

Terms of reference Consultancy

Developing a strategy and action plan for Mediterranean deep sea conservation, management and monitoring

Background of the consultation

The Mediterranean Sea contains sea beds up to 5000m deep and a large part of the coasts have deep waters close to shore. It harbors key geomorphological structures (submarine canyons, seamounts, mud volcanoes or deep trenches) that contain a rich and unique biodiversity that are highly vulnerable to different threats.

The riparian Mediterranean countries have adopted a set of conventions and agreements at a regional scale, which deal with the main shared environmental, natural resources management and nature conservation challenges, among them the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black and Mediterranean Seas and adjoining Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Aichi Targets) and within the framework of the FAO Constitution, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (GFCM). Each of these agreements encourages inputs for the conservation of deep sea Mediterranean ecosystems. Moreover, the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM) and other national and international research institutions bring relevant knowledge to better understand, monitor and protect a fast-changing, highly impacted Mediterranean Sea.

Within the framework of different projects and in collaboration with different partners, IUCN is promoting the conservation of the Mediterranean open seas and deep seas, and in particular through the implementation of different initiatives to:

- Support activities towards a better representativeness and functionality of conservation areas and a better implementation of conservation plans for species in the Mediterranean region
- Identify conservation priorities sites that are contributing to the establishment of Marine Protected Areas over offshore deep sea environment and in particular seamounts and submarine canyons
- Develop innovative approaches for data collection and monitoring of conservation areas and species and make available all relevant information for decision makers and society

The objective of this consultancy is to prepare an effective strategic plan to guide and facilitate the implementation of deep sea conservation and sustainable development in the Mediterranean.

Objective of this consultancy

The services of this consultancy include the development of a draft regional strategy for deep sea conservation and management to support the development of marine planning initiatives by different partners in the Mediterranean, with a focus on biodiversity conservation. The proposed consultancy will support the development of a 10 to 15 years Action Plan.

This Mediterranean regional strategy should be based on:

(1) an assessment of the current state of marine deep seas environments biodiversity knowledge management, and main impacts of human activities incorporating future trends affecting deep sea ecosystem health (2) identifying the main actors (authorities and policy drivers) key strategic objectives and actions by different partners to achieve their respective mission and goals, lessons learned and potential gaps and opportunities on designing and implementing strategies for sustainable deep sea conservation and management in other seas and (3) sharing through a broad stakeholder consultation the findings for review, and (4) A proposal of objectives and scope for the strategy and priority actions for future development with potential funding opportunities.

This strategy should be based on:

This consultancy work is funded by MAVA and will follow procedures according to IUCN requirements.

Expected outputs

Deliverables and timeline:

- A draft version for consultation on the strategy for deep sea conservation (End of June 2015)
- Consultations to discuss the draft and incorporate outcomes (May-September 2015)
- Final draft based on the findings and inputs (October 2015)
- Identification priority actions for future development and potential funding opportunities (October 2015)

The consultant will work with IUCN to identify the main stakeholders for the consultation, orientation of the work and feedback. It would also participate in a workshop to solicit input and feedback to improve the strategy and hold feedback for the improvement of the final draft of the strategy.

Qualifications & Experience

The consultant should have an interdisciplinary background in environmental planning (particularly focused on deep sea biodiversity and ecosystem services); sustainable development, international conventions, private sector and public policy. It should also have good reporting and writing skills, experience in mediation, negotiation, consensus building, and in participatory consultation.

Documents will have to be produced in English.

Closing date for submission CV is extended until 14th May 2015. The expected timeframe for the project is 6 months. Please, send your proposal to : mariadelmar.otero@iucn.org

Cost: 5000 euros excluding VAT