

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – MARE/2014/46

Terms of Reference for an EU grant under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Action on Maritime Spatial Planning in the Northern European Atlantic

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1. INTRODUCTION - BACKGROUND

The European Commission, referred to as "the Commission", in particular the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) is launching a call for proposals with a view to concluding a grant agreement valid for a period of 24 months for the conduction of an action on Maritime Spatial Planning¹ (MSP) in the Northern European Atlantic.

1.1. Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

This call is launched in accordance with the 2014 Work Programme for the Implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)² (section 1.2.1.5. of the annex), on the basis of the objectives set out in the Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund³, and in particular Article 82(b).

1.2. General information concerning the Call for Proposals

The action that is covered by this call for proposals forms part of a EMFF whose implementation has been delegated to the Executive European Agency for Small and medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)⁴.

According to the act of delegation this grant agreement will be signed by EASME.

For the purpose of this call, the Northern European Atlantic encompasses Member States which have waters in Region III (Celtic Seas) of the OSPAR Convention⁵.

1.3. Background

1.3.1 *The concept of Maritime Spatial Planning*

The use of Europe's sea-areas is increasing and gives rise to potential conflicts and competition for maritime space, both between different users, and between maritime uses and the preservation of the marine environment. This development increases the demand for Maritime Spatial Planning, an instrument that is essential for resource efficiency in

¹ Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning, Official Journal of the European Union, L 257/135, 28.8.2014.

² Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2014 and the financing for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (C(2014) 4488 final), of 4 July 2014, section 1.2.1.5.

³ Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Official Journal of the European Union, L 149/1 of 20.5.2014.

⁴ Commission Decision of 23.12.2013 delegating powers to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises with view to performance of tasks linked to the implementation of Union programmes in the field of energy, environment, climate action, competitiveness and SMEs, research and innovation and ICT, comprising, in particular, implementation of appropriations entered in the general budget of the Union (C(2013)9414 final).

⁵ http://www.ospar.org/content/content.asp?menu=00480213000000_000000_000000

maritime activities. MSP provides a framework for the management of human sea uses in a context of intensifying economic activity in sea basins around Europe. As such, it has a vital role to play both in terms of maximising the development potential for crucial activities, such as offshore renewable energy production, and of arbitrating between human activities to ensure that the cumulative impact of ongoing activities is sustainable. By providing long-term stability, predictability and transparency, MSP encourages investments for sustainable growth and jobs and secures ongoing activities.

In a similar vein, the impact on the marine environment of economic activities needs to stay within clear boundaries. MSP supports sustainable use of marine resources in line with the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)⁶ on the application of the ecosystem approach, by providing the means to effectively organise human use of the marine space.

1.3.2 Action on MSP at EU level

The European Commission's intention is to support the development of MSP processes throughout the EU, by facilitating cooperation between Member States in the management of maritime space in sea basins surrounding the EU. To this end, the Communication "Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning: Achieving common principles in the EU"⁷ was adopted by the Commission in 2008. In this Communication the Commission brought forward a set of 10 key principles for applying MSP, based on common practices on MSP found in the EU Member States and in third countries around the world. In a Communication adopted in December 2010⁸, the Commission reported on the outcome of those discussions, as well as other developments on MSP. The stakeholder consultation revealed broad agreement on the need for a coordinated and coherent approach on MSP and confirmed an interest to develop MSP further at EU level.

The Commission has also initiated a number of studies on various aspects of MSP:

- A study on the legal aspects of MSP (2008)⁹;
- A study on the economic effects of MSP (2010)¹⁰, which concluded that economic effects of MSP are reduced transaction costs for new maritime activities and an improved investment climate;
- A study looking into the potential of MSP in the Mediterranean (2011)¹¹.

On the basis of those preparatory actions, the Commission proposed legislative action on Maritime Spatial Planning in 2013¹². Following this, the Maritime Spatial Planning

⁶ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

⁷ Communication from the Commission of 5 November 2008 concerning a Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning: Achieving Common Principles in the EU (COM (2008) 791final)

⁸ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2010) 771 final)

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/documentation/studies/spatial_planning_en.htm

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/documentation/studies/study_msp_en.htm

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/documentation/studies/study_msp_med_en.htm

¹² Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management (COM(2013) 133 final)

Directive was adopted. The main purpose of this Directive is to promote the sustainable growth of maritime activities by establishing a framework for the implementation of maritime spatial planning in EU waters. The Directive was adopted by the European Parliament and by the Council on 23 July 2014. It entered into force in September 2014. The text of the Directive can found here:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.257.01.0135.01.ENG

The Directive is not sector-specific, but covers policy areas of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union¹³ (TFEU) that have an impact on coasts, seas and oceans. It supports on-going implementation of sea-related policies in Member States through more efficient coordination and increased transparency. At an early stage, maritime spatial plans can improve the articulation of, and reduce conflicts between, economic objectives and environmental legislation.

The operational objectives of the Directive are procedural in nature. Member States are required to develop and implement coherent processes to plan human uses of maritime space, and to establish appropriate cross border cooperation among them. A key added value of the Directive is to support the inclusion of land-sea interactions in MSP processes. Planning details and the determination of management objectives are left to Member States.

1.3.3 *Cross-border cooperation on MSP*

Through its legislative proposal, the Commission had emphasised the advantage of a common framework to MSP within the EU. However, it is clear that the specific approach chosen in various sea basins or relevant institutional set-up within regions and individual Member States should be taken into account.

Practical experience on cross-border application of MSP, based on the principles of the MSP Directive, is necessary to ensure that all Member States develop the capacity to apply MSP, and exchange best practices. This type of experience should also be a significant factor for the on the ground development of a common approach to MSP that is required by the Directive for cross-border/sea-basin level. Although the Commission considers that cooperation at sea-basin level allows for a better adaptation of the planning process to marine regions' political and environmental characteristics, the Directive will leave to Member States the decision to choose the mechanism they consider more adapted to allow cross-border planning with their neighbours.

Cross-border cooperation presents a challenge for sea basins where such experience does not exist. It also requires financial and human resources to ensure its success. For those reasons, the EU has already co-financed four preparatory actions on MSP in the Baltic Sea¹⁴, in the North Sea¹⁵ in the Atlantic¹⁶ and is currently co-financing projects on MSP in the Adriatic Sea¹⁷, involving bodies from several Member States in each project. The Commission has also launched initiatives to establish lasting mechanisms for cross

¹³ Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union C 326/49 OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 47–390

¹⁴ <http://planbothnia.org/>

¹⁵ <https://www.wageningenur.nl/en/show/Maspnose-Maritime-spatial-planning-in-the-North-Sea.htm>

¹⁶ <http://www.tpeamaritime.eu/wp/>

¹⁷ <http://adriplan.eu/>

border cooperation in the Baltic and Black sea basins, closely linked to the role played by, and the legal obligations required of, relevant national and governmental authorities in charge of MSP.

In the same context, the Commission is now launching this call for proposals for a cross-border MSP action in the Northern European Atlantic.

2. OBJECTIVES – THEMES – PRIORITIES

2.1. Objective of the action

The objective of the action is to support Member States develop MSP in their marine waters and implement cooperation on cross-border planning in their sea-basin. This action seeks to stimulate the development of a cross-border, ecosystem-based approach towards MSP on the basis of the requirements of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning¹⁸.

More specifically, the objectives of this action are to:

1. Support the implementation of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning in Member States marine waters.
2. Launch and carry out concrete, cross-border MSP cooperation between Member States in the Northern Atlantic, involving at least two Member States and the relevant authorities responsible for MSP in the selected area.

2.2. General guidelines

Considering that one of the objectives of the action is to launch or support the implementation of the Directive on MSP in Member States, the involvement in the action of the current or future Competent Authority, designated under Article 13.1 of the Directive, is of essential added-value.

When applying MSP, certain framework conditions and legal aspects must be considered. The Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning frames national MSP processes. The core elements of the Directive are:

- Acknowledgement of maritime spatial planning as a cross-sectoral tool to analyse and organize human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives;
- Transposition of the Directive into national law, and creation of competent authorities to put it into effect, within 2 years;
- EU Member States (except land-locked ones) are to prepare cross-sectoral maritime spatial plans by 2021.
- The plans should:

¹⁸ Directive 2014/89/EU Of The European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning, Official Journal of the European Union, L 257/135, 28.8.2014.

- apply the ecosystem-based approach;
- contribute to the preservation, protection and improvement of the environment;
- contribute to the sustainable development of energy sectors at sea, maritime transport, and fisheries and aquaculture;
- allow Member States to pursue additional objectives such as sustainable tourism or the extraction of raw materials;
- Take into account land-sea interactions and promote coherence between MSP and Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
- Cross-border cooperation:
 - Member States sharing a sea should cooperate to ensure that their MSP are coherent and coordinated across the marine region. Means of cooperation are left to Member States to decide.
 - Member States should cooperate with third countries on their actions with regard to maritime spatial planning (where geopolitically possible).
- Public information from an early stage and participation of relevant stakeholders, authorities, and public concerned;
- Use of best available data and organisation of the sharing of information between stakeholders.

At EU level, other relevant EU policies and legislation must be taken into account. This includes the MSFD¹⁹, Natura 2000 and related legislation²⁰, the Common Fisheries Policy²¹ (CFP), the Renewable Energy Directive²², the INSPIRE Directive²³, etc. The studies initiated by the Commission on various aspects of MSP could provide useful knowledge and information. The results of relevant INTERREG²⁴ projects as well as projects funded by other European means (e.g. via the Research Framework Programmes²⁵) or by other international organisations should also be taken into account. Due regard should be given to EU and international obligations of Member States to establish Marine Protected Areas.

¹⁹ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm

²¹ Regulation 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC

²² Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC

²³ Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

²⁴ Now [European Territorial Cooperation](#)

²⁵ See the [Commission's Research website](#)

Applicants should take into account the work done by the European Commission to assemble marine data, data products and metadata from diverse sources in a uniform way through the European Marine Observation and Data Network²⁶ (EMODnet). Especially, the development of EMODnet through sea-basin portals can help coordination on MSP at the level of marine regions.

UNCLOS is globally the legal basis for all human activities in the maritime area. The relevant regulations of UNCLOS, particularly regarding the rights to use maritime resources, must therefore be respected. The guidelines that have been developed by UNESCO IOC²⁷ might provide useful guidance and should therefore be considered for the action.

2.3. Action components

2.3.1 Component 1: Implementation of MSP

Initial assessment

Choose, specify and describe the area(s) identified: geographical position, habitat description, assessment of both ongoing human activities, as well as foreseeable future demands by maritime sectors and future maritime uses. Define why cross-border planning is considered relevant and necessary for the area(s) and which States are involved.

Development of cooperation on maritime spatial planning

- a) Agree on common objectives at sea basin level for cross-border cooperation on MSP, taking into account the ecosystem approach.
- b) Start developing a mechanism for cross-border cooperation based on the elements of the MSP Directive. This could give an overview of the planning system and could describe the instruments used for the cooperation process.
- c) Set up a structure and procedures to be used for the development of cooperation on MSP and the potential production of a plan itself, including relevant stakeholder involvement.
- d) Elaborate potential further developments needed for new, innovative instruments that are tailor-made for cross-border cooperation on spatial planning at sea.

Support for Member States' implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning

In order to have proper cross-border cooperation on maritime planning, Member States need to have reached a fairly equivalent level of MSP development. When needed, the action should support the development of maritime spatial plans in Member States, independently from cross-border cooperation. Such activities may include data gathering,

²⁶ <http://www.emodnet.eu/>

²⁷ http://www.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=147&Itemid=76

data management, set-up of GIS systems, public consultation and participation, studies related to Strategic Environmental Assessment, cost-benefit analysis, etc.

Evaluation of the maritime spatial planning process

Provide appropriate indicators and criteria that could be applied during an evaluation of the MSP process (NB: please note that these indicators are different from the ones mentioned in 2.4.5, which are used for the purpose of evaluating the management of the action itself). Suggest a suitable monitoring and evaluation process, including recommendations for appropriate timing of evaluation, appropriate governance structures for such a process, as well as an indication of the financial resources that would be needed to carry out the monitoring and evaluation in a meaningful way.

2.3.2 Component 2: Management and coordination

This component encompasses the activities related to the physical, administrative, legal and financial activities which are necessary to implement the action. This includes how the internal management of the action will be set up (e.g. monitoring and control of the incurred expenditure and preparation of Interim and Final Reports) and how the Partners coordinate their work throughout the action's duration (e.g. organisation of coordination meetings between the Partners and setting up working groups).

This component includes activities between the Partners to set up and execute an exchange of information mechanism at a cross-sector and cross-border level that is viable and durable in time for this action.

2.3.3 Component 3: Communication and Dissemination

Activities carried out under this component could be aimed at disseminating the action's activities and achievements outside the action to the relevant stakeholders in Europe (e.g. neighbouring States, Regional Sea Conventions, specialised agencies, etc). This could include the following activities:

- Organisation of launching and closing conferences, as well as workshops during the implementation phase;
- Development of a website for the action and regular update of this website according to intermediate action results – existing website of one of the involved partners can also be used to fulfil that objective, especially if the partner is the Competent Authority identified to implement the MSP Directive²⁸;
- Publication and dissemination of leaflets, newsletters, or other information material supported in any format;

²⁸ Directive 2014/89/EE Of The European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning, Official Journal of the European Union, L 257/135, 28.8.2014.

- Development of maps, tables, plans etc. to support the visualisation and dissemination of results, possibly feeding into the Maritime Forum and/or the European Atlas of the Seas;
- Development of a repository of best practices and lessons learnt from the action.

2.4. Partnership and implementation

2.4.1 *Steering Committee*

The proposed governance structure must include a Steering Committee chaired by the Coordinator which will provide the overall steering of the action. It will review the work plans and report, review the progress, accept deliverables and take decisions regarding the implementation. The Commission, EASME and representatives of Member States where the action takes place should participate in the Steering Committee, and there should be an adequate representation of the partners involved.

Ideally, it should meet at least once every 6 months.

The Steering Committee usually sets up and implements a monitoring and evaluation system in order to carry out its tasks. The progress towards the achievement of the action's objectives is assessed mainly through the output and result indicators. The monitoring system can also cover the following issues:

- Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation: is the action progressing in line with the initial time plan presented in the application form? Is the budget plan being implemented and are allocations per budget categories being observed? How do the action's achievements relate to the encountered expenditure (costs/benefits)?
- Quality of the management and coordination: are management and coordination procedures efficient and are the resources used in this process sufficient?

In parallel to the Steering Committee, other coordination bodies (e.g. task forces, advisory groups) may also be established to coordinate the day-to-day running of the action, to fulfil specific tasks or to carry out certain activities. It is, however, recommended that the coordination and management procedures remain as transparent and simple as possible.

The above monitoring and decision-making processes must be clearly documented in the action proposal. The inclusion of a chapter describing specific working arrangements is recommended. In order to allow for appropriate discussion and feedback on the action execution, the Coordinator may want to include provisions for regular contact with the Commission and the EASME, including a kick-off meeting.

2.4.2 Partnership composition

For the purpose of this Call, the Northern European Atlantic is defined as Region III (Celtic Seas) of the OSPAR Convention²⁹.

The action must be managed in a Partnership where the Partners are public bodies of at least two coastal EU Member States with waters in Region III (Celtic Seas) of the OSPAR Convention. In addition, the Partnership may also include the relevant regional sea conventions as Coordinators or Partners.

Participation of Partners which are relevant for the implementation of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning is recommended, as well as a balanced representation of Member States involved. This should be reflected in the involvement of Partners in the action's activities and through their respective financial contribution. The budget of a Partner must also be in line with the level of costs in the relevant country. Any major differences between the budgets of the Partners must be clearly justified in their application.

The core Partnership can only involve contributing Partners, including their relevant affiliated entities which all have to be listed in the application. However, it is possible for other relevant parties to participate with an observer status, e.g. public bodies from non EU Member States, EU Member States from different sea basins than the Northern European Atlantic or other regional or international organisations active in the area. Observer status in this context means that participation in any activity or meetings will be at the observers' own expenses (e.g. travel costs for observers are not eligible under this action). Furthermore, observers will not receive any European Union co-financing and will not join or sign any statements.

2.4.3 Role of the Coordinator

Among the number of Partners who carry out the action, one is appointed to act as Coordinator and thus forms the link between the Partners and the Commission/EASME.

In addition to the obligations set under Article II.1.3 of the grant agreement, the Coordinator shall:

- a. Sign and submit the application form on behalf of the partnership,
- b. Should the action be approved, sign the grant agreement with the EASME for the total amount of the grant;
- c. Obtain a power of attorney in writing from each partner
- d. Have full responsibility for ensuring that the action is implemented in accordance with the grant agreement;
- e. Agree the grant rules with the other Partners, respecting the EU grant rules established under the call and under the grant agreement;

²⁹ http://www.ospar.org/content/content.asp?menu=00480213000000_000000_000000

- f. Be responsible for the efficient management, communication, implementation and coordinator of activities and tasks amongst the Partners, and ensure these are fulfilled in compliance with the application form and the grant agreement through an efficient control system;
- g. Inform the Partners of any event of which the Coordinator is aware that is liable to substantially affect the implementation of the action;
- h. Ensure that the reports are delivered timely and correctly to the EASME;
- i. Inform the EASME of payments made to partners and the distribution of the EU financial contribution between the partners and of the date of transfer within 60 days from the balance payment.

The full administrative responsibility for the action therefore lies with the coordinator. It is recommended that the following professional staff be appointed by the Coordinator for the sound management of the action:

- a contact person

The contact person is responsible for the organisation of the action's work. The contact person shall be qualified or have relevant experience in European project management, as well as in the thematic priority of the action. The contact person shall be able to act as a driving force in the Partnership and to mobilise the Partners in order to achieve the objectives laid down in the application within the given time.

- a financial manager

The financial manager is responsible for the accounts, financial reporting and the internal handling of EU funds and national co-financing. The financial manager shall work in close contact with the contact person and the Partners in order to enable efficient financial management of the action and respect of the related contractual provisions. The financial manager shall be familiar with accounting rules, international transactions, EU and national legislation for the management of EU funds, public procurement and financial control.

The contact person and financial manager should be fluent in English which should be the language used for all communication with the EASME/ Commission.

2.4.4 Cooperation arrangements within the Partnership

At the submission of the application, the coordinator and the partners shall have agreed upon and concluded an **internal cooperation agreement** regarding their internal operation for the proper performance of the action.

In addition to the obligations set under Article II.1.2 of the grant agreement, the partners bound to as co-beneficiaries of the grant, shall:

- a) Provide the coordinator with a power of attorney in writing through a mandate

signed for that purpose³⁰. The mandate shall fully empower the coordinator to act on the Partners' behalf in the context of the grant agreement.;

The grant agreement binds the coordinator and the partners in the terms expressed under the power of attorney provided by each partner to the coordinator.

The empowerment mandate shall not compromise or change in any manner the Coordinator's and the Partners' rights and obligations set under this call for proposals.

2.4.5 Monitoring arrangements

Project outcomes should be measured against a certain number of pre-defined output and result indicators. Outputs and indicators as listed below are suggestions and non-exhaustive. Applicants should consider the appropriate indicators suitable for their proposed action and include a list of relevant indicators in their application (section 2.1 of the application form).

N.B. The indicators below are used for evaluating the performance of the action as such. They should not be confused with any indicators to be developed for the MSP evaluation and monitoring process described under section 2.3.1 in this Call.

Examples of pre-defined indicators³¹

1/ Set up of coordination procedures and processes for Maritime Spatial Planning in the selected cross-border area(s)

³⁰ A template for this Mandate is included as Annex IV to the draft grant agreement published together with this Call.

³¹ Outputs are the tangible deliverables of the project. They directly result from the activities carried out in the project. They report on 'what' the main 'products' delivered by the project are. They do not lead to a qualitative judgment of the project's outcomes. In other words, it is not because the project organises a high number of workshops that it will necessarily be successful. Output indicators are typically measured in physical units such as the number of seminars, site visits, conferences, participants, publications, good practices identified, or policies addressed.

Results are direct and clearly identifiable. They are a product of the project and its outputs. Outputs, such as the organisation of events, the identification and dissemination of good practices, the production of policy recommendations etc., are carried out in order to achieve specific effects that the result indicators should be able to assess and measure, preferably in quantified terms.

Output indicators

- Delivery of rationale and description of selection process for chosen sea area(s)
- Number of coordination meetings between governmental bodies of different Member States.
- Production of a description of human activities (both present and predictable future) assessed and analysed in the chosen sea area(s)
- Delivery of model maritime spatial plan produced
- Number of relevant and high quality maps produced
- Number of coordination meetings with stakeholders
- Delivery of concept for a suitable monitoring and evaluation process

Result Indicators

- Delivery of high quality recommendations for set-up of coordination procedures and processes for Maritime Spatial Planning in the cross-border area(s)
- Delivery of a model test case of the function and usefulness of a maritime spatial plan in the cross-border area(s) involvement of relevant ministries/authorities
- Development of a vision and definition of a set of coordinated and coherent objectives for Maritime Spatial Planning in the sea basin
- Carrying out of an analysis of (interaction of) human activity in a cross-border context
- Suggestion for a monitoring and evaluation process, including estimation of resources needed
- Delivery of a lasting mechanism to exchange information between Member States.
- Involvement of relevant stakeholders/stakeholder groups
- Description of the experience gained in the development of a coordinated and coherent approach to Maritime Spatial Planning in a cross-border context

2/ Report on the process of developing cross-border Maritime Spatial Planning

Output indicators

- Description of specific needs and challenges of the MSP process in the cross-border area(s)
- Accurate description of procedural steps followed within the development of cross-border MSP
- Description of methodology developed
- Description of experience and best practice in applying the requirements of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning.
- Carrying out an evaluation of best practices for MSP in the cross-border area(s)

Result indicators

- Set-up of consistent and lasting mechanism to ensure cross-border planning at sea-basin level
- Identification of best practices for MSP in cross-border areas
- Description of the effectiveness of the applied methodology to develop MSP.
- Description of stakeholder involvement in cross-border MSP
- Delivery of the identification of additional requirements and gaps

3/ Management and coordination

Output indicators

- Number of coordination meetings organised by Partners for the period of the action
- Production of adequate documentation of organisation and cooperation mechanisms.

Result indicators

- Description of strengthened cross-border cooperation on MSP

4/ Communication and Dissemination

Output indicators

- Number of reports about model cross-border maritime spatial plans
- Number of articles in relevant media
- Number of relevant events participated in (with presentations/stands about the activities)

Result indicators

- Description of knowledge and experience that can be transferred from the results
- Number of results discussed in the relevant international fora (e.g. Regional Sea Conventions other than Partners, RAC)

3. TIMETABLE

	Total duration of the action	24 months
	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the Call for Proposals	June 2015
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	10/09/2015 – 12.00 (Brussels time)
c)	Evaluation period	September-October 2015
d)	Information to applicants	October 2015
e)	Signature of the grant agreement	November 2015
f)	Starting date of the action	December 2015
g)	Progress report	To be provided every 2 months from the starting date of the action
h)	First interim report	6 months after the starting date of the action
i)	Second interim report	12 months after the starting date of the action
j)	Third interim report	18 months after the starting date of the action
k)	Final report	Within 60 days of the end of the action
l)	Report on distribution of the EU financial contribution	Within 60 days of the balance payment

3.1. Start date and duration of the action

As an indication, the action is expected to start by 1 December 2015; however, the exact timing can only be fixed once the grant has been awarded.

The activities shall start on the date when the last of both parties signs the Grant Agreement for a total duration of 24 months. Only costs incurred during this period will be eligible. However, the total duration may be extended by EASME for duly justified reasons.

3.2. Reporting

All reports shall be submitted using the reporting templates provided in annexes to these Terms of Reference and refer to the indicators under point 2.4.5 when required.

The Interim and final reports are to be sent to the EASME both electronically as well as in paper form within one month after the end of the reporting period indicated in the timetable under section 3, and shall be written to a level of English equivalent to C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages³² in a clear and readable format.

In addition, the coordinator must submit on behalf of the partners a bimonthly two-page progress report, summarising actions taken in the previous months and the ones foreseen in the next months. For these bimonthly progress reports, electronic submission to the EASME is sufficient.

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing for this action is estimated at EUR 2,600,000.

Only one proposal will be awarded a Grant in the context of the present Call.

The EASME reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Proposals will only be evaluated if they comply with the following admissibility requirements:

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3;
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 14) using the application forms provided as part of this Call for Proposals;
- Applications may be submitted in any official EU language; however applications and supporting documents submitted in English will speed up the selection process.
- Submitted proposals can only have one Coordinator.

Failure to comply with these requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

6. ELIGIBILITY

³² http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp

6.1. Eligible applicants

The following types of entities are eligible to participate in the Call:

- Public bodies (national, regional, local administration) of Member States of the European Union;
- International organisations and their members;
- the North-East Atlantic regional sea convention (RSC) and its members;
- Only applications with public bodies from at least two coastal EU Member States with waters in Region III (Celtic Seas) of the OSPAR Convention³³ will be eligible.

Affiliated entities: Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in section 11.2. For that purpose, the applicant shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

Applications submitted where one or more Partners that do not fulfil the above eligibility criteria, shall not be considered eligible for EU contribution under this call.

To be considered as a public body, the body in question must fulfil all of the following criteria:

- The body has been created by a public authority or is governed by private law with a public service mission,
- The public interest of the body must be explicitly mentioned in the relevant legal or administrative act(s),
- The body is financed totally or to a large extent (more than 50%) by public sources,
- In the event that the body stops its activities, all rights and obligations including financial rights and obligations will be transferred to a public authority.

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

- copy of the resolution/law/decreed/decision establishing the public entity, or other official document attesting the establishment of the entity by the national authorities;
- in addition to the supporting documents referring to their legal status, all members of the Partnership, including affiliated entities, will submit a letter of confirmation of their participation to the action.
- Affiliated entities shall demonstrate their legal/capital link with the relevant applicant.

³³

http://www.ospar.org/content/content.asp?menu=00480213000000_000000_000000

6.2. **Eligible activities**

Eligible activities shall be those foreseen in section 2.3 of this call for proposals.

7. **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

7.1. **Exclusion from participation:**

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the Call for Proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations as referred in Art. 106 (1) (a) FR;
- (b) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata as referred in Art. 106 (1) (b) FR;
- (c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- (d) they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the responsible authorizing officer (RAO) or those of the country where the grant Agreement is to be performed (Art. 106(1)(d) FR;
- (e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests as referred in Art. 106 (1) (e) FR;
- (f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) FR.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

7.2. **Exclusion from award:**

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest as referred in Art. 107.1 FR;

- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the EASME as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;
- (c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

7.3. **Supporting documents**³⁴

Applicants, including each of the affiliated entities, must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 FR, filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying the call for proposals.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding.

However, on the basis of article 131(3) FR and given the eligibility criteria set for applicants under section 6 of this Call for Proposals, the applicants are considered to have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding..

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action.

However, on the basis of article 131(3) FR and given the eligibility criteria set for applicant, under section 6 of this Call for Proposals, the applicants are considered to have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action.

In this respect, each of the applicants has to submit a declaration on their honour that they have the financial and operational capacity to carry out the action. The EASME may request further supporting documents to confirm the financial and operational capacity.

³⁴ Art. 197 RAP

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Relevance** (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points): Applicants should describe how they understand the objectives of the action and how their proposal addresses these objectives. The applicants should demonstrate how the action will impact on current and future implementation of MSP in the Northern European Atlantic, including in a cross-border context.
- **Added value** (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points): Applicants should clearly demonstrate the added value of the proposed action to the existing knowledge and experience for the development of an efficient mechanism for MSP within the EU. The proposed action should also demonstrate its added-value to the implementation of the MSP Directive in the Member States where the action takes place, ensuring coherence of MSP implementation across Member States. The involvement of the authorities in charge of implementing MSP will be considered a bonus.
- **Methodology** (minimum required 7.5 points - maximum 15 points): Applicants should describe their proposed working methodology to achieve a timely and successful implementation of the action. In particular, applicants should provide a detailed timetable/work plan. Applicants should give particular consideration to the set-up of a lasting mechanism for cross-border cooperation and to the issue of data and describe how they will ensure:
 - access to the data necessary to implement their planning;
 - long-term use of the data collected through the action
 - exchange of data required for MSP between the participants in the action
 - an analysis of the main challenges for such data exchange (e.g. legal, administrative or technical obstacles).
- **Means of implementation of the action** (minimum required 5 points - maximum 10 points): Applicants should demonstrate how the resources (personnel, equipment, financing, etc.) that will be mobilised are adequate to achieve a timely and successful implementation of the action. In particular, applicants should demonstrate that their implementation means are cost-effective.
- **Management** (minimum required 5 points - maximum 10 points): Applicants should demonstrate how the organisation and management structure proposed for the action are adequate to achieve the required quality, meet the deadlines, establish a real Partnership considering the requirements set under these Terms of Reference notably section 2.4 and bring added-value to Member States' implementation of MSP.

- **Sustainability** (minimum required 5 points - maximum 10 points): Applicants should demonstrate how they will ensure that results and outputs from the action are stored and kept available to be used by partners after the end of the action, and how these will feed into and contribute to MSP implementation in the long term.
- **Visibility and Transferability** (minimum required 7.5 points - maximum 15 points): Applicants should describe how they intend to disseminate and communicate the results and outputs of the action. This can be done, for example, through a website where core information on the action is made available – the existing website of one of the Partners may be used. The applicants should ensure the results of the action can and are used optimally by other stakeholders not participating in the action, including those in other regions. The proposed action should contain a dissemination and communication plan detailing the applicants' approach.

The Grant will be awarded to the proposal which reaches the highest score on the basis of the above mentioned award criteria.

A maximum of 100 points will be awarded for the quality of the proposal. The minimum overall score required is 60 points and the minimum for each criterion is 50% of the points assigned for that criterion.

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant awarded by EASME, a Grant Agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, as well as the procedure in view to formalise the obligations of the parties.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed by the coordinator on behalf of the partnership and returned to EASME immediately. EASME will sign it last.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1. General Principles

a) Non-cumulative award

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.³⁵

³⁵ Art. 196.4 RAP.

b) Non-retroactivity³⁶

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the Grant Agreement is signed or the grant decision is notified. In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action or the work programme may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action or of the work programme may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources;
- income generated by the action or work programme;
- financial contributions from third parties;
- in-kind contributions from third parties.

These are non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties to the beneficiary³⁷ and the corresponding costs are not eligible. They shall be presented separately in the estimated budget to reflect the total resources allocated to the action. Their unit value is evaluated in the provisional budget and shall not be subject to subsequent changes. In-kind contributions shall comply with national tax and social security rules.

Such contributions must not exceed:

- either the costs actually borne and duly supported by accounting documents;
- or, in the absence of such documents, the costs generally accepted on the market in question.

d) Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the action is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

If the applicant foresees that costs will not be incurred in euros, it is invited to use the exchange rate published in the Official Journal of the European Union on the Infor-euro website available at:

³⁶ Art. 130 FR

³⁷ Art. 127 FR

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm

a) Implementation contracts/subcontracting³⁸

Implementation contracts are intended to cover the purchase of services and/or goods, equipment etc. necessary for the implementation of the action.

Sub-contracting implies one or several applicants hiring a contractor following the applicants' internal procurement procedures, in order to carry out specific tasks or activities which form part of the action as described in the proposal (see also general conditions of the grant agreement).

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Sub-contracting must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified in articles II.9 and II.10 of the Grant Agreement) and the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules.

b) Financial support to third parties³⁹.

Financial support to third parties is not allowed under this Call for Proposals.

11.2. Funding forms

Funding takes the form of mixed financing.

Mixed financing grants are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding. The grant amount may neither exceed the eligible costs nor the amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

Eligible costs shall comply with general eligibility criteria for European Union Grants, i.e. costs shall be:

- Actually incurred by the beneficiaries during the duration of the action,

³⁸ Art. 137 FR, 209 RAP

³⁹ Art. 137 FR, 210 RAP.

- Properly budgeted and included in the estimated budget of the action,
- Necessary to the fulfilment of the action's objectives and
- Identifiable and verifiable.

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

➤ **Maximum amount requested**

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of 80% of **eligible costs** taking into account the maximum grant amount referred to in section 4.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant.

➤ **Eligible costs**

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the following criteria:

- ✓ they are incurred during the duration of the action with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;

The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the Grant Agreement or the grant decision.

If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the Grant Agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see section 4).

- ✓ they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- ✓ they are necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- ✓ they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- ✓ they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- ✓ they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiaries' internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as:

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used;
- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action concerned were not undertaken;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc) provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc), provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- depreciation cost of equipment (new or second-hand): only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the EASME. As the purchase of equipment cannot be a core element in this action, it should remain exceptional, it must be justified in the proposal and, it should not exceed 5% of the total eligible costs;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the action;
- costs entailed by implementation contracts awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the action, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met. Should the value of the implementation contracts exceed 25% of the total value of the eligible budget, a justification must be provided in the proposal;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, translations, reproduction);
- costs relating to external audits where required in support of the requests for payments;

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

A flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action.

Indirect costs may include may include items such as:

- stationery
- photocopying
- mailing
- telephone, fax and Internet
- heating, electricity
- office furniture, maintenance
- office rent
- other administration expenditure absolutely necessary for the successful completion of the action and clearly resulting from project implementation.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

The Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant from EU funds, indirect costs are not eligible under this action.

➤ **Ineligible costs**

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- costs of transfers from the EASME charged by the bank of a beneficiary;
- costs declared by a beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- costs arising from sharing of costs and invoicing between beneficiaries;
- in kind contributions;
- VAT;
- the purchase of equipment and depreciation costs incurred outside the duration of the action.

➤ **Calculation of the final grant amount**

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents⁴⁰, including relevant supporting documents where appropriate:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action;
- the final financial statement of costs actually incurred;
- where applicable, a certificate on the financial statements of the action and underlying accounts.⁴¹

In the event of non-execution or clearly inadequate execution of an activity planned in the application attached to the funding decision/agreement, the final grant will be reduced accordingly.

The EU grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the beneficiary. Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the **eligible costs** incurred by the beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action.

11.3. **Payment arrangements**⁴²

A pre-financing payment⁴³ corresponding to 30% of the grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30⁴⁴ days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the Grant Agreement.

A first interim payment⁴⁵ of maximum 20 % of the grant amount will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of the first interim report on the action's implementation, a financial statement and all supporting documents in accordance with Articles I.4 and II.23.2 of the Grant Agreement.

A second interim payment⁴⁶ of maximum 20 % of the grant amount will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of the second interim report on the action's implementation, a financial statement and all supporting documents in accordance with Articles I.4 and II.23.2 of the Grant Agreement.

A third interim payment⁴⁷ of maximum 20 % of the grant amount will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of the third interim report on the action's implementation, a financial statement and all supporting documents in accordance with Articles I.4 and II.23.2 of the Grant Agreement.

⁴⁰ Art. 135 FR

⁴¹ Art. 207.3 Rules of Application.

⁴² Art. 90, 135 FR, 207 RAP.

⁴³ Art. 109, 110 RAP

⁴⁴ Art. 92 FR

⁴⁵ Art. 109, 110 RAP

⁴⁶ Art. 109, 110 RAP

⁴⁷ Art. 109, 110 RAP

The total amount of pre-financing and interim payments shall not exceed 90 % of the maximum grant amount.

A balance payment of maximum 10% of the maximum grant amount will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of the final report on the action including a final technical report, a financial statement and all supporting documents according to Articles I.4 and II.23.2 of the Grant Agreement.

In the case of public bodies, the certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts must be produced by a competent and independent public officer.

The EASME will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.2 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the EASME through a recovery order⁴⁸.

12. PUBLICITY

12.1. By the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Union on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed action.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer available at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/index_en.htm

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

12.2. By the EASME⁴⁹

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The EASME will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level⁵⁰ if he/she is domiciled within EU or equivalent if domiciled outside EU,

⁴⁸ Art. 109, 110 RAP

⁴⁹ Art. 35, 128.3 FR, 21, 191 RAP.

- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

13. DATA PROTECTION

The reply to any Call for Proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the Call for Proposals will be processed solely for that purpose by the EASME. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-EASME.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 13 November 2014 on the Early Warning System⁵¹ (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),

or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm

14. PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under section 3.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of

⁵⁰ European Union Official Journal L 39, of 10 February 2007.

⁵¹ Commission Decision 2014/792/EU of 13 November 2014, OJ 2014 L 329 of 14 November, p.68

clerical mistakes, the EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process⁵².

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.⁵³

➤ Submission on paper

The application form is provided in annex to these Terms of Reference.

Applications shall be submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), submitted in 2 copies (one original clearly identified as such, plus 1 copy), and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

Where applicable, all additional information considered necessary by the applicant can be included on separate sheets.

Applications must be sent to the following address⁵⁴:

- a) sent **by registered mail** (date as postmark):

European Commission
EASME
Ref. MARE/2014/46
Unit A.3 – EMFF
B – 1049 Brussels

In this case, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark.

- b) **Express delivery service or hand-deliver** against signature (date as receipt)::

European Commission
EASME
Ref. MARE/2014/46
Unit A.3 - EMFF
Mail Service
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels

➤ Electronic copy

In addition to the submission on paper, the applicant is requested to submit an electronic copy of the proposal and all its annexes on a CD-ROM or USB-stick in the same envelope as the paper version.

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

Contacts

⁵² Art. 96 FR

⁵³ Art. 133 FR, 205 RAP

⁵⁴ Art. 195.3 Rules of Application.

All questions related to the call may be sent by electronic means (e-mail) to: MARE-EI@ec.europa.eu no later than 15 August 2015, indicating the subject title 'Project on Maritime Spatial Planning in the Northern European Atlantic'. Such questions, together with their answers, if of a general interest, will be published on:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/contracts_and_funding/calls_for_proposals/index_en.htm.

In addition, important information for the applicants may, if need be, be published on this website. Applicants are thus strongly recommended to consult this website regularly.

➤ Annexes:

- Application form with the checklist of documents to be provided
- Declaration on Honour to be signed by the applicant
- Model Grant Agreement
- Financial report template
- Progress report template
- Interim report template
- Final report template
- Budget form
- Method for calculation of staff costs
- Template for external audit statement
- Mandate template
- Declaration of honour