



## CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

RFT: 2025/028  
File: AP\_2/44  
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To: Interested Service Providers  
Contact: Maraea S. Pogi ([maraeap@sprep.org](mailto:maraeap@sprep.org))

**Subject: Request for tenders (RFT): Setting up a Community Based Marine Conservation Area (CBMCA), Lenakel, Tanna**

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### **Question 1:**

#### **Stakeholder Engagement Requirements:**

Could you please clarify the expected level of involvement of the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Fisheries during the consultation and planning process? Are there specific coordination protocols or approvals required from these institutions before commencing community consultations?

#### **Response:**

The Department Environment and Fisheries are key institutional stakeholders and must be meaningfully involved throughout the consultation and planning process. Their participation is essential to ensure alignment with national environmental and marine resource management priorities, and to foster institutional ownership of project outcomes.

Both ministries are expected to be actively engaged in:

Initial stakeholder briefings and joint planning sessions; Community consultations, particularly where regulatory or policy frameworks (e.g., protected area management, customary fishing rights, biodiversity conservation) intersect with proposed activities; Review and validation of proposed activities, especially if there are formal authorization or endorsement is required; Ongoing oversight and technical guidance during implementation.

The project coordinator inform both ministries in advance of any planned field engagement, ensuring that representatives have the opportunity to participate. He will also provide facilitation and support to ensure all relevant national and provincial protocols are respected. Where formal approvals (e.g., for conservation measures, resource use agreements, or customary land access) are required, the project coordinator will assist the service provider in navigating these processes in collaboration with the government departments and relevant provincial departments.

### **Question 2:**

#### **Youth Marine Monitoring Network Report:**

Is the intention for the consultant to set up a fully operational monitoring network by the end of the

assignment, or is it acceptable to propose a phased approach with initial training and capacity-building, leaving full implementation to local partners beyond the project period?

Response:

The preferred approach is not to establish a fully operational and externally managed monitoring network by the end of the assignment, but rather to lay the foundations for a sustainable, community-driven monitoring initiative. The primary objective is to build local capacity—particularly among youth—for basic, practical marine monitoring that is adaptable to community-level realities and directly supports informed, adaptive management decisions.

The consultant is therefore expected to:

- Deliver tailored training for local youth on fundamental marine monitoring methods appropriate to the coastal ecosystems in question (e.g., reef health, mangrove conditions, fish species abundance);
- Emphasize data literacy and local relevance, ensuring that participants not only learn how to collect reliable data but also how to interpret it meaningfully within their community context;
- Co-develop a simple, realistic 6-month marine monitoring activity plan with community stakeholders and youth participants. This plan should outline the tools, methods, frequency, roles, and responsibilities for ongoing monitoring that can continue with local leadership and minimal external input;
- Where appropriate, ensure that data collection protocols align with national or provincial Fisheries and Environment Ministries' monitoring frameworks, so that community-generated data may contribute to formal databases or be recognized by technical agencies.
- While implementation of the full monitoring plan may extend beyond the consultant's assignment period, the groundwork must be solid: a trained and motivated youth cohort, a usable monitoring toolkit (including templates, indicators, and procedures), and a locally owned monitoring workplan that communities are confident to carry forward.

Additional Notes:

Monitoring activities should be co-designed with community leaders, fishers, and women's and youth groups to ensure inclusive participation and long-term utility. Where possible, linkages should be explored with existing local or regional marine monitoring networks or initiatives to foster peer learning and sustainability. The approach should remain flexible, culturally grounded, and guided by local priorities, ensuring that community knowledge and values are integrated into the monitoring process

**Question 3:**

**Language and Format of Deliverables:**

Should all deliverables, including community-facing materials (e.g., training manuals, awareness tools), be produced exclusively in English, or are there expectations for translation into Bislama or local languages?

Response:

All formal deliverables submitted to SPREP, including reports and technical documents, are expected to be produced in English. This includes the main outputs such as the Stakeholder Engagement and



Consultation Report, Rapid Ecological Baseline and Socio-Economic Assessment Report, CBMCA Management Plan and any formal submissions associated with the project's contractual obligations.

For community-facing materials, there is more flexibility and cultural consideration:

- Training manuals and technical guides can be developed in English, but it is expected that trainings themselves will be delivered in Bislama, to ensure accessibility and full comprehension by community participants.
- Where needed, on-the-ground translation and facilitation support can be arranged through local facilitators. The project team can assist in identifying or engaging these facilitators upon request from the consultant.
- CBMCA Management Plan, which is a key output of this assignment, will be translated into Bislama by the project team, to ensure broad community understanding and ownership of the plan.
- The consultant should remain mindful of the importance of language accessibility in both written and verbal communications with communities and ensure that all engagements are conducted in a culturally appropriate and inclusive manner. Where feasible, visual tools and participatory methods should complement written materials to reinforce understanding across different literacy levels.

**Question 4:**

**Role of Local Lead Person Identified by VFD:**

Could you confirm whether this individual is already engaged, and what their formal role will be in relation to the consultant's activities (e.g., liaison, co-facilitator, field coordinator)?

**Response:**

The individual identified by the Vanuatu Fisheries Department (VFD) will be formally introduced to the consultant team once the assignment has commenced. This person will serve as a local liaison and community coordinator, supporting the smooth implementation of field activities.

Specifically, their role will include:

- Coordinating and facilitating community meetings, including introductions and helping navigate local protocols;
- Providing translation support, especially during consultations and trainings;
- Ensuring alignment of activities with ongoing Fisheries initiatives, particularly those related to Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) or Community-Based Marine Areas (CBMAs);
- Offering contextual advice and guidance on culturally appropriate approaches and stakeholder dynamics.
- It is important to note that this individual will not be involved in technical data collection or in drafting project reports but can assist by offering input or feedback as needed throughout the process to ensure local relevance and consistency with Fisheries' broader objectives.

**Question 5:**

**Budget Format and Inclusions:**

- a. Should the financial proposal include all anticipated community engagement costs (e.g., venue hire, refreshments, transport, per diems)?
- b. If so, does SPREP have standard rates or budget guidelines for such expenses in Vanuatu?

Response:

No, the financial proposal should not include costs related to community engagement or participation, such as venue hire, refreshments, community transport, or per diems for participants. These costs will be covered directly by SPREP for any organized events such as community workshops or consultations. The project is to be advised in advance 7 weeks prior on when work is to be carried out on the ground.

The consultant's financial proposal should focus solely on costs directly related to the implementation of their responsibilities, including: Travel and accommodation for field visits, Personnel time and professional fees, Costs related to leading consultations and data collection activities, Preparation of deliverables (e.g., reports, training materials), Any necessary equipment or tools required to carry out the tasks.

If there are specific cost categories where clarification is needed, SPREP can provide further guidance. However, there are no standard SPREP rates to apply for the consultant's internal expenses—those should be determined based on realistic and justifiable needs for delivering the assignment.

**Question 6:**

**Available Budget:**

Is there an indicative budget range or ceiling allocated for this consultancy that applicants should be aware of when preparing their financial proposal?

Response:

There is no fixed indicative budget ceiling provided for this consultancy, as the selection will follow a competitive bidding process. Applicants are encouraged to submit a realistic and cost-effective financial proposal that aligns with their proposed methodology, workplan, and timeline for delivering the required outputs.

While value for money will be a key consideration, the proposed budget should reflect the necessary level of effort, expertise, and logistical requirements to conduct the work to a high standard. Proposals that demonstrate a strong balance between quality and cost-efficiency will be viewed favorably.

**Question 7:**

Can you please provide an indicative budget for this project

Response:

Same as above

**Question 8:**

Please advise if travel and related expenses for in-country engagement are to be costed in the project budget or dealt with separately

Response:

Yes, the project budget must include all consultant travel and related expenses required to undertake the assignment, including international and in-country travel to and within Vanuatu, particularly the cost of reaching Tanna and any internal logistics needed to carry out fieldwork.

However, costs specifically related to community engagement logistics—such as venue hire, refreshments, participant per diems, and local coordination of community meetings—will be covered directly by SPREP. Consultants are only expected to budget for their own travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs associated with delivering the technical aspects of the assignment.

**Question 9:**

Please explain in more detail the expectations for the rapid ecological baseline assessment. Is this simply a rapid visual assessment or more detailed recording species diversity and numbers?

Response:

We encourage bidders to propose their own methodology for conducting the rapid ecological baseline assessment, as part of demonstrating their technical approach and understanding of the context. While this is not expected to be an extensive or comprehensive ecological survey, the assessment should go beyond a simple visual check.

The objective is to conduct a focused and time-efficient assessment that can capture key ecological indicators, such as species diversity, abundance, habitat condition, and any visible signs of ecosystem stress or degradation. Ideally, the approach should be adaptable to community-level participation, meaning it must be simple enough to explain and share with local stakeholders, but also rigorous enough to inform initial management decisions.

We welcome proposals that incorporate existing or proven tools (e.g., Reef Check, LMMA frameworks, or simplified biodiversity scoring systems) and can be implemented within the timeframe available. The findings should be communicable and useful to communities to support their own monitoring and adaptive management planning.

**Question 10:**

Please explain in more detail the expectations for the socio-economic assessment. Is this simply a qualitative assessment of socio-economic values, threats and opportunities based on consultation outcomes?

Response:

Similar to the expectations for the rapid ecological assessment, we encourage bidders to propose their own methodology for the socio-economic assessment. The approach should be practical, context-specific, and feasible within the project timeframe and budget.

The assessment is expected to be primarily qualitative, drawing on community consultations and available secondary data, with a focus on identifying key socio-economic values, perceived threats, and opportunities related to marine resource use. The main goal is to understand how local communities depend on marine resources for their livelihoods, food security, and income, and to provide information that can support community-led adaptive management decisions.

Bidders are encouraged to:

- Use simple and participatory methods appropriate for the local context (e.g., focus group discussions, interviews, community mapping).
- Identify basic socio-economic indicators relevant to marine resource use and governance.
- Ensure that findings are easily communicated back to communities to inform planning and prioritization.

**Question 11:**

The Terms of Reference describe the duty station as Port Vila, Vanuatu. Please clarify if international consultants/consortia are eligible?

**Response:**

Yes they can also apply

**Question 12:**

Time frames are very tight for the scope of works. For example, the proposed stakeholder consultation phase, to occur prior to the process to develop the management plan, has a tentative delivery date of June. This phase alone is likely to be particularly time-consuming. It is also possible that PFIC may take many weeks, despite initial agreements.

- a. To what extent will PEBACC+ team members facilitate stakeholder meetings and the PFIC process?
- b. How flexible is the proposed project timelines?

**Response:**

The total timeframe allocated for this consultancy is six months, and we expect all key activities, including stakeholder consultations, the FPIC process, and management planning—to be conducted within this period. However, we acknowledge the intensity of the consultation phase, and if necessary, a no-cost extension may be considered toward the end of the assignment to allow for the proper finalization and consolidation of outputs.

**a. Role of the PEBACC+ Team in Stakeholder Engagement and FPIC:**

- The PEBACC+ Project Coordinator in-country will support the coordination and logistics of stakeholder meetings and help facilitate introductions and engagement on the ground.
- Initial FPIC (Free, Prior, and Informed Consent) has already been secured at the tribal level to proceed with engagement.

- Nonetheless, it remains important that FPIC is revisited at each major phase (e.g., during planning meetings and workshops) to ensure continued consent and participation, particularly when engaging directly with communities. An FIC form template is already available for the project.
- The consultant is expected to lead and facilitate the actual meetings and workshops, with the project team providing logistical and cultural support as needed.

b. Flexibility of Project Timelines:

The six-month timeframe is firm for planning purposes, and we encourage bidders to design a realistic and efficient methodology within this window. That said, the project is open to considering adjustments, particularly if delays arise due to unavoidable circumstances (e.g., weather, community availability, or FPIC-related factors). Any such extension would require justification and formal approval, and should only be requested toward the end of the original implementation period.

Bidders should clearly indicate in their proposal:

- The number of stakeholder meetings anticipated.
- A realistic activity timeline aligned with the scope of work.
- Whether your team will directly manage consultation logistics, and if so, ensure those costs are included in your financial proposal (SPREP will not cover these separately).

**Question 13:**

Our proposed approach is based on years of relevant experience that includes our own Intellectual Property. In the event that our team does not win the bid, what assurances can SPREP provide that relevant IP will be secure?

Response:

SPREP fully respects the confidentiality and Intellectual Property (IP) of all bidders. All proposals submitted as part of this tender process are treated as confidential and are used solely for the purpose of evaluation in accordance with SPREP's procurement policies.

In the event that your team is not selected, any proprietary methodologies, tools, or other IP included in your proposal will not be shared, disclosed, or used by SPREP or passed on to any third party. SPREP does not retain any rights over proprietary content submitted in proposals, except where explicitly agreed upon in writing.

We encourage bidders to clearly mark any confidential or proprietary sections of their proposals, and to avoid disclosing unnecessary sensitive material if not required for evaluation. If selected, any further use or adaptation of proprietary tools or methods would be subject to mutually agreed contractual terms.

**Question 14:**

What is the indicative budget allocated to this project?

Response:

[Refer to answer on question 6 above](#)

**Question 15:**

Based on experience supporting communities in establishing conservation areas, we believe that a minimum of one year is typically required to ensure sufficient community dialogue, capacity building, ownership and FPIC. Is there any flexibility on the 6-months contract duration?

Response:

[Refer to answer on question 12 above](#)

**Question 16:**

Could you provide an indication of the maximum budget allocated for this contract?

Response:

[Refer to answer on question 6 above](#)

**Question 17:**

Could you share background information on the level of community support for the Marine Conservation Area, including whether consensus among the 12 landowning groups has already been confirmed, or if the project is expected to support achieving it?

Response:

[Refer to answer on question 12 above](#)