

Call for tenders' details

Title: Framework Service Contract for the Copernicus Land Monitoring Services – CLC+ Backbone Production, Including Raster and Vector Products Based on Satellite Input Data from 2017/2018/2019

Start date: 22/07/2019

Time limit for receipt of tenders: 23/09/2019

Contracting authority: European Environment Agency (EEA)

Status: Closed

Call for tenders question list

#	Submission date	Publication date	Question subject	Question	Answer
1	06/08/2019 08:09	07/08/2019 14:03	Annex 9	In the Tender Specifications (p.29) there is a reference to “Annex 9: Checklist of documents to be submitted in the e-Submission application” as an Annex to the ITT, but it is not uploaded to the e tendering portal. Could you please provide it?	07/08/2019 Annex 9 has been uploaded

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2	06/08/2019 08:13	08/08/2019 11:37	Test Sites deliveries	Where in the e-tendering portal are we supposed to upload the several products of the test site? Is there a file size or overall size limitation? Is there any requested format for the additional products that are not defined already in Annex 7?	08/08/2019 The final product for a test area must be submitted under the 'Technical tender' tab in the 'Tender Data' section either as a separate file or as part of the technical offer. There should not be a file size or overall size limitation in e-Submission. if you encounter any technical problems, please contact the e-Submission Helpdesk: DIGIT-EPROCUREMENT-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu. The specifications for the final product samples and test area are as described in Annex 8 to the Tender Specifications.
3	06/08/2019 08:10	08/08/2019 11:43	Financial Offer and overall price	Annexes 4a and 4b constitute the Financial Offer, comprising both, production prices /100 km ² and consultants' daily rates. On the other hand, after submission of a Financial Offer, the e-tendering portal requires a single total amount for the financial proposal to be additionally entered. How is this to be calculated in case of the two price components?	08/08/2019 The total amount to be entered for this call for tenders under the 'Financial Tender' tab should be EUR 0.

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4	06/08/2019 08:13	08/08/2019 13:29	Annex 5, Special Condition I.1.4	Clause I.1.4 of the Annex 5 (Draft Framework Service Contract) states that "the contract does not confer on the contractor any exclusive right to provide the service [...] to the Agency." Could you please explain in a bit more detail how this shall be interpreted, particularly whether this could mean a retendering or reopening of the competition at any later stage after contract award and signature?	08/08/2019 Article I.1.4 of the draft framework contract should be interpreted as meaning that if during implementation of the contract the need arises for additional or supplementary services the EEA may decide to procure services from another service provider than the future contractor.

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5	02/08/2019 09:32	12/08/2019 11:58	Eligibility to participate in tender	<p>The exclusion criteria do not state any exclusion of EAGLE group members. Can you please clarify whether an EAGLE group member is eligible in case s/he was not involved in writing the specifications</p> <p>- Annex 7 (Technical specifications for implementation of a new land-monitoring concept based on EAGLE).</p>	<p>12/08/2019 It is not possible at this stage to give a definite answer. The decision of whether to reject a tenderer from the award procedure due to prior involvement in the preparation of procurement documents is a decision to be taken by the EEA authorising officer (AO) for this call for tenders (CfT) (Art 141(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046). However, focusing on certain sections in the Tender Specifications (TS) as well as the background of CLC+ and the Eionet EAGLE group (EG) may shed some light on the issue. The subject of the present CfT is the production of CLC+ Backbone, which is the first component in the deployment of the CLC+ suite of products and services. The CLC+ suite of products is based on a concept and data model developed by the EG, through past, current and upcoming service contracts awarded to the EG by the EEA. Although the composition of the EG is not static, but has differed slightly in the context of each contract with the EEA, and although the implementation of the sub-tasks has been spread among the EG members, the AO may find that any EG member participating in this CfT, irrespective of whether (s)he has</p>

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					<p>irrespective of whether (s)he has been involved in drafting the technical specifications in Annex 7 of the TS or some other part of the CLC+ concept, must be rejected from the award procedure due to prior involvement in the discussion related to the content of the TS. Before reaching any findings, it is likely to be taken into consideration by the AO, that the CLC+ concept, data model and terminology all stems from the EG, that the CLC+ concept is expected to provide the basis with which to cope with challenges in requirements to Land Cover and Land Use (LC/LU) information for the coming 10 to 15 years, that the CLC+ work in the EG is on-going, and that the EG during implementation of the contract for this CfT will be tasked with making sure that the CLC+ Backbone product is in conformity with the EAGLE model (section 1.4.1. of the TS).</p>

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6	30/07/2019 09:10	12/08/2019 14:50	Input imagery for the test classification (Tender EEA/DIS/R0/19/012)	<p>Could you please confirm if we understood the following correctly?</p> <p>1. We need to create an account on the Copernicus Open Access Hub portal, and download the necessary input imagery for the test classification?</p> <p>2. We need to create an account on the EU Hydro River network portal, and download the necessary data for production step 1. "Hardbone segmentation"? (As the access to EU-Hydro data is restricted, but we need to use EU-Hydro data for rivers backbone) Thank you in advance for looking into this.</p>	<p>12/08/2019 You are right in your assumptions in both instances.</p>
7	06/08/2019 08:14	12/08/2019 16:56	National projection products	<p>Section 1.4.8 of the Tender Specifications asks that "national projection products, where those are part of the deliveries" are considered an integral part of the production. Please confirm our understanding that the further provisions of the ITT do not contain such delivery specification.</p>	<p>12/08/2019 National projection products are considered an integral part of production and are expected as deliverables (section 1.4.8 of the Tender Specifications). Detailed descriptions of deliverables will be provided in connection with the specific contracts to be established under the framework contract (sections 1.6 and 1.7.1 of the TS).</p>

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8	09/08/2019 13:19	13/08/2019 10:58	Financial issues	In page 11 it is stated that only the management of the processing and storage shall be taken into account in the financial offer and that cloud infrastructure related costs are not part of the procedure. Does this mean that the infrastructure for the implementation of the contract would be provided by the EEA, and all cost associated to the processing of these products are out of the scope and out of the budget of this tender?	13/08/2019 The EEA is currently assessing options for a CLMS wide processing, storage and delivery platform (such as the DIASes). In the meantime tenderers should to foresee their own infrastructure for the production, which will not be provided by the EEA. Depending on the outcome of the assessment, it may happen that during the production phase, an agreement is reached with one of the DIASes to put some of the EEA production tasks on their environment. In such a case the future contractor should ensure that there is portability from his environment to the chosen DIAS environment.
9	06/08/2019 13:23	13/08/2019 11:01	VHR 2018	As the use of VHR2018 is mandatory in the CLC + production, will it be supplied to process the pilot area?	13/08/2019 Yes, the VHR2018 coverage will be available for CLC+ Backbone.
10	06/08/2019 13:23	13/08/2019 11:04	VHR coverage	Which texture parameter is expected from the VHR coverage?	13/08/2019 It is up to tenderers to choose the most suited texture parameter to improve the classification.

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11	06/08/2019 13:22	13/08/2019 11:06	Changing areas	Which is the date of reference in case of changing areas?	13/08/2019 In principle, the reference year is 2018 for the satellite input imagery, and as closely as possible to that date for any other ancillary data. It should be remarked that the overall concept of CLC+ is set up such that time stamps can be handled flexibly.
12	06/08/2019 13:20	13/08/2019 11:23	Award Criteria. TS 23	What is exactly meant with the award criteria "Completeness and the level of detail of the workflow information"	13/08/2019 In essence all elements of information that are essential to be able to reproduce the process and obtain the same results (similarly as in scientific experiments).
13	06/08/2019 08:19	13/08/2019 12:27	Product Accuracy	While section 4.6 of Annex 7 specifies a general CLC+ backbone thematic accuracy of 90 %, section 4.4.1 asks for 90 % overall accuracy for the raster based product and 95 % overall accuracy for the vector based product, respectively. Please clarify which one applies.	13/08/2019 One specification does not exclude the other, but in this case, section 4.4.1 of Annex 7 provides further detail and thus applies.

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14	06/08/2019 08:18	13/08/2019 13:08	Vector Products	Section 4.4 of Annex 7 specifies that Vector products should be thematically attributed with a range of additional features beyond land cover aspects, such as spectral and textural properties and SAR derived indices such as wetness and roughness. It would help the setup of meaningful related procedures, if the intended later uses of these additional features would be better understood. Please clarify.	13/08/2019 Firstly, all features that can help and are deemed relevant to ensure that for future change detection stable phenomena remain stable, and changes are detected as real changes. Secondly, since CLC+ is meant to be a generic LC/LU suite of products, it is expected to see a broad range of applications emerging; the critical and most important ones to start with, connect to (i) LULUCF under climate change; (ii) greening of the CAP; (iii) the EU's urban agenda; and (iv) biodiversity monitoring. Therefore, properties that can be exploited under these policy contexts are deemed relevant.

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15	06/08/2019 08:12	13/08/2019 13:39	60 page limit for the Technical Proposal	<p>The Tender Specifications explicitly request that several aspects of the proposal, such as the internal validation, are described in detail, and furthermore highlight that the “mere repetition of mandatory requirements set out in the tender specifications and its technical annexes [...] will only result in a low score”, whilst at the same time asking that the entire methodological approach, optimisation of calibration and harmonisation, portability and reuse of the processing system as well as the data quality of the test area are limited to overall 60 pages. Whilst we generally appreciate such page limitation in order to establish equal and comparable grounds for evaluation of all tenders, we have come to the conclusion that in the light of the sheer extent of mandatory requirements to be considered particularly for the CLC+, the 60 page limitation appears not feasible. We ask to reconsider whether this could be extended to about 90-100 pages.</p>	<p>13/08/2019 The limit of maximum 60 DIN A4 pages for the technical offer is maintained. However, that should not prevent tenderers from adding annexes to elaborate on the technical offer. Such annexes should not contain any critical or key information (which should be included the technical offer) but should be limited to providing examples or exhaustive lists of parameters that are described in the key text in the technical offer. The technical offer plus annexes may not exceed a maximum of 100 DIN A4 pages.</p>

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16	06/08/2019 08:17	13/08/2019 14:17	Unambiguous distinction between Award Criteria 1, 2, 3	For the sake of a clear Technical Proposal structure and unambiguous later evaluation, could you please clarify some detail of the distinction between the first 3 Award Criteria listed in Annex I Tender Specifications (section 2.2.3.1)? Particularly we notice a potential overlap between Award Criterion 1 sixth bullet on the one side and Award Criterion 2 third bullet as well as Award Criterion 3 first and second bullet on the other side.	13/08/2019 Award criterion 1 focuses on the overall documentation of the full methodological approach and workflow, whereas in award criterion 2, the focus is on the segmentation process, which is considered still one of the more delicate steps in ensuring continuity with future updates. In award criterion 3 the focus is on those documentation aspects that ensure the portability of the proposed solutions with regard to different possible cloud infrastructures, amongst other a choice on DIAS to be made.

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17	06/08/2019 08:15	13/08/2019 15:10	Award Criterion 1	Award criterion no.1 listed in Annex I Tender Specifications (section 2.2.3.1) specifies, amongst others, that the “Completeness and adequacy of the proposed approaches to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements listed in section 1.4” will be considered in the evaluation of tenders, whilst it remains unclear whether or under which award criterion the requirements set out e.g. in section 1.3, as well as tenderer’s propositions going beyond the minimum requirements of section 1.4 will be considered. Please clarify.	13/08/2019 The award criteria will only be applied to tenders that comply with the minimum requirements (sections 1.3 and 1.4 of the tender Specifications (TS) and Annex 7 to the TS). The minimum requirements set out in the TS are thus considered the baseline, and the extent to which tenderers' offers include elements that are “on top of” the minimum requirements and contribute to the overall successful implementation of CLC+ Backbone will be evaluated as part of the award criteria, including in particular the first bullet point of award criterion 1.

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#	Submission date	Publication date	Question subject	Question	Answer
18	06/08/2019 08:09	13/08/2019 15:33	Meetings	In Annex I Tender Specifications, p. 16, the indicative overview of meetings suggests meeting no.2 and no.3 to take place 8 and 15 months after the signature of the second specific contract, respectively. Please confirm our understanding that in both cases the first specific contract is meant.	13/08/2019 The specific contracts to be established under the framework contract will further specify the tasks to be carried out, the expected deliverables and estimated schedule. The overview of meetings in section 1.7.3 of the Tender Specifications is indicative only, and will be further discussed during the kick-off meeting with the future contractor as part of the discussion of the draft project management plan, which shall comprise, inter alia, a detailed production plan. The overall idea with meeting 2 is to have a meeting in early production phase (when perhaps 10% of the area has been delivered) in order to allow for flexible corrections for the further production.

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19	12/08/2019 14:40	15/08/2019 08:48	Eligibility	In case a subcontractor is found ineligible, would that disqualify the whole Consortium? We understand that the disqualification of a whole Consortium applies when a member of the consortium (not subcontractors) are not eligible. Could you please clarify?	<p>15/08/2019</p> <p>The question of eligibility to participate in the tendering procedure is discussed in section 2.1.1 of the TS and refers to whether a tenderer (including any member of a consortium) has access to the market. Access to the market and the eligibility to participate in the tendering procedure does not concern sub-contractors. If the EEA during the procurement procedure finds a sub-contractor in an exclusion situation, e.g. in case of bankruptcy (section 2.2.1 of the TS), or rejects a sub-contractor for not complying with a selection criteria applicable to him/her, e.g. if a sub-contractor has conflicting professional interests (see section 2.2.2 of the TS), the EEA will not reject the tenderer/consortium from the procurement procedure, if there is no impact on the capacity to execute the contract and on the tender. In order to make this assessment, the following three conditions must be fulfilled: 1. Whether the new sub-contractor (if any) is not in an exclusion situation; 2. Whether the tenderer still fulfils the selection criteria (with the new sub-contractor if any) and whether the new sub-contractor fulfils the selection criteria applicable to him/her; 3. Whether the change in sub-</p>

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					Whether the change in sub-contracting does not entail a substantial change in the tender. Should the EEA want to reject a sub-contractor, it will notify the tenderer and ask whether and by whom the tasks assigned to the sub-contractor in question will be taken over (new sub-contractor or consortium member) and will inform of the conditions above.

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#	Submission date	Publication date	Question subject	Question	Answer
20	13/08/2019 13:51	19/08/2019 12:32	Clarification Answer no. 8 "Financial Issues"	<p>Whereas EEA's plans re. a CLMS wide processing/storage/delivery platform are understood from Annex I (A-I) and Clarif. Answer 8 (CA-8), related timing/cost handling seems contradictory: A-I unambiguously provides that only a "temporary interim solution" shall be found by contractor, in case of delays in the "CLMS infrastructure implementation process", whereas CA-8 says that agreement on a CLMS wide solution only even "may happen" during production phase. This is critical, as the CA-8 asks that "In the meantime tenderers should foresee their own infrastructure for the production". Please confirm that in such case, "own infrastructure" may be DIAS/other platform of tenderer's choice, and that A-I's clear provision that "Cloud infrastructure and [...] related costs are not part of this open procedure" applies also in such case unrestrictedly, as otherwise it would be unfeasible to calculate a Financial Offer as per Annex 4a.</p>	<p>19/08/2019 Firstly, we confirm that "own infrastructure" may or may not be a DIAS; it is up to the tenderer to make that choice for the production phase of CLC+ Backbone. Secondly, we can confirm the statement on page 11 of the Tender Specifications, that "Cloud infrastructure and cloud infrastructure related costs are not part of this open procedure, but will be addressed in a separate procurement procedure.". Although it should be clear from the sentence following on, it may have avoided confusion to have inserted "for the CLC+ suite" so that the sentence would read "Cloud infrastructure and cloud infrastructure related costs for the CLC+ suite are not part of this open procedure, but will be addressed in a separate procurement procedure.".</p>

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21	03/09/2019 19:12	10/09/2019 10:31	Cloud & processing infrastructure	There were already some questions related to the inclusion of the processing infrastructure as part of the tender. However, the replies provided do not make it entirely clear whether the associated IT infrastructure costs for the production of the CLC+ Backbone should be included as part of the financial offer. Could you please confirm that this is the case?	10/09/2019 Please refer to Question8 and Question20
22	03/09/2019 19:11	11/09/2019 15:26	VHR2018	Annex 1 & 7 of the tender specifications indicate that VHR2018 should be used as part of the segmentation process for CLC+. However, these data do not seem to have been provided as part of the test site data. In order to ensure that the test site results are as close as possible to the production process, would it be possible to make these data available for the test area?	11/09/2019 In order to further facilitate the requested work on test data two VHR images from the VHR2018 datasets covering the test area have been uploaded to the following location specified in Annex 8: URL: http://cws-validation.eea.europa.eu/CLCplus_Backbone_2018_TestArea/ To get access to the fileserver, please write an email to Copernicus@eea.europa.eu .

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23	04/09/2019 09:52	18/09/2019 11:58	In situ data	<p>In page 33 of the Annex 7, a reference is made to the use of a nDSM for diferentiating between "trees" and "shrub". However, in the absence of an open data source for such dataset at pan-European level with sufficient spatial resolution and vertical accuracy, are service providers expected to provide either (i) a commercial solution for sourcing such a dataset or (ii) producing such a dataset as part of the CLC+ contract which would require access to commercial EO data ?</p> <p>Either way, the cost would seem prohibitive in comparison with other tasks for this tender. Therefore, we were wondering whether this was a compulsory requirement or if an alternative approach could be adopted.</p>	<p>18/09/2019</p> <p>As expressed in annex 7 to the tender specifications the data situation with regard to the availability of a European wide nDSM is and will be rapidly developing during the implementation of the contract. The COPERNICUS programme as such is exploring and considering options to provide access to such data (via ESA/European Commission and/or commercial products). For the time being, and within the framework of CLC+ Backbone, it is not mandatory to produce a nDSM. However, as noted in the remarks to class “woody”, a differentiation of “trees” and “shrubs” are an important element in CLC+ Backbone. Tenderers are asked to provide alternative solutions for the differentiations of these classes and assess the expected accuracy of the proposed methods. These solutions can be based on various technical input data, ranging from radiometric properties, texture indicators or additional data like nDSM to name only a few. Tenderers should present technical solutions in case the availability of nDSM-data is operationalized during contract implementation.</p>

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#	Submission date	Publication date	Question subject	Question	Answer
24	12/09/2019 16:26	18/09/2019 11:59	request for extension to the submission deadline	Following the reply to question 22, we would like to thank EEA for making the relevant datasets available, but considering the late availability of these data and to ensure that the results of the test area are fully in line with the envisaged workflow for the CLC+ production, we would greatly appreciate it if a short extension to the submission deadline could be granted.	18/09/2019 The most recent uploading of VHR2018 data was done upon request in order to facilitate the work required from tenderers on test data. The VHR2018 data in question was already accessible through other open sources. In addition, when setting the deadline for submission, the fact that most economic entities would be closed for some weeks during July/August was taken into account. The deadline set, which is well above the minimum requirement, should have given tenderers ample time in which to prepare an offer. This, together with internal Agency planning as to when to have a contract in place, means your request for an extension of the submission deadline is not granted.

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