11/04/2024

HORIZON-CL5-2021-D1-01 – RESTORE4Cs

GRANT AGREEMENT project number 101056782 —Modelling RESTORation of wEtlands for Carbon pathways, Climate Change mitigation and adaptation, ecosystem services, and biodiversity, Co-benefits - RESTORE4Cs

Programme: Horizon Europe Climate

Organization : SECRETARIAT MedWet (MedWet)– c/o La Tour du Valat – Le Sambuc – 13200 Arles

Object: Request of Offer for an external service provider for a Community building specialist - European (coastal) wetlands restoration Community of Practice (ECoP) – WP2

Background information

RESTORE4Cs aims to assess the role of restoration action on wetlands climate change mitigation capacity and a wide range of ecosystem services using an integrative socio-ecological systems approach. Focusing on coastal wetlands across Europe, RESTORE4Cs will deliver standardised methodologies and approaches for the prioritisation of restoration promoting carbon-storage and greenhouse gasses (GHG) emissions abatement, while improving the ecological status and the provision of additional ecosystem services such as flood regulation and coastal erosion protection. Project results will support the implementation of Climate and Biodiversity policies in the context of the European Green Deal. Effectiveness data on restoration and land use management actions on climate services and other ecosystem and socio-economic services will be gathered both from six Case Pilot sites across European coastal areas, including well-preserved, altered, and restored wetlands, and from meta-analysis. Models and integrative assessment tools will be upscaled to wider geographical (European) and ecological (other wetland types, including floodplains and peatlands) contexts using remote sensing and machine learning methods to develop an integrated status assessment of European wetlands. The results will be integrated into a digital platform to serve as a Decision Support System (DSS) for stakeholders that will steer project efforts as part of a newly created Community of Practice around wetland restoration.

The main role of MedWet in RESTORE4Cs

The main objectives of MedWet in RESTORE4Cs will be to co-design, launch and grow a European wetland restoration Community of Practice (ECoP) to ensure that stakeholders and end users are actively involved in the restoration processes, enabling awareness of the project developments and results, acceptance of the results as valid tools and adopt them in their workflows. At the same time, the ECOP will enhance exchanges between Case Pilots and past and current wetlands restoration networks to boost cooperation among different EU territories. The ECoP will be set at different levels, from local scales (Case Pilots) to national and regional scales (e.g., at the pan-European level) through the coordination of MedWet and with the collaboration of Ramsar Europe and the other European Ramsar Regional Initiatives and implemented through a variety of virtual and face-to-face tools (e.g., webinars, workshops, exchange visits). Activities will include: 1) inspiring wetland managers; 2) training activities for co-creation and co-design, to achieve best practice; 3) premium courses and programs to support the ECoP to develop co-assessment activities for feedback on the community building skills.

MedWet will be involved in 6 WPs and will lead WP2, Task 1.3 (WP1) and Task 8.2 (WP8).

Working Packages (WPs) are briefly described below.

WP1 – Policy relevance
Assess the extent to which EU and national policies help achieve or hinder wetland restoration and the delivery of key ecosystem services; Identify the needs for data, information systems, methods and tools of decision-makers and practitioners working on the implementation of policies for wetland restoration and climate change mitigation/adaptation; Synthesise key policy-relevant project insights for decision-makers and practitioners; Develop guidance to assist national authorities and practitioners on the use of RESTORE4Cs methods and tools to address key policy targets.

WP2 - European (coastal) wetlands restoration Community of Practice (ECoP)
Structure an European Community of Practice (ECoP) by connecting institutions, policymakers, scientists and the general public about wetlands restoration to support the implementation of the new EU Nature Restoration Law of the EU BDS 2030 and to foster climate mitigation and adaptation solutions;
Co-design a multi-actor approach for the project's stakeholder interaction at the EU and local level;
Increase the impact of existing cooperation on wetlands restoration and protection results by capitalising the results of other EU programmes (LIFE, H2020, ERDF etc) and by promoting co-operation, consultations and joint activities on cross-cutting issues and share of results with other relevant projects.

WP3 - Integrative assessment framework and scenario development
Review the knowledge and the tools that are already available to provide information on the state-of-theart of modelling, monitoring, mapping, restoration, and management of wetlands; Develop models, blending process-based and data-driven components, and made available as modules to be inserted in regional climate models. Boosting the integration of data sources and products to be assimilated in advanced models, in the spirit of a wetland ecosystem digital twin, to address landscapeecosystem; dynamics (WP4, WP5, WP6) and the provision of ecosystem services; Provide a comprehensive framework to assess the pan-European wetland system dynamics, across scales (micro, meso, macro), under the combined effect of climate change and anthropic pressures either negative or positive (i.e. restoration, WP5).

WP4- Climate mitigation services and C and GHG processes in wetlands
Overcome data gaps by obtaining data sets on C-storage capacity and GHG emissions mitigation;
Obtain these data sets from Case pilots (in situ), plus additional wetland types, including floodplains and peatlands (from literature review), for the meta-analysis;
Provide data to feed (calibration and validation) the response models to be elaborated in WP3 to assess the response of wetlands to changes in their ecological status as well as those caused (potentially improving) by restoration actions & Provide data to enable upscaling at WP6 and integration in the decision-making platform (WP7).

WP5 - Social, ecologic, and economic valuation for enhanced co-benefits from wetland restoration
Assess and compare the effect of different wetland restoration actions on the C-storage capacity and the GHG exchange balances of wetlands;
Test methods and information gathered on climate and other services across Case Pilots to inform the development of tools to be included in the upscaling and toolbox exercises;
Provide evidence as to when and how wetlands restoration is good value for money and assess the potential of existing financing tools to boost public and private investment;
Analyze the social acceptability of wetland restoration and management practices from the perspective of multiple alternative scenarios.

WP6 - Upscaling and integration for assessment of the status and restoration potential of wetlands in Europe
Upscale the tools and methodologies developed under WP3, WP4 and WP5 to prepare the development of workable tools to estimate the restoration-mediated improvement of the climate change mitigation capacity and other ecosystem services of wetlands at broader scales and serve as input for the toolbox and platform developed by WP7;
Integrate the knowledge developed in WPs 2, 4 and 5 together with existing EO-based information layers that indicate wetland condition and pressures to deliver comprehensive mapping and assessment tools for wetland ecosystems at European scale;
Provide a conceptual generalization of the RESTORE4Cs approaches that support the application to other wetlands.

WP7 – Online Platform and Toolbox for decision making to support wetlands restoration actions
Prepare a repository for all data and metadata of interest for the project, including all types of data produced at the scale of the Pilot Sites (WP3 and WP4) and those upscaled at national and pan-European levels (WP6), accounting for the FAIR principles. Design and implement an Online Platform that integrates the main results from WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6 regarding wetlands monitoring, ecosystems condition assessment and restoration actions priorisation. Develop an Integrative Toolbox that could be used as the main project's framework to provide guidance and recommendations, essentially derived from WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6 outputs to support the decision-making assessments for wetland ecosystems restoration (prioritization of actions, choice of alternatives, economic efficiency analysis...). This Integrative Toolbox will also use a policy-centred approach focusing on user needs that incorporates stakeholder involvement throughout its development (links with WP1 and WP2).

WP8 - Communication, dissemination, and exploitation

Ensure the visibility of the project and disseminate its outcomes to the identified target groups; Raise awareness of project and its outcomes towards the society at large; Support engagement of stakeholders and exploitation of project results; Guarantee the sustainability of the actions and outcomes of the project.

WP9 - Management and Coordination
Efficiently coordinate and manage all technical aspects, with respect to deadlines, objectives, ans financial aspects of the project.

Details of the project and deliverables are available on request.

Objective of the consultancy

This external service will provide a **Community building specialist.**

In RESTORE4Cs, MedWet is responsible for establishing a European Community of Practice (ECoP) to be developed with the direct involvement of wetland managers and restoration champions from 6 pilot sites across Europe. (WP2, Task 2.1)

Although the managers of these sites navigate very different contexts, they all share a number of challenges linked to the restoration and conservation of one specific type of ecosystem, i.e. wetlands located in coastal areas. By encouraging the exchange of experiences between its members, the Community of Practice will encourage mutual learning and upscaling of solutions for restoring these ecosystems.

Gaining a similar level of understanding for all pilot sites is therefore a key step to ensuring a balanced composition of a community that can deliver relevant and high-quality outcomes. However, the need for standardised information is not exclusive to WP2. In RESTORE4Cs, almost all work packages require the collection of consistent data from the pilot sites.

In several meetings, project partners have stressed the need to optimise the number of interactions with local stakeholders and reduce the number of requests to prevent their fatigue throughout the project.

Additionally, in WP2, MedWet is expected to train wetland managers 'to form the basis of a local strategy to engage key stakeholders (e.g. farmers' associations, NGOs) and decision-makers with the aim of ensuring a smooth implementation of the project's activities.'

To respond to this variety of needs and reflect on project partners' concerns, MedWet has developed a plan to streamline interactions with stakeholders at different levels, as well as with the other work packages within the project and external partners, as part of a 'multi-actor approach' (described in the technical roadmap of the European Community of Practice).

This plan specifies the need for a Community Building Specialist (CBS), responsible for managing local interactions and ensuring consistency in the applied methodology for stakeholder engagement across all pilot sites.

Tasks

1 – Planning and implementing interactions with case pilots

In support of WP2 (Task 2.1), under the supervision of MedWet and before the end of October 2025, the consultant / Community Building Specialist (CBS) will visit 5 of the 6 pilot sites (Camargue in France, South-West Dutch Delta in the Netherlands, Ria de Aveiro in Portugal, Danube Delta in Romania and Curonian Lagoon in Lithuania) to deploy a unified process for local stakeholder interaction. The pilot site in Valencia (Spain) will be covered by the ECoP coordination.

Each site will be visited on two occasions as two-day stays (2 full days on site, i.e. 3 nights.)

1.1 - A first visit to create connections with the stakeholders, and to understand their socioecological context

This visit will allow to verify whether the persons initially identified by the pilot site leader (as part of a first stakeholder mapping exercise) are available and willing to participate regularly in the Community of Practice, or if a different person needs to be considered.

The CBS will work with MedWet to adapt the survey already developed for guiding these interactions to the specific context of each site.

Moreover, these encounters will support in:
- Identifying best practices to be shared and replicated, meeting other local 'restoration champions'
- Mapping existing events and special occasions for interaction
- Collecting spatial information on potential areas to be restored, historical land use changes (linkages with the Decision-support Toolbox in WP7)
- Developing 'narrative scenarios' in cooperation with WP3
- Consulting the indicators applied by the public administration to monitor wetland condition, informing the assessment of end-user needs as well as the development of a future interactive online platform in WP7.
- Obtaining information on the development and implementation of policies, which are relevant for the policy analysis in WP1
- Understanding the structure of the managing authority, and obtaining a contact from the climate reporting service

Where possible, these visits will be coordinated with the communications team of LifeWatch ERIC (WP8 coordinator).

The consultant's work plan should commit to start as soon as possible after signing the contract, during the month of May.

1.2 - A second visit to organise a road-mapping exercise or workshop with the identified stakeholder groups

This second visit will aim at co-developing a common vision of restoration for each site with the local stakeholders. The results of this exercise, together with a series of recommendations will be presented by the project partner coordinating the works at the pilot site at a final event to be held towards the end of the project.

Taking into account the context and specific character of each site, the consultant will work with MedWet to develop a suitable methodology.

2 – Planning and executing the following activities and deliverables

2.1 – Preparatory works

- Improving questionnaires, perform some independent research on pilot sites, design-refine methodology (including road-mapping and scenario development)

2.2 - Deliverables

- Producing a summary of the information compiled for each pilot site by July 2024
- Writing a final report with conclusions from pilot sites and learnings to be shared and presented at the ECoP by July 2025
- Supporting the organization of one onsite event for the EcoP (2-day event, 1-day travel, 1-day preparation) and webinar for presenting EcoP before the end of the project

To achieve this, the consultant will:

- hold frequent meetings with the ECoP coordination
- provide essential support to the WP2 of the project, working with the others members of the team;
- attend selected online meetings of the project
- maintain regular communication with the project partners and stakeholders at the pilot sites to build effective links
- collect feedback from the project partners on the most suitable methodology to engage with the local stakeholders
- identify any potential issues or risks that could affect the implementation of the WP2 and identify potential solutions;

The Consultant's mission shall consist in the provision of services for WP2 according to the grant agreement number 101056782 — RESTORE4Cs.

Requirements

- Background in Sociology, Anthropology, Environmental Sciences or any other related field
- Experience designing surveys and consultation processes
- Strong interpersonal, networking skills and work ethics
- Previous experience organising interactive sessions to engage stakeholders (e.g. performing road-mapping exercises)
- Knowledge of conservation-related topics
- Good command of English, ideally of other European languages as well

Contractual and Financial Terms

The Consultancy service will be required for 18 months. The expert shall be paid upon successful completion of each milestone the fees for the number of working days, assuming a daily basis of 7 hours, based on work plan/agreed deliverable and satisfactory performance. The consultancy will be home-based with frequent travel. The start date of this contract is expected to be from May 6, 2024 (at the earliest when the evaluation is completed) until October 31, 2025.

The selected expert will liaise with the project team to schedule his/her activities and meetings. The consultant is expected to share progress reports monthly to the project coordination. The acceptance of the offer by the successful tender will imply the acceptance of the conditions detailed in these ToRs. A duly-issued invoice will be required for payment under the following conditions:

- the invoice will specify the number of working days per task
- the payment term will be of 15 days after the invoice date (bank account details should be detailed)
- the tax legislation in force at the date of acceptance of the offer will be applied

The financial offer must include:

- the provision in terms of working days and daily rate for the support of the mission
- the expenses linked to participation in 11 project meetings, starting from May 2024

As part of the project, the consultant will propose an all-inclusive package to cover travel and mission expenses.

The financial offer for the services and travels must not exceed 28,000 euros

Deadline and submission of offer

1.1 Application rules

Candidates are invited to send an application via e-mail to perroud@medwet.org no later than **30/04/2024 by 18.00 Central European Time.**
The assignment will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the technical note and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer.

The application needs to contain the following:

- **CV(s) including relevant knowledge and experience**;

- **Technical note**:

  - Brief description of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment;
  - Brief technical note of 2 pages maximum describing:
    1) the proposed methodology for the mission: explain the understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output;
    2) a presentation of its flexibility in adapting the methodology, initiatives and approach proposed to meet the changing needs of the project.
  - Examples of other participation workshops or stakeholder engagement processes where the consultant has previously contributed to (deliverables, reports, etc)
  - Testimonials or references that speak for the consultant's work
  - A short work plan, outlining the duration of each task, showing the different phases and milestones described in these Terms of Reference (e.g. as a Gantt chart). The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan.

- **Financial offer:**

  When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account the following:
  1) Include the number of proposed working days and daily fee rate all taxes included for consulting services broken down by tasks;
  2) the fee rates should be broadly consistent with the EU framework rates for these types of professional services;
  3) Include travel and accommodation costs for 11 project in-person meetings.

  Thanks to complete the Annexe 1 - Financial proposal

- **the certificate of honour as requested below.**

Incomplete proposals may not be considered.

1.2 Certificate of honour

The tenderer must provide a certificate of honour, duly dated and signed, stating that **she/he is not in any of the following cases**:

- she/he is in bankruptcy, liquidation, legal settlement, cessation of activity
- she/he has been convicted by a judgment which has the force of res judicata for any offense affecting their professional character
- she/he has not fulfilled his obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or his obligations relating to the payment of his taxes according to the legal provisions of the country where they are established
- she/he has been the subject of a judgment for fraud, corruption, participation in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- she/he is in a conflict of interest.

Evaluation and selection process

The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:
a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
b) having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.
* Technical Criteria: weight 80%
* Financial Criteria weight 20%
Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 50 points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Technical Criteria – Maximum 80 points

Qualification and Experience (40 points) [evaluation of CV]:

- General Qualification (15 points);
- Experience relevant to the assignment (15 points);
- References (10 points)

Technical note (40 points):

- Technical Approach & Methodology (30 points)
- Work Plan (10 points)

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 50 points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Incomplete proposals may not be considered.

Annex 1 – Financial proposal

Tasks WP2	Number of working days	Daily rate all taxes included (euros)	Total amount all taxes included (euros)
1 – Planning and implementing interactions with case pilots			
2 – Planning the additional time required for the following activities			
		Total	

travel and accommodation costs	number	Unit cost all taxes includes (euros)	Total amount all taxes included (euros)
travel and accommodation costs for 11 project in-person meetings	11		
		Total	

Total amount for working days all taxes included (euros)	Total amount travel and accommodation all taxes included (euros)	Total amount of the offer all taxes included (euros)

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Annex 2 - details of services of WP2 according to the grant agreement number 101056782 — RESTORE4Cs.

European (coastal) wetlands restoration Community of Practice (ECoP)

Lead Beneficiary : MedWet

Start Month 1 - End Month 36

Objectives

● Structure a European Community of Practice (ECoP) by connecting institutions, policymakers, scientists and the general public about wetlands restoration to support the implementation of the new EU Nature Restoration Law of the EU BDS 2030 and to foster climate mitigation and adaptation solutions.
● Co-design a multi-actor approach for the project's stakeholder interaction at the EU and local level
Increase the impact of existing cooperation on wetlands restoration and protection results by capitalising the results of other EU programmes (LIFE, H2020, ERDF etc) and by promoting co-operation, consultations and joint activities on cross-cutting issues and share of results with other relevant projects.

Description

Task 2.1 European Community of Practice co-design and launch plan (M1-M36) MedWet, WR, all partners

This task will involve from the start all partners and key stakeholders to co-design, launch and grow a European Community of Practice (ECoP) to enhance exchanges between Case Pilots (UAveiro; TdV; UVEG; UNIBUC; KU_LT;WR) and past and current wetlands restoration networks to boost cooperation among different EU territories. All RESTORE4Cs's partners will actively participate in the activities of the ECoP to share their local restoration solutions and possibly inspire action, thus also contributing to the European debate on mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
The Task will follow a twofold approach:
1) Creating the European dimension of the ECoP. Besides taking advantage of its own networks, MedWet will engage with all project partners to map all relevant networks the partnership is connected to and will coordinate networking activities across partners; 2) Nurturing the local dimension of the ECoP: the focus will be on the challenges facing key local wetland managers (administration/authorities or other bodies responsible for the conservation and management of the wetland). Wetland managers will be trained to form the basis of a local strategy to engage key stakeholders (e.g. farmer associations, NGOs) and decision makers with the aim of ensuring a smooth implementation of the project's activities. Activities will include: 1) Inspiring wetland managers: Cutting edge content to let Case Pilots become great local community builders (in-depth guides, how-to, success stories, interviews, reviews, etc.);
2) ECoP's Academy (training activities for co-creation and co-design, to achieve best practice); 3) Premium courses and programs to support the ECoP to develop co-assessment activities for feedback on the platform and toolbox and community building skills. Inputs to D2.1.

Task 2.2 Exchanges between EU projects and clustering with other Horizon Europe and H2020 projects and LIFE (M1-M36) MedWet, UNIBUC, all partners

RESTORE4Cs will have continuous collaboration and with the projects funded under Horizon Europe and with other relevant EU-funded projects, the H2020 and LIFE projects on freshwater ecosystem restoration and ecosystem services.
These exchanges will allow the ECoP to grow and to maximise RESTORE4Cs impacts and visibility across Europe and beyond. Networking and clustering these projects will contribute to the sharing of learning stories, and most importantly to articulate outputs of the project with Tasks 7.2 and 7.3. With other projects, this task will work on the complementarity and synergies for reaching wetlands restoration in pursuit of climate adaptation and mitigation goals across Europe. The idea being to have them join the EcoP to contribute to the effort of providing guides and recommendations about the up-scaling up of the solutions for wetlands restoration and protection. Activities will include: Organising multilateral meetings and interactions for cross-projects cooperation: A first meeting will be organized at the project start, then representatives will be invited to key meetings and to the RESTORE4Cs final conference. One dedicated meeting (back-to-back with annual consortium meetings) will take place for exchanges. Throughout the

project, Pilots'interactions with Pilots from other Horizon projects will be organised. In total at least 6 facilitated interactions will be organised, resulting in at least 6 thematic best practice reports that will be included in D2.2; Twinning Case Pilots. At least two twinning activities for Case Pilots for exchange and wetlands managers networking on cross-cutting issues and share of results will be organized. The Twinning programme covers the costs to up to two persons of the partner's staff for a visit exchange to a selected Case Pilot of another Horizon project. Reports will be prepared for each twinning. Inputs to D2.2.

Task 2.3 EU/MS level workshops to design the implementation of joint initiatives of the ECoP (M1-M36) MedWet, all partners

Two workshops (EU and Member States level) are organised on cross-cutting issues with other project leaders to enhance networking and exchanges between international and European restoration experts, case studies and other relevant stakeholders to foster sharing the knowledge generated by RESTORE4Cs as well as to boost cooperation among different EU territories. The two workshops will be held in collaboration with wetland restoration networks where project partners have been involved, with wetlands networks (e.g. other Ramsar Regional Initiatives) to create synergies and foster cross- border collaboration, thus also feeding the EU current debate on restoration. Selected projects/activities will be expected to share the results of their activities at local, regional, national level and transnational level. Results should be reusable, transferable, scalable and, if possible, have a strong transdisciplinary dimension. Inputs to D2.2.