**OSPAR call for tender**

**1. Name, addresses and contact point(s):**

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**2. Title attributed to the contract**

“OSPAR ICG-ORED Pilot assessment of cumulative impacts of offshore renewables on birds” (Bird pilot tender 1).

**3. Description of the contract**

Background

1. The OSPAR Convention is the mechanism by which 15 Governments and the EU cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. As part of this mechanism OSPAR assesses the impact of human activities on the environment.
2. The overall aim of the work on offshore renewables is to support the implementation of the OSPAR North-East Atlantic Strategy (NEAES) 2030 in developing guidance on how to promote and facilitate sustainable development and scaling up of offshore renewable energy in a way that cumulative environmental impacts are minimised. To this end, an Intersessional Correspondence Group on Offshore Renewable Energy Development (ICG-ORED) was established in March 2021.
3. As part of the initial scope of work, ICG-ORED is prioritising the impacts of offshore renewable energy developments on birds, to progress simultaneously on Operational Objective S5.04 of the NEAES 2030: “*By 2025 at the latest, OSPAR will take appropriate actions to prevent or reduce pressures to enable the recovery of marine species and benthic and pelagic habitats in order to reach and maintain good environmental status as reflected in relevant OSPAR status assessments, with action by 2023 to halt the decline of marine birds.”*
4. In the face of the planned large-scale development of offshore wind energy in the North-East Atlantic and the aims and scope of ICG-ORED, the group initiated the development of a framework for assessing the cumulative impacts of offshore wind energy on marine ecosystems on a regional sea scale. In line with NEAES Operational Objectives S12.04 and S5.04, this cumulative impacts assessment (CIA) framework will be developed and first applied to assess the impacts of offshore wind energy on birds. These two elements constitute the focus of this request for proposals.
5. The so-called ‘bird pilots’ have two main aims: first, to test and further develop the CIA framework; and second, to provide the evidence base on which to elaborate guidance on measures and actions within OSPAR with regards to preventing negative impacts on birds as a result of offshore wind energy development and operation. The assessment should consider two time-frames: up to 2030 and beyond 2030. Given the large area of the North-East Atlantic to be covered and the different characteristics of each OSPAR sub-region, two case study areas are proposed, the North Sea Basin and the Celtic Sea-Bay of Biscay Area. Based on the results of the pilot studies and subsequent CIAs, ICG-ORED will assess the need for measures and identify the type of measures needed in order to develop offshore renewables in a way that minimises cumulative impacts on the environment.

Scope of Work

1. The contractor is expected to:
2. based on the provisional list of bird species and relevant parameters drawn up by ICG-ORED, finalize the species of bird for inclusion in each of the two pilot assessment studies;
3. define the exact geographical scope of the two pilot studies, based on the provisional delimitation already carried out by ICG-ORED and relevance to the bird species selected;
4. develop scenarios relative to offshore wind power development pre- and post-2030 in the two pilot study areas;
5. further develop a CIA approach, including the development or application of one or more tools enabling a spatially-explicit estimation of cumulative impacts of offshore wind power on bird populations and their distribution; and
6. carry out the two bird pilot assessment studies, including producing a report with results in terms of expected impacts and proposals for minimizing them.

Cumulative impact assessment (CIA) approach and pilot studies on birds

1. The initial assessment of cumulative impacts on birds in two study areas that is the focus of this contract should be in line with the following principles:
2. The results of the CIA will be used by ICG-ORED to elaborate recommendations on additional OSPAR measures to protect the marine environment.
3. The impacts assessment should be based on the DAPSIR framework including a pathway approach based on spatial information.
4. The description of impacts should be based on the most recent publicly available knowledge and include:
5. transparency about knowledge gaps and assumptions and use of expert judgements to address knowledge gaps;
6. use of the precautionary principle assuming a realistic worst-case approach within the range of expected developments;
7. absolute clarity about the geographical scale and time horizon of the calculated impacts; and
8. focus on species that are expected to suffer significant negative impacts.
9. The CIA approach and tool or tools developed and/or used in this contract will be made available in full to OSPAR at the end of the contract for independent future use and further development by OSPAR Contracting Parties. The contractor will retain the right to independently use and further develop the tool or tools after the end of the contract.

Available background information:

1. As part of its work, ICG-ORED has produced:
2. an updated synthesis of research on the impacts of offshore windfarms on birds in the OSPAR maritime area;
3. an overview of measures available to and used by OSPAR contracting parties to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of offshore wind power on birds. This overview does not include compensatory measures;
4. an overview of tools available and used for assessing the impacts of offshore wind farms on birds in the OSPAR maritime area;
5. a provisional list of bird species for inclusion in the bird pilot studies, based on a number of inclusion criteria;
6. a proposal for two large geographical areas on which to carry out the bird pilot studies, namely the North Sea and a second area extending from the Celtic Sea to the Bay of Biscay.
7. For the scenario development work, ICG-ORED has available the results of the work carried out by the North Seas Energy Cooperation on offshore wind energy development in the North Sea by 2022 and 2030.
8. These background documents will be made available to the tenderers upon request.

**4. Tasks and products**

1. The aim of this contract is to provide technical assistance to OSPAR ICG-ORED in further developing an approach and tool(s) for cumulative impact assessment, including carrying out two pilot assessment studies on birds in the OSPAR maritime area. Tenderers should demonstrate in their response how they would fulfil the tasks included in Table 1.
2. In line with the description in the preceding section of this document, the anticipated outcomes of the contract are:
3. An approach and tool (or tools) for cumulative impact assessment of offshore wind power development;
4. Pilot assessment studies of impacts on birds in two sub-areas of the OSPAR maritime area, including:
   1. Delimitation and characterisation of the two distinct study areas;
   2. List of bird species for inclusion in the pilot studies, including inclusion criteria;
   3. Scenarios relative to the development of offshore wind power in the two pilot study areas;
5. Delivery of a report with the results of the pilot bird studies, including proposals for impact mitigation measures.

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| **Tasks** | **Delivery schedule \*** |
| **Step 0 - Inception**  Take stock of the work carried out by ICG-ORED so far, in particular of products with direct relevance for the contract. Kick-off meeting and initial coordination with project steering group about the implementation of the project and the expected content of deliverables. Carry out detailed planning of project implementation.  Produce an inception report, including, but not limited to:   * A detailed work plan and time table for implementation of the project * Relative to the CIA approach (Step 1): An outline of the approach, including identification of assessment tools, metrics and data requirements * Relative to the bird pilot assessment studies (Step 2): * a description of the approach for elaborating scenarios, including data sources * a final list of bird species for inclusion in the assessment studies * the geographical delimitation of the assessment areas * the identification of data sources for carrying out the assessments * Relative to the final project report (Step 3), a tentative outline of its contents. | Inception report by 15 April 2024 |
| **Step 1 – CIA approach**  Develop a fully functional approach and spatial decision support tool or tools enabling the assessment of cumulative impacts of offshore wind power development. The approach and tool(s) should take into consideration the CIA approach development work already carried out by ICG-ORED, and must fulfil the following requirements:   * Encompass the entire causal chain, including activities – exposure (pressures and receptors) – effects – impacts. * Encompass the different stages of offshore wind power development, including surveying, construction, operation and decommissioning, but excluding grid development on land. * As a minimum, describe effects and impact in terms of changes in abundance, in the latter case in terms of changes at the population level. * Describe all elements of the causal chain in a spatially explicit manner. * Enable the amendment and updating of all elements of the causal chain, so that the approach and tool(s) can be continuously improved as new knowledge becomes available. * All sources, calculations and assumptions must be made explicit.   The contractor should consider and justify the choice of employing existing approaches and tools versus the development of new ones. To this end, the contractor should carry out a review of existing approaches and tools, based on the work already carried out by ICG-ORED.  This step must be carried out iteratively with Step 2, so that the CIA approach and tool(s) can be improved based on the results of the pilot bird assessment studies. | Draft by 28 June 2024  Final by 1 April 2025 |
| **Step 2 – Bird pilot**  Apply the CIA approach and tool(s) developed in Step 1 to the assessment of cumulative impacts of offshore wind power on birds in two distinct areas within the OSPAR maritime area, the North Sea and the Celtic Seas and Bay of Biscay.  The assessments must be based on the best publicly available data, with the necessary temporal and spatial resolution. The assessments should consider trend estimates relative to the status of the bird species included in the assessment, as well as to other pressures that might compound the impacts of offshore wind power on birds, such as fisheries affecting prey fish species or bycatch of birds, seaborne pollution among others.  The pilot assessments are preceded by the following three sub-steps (2.1 – 2.3): | Draft by 30 September 2024  Final by 1 April 2025 |
| **Step 2.1 – Study areas**  Define the exact geographical scope of the pilot studies, based on the initial delimitation carried out by ICG-ORED. The study areas must consider the geographical range of the bird species included in the assessment (Step 2.2). The delimitation of the study areas will be subject to approval by the project steering group. |  |
| **Step 2.2 – Bird species selection**  Elaborate a list of bird species for inclusion in the pilot assessment studies, based on the preliminary list already compiled by ICG-ORED. The choice of species for inclusion in the final list must be clearly motivated and must be discussed with and subject to approval by the project steering group. |  |
| **Step 2.3 – Scenario development**  Develop scenarios relative to the development of offshore wind power in the two pilot study areas. Baseline year should be 2022. The first scenario concerns developments by 2030 based on existing plans, pledges or ambitions by countries in the study areas as of 2022. A second and third scenario year should be 2040 and 2050, respectively. These longer-term scenarios should also consider plans and ambitions communicated by the countries. However, since these are generally less specific than the ones for 2030, scenario development work might need to consider the following aspects when identifying possible areas for offshore wind power development:   * Levelized cost of electricity (LCOE) * Exclusion areas, such as shipping routes, military areas, areas for oil & gas and sand extraction, strict nature protection areas, among others * Important fish habitat and important areas for protected species, including birds   For the 2040 and 2050 scenarios, the contractor might consider developing high-GW, mid-GW and low-GW scenarios by varying the degree of installed capacity; or best-case and worst-case scenarios relative to some of the scenario parameters – for example a worst-case scenario relative to potential fisheries displacement, or a best-case scenario relative to overlap with migratory bird routes. The feasibility and budgetary implications of developing such alternatives shall be discussed with the project steering group.  All parameters and assumptions used in scenario development must be made explicit, and the scenario development process must be clearly described in the project report (Step 3).  Scenarios must be discussed with and subject to approval by the project steering group. |  |
| **Step 3**  Produce a report documenting the results of the project, including, but not limited to:   * A description of CIA approach and tools, scenarios, bird species and results in terms of effects and impacts on populations; * A description of assumptions and uncertainties, how these were dealt with and how they affect result validity; * A description of knowledge and data gaps; * Maps and illustrations depicting the assessment steps and results; * Conclusions regarding: * The suitability and limitations of the CIA approach and tool(s) and how the latter could be overcome in view of the aims of ICG-ORED; * Options for actions by OSPAR to minimize the impacts identified in the assessment. | Draft by 14 February 2025  Final draft report by 1 April 2025 |

Table 1 - Overview of tasks and proposed time allocation. (\*) Delivery schedule assumes project start on 15 October, 2023 and will be adjusted in case the project starts at a later date.

**5. Duration of the contract and timing of deliverables**

Start date: 4 March 2024

Expected end date: 30 April 2025

Inception report delivery by: 15 April 2024

First Draft report delivery by: 14 February 2025

Final draft report delivery by: 1 April 2025

**6. Type of tender**

Open

**7. Estimated level of provision of technical assistance**

1. It is envisaged that the work will be conducted remotely, at the contractor’s premises. The tender should budget for three one-day hybrid meetings with the project steering group in a location in Europe. If additional travel is necessary for the purposes of the delivery of the technical assistance it shall be agreed with the project manager. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs associated with this additional travel will be reimbursed by the OSPAR Secretariat and should not be included in the tender.
2. The budget for this contract shall not exceed EUR 200,000 excluding VAT and expenses.

**8. Management, delivery and completion of the work**

1. The OSPAR Secretariat will act as project manager, supported by a member of ICG-ORED on technical questions. The project manager will be the main point of contact for all matters concerning this contract, and the recipient of all deliverables submitted by the contractor. The project will include a project steering group composed of representatives from ICG-ORED members. The project steering group will provide advice on matters pertaining to the content and quality of deliverables. The project steering group will engage directly with the contractor at the three scheduled meetings. These include:
2. a project kick-off meeting within two weeks from signature of the contract;
3. a mid-point progress review meeting within 26 weeks from signature of the contract; and
4. a final review meeting within four weeks from submission of the draft final report.
5. The contractor is also expected to be available for participating online and presenting the results of the project at ICG-ORED meetings (dates to be confirmed) and at the EIHA committee meeting in April, 2025.
6. The contractor is required to deliver an inception report within six weeks from contract signature. A draft report with the results of the various steps indicated in Table 1 shall be delivered by the contractor by 14 February, 2025. ICG-ORED will provide feedback on the draft report by 7 March, upon which the contractor will have until 1 April, 2025 to finalise the draft final project report. The final review meeting will serve to discuss the draft final report, including ICG-ORED’s review ahead of the finalisation and acceptance of the project report.
7. All communication and deliverables of the project are required to be in English. The contractor is responsible for language and accessibility proofing of deliverables.

**9. Selection criteria and weighting**

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| ***Criteria*** | ***Weighting (%)*** |
| Understanding of and relevance to OSPAR’s requirements | 10 |
| Clarity and content of proposed methodology and approach | 40 |
| Contractor’s expertise and experience | 25 |
| Value for money | 25 |

**10. Information required in the response to tender**

1. The response to this call for tender should incorporate the following elements:
2. Demonstration of understanding of the issue and requirements;
3. Description of how the project would be delivered, including a preliminary outline of approach and timeline;
4. Examples of relevant previous experience;
5. Skills and expertise of proposed personnel;
6. Project budget breakdown;
7. Name and full contact details of a primary contact.