



OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS

for the award of framework partnership agreements concerning  
four European Topic Centres on

1. **Air and climate change mitigation 2014-2018** (EEA/ACC/13/001-ETC/ACM)
2. **Biological diversity 2014-2018** (EEA/NSV/13/001-ETC/BD)
3. **Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation 2014-2018**  
(EEA/ACC/13/002-ETC/CCA)
4. **Inland, coastal and marine waters 2014-2018** (EEA/NSV/13/002-ETC/ICM)

**INFORMATION BRIEFING**

**22.2.2013, 10:00 – 12:30**

**EEA Auditorium (8.1.1)**

**SUMMARY RECORD AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## 1. Introduction

As foreseen in the Terms of Reference published on the EEA website<sup>1</sup>, an information briefing took place at the EEA with representatives of interested bodies who had previously registered.

Following an introduction on the purpose of the meeting and a few words on the mandate and role of the EEA, the Eionet and the European Topic Centres (ETCs), the following timetable was specified and confirmed:

Publication of the calls for proposals	31.1.2013
Closing date for submission of proposals	30.4.2013 <sup>2</sup>
Opening of proposals <sup>3</sup>	7.5.2013
Evaluation of proposals	From 8.5.2013 to 30.5.2013
Designation of the selected consortium <sup>4</sup>	26.6.2013
Notification of the evaluation results	June 2013
Negotiation and conclusion of framework partnership agreements	Second half of 2013
Implementation of framework partnership agreements	From 1.1.2014

## 2. Common and specific issues raised and clarified during the information briefing

### 2.1 Common issues (all four calls for proposals)

1	Question	In the Terms of Reference there are some overlaps between the various ETCs; how shall this be addressed in the proposal?
	Answer	<i>Each proposal should address as comprehensively as possible the Terms of Reference for that particular call. Any overlaps will be dealt with in the annual planning process.</i>

2	Question	How was the outcome of the ETC review process taken into account in the drafting of the Terms of Reference?
	Answer	<i>The ETC review is still an on-going process and further discussion shall take place in March at the Management Board Seminar. The ETC Review Committee focused on describing the overall ETC landscape in broad terms but was not involved in drafting the terms of reference for these open calls for proposals.</i>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/call-for-proposals/openproposal.html>

<sup>2</sup> At 16 :00 CET in case of hand delivery and 23 :59 in case of mail delivery

<sup>3</sup> Representatives of applicants (one per applicant) are allowed to participate in the opening session at their own expenses. They are requested to inform in advance the EEA's procurement services by email at [procurement@eea.europa.eu](mailto:procurement@eea.europa.eu) or by fax at number +45 33 36 72 73.

<sup>4</sup> By decision of the Management Board following the recommendations from the evaluation committee

3	Question	Is it possible to indicate whether EEA is looking at developing ETCs in new topics in the future?
	Answer	<i>At this point in time EEA is not in a position to comment or disclose information on the possible future landscape of ETCs as this could be conflicting with the current tendering process. As stated in the letter of invitation to submit proposals in response to the open calls for proposals, EEA may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the agreement, or correcting an error, inaccuracy, omission or any clerical error in the text of the calls for proposals.</i>

4	Question	With reference to EEA’s cooperation with European institutions, could you please specify whether this cooperation extends to European Agencies, for instance ECHA and EFSA, and if so how?
	Answer	<i>When there are areas of common development, EEA strives to establish direct contacts with the EU institutions, bodies and agencies involved for the purpose of defining the respective roles and tasks to be performed in order to create synergies and avoid overlaps. For instance in the area of ACM, EEA cooperates with EMSA, Eurocontrol, etc.</i>

5	Question	Could you please provide additional information on the composition of the evaluation committee
	Answer	<i>The evaluation committee will be appointed by the EEA Management Board and shall consist of representatives of the Management Board, the EEA Scientific Committee, the European Commission, the National Focal Points of the Eionet and EEA staff members. With a view to ensuring a consistent reading and evaluation of the proposals, the proposals submitted in response to all four calls for proposals will be assessed by the same Evaluation Committee.</i>

6	Question	What would be the scope of the negotiations that would follow the designation of the successful consortium?
	Answer	<i>The successful consortium may be asked to address certain recommendations made by the Evaluation Committee in particular as regards the structure, management and coordination of the consortium.</i>

7	Question	In the terms of reference, under section 4.1 on the structure of the ETC, it is stated that <i>'it is essential that team leads are from organisations which participate in Eionet'</i> ; would this be assessed as a selection criterion?
	Answer	<i>As indicated in the heading, section 4 of the terms of reference shall be construed as general guidance for a successful consortium based on EEA experience. It is entirely up to the applicants to decide on the structure of the ETC consortium, though they are well advised to consider the recommendations provided in the terms of reference and to bear in mind the award criteria specified under section 6.5 when drafting their proposal.</i>

8	Question	With reference to section 10, presentation of the proposal, Envelope No 1 – Executive summary, shall a brief summary of the technical proposal also been included?
	Answer	<i>The executive summary is meant to serve as a factsheet of the consortium and does therefore not need to include information on the technical proposal.</i>

9	Question	With reference to section 10 of the terms of reference, presentation of the proposal, shall the original and the copy (consisting both in 3 envelopes) be submitted in separate parcels or together in one parcel?
	Answer	<i>It is entirely up to the applicant to decide on the most appropriate way to organise its proposal; applicants shall ensure that the formal requirements for admissibility as set in the terms of reference are met (i.e. double envelopes and subdivision in 3 inner envelopes); with a view to ease the opening and evaluation process it is recommended to clearly label the content of each envelope.</i>

10	Question	Annex 1 to the terms of reference, Proposal submission form, should it be filled out by the coordinator of the consortium only or by each of the members of the consortium?
	Answer	<i>Annex 1 to the terms of reference – Proposal submission form – shall be filled out and submitted by the coordinator of the consortium only.</i>

11	Question	With reference to section 6.4 of the terms of reference, Selection criteria, (c) Technical and professional capacity, (2) signed letter of intent, is there a template available?
	Answer	<i>There is no particular template; the content of the letter shall be self-explanatory and clearly state that the partner will place the necessary resources for performance of the framework partnership agreement at the disposal of the consortium.</i>

12	Question	With reference to section 4.1 of the terms of reference, Structure of the ETC consortium, could you please clarify whether the core team shall include only persons from the coordinating organisation or also from other partners of the consortium? Could you please clarify what is meant by team leader and also elaborate on how to interpret the statement ' <i>it is essential that team leads are from organisations which participate in Eionet</i> '?
	Answer	<i>The core team shall comprise representatives of the consortium partners <u>and</u> of the coordinating organisation; it shall cover the required fields of expertise and ensure as much as possible a good geographical coverage. Team leaders shall be selected from among the partners in the consortium who would be entrusted with the performance of activities in the main work areas and who would dedicate at least 75% of their time to that end.</i>

13	Question	With reference to section 6.4 of the terms of reference, selection criteria, (c) technical and professional capacity, could you please clarify what is meant by ' <i>partner's managerial staff</i> ' and by ' <i>key experts of all consortium partners</i> '? Is there a difference between senior experts and key experts?
	Answer	<i>The aim of this selection criterion is to assess whether the consortium as a whole has the minimum capacity levels required for the provision of the services in the various areas specified in the terms of reference, in particular in terms of resources available, nature and scope of the services provided. To that end, applicants are required to provide detailed CVs of the partner's managerial staff, i.e. in this context the director, the head of department/unit, the chief scientist, etc. who supervise the experts and the operational and operating budgets, as well as those of the staff designated to carry out the work, i.e. the experts themselves. In addition, applicants shall provide signed letters of intent of the ETC manager and core staff of the consortium coordinator, as well as of the key experts of all consortium partners, i.e. the experts from the partners in the consortium who would be entrusted with the performance of activities in the main work areas who would dedicate between 50 to 75%</i>

		<i>of their time for that purpose. As such there is no particular requirement in terms of the seniority of the key experts. The letters of intent to be provided shall therefore cover at least the staff designated to carry out the work whose CVs have been submitted in accordance with point 6.4(c)(1).</i>
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14	Question	With reference to section 6.4 of the terms of reference, selection criteria, (c) technical and professional capacity, is it allowed to submit information concerning past management and past scientific activities in relation to the current running ETCs?
	Answer	<i>The aim of this selection criterion is to assess whether the consortium as a whole has the minimum capacity levels required for the provision of the services in the various areas specified in the terms of reference. To that end, applicants are required to provide a list and brief account of work considered relevant and carried out in the past 5 years, see section 6.4 (c)(3) of the terms of reference.</i>

15	Question	Could you please clarify more specifically what is meant with the core team approach, in particular do you expect them to work in the same location?
	Answer	<i>From past experience, EEA reckons that a core team of senior experts to lead on the main clusters of work provides coherence and efficiency gains insofar as the team, through its steering expertise, will collectively be better at scoping, designing and following up a fully articulated and inter-linked set of tasks and activities, while being more responsive to changes and adapting the work plan and work approach. This requires though, as indicated in the terms of reference, that the senior experts dedicate between 50 to 75% of their time to this effect. On the way this should be organised, EEA is not indicating any preferred arrangements.</i>

## 2.2 Specific issues on Biological diversity (ETC/BD)

16	Question	With reference to section 3.1 of the terms of reference, Work package 1 – Biological Diversity, could you please confirm the number of priorities around which the work will be organised?
	Answer	<i>The EEA biodiversity work will be organised around five priorities as listed on page 7 of the terms of reference.</i>

17	Question	With reference to section 3.1 of the terms of reference, Work package 1 – Biological Diversity, and in particular the biogeographic seminars process, is the EEA going to provide particular contributions to management of sites?
	Answer	<i>This is neither in EEA's remit nor has it been required for the EEA to do so. The EEA will continue to work with countries on activities covering information provisions and flows in its all related technicalities that are part of the biogeographical process.</i>

18	Question	With reference to section 3.1 of the terms of reference, Work package 2 – Ecosystems assessments, what is expected on the gathering of knowledge on methodologies, will the EEA only gather material or will it also do the assessments?
	Answer	<i>In line with BD20 Target 2 (action 5 in particular), EEA will support together with EC services the gathering of methodologies so to provide guidance material to the countries for their national delivery. At the same time, together with EC services, EEA will contribute to the production of the European assessment.</i>

19	Question	With reference to section 3.1 of the terms of reference, Work package 3 – Agriculture and forests biodiversity and ecosystems-related information, no explicit reference is made to the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) on soil, agriculture and forest, whilst this cooperation is important for the work; could you please clarify what kind of cooperation is expected with this data centre?
	Answer	<i>The penultimate bullet point on page 10 specifically refers to European Data Centres in these fields, which are led by the JRC. The JRC is also included in the mention 'EC services' that is found across the terms of reference.</i>

### 2.3 Specific issues on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (ETC/CCA)

20	Question	With reference to section 4.1 of the terms of reference, Structure of the ETC consortium, could you please clarify whether the core team shall include only persons from the coordinating organisation or also from other partners of the consortium? Could you please clarify what is meant
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		by team leader and also elaborate on how to interpret the statement ' <i>it is essential that team leads are from organisations which participate in Eionet</i> '?
	Answer	<i>Please refer to answer No 12 above.</i>

21	Question	With reference to section 6.4 of the terms of reference, selection criteria, (c) technical and professional capacity, could you please clarify what is meant by ' <i>partner's managerial staff</i> ' and by ' <i>key experts of all consortium partners</i> '? Is there a difference between senior experts and key experts?
	Answer	<i>Please refer to answer No 13 above.</i>

22	Question	With reference to section 6.4 of the terms of reference, selection criteria, (c) technical and professional capacity, is it allowed to submit information concerning past management and past scientific activities in relation to the current running ETCs?
	Answer	<i>Please refer to answer No 14 above.</i>

#### **2.4 Specific issues on Inland, coastal and marine waters (ETC/ICM)**

23	Question	Could you please clarify more specifically what is meant with the core team approach, in particular do you expect them to work in the same location?
	Answer	<i>Please refer to answer No 15 above.</i>