A white background with black and white clouds

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Request for Quotation

Rapid Evidence Review of peatland degradation associations with water quality and the Water Environment Regulations (WFD).

19/08/2025

Request for Quotation

Rapid Evidence Review of peatland degradation associations with the Water Environment Regulations (WFD).

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: [NationalPeatland@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:NationalPeatland@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Date: 6th October 2025

Time: 12pm

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

The EA National Peatland Team will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 12th September 2025 at 17:00 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 29th September 2025 at 12:00 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 6th October 2025 at 12:00 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 20th October 2025 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 27th October 2025 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 31st March 2026 |

Section 1: General Information

Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| “Authority” | means The Environment Agency who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The Authority’s Standard Good and Services Terms & Conditions (used for purchases under £50k)can be located on the [Environment Agency Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about/procurement#conditions-of-contract) and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT.

Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Find a Tender Service (FTS) in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a 'Sub Central Contracting Authority' with a publication threshold of £30,000' inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via FTS, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract.

A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

Information Security requirements

The Government Security Classification Policy (GSCP) sets out the administrative system used by HM Government (HMG) to protect information and data assets appropriately against prevalent threats through the use of ‘classification tiers’. HMG uses three classification tiers; OFFICIAL, SECRET and TOP SECRET. Each tier provides a set of recommended baseline behaviours and a set of protective controls, which are proportionate to the threat profile for that tier AND the potential impact of a compromise, accidental loss or incorrect disclosure of information held within that tier.

Tenderers and suppliers must ensure that appropriate protective security controls are in place to comply with the GSCP and manage the information shared and received as part of this tender exercise.

A full suite of guidance documents is available on GOV.UK, with specific guidance for tenderers and suppliers set out in [Guidance 1.6 - Contractors and Contracting Authorities.docx (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166155/Guidance_1.6_-_Contractors_and_Contracting_Authorities.pdf).

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The Authority expects suppliers to declare where they have used AI software in the creation of Tender responses or intend to use AI software in the performance of the contract. How any AI software was, or will be, used should be to be declared within the technical submission part of the tender. We may require you to answer specific question/s on this topic, particularly where the Authority expects that usage is highly likely or clearly relates to the contract requirements.

Suppliers must follow any guidelines or regulations related to AI use and declarations as indicated in the [PPN 2/24 Improving Transparency of AI use in Procurement](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ppn-0224-improving-transparency-of-ai-use-in-procurement/ppn-0224-improving-transparency-of-ai-use-in-procurement-html).

Any information, instructions, or data provided by the Authority to suppliers as part of this tender, the requirements, or contract should not be directly inserted into Generative AI software (such as Gemini, ChatGPT, or CoPilot) without prior permission, unless this information is clearly published in the public domain.

Use of any Authority confidential tender information for training AI software is prohibited. it is advised that Defra’s data or instructions, or anything marked as confidential should not be directly inserted into AIs. For example, putting Authority’s instruction email into Gemini, ChatGPT, or CoPilot is not recommended.

If you intend to use AI to provide goods or services to the Authority, then you are required to complete a declaration which is simply answering the question stated within the 'Information to be returned’. The answer to this question will not be used in scoring your quote.

Protection of Personal Data

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.

* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with the Environment Agency staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Section 2: The Invitation

Specification of Requirements

Background to Environment Agency

The Environment Agency was established in 1996 to protect and improve the environment. We are an Executive Non-departmental Public Body responsible to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Our principal aims are to protect and improve the environment, and to promote sustainable development.

We put the climate emergency at the heart of everything we do and help society adapt to environmental challenges such as flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal change.

We improve and protect the quality of our air, land and water by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations and believe a healthy and diverse environment enhances people’s lives and contributes to sustainable and resilient economic growth.

We know we cannot do this alone. We work together with local, national and global partners. This includes Defra group (the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), wider government, businesses, local councils, charities, civil society groups, local communities and international bodies.

We strive to make the right decisions today, for the people, wildlife and environment of tomorrow.

Peatland Water Quality and WFD

Background to the specific work area relevant to this purchase

The Environment Agency National Peatland Programme Team was set up to support the delivery of the England Peat Action Plan and the government's Net Zero: Build Back Greener strategy, which sets a target of restoring 280,000 hectares of peat in England by 2050. Understanding influences on peatlands which lead to degradation is key to halting decline. Additionally, recognising that degraded peatlands contribute to a reduction in natural capital benefits such as clean drinking water, healthy habitats and natural flood management is also important to help drive long term change. This project focuses on water quality issues arising from peatlands in headwater catchments (or upland peatlands), with an additional focus on the Water Environment Regulations (WFD).

This project aims to identify what connections there are between peatland degradation and water quality issues, how that relates to the Water Environment Regulations (WFD) and what best indicates water quality health in peatland dominated catchments through a Rapid Evidence Review. There may be evidence from different scales of peatland landscapes, which should be accounted for in outputs and there may be evidence gaps which need to be highlighted. Peatland areas in use for lowland agricultural purposes should not be considered within this evidence review.

Identifying the influence of peatland degradation on water quality and the WFD is a vital part of regulating water quality within upland peatland dominated catchments, as well as finding a solution. Monitoring of the WFD in England is undertaken at quarterly intervals via spot sampling and includes a specific set of criteria. The restrictions of sampling may not reflect the true status of peatland dominated water bodies within a catchment due to the flashy and sporadic nature of flow and distance from source the samples are taken. Additionally, water quality is a key driver of peatland restoration and understanding how best to approach ongoing monitoring efforts of water quality will help inform progress against targets.

Outputs will enable better understanding of pressures on peatlands and the resultant impacts on water bodies. From this, a picture will be built of what can be described as a suspected, probable or confirmed Reason for Not Achieving Good (RNAG) Status which will help inform action from the Environment Agency and partners to support positive change in peatland catchments. The better represented these issues can be within WFD monitoring, the more likely peatland restoration will be included within River Basin Management Plans and therefore prioritised for action within a river basin.

Using rapid evidence review techniques this project will review current evidence with outputs that describe what is known about the links between peatland degradation, water quality and the WFD, whether the WFD is a suitable method of measuring peatland catchment health, and if not, what would be more appropriate. Where evidence does not include reference to WFD but is relevant to water quality parameters linked to the WFD, this should be included within the evidence review with caveats. The outputs will seek to identify trends and themes within the subject area, for example land management activities, water quality components, pressures etc. It is likely that a mixture of human derived and natural processes influence the subject matter for this review and that the interaction between these will be complex. We would welcome contractors to consider different scenarios of hydrological state and how drought and inundation may impact water quality within a peatland catchment. Outputs should be relevant across all 4 UK Nations.

The project will run from October 2025 through to March 2026, with reporting due by March 31st 2026.

Requirement

Specific Objectives:

* Provide an overview of current understanding of peatland catchment water quality health.
* Summarise evidence linking peatland degradation to Water Environment Regulations (Water Framework Directive) linked water quality parameters.
* Provide suggestions of best practice for monitoring water quality in peatland dominated catchments.
* Outline what ‘good’ status within the WFD looks like for peatlands.
* Collaborate with Peer reviewer to ensure relevancy across multiple UK nations.

Contractors are encouraged to create innovative, interactive and visual ways of displaying the summaries, conclusions and thematic outcomes of the review that will be informative and accessible.

Deliverables:

1. Summary of Most Recent Evidence.

A literature review focusing on water quality, the Water Framework Directive specific Biological and Physico-chemical components, and where relevant, priority substances, linked to peatlands will be undertaken to answer the questions:

What are the effects of upland peatland degradation on water quality within water bodies in peatland dominated catchments?

What are the effects of upland peatland degradation on Ecological Quality Standards and supporting chemical elements within the WFD on water bodies?

What causes peatland catchments to not achieve good?

* A literature review focusing on water quality, the Water Framework Directive specific Biological and Physico-chemical components, and where relevant, priority substances, linked to peatlands will be undertaken.
* The literature review will first aim to establish wider peatland degradation and water quality issues and links, then compare this to evidence for impact on WFD parameters.
* The review will highlight where there are known connections between degraded peatlands and WFD biological and physico-chemical components.
* The contractor will specify which Ecological Quality Standard components and which chemical components are most likely to reliably indicate condition of peatland catchment water bodies and which are less relevant.
* Associations of land use or pressures, such as management and interventions, or other actions influencing water quality will be highlighted or themes identified. It may be that some actions are positive and some are negative, this will be highlighted and weight of evidence noted within each theme.
* It is likely that a mixture of human derived and natural processes influence the subject matter for this review and that the interaction between these will be complex. We would welcome contractors to consider different scenarios of hydrological state and how drought and inundation may impact water quality within a peatland catchment.
* The review will indicate evidence gaps and areas which require more research to be able to draw conclusions.
* The review will contain narrative and visualisation of information.

Consideration will be given to literature from the following sources:

* Academic and field-based evidence from temperate peatland systems (including UK, Western Europe and North America) and will exclude tropical peatlands.
* Grey literature

1. What does 'good' status look like for peatland catchments?

* The WFD was not designed to monitor peatland degradation unless there are issues of nutrient enrichment, and so drawing conclusions from the peatland dominated areas can be challenging.
* It is likely that the effects of peatland degradation on water bodies results in changes which are challenging to biodiversity, but peatlands may need an alternative approach to those in non-peatland areas as the WFD metrics were not designed with peatland catchments in mind, but rather nutrient and pollution.
* Using WFD monitored [Ecological Quality Standards (EQS](https://www.wfduk.org/)) and supporting elements, indicate what High, Good, Bad and Poor status looks like within a peatland catchment.
* Indicate where this differs from standard approaches to WFD EQS.

1. How can we best monitor water quality within peatland catchments to provide a picture of overall health?

* Suggest a set of water quality parameters that can, in combination, indicate peatland health, even if those parameters fall outside of the WFD list.
* If there are different methodologies for different scales of interest, these should be outlined.
* If there are different methodologies which will best show a picture of overall health these will be highlighted.
* If there are different methodologies which would fit themes within water quality parameters or interest areas then those will be highlighted. For example ecological, chemical, drinking water, overall health etc.
* Pros and cons of each option should be included.
* Cost estimates, where possible, should be included.
* Suggestions will include justification and evidence.
* Information will be presented with visual supporting documents and be appropriate evidenced.

1. Identify available data which could be reanalysed within WFD metrics. Where previous research has collected data that could be reanalysed to indicate WFD water body status, undertake the reanalysis.

* Through the literature review, identify data that would be available to reanalyse using WFD metrics where possible.
* Reanalyse data available to show status of a water body within the WFD standards. Approaches could look at both the current WFD standards and the proposed 'good' status generated from this work.

Outputs:

* An evidence review outlining the answers to the questions listed above, including an evidence map/maps describing different themes identified through the review process. Themed groupings showing weight of evidence, credibility and other relevant information will be clear. The review will contain a narrative, but also innovative knowledge sharing to best demonstrate findings, preferably in a visual format to make the information useable and accessible.
* Well evidenced suggestions of how to approach water quality monitoring to measure catchment health.
* A description of what 'good' status looks like within a peatland dominated catchment, within the water framework directive.
* Reanalysed data with assigned status from WFD.

Created works such as reports, images, map layers, films, audio recordings, software, code, and datasets or databases are legally protected from certain types of re-use. Where you are acquiring an existing work or commissioning the creation of a new work which may incorporate a third party's work, you need to specify compatibility with your use, sharing and onward licensing requirements. See the guidance for more help.

Sustainability

The Environment Agency protects and improves the environment and is committed to reducing the sustainability impacts of its activities directly and through its supply chains. We expect the Contractor to share this commitment and adopt a sound, proactive sustainable approach in keeping with the 25 year environmental plan/our commitments compliant with all applicable legislation. This includes understanding and reducing direct and indirect sustainability impacts and realising opportunities, including but not restricted to; resilience to climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water use and quality, biosecurity, resource efficiency and waste, reducing the risk of pollution, biodiversity, modern slavery and equality, diversity & inclusion, negative community impacts.

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring the Contracting Authority is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to the Contracting Authority’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project.

This project is unlikely to require site visits and use of vehicles and is intended to be a desk based exercise, however if the contractor sees the need to incorporate aspects away from the desk that should be described in their proposal and accounted for in sustainability commitments.

Meetings between the contractor and the Environment Agency will be conducted online via MS Teams unless otherwise stated. This will avoid unnecessary emissions from vehicle usage.

The Supplier/Contractor will provide such evidence of addressing its sustainability impacts and compliance with the contract requirements when the Authority reasonably requests.

Outputs and Contract Management

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Deliverable | Responsible Party | Date of completion |
| D1 | Summary of latest learning (Literature review and visual knowledge sharing) | Contractor | 31st March 2026 |
| D2 | Based on current evidence, suggest guidelines for monitoring water quality of blanket bog dominated catchments.  Review of gaps and cost to define parameters or roll out monitoring. | Contractor | 31st March 2026 |
| D3 | Define parameters for High, Good, Poor and Bad status for both biological and chemical for upland peatland dominated catchments. | Contractor | 31st March 2026 |
| D5 | Review of data within the peatland research community and re-analysis of data if sampling techniques meet standards | Contractor | 31st March 2026 |
| D6 | Work with Peer Reviewer to ensure multi-nation relevance. | Contractor and Peer Reviewer |  |

The Environment Agency Peatland Team will be available via email and MS Teams when needed. The planned approach to review progress will be steering board meetings to be held every 4-6 weeks after the initial start-up meeting.

Reports will be presented in Word format with appropriate glossary of terms and abbreviations.

Startup meeting will commence W/B:

03/11/2025

* A draft report is expected to be sent by February 4th 2026 to enable the Environment Agency to read, review and make comment before the final report is delivered on March 31st.
* A wash-up meeting will be held a month after the final report deadline to consider next steps, dissemination and any further discussions as needed.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Meeting | * Description | * Week Beginning |
| Startup | Contractors and steering group meeting to discuss project outline, contractor approach and to clarify any outstanding questions.  The contractor will also outline the timeline for expected delivery to the steering group. | 03/11/2025 |
| 1st check in | Progress update. | 24/11/2025 |
| 2nd check in | Progress update. | 15/12/2025 |
| 3rd check in | Progress update. | 19/01/2026 |
| 4th check in | Progress update. | 16/02/2026 |
| 5th check in | Draft reports/outputs to be shared for comment prior to meeting.  Feedback and progress update. | 02/03/2026 |
| 6th check in | Draft reports/outputs to be shared for comment prior to meeting.  Feedback and progress update. | 09/03/2026 |
| 7th check in | Final drafts to be shared ahead of meeting. At this stage minimal feedback would be expected from the steering group and contractors will be nearly ready to give final report. | 23/03/2026 |
| Wash up | A month to 6 weeks post deadline to check in and see how best to use the information. | 11/05/2026 |

Annex 1:

Further Information

The Production of Quick Scoping Reviews and Rapid Evidence Assessments. A How to Guide : [Production\_of\_quick\_scoping\_reviews\_and\_rapid\_evidence\_assessments.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f3a76ed915d74e33f5206/Production_of_quick_scoping_reviews_and_rapid_evidence_assessments.pdf)

Search Strategy suggestion - to be built upon by the contractor.

* Water Quality AND
  + peatlands, blanket bog, Raised bog, upland peatland, Moorland
  + Land management activities: drainage/drained, grazing, burning, cutting, forestry/afforestation/deforestation etc
* Water Framework Directive, WFD, AND
  + peatlands, blanket bog, Raised bog, upland peatland, Moorland
  + Land management activities: drainage/drained, grazing, burning, cutting, forestry/afforestation/deforestation etc
* Peatland Degradation AND…
  + Ecological, invertebrate, fish, macrophyte, plant, diatom, algae.
  + Physico-Chemical: pH, acidity, metals, heavy metals, DOC, POC, sediment, nutrients, phosphorus, nitrogen, Biological Oxygen Demand, Dissolved Oxygen, plus any other components relevant to WFD or wider water quality.
* Literature from - UK, Europe, North America.
* Appropriate combinations of suggestions above.

Out of Scope:

* Evidence from systems vastly different to the UK, including tropical peatlands are out of scope of this review. Evidence from similar climates and peatland types from the UK, Europe and North America can be included.
* Peatland areas in use for lowland agricultural purposes are out of the scope of this evidence review. The review should not include evidence from Lowland Agricultural Peatland areas but may consider raised bogs in headwaters, or different peatland types within headwaters.

Additional Information:

* Grey Literature can be used but with caution and appropriate recognition of weight within the overall review.
* Example themes within visualisations could be: water quality parameters/measuring components (ie pH, sediment, turbidity etc), land management activities, geography
* Peatland dominated catchments, for the purposes of this review, can be defined as: 'Operational Catchment' boundaries within surface water [Cycle 2 WFD data](https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/41cb73a1-91b7-4a36-80f4-b4c6e102651a/wfd-classification-status-cycle-2) for England, which contain greater than 50% peatland (Peaty Soils Layer 2008). This is not to say this is likely to be described in literature, but more an indication of the types of areas likely to be impacted by peatland degradation.
* Suggested software/ example for visualisation:
* [Rapid Evidence Map: Promoting Agricultural Resilience in the Middle East, Sahel, and Horn of Africa](https://developmentevidence.3ieimpact.org/egm/rapid-evidence-map-on-promoting-agricultural-resilience-in-the-middle-east-and-sahel-and-horn-of-africa-regions)
* Example papers:
* Brown, L.E., Aspray, K.L., Ledger, M.E., Mainstone, C., Palmer, S.M., Wilkes, M. and Holden, J., 2019. Sediment deposition from eroding peatlands alters headwater invertebrate biodiversity. Global Change Biology, 25(2), pp.602-619.
* Cummins, T. and Farrell, E.P., 2003. Biogeochemical impacts of clearfelling and reforestation on blanket peatland streams I. phosphorus. Forest Ecology and Management, 180(1-3), pp.545-555.
* Daniels, S.M., Evans, M.G., Agnew, C.T. and Allott, T.E.H., 2012. Ammonium release from a blanket peatland into headwater stream systems. Environmental Pollution, 163, pp.261-272.
* Donahue, T., Renou-Wilson, F., Pschenyckyj, C. and Kelly-Quinn, M., 2022, January. A Review of the Impact on Aquatic Communities of Inputs from Peatlands Drained for Peat Extraction. In Biology and Environment: Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy (Vol. 122, No. 3, pp. 145-160). Royal Irish Academy.
* Edokpa, D.A., Evans, M.G., Allott, T.E., Pilkington, M. and Rothwell, J.J., 2017. Peatland restoration and the dynamics of dissolved nitrogen in upland freshwaters. Ecological Engineering, 106, pp.44-54.
* O'Driscoll, C., O'Connor, M., de Eyto, E., Brown, L.E. and Xiao, L., 2016. Forest clearfelling effects on dissolved oxygen and metabolism in peatland streams. Journal of Environmental Management, 166, pp.250-259.
* Olsson, T.I. and Persson, B.G., 1986. Effects of gravel size and peat material concentrations on embryo survival and alevin emergence of brown trout, Salmo trutta L. Hydrobiologia, 135, pp.9-14.
* Pschenyckyj, C., Donahue, T., Kelly-Quinn, M., O’Driscoll, C. and Renou-Wilson, F., 2023. An examination of the influence of drained peatlands on regional stream water chemistry. Hydrobiologia, 850(15), pp.3313-3339.
* Ramchunder, S.J., Brown, L.E. and Holden, J., 2012. Catchment‐scale peatland restoration benefits stream ecosystem biodiversity. Journal of Applied Ecology, 49(1), pp.182-191.

Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Invoices can be submitted at milestones once agreed by the project board they have been met.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 5 months to end no later than 31st March 2026. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

We will award this contract in line with the most advantageous tender (MAT). See award criteria:

Technical – 60%

Commercial – 40%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 60% technical and 40% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 60% | Service / Product Proposal | Methodology | 4 Questions  Q1.1 (15% of technical score available)  Q1.2 (15% of technical score available)  Q1.3 (15% of technical score available)  Q1.4 (15% of technical score available) |
| Key personnel | 1 Question  Q2 (10% of technical score available) |
| Project Management and Quality Assurance | Q3 (20% of technical score available) |
| Management of sustainability and social value | 1 Question  Q4 (10% of technical score available) |
| Commercial | 40% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | 1 Question  Q5 (100% of commercial score available) |

Technical (60%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Sco res for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Questions | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1.1  Methodology  Provide details of the approaches proposed to deliver:  Outcome 1: Summary of most recent Evidence | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |
| Q1.2 Methodology  Provide details of the approaches proposed to deliver:  Outcome 2: Define what 'Good' status looks like for Peatland dominated Catchments. | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |
| Q1.3 Methodology  Provide details of the approaches proposed to deliver:  Outcome 3: outline of best practice water quality monitoring within peatland catchments to provide picture of overall health. | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |
| Q1.4 Methodology  Provide details of the approaches proposed to deliver:  Outcome 4: Ensure relevancy across all 4 UK Nations. | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |
| Q2. Key Staff  Provide details of the proposed project team and team structure that you intend to use to deliver this project, including any sub-contractors and/or associates. Please indicate relevant experience of similar projects you have undertaken in the past. | CVs for all staff should be submitted to support your response and include a table showing the staff days expected to be spent on the project per task, this table should match the staff days in the cost proposal. Please indicate relevant experience of similar projects you have undertaken in the past. |
| Q3. Project Management and Risk | Please provide your proposed project management arrangements including day to day working for the project, the proposed timetable for the project, identified risks and mitigation actions |
| Q4. Management of sustainability and social value | The Authority has set itself challenging commitments and targets to improve the environmental economic and social impacts of its estate management, operation, and procurement. These support the Government’s green commitments. The policies are included in the Authority’s sustainable procurement policy statement published at:  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-s-sustainable-procurement-policy-statement>  Within this context, please briefly explain your approach to delivering the services and how you intend to reduce negative sustainability impacts. Please discuss the methods that you will employ to demonstrate and monitor the effectiveness of your organization’s approach for this requirement |
| Q5. Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | The Contract is to be awarded as a fixed price which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.  Please provide a price for the work detailed in the Specification of Requirements, broken down into the Outputs detailed in the specification. |

Commercial (40%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a 'fixed price' which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverable used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the individual weighted scores is as follows:

* Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price ) x [40%] (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x [60%] (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

Once all evaluators have completed their individual evaluations and provided their final scores, an average score will be calculated which will be multiplied by the selected weighting to give a weighted score representing the views of all evaluators.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* complete AI question [ ''Do you use Artificial Intelligence (AI) or machine learning tools, including large language models within your quote submission or service delivery processes.?''] response which will not be scored, is to be returned within technical response
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

[Insert either 'The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign'.] OR. ['The successful supplier will be issued the contract via a Purchase Order.']

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion, including being on the Government Debarment List.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted  If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_