



OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS

for the award of a Framework Partnership Agreement concerning the

European Topic Centre on

Air pollution and climate change mitigation 2011-2013 EEA/ACC/10/001¹

1. Background information

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

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is the main source of information of the European Union and its Member States in developing 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), 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 website². The European Commission, the European Parliament, national and regional authorities in the member countries, 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 regulation³. 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 and Norway; Switzerland and Turkey.

Part of Eionet are currently five European Topic Centres (ETCs) covering the following topics: 'Air and Climate Change', 'Biodiversity', 'Land Use and Spatial Information', 'sustainable consumption and production' and 'Water'.

¹ The successful *consortium* will be proposed a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) covering the period from 2011 to 2013 (the remaining period of the current EEA Strategy 2009-2013) with a possible renewal for one year under the next EEA Strategy subject to management board approval.

² <http://www.eea.europa.eu/>.

³ (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://org.eea.europa.eu/documents>).

Having regard to the expiry of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) concerning the ETC Air and climate change on 31 December 2010, the EEA launches this call with a view to identifying the *consortium* which will continue the work in the respective area from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.⁴

The separation and extension of the work of ETC Air and climate change (ETC/ACC) into ETC Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (ETC/CCA) and ETC Air pollution and climate change mitigation (ETC/ACM) reflects the scale of policy and scientific developments in these areas.

In February 2008, the European Commission adopted a Communication proposing to improve, modernise and streamline current environmental information systems by establishing a European Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS). SEIS is a distributed, integrated, web-enabled information system based on a network of public information providers sharing environmental data and information. It is built on existing e-infrastructure, systems and services in the Member States and EU institutions, especially those of the EEA and Eionet.

The system aims to tie in better all existing data flows and information related to EU environmental policies and legislation including the implementation of the infrastructure for spatial information in Europe Inspire, and other data and real time observations related to emerging environmental priorities, and services coming from programmes such as Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES). It will provide easily accessible information to both policy-makers and citizens. A major challenge will be to develop SEIS as a platform that also can be used for two-way communication on the environment, namely enabling users to upload and share their information with others from local to global level.

The EEA will achieve its contributions therein by, inter alia: working together with Eionet, the European Commission (primarily through ten thematic European Environmental Data Centres) and the EEA's European Topic Centres on the implementation of this distributed system for sharing information from local to global level based on interoperability and, focusing on EEA European data management, including streamlining priority dataflows with Eionet, coordination of the in-situ component of GMES and the management of 5 of those thematic Environmental Data Centres (Climate change, Air, Water, Land use and Biodiversity) to offer a wealth of European environmental datasets in suitable formats for various users.

The implementation of SEIS principles via appropriate technological development and networking activities with stakeholders plus an increased focus on the inclusion of near-real time measurements and improved use of modelling techniques means that EEA will, for some dataflows, move away from the traditional methodology of

⁴ With a possible renewal for one year under the next EEA Strategy subject to management board approval. This call is subject to the EEA Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules as determined by the EU's Financial Regulation (EC) No. 1605/2002 as last amended by (EC) No. 652/2008 and its Implementing Rules (EC) No. 2342/2002 as last amended by (EC) No. 478/2007, in particular their respective Titles VI on Grants (Articles 108-120 FR and 160-184a IR).). 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'.

processing national data as applied over the last 10 -15 years while continuing to support countries in their efforts to produce relevant and high quality data.

The EEA website will evolve from one that stores documents into an interactive site and portal that supports two-way communications and can be effective in helping to improve the quality and spread of environmental information. Meeting this objective in the complex field of air pollution and climate change mitigation can mean that standalone outputs are complemented with more frequently updated content.

Subject to available funds from the General Budget of the EU, the total annual budget for Specific Agreements (SAs) to be concluded on the basis of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) to be concluded following this call is estimated at:

Air pollution and climate change mitigation (total): 2,200,000 Euro

1.2 Role of European Topic Centres (ETCs)

ETCs are, according to the EEA regulation⁵ 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 EEA data centres for the issues air, climate change, water, biodiversity and land use 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 the EEA, steering and 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

⁵ The EEA regulation, see footnote 2, describes in Article 4(4)-(6) European Topic Centres and their tasks as part of Eionet.

All activities of ETCs are based on Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) and Specific Agreements (SAs) concluded to implement the former. Work programmes (mostly annual implementation plans), which form part of the SAs, 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 EEA work and demands in the area of Air pollution and climate change mitigation 2011-2013

2.1 Policy context

Global warming will have far-reaching consequences. Action to address global climate change is both technically feasible and affordable compared to the high costs of unabated climate change. In order to limit a global average temperature increase to 2°C compared to pre-industrial times requires that global greenhouse gas emissions peak by 2020 at the latest and be reduced by at least 50% as compared with 1990 levels by 2050 and continue to decline thereafter.

Although emissions of key air pollutants have decreased in recent years, and ambient air quality has been improving, 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 particles, such as PM10 and PM2.5, ozone, toxic and other hazardous pollutants in ambient air and the deposition of a variety of substances.

Over the past few years, key European and international legislative instruments concerning greenhouse gas mitigation and air pollution have been, or continue to be, under review and development. These include:

- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change concerning the post-2012 climate regime, and EU policies such as the Climate Action and Energy Package, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/climate_action.htm, and related legislation such as the EU Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Mechanism,
- The UNECE LRTAP Gothenburg Protocol to abate acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone as well as the EU National Emissions Ceilings (NEC),
- The Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directives (IPPC) (and various supporting instruments such as the Waste Incineration Directive) and the UNECE PRTR protocol,
- The European Commission Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution (COM(2005)0446)
- The Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC).

The continuing development of these instruments will lead to changes in reporting requirements for countries and associated EEA assessment and policy support activities, which will thus also be reflected in changes in the future work programme of the EEA and the ETC.

In addition, the development of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) atmosphere services (www.gmes.info) and the implementation of both the Shared Environmental Information System for Europe (SEIS) principles (COM/2008/0046) and of the INSPIRE Directive (2007/2/EC) have the potential to improve in the future the extent, quality, timeliness and spatial resolution of *inter alia* air quality information and assessments and thus could play in the coming years an important role in air quality policy developments.

Finally, there is growing scientific and policy awareness of the importance of interlinkages (both negative and positive) between air pollution and climate change. This leads to the increasing need for development of integrated policies that ensure the most cost-effective approach is taken in devising future measures that are aimed at addressing environmental and health impacts. Thus assessment work relating to mitigation of both climate change and air pollution will be an important element in EEA's work over the coming years, linking to work on developments in and the resulting pressures from e.g. the energy and transport sectors.

2.2 EEA role in support of policy

As set out in the EEA Strategy 2009-2013, the main operational objectives concerning air pollution and climate change mitigation are to track progress towards, and provide outlooks for, the achievement of short- and long-term targets as defined *inter alia* in relevant EU and international policies for issues such as emissions reductions, loads on ecosystems, air quality standards and human health impacts.

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 emissions, air quality and exposure to air pollution, on the driving forces behind the observed trends, 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 several 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 the SOER 2010.

Further information on the main areas of work can be found in the EEA Strategy 2009-13: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/eea-strategy-2009852013-multi-annual-work-programme>

3. Specific tasks of the European Topic Centre on Air pollution and climate change mitigation

3.1 Air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation

The ETC will be required to support the work of the EEA and the Agency's cooperation with the European Commission, the European Parliament, EEA member countries (through the Eionet network) and key international organisations on air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation - including projections as well as policies and measures - within the following areas of work:

Work area 1: Emissions data, SEIS and GMES

- Assisting with the collection, maintenance and review of relevant EU greenhouse gas, air pollutant and industrial emissions datasets, in conjunction with associated SEIS principles and Air and Climate Change Data Centre activities;
- Compiling EU emission inventory reports under the UNFCCC and EU GHG monitoring mechanism, NEC Directive and CLRTAP, in close coordination with EEA member countries and Commission services;
- Ensuring business continuity on tasks related to EC emission inventory processes, especially the GHG emission inventory and the EU National Inventory System;
- Supporting and promoting the use of relevant GMES services both by EEA and also by Eionet, including reviewing the potential for and piloting the use of new applications and uses and benefits for emission inventory data in the GMES context;
- Supporting activities to harmonise and improve consistency between GHG and air pollution inventories as well as with installation specific emission data from the EU ETS, E-PRTR and LCP reporting etc;
- Ensuring that the QA/QC procedures for emission inventories are updated, implemented, and documented in line with the QA/QC programmes, and participating in external (UNFCCC, LRTAP) QA/QC reviews as appropriate;
- Developing more timely estimates of e.g. GHG emissions;
- Performing data analysis and assessment work in relation to NAMEA Air and carbon accounting, and end-user allocation of emissions;
- Assisting with the further development and populating of the EEA Data Centres on Air and Climate change and the redesign of key databases and user interfaces (e.g. data viewers) to fulfil future requirements;
- Supporting activities aimed at improving the spatial resolution and availability of emissions data, including initiatives focussed on urban emission inventories;
- Assisting EEA member countries with their data deliveries by providing assistance/feedback with data exchange, expert and training workshops as well as by visiting countries to provide on-site training.
- Supporting EEA in activities concerning any further development and implementation of greenhouse gas, air pollutant and industrial emissions legislation, including the EU GHG monitoring mechanism, the Effort-sharing Decision, the EU ETS directive, the IPPC directive, the E-PRTR, the NEC

Directive and relevant UNECE/CLRTAP protocols, including related changes in reporting requirements and assessment needs;

- Supporting European Community delegations in the preparation of and participation in international negotiation processes, e.g. UNFCCC, contributing to other relevant European Commission/European Union working groups and committees including bodies of the UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

Work area 2: Greenhouse gas and air pollutant mitigation assessments and indicators

- Analysing and assessing the progress of the EC, its Member States and other EEA member countries towards air pollution mitigation targets under the Gothenburg protocol and NEC directive, and climate mitigation targets under the Kyoto Protocol and any new mitigation targets for post-2012, including Member State targets under the Effort Sharing Decision.
- Analysing relevant projections and the effectiveness of national and European policies and measures to achieve the current GHG reduction targets and new post-2012 targets, including the EU ETS and flexible mechanisms.
- Assessing the links between developments in source sectors such as energy and transport, including e.g. efficiency developments in the production and consumption of energy, on the one hand and air pollution and climate mitigation on the other - including mitigation potential and costs.
- Synthesising external (non-EEA) scenarios and outlooks in the field of climate mitigation, air pollution and main common sectors such as the energy and transport.
- Assessing interactions and linkages between climate change mitigation and air pollution, e.g. investigating the physical and policy interactions of climate change and air pollutants as short-lived climate forcers.
- Contributing to main EEA assessment reports including analyses and assessments of pathways to achieve a low-carbon economy and, as appropriate, contribute to international assessments on mitigation issues e.g. under IPCC and UNEP.
- Maintaining and developing EEA Core Set Indicators and other relevant indicators in the field

3.2 Air quality

The ETC will be required to support the work of the EEA and the Agency's cooperation with the European Commission, EEA member countries (through the Eionet network) and key international organisations on air quality within the following areas of work:

Work area 3: Air quality data, SEIS and GMES

- Assisting with the collection, maintenance, review and dissemination of European air quality monitoring data in conjunction with associated SEIS principles, Inspire and Air Data Centre activities;
- Supporting the implementation and documentation of QA/QC procedures and supporting member countries with their data deliveries by providing

assistance/feedback with data exchange, expert and training workshops as well as by visiting countries to provide on-site training;

- Supporting the move towards more integrated data flows required under the Air Quality directive (2008/50/EC), with rules and guidance for integrated QA/QC within countries as well as at the European level, and supporting non-ETC IT developments at the EEA in this regard;
- Supporting the EEA in expanding the near-real time data geographical coverage and extending the near-real time air quality information system from ozone to NO₂, NO_x, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂ and other parameters;
- Contributing to the workings of the joint JRC EEA FAIRMODE network, in particular to the FAIRMODE steering committee and the working group on 'Guidance on the use of models' led by the EEA;
- Supporting the coordination of and access to in-situ data necessary for GMES services, and promoting the use of GMES services by EEA and Eionet, including reviewing the potential and piloting the use of new services;
- Supporting the overall development of the GMES framework to ensure that services are fit for purpose;
- Supporting the European Commission Data Exchange Group and other relevant European Commission/European Union working groups and committees as well as 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 air quality assessments.

Work area 4: Air quality assessments and indicators

- Regularly updating and further improving the relevant EEA core set of indicators and other indicators in the field, including exploiting the use of near-real time air quality data for more up-to-date indicators as well as for improving the air quality index;
- Assessing summer ozone exceedances and air quality in zones and agglomerations .
- Contributing to main EEA cross-cutting and comprehensive assessment reports;
- Assisting the EEA in producing integrated and targeted assessments 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 the EEA in preparing input relevant for the review process of the air quality directive (2008/50/EC),

3.3 General activities

Work area 5: ETC management and capacity-building in EEA member 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 countries, to the European Commission and to other relevant organisations. In response to the annual work programme, which is the basis for the

grant, the consortium shall produce a draft annual implementation plan for agreement with the EEA.

The ETC management must also maintain 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 efforts with the countries, including networking and regular country visits;
- in dialogue with the countries identifying barriers to optimally perform their tasks (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 organising regular Eionet workshops and seminars to discuss the outcomes of the work and plan future activities with the member countries;
- engaging actively in co-operation with other ETCs to strengthen the coherence of data and information, in particular regarding
 - geographical data sets,
 - climate change mitigation and impacts,
 - human exposure to noise and air pollution,
 - impacts of air pollution on ecosystems,
 - sustainable consumption and production.

4. General guidance on the expertise and organisation of the European Topic Centre on Air pollution 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.

A. 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 by a ‘core group’ located at the coordinating organisation, supported by partners with specific competences. The expertise needed in the core group is both topical and technical, including:

- coordinator (ETC manager), having excellent management and networking capabilities;
- technical/scientific coordinator with in-depth knowledge of air pollution and climate change mitigation related issues;
- administrative support, able to work in English and organise European meetings and consultations;
- data management with experience in QA/QC;
- expertise to design relevant information systems including the ability to handle relevant GIS components in cooperation with the European data infrastructure developed at EEA.

In order to ensure proper financial management, the core team shall have access to financial control services.

- The consortium as a whole needs to cover the main work areas with the expertise listed under B, but also have appropriate 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 subcontract experts for specific projects.

B. 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.

Excellent technical and scientific knowledge, expertise and experience in the following areas is specifically required:

- International, EU and national policy developments regarding air pollution and climate change mitigation;
- GHG and air pollution emission inventories including industrial emissions data, and familiarity with both international reporting requirements and associated guidance documents;
- Consumption and end-user based approaches to emissions estimation;
- Driving forces and pressures causing air and greenhouse gas emissions;
- Integrated assessments including the use and analysis of projections and scenarios and policy effectiveness assessments;
- Socio-economic analysis of climate and air pollution mitigation pathways;
- Air quality measurements and modelling, including Near Real Time activities;
- Health and ecosystem exposure to air pollution;
- Indicators of air and greenhouse gas emissions and air quality;
- QA/QC of data flows, indicators and assessments;

- SEIS, GMES and its associated services;
- Spatial analysis (and Inspire);
- Networking and communicating with countries and also with relevant Commission and/or other 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 (background notes, draft fact sheets and reports, etc.) at a quality level 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 relevant 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 Eionet⁶, 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 <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/>.

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.

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.

6.2 *Ne bis in idem*

While partners may participate in *consortia* aiming at FPAs concerning different ETCs (see the parallel Open Calls EEA/NSV/10/001, EEA/NSV/10/002 and EEA/NSV/10/003), **no partner** may participate **in more than one** *consortium* aiming at the FPA **concerning the ETC of this Open Call**, the ETC on Air Pollution 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. 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 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the FR, namely the following:

- (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 are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1) FR

(g) they are faced with a conflict of interest

(h) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procedure or fail to supply this information

(i) following another procurement 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;

(j) have been excluded (according to Article 96(2)(a) FR) as candidate, tenderer or contractor from the contracts and grants financed by the budget, for a maximum period of ten years.

The cases referred to in point (e) shall be the following:

(a) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;

(b) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997;

(c) cases of involvement in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council;

(d) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC

Every *consortium* partner must provide a declaration on their honour, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in any of the situations listed above (see Annex 3).

The *consortium* with whom the Agency will enter into a Framework Partnership Agreement must provide evidence confirming the declaration referred to in the previous point.

The contracting authority shall accept as satisfactory the following evidence:

i) For points (a), (b) and (e) a recent extract from the judicial record, or failing that, a recent equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied.

ii) For point (d) a recent certificate issued by the competent authority of the State concerned.

Where the document or certificate referred to above is not issued in the country concerned and for other cases of exclusion, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

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 action/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, entry in the VAT register or any other statutory document allowing verification of the partner's legal status.

All partners of a *consortium* shall provide an identification sheet (Annex 2 to the Call for proposals) duly filled out and signed, a copy of inscription in a trade register, where applicable, and a copy of inscription in VAT registers.

(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 2011-2013;
- 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 year⁷).

(c) Technical and professional capacity

⁷ Having regard to Article 173(4) IR 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.

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 (indicating, *inter alia*, the level of English/other language skills) + 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;

2. 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;
3. 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 annual work programme;⁸
4. 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.
5. Proof and description of the *consortium's*/partners' Quality Assurance and Quality Control systems;
6. Proof and description of the *consortium's*/partners' environmental policy;

⁸ 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. Before awarding any grant through Specific Agreements (SAs) based on the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), the *consortium* must furnish proof of the amount of co-financing to be provided (Article I.6.2 FPA).

6.5 Award criteria

The Framework Partnership Agreement will be concluded with the *consortium* whose proposal guarantees best that the EEA demands as described above are met. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the six award criteria and allocation of points as outlined below, producing a maximum total score of 100 points:

	Max. award points
1. General approach to the work – ability to provide information that addresses the needs of policy-makers. The proposal needs to demonstrate the consortium’s understanding of the objectives of the EEA strategy, and the policies to which ETC on Air pollution and climate change mitigation will contribute. This needs to be reflected in the set up of the consortium, the approach taken to the work and the products proposed.	15
2. Expertise and experience in data on air pollution and climate change mitigation – the expertise and experience of the consortium as evident from their previous projects and publications/reports/internet sites regarding in-depth knowledge of EU and international data on air pollution and climate change mitigation (collection, validation processes, quality assurance and quality control, and data management)	25
3. Expertise and experience of air pollution and climate change mitigation relevant policy processes – the expertise and experience of the consortium in analysis of effectiveness of EU and national strategies and policies, including air pollution and climate change mitigation (often integrated within other key policies) as evident from their previous projects and publications/reports. Experience in participation in the development and implementation of strategies and policies by providing expert advice in EU and/or international steering and working groups	15
4. Expertise and experience in developing indicators and supporting assessment – the expertise and experience of the consortium in developing indicators and their relationships and contributing to broad environmental pan-European assessments, sectoral assessments, and environmental thematic assessments, as evident from previous projects and publications/reports	15
5. Use of existing capacities in Europe – Sound approach to access of expert networks in the member countries and in institutes external to the consortium, links with relevant scientific and other organisations in Europe as evident from previous projects and reports.	15
6. Project management and networking capacity – Sound arrangements for the management of the ETC consortium, and tracked record in implementing effective management procedures, enhancing cooperation between partners, and with countries and other stakeholders, transparent financial administration environmental policy adopted and quality assurance. Adequate level of manpower, resources and output corresponding to the indicative annual budget. Ability to work with countries across Europe (EEA countries and potentially others).	15
TOTAL	100

Proposals will be evaluated and awarded points according to the extent to which the above award criteria are fulfilled. Proposals scoring less than 65% of the maximum

total score for the seven award criteria overall will be considered to be of insufficient quality and eliminated from the award procedure. Should proposals obtain the same total score of 65 points or more and tie for first place, the winning proposal will be decided on the basis of the highest score achieved in total across award criteria 2 to 4.

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 contract, 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/documents/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: 3 February 2010 (Copenhagen)

Deadline for submitting proposals: 20 April 2010

Following the decision of the EEA Management Board on the designation of the successful *consortium* (foreseen for 16 June 2010) and prior to signature of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) all *consortia* will be notified of the outcome of this call.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Proposal (model structure)

Annex 2 – Identification sheet

Annex 3 – Declaration exclusion criteria

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 3 February 2010 in Copenhagen. If you are interested, please register by sending an e-mail to olivier.cornu@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: jeff.huntington@eea.europa.eu (general questions), andreas.barkman@eea.europa.eu (air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation), or aphrodite.mourelatou@eea.europa.eu (air quality)

All applicants are encouraged to consult the section ‘contract opportunities’ on the EEA website regularly before the deadline.