

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ELABORATION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANNUAL WATER TOPIC FOR THE INTERREG EURO-MED NATURAL HERITAGE MISSION.

Budget code: EEP001

Project: D4N

Imputation item: 4.2.1

Introduction

The Associació MedCités / MedCities is an association of cities, with its headquarters in Barcelona, dedicated to sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean. It comprises 81 municipalities and unions of municipalities from seventeen different states and runs projects in the fields of strategic urban planning, urban services, the environment and local economic and social development, as well as training activities, technical support and the capitalisation of best practices. The network was created in 1991, since which time it has carried out dozens of projects in Mediterranean cities.

The **Dialogue 4 Nature project, or D4N**, brings together MedCities, along with six other solid and diverse Euro-MED partners (Region of Crete, Region of Sardinia, IUCN Med, Plan Bleu, the Marine Institute, and the Ministry of Environment of Montenegro).

D4N is part of the Natural Heritage Mission (NHM) of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, which focuses on protecting, restoring, and valorising the natural resources of the Euro-Mediterranean area. The NHM includes:

- 2 Governance projects: One Institutional Dialogue (Dialogue4Nature, D4N) and one Thematic Community (Community4Nature, C4N)
- Currently, there are 19 Thematic Projects (TPs) to which the governance projects serve as amplifiers.

More specifically, D4N aims to amplify the dialogue between different public authorities to integrate the results of thematic projects and enhance multilevel, multi-sector, and transnational coordination, beyond the cooperation area for improving the protection, restoration, and valorisation of Natural Heritage in the Mediterranean. For this purpose, it aims to respond to three identified challenges: (i) improving policy governance and coordination, (ii) mainstreaming nature conservation understanding, and (iii) enhancing capacities for policy delivery.

Building from the NHM Advocacy Plan, and given the importance of water in different policy agendas, the NHM has selected water as priority policy topic this year and several actions are taking place. Within those, MedCities through D4N is in charge of preparing policy recommendations on water.

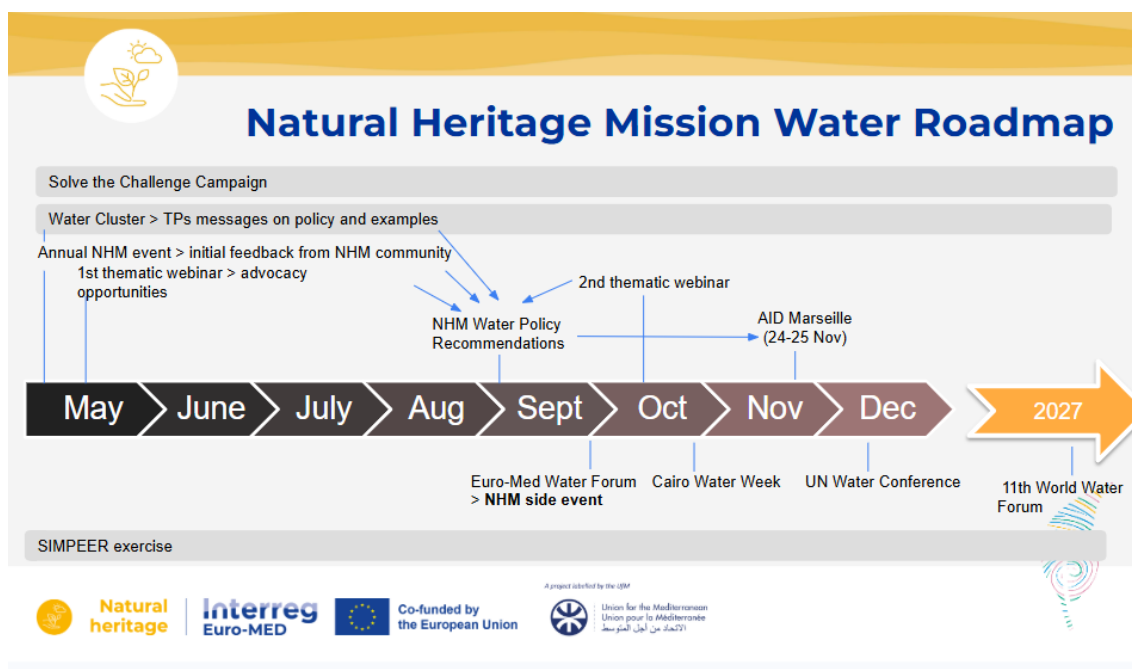
MedCities is looking for a service provider with extensive record on water policies and practices in the Mediterranean region to support D4N in co-creating these policy recommendations.

1. Objective

The objective of this service provision is the elaboration of policy recommendations on the topic of water by the Natural Heritage Mission.

2. Scope of the services

The scope and characteristics of the services are detailed below. Generally, the elements and process are included in the image below.



Task 0. Read and analyse the NHM related work which will serve as a basis for developing the policy recommendations.

This includes:

- The NHM Advocacy Plan, which already contains a thematic line on water, suggesting events, stakeholders, means of intervention, etc.¹
- The previous policy recommendations, which focused on marine² and terrestrial restoration.³ A similar structure can be followed to develop the ones on water.
- The results of the 1st thematic webinar on water (May 2026), where a collaborative exercise with thematic projects (TPs) took place⁴. Starting from the information provided through the survey conducted by the Community4Nature project (C4N)⁵, TPs

¹

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TaLiulKAiP0zK0xeuEjaLW0piI0QVo6o/edit?usp=sharing&oid=102159781434211908131&rtpof=true&sd=true>

²https://natural-heritage.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/policy-recommendations-on-restoration_31012025.pdf

³

<https://natural-heritage.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/policy-recommendations-on-restoration---terrestrial-and-freshwater-ecosystems.pdf>

⁴ The exercise was collaborative using Miro, the results can be seen [here](#).

⁵ The results of the survey will be shared with the service provider once the contract is granted.

connected their territorial solutions with policy themes, target groups and messages. In addition, they identified advocacy needs and proposals.

The service provider will meet with MedCities (and other D4N partners) to clarify any doubt on the existing work and have a clear view on the way forward. The provider, in coordination with C4N, and in the framework of the existing water cluster⁶, may get in touch with TPs to properly consider their territorial solutions and views in the policy recommendations.

Task 1. Outline of the policy recommendations

Based on Task 0, the service provider will produce an outline with the main elements for the policy recommendations. Tentatively, it shall include the following sections:

1. Context
 - Water status and trends in the Med
 - Policy frameworks and processes
 - Who is concerned by the policy recommendations
2. Key Policy Recommendations (by group/themes/stakeholders/governance scale)
3. Territorial solutions (by group/themes/stakeholders/governance scale)
 - Rationales of the theme
 - Specific territorial solutions from TPs
4. Conclusions

This will be considered a first draft of the policy recommendations, which will guide the intervention of D4N at the side event of the NHM at the Euro-Med Water Forum (30th September). The conclusions of this side-event shall also be integrated into the policy recommendations.

Task 2. Organisation of the online interactive session with TPs at the second thematic webinar on water

Building from the 1st webinar exercise, and the outline of the policy recommendations, the service provider will conduct a collaborative exercise with TPs to revise and fine-tune the policy recommendations during the 2nd thematic webinar of the year, which is expected to happen mid-October.

Task 3. Final policy recommendations

The service provider will produce the final draft of the policy recommendations which will be presented at the NHM Annual Institutional Dialogue (including external key stakeholders). The service provider should propose an interactive discussion for the last input into the recommendations, and integrate it to produce its final version. The maximum length should be 20 pages, including annexes.

⁶ The water cluster was set up by C4N as an ad-hoc mechanism to be able to work on this topic with TPs on specific water related issues.

Finally, the service provider should provide information (text and general layout) for an infographic, whose final design will be produced by NHM, summarising the policy recommendations.

Task 4. Advocacy opportunities

Building on the windows of advocacy opportunities in relation to water included in the NHM Advocacy Plan, the service provider should further expand and specify those opportunities, as well as means to advocate using the Policy Recommendations.

3. Deliverables and calendar

Deliverable	Deadline
D1. Outline of the policy recommendations	15 th September
D2A. Proposal of collaborative exercise with TPs	5 th October
D2B. Report on the results of the webinar exercise	1 week after the webinar (expected mid-October)
D3A. Final draft policy recommendations	9 th November
D3B. Infographic policy recommendations	7 th December
D3C. Final policy recommendations	7 th December
D4. Advocacy opportunities	9 th November

4. Type of service, duration and place of execution

These terms of reference and the winning proposal will define the conditions of the service as a contract of provision of services from the notification of the order until 31st December, 2026. The service will be carried out in the premises of the service provider. The service will be governed by the Catalan law, the Spanish law and the courts of Barcelona.

5. Base budget of the service

The maximum budget for this service is €9.500,00 (all taxes included). If the bidder has its tax domicile in Spain, the maximum amount will be €11.495,00 including the VAT rate valid on the date of the publication of these terms of reference which is 21%.

Any offer exceeding this amount will be rejected.

It is understood that the budget includes all of the costs that the successful bidder is required to pay for the normal fulfilment of the services contracted such as general expenses, financial costs, insurance, transport and travel expenses, remuneration for the staff under its control and all verification and job costs.

6. Price of the contract and economic conditions

The administrative details of the Contracting Body are:

ASSOCIACIÓ MEDCITIES AND/OR MEDCITÉS

C / 62. 16-18. EDIFICI B, ZONA FRANCA

08040 BARCELONA – CATALONIA - SPAIN

Tax number (VAT): ESG66401258

The contract price is the one established by the award of the tender, in line with the offer submitted.

2 invoices are required according to the following details:

- 40% of the total amount after the delivery of D1, by 15th September, 2026
- 60% of the total amount after the delivery of D2A, D2B, D3A, D3B, D3B and D4 by 7th December, 2026

Offer and invoices must contain at least the following information:

- Full tax name and full tax address of the supplier
- Tax identification number of the supplier
- Complete MedCities data
- Offer/Invoice number
- Offer/Invoice date
- Budget code and project name indicated in the header of this document
- Description of the service to be provided/provided
- Detail of the amount of the service and taxes (if any)

The payment term of the invoice will be: bank transfer around 30 days after the date of the invoice (bank account details are required) and always after internal favourable report issued by the General Secretariat of MedCities at the end of each phase.

The service provider will be directly responsible for paying the local or national taxes applied to the services except if the service provider is fiscally domiciled in Spain, whereupon the current tax law in respect of personal income tax (IRPF) will be applied.

Invoices must be sent either by post to the offices of the General Secretariat of MedCities or, if they are in digital format, to contact@medcities.org.

Bank charges arising from the payment of invoices will be shared (SHA according to bank coding).

MedCities may require information from the service provider regarding its compliance with obligations relating to social security contributions and the payment of taxes.

Those non-EU service providers will be required to present a certificate of tax residence within 7 calendar days of the award of the service. If the aforementioned document has not been provided to MedCities within 7 days, the contract may be terminated.

7. Participation requirements

General Secretariat

Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona – Carrer 62, núm. 16-18 Edifici B, Zona Franca, 08040 Barcelona, SPAIN
Tel. (+34) 93 506 93 58 – Fax (+34) 93 223 48 49 – contact@medcities.org – www.medcities.org

Those bidding for the service can be individuals or companies that have the full capacity to carry out the work, that are not subject to a ban on hiring staff and that can demonstrate their technical reliability and professional experience.

8. Confidentiality clause

The information that the service provider will have access to in order to fulfil the purpose of this contract must be kept strictly confidential and must not be used for any activity not covered by this contract. In circumstances where a particular use of the information gives rise to doubts in respect of this confidentiality clause, the service provider must, in all cases, request the consent of MedCities.

9. Ownership and authorship of the work

The ownership and authorship of any service provision work carried out belongs to MedCities. As owners of the study, any use or mention of it in publications, articles, interviews, conferences, etc. must have the express authorisation of MedCities.

10. Termination of the service

By giving notice of one month, the service can be terminated by either party before the date indicated in Point 3 of these terms of reference for objective reasons or for the reason described in the last paragraph of point 5 of this terms of reference.

11. Submission of offers

The offer must be sent to the following email address: contact@medcities.org

- Proposal submission period: 10 working days from the date of these terms of reference.
- the subject line of the email should specify "ELABORATION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANNUAL WATER TOPIC FOR THE INTERREG EURO-MED NATURAL HERITAGE MISSION".

The offer must include the extent of the services offered and fulfil the conditions expressed in the previous sections, **developing further the elements contained in these Terms of Reference, and particularly initial ideas on the outline of the policy recommendations and the process to get to the final version.** Notwithstanding that the candidate can attach to their offer any complementary information they consider to be of interest, the tender must include the following documentation:

- o Detailed offer of the services.
- o Economic proposal: candidates must submit an economic proposal in euros that either they or their representative must sign. The prices offered should include any type of tax, charge or fiscal ruling of a European, state, autonomous community or local nature as indicated in Points 6 and 7 of these terms of reference.
- o CV of the professional person or company involved and of the working team, giving relevant examples of similar work undertaken and, if applicable, international experience.

In the event that additional information is required to present the offer, we invite you to contact MedCities by writing to the email address contact@medcities.org. Only written questions about clarifications of the presentation of offers will be answered.

MedCities may request additional information related to the proposal if it deems it appropriate. If this is the case, the proposals that require clarification must be answered within a reasonable period established by the evaluation team.

12. Assessment criteria

The most advantageous offer will need to be evaluated bearing in mind the cost-effectiveness ratio in accordance with the overall proposal. The assessment could take the price-quality ratio into account.

MedCities guarantees equal treatment of the people/companies bidding and will keep their offers confidential.

The person/company adjudicated as the successful bidder will be notified within a period of 5 working days from the final submission date for offers.

Barcelona, 9th July, 2026

Aleix Villatoro i Oliver
MedCities Secretary General