

Terms of Reference

Context

Wetlands are key ecosystems for climate change adaptation and resilience, as well as biodiversity hotspots in Europe. These aquatic ecosystems are also key elements for connecting different natural areas and populations of several species. They serve as stepping-stones for many species of birds in their migratory routes, contributing significantly to the conservation of the biodiversity. In addition, they are key areas for providing several ecosystems services including, water provision, flood protection, carbon sequestration, which are important contributions to human health provision and socioeconomic development, especially in the face of the climate change.

The Mediterranean Basin is a global biodiversity hotspot and hosts one of the largest groups of islands in the world with a rich history and varied cultural values. Mediterranean island wetlands have a crucial role in protecting the islands against the impacts of climate change and desertification and have a critical significance for a variety of threatened and endemic species of flora and fauna and an important number of migratory species.

The Mediterranean island wetlands increasingly face serious pressures, such as the spread of urban and coastal developments that threaten to undermine their ecological character and lead to the increased degradation of wetland areas and, subsequently, to ecosystem fragmentation. Moreover, small island wetlands are extremely vulnerable and could be easily destroyed, including by non-intentional actions and/or lack of awareness of their significance.

During the last 30 years all Mediterranean countries have attempted to identify their wetlands and evaluate their status; nonetheless, the level of information is still very low, and the existing data from national inventories are not comparable, resulting in inefficient protection on its whole. The latter is especially true for the small wetlands, since the vast majority of them remain unknown. This conservation issue is even more concerning on the islands, where the freshwater supplies are limited and the impact of tourism and urbanisation is particularly strong.

The requirements of International and EU legislation dedicated to environmental protection and its limited implementation to date request further action and resources at different policy levels to enforce the protection and ecological restoration of Mediterranean island wetlands.

Despite their key importance, there is still a lack of sufficient awareness of the vital services that island wetlands provide and of their importance for the environment. The seriousness of the continuing loss of wetlands demands not only a new approach to wetland management but a greater awareness and policy coordination at national, European and international level.

The MedisWet project established a network of NGOs, Institutes, Universities and public authorities. for the completion of the inventories of all the Mediterranean island wetlands, and at the same time with the aim to disseminate knowledge and promotion of certain conservation measures in local, national and Mediterranean scale. The MedisWet project contributes to the full implementation of Ramsar Resolution XII.14 “Conservation of Mediterranean Basin island

wetlands” and to the achievement of Ramsar Convention’s and the objectives of MedWet, the regional Initiative of Ramsar for the Mediterranean. One Strategy of MedWet is fully dedicated to policy and advocacy at regional scale. Under this approach, actions to promote the protection of the Mediterranean island wetlands in a Mediterranean and European scale will be implemented. MedWet finds itself in a privileged position to drive the process towards a Mediterranean policy advocacy strategy to affirm the importance, identify and protect Mediterranean island wetlands.

MedIsWet Strategy

In order to face the above-mentioned challenges and put island wetlands at the core of the environmental agenda, MedIsWet, with the coordination of MedWet, intends to define and implement a policy and advocacy strategy at regional scale. Under this objective, actions to promote the protection of the Mediterranean island wetlands in a Mediterranean and European scale will be implemented. The main focus of this project is on island wetlands in the Mediterranean basin. However, according to the policy area, a wider focus might be slightly required to achieve greater impact.

This strategy is composed of 2 stages:

- **Phase 1**_Strategic work and preparations, by July 2020
- **Phase 2**_Implementation of the Strategy to advocate and facilitate policy development, by October 2022

Goals and objectives of the Policy and Advocacy for island wetlands conservation are described below:

Strategic Goal: by 2022, Regional and EU legislation dedicated to environmental protection will include actions for the sustainable management and the protection and restoration of Mediterranean island wetlands.

Objectives:

1. By 2019, a policy Strategy is drafted by the consultant, which will address different ongoing policy processes in the EU during the 2019-2022 period, including policy, regulatory and funding
2. By 2020, “wetland conservation” is incorporated as a possible strategic element in the DG plans for the incoming Commission. Priority DGs are ENV (biodiversity, water) and maybe CLIMA (adaptation, mitigation).
3. By 2022, important steps have been taken to pave the way for the achievement of environmental objectives (protection, restoration and better management) for the island wetlands in the Mediterranean. This includes improved policy guidance or regulation at the EU level for the implementation of the Management Plans of Natura 2000 and the Programs of Measures of the RBMPs, defined under Birds and Habitat Directive and Water Framework Directive or other EU legislative tools.
4. By 2022, the opportunities of the Mediterranean wetland managers and other related organizations to access European funds for restoration and protection of biodiversity, specifically to island wetlands in the Mediterranean, have significantly increased.

Particularly relevant for the first phase are the preparatory activities for the 2019-2024 legislative period. The European Commission General Directorate appear to prepare a compilation of

strategic lines-to-take for the incoming Commission, by beginning November 2019. Placing wetland conservation in these strategies can facilitate furthermore specific actions aimed for in the policy and advocacy activities.

Main tasks of the consultancy

The present assignment only concerns the first phase of the Strategy. The following tasks are expected to be performed by the consultant for the first phase. Other needs may raise during this assignment.

a. Strategic work and preparations

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- Draft a policy strategy by addressing the main relevant ongoing policy processes (EU post 2020, SDGs 2030 agenda, Paris agreement, etc...) including policies, regulatory and funding aspects.
- Draft a Framework Document, aiming at reflecting general aspects of the conservation, values and challenges of the Mediterranean island wetlands. The document will include brief responses to key questions (e.g. general data like how many island wetlands exist and where, main pressures, good and bad practice case studies, with links to the different concerned policies, etc) taking in account the specificity of the islands (in terms of economic and social conditions, limited resources, etc)
- Provide substantial support to develop a focus workshop to validate the strategy and define policy priorities.
- Draft 4 policy briefs focused on specific policy areas of interest for the European Commission.
- Support concrete policy and advocacy actions by preparing roadmaps, taking notes during relevant meeting and drafting follow up actions.

b. Lobbying and advocate to incorporate “wetland conservation” as a possible strategic element in the DG plans for the incoming Commission

i.e.

- Contacting key partners and informs them about the policy window of opportunity, and agrees sharing of activities/targets, and which DGs shall be targeted.
- Based on existing materials on wetlands, a (different/targeted) one-pager shall be prepared for each meeting, including 1) arguments for wetland conservation and 2) suggested policy strategies/actions.
- Prepare a more specific work plan (with a timeline, etc). Meetings will be held at appropriate level (EC Director, Head of Unit?) to emphasize the key points and hand-over the one-pager and offer support for further information gathering.
- Political targeting. Meetings shall be held with MEPs and other strategic players to prepare them for questions/aspects they could raise to the incoming Commissioners at their hearings, to raise the voice for wetland conservation.
- Follow-up. The engaged desk officers, directors or MEPs shall be contacted again to follow-up on the impact of the action, and if it has been successful, agree on next steps/contributions for developing more specific action plans.

What are we looking for?

MedWet is seeking for an experienced policy and advocacy consultant to support its work in the framework of the MedIsWet project.

Under MedWet coordination, the consultant will provide its effective support to implement the tasks defined in the above paragraph.

The candidate must have:

- 10 years proved professional experience in international and EU policy, lobby and advocacy, preferably related to the environment, biodiversity and conservation
- Full knowledge of the current general state and management of natural resources in the Mediterranean region
- Demonstrate interest and enthusiasm for issues related to nature conservation and the use of natural resources
- Fluency in spoken and written English, a good command of French. Knowledge of Arabic will be considered an asset

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the MedWet coordinator and will report periodically on progress made in the performance of his / her duties.

Other relevant information

The total value of the contract is € 30,000 (all applicable taxes included) representing costs associated with the deliverables of the consultancy.

All travel costs will be covered by MedWet to a maximum of € 3,000.

The duration of this consultancy is approximately of 10 months from the signature of the contract until the 31st of July 2020.

The application file will include:

1. A letter of motivation describing how the candidate meets each of the requirements listed above.
2. A brief work plan with the required tasks.
3. A complete curriculum vitae.
4. The contact information (surname, first name, email address and telephone number).

The application will be emailed to the MedWet coordinator at satta@medwet.org.

The deadline for receipt of applications is **30th July 2019 at midnight (Paris time)**.

MedWet retains its right to accept or reject the proposals without any reasons, and cancel the procurement service of this work, if it deems so.