Clarifications to Bidder’s Questions:

Update to the Maritime Cliff and Slope Priority Habitat Inventory Layer

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| 1 | 3D data requirement – is the expectation that bidders deliver new 3D surface models and fly-throughs? | Yes, while we hope to let this contract as a single piece of work (with one bidder completing both steps 1 and 2), we recognise there are two main steps to the project. Step 1 as you note is focused on updating the Maritime Cliff and Slope PHI layer using the data sources we have suggested in the RfQ - this is a desk-based exercise requiring GI analysis skills and an understanding of coastal environments. While Step 2 (following site prioritisation) should include an element of fieldwork carrying out a site visit and producing 3D surface models and fly-throughs for a small number of mutually agreed cliff sites (likely to be soft cliff locations which are subject to cliff recession). This element of the work will build on and develop our understanding of remote sensing and data capture technologies (following GeoData 2022). We are particularly interested in how they can be used to map complex coastal cliff habitats and geomorphological features. In addition, the use of 3D models/ fly-throughs can provide an opportunity to engage and explain coastal cliff environments to a wider audience, which are generally poorly understood. |
| 2 | Scope of coverage – is the project intended to update the entire Maritime Cliff and Slope PHI layer nationally (i.e. all qualifying coastline), or is the focus on a subset of priority areas like soft cliffs? Understanding the geographic scale will help us shape the right technical approach? | In terms of your second question round the *Scope of coverage* - we see this as a being undertaken at two scales.  Step 1 is to update the national (England) Maritime Cliff and Slope PHI - so should include all qualifying areas of the English coast using the data sources we have suggested in the RfQ.  In contrast, step 2 (following site prioritisation) will focus on a few localities (we have suggested a minimum of 3 locations depending on budget). |
| 3 | **Clarification - Step 2 – Capture more detailed data using earth observation and ground-truthing**  The location of, and proximity to each other of the three key sites to be surveyed as part of Step 2 will have a significant influence both the survey method and costs for this stage of the study. To help us ensure we provide the most economical approach, and a fair comparison can be made across tenders, please can Natural England propose 3 sites to use as the basis for the tender. | As you have read in the brief, stage 2 of the work requires a number of sites to be assessed on the ground, with ground-truthing and/or locally derived data, together with 3D surface models and ‘fly[1]through’s illustrating the key features and changes. The locations of these will be identified as one the outputs of stage 1. In the brief we have suggested three locations should be considered (obviously if budget allows, we would be interested in including additional areas). And we foresee these sites being geographically spaced around the county so to encompass a number of different cliff features and site conditions.  My colleague Elizabeth Hopley (earlier this year) has undertaken a high-level review of SSSI cliff sites (where Maritime Cliff and Slope is identified as a SSSI feature - noting that for some cliff SSSI’s Maritime Cliff and Slope is not consistently applied). The exercise looked at which sites have features which would not be protected using the 50-year erosion rate predicted by NCERM2. This has provided us with a short-list of sites, so we do have an indication of where the greatest effects of coastal erosion/ recession are occurring related to SSSI boundaries. Looking at this list we have a site in North Yorkshire, 3 sites in Cornwall, 2 in East Sussex and Kent and one on the Isle of Wight, but we also know that there are additional sites in Norfolk which are not included in the above. For costing purposes, we would suggest using three locations including the Isle of Wight (which is a priority from our point of view) and two other counties from the list above - but we ask that this remains somewhat flexible to allow the results of stage 1 to be considered. |
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