Clarifications to Bidder’s Questions:

Maerl habitat mapping Project 2025-26: Fal and Helford SAC

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| 1 | Regarding statement in RFQ section 2.1 “As part of this project, the newly collected data will be combined with data from previous surveys carried out by Envision Ltd (2023 & 2024) and CIFCA (2023) to enable the distribution, extent and condition of subtidal maerl communities of the Falmouth Bay to St Austell Bay SPA, which overlaps the Fal and Helford SAC, and Manacles MCZ, to be reported on.”. Could you explain what you mean by the ‘data from previous surveys carried out by Envision Ltd (2023 & 2024) and CIFCA (2023)’. We do not believe that the areas in the RfQ overlap with the work Envision Marine Ltd did previously, and later in the RfQ it only mentions combining previous data from the CIFCA side scan surveys from 2021, which we think sounds more appropriate. | To confirm, the survey area is only within the SPA which overlaps the SAC boundary plus additional small areas shown in the RFQ map e.g. further past St Mawes and The Manacles. It does not include areas where Envision Marine Ltd previously surveyed (Old Wall, Bizzies and further East). The resulting dataset (from surveys carried out in 2025) will be combined by Natural England to provide ‘the picture’ of maerl in the SPA as a whole. It is correct that the SSS dataset which was carried out by the CIFCA in 2021/2 will be required to be utilised. |
| 2 | Would you consider proposals which provide DDV only sampling to assess the distribution, extent and community composition of maerl habitat within beds within the Fal and Helford SAC? | Yes, we will consider this proposal, however the inclusion of side scan sonar in the methodology is an important component of our scoring due to previous surveys having utilised this survey design. We are required to award the contract to whomever can deliver the highest quality survey at the best possible price, therefore should we receive a bid which includes both DDV and SSS within budget, then this would receive a higher score. |
| 3 | Is there any scope for increasing the budget for the project? | Not at the time of writing. |
| 4 | Would you be happy to receive submissions for alternative scopes that fit within the stated budget, e.g. acoustic survey only? | Please see answer to Question 2. We welcome quotes for the full scope at a different budget point if that is how you would cost the work, but we cannot guarantee that there would be any increased budget available for this project. |
| 5 | Do you have an estimate of the amount of data to be collected from St Mawes Bank in terms of video duration / no. still images? | The estimate is approximately 10-15 video tows containing video only from an ROV, of approximately 250m length each, however this is approximate. If possible, please quote for 1 video tow of 250m length to indicate how much each tow would cost. |
| 6 | Can you indicate the type and amount of data collected by Envision from the SPA and how you envisage this will be integrated with the new dataset? | The dataset from Envision (2023 and 2024) will not be required to be integrated into the new dataset by the contractor. The only dataset currently required to be utilised by the contractor is the CIFCA side scan sonar dataset created in 2021 from Falmouth Bay. |
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