Terms of Reference
Consultant for the implementation of questionnaires on seagrass banquettes management, perception and expectations in Spain

Background of the consultation

Residues of seagrass *Posidonia oceanica* beached in tourist zones often represent a problem in the Mediterranean region. Similarly to seagrass meadows, the leaf debris help to reduce the swell’s energy and can act as a seedbank for dune formation increasing the overall resilience of the coast to natural and climate change effects. However, to ensure that the coasts and beaches remain attractive for tourism, tones of this material are removed and disposed by administrations in many coastal areas, including protected areas (PA). There is a lack of public awareness of the benefits of this natural capital and a strong need for strengthening PA management capacity with adequate guidelines on how to effective manage it. Several local studies and EU projects have evaluated the ecosystem services that Posidonia and its structures, called banquettes, offer, developed tools for the management of banquettes and new ways to use them.

By integrating the results from past studies and providing a transnational overview of the management practices, the perceptions of stakeholders across Mediterranean, the Interreg MED project POSBEMED ("Sustainable management of the systems Posidonia-beaches in the Mediterranean region") aims to define a transnational joint management strategy for Posidonia beach/dunes systems. POSBEMED will therefore look at the management, conflicts and opportunities of the coastal protected areas (PA) and Natura 2000 habitats in the Mediterranean where interdependence between *Posidonia oceanica* meadows, dunes and beaches exists. It also aims to offer common sustainable tools for local administrators and PA managers and develop a strategic model of integrated governance. The results of the project will assist in improving protection measures and enhancing management effectiveness on these connected habitats in PAs while promoting local blue growth based on the use and sustainable management of the Posidonia banquettes as natural capital.

More information on the project can be found at:


Objective
The objective of the present consultancy is to assist IUCN to collect information on current management practices of Posidonia banquettes and on perceptions and expectations of stakeholders with regards to the banquettes in targeted marine protected areas (MPAs) in Spain (Balearic islands and mainland). The collected information will allow us to:

a) have an overview of the current management practices in targeted sites,
b) help us understand what is the level of awareness

c) gather information on how are banquettes are perceived by different groups of stakeholders and what are their preferences with regards to their future management.

Three questionnaires will be implemented, one per each target group:

1. Questionnaire for local government authorities that manage the beaches: the aim of the questionnaire is to obtain information on current management practices of Posidonia banquettes (removal or not, required administrative procedures, machinery used, costs etc.)

2. Questionnaire for tourist operators: the aim of the questionnaire is to understand how does the tourist sector (beach tourism services, accommodation) perceive the banquettes and their current management, if and how it affects their operations and what would they prefer in terms of future management of the banquettes

3. Questionnaire for beach users: the aim of the questionnaire is to collect information from people who use the beaches for leisure and recreation (including both tourists and the local community) about their perceptions on the banquettes’ presence on the beaches, the value of natural beach areas for them and their preferences in terms of future management of the banquettes

The templates for the development of the questionnaires will be provided by IUCN in Spanish and English.

**Expected outputs**

*Deliverables and timeline:*

1. Proposal list of local government administrations and areas to be surveyed for consultation with IUCN. Timeline 30th July 2017.

2. After agreement of the areas to work with IUCN, implementation of the questionnaires in different localities in Spain for the following target groups: local government administrations in charge of beach management where banquettes occur (20 questionnaires minimum), beach users and tourist operators (200-300 questionnaires at 6 different beaches). This work will be conducted following the materials given by IUCN from August to end of September.

3. Elaboration of a database with the results of the questionnaires (in English) to be joined with the results of the questionnaires by 1st week of October.

4. Detailed report with the findings for Spain. The final delivery date of this report will be 20th October 2017.

**Qualifications & Experience**
The consultant/s is expected to have a multi-disciplinary environmental and social science background, preferable with experience on coastal issues. Experience in developing social surveys and approach enquiries (qualitative and quantitative) to address key topic questions as well as good communication skills to address interviews to different stakeholder groups is necessary. Good understanding of the topic of Posidonia meadows and its banquets will be an asset as well as previous knowledge/experiences from areas where the work will be conducted.

Working knowledge in Spanish and English.

Documents will have to be produced in English.

Closing date for submission CV and presentation of a Letter of Interest explaining experience on the subject is 24th July 2017.

Value: Offers up to 5500 euros excluding VAT to be sent to: Maria del Mar Otero at mariadelmar.otero@iucn.org. All travel expenses associated to the elaboration of the enquiries should be included in the offer.