



**Mediterranean  
Action Plan**  
Barcelona  
Convention



*The Mediterranean  
Biodiversity  
Centre*

**CALL FOR CONSULTANCY N° 11/2020\_SPA/RAC**

**ELABORATION OF INTERPRETATION MANUAL OF THE UPDATED REFERENCE LIST OF  
MARINE HABITAT TYPES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**July 2020**

**This call for tenders document is available only in English.  
Offers could be made either in English or French.**

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## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### I – CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

#### 1.1 - Description of SPA/RAC and its mission

The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) was established by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in order to assist the Mediterranean countries in implementing the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol). Tunisia has been hosting the Centre since its establishment in 1985. The Centre works under the auspices of the UN Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) - Barcelona Convention Secretariat, based in Athens, Greece.

SPA/RAC's main objective is to contribute to the protection, preservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean and, in particular, the creation and effective management of marine and coastal areas of particular natural and cultural value and the conservation of threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna in the Mediterranean.

For more information, please consult: [www.spa-rac.org](http://www.spa-rac.org).

#### 1.2 - Justification for the action

In December 2019, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention adopted the Updated Reference List of Marine Habitat Types for the Selection of Sites to be included in National Inventories of Natural Sites of Conservation Interest in the Mediterranean ([Decision IG 24/7](#)). This list includes a total of 117 habitats (up to level 5) and in particular 30 in the Littoral, 26 in the Infralittoral, 24 in the Circalittoral, 13 in the Offshore Circalittoral, 14 in the Upper Bathyal, 8 in the Lower Bathyal and 2 in the Abyssal. A few reference facies and associations have also been proposed in each of the selected key habitats for inclusion in the updated classification. The non-exhaustive list of associations and facies at level 5 is indicative and needs to be continuously updated and improved according to the geographical area and local situations, as well as the increasing state of knowledge.

The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC) launches the production of the interpretation manual for marine habitats as foreseen in PoW [2020-2021](#) (Activity 3.2.1.2.c). The objective is to provide countries with a tool to help identify and assess these marine habitats.

This interpretation manual should be designed as a support and field tool to identify habitats and reduce differences in the interpretation between users of the typology.

### II – OBJECTIVE

The objective of this call for consultancy is to identify experts to be recruited by SPA/RAC to work on the elaboration of the interpretation manual for the Updated Reference List of Marine Habitat Types for the Selection of Sites to be included in National Inventories of Natural Sites of Conservation Interest in the Mediterranean .

### III – METHODOLOGY AND TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT

The following elements are given to provide the interested experts with the information they will need to prepare their applications.

### 3.1 Approach for the elaboration of the Interpretation manual

As the list contains a total of 117 main habitats (up to the level 4), and in particular 30 in the Littoral, 26 in the Infralittoral, 24 in the Circalittoral, 13 in the Offshore Circalittoral, 14 in the Upper Bathyal, 8 in the Lower Bathyal, and 2 in the Abyssal, the manual will be composed of habitat's descriptive sheets.

The development of the manual requires a team of a maximum of 4 experts (per bionomic zone). To keep the same drafting conventions everywhere and to ensure the greatest possible consistency, it is necessary for one of them to coordinate the drafting and harmonization of the final document under the supervision of SPA/RAC officer in charge.

The applicants should be aware that the work could be conducted in both languages English and French (consultation, survey, online meetings, etc.). The final draft manual should be presented in one of these languages.

The process for the elaboration of manual will follow three steps:

#### **STEP 1: Elaboration of the manual content table and the habitat's descriptive sheets model**

The coordinator with the other team members should

- elaborate the content's table of the manual
- undertake an inventory of similar initiatives at European level and national level should to capitalise on all available and recent data to easily identify habitats and to agree on a sheet model to be used to describe the habitat type to maintain the same drafting conventions everywhere and to ensure the greatest possible consistency.

#### **Step 2: Redaction of the habitat's descriptive sheets**

Each expert will draft the habitat's descriptive sheet of the habitats of bionomic zone subject of its his/her expertise and contribute as appropriate in drafting of other habitat's descriptive sheet. The sheets should be illustrated with photos. The photos should be made be available for the editing of the manual. Reference to the owner will be made for each photo.

Once the draft sheets are drafted, a national consultation is planned to get feedback from the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention on the description sheet in order to supplement with national data and illustration and ease it use at national level.

The expert coordinator will

- supervise and harmonise the drafting and contribute in the drafting process.
- integrate the feedback of contracting Parties with the help of other team members
- harmonise the final draft of the manual

The timeframes for Step 1 and Step 2 are as follows:

<b>Step 1</b>	
<b>Elaboration of the manual content table and the habitat's descriptive sheets model</b>	
Manual content table	10 days after the signature of the contracts
Habitat's descriptive sheets model	20 days after the signature of the contracts
<b>Step 2 : Redaction of the habitat's descriptive sheets</b>	
Draft 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets	120 days after the signature of the contracts

National Consultation	150 days after the signature of the contracts
Finalised 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets	160 days after the signature of the contracts
Interpretation manual of the updated reference list of marine habitat types for the selection of sites to be included in the national inventories of natural sites of conservation interest in the Mediterranean	175 days after the signature of the contracts

### 3.2 Tasks to be performed by the experts

#### Tasks for Experts

For each bionomic zone, the appointed Expert will perform the following tasks:

- Contribute in the elaboration of manual content's table.
- Elaborate the inventory of similar initiatives at European level and national level for the depth zone
- Contribute in the elaboration of the habitat's descriptive sheets model
- Draft the habitat's descriptive sheets for the habitats of the bionomic zone

To perform these tasks, each Expert will use mainly her/his personal knowledge and experience in relation to the specificities of the habitats of the depth zone.

The estimated working days is 25 days

#### Tasks of the Coordinator:

The Coordinator will be tasked with the elaboration of the manual of the updated reference list of marine habitat types for the selection of sites to be included in the national inventories of natural sites of conservation interest in the Mediterranean. In this context She/he will perform the following tasks:

- Contribute and coordinate the elaboration of manual content's table
- Contribute and coordinate the elaboration of the inventory of similar initiatives at European level and national level
- Contribute and coordinate the elaboration of the habitat's descriptive sheets model
- Coordinate the drafting and draft the habitat's descriptive sheets for the habitats of the depth zone including the integration of the feedback of the Contracting Parties
- Harmonise the final draft of the manual

The estimated working days is 40 days as follows: 5 days (coordination) + 25 days (redaction) +10 days (harmonisation)

## IV – DELIVERABLES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

### **Step 1: Elaboration of the manual content table and the habitat's descriptive sheets model**

- Content's table of the manual
- habitat's descriptive sheets model

### **Step 2: Redaction of the habitat's descriptive sheets**

- draft 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets to be sent to the national focal point for national consultation review
- final 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets
- Interpretation manual of the updated reference list of marine habitat types for the selection of sites to be included in the national inventories of natural sites of conservation interest in the Mediterranean

## ADMINISTRATIVE CLAUSES

### Article 1 – Conditions of participation

The present call for consultancy is open to independent experts with proven competences, deep knowledge and experience in the inventory, characterisation, mapping and monitoring of marine habitats and the classification and typology of marine and coastal habitats for the 4 bionomic zones (The reference list could be viewed at this [link](#)). The number of experts to be contracted should not exceed five (4) experts including the coordinating expert.

Bionomic zone	Number of habitat types
Littoral	30
Infralittoral	26
Circalittoral	37
Bathyal and Abyssal	24

Associations amongst experts is authorized, each expert will be contracted individually.

The qualification and workload of the Experts are:

#### Habitat Expert

Qualifications: University degree in disciplines of relevance for the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal biodiversity  
Experience in the inventory, characterisation, mapping and monitoring of marine habitats of one of the bionomic zones  
Familiarity with the classification and typology of marine and coastal habitats  
Competence and knowledge of the conservation issues related the marine and coastal habitat biodiversity in the Mediterranean.

Language proficiency: fluency in English is required and good knowledge of French is an asset

#### Coordinator Expert

Qualifications: University degree in disciplines of relevance for the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal biodiversity.  
Experience in the inventory, characterisation, mapping and monitoring of marine habitats in the Mediterranean in more than one bionomic zone  
Experience in the classification and typology of marine and coastal habitats  
Competence and knowledge of the conservation issues related the marine and coastal habitat biodiversity in the Mediterranean.  
Knowledge of the Mediterranean updated Classification of Benthic Marine Habitat Types for the Mediterranean Region and Updated Reference List of Marine Habitat Types for the Selection of Sites to be Included in the National Inventories of Natural Sites of Conservation Interest in the Mediterranean

Language proficiency: fluency in English is required and good knowledge of French is an asset

Each expert must prove that he/she has all the required legal and professional guarantees for the execution of the present mission under good conditions.

Application may be for:

- one or two of the four positions of habitat Expert and for the position of coordinator Expert
- An expert may be appointed as habitat Expert and coordinator Expert in charge of the elaboration of the manual

## Article 2 – composition and presentation of offers

The submitted offer must include separately a technical offer, administrative documents and a financial offer. The services provided as part of this assignment consist of an overall fixed and non-revisable cost.

### 2.1 Technical offer

It must contain:

1. A cover letter outlining the consultant's suitability for the job
2. A curriculum vitae including university degrees and qualifications, professional experience, and references regarding similar studies in relation with diagnosis and planning processes (including copies/certificates of highest university diploma(s) and documents that support the references presented).
3. A methodology note to present the good understanding of the content of the mission to be carried out, the methods to be followed and the implementation stages.

*The selection process may include interviews (through Skype or phone), as well as a pre-selection phase followed by requests for complementary information / negotiation if required.*

### 2-2 – Administrative documents

The administrative folder should include the following administrative documents:

1. A cover letter outlining the consultant's suitability for the job.
2. A sworn statement that the expert is in no situation that could in any way be incompatible with the mission or compromise independence in carrying out the mission.
3. This call for application ToRs signed (date, signature, and stamp of the provider at the end of the document).

### 2.3 Financial offer

The financial offer must be expressed in both tax-free and all tax-included prices. It should include all the costs connected to the provision of the service.

In case the Expert will submit to more than one position (habitat experts/coordination expert), the financial offer must be expressed separately for each position.

Should any administrative documents be missing, the consultant will be contacted to complete the offer documents. If after a period of 10 days, the documents are still not completed the candidate will be rejected even if already chosen as best positioned.

## Article 3 – Submission

Proposals must be submitted in one stage and will contain the documents indicated in article 2 points 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

Proposals must be received electronically at the following e-mail address: [car-asp@spa-rac.org](mailto:car-asp@spa-rac.org)  
**before 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 at 23h59 (Tunis Time).**

E-mails should have the following subject:

**« CALL FOR CONSULTANCY N° 11/2020\_SPA/RAC\_ELABORATION OF INTERPRETATION MANUAL OF THE UPDATED REFERENCE LIST OF MARINE HABITAT TYPES FOR THE SELECTION OF SITES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL INVENTORIES OF NATURAL SITES OF CONSERVATION INTEREST IN THE MEDITERRANEAN»**

Proposals received after this date and after this time will not be considered.

**For additional information:**

Should any problems of interpretation arise in the course of drawing up the proposal, bidders may submit a written request by email for further information to: [atef.ouerghi@spa-rac.org](mailto:atef.ouerghi@spa-rac.org) Cc: car-sp@spa-rac.org no later than 05 calendar days before the deadline for the proposal submission.

### **Article 4 – Terms of payment**

Payment for the mission will be made as follows:

- 30 % upon submission of the draft report and its validation by SPA/RAC
- 60% after the sub-regional workshop and validation of the final report (prefinal report for the regional) by the SPA/RAC
- The balance upon the submission of all the deliverables as defined in part D of the technical specifications and the completion of all the tasks due in the present contract and after their validation by the SPA/RAC.

All payments will be made by bank transfer.

### **Article 5 – Evaluation procedures**

The offers evaluation will be made for each expert position separately and individually.

#### **A. Technical Evaluation**

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- (i) Profile (diploma and experience) of the consultant in relation to the subject of the present mission (70 points),
- (ii) The methodology proposed for conducting the mission, and observations/analysis on the ToR (30 points)



The evaluation will be based on a combined technical and financial criterion as follow for the Habitat Expert:

<b>A. Technical Evaluation (100 pts)</b>		
Criteria	Scoring	
<b>Diploma (Max 20 pts)</b>	PhD/MSc degree in Biology/Ecology or equivalent field and at least 10 years of professional experience in Mediterranean marine biodiversity	<b>20 points</b>
	University degree and at least 10 years of professional experience in Mediterranean marine biodiversity	<b>10 points</b>
	None of the above or in fields far from the one requested	<b>0 points In this case the offer is eliminated</b>
<b>Consultant's experience and number of similar studies (Max 50 pts)</b>	Similar studies in diagnosis of biodiversity status and/or the inventory, characterisation and monitoring of marine habitats in one of the bionomic zones	10 points/reference
Methodology proposed for conducting the mission, and observations/analysis on the ToR (Max 30 points)	Methodology clearly presented, well developed, and meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives <b><u>(the presentation of improvements and innovations is possible)</u></b>	<b>30 pts</b>
	Methodology fairly well developed and meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives	20 pts
	Methodology not much developed but meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives	10 pts
	Methodology not clearly presented and does not meet the terms of reference and the study's objectives or no methodology presented	0 pts

**The evaluation will be based on a combined technical and financial criterion as follow for the Coordinator Expert:**

<b>A. Technical Evaluation (100 pts)</b>		
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Scoring</b>	
<b>Diploma (Max 20 pts)</b>	PhD/MSc degree in Biology/Ecology or equivalent field and at least 10 years of professional experience in Mediterranean marine biodiversity	<b>20 points</b>
	University degree and at least 10 years of professional experience in Mediterranean marine biodiversity	<b>10 points</b>
	None of the above or in fields far from the one requested	<b>0 points</b> <b>In this case the offer is eliminated</b>
<b>Consultant's experience and number of similar studies (Max 50 pts)</b>	Similar studies in diagnosis of biodiversity status and/or the inventory, characterisation and monitoring of marine habitats for more than bionomic zones	<b>10 points/reference + 2 additional point if the reference is on habitats belonging to more than one bionomic zone</b>
<b>Methodology proposed for conducting the mission, and observations/analysis on the ToR (Max 30 points)</b>	Methodology clearly presented, well developed and meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives ( <b><u>the presentation of improvements and innovations is possible</u></b> )	<b>30 pts</b>
	Methodology fairly well developed and meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives	20 pts
	Methodology not much developed but meets the terms of reference and the study's objectives	10 pts
	Methodology not clearly presented and does not meet the terms of reference and the study's objectives or no methodology presented	0 pts

Any offer that has not attained the minimum score of 80 points will be eliminated.

In the event of no offer obtains 80 points or more, the call for consultancy process will be declared unsuccessful.

The technically compliant offers will be attributed a technical score based on the following equation:

$$\text{Technical score} = (\text{final score of the technical offer in question} / \text{final score of the best technical offer}) \times 100$$

## B. Financial evaluation

The lowest financial offer will receive 100 points. The other offers will be attributed a score based on the following equation:

$$\text{Financial score} = (\text{amount of the lowest offer} / \text{amount of the offer in question}) \times 100$$

For each expert separately, the choice of the best offer is achieved by weighting the technical and financial scores using a distribution key of 80/20 basis. To this end:

- The technical score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0,80.
- The financial score will be multiplied by a coefficient of 0,20.

The weighted technical - financial scores thus calculated will be added to ascertain the offer with the best technical and financial score.

If two offers obtain the same technical-financial scores, preference will be given to the consultant in the following order:

- having obtained the best technical score
- having obtained the best total score for similar studies of experts.

## Article 6- Monitoring, control and validation of the work

The Expert will work under the supervision of SPA/RAC. The service provider will submit draft version of deliverables for each phase. The service provider will submit in the final version of deliverables as indicated in Section 4 of the technical specifications.

## Article 7- Deadline for the execution of the mission

The maximum time allowed for carrying out the study is seven months for Sub-regional Experts and twelve months for Regional one, as from the date of signature of the contract, including the deadlines for handing in the final documents and deliverables according to the following timeline:

<b>Step 1</b>	
<b>Elaboration of the manual content table and the habitat's descriptive sheets model</b>	
Manual content table	10 days after the signature of the contracts
Habitat's descriptive sheets model	20 days after the signature of the contracts
<b>Step 2 : Redaction of the habitat's descriptive sheets</b>	
Draft 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets	120 days after the signature of the contracts
National Consultation	150 days after the signature of the contracts
Finalised 117 illustrated habitat's descriptive sheets	160 days after the signature of the contracts
Interpretation manual of the updated reference list of marine habitat types for the selection of sites to be included in the national inventories of natural sites of conservation interest in the Mediterranean	175 days after the signature of the contracts

## **Article 8- Penalty**

In the absence of completion by the Expert of the services at his charge within the contractual deadlines envisaged in the section 4 Technical specification and article 7 “deadlines for the execution of the mission”, it will be applied as of right and without notice, a penalty of one five hundredth (1/500) of the total amount of the contract (All Taxes Included - ATI) for each calendar day of delay.

The amount of the late penalties will be deducted from the accounts. The amount of the penalties is capped at 10% of the total amount of the contract in (ATI). When this ceiling is reached, SPA/RAC reserves the right to terminate the contract at the holder's fault, in accordance with article 13 “cancellation” below, without that the holder cannot raise disputes or claim any compensation.

## **Article 9-Copyright, ownership of document**

All the plans, drawings, software, photos, videos, study reports and any other documents, elaborated and submitted by the service provider to UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC for the execution of the present contract, will become and remain the property of UNEP/MAP- SPA/RAC, and the service provider will submit them to UNEP/MAP- SPA/RAC. The names and logos of UNEP/MAP- SPA/RAC must be displayed appropriately.

## **Article 10- Arbitrage, dispute settlement**

Every dispute arising from or in connection with this contract execution shall be solved by way of amicable negotiations by the parties. This agreement is deemed to have been made in Tunisia and to be subject to Tunisian law. In case of dispute, the Court of Tunis is competent.

## **Article 11-Liability & Insurance**

The SPA/RAC does not accept any liability for acts of third parties, accidents, sickness, losses of any kind, however caused arising during the implementation of the specific actions and the production of the relative outputs expected. The Expert confirms that their selves or any involved staff will be covered by appropriate insurance.

## **Article 12 - Force majeure**

Force majeure means any event outside the control of a Party so that it is impossible for one party to carry out his obligations or the implementation of these obligations becomes so difficult that it is considered to be impossible to carry them out under such circumstances.

The party which invokes force majeure must inform his co-contractor within seven (07) days of its occurrence so that the contractual deadline will be suspended with a joint agreement between the parties for the period which is covered by the case of force majeure.

SPA/RAC has a right to assess the circumstances of the impediments invoked by the holder as a case of force majeure to see if they are convincing and should this not be the case, then the days of discontinued work will be accounted for as days of delay.

Failure by either Party to fulfil any of his contractual obligations does not entail a contract termination or failure to fulfil his contractual obligations if such a failure is due to a case of force majeure, if the Party that finds himself in such a situation has done the following:

- a. has taken all the reasonable precautions and measures to allow him to comply with the terms and conditions of the present contract; and
- b. has informed the other Party of the event as soon as possible. Any timeline given to a Party for the execution of his contractual obligation will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that Party was prevented from fulfilling his obligations.

Any timeline given to a Party for the execution of his contractual obligations will be prolonged by a period which is equal to the period during which that Party was unable to fulfil his obligations due to the case of force majeure.

### **Article 13: Cancellation conditions**

SPA/RAC could cancel this contract in case of the no respect of the deadline of the execution (Article 7- Deadline for the execution of the mission) or of the non-conformity to the content of the service listed in the technical specification of the present consultancy (section 3 "Technical specifications": *methodology and tasks to be carried out*), and in the case described in the article 8 Penalty, when the amount is capped at 10% of the total amount of the consultancy.

In case of cancellation, the payment will be done in proportion to the tasks already carried out.