



CALL FOR CONSULTANCY N°17/2023_SPA/RAC

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY
SERVICES**

**“Elaboration of a draft sub-regional Action Plan concerning species
introduction and invasive species for the Eastern Mediterranean”**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1. BACKGROUND

Among marine ecosystems altered by invasion, the Eastern Mediterranean Sea underwent the most intense and exceptionally rapid changes in terms of number of arrivals, number of established species and related impacts with respect to other Mediterranean subregions. These profound alterations are today fostered by climatic changes and other anthropogenic drivers, which are rendering the Eastern Mediterranean (EMED) a more favourable environment to tropical invaders, at the expenses of their native analogues. In September 2017, A Meeting on the Sub-Regional Pilot Study for the Eastern Mediterranean on Non-Indigenous Species (NIS) in Relation to Fisheries took place in Athens, Greece. The purpose was to take stock of relevant General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and UN Environment / Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) legislative frameworks and to review specific sub-regional monitoring needs in relation to NIS Fish Species. It discussed and provided guidance on the way forward to develop a Sub-Regional NIS common indicator monitoring plan in relation to selected fish species (including a sub-regional NIS Fish Species List to monitor).

The Pilot Study, supported by the EcAp-MED II, EU-financed project, was a joint initiative of the GFCM and UN Environment/MAP. As such, it represents a significant process, not only in relation to substantial sub-regional coordination on a sensitive issue in a politically highly charged sub-region (including Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, and Turkey) but also in relation to regional ocean governance. This pilot sub-regional monitoring plan on NIS/Fisheries, as an outcome, will be as a follow-up submitted for endorsement to the respective relevant bodies of GFCM and UN Environment/MAP and interested Contracting Parties of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention/Members of the GFCM will be invited to test it.

To ensure more efficiency in the measures envisaged in the implementation of this Action Plan concerning species introduction and invasive species in the Mediterranean (Decision IG.22/12, CoP 19 Athens 2016), Mediterranean countries are invited to establish National Plans to prevent the introduction of new alien marine species by controlling their pathways, and to mitigate their negative impact. Each National Plan, taking into account the concerned country's specific features, must suggest appropriate institutional and legislative measures. In this context, SPA/RAC assisted several countries of the eastern sub-region Libya, Egypt, Lebanon, Cyprus, Turkey to elaborate and start implementing their national Action Plan concerning non-indigenous species.

The root cause of the biological invasion problem is globalization, which has facilitated the planet-wide breakdown of biogeographic barriers to species migration. In order to understand and manage the problem, coordination on a global scale is essential, and international cooperation among affected countries must therefore play a critical role to address properly non-indigenous species.

Elaborating and implementing action plans to confront the threats to biological diversity is an effective way of guiding, coordinating and stepping up the efforts made by the Mediterranean countries to safeguard the region's natural heritage. In the SPA/RAC PoW 2022-2023, it is planned to elaborate a sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine Basin.

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The aim of this call for consultancy is to elaborate a sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine Basin based on the national Action Plans to coordinate and step up the efforts made by the countries of the sub-region to prevent and control the introduction of alien species, the Mediterranean Ballast Water Management Strategy (2022-2027) and the sub-regional monitoring plan on NIS/Fisheries.

3. TASKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN

The consultant will carry out the following tasks:

- a) Prepare a detailed work plan and timetable to deliver sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine.
- b) Prepare a sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine Basin based on the national Action Plans, the national IMAF on biodiversity and NIS under EcAp and the sub-regional monitoring plan on NIS/Fisheries, the Mediterranean Ballast Water Management Strategy (2022-2027);
- c) Undertake a national consultation with Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, and Turkey and contribute to the organization of one day meeting in early April 2023 (by Visio conference) to discuss and endorse the draft sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine
- d) Finalise the draft sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine for submission to the focal meeting (22-24 May 2023)

4. TIME DURATION OF THE CONTRACT, DELIVERABLES & TIMELINE

The time duration of this contract is six months starting from the date of its signature. The contract deliverables and timeline of their submission should be carried out in conformity to the following table:

Deliverables		Necessary Working days	Deadlines
<u>Deliverable 1:</u> Work plan and Timeline Production of 1 document (word) detailing the work plan and timeline.	Detailed work plan and timeline developed.	two days	One week after the contract signature
<u>Deliverable 2:</u> Production of a (Word format) document in English	Draft sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine Basin based on the national Action Plans, the national IMAF on biodiversity and NIS under EcAp and the sub-regional monitoring plan on NIS/Fisheries	Ten days	One month from the date of the contract signature
<u>Deliverable 3:</u> Production of a (Word format) document in English	Provide a Draft sub-regional Action Plan on non-indigenous species and species introduction for the Aegean-Levantine Basin taking into account the national consultation and the outcome the sub-regional meeting	Five days	Four months from the date of the contract signature
<u>Deliverable 4:</u> Production of (Word format) document in English	Provide the final draft considering the outcomes of the NFP meeting	Three days	six months from the date of contract signature

5. SUPERVISION AND COLLABORATION

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the SPA/RAC Ecosystem conservation officer and the overall supervision of the SPA/RAC director.

6. SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED OF CONSULTANTS

The consultant should meet the following criteria:

- Advanced University degree in marine biodiversity/ environment, such as environmental sciences, marine ecology, marine biology, etc.;
- Advanced experience in marine biodiversity studies and conservation with **a focus on non-indigenous species**
- Relevant experience in monitoring and assessment of the marine environment with **a focus on non-indigenous species**
- Good knowledge and working experience of the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its regional Action Plan for the conservation of threatened habitats and species, Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process /Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP);
- Familiarity and good knowledge of (i) the Mediterranean marine environment, (ii) the implementation of the Barcelona EcAp/IMAP process; (iii) the EU MSFD (2008/56/EC; 2010/477/EU; 2017/848/EU) is an asset.
- Excellent command of English (oral and written) is required.

ADMINISTRATIVE CLAUSES

ARTICLE 1 - CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTANCY

Are eligible for the present call of consultancy, only individual consultants.

ARTICLE 2 - COMPOSITION AND PRESENTATION OF OFFERS

The submitted offer must include separately: (i) a technical offer, (ii) administrative documents, and (iii) a financial offer.

The services provided as part of this assignment consist of an overall fixed and non-revisable cost.

The estimated number of net working days to implement the tasks and deliverables of this contract are 20 effective working days (WD). They are estimated as follows:

Deliverable 1: 2 days

Deliverable 2: 10 days

Deliverable 3: 5 days

Deliverable 4: 3 days

2.1. Technical offer

It must contain:

1. A cover letter outlining the consultant's suitability for the job.
2. Personal CVs indicating educational background (including a copy of higher education degrees) as well as all experiences in the field of marine science studies and/or environmental conservation with a focus with a focus on non-indigenous species as well as the references regarding similar studies and reference. If other experts are proposed, the same documents and information should be provided.
3. A detailed methodological note on how the consultant intends to approach and implement the assignment.
4. Planning and detailed time schedule (and chronogram of intervention of the team members, in case of more than 1 expert are proposed in the offer).

Applicants are encouraged to send links to references of previous works completed on subjects relevant to the consultancy or share relevant documents by e-mail if those are not accessible online.

The selection process may include interviews (through a teleconferencing platform), as well as a pre-selection phase followed by requests for complementary information/negotiation if required.

2.2. Administrative documents

The administrative offer should include the following administrative documents:

For individual consultant(s):

1. Document certifying the ability to practice this profession (registration certificate, for example) according to the legislation of their country with the tax number on it.
2. A sworn statement that the bidder is in no situation that could in any way be incompatible with the mission or compromise independence in carrying out the mission.
3. Terms of reference signed (date, signature of the provider at the end of the document).

If the original administrative documents are not in English or French, it should be provided with additional copies translated into English or French by a sworn translator. Should any of the administrative documents be missing, the tenderer will be contacted to complete the missing offer

documents within a period of five (5) days. If after a period of five (5) days, the documents are still not complete the offer will be eliminated.

2.3. Financial offer

The financial offer must be expressed in Euro, in both tax-free and all tax-included prices. It should include all the costs connected to the provision of the service

The financial offer should also include the following documents:

- submission letter, using the template attached in Annex 1; and
- the details of the global price using the template in Annex 2.

ARTICLE 3 - SUBMISSION

Proposals must be received electronically at the following e-mail address: car-asp@spa-rac.org, before **14 March 2023 11:59 pm UTC+1 (Tunis Time)**.

E-mails should have the following subject:

CALL FOR CONSULTANCY N°17/2023_SPA/RAC

"Elaboration of a draft sub-regional Action Plan concerning species introduction and invasive species for the Eastern Mediterranean - Applicant name"

Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

ARTICLE 4 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should questions or need for clarification related to these terms of reference and their content arise, bidders may submit a written request by e-mail to: car-asp@spa-rac.org ; cc: atef.ouerrghi@spa-rac.org, no later than five (5) calendar days before the deadline for the proposal submission.

ARTICLE 5 - TERMS OF PAYMENT

Payment for the mission will be made as follows:

1. The 1st Instalment of 35 % will be paid upon submission of deliverables 1,2, and after their review and approval by SPA/RAC.
2. The 2nd instalment of 55 % will be paid upon submission of deliverable 3, after the review and approval of SPA/RAC.
3. The 3rd and last instalment of 10% will be paid after the completion of the work and submission of all its final version deliverables. This payment is also conditioned by a certificate from SPA/RAC that the service provider has accomplished all its contractual obligations and duties to SPA/RAC's satisfaction.

All payments will be made by bank transfer after the receipt of an invoice from the contractor. Payments shall be made to a bank account held by the contractor.

ARTICLE 6 - EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The evaluation will be based on combined technical and financial criteria as follows:

6.1. Technical evaluation

The technical offers will be first examined, while the financial offers remain sealed. Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Experts / Individual consultant(s) capacity and expertise: 65 points
2. Methodology, organization, and work implementation planning and schedule (35 points).

Criteria		Scoring	
consultant	Experience	Relevant scientific background and experience in marine biodiversity monitoring and assessment studies with a focus on non-indigenous species	60 points Maximum (12 points / study + 3 additional points/study in the Mediterranean)
		No similar study	0 points (in this case the offer is eliminated)
	Diploma	Post-graduate university degree in marine science and /or environmental science or equivalent field	5 points maximum
		University degree in the above-mentioned fields	3 points
		No university degree in the above-mentioned fields	0 point (<i>in this case the offer is eliminated</i>)
	3- Methodology, time planning schedule, chronogram of intervention of the team	The methodological note evaluation	Methodology clearly presented, well developed, and meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives
Methodology more or less well developed but clearly meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives			15 points
Methodology poorly developed and meets partially the terms of reference and the study's objectives			8 points
Methodology not clearly presented and does not meet the terms of reference and the study's objectives, or no methodology presented			0 points
Planning and time schedule, and chronogram		Realistic planning clearly presented, coherent with the time schedule considering the requested time for reports validation and chronogram of intervention	10 points maximum
		Realistic planning but more or less well presented, fairly coherent with the time schedule and the chronogram of intervention	5 points

		Planning unclearly presented, doesn't respect the deadline, or no planning or no time schedule or no chronogram of intervention	0 point
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Any offer that has not attained the minimum score of 80 points will be eliminated.

In the event of no offer obtains 80 points or more, the call for consultancy process will be declared unsuccessful

6.2. Financial evaluation

Once the technical evaluation has been completed, the financial offers of applicants that have not been eliminated during the technical evaluation will be examined.

The evaluation committee will check that the financial offers do not contain any obvious arithmetical errors. Any possible obvious arithmetical errors will be corrected, and the corrected figures will be taken into consideration.

The evaluation committee will then proceed to a financial comparison. The lowest financial offer that is judged acceptable will receive 100 points. The other offers will be attributed a score based on the following equation:

Financial score = (amount of the lowest accepted offer/amount of the offer in question) x 100

6.3. Conclusions of the evaluation committee

The choice of the best offer is achieved by weighting the technical and financial scores using a distribution key of 80/20 basis. To this end:

- The technical score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0.80.
- The financial score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0.20.

The weighted technical - financial scores thus calculated will be added to ascertain the offer with the best technical and financial score.

If two offers obtain the same weighted technical-financial scores, preference will be given to the applicant in the following order:

- having obtained the best technical score.
- having obtained the best score for methodology.
- having obtained the best total score for experience and qualifications of experts.

Note: The selection process may include interviews (through a teleconferencing platform), as well as a pre-selection phase followed by requests for complementary information / negotiation if required.

ARTICLE 7 - MONITORING, CONTROL AND VALIDATION OF THE WORK

The consultant will work under the supervision of SPA/RAC. The consultant will submit draft version of each deliverable. The consultant will submit the final version of deliverables as indicated in section 4 (Deliverables) and section 6 (Time schedule) of the technical specifications.

ARTICLE 8 - PENALTY

In the absence of completion by the consultant of the services at his/her charge within the contractual deadlines envisaged in section 7 of the technical specifications (Time schedule), and Article 8 (Deadline for the execution of the mission), it will be applied as of right and without notice, a penalty of one two hundredths (1/200) of the total amount of the contract (All Taxes Included - ATI) for each calendar day of delay.

The amount of the late penalties will be deducted from the accounts. The amount of the penalties is capped at 10% of the total amount of the contract in ATI. When this threshold is reached, SPA/RAC reserves the right to terminate the contract at the holder's fault, in accordance with Article 14 (Cancellation conditions) below, without that the holder cannot raise disputes or claim any

compensation.

ARTICLE 9 - INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, OWNERSHIP OF DOCUMENT

All legal rights throughout the world in works or inventions created by the provider in connection with the consultancy shall be allowed to SPA/RAC. The provider recognizes that such rights include, but are not limited to, copyright and other rights in written material, sound and video recordings (including films), maps, photographs, etc. as well as patents and other rights in inventions, and that the said rights enable SPA/RAC to control and authorize, where appropriate all publications, publicity material and other exploitation of the said works and inventions.

All the plans, drawings, software, photos, videos, data, presentations, study reports and any other documents, elaborated and submitted by the provider to SPA/RAC for the execution of the contract, will become and remain the property of SPA/RAC, and the consultant will submit them to SPA/RAC.

The provider does not have the right to use or copy the products resulting from this consultancy, whatever their form or their media, without the explicit written non objection of the SPA/RAC."

ARTICLE 10 - ARBITRAGE, DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

Every dispute arising from or in connection with this contract execution shall be solved by way of amicable negotiations by the parties. The contract is deemed to have been made in Tunisia and to be subject to Tunisian law. In case of dispute, the Court of Tunis is competent.

ARTICLE 11 - LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

SPA/RAC does not accept any liability for acts of third parties, accidents, sickness, or losses of any kind, however caused arising during the implementation of the specific actions and the production of the relative outputs expected. The bidder confirms that they or any involved staff will be covered by appropriate insurance.

ARTICLE 12 - FORCE MAJEURE

Force majeure means any event outside the control of a party so that it is impossible for one party to carry out his obligations or the implementation of these obligations becomes so difficult that it is considered to be impossible to carry them out under such circumstances.

The party which invokes force majeure must inform its co-contractor within seven (7) days of its occurrence so that the contractual deadline will be suspended with a joint agreement between the parties for the period which is covered by the case of force majeure.

SPA/RAC has a right to assess the circumstances of the impediments invoked by the holder as a case of force majeure to see if they are convincing, and if this should not be the case, then the days of discontinued work will be accounted for as days of delay.

Failure by either party to fulfil any of its contractual obligations does not entail a contract termination or failure to fulfil its contractual obligations if such a failure is due to a case of force majeure, if the party that finds itself in such a situation has done the following:

- a. has taken all the reasonable precautions and measures to allow it to comply with the terms and conditions of the contract; and
- b. has informed the other party of the event, as soon as possible. Any timeline given to a party for the execution of its contractual obligation will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that party was prevented from fulfilling its obligations.

Any timeline given to a party for the execution of its contractual obligations will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that party was unable to fulfil its obligations due to the case of force majeure.

ARTICLE 13 - CANCELLATION CONDITIONS

SPA/RAC could cancel this contract through a notification in writing addressed to the tenderer after one of the events indicated in the following paragraphs:

- a. no respect for the deadline of the execution in the application of Article 8 (Deadline for the execution of the mission);
- b. in the case described in Article 9 (Penalty) when the amount is capped at 10% of the total amount of the contract;
- c. non-conformity to the content of the service listed in the technical specifications of the present consultancy (section 4 of the technical specifications: Tasks to be undertaken),
- d. If the tenderer goes bankrupt or into receivership.
- e. If, after a case of force majeure, the holder is unable to execute a substantial part of the Services for a period equal to at least sixty (60) days;
- f. If the tenderer was involved in corruption or fraudulent manipulations to obtain the contract or during the execution of the contract. For the purpose of the clause: a person is guilty of "corruption" if he/she offers, gives, solicits or accepts any kind of advantage in order to influence the action of a public official during the selection or the execution of the contract; and undertakes "fraudulent manipulations" which distort or denature the facts so as to influence the selection or the execution of the contract to the detriment of the borrower; by "fraudulent manipulations" is meant any agreement or collusive manipulation of the tenderers (before or after submitting the proposals) so as to artificially maintain the prices of the tenders at levels which do not correspond to prices which would have resulted from free and open competition and which deprive the borrower of the advantages of free and open competition; or
- g. If SPA/RAC, on its own initiative and for any reason whatsoever, decides to terminate the contract.

ARTICLE 14 – CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

14.1- Prohibition of incompatible activities

The contract tenderer, the personnel and agents must not engage, directly or indirectly, during the contract implementation period, in professional or commercial activities which could be incompatible with the activities with which they have been entrusted due to the present contract.

14.2- non-participation of the holder and his associates in certain activities

The tenderer and his associates are prohibited, during the contract duration and at the end of the contract period, to provide good, works or services means for any project stemming from the services or closely connected with the present contract services (except for the implementation of the present contract services and their continuation).

ARTICLE 15 - PROVISIONAL AND FINAL ACCEPTANCE

The provisional acceptance is pronounced after complete completion of the services covered by this consultancy i.e., after the completion of the service described in section 2 tasks to be undertaken of the technical specifications, and Article 8 (Deadline for the execution of the mission). The provisional acceptance will be pronounced only in the case of complete conformity deemed conclusive by SPA/RAC and a provisional acceptance report issued by the SPA/RAC no later than 30 days from receipt of the deliverables and at the written request of the service provider and the signing of a report of completion of the work/services jointly by the service provider and SPA/RAC. The Service Provider shall, however, correct any deficiencies identified by the SPA/RAC upon completion of the various phases.

Final acceptance will be given one (1) month after the date of provisional acceptance without reservation of the contract. The final acceptance report will only be delivered once the service provider has fulfilled all his obligations resulting from sections 2 (Tasks to be undertaken) and section 4 (Deliverables) of the "Technical Specifications" and after corrections of all deficiencies signalled by SPA/RAC.

ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION LETTER

I, the undersigned (Lead expert), after having taken due note of the dossier documents of the call for consultancy N° launched by , pertaining to a mission of

..... I hereby pledge to execute the requested services in conformity with the provisions defined in the documents referred to, for the prices as established by myself without taking into account the taxes and knowing that the stamp duties and registration are to be covered by the insurer. The total price of the bid is

(.....) EURO ATI. I take due note of the fact that you are not obliged to proceed with the tendering procedure and that I cannot claim a compensation. I pledge that the conditions in my offer will remain valid for a period of one hundred and twenty days (120 days) starting from the day after the date for the deadline for the receipt of tenders. SPA/RAC pledges to pay the amount after the signing of a convention into the bank current account of the Bank In the name of

Under the number of RIB (BIC – IBAN)

In, on
(Name, first name and function) Right for submission (Signature)

ANNEX 2 DETAILS OF TOTAL PRICE

The bidder, in support of its bid, should provide a breakdown of each unit price according to the following model:

Designation	Unit price	Tasks 1		Tasks 2		Tasks 3 ...		Total Tasks (1+2+3...)	
		Duration	Sub-total	Duration	Sub-total	Duration	Sub-total	Duration	Sub-total
Fees									
Consultant									
Other costs									
Travel and accommodation									
Other costs necessary for the proper execution of the present consultancy									
Sub-total / task (excluding VAT)									
	TOTAL Excluding VAT								
	VAT Amount								
	TOTAL All Taxes Included								

Amount of the offer excluding Tax is fixed at the sum of

Amount of the VAT is fixed at the sum of

Amount of the offer is fixed at the sum of..... All Taxes Included (ATI).

(Signature and official stamp of the bidder)