



**Framework Partnership Agreement  
concerning the European Topic Centre  
on  
Air and climate change mitigation 2014-2018**

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Reference: Open call for proposals EEA/ACC/13/001-ETC/ACM

Closing date: 30.04.2013

**1. Background information**

**1.1 The European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network**

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is a main source of information of the European Union and its Member States in developing, implementing and evaluating European environment policies. The Agency aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy-making agents and the public.

Established in 1990 and operational in Copenhagen since 1994, the EEA is the hub of the European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet<sup>1</sup>), a network of around 350 organisations across Europe through which it collects and disseminates environment-related data and information. This information is made available through various report series, briefings and the EEA website<sup>2</sup>. The European Commission, the European Parliament, national and regional authorities in the member countries, the scientific world and a wide range of non-governmental organisations are among the regular users of the databases and information products.

Institutionally, the EEA is one of the Agencies of the European Union. The functioning of the EEA and Eionet are described in the EEA regulation<sup>3</sup>. The Agency, which is open to all nations sharing its objectives, has currently 32 member countries. These are the 27 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

The EEA and Eionet contribute to the European Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), a distributed, integrated, web-enabled information system based on a network of public information providers sharing environmental data and information. It builds on existing e-infrastructure, systems and services in the Member States and EU institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eionet.europa.eu>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.eea.europa.eu>

<sup>3</sup> (EC) Regulation No. 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the EEA and Eionet (codified version, OJ L126 of 21 May 2009, p13, see: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009R0401:EN:NOT>

One key role is to manage five thematic Environmental Data Centres (Climate change, Air, Water, Land use and Biodiversity)

Part of Eionet are currently six European Topic Centres (ETCs) covering the following topics: 'Air pollution and climate change mitigation', 'Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation', 'Inland, coastal and marine waters', 'Spatial information and analysis', 'Biological Diversity', and 'Sustainable consumption and production'.

Having regard to the expiry of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) concerning the ETC Air pollution and climate change mitigation on 28 October 2013, the EEA launches this call with a view to identifying the consortium which will continue the work in the topic area from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018<sup>4</sup>.

The total annual budget for Specific Agreements (SAs) to be concluded on the basis of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) will be subject to available funds from the General Budget of the EU and priorities set in the EEA Strategy 2014-18, which will be approved by the EEA Management Board later in 2013. Present spending in the topic area is of the order of:

**Air and climate change mitigation (total): EUR 2,450,000**

## 1.2 Role of European Topic Centres (ETCs)

ETCs are, according to the EEA regulation<sup>5</sup> and in practice, an important instrument supporting the EEA through the execution of sizeable, continuous, well-defined tasks with the involvement of member countries. ETCs support the EEA Environmental Data Centres for the topics Air, Climate change, Water, Biodiversity and Land use referred to above, and may provide help to EEA in supporting other data centres coordinated by Eurostat and JRC. Tasks focus on the harmonisation of monitoring of the environment in the member countries, the compilation of the resulting data in international databases, the processing of the information including the use of models to describe and analyse the present and future state of the environment, and the production of indicators to communicate the findings to various users.

ETCs are a part of and support to Eionet. Their activities have an important networking-component involving experts in the member countries in the harmonisation, quality assessment and exchange of data and/or information, capacity-building in member countries through country visits and meetings with all Eionet country experts. ETCs are sparring partners for countries discussing options for improving national information systems. Networking with member countries also includes their involvement in indicator analysis and assessment. Under the overall leadership of EEA, leading, steering and

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<sup>4</sup> This call is subject to the EEA Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules as determined by the EU's Financial Regulation (EU) No 966/2012 of 25.10.2012 (OJEU L 298/1 of 26.10.2012) and its Rules of application laid down in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29.10.2012 (OJEU L 362/1 of 31.12.2012), in particular their respective Titles VI on Grants (Articles 121-137 FR and 173-210 RAP). It is also subject to the EEA regulation which stipulates in Article 4(5) that 'topic centres shall be designated by the Management Board ...for a period not exceeding the duration of each multiannual work programme...Each designation may, however, be renewed'.

<sup>5</sup> The EEA regulation, see footnote 3, describes in Article 4(4)-(6) European Topic Centres and their tasks as part of Eionet.

supervising the work of the ETCs, ETCs are also expected to cooperate amongst themselves on crosscutting projects.

In order to assume this role, ETCs are expected to assemble the best expertise in Europe covering the full geographical area of EEA member countries, to handle data in their areas and analyse environmental data with regard to societal and economic developments relevant to environmental and sectoral policies.

### **1.3 Agreements**

All activities of ETCs are based on Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) and Specific Agreements (SAs) concluded to implement the former. Annual work programmes which serve as the basis for the award of any grants are decided upon by the EEA and ETCs taking into account the requirements of all parts of Eionet and other stakeholders.

All grants are subject to co-financing by the *consortium* concerned (minimum 10% of the total eligible costs).

## **2. Future demands on EEA work in the area of air pollution, noise and climate change mitigation 2014-2018**

### **2.1 Policy context**

The 2012 United Nations RIO+20 Conference on Sustainable Development reaffirmed that climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of our time, and urged Parties to the UNFCCC and to the Kyoto Protocol to fully implement their commitments. Action at national and international levels to address global climate change is both technically feasible and affordable compared to the high costs of unabated climate change.

Within Europe emissions of air pollutants have decreased in recent decades and ambient air quality has been improving with respect to certain air pollutants. Nevertheless, recent assessments confirm there is still a long way to go before long-term targets to protect human health and the environment are met. Substantial impacts on human health, ecosystems, crops and forests still remain due to the presence of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), ozone, toxic and other hazardous pollutants in ambient air and the deposition of a variety of substances.

Noise is recognised as a growing environmental challenge. Scientific understanding of its impact upon our environment has increased dramatically in the last decade and noise is now regarded as a pervasive and critical anthropogenic pollutant affecting humans, animals and marine life.

Within the European Union, the proposed 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme recognises the need that climate change, air pollution and noise policy commitments are properly addressed and implemented.

A significant part of EEA's annual activities focus on supporting the implementation of current EU and international legislation in the fields of air pollution, noise and climate change. Regular activities are also performed to support sectoral legislation and assessments in areas such as energy and transport. In addition, over the past few years a number of key European and international legislative instruments addressing greenhouse gas mitigation, noise and air pollution have been, or will continue to be, under review and development.

These include:

- New demands stemming from the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester regarding timelier reporting and assessment of climate change policies and measures and their projected effects on emissions. More regular updates of information on national climate change and other policies affecting progress towards achievement of the Europe 2020 climate and energy headline targets will be required;
- The on-going review of EU Air legislation, which is expected to lead to both a proposal for a revised National Emissions Ceilings (NEC) Directive (2001/81/EC) in 2013, and potential introduction of regulatory and non-regulatory options that could assist with further improving Europe's air quality;
- Implementation of the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) and its implementing provisions;
- The 2012 amendment of the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) Gothenburg Protocol will result in new reported information including on black carbon emissions;
- The revision of the EU monitoring mechanism for greenhouse gases (Decision No 280/2004/EC) to ensure compliance by the European Union and Member State with commitments and obligations under current and future EU and international climate change agreements, including covering emissions from maritime shipping;
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change concerning the post-2012 GHG emissions regime;
- The proposed revision of the Fluorinated Gases Regulation ((EC) No 842/2006));
- The Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC);
- The agreement of the Directive on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) (2010/75/EU) which once fully entered into force will lead to revised reporting obligations for countries;
- The review of the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register Regulation ((EC) No 166/2006);
- Regulations (EC) No 443/2009 and No 510/2011 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles and where applicable future monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from other vehicle categories, in particular heavy duty vehicles.

Thus many of EEA's future activities across the areas of climate change mitigation, noise and air pollution will take place against this changing policy background. Many of the developments will lead to changes in the environmental information reporting requirements and assessment needs for countries and the European Union as a whole. Both the EEA and its ETC will therefore need to adapt to these changing requirements in the years ahead.

Finally, given the increasing scientific understanding that several air pollutants are also climate forcers, there is an increasing policy recognition that air quality and climate change can – to a certain extent - be addressed together by defining policies and measures developed through an integrated approach. Thus assessment work relating to mitigation of both climate change and air pollution will continue to be an important element in EEA's work over the coming years, linking to work on developments in and the resulting pressures and impacts from e.g. the energy and transport sectors.

## **2.2 EEA role in support of policy**

EEA's main operational objectives concerning air pollution, noise and climate change mitigation include supporting the implementation of legislation and tracking progress towards the achievement of short- and long-term targets as defined in relevant EU and international policies for issues such as emissions reductions, loads on ecosystems, air quality standards, and human health impacts arising from exposure to air pollutants and noise.

In order to do this, EEA carries out a broad range of activities aimed at ensuring the best possible access at the European level for decision-makers and the general public alike to quality-assured data and outlooks on greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions, concentrations and exposure to air pollutants, on the driving forces behind the observed trends including analysis of developments in energy and transport sectors, and on the effectiveness of policies in addressing the issues. The EEA also uses the data itself to maintain and further develop a comprehensive set of indicators in the field, including many of the EEA Core Set of Indicators, produces regular thematic assessments in the field of air pollution and climate change mitigation, and also covers the topics in cross-cutting reports of the EEA such as its 5-yearly European Environment State and Outlook reports.

## **3. Specific tasks of the European Topic Centre on Air and Climate Change Mitigation**

The ETC will be required to support the work of the EEA within the following work package areas:

### **3.1 Work package 1: Integrated activities in the areas of air pollution, climate change mitigation, noise, energy and transport**

EEA will further develop its integrated activities across the areas of air pollution, climate change mitigation, noise, energy and transport. The ETC is required to support the work of the EEA within the following technical areas:

- Assessing the modelled interactions, trade-offs and synergies between climate change mitigation and air pollution policies;
- Assessing progress of the EU and its Member States toward meeting energy efficiency, renewables and transport-related objectives;
- Contributing to EEA energy and transport reports (e.g. TERM) assessing progress with the integration of environmental considerations into the energy and transport sectors and environmental progress achieved;
- Assessing the environmental impacts of different sectoral policies (energy transport, industry, agriculture etc.) (including impacts on GHG emissions, air pollution, impact on biodiversity and marine environment, land-use, noise, socio-economic impacts etc.) at European, national and local scales;
- Analysing the potential impacts and identifying benefits and environmental pressures of different shares of renewable energies in different sectors (electricity, heat and transport), including interactions and trade-offs between sectors (energy, transport and agricultural land-use etc.), associated external costs etc.;
- Assessing potential future technological developments in the energy and transport sectors and their environmental effects;
- Maintaining and developing EEA Core Set of Indicators and other relevant indicators on transport and energy.

### **3.2 Work package 2: Air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions monitoring, reporting and verification**

- Assisting with the overall collection, maintenance and review of relevant EU greenhouse gas, air pollutant and industrial emissions datasets, in conjunction with associated SEIS principles and further development of the Air and Climate Change Data Centres;
- Compiling EU emission inventory datasets and inventory reports under the UNFCCC and EU GHG monitoring mechanism, NEC Directive and LRTAP Convention, in close coordination with member countries and European Commission services;
- Assisting EEA with compiling and managing the environmental information reported under the EU Fluorinated Gases (F-gases) Regulation, Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Regulation, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions data reported for new passenger cars and vans and, if applicable, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from other vehicle categories, in particular heavy duty vehicles;
- Performing quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) checks on the information reported by member countries, including on projections and policies and measures, and ensuring that QA/QC procedures for inventories, industrial emissions and transport CO<sub>2</sub> emission data remain updated, implemented, and well documented;
- Participating in external (UNFCCC, LRTAP) emission inventory reviews, and assisting EEA with the implementation of annual emission inventory reviews under the EU GHG monitoring mechanism and Effort Sharing Decision;
- Assisting EEA member countries with their data deliveries by providing assistance/feedback with data exchange, expert and training workshops, and by visiting countries to provide on-site training and capacity building;
- Supporting EEA activities on the implementation of new or revised EU and international legislation, including the EU GHG monitoring mechanism, Effort Sharing Decision, F-gas Regulation, NEC Directive, UNFCCC, UNECE Gothenburg Protocol etc., especially changes in monitoring and reporting requirements, assessment needs and guidance material (e.g. the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook);
- Preparing estimates for information not reported by countries under the EU GHG monitoring mechanism (e.g. approximated year-1 GHG emissions, projections);
- Exploring and assessing different emission accounting principles including 'end-user' inventories, production and consumption-based approaches etc.;
- Contributing to initiatives aiming to improve the consistency and streamlining of reporting between the GHG and air pollution inventories as well as installation-specific emission data under IED, E-PRTR and ETS reporting etc.;
- Supporting EEA's developing activities in the area of local and urban emission inventories;
- Supporting the use of GMES services both by EEA and by Eionet where relevant, including reviewing the potential for the use of new applications and uses and benefits for emission information;
- Supporting EEA contributions to European Union participation in international bodies, e.g. UNFCCC, UNECE, UNEP, OECD etc., and supporting relevant European Union working groups and committees, the LRTAP Convention working groups and task forces etc.

### **3.3 Work package 3: Greenhouse gas and air pollutant mitigation assessments and indicators**

- Performing in-depth and robust assessment of the progress of the EU, its Member States and other EEA member countries towards climate mitigation targets, including those under the Kyoto Protocol commitment period(s), the EU 2020 headline targets, and the Effort Sharing Decision, as well as toward air pollution mitigation targets under the amended Gothenburg protocol and NEC Directive;
- Analysing relevant projections and the effectiveness of climate change and air pollution policies and measures to achieve future targets, including detailed consideration of the non-ETS trading sectors and LULUCF sectors, and use of flexible mechanisms etc., while enhancing links to the Europe 2020 strategy and European Semester;
- Synthesising external (non-EEA) scenarios and outlooks in the field of climate mitigation, air pollution and the main sectors such as the energy, transport and agriculture for use in EEA assessment studies;
- Contributing to EEA reports including providing innovative assessments on emissions mitigation potentials and costs (including for point sources), ex-post policy assessments, detailed assessment of sectoral trends and underlying explanatory factors including by decomposition analyses, assessing the external costs of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions etc.;
- Contributing to the regular updating and further improvement of climate change relevant indicators in the context of information needs under the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Annual Growth Survey and European Semester;
- Maintaining and developing EEA Core Set of Indicators and other relevant indicators.

### **3.4 Work package 4: Air quality and noise data**

- Assisting with the collection, maintenance, review and dissemination of air quality and noise reported data in conjunction with the air quality (2008/50/EC, 2004/107/EC), noise (2002/49/EC) and INSPIRE (2007/2/EC) Directives, in line with the associated SEIS principles and with the relevant EEA Data Centre activities;
- Supporting IT developments at the EEA in relation to data collection, processing, QA/QC and dissemination;
- Supporting the improvement of the quality and timeliness of the data reported by the countries inter alia through the implementation and documentation of related QA/QC procedures;
- Providing support to countries by providing assistance/feedback on data reporting, expert workshops and training activities;
- Supporting the EEA in expanding the geographical and temporal coverage of data with a view to improve air quality and noise assessments;
- Assisting EEA to evaluate options for streamlining data reporting requirements for air quality and noise;
- Contributing to the workings of the joint JRC EEA FAIRMODE network, in particular to the working group on 'Guidance on the use of models' led by the EEA;
- Contribute to and support the work of the CNOSSOS-EU implementation project on noise where appropriate;

- Supporting the access to data necessary for the GMES atmosphere services, and supporting the use of GMES services by EEA and Eionet, including reviewing the potential and piloting the use of new services;
- Supporting relevant European Commission/European Union working groups and committees as well as the EEA Expert Panel on Noise and the UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution working groups, task forces and other relevant bodies in developing, harmonising and streamlining data flows and in improving assessments.

### **3.5 Work package 5: Air quality and noise assessments and indicators**

- Regularly updating and further improving the relevant EEA core set of indicators and other indicators in the fields of air quality and noise, including exploiting the use of up-to-date data for more up-to-date indicators;
- Assessing annually summer ozone exceedances and air quality in zones and agglomerations (in line with the air quality directives) and population exposure to noise (in line with the environmental noise directive);
- Assisting the EEA in providing an annual overview and analysis of the status and trends of air quality in Europe;
- Assisting the EEA in producing integrated and targeted assessments for European, regional and local scales of air pollution, the impacts on human health and the effects on the environment, and the effectiveness and co-benefits of related policies and measures;
- Assisting EEA in producing targeted assessments of the state of the noise environment, the impacts on human health, effects on the environment and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies and action plans;
- Assisting the EEA in preparing input relevant for reviews and for the implementation of the air quality and noise directives;
- Contributing to main EEA cross-cutting and comprehensive assessment reports.

### **3.6 Work package 6: ETC management and capacity-building in EEA member and cooperating countries**

The organisational set-up and management procedures of the ETC consortium must meet the special and general conditions of the Framework Partnership Agreement. To ensure this, the management of the ETC requires, for example, clear decision and communication structures within the consortium, and well-established links to the EEA and its member and cooperating countries, to the European Commission and to other relevant organisations. In response to the jointly agreed annual work programme, which is the basis for the grant, the consortium shall submit a proposal for action for agreement with the EEA.

The ETC management must also include procedures for quality assurance – including language-checking - of all its deliverables.

The ETC shall maintain close links with the Eionet (EEA member countries and other ETCs), through:

- strong communication with the countries, including networking;
- in dialogue with the countries identifying barriers to optimally perform their tasks, particularly those focussed around reporting of official dataflows (e.g. monitoring capacities, staff resources, knowledge gaps) and developing proposals to solve any

issues that may emerge and providing training and capacity building in the countries as appropriate;

- helping to organise regular Eionet workshops and seminars and planning future activities with the EEA member and cooperating countries;
- engaging actively in co-operation with other ETCs to strengthen the coherence of EEA data, assessment and information.

#### **4. General guidance on the expertise and organisation of the European Topic Centre on Air and climate change mitigation**

The present and earlier ETCs are consortia of government organisations, private non-profit organisations and a few commercial firms. Based upon EEA experience some general guidance can be given for a successful consortium.

##### **4.1 The structure of the ETC consortium**

The ETC consortium shall comprise one coordinating organisation and several partners. The following points have to be considered when establishing the consortium:

- As it can be difficult to manage many small partners (e.g. with contracts of less than EUR 50 000 per year) in a consortium, fewer partners can facilitate management. However, this has to be balanced against the need to cover the required field of expertise and to ensure good geographical coverage.
- The work programme may be best addressed when organised in air pollution, noise and climate change mitigation teams, but EEA will prioritise integration across these themes. Each team should establish a technical/scientific team lead which, in collaboration with the coordinating organisation, develops the work. It is essential that team leads are from organisations which participate in Eionet and that their organisations are actively engaged in the implementation in the main policy areas as described earlier. Other requirements are:
  - coordinator (ETC manager), having appropriate management and networking capabilities;
  - administrative support, able to work in English and organise European meetings and consultations;
  - In order to ensure proper financial management, the core team shall have access to financial control services.
- The consortium as a whole need to cover the main work areas with the expertise listed under 4.2, but also to have excellent links to wider European expertise. This is particularly important where specific skills are needed, e.g. for certain methodologies, modelling or for wider sector integration etc.
- Therefore, the ETC needs to be structured in a way to ensure the necessary flexibility to be able to adapt to changing needs and to be able to provide experts for specific projects.
- It should also have the capability to network and communicate with countries and also with relevant Commission and/or other international policy and scientific working groups and conferences.

#### **4.2 Technical and scientific expertise**

The consortium is expected to have excellent technical and scientific expertise to be able to fulfil all the tasks in the work areas mentioned in section 3.

In addition, excellent technical and scientific expertise and demonstrable experience in the following areas is specifically required:

- International, EU and national policies and policy analysis on air pollution, noise, climate change mitigation, energy and transport, and understanding of the associated reporting requirements and dataflows;
- GHG and air pollution emission inventories including industrial emissions data, and associated guidance documents;
- Air quality and noise measurements and modelling, including Near Real Time activities;
- QA/QC of environmental data flows, indicators and assessments;
- Data-handling including database development and management, and protocols for electronic data reporting and exchange;
- Spatial data handling and analysis;
- Inspire, SEIS, GMES and its associated services;
- Integrated assessments, including modelling, both within and across different policy areas including the use and analysis of projections and scenarios and policy effectiveness assessments performed using appropriate techniques and tools;
- Assessing health and ecosystem exposure and impacts from air pollution and noise;
- Socio-economic analysis of climate, noise, air pollution, energy and transport mitigation pathways, including experience in assessing environmental externalities, market-based environmental instruments etc.;
- Technological developments in the energy and transport sectors, including energy and transport modelling, data sources, abatement technologies, vehicle type approval, and registration procedures, etc;
- Indicators of air pollution, greenhouse gases, noise exposure energy and transport;
- Networking and communicating with relevant national, EU and international policy and scientific working groups and conferences.

#### **5. Mandatory requirements**

In order to deliver high quality products and services the future beneficiaries shall comply with the following mandatory requirements:

- As the working language of the EEA is English, it will also be the working language of the FPA and SAs. More particularly, the ETC is expected to deliver documents requiring minimal further language checking prior to publication. Future beneficiaries are required to have a quality control procedure to this effect.
- Without exception, the ETC shall report to the EEA, the main contact points being the ETC Manager and the competent EEA Project Manager.
- Subject to guidance from the EEA, the ETC shall ensure coherence and integration of its work with the work carried out by the EEA. To this effect and as far as specific tasks are concerned, the EEA Project Manager(s) will be in close contact with the future beneficiaries (ETC Manager and partners as needed).

- The ETC is also expected to provide input into the development of the EEA annual work programme. Furthermore it shall provide EEA with proposals for the continuous development of the working areas.
- While cooperation amongst ETCs is subject to respective requests and coordination from the EEA, ETCs shall be structured in a way which ensures proper linkages with other ETCs as cross-sectoral and cross-thematic cooperation and integration needs further attention in the future. Such integrated cooperation needs highly transparent ETC management in order to avoid duplication or disintegration of tasks across partners.
- Maintaining and improving the links to Eionet, in particular the Primary Contact Points (PCP) and National Reference Centres (NRC) appointed by the member countries, is the basic foundation for the work of the ETCs. This means, e.g., *ad hoc* technical support to member countries, reflecting the specific needs of all countries, to enable them to contribute to the reporting of 'priority data'. The ETC shall also assist the EEA in organising annual meetings with the Eionet partners.
- The EEA is committed to an internal Environmental Policy to ensure that the EEA operates in an environmentally sound manner. Since March 2005 the EEA is EMAS certified. It is thus required that the future beneficiaries take into consideration the reduction of environmental impact of ETC activities and develop Environmental Policies for the ETCs.

## 6. Criteria

### 6.1 Eligibility

Consortia consisting of at least two partners (natural/legal persons, private or public), these partners being established in different EEA member countries (the 27 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey), are eligible, subject to 6.2 and 6.3, for submitting proposals. Consortia must identify one of their partners as coordinator who will interface with the EEA.

Entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law of one of the EEA member countries are also eligible under the same conditions, provided that their representatives have and can prove their capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and assume financial liability.

A *consortium* may also include partners from other countries than the above mentioned, provided that the other eligibility requirements are respected and the share of partners from non-EEA member countries does not exceed 10 % of the total eligible costs.

With a view to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria, the *consortium's* coordinator is required to submit a proposal submission form (see annex 1) duly filled out and signed.

### 6.2 Ne bis in idem

While partners may participate in *consortia* aiming at FPAs concerning different ETCs (see the parallel Open Calls EEA/ACC/13/002-ETC/CCA, EEA/NSV/13/001-ETC/BD and EEA/NSV/13/002-ETC/ICM), **no partner may participate in more than one consortium aiming at the FPA concerning the ETC of this Open Call**, i.e. the ETC on Air and climate change mitigation. Disregard of this rule leads to exclusion of all *consortia* concerned.

Similarly it is prohibited for proposed staff to sign letters of intent to participate in more than one *consortium* aiming at the FPA concerning this ETC, i.e. ETC on Air and climate change mitigation. Disregard of this rule leads to exclusion of all *consortia* concerned.

### **6.3 Exclusion criteria**

Apart from the situations under 6.2, *consortia* shall be excluded from participation in this procedure if any of its partners is in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1), 107 and 109(1)(b) of the Financial Rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union<sup>6</sup>.

When submitting their application, each partner of the consortium must provide a declaration on their honour in accordance with the form attached as annex 2, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in any of the situations specified in the above mentioned provisions.

The partners of the consortium with whom the EEA will enter into a Framework Partnership Agreement will be required, prior to the signature of the agreement, to provide the evidence specified in the penultimate paragraph of the declaration of honour mentioned above (see annex 2).

### **6.4 Selection criteria**

The selection criteria will be assessed as a first step by the evaluation committee. Failure to comply with these criteria will result in the proposal not being evaluated further by the evaluation committee. Applicants may be asked to provide additional proof, or to clarify the supporting documents, related to the selection criteria within a specific time limit.

#### ***(a) Legal capacity***

*Consortia* are required to prove that all their partners are authorised to perform the framework partnership agreement under national law, as evidenced by inclusion in a trade or professional register, a sworn declaration or certificate, membership of a specific organisation, express authorisation, or entry in the VAT register or any other statutory document allowing verification of the partner's legal status.

To that effect, each partner of a *consortium* is required to submit a legal entity form (see annex 3) duly filled out and signed, accompanied by a copy of inscription in a trade register and, where applicable, a copy of inscription in VAT register.

#### ***(b) Economic and financial capacity***

Evidence of the *consortium's* economic and financial capacity shall be furnished by the following documents:

- proof of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the *consortium's* activity throughout the period 2014-2018;

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<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25.10.2012, OJEU L 298/1 of 26.10.2012.

- for private partners: profit and loss accounts, balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts were closed (and audit reports by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last available financial year<sup>7</sup>).

**(c) Technical and professional capacity**

Evidence of the *consortium's* technical and professional capacity to carry out the envisaged work programme shall be furnished on the basis of the following documents:

1. Detailed CVs of the partner's managerial staff as well as those of the staff designated to carry out the work indicating, *inter alia*, the educational and professional qualifications and statement of language skills;
2. Signed letters of intent of:
  - the ETC Manager and core staff of the *consortium* coordinator; as well as
  - the key experts of all *consortium* partners

proving that the *consortium* as a whole has sufficient technical, scientific and management (including financial) experience to assume the role of an ETC;

3. A list and brief account of work considered relevant and carried out by the partners forming the *consortium* in the past five years, with the sums, dates and recipients ( public or private);
4. Letters of intent of all *consortium* partners to participate and provide co-financing up to at least 10% of the total eligible cost of the action<sup>8</sup>;
5. For each partner established in an EEA member country, letters of confirmation from the respective Member of the EEA Management Board that the relevant partner is able to perform the function of an ETC partner within Eionet;
6. For each partner, proof and description of their Quality Assurance and Quality Control systems;
7. For each partner, proof and description of their environmental policy.

**6.5 Award criteria (ETC ACM)**

A Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) will be concluded with the consortium whose proposal best meets the EEA requirements as described above. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the documentation provided to demonstrate that the consortium meets the six award criteria set out below. The allocation of weightings to the 6 criteria is also given, corresponding to a maximum total score of 100 points.

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<sup>7</sup> Having regard to Article 196(3) RAP and the fact that all *consortium* partners will assume joint and several liability in accordance with the FPA, such audit reports are not required if *consortia* include any public bodies.

<sup>8</sup> The 10%-rule of minimum co-financing is applied towards the *consortium* as a whole. To what extent partners contribute to this co-financing is an internal *consortium* matter.

No	Award criteria	Max. points
1	<p><b>General understanding of the task.</b></p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of: the policies and stakeholders that the EEA and the Eionet are supporting and cooperating with in the topic area; how the different dimensions of the topic area (e.g. the links between air pollution and climate change mitigation, and the synergies and trade-offs between policies ) are related, and related to thematic and cross-cutting issues outside the topic area; how the environmental and policy issues in the topic area vary across the EEA member countries and how this impacts on the tasks of the EEA and Eionet; the roles of data, indicators and assessments in EEA work in the topic area, and the methodologies and frameworks, such as inventories, modelling and accounting, that underpin the work; the importance of collaboration within and outside Eionet in delivering the work.</p>	15
2	<p><b>Data and information systems</b></p> <p>Sound knowledge of the actual and potential existence, availability and usefulness of data and information relevant to the topic area from Eionet sources, and from other official and non-official sources at (sub)national, EU and international levels, including sources such as research, citizen science and remote sensing; experience and expertise in supporting the design, management and quality control of data and information systems in the topic area reflecting SEIS principles and Inspire requirements, inter alia exploiting accounting frameworks and data modelling and assimilation techniques.</p>	20
3	<p><b>Assessments</b></p> <p>Experience and expertise in supporting the definition, production, management and use of indicators in the topic area, and in contributing to thematic, sectoral and cross-cutting assessments.</p>	20
4	<p><b>Policy support</b></p> <p>Experience and expertise in providing technical and scientific support to the development and implementation of international, EU or national policy processes, including contributions to ex-ante and ex-post analysis of the effectiveness of strategies and policies, in the topic area.</p>	15
5	<p><b>Collaboration and communication</b></p> <p>Sound approach to collaborating with and providing capacity-building support to Eionet member organisations in member countries; experience and expertise in accessing and working together with relevant expert networks and institutes external to the Eionet, including the scientific world; experience and expertise in preparing and facilitating workshops and similar; good communication skills.</p>	15

No	Award criteria	Max. points
6	<p><b>ETC management</b></p> <p>Sound arrangements for implementing transparent, effective and quality-assured management of the ETC consortium, including financial management. Sound approach to managing different dimensions of the topic area individually and as a coherent whole, and to addressing geographical specificities in the topic area across EEA member countries. Sound environmental policy for the consortium. Adequate level of manpower, resources and output corresponding to the indicative annual budget.</p>	15
Total		100

## 7. 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 beneficiaries will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in the implementation of the Framework Partnership Agreement, 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/about-us/emas>.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that proposals 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 Terms of Reference (no additional material in paper) and avoiding plastic folders or binders.

## 8. Further information

Submitting a proposal implies acceptance by the *consortium* of all terms and conditions of the standard Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) and its Annexes.

## 9. Timing

Information briefing: **22 February 2013, 10 am – 1 pm at the EEA premises in Copenhagen**: Kongens Nytorv 6, 1050 Copenhagen K

Deadline for submitting proposals: **30 April 2013**

Opening of proposals: **7 May 2013**

Evaluation of proposals: **From 8 May to 30 May 2013 (indicative dates)**

Following the decision of the EEA Management Board on the designation of the successful consortium (foreseen for 26 June 2013) and prior to signature of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) all consortia will be notified of the outcome of this call.

## 10. Presentation of the proposal

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the ***double envelopes system***:

The outer envelope or parcel should be sealed with adhesive tape and signed across the seal and carry the following information:

- The call for proposals reference No EEA/ACC/13/001-ETC/ACM
- The call for proposals title “Framework partnership agreement concerning the European Topic Centre on Air and climate change mitigation”
- The name of the consortium’s coordinator
- The indication “Proposal – Not to be opened by the internal mail services”
- The address for submission of proposals (as specified in the letter of invitation to submit proposals)
- The date of submission shall be legible on the outer envelope or parcel

The outer envelope or parcel must contain three inner envelopes, i.e. Envelopes No 1, 2 and 3, corresponding to the following three sections: executive summary, administrative section and technical proposal.

**(a) Envelope No 1 – Executive summary** shall include the following information (max. 10 pages):

- ETC name as indicated in the title of these Terms of reference;
- Full contact details of the partner assuming the role of coordinator of the consortium;
- Name and CV (abstract) of the proposed ETC Manager affiliated with the partner coordinating the consortium;
- Presentation of the core team of the partner coordinating the consortium;
- Full contact details of each other partners of the consortium;
- For each partner, name and CVs (abstract) of key experts expected to contribute at least 100 days/year to the ETC.

**(b) Envelope No 2 – Administrative section** shall include the following information:

- The proposal submission form drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 1
- For each partner, the declaration on exclusion criteria as required under section 6.3 drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 2
- For each partner, the legal entity form as required under section 6.4 (a) drawn up in accordance with the model in annex 3
- For the partner acting as coordinator of the consortium, the financial identification form drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 4
- The evidence and documentation demonstrating the fulfilment of the selection criteria as required under section 6.4 (b) (economic and financial capacity) and 6.4 (c) (technical and professional capacity)

**(c) Envelope No 3 – Technical proposal** shall include the following:

The technical proposal providing all information requested under section 6.5 – Award criteria

Proposal shall be drafted in one of the languages of the EEA member countries, **preferably in English** (supporting evidence does not need to be translated) and submitted in **duplicate** (one original unbound and one copy).

It is important that proposals are presented in the correct format and include all documents necessary to enable the evaluation committee to assess them. Failure to respect these requirements will constitute a formal error and may result in the rejection of the proposal.

Consortia shall observe precisely the indications in points 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the letter of invitation to submit a proposal to ensure their proposal is admissible. Late delivery will lead to non-admissibility of the proposal and its rejection from the award procedure. Proposals sent by e-mail or by fax will also be non-admissible and discarded. Envelopes or parcels found opened at the opening session will also lead to non-admissibility of the proposal. Consequently, consortia must ensure that their proposals are packed in such a way to prevent any accidental opening during their mailing.

**11. Confidentiality and protection of personal data**

For the processing of this award procedure, the EEA observes the rules set in Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regards to the processing of personal data by Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJEU L 8/1 of 12.1.2001).

For further detailed information please refer to the privacy statement available on the EEA external website at the following address: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/privacy-statement>.

**ANNEXES**

Annex 1 – Proposal submission form

Annex 2 – Declaration exclusion criteria

Annex 3 – Legal entity form

Annex 4 – Financial identification form (only for the partner coordinating the consortium)

Annex 5 – Draft framework partnership agreement and specific agreement

**BRIEFING MEETING and further information**

A briefing meeting to provide more background information on the expectations for the ETC and the procedure for submitting a proposal will be organised on 22 February 2013 in Copenhagen. If you are interested, please register by sending an e-mail to [procurement@eea.europa.eu](mailto:procurement@eea.europa.eu). We will send you the meeting details in response.

Any immediate questions regarding this call for proposals should be sent by e-mail to the European Environment Agency: [olivier.cornu@eea.europa.eu](mailto:olivier.cornu@eea.europa.eu) (general questions) or [paul.mcaleavey@eea.europa.eu](mailto:paul.mcaleavey@eea.europa.eu) (technical questions).

All applicants are encouraged to consult the section 'contract opportunities' on the EEA website regularly before the deadline (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders>).