):*** water use and water needs in agriculture will acquire increasing importance as climate change becomes noticeable. EEA work should contribute to identifying potential problem areas of water scarcity and look at sectoral trends that can alleviate or worsen the problem.
- 5) ***Rural policies and the environment:*** various EU policies impact on the rural environment, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion and Structural Funds. The EEA should increase its understanding of the implementation and environmental impact of these policies, thus contributing to environmentally-informed decision making in this area.

2. Description of tasks to be performed

- 1) Support the updating and extension to EU-25 (and/or the EEA member countries) of a selected number of agri-environment indicators, with particular emphasis on gross nutrient balance (N + P), policy response information as well as water and biodiversity related indicators;
- 2) Support in identifying and compiling data on farm management practices of relevance to EEA projects (agri-water analysis, HNV farmland, Natura 2000, renewable energy, land use accounting);
- 3) Data input and analysis regarding environmentally compatible bioenergy/biofuel production on farmland;
- 4) Compilation and analysis of socio-economic data, including the implementation of the EU common agriculture policy and structural funds;
- 5) Help with the integration of geo-referenced biodiversity and other data, as far as needed in addition to in-house resources;

- 6) General assistance with regard to analysis of relevant research literature, links to EU research projects, organisation of and participation in expert meetings and conferences (as far as needs arise).

The sections below explain in more detail the likely tasks to be performed. Please note that this comprises all possible tasks over the duration of the framework contract. The actual activities to be carried out each year will be specified in annual technical agreements and may not comprise all the tasks listed below.

Ad 1) Updating and extension of selected agri-environmental indicator fact sheets

1. *Screening of data sets* available for the new EU Member States (and remaining EEA member countries as far as possible) for their suitability in extending the selected agri-environment indicators;
2. *Updating and extension of selected agri-environmental indicator fact sheets* on the basis of previous and newly identified data sets, including a review of key messages, graphs, interpretive text and meta data sections.
3. *Regionalisation of gross nutrient balance data for nitrogen, development of national gross nutrient balances for phosphate*; this work needs to follow the OECD/Eurostat methodology and be coordinated closely with these organisations and the EU Joint Research Centre (JRC).

The indicator development and reporting under this contract has to cover all EU Member States, including Bulgaria, Romania and further EEA member countries, as far as feasible and appropriate. The indicator reporting level the successful tenderer has to work on is the appropriate geographical level to undertake regional analysis (EU-15: at least NUTS 2 for Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and NUTS 3 for Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom; new Member States: a regional division will be supplied when available) – subject to data availability within the timeframe of the contract. Digital data supplied should be ascii or excel files, which are compatible for importing into GISCO NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 coverages and into the EEA Data warehouse structure.

Close co-ordination of work under the contract with related projects in various EEA groups needs to be ensured at all times (water and agriculture group, spatial group, biodiversity group, climate change/energy group, air/transport group, scenario group). Consultation and co-operation with relevant organisations at international level is also essential (DG Agriculture, DG Environment, DG Eurostat, DG Joint Research Centre of the European Commission; OECD).

Ad 2) Compilation of farm management data

1. *Review of available farm management data* at EU and national level: this should include results of the Eurostat-financed PAIS project, research for related IRENA indicators, administrative data handled by DG AGRI and the MARS unit at the JRC, results of EU research projects, data held by non-government organisations (e.g. advisory services or farmers unions) and national data sets in EU Member States.
2. *Identification of the most suitable data sets* for use in EEA environmental analysis, in particular for water-agriculture, bio-energy and Natura 2000 management related projects and for the development of agri-environment indicator fact sheets.

3. *Analysis and presentation of farm management data*, for direct use in related EEA projects, or in developing and writing agri-environment indicator fact sheets.

Ad 3) Data input and analysis regarding bio-energy / bio-fuel production on farmland

1. *Review of available data* on current bio-energy/bio-fuel production on farmland, including data on their environmental impact.
2. *Input to future EEA analysis on the environmental impacts* of agricultural bio-energy production, including assessment frameworks and the characteristics and geographic distribution of the issues identified.
3. *Analysis of the importance of farm management options* for energy crop yields and the environmental impact of energy production in agriculture.
4. *Evaluation of possible win-win options* for bio-energy production on farmland, in particular with regard to the management of marginal, high-nature value grasslands and the prevention of forest fires in the Mediterranean.

Ad 4) Compilation and analysis of socio-economic data

1. *Review of available data* on the implementation of the EU common agriculture policy, cohesion and structural funds and relevant socio-economic data sets (which document social and economic trends in the farm sector). This should include the administrative data handled by DG AGRI and the MARS unit at the JRC, results of EU research projects, and national data sets published by EU Member States.
2. *Evaluation of available data sets* regarding their relevance for assessing the potential environmental impacts of EU rural policies.
3. *Contribution to EEA projects* in the areas of water quality and quantity, environmental accounting, management of Natura 2000 and high nature value farmland areas as well as future rural trends.

Ad 5) Integration of geo-referenced biodiversity and other data into EEA data systems

1. *Acquisition, handling and integration of national or regional biodiversity data* into EEA data systems, in particular those related to high nature value farmland and Natura 2000.
2. *Liaising with the MARS unit at the JRC and national organisations* regarding the integration of geo-referenced farm and policy implementation data (e.g. olive registers, irrigation area, distribution of CAP direct aid payments) into the EEA data system.
3. *Physical support* for the integration of relevant farm and policy implementation data into the EEA data system.
4. *Other general support* for work with GIS data, as far as necessary.

Ad 6) General assistance

1. Supporting the analysis of research literature relevant to EEA agri-environmental projects.
2. *Build and maintain links to relevant EU research projects*, in particular regarding methodological approaches, data sets and data analysis.

3. *Supporting the organisation and documentation of EEA meetings* and, as far as possible, representing EEA externally by participating in international meetings and conferences.

3. Skills required from potential contractors

The tasks listed above imply a wide range of skills that the potential contractors need to possess. These can be grouped as follows:

- a) Data acquisition, compilation and analysis;
- b) Preparation and manipulation of excel data sheets that link to EU agri-environment indicators;
- c) Development and writing of agri-environment indicator fact sheets, including indicator graphs and interpretive text;
- d) Independent research of agri-environmental issues and research literature in a wide range of topics (see part 2);
- e) Analytical skills and experience in integrated analysis that links different agri-environmental domains as well as environmental and socio-economic data;
- f) Good writing and editing skills for reports targeted at a non-specialised audience;
- g) Experience in the organisation of meetings, including the preparation of background and summary documents;
- h) Good general presentation skills.

4. Place of performance

The work will take place mainly at the contractor's premises.

5. Duration of the contract

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

6. Volume of the contract

The estimated budget for the first year is Euro 86,000. For the following years, approximately Euro 100,000 per year it is foreseen to be available, but this amount can vary according to the Agency's needs.

7. Price

The price quoted must be fixed and not subject to revision. Prices 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, prices 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 Agency shall purchase on the basis of the prices in force on the date on which orders are signed. Such prices shall not be subject to revision.

This revision shall be determined by the trend in the harmonised consumer price index published by the European Commission on Eurostat web page (Theme 2 - Economy and Finance; Prices; HICP – Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices; HMIDX – Monthly data (index); GEO – Eurozone; COICOP cp00).

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 in which the validity of the tender expires;
Ir = index for the month corresponding to the date of receipt of the letter requesting a revision of prices

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 costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

Prices must be quoted in EUR. The tenderer should indicate a daily fee for senior expert and a daily fee for junior expert.

8. Contractual terms

In drawing up his bid, the tenderer should bear in mind the provision of the standard contract attached to the invitation to tender.

9. Criteria

Exclusion Criteria

Candidates or 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) they have been convicted for an environmental offence in the exercise of the profession;

(g) 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.

Candidates or tenderers must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above. The tenderer shall provide an auto-declaration, preferably made on oath before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a competent professional or trade body by a person competent to do so on behalf of the tenderer, which states that none of the grounds for exclusion apply to the tenderer (See Annex 1). N.B. additional evidence may be requested at a later stage prior to signature of the contract.

Contracts may not be awarded to candidates or 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.

Selection Criteria

(a) Legal status

The tenderer is requested 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 trade register, where applicable, and a copy of inscription in VAT registers.

(b) Financial capacity

Evidence of economic and financial capacity shall 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 for the last three financial years.

If, for some exceptional reason, which the contracting authority considers, justified, the tenderer or candidate 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.

(c) **Technical capacity**

The evidence of the technical and professional capacity should be furnished on the basis of the following documents:

- the educational and professional qualifications of the service provider and/or those of the firm's managerial staff and, in particular, those of the person or persons responsible for providing the services (CVs of the proposed staff);
- a list of the principal services provided in the past three years, with the sums, dates and recipients, public or private
- an indication of the proportion of the contract which the service provider may intend to subcontract.

Award criteria

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

- **Expertise** - the consultants' knowledge of structural and management trends in the European farm sector and their impact on the environment, familiarity with statistical and administrative data sets on farm structures, farm management, sector incomes and implementation of the CAP and other EU policies, and their understanding of socio-economic issues affecting the farm sector, as evident from their previous projects and publications/reports;
- **Approach** - the degree to which the description of the support to be provided shows the capacity to provide valuable input to EEA agri-environment work, both in terms of data handling and analysis as well as the writing of high quality reports for direct or indirect use by the EEA;
- **Project management** – based on the quality of the team organisation and project management procedures, which should be clearly outlined in the tender; and,
- **Understanding** – the degree to which the tenderers have taken into consideration all the aspects of the tasks required by the contract, such as they appear above, as well as the European dimension and characteristics of the required input to EEA projects.
- **Price** – the average fee rates: (Fee Senior Expert + Fee Junior Expert)/2.
- **Environmental Policy of the Tenderer**

A points system is used for choosing the best tender. The distribution of maximum points to each criterion is as follows:

- 25 points to 'Expertise'
- 25 points to 'Approach'
- 15 points to 'Project Management'
- 15 points to 'Understanding'
- 15 points to 'Price'¹
- 5 points for 'Environmental Policy'

¹ For the price, the points will be awarded using the following formula:
Price = (lowest average fee / average fee of the tender being considered) x 15%

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 successful tenderer will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in their work, in particular those relating to business travel, paper and energy consumption. Further information on the EMAS system can be found on the EEA homepage: <http://org.eea.europa.eu/documents/emas>

Moreover, we strongly recommend the tenderers to submit the tenders in an environmentally friendly way, as following:

- Only material mentioned in the technical specifications attached (no additional material);
- Printed on both sides of paper;
- Without plastic folders or binders;
- With consecutive page numbering and with a list of contents.

11. General Comments

The tender must comprise:

- A technical offer containing the description of expertise and approach to be used in the work for the EEA, which shall include an indication of the foreseen share of work for senior and junior experts, respectively
- A financial offer indicating the daily fees for senior expert and junior expert.
- Declaration on Exclusion Criteria
- Documents proving the Legal Status
- Documents proving the Financial and Technical Capacity

Tenders from consortiums of firms or groups of service providers must specify the role, qualifications and experience of each of the members or of the group.

Declaration on exclusion and documents on selection criteria must be supplied by each member of the consortiums of firms or groups of service providers submitting a single tender.