Request for Proposals (RfP)  
Expenditure verification BIOPAMA

IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme
Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme

Issue Date: 25 August 2020

Closing Date and Time: 28 September 2020 at 23:59 CET

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PART 1 – INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS AND PROPOSAL CONDITIONS

1.1. About IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Headquartered in Switzerland, IUCN Secretariat comprises around 950 staff in more than 50 countries.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world’s largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,300 Member organisations and some 10,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous people organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people’s well-being.

www.iucn.org  
https://twitter.com/IUCN/
**Summary of the Requirement**

IUCN invites you to submit a proposal for two work packages of annual expenditure verifications of the Programme Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management – BIOPAMA II funded by DG for International Cooperation and Development from 2020 to 2023. The detailed description of the Requirement can be found in Part 2 of this RfP.

1.2. The procurement process

The following key dates apply to this RfP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RfP Issue Date</td>
<td>25 August 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Questions</td>
<td>14 September 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RfP Closing Date and Time</td>
<td>28 September 2020, 23:59 CET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Contract Award Date</td>
<td>18 October 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3. Conditions

IUCN is not bound in any way to enter into any contractual or other arrangement with any Proposer as a result of issuing this RfP. IUCN is under no obligation to accept the lowest priced Proposal or any Proposal. IUCN reserves the right to terminate the procurement process at any time prior to contract award. By participating in this RfP, Proposers accept the conditions set out in this RfP.

Proposers must sign the “Proposer's Declaration” and include it in their Proposal.

1.4. Queries and questions during the RfP period

Proposers are to direct any queries and questions regarding the RfP to the above IUCN Contact. No other IUCN personnel are to be contacted in relation to this RfP.

Proposers may submit their queries no later than 14 September 2020, 23:59 CET.

As far as possible, IUCN will issue the responses to any questions, suitably anonymised, to all Proposers. If you consider the content of your question confidential, you must state this at the time the question is posed.

1.5. Amendments to RfP documents

IUCN may amend the RfP documents by issuing notices to that effect to all Proposers and may extend the RfP closing date and time if deemed appropriate.

1.6. Proposal lodgement methods and requirements

Proposers must submit their Proposal to IUCN no later than 28 September 2020, 23:59 by email to: anna.rosenberg@iucn.org. The subject heading of the email shall be [Request for Proposal – Expenditure verification BIOPAMA II] - [Proposer Name]. Electronic copies are to be submitted in PDF and native (e.g. MS Word) format. Proposers may submit multiple emails (suitably annotated – e.g. Email 1 of 3) if attached files are deemed too large to suit a single email transmission.

**IMPORTANT:** Submitted documents must be password-protected so that they cannot be opened and read before the submission deadline. Please use the same password for all submitted documents. After the deadline has passed and no later than 12:00 on 29 September, please send the relevant password to the same email address as used for submitting your Proposal. This will ensure a secure bid submission and opening process. Please **DO NOT** email the password before the deadline for Proposal submission.

Proposals must be prepared in English and in the format stated in Part 3 of this RfP.
1.7. Late and Incomplete Proposals
Any Proposal received by IUCN later than the stipulated RfP closing date and time, and any Proposal that is incomplete, will not be considered. There will be no allowance made by IUCN for any delays in transmission of the Proposal from Proposer to IUCN.

1.8. Withdrawals and Changes to the Proposal
Proposals may be withdrawn or changed at any time prior to the RfP closing date and time by written notice to the IUCN contact. No changes or withdrawals will be accepted after the RfP closing date and time.

1.9. Validity of Proposals
Proposals submitted in response to this RfP are to remain valid for a period of 90 calendar days from the RfP closing date.

1.10. Evaluation of Proposals
The evaluation of Proposals shall be carried out exclusively with regard to the evaluation criteria and their relative weights specified in part 3 of this RfP.
PART 2 – THE REQUIREMENT

IUCN seeks an audit company to perform expenditure verification of two distinct deliverables of Biopama II programme. The purpose of this tender is to conclude an agreement for the period of 3 years with a company specialised in expenditure verifications of the grants funded by the EU. Only proposals including offers for both work packages will be considered. The requirements for these services are detailed in this section.

2.1. Background

The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme aims at improving the long-term conservation of biodiversity in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries by promoting the use of the best available science and knowledge and building capacity to strengthen policy and decision-making on biodiversity conservation and protected areas management (terrestrial and marine). BIOPAMA is implemented jointly by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and EC-JRC (European Commission Joint Research Centre) and is an initiative of the ACP Secretariat funded by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). Regionally, the program implementation takes place in four regions: Eastern and Southern Africa, Western and Central Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The total amount of the Grant Contract BIOPAMA II is 43,900,000 EUR. The implementation period of the project covers the period from June 2017 to June 2023 with a further 18 months no cost extension confirmed by the donor. The no cost extension is not factored in into the project period stated above.

The project has two Specific objectives: Operationalization and institutionalization of Regional Observatories (Caribbean, Eastern and Southern Africa, Western and Central Africa and Pacific) and Action Component (21,000,000 EUR earmarked for financial support to third parties).

The BIOPAMA Action Component provides funding opportunities to address protected and conserved areas, sustainable use of biodiversity, natural resources priorities for actions on the ground in the eligible Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific countries.

Financial support to third parties is provided through different types of grants:

1. Medium Grants – with an amount up to 400,000.00 EUR funded by BIOPAMA II and a maximum duration of 36 months. The co-financing of minimum 5% is mandatory.
2. Small Grants – with an amount up to 100,000.00 EUR funded by BIOPAMA II and a maximum duration of 12 months. No co-financing is required.
3. Small Technical Grants - with an amount up to 100,000.00 EUR funded by BIOPAMA II and a maximum duration of 12 months. No co-financing is required.
4. Rapid Response Grants - with an amount up to 50,000.00 EUR funded by BIOPAMA II and a maximum duration of 12 months. No co-financing is required.

Grants awarded as of August 2020 by country of implementation:

- 19 Medium Grants and 27 Small Technical Grants have been awarded to date in various BIOPAMA II countries for a total indicative amount of 9.4 million euro, see detailed breakdown in Annex 2.
- Rapid Response Grants – an open-ended call for proposals for COVID 19 emergency grants was launched in June 2020 with an indicative envelope of 2 million euro.

There is a high probability of the remaining 9.6 million euro being allocated to grants under 100,000 EURO.

2.2. Work package 1: Grant-wide annual audit.

Perform an annual expenditure verification of IUCN grant funded by the DG DevCo, Grant Contract – Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management - FED/2017/387-068. The beneficiary of the Grant contract is IUCN and its implementing partners. The following IUCN Regional Offices are implementing the Grant Contract:

- IUCN HQ (Switzerland)
- IUCN ORMACC (Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean Region)
- IUCN ORO (Oceania Region)
- IUCN PACO (West and Central Africa Region)
- IUCN ESARO (Eastern and Southern Africa Region)
The expenditure verifications will take place in July 2021, 2022 and 2023.

All documents related to IUCN offices are held centrally by IUCN in HQ, Gland Switzerland.

The Terms of Reference for an annual Expenditure Verification Report of a Grant Contract – External Action of the European Union (PRAG 2014) are attached in Annex 1. The EVR shall cover the interim and final financial reports to the EC to be submitted by IUCN.

IUCN wishes to release the payments to the grants beneficiaries punctually after they submit their interim, technical and financial reports throughout the year. In order to reduce the risk of ineligible costs identified at the end of the projects all the reports of the grants beneficiaries as listed above are included in the scope of annual expenditure verification of IUCN and are subject to remote review. The schedule of reports will be made available after each Call for Proposals is completed and the grant contracts are signed.

Maximum budget available for work package 1 is 180,000 euro.

2.3. Work package 2: Expenditure verification of the actions on the ground

Work package 2 consists of undertaking an expenditure verification of the final report of Medium Grants awarded under BIOPAMA II programme following the completion of the grant project.

Only final financial reports are subject to on-site expenditure verification, since all the previous reports will have been tested remotely by this time.

The Medium Grants are implemented in the eligible African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, see list of eligible countries in Annex 2. Grant lead beneficiaries are likely to be international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), European NGOs, local NGOs, Protected Areas, public bodies and Government Agencies in the eligible ACP countries. Grantees based outside the country of implementation are furthermore required to work closely with national stakeholders, local communities, and with the consent and all required authorizations from the government.

The cost of expenditure verifications of Medium Grants final financial reports is included in the budgets of respective grants. IUCN ensures that the beneficiaries of such grants allocate sufficient provision for this cost item.

2.4. Experience and Qualifications

1. Knowledge and experience of conducting expenditure verification according to the ToRs for External Actions of the European Union (PRAG 2014).

2. Knowledge and experience of expenditure verification of grants with budgets based on simplified option costs.


4. Experience of similar assignments for projects funded by the EU and more particularly the DG DevCo.

5. Knowledge and experience of grant-making processes and sub-grant agreements verification and audit.

6. Knowledge and experience of expenditure verification of similar stakeholders in comparable geographic locations.

7. Adequate capacity and resources (presence) to carry out the assignment.
PART 3 – THE EVALUATION MODEL

The evaluation of proposals shall be carried out exclusively with regard to the evaluation criteria and their relative weights specified in the table below.

3.1. Technical proposal evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation criteria</th>
<th>Maximum attainable points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of the ToRs for External Actions of the European Union is mandatory</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with the ToRs for External Actions of the European Union (PRAG 2014)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with simplified cost options reporting</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working with the kinds of stakeholders likely to be awarded grants</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track record in overcoming issues encountered in auditing grant making facilities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of work in the locations and countries covered by the programme</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of auditing grant-making facilities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate capacity and resources</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each criterion will be scored out of 5 (where 1 – Poor, 2 – Fair, 3 – Good, 4 – Very good, 5 – Outstanding). Any proposals scoring 1 in any Criterion fail the Quality Threshold and will not be considered further.

Technical proposals meeting the Quality Threshold will have their technical scores normalised by dividing their score by the highest-scoring technical proposal, and converting this value into a percentage to give the Normalised Technical Score. Thus:

\[
\text{highest technical score} = X\% \\
\text{bid A's technical score} = Y\% \\
\text{bid A's normalised technical score} = \left(\frac{Y}{X}\right) * 100\%
\]

3.2. Financial proposal evaluation:

The financial evaluation will be based upon the prices submitted in the Proposal. Financial Proposals that exceed the budget for Work Package 1 will not be considered further.
For the sole purpose of evaluating and comparing Proposals, IUCN will calculate a Total Price for each Proposal as the sum of the fixed and firm price for Work Package 1 plus an illustrative price for Work Package 2 based on the quoted maximum price per assignment and location applied to the Medium Grants awarded to date (see Annex 2).

The Total Price of each Proposal will then be normalised by dividing the lowest Proposal price value by that Proposal's price value, and this value turned into a percentage (Normalised Financial Score). Thus:

\[
\text{Lowest Proposal value} = \text{EUR X} \\
\text{Proposal A's value} = \text{EUR Y} \\
\text{Proposal A's normalised financial score} = \left(\frac{X}{Y}\right) \times 100\%
\]

3.3. Total Score

The Normalised Technical Score will be multiplied by the Technical Weighting Factor (70%), the Financial Score multiplied by the Financial Weighting Factor (30%) and the two weighted scores added together to provide a Total Score.

The contract will be awarded to the Proposal which has obtained the highest Total Score subject to the Proposal Conditions in Part 1.

PART 4 – INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY PROPOSERS

By participating in this RfP, Proposers are indicating their acceptance to be bound by the conditions set out in this RfP.

This Part details all the information Proposers are required to provide to IUCN. Submitted information will be used in the evaluation of Proposals. Proposers are discouraged from sending additional information, such as sales brochures, that are not specifically requested.

Each of the following must be submitted as a separate document, and will be evaluated separately.

4.1. Declaration

Please read and sign the Declaration and include this in your proposal.

4.2. Technical information/Service Proposal

Please provide separate responses to each of the following:

1.1.1. Up to three relevant examples of your experience with the ToRs for External Actions of the European Union (PRAG 2014), and of performing similar assignment for the EU and/or EU-funded projects;

1.1.2. Up to three relevant examples of working with the kinds of grantees that are likely to be awarded grants under this programme;

1.1.3. One relevant example demonstrating experience of work in the specific locations;

1.1.4. One relevant example of auditing grant-making facilities funded by DG DevCo, in particular the ones based on SCO;

1.1.5. The resources you will make available for the assignment.

1.1.6. Highlight any specific issues encountered with expenditure verification of grant-making facilities in the past and the ways of overcoming these. Describe any potential issues with the attached ToRs.
4.3. Financial Proposal

Prices include all costs

Submitted rates and prices are deemed to include all costs, insurances, taxes, fees, expenses, liabilities, obligations, risk and other things necessary for the performance of the Requirement. Any charge not stated in the Proposal as being additional, will not be allowed as a charge against any transaction under any resultant Contract.

Applicable Goods and Services Taxes

Proposal rates and prices shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax.

Currency of proposed rates and prices

Unless otherwise indicated, all rates and prices submitted by Proposers shall be in EURO.

Rates and Prices

Work Package 1:

For Work Package 1, your Financial Proposal must state the fixed and firm price for which you will deliver this work irrespective of the number and location of grants that may be awarded out of the stated funds. Your proposal should also include your daily rates for relevant positions or staff members.

Work Package 2:

For Work Package 2, your Financial Proposal must state your daily rates for relevant positions or staff members, and a maximum fee for an expenditure verification of a grant for each of the locations listed in Annex xx.

Your proposal should also include a maximum fee for an expenditure verification of a grant where the lead organisation is based in Europe.

Where your maximum fee is the same for more than one location, it is permissible to state the fee for a group of locations as long as it is clearly indicated to which locations this fee applies.

The charge for each individual engagement will be negotiated on the basis of your daily rates and an estimate of how long each assignment will take to complete, subject to the agreed maximum fees per assignment.

The costs of travel and per diems, if necessary, have to be stated in the Financial Proposal.
**PART 5 – DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this Request for Proposal (RfP) the following definitions apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>Means any contract or other legal commitment that results from this Request for Proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor</td>
<td>Means the entity that forms a Contract with IUCN for provision of the Requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>Means the instructions and conditions set out in Part 1 of this Request for Proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>Means IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUCN Contact</td>
<td>Means the person IUCN has nominated to be used exclusively for contact regarding this Request for Proposals and the Contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Means a written offer submitted in response to this Request for Proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposer</td>
<td>Means an entity that submits, or is invited to submit, a Proposal in response to this Request for Proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirement</td>
<td>Means the supply to be made by the Contractor to IUCN in accordance with Part 2 of the RfP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RfP</td>
<td>Request for Proposals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>