



Terms of Reference
Local Representative of the implementing partners
to support the implementation of the Programme
“EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data”
in Azerbaijan

1. Financing

European Union (ENI/2021/424-550)

Co-financing by Austria (Austrian Development Agency) and France (Artois Picardy Water Agency)

2. Procedure

Simplified procedure according to EU PRAG¹

3. Contracting authority

International Office for Water (OiEau) - France

4. Nature of contract

Fee-based service contract

5. Indicative time period of implementation

March 2022 – June 2024 with possible extension up to August 2024

6. Contract amount

Maximum amount: € 75,000

¹ Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions

7. Background information

Context

The Programme aims at improving people's wellbeing in the EU's Eastern partner countries and enabling their green transformation in line with the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Programme's activities will be clustered around two specific objectives:

To support a more sustainable use of freshwater resources through improved water policies and practices and help reduce the adverse impact of human activities on water quality and ecosystems;

To extend and improve the use of sound environmental statistics by the partner countries, and ensure greater availability of policy-relevant data for decision-makers and citizens.

Environmental and climate resilience and the promotion of fair and inclusive societies are among the key objectives on the post-2020 Eastern Partnership (EaP) agenda. It includes ambitious goals related to better air and water quality.

A far-reaching Economic and Investment Plan will underpin this agenda, aiming to mobilise EUR 17 billion in investments. The Programme will help to speed up such investments into projects that reduce pollution.

The Programme is part of the Team Europe Initiative on Water and Zero Pollution, which aims at moving towards a toxic-free environment for all citizens is an area with a strong interest from partner countries.

The identified measures build on, and ensure continuity of, the Shared Environmental Information System Phase II and the EU Water Initiative Plus for Eastern Partnership programmes. These two programmes were instrumental for modernising environmental monitoring and data analysis systems, promote evidence-based policy making, and increase the partner countries' alignment with EU and international law, in particular the Water Framework Directive.

EaP countries² are countries have made progress in a number of water policy reform areas. Since 2016, especially through the European Union Water Initiative Plus (EUWI+), River Basin Management Plans for more than 10 river basins have been refined or newly developed with assistance from the European Union. Regular multi-stakeholder National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) and peer-to-peer international exchanges have enabled water sector reforms. Transboundary cooperation has been on-going in the Kura, Neman, Dniester/Nistru, Western Dvina/Daugava, and Danube river basins. Data management platforms developed in the six countries have increased the transparency of and access to water and environmental information. Water indicators are being gradually aligned with EU and good international practice. Furthermore, ratification and implementation of MEAs has progressed and River Basin Management Plans are now coordinated in some transboundary basins.

However, there is still a need to improve the existing regulatory and institutional frameworks to bring them in line with the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), the EU acquis and UNECE legal instruments. Another task involves addressing the economic aspects of water management through the introduction/upgrade of a number of economic instruments for water resources management. Water allocation rules as well as flood protection management should also be elaborated, and incentives for water use efficiency identified and implemented. National water resource strategies should be supported by sustainable financing strategies.

Beyond the water sector, it is fundamental to fully understand natural assets, stocks and flows, and the state of the environment more generally, in order to assess risks to economic and environmental resilience, create jobs, and shift towards greener growth. Developing and putting environmental economic accounts into place is a significant task for EaP countries. This is particularly the case in high-priority areas, such as air, water, waste, and land. Though environmental-economic statistics have improved, many gaps persist.

Shortfalls in the countries' monitoring capacities prevent effective data collection. In addition to the monitoring of water quality and quantity, air quality monitoring is particularly limited or obsolete, while air pollution is often the single largest environmental health risk. Better information is needed in order to devise effective strategies to combat air pollution and reduce environment-related health risks more generally.

² Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine.

Objectives and outputs

The Programme “EU4Environment – Water resources and Environmental data” (hereinafter - the Programme) aims to operationalise several key mechanisms to preserve natural resources, thus improving people’s wellbeing in the partner countries, while enabling countries’ green growth in line with the European Green Deal and a post-COVID-19 green recovery. This will contribute towards longer-term environmental, climatic, and socio-economic resilience, and improved human health and wellbeing, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Programme’s specific objectives are:

- Specific Objective 1 “Water resources management”: Water policies and practices support more sustainable use of freshwater resources and help reduce the adverse impacts of human activities on water quality and ecosystems.
- Specific Objective 2 “Environmental statistics and open data”: The use of sound environmental statistics by the partner countries is extended and improved, and better availability of policy-relevant data to decision-makers and citizens is ensured.

To address these specific objectives, the expected outputs are listed below (each output is broken down into activities):

Component 1: Water resources management

Output 1.1 The first cycle of river basin management planning is extended

Output 1.2 Water strategies, policies and practices include climate-proofing measures

Output 1.3 The implementation of water for health agenda is making progress

Output 1.4 Novel approaches to water monitoring are further promoted

Output 1.5 The economic soundness of water strategies and policies is improved

Output 1.6 Water utilities, private sector and the general public are more closely involved in water management

Output 1.7 National and international water governance and cooperation are further strengthened

Output 1.8 Priority measures are supported through finance mobilisation

Component 2: Environmental statistics and open data

Output 2.1 Water accounting is extended

Output 2.2 Land and agriculture monitoring and data are improved

Output 2.3 Air and waste management data and statistics are improved for policy-relevant use

Output 2.4 Open data and citizen participation in data collection and analysis are further operationalised

Output 2.5 International sharing of data and networking is maintained

Organisation of implementation

The Programme, co-financed by the European Union, will be implemented in close cooperation and coordination with the Implementing Partners: three Member State agencies: Umweltbundesamt GmbH (also called “UBA” or “Environment Agency Austria”), Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and International Office for Water (OiEau, France) as well as two international organisations (OECD and UNECE).

The main target group of the Programme in the country is composed of the ministries in charge of water resources and environmental data management. Further target groups are other public institutions and agencies responsible for developing and implementing the national water policy and involved in the management of water resources and non-government stakeholders.

The planned implementation period for the Programme is from January 2022 until August 2024.

The International Office for Water (hereinafter – the Contracting Authority) shall contract an experienced expert (hereinafter – the Contractor) as the Local Representative of the implementing partners’ team in the country for the implementation of the Programme.

8. Scope of works

Purpose

The expert will act as the Local Representative of the implementing partners' team in the country for the Programme and will support the implementation of the Programme by providing water and environmental data management expertise on substantive, strategic and operational matters. He/she will assist national and international experts in the preparation and during their missions, support preparation of ToR for national activities, prepare and organise specific high-level events, and supervise contracts. The Contractor will ensure close cooperation with the implementing partners (project managers and thematic leads) and with the EU Delegation. He/she will liaise closely with the beneficiaries and other national authorities, in particular with the National Focal Points (NFP), as well as relevant national and international stakeholders. The Contractor will coordinate with other national and international water sector projects, and in particular EU-funded projects and projects funded by EU Member States in a Team Europe Initiative spirit and thereby contribute to the successful implementation of the Programme. Very close coordination should be ensured with the umbrella EU4Environment programme.

The Contractor will closely cooperate with the regional office in Kyiv (for Eastern countries) and Tbilisi (for Caucasus countries).

Scope of work

Task 1: Provide support to the Programme management and coordination in the country:

- Represent the implementing partners in the country, by liaising with the EU Delegation and establishing links with the beneficiaries and other national authorities, in particular with the National Focal Points (NFP) and Beneficiaries' Thematic Leads, as well as relevant national and international stakeholders.
- Assist in the organisation, including participation of national representatives, of any physical or virtual meetings, workshops, trainings or webinars, (sub-) regional, national or local, and thereby contribute to the execution and efficiency of the Programme.
- Closely monitor and share with the implementing partners the changes in relevant policies, legal acts, organisation, and public investments related to the project activities.
- Assist in the substantive and strategic conceptualisation and organisation of National Policy Dialogue (NPD) meetings in the country, including support to the determination of appropriate timing, focus areas, agenda development and speakers and participants. Plus support to preparation of appropriate press release and communication, and summary record development and approval.
- Ensure proper coordination with projects and activities in the country led by other actors and donors in the water and the environmental data sectors. Particular attention will be given to EU-funded projects and projects funded by EU Member States in a Team Europe Initiative spirit.
- Attend meetings outside the country at the request of the implementing partners.

Task 2: Provide support to the implementation of all activities under both Components. To implement this task the Contractor will in particular:

- Liaise regularly with, and provide substantive and strategic advice and logistical and technical support to the beneficiaries via the Ministry's National Focal Point (NFP) and other stakeholders.
- Provide assistance to, and cooperate with the Programme and project managers, thematic leaders, international experts of the EU MS consortium, OECD and UNECE before, during and after their missions and online meetings.
- Provide input to the formulation of technical specifications for service or supply contracts.
- Support the contracting of national experts or companies and coordinate, supervise and support their work, including carrying out quality checks and needed corrective action.
- Contribute to assuring good quality of analytical studies, data collection and field work.
- Provide substantive and strategic reviews and comments, providing a local-context on key documents produced by the beneficiary and implementing partners or their sub-contractors.

More specifically, the candidate should be familiar with its country's institutional arrangements, strategic priorities and organisation and with European principles regarding the topics supported, for example:

- Strategies and participative planning development and implementation at national, basin (districts and transboundary), and local scales.
- Monitoring and related laboratory analysis.
- Economic analysis and financing.
- Shared Environmental Information Systems.
- Water accounting and environment-related data management.

Task 3: Provide support to stakeholder involvement and public communication:

- Work with and support the communication and visibility team, notably the C&V Leader, of the implementing partners to ensure adequate implementation of the Programme's Communication and Visibility Plan, and facilitate the visibility of the EU, the implementing partners, and the donors of the Programme, in line with EU communication and visibility requirements and national-level priorities.
- Assist in the organisation of local and international events and participate there, if requested by the Programme Manager.
- Support public relations and recurrent visibility measures by:
 - monitor social networks and website of the Programme selecting pertinent information to be shared on social networks according to the agreed set of indicators
 - support regional assistant in maintaining an archive of press clipping featuring the Programme in local media and publications featuring the Programme through social networks
 - assist in developing photo and video archives of the Programme
 - drafting short briefs for the website and e-news
 - ensuring visibility of the EU, the implementing partners, and the donors of the Programme, in line with EU communication and visibility requirements
- Upload information online on the country specific areas dedicated to the project.

Task 4: Project organisation and administration:

Regularly interact and coordinate with the Programme and project managers of the implementing partners and thematic leads.

- Provide support to the implementing partners for project monitoring and reporting through:
 - substantive inputs and comments on work package development, workplans, etc
 - contribution to Programme's inception, progress and final reports.
 - collection of information to up-date the project logframe
 - ensuring that the lists of participants are filled in for each event/workshop/meeting organised during the Programme and archiving most important data under a csv format,
 - collection of information to up-date the list of contacts, including relevant media contacts
- Ensure trustful relationships and clear receipts vis-à-vis financial issues, including petty cash.
- Support project registration, where required, with public authorities in the country.
- Provide occasional interpretation and translation between the local language and English:
 - for international experts during technical meetings;
 - quality assurance of any translation that may be requested into or from the national language.
- Provide support to the project's sub-regional administrative assistant and those of the implementing partners, as needed.
- Provide regular reports to the Contracting Authority through monthly activity reports with time sheets;

9. Working modalities

Location of services

The Programme will be based in the country's capital city, but some travel is expected. National and international travel expenses will be reimbursed according to project requirements and rules.

Assignment schedule

The assignment is expected to start in March 2022 and will end in June 2024. Possible extension until August 2024 for project reports wrap up.

Input

The Consultant will be contracted on a part-time basis for an estimation of **405 days** in total or an indicative average of 14 work days per month.

Management

The Local Representative will work under the supervision of the Programme Manager (UBA) and coordinate with the implementing partners' Project Managers and Thematic Leaders towards a sound implementation of all outputs in his or her country. Contract administration will be guided by the Contracting Authority.

The main counterpart on the side of the beneficiary are the National Focal Point(s) (NFP) at the concerned Ministry/Ministries. On the side of the implementing partners it is the Programme Manager. All correspondence and documents related to these services must be written in English.

Work environment

The Local Representative must provide all means and technical equipment (e.g. hardware like laptop and mobile phone, software) necessary for the successful implementation of the services. She/he can also use office room and equipment at sub-regional offices.

Deliverables

As mentioned above, the contractor will contribute inter alia to the progress reports of the Programme and will produce monthly activity reports with time sheets.

Other deliverables may be defined on an ad-hoc basis by the implementing partners.

Payment

Payment will be made by the Contracting Authority to the Consultant in regular intervals after successful execution of the work and will be subject to acceptance of the results. Payments will be made by OiEau upon receipt of invoices with supporting documents/time-sheets.

10. Application

Interested parties (individual and legal persons) are invited to request the full tender dossier containing instructions and further information about the tender procedure from the following persons:

Ms Ilke CICEKOGLU: i.cicekoglu@oieau.fr, Project Assistant and the project managers Mr Philippe SEGUIN: p.seguin@oieau.fr and Mr Pierre Henry de Villeneuve: p.henry-de-villeneuve@oieau.fr from OiEau as contracting authority staff.

The deadline for submitting proposals to OiEau premises (France) by express post is:

28 February 2022, 16:00 (CET).

This tender is based on the EUs Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions (PRAG). The tender will be awarded based on the best price-quality ratio.

11. Award of the contract

This invitation does not commit OiEau to contract the services announced. OiEau can withdraw from this call at any given time. In no event shall OiEau be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a tender procedure.

The awarding or non-awarding of the contract does not preclude the application or (non-)awarding for any similar tender under this Programme.