Clarifications to Bidder’s Questions:

**NCEA England Peat Map Soils Analysis**

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| 1 | Moisture/Dry Matter at 105 °C  The RFQ specifies drying at 105 °C (≥16 h) as part of the method, but the outputs list only % organic content (LOI).  Please confirm whether you require us to also report moisture content and/or dry matter at 105 °C, as this is not part of our SOP. | Regarding outputs we only require reporting the loss on ignition results. |
| 2 | Ramp rate to 375 °C  The RFQ specifies a ramp rate of 6 °C/min to 375 °C. Our current SOP uses 20 °C/min.  Is 20 °C/min acceptable for your samples? | For alternate methods we ask that the methodology adheres to that set out in the RFQ, as we have different requirements to the EES soil survey and this method aligns with how our previous analysis was conducted. |
| 3 | Hold time at 375 °C  The RFQ requests a 16 h hold. Our SOP holds for 15 h 45 min.  Is 15 h 45 min acceptable? | For alternate methods we ask that the methodology adheres to that set out in the RFQ, as we have different requirements to the EES soil survey and this method aligns with how our previous analysis was conducted. |
| 4 | We have a UKAS accredited methodology for Loss on Ignition, but this is slightly different from the methodology set out in Section 2 of the RfQ. On this basis, a) will our methodology be an acceptable alternative, or b) will you need to approve our methodology prior to our bid, or c) if your methodology is mandatory, for which cannot provide UKAS accreditation, what other evidence will you need for us to demonstrate our competence? | Our methods are mandatory as this aligns with the previous round of analysis done for our project. If you cannot provide accreditation, section 3.6 in the "Specification of Requirements" outlines the information we require to demonstrate your expertise. |
| 5 | The Requirement states that testing will be required “on up to 1,800 samples”, which is approx. 78 samples per week for the intended delivery period (assuming 1 week off for Christmas). Is this a reasonably firm indication of your likely requirement or could this be subject to significant variation? | This is a reasonably firm estimate of total sample numbers. We cannot comment on the distribution of samples provided as that is dependent on the work of field surveyor contractors. |
| 6 | We understand that soil samples may be received at our lab from multiple Surveyors. Please can you confirm that all such Surveyors would provide Chain of Custody documentation in a standard format across this assignment. | Yes, our field survey protocol includes instructions for Chain of Custody documentation for the samples. |
| 7 | Please can you advise whether the scope of work includes a requirement for the laboratory to provide suitable containers for soil samples to the field Surveyors. If so, please advise how this would work in practice. | The contracted field surveyors are responsible for procuring sample containers. |
| 8 | Please can you confirm that all costs associated with the transport of soil samples from their source to our lab will be met by other parties and do not form part of this bid. | The contracted field surveyors are responsible for the costs for delivery of samples; these costs are not part of this bid. |
| 9 | Do you have any specific requirements in respect of turn-around time for the analysis of these samples and the provision of results? | We do not have any specific requirements at this stage as this is partially dependent on the progress of field surveys. Reporting frequencies will be agreed with the successful bidder. |
| 10 | The method doesn't meet the MCERTS UKAS accredited method, due to temp differential for the furnace element. Is this because it's a bespoke methodology or are we looking for the accredited method? | We are looking for the methodology as described in the RFQ, as this aligns with how previous analysis was done for our project. |
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