



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to review mechanisms to facilitate virtual collaboration among Contracting Parties

Background

The [Convention on Wetlands](#) is an intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It was the first of the modern global multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and remains the only MEA dedicated to the conservation of a specific critical ecosystem.

At COP14 (November 2022) Contracting Parties adopted Resolution [XIV.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Ramsar Convention](#), on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention with a specific interest in exploring online tools or platforms that will facilitate virtual collaboration between Parties. This consultancy will provide the Secretariat with information to fulfil two requests (paragraphs 11 and 15) of the Secretariat within the Resolution.

Tasks

At the end of this consultancy, the Secretariat will have:

- **Deliverable 1:** An analysis of possible approaches, including possible online systems, and in particular a closed members' portal, continuously updated member address lists, and further improved access to online documents that would enhance collaboration between Contracting Parties intersessionally, including, but not limited to, in working groups and in the preparation of draft resolutions by allowing Parties to submit and provide comments on draft resolutions. Systems utilized by Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations should be considered for adaptation to the Convention. The analysis should include a cost and benefit comparison of possible systems and how a system and its implementation would address participation gaps between Parties with different levels of internet access. It is envisioned that following identification of possible approaches and systems, that the identified approaches and systems will be evaluated against functional requirements and other considerations using a matrix approach.
- **Deliverable 2:** An assessment of the challenges affecting the practices of the Convention during the global pandemic period and proposals of ways to enhance decision-making procedures and to maintain the full and effective participation of all Contracting Parties to enable the effective operation of the Convention during exceptional circumstances, including by identifying any possible amendments to the [Rules of Procedure](#) and taking into account best practices of other international bodies. This deliverable is to address how decision-making processes can optimally take place absent physical meetings.

Qualifications

Demonstrable knowledge and experience in the utilization of online platforms that facilitate collaboration between a large number (200+) of individuals in multiple languages with varying levels of internet access. Of particular interest is experience with UN, intergovernmental organizations or membership-based organizations.

Timeline

First drafts of the two deliverables are to be delivered to the Secretariat in a Word document by 24 March. Following feedback from the Secretariat, final drafts are to be delivered to the Secretariat by 7 April.

Budget

A maximum budget of CHF 10.000 is available for the project. Proposals will be evaluated on both the quality of the proposal and the cost.

Proposals

Consultants should submit an Expression of Interest addressing the Terms of Reference that includes:

- Demonstrated understanding of the project and the required outcomes;
- Details of the proposed approach to the project;
- CV and examples of previous experience and relevant projects, and experience and roles of team members, and contact details of at least two referees;
- Evidence of capacity to complete the project as specified within the indicative timeline;
- A fixed-priced quotation for each phase of the project, inclusive of all costs (including travel and materials);
- A statement regarding pecuniary, actual or potential conflict of interest.

The closing date for Expressions of Interest is **1 March 2023**. Please submit your written proposal (in one PDF document) to aldous@ramsar.org