

# TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES TO SIOFA'S PROTECTED AREAS AND ECOSYSTEMS WORKING GROUP (PAEWG)

**Title: Bioregionalisation and Management of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs)**

**Project Code: PAE2021-01**

## 1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

The EU has agreed to a 2-year funding arrangement to enable SIOFA to commission a series of scientific studies to support the SIOFA/Scientific Committee's (SC) Work Plan (2018-21). These proposed studies will be integrated with SIOFA's ongoing and planned scientific studies.

The EU funding arrangements are designed to deliver on five General Objectives and, within each general Objective, a number of specific objectives.

These Objectives are designed to (a) provide the data and analysis to inform the effective management of the three key target stocks in the fishery, being alfonsino (*Beryx splendens*), toothfish (*Dissostichus spp*) and orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) and (b) to mitigate risks to vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) including by-catch and/or impacted species.

This document describes the background for the project related to General Objective 2 of the EU funding grant (GO2), being the Management of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs).

It also includes activities related to the SIOFA study on bioregionalization searches for smaller spatial entities within a larger area using a range of environmental information.

The budget allocation for the project, incorporating both EU-funded and MoP8 SIOFA research activities is €60,000.

Within GO2 of the EU Funding Grant, 3 Specific Objectives are specified being:

- Specific Objective 5 (SO5): The definition and implementation of robust methodologies for the mapping and protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems within the SIOFA management area.
- Specific Objective 6 (SO6): The mitigation of possible impacts on associated and dependant species.
- Specific Objective 7 (SO7): Investigate possible habitat suitability modelling.

The proposed project will build on the work already undertaken by SIOFA's Scientific Committee (SC) and its Protected Areas and Ecosystems Working Group (PAEWG) by

investigating a holistic framework for assessing and preventing Significant Adverse Impacts (SAIs) on VMEs and support work on benthic bioregionalization (underway) and (future) investigate possible habitat suitability modelling. In addition, the proposed project will be expected to undertake an investigation of representative protected areas relevant to the bioregionalization work.

The expected outcomes of the proposed project described in this document includes the development of the understanding of the impact of fishing on the marine environment and, in particular, encouraging and promoting scientific cooperation in scientific research in order to improve knowledge of VMEs within the SIOFA management area.

Gaps in knowledge in the SIOFA area currently extend to several taxa and to large parts of the shelf and deep-sea ecosystems and therefore an additional expected outcome of this project will be to define and suggest mitigation strategies for dealing with direct and indirect infractions between fishing activities and VMEs and their components.

The Terms of Reference, work plan, budget allocation, and other administrative matters are included below. Once appointed, the consultant should direct any questions and clarifications to the Executive Secretary (Thierry CLOT, [thierry.clot@siofa.org](mailto:thierry.clot@siofa.org)) for administrative matters and the PAEWG Chair (Mr Patrice Pruvost) on [patrice.pruvost@mnhn.fr](mailto:patrice.pruvost@mnhn.fr) for technical matters .

## 2. TERMS of REFERENCE

Terms of Reference for the work to be undertaken are:

- ToR1: Building on ongoing VME mapping activities being undertaken by SIOFA, to undertake classification of key biological, geological, and oceanographic data to provide a spatial framework for classifying the area's marine environment into bioregions and, where possible, smaller spatial entities within bioregions, that make sense ecologically and are at a scale useful for regional planning.
- ToR2: As part of the bioregionalization work (ToR1), investigate and advise on the identification of representative protected areas within the SIOFA management area.
- ToR3: In support of ToR1, investigate and advise on the use of habitat suitability modelling in predicting benthic species diversity and distribution in the SIOFA management area, including assessing data availability for such modelling.
- ToR4: Investigate and advise on a holistic framework for assessing and preventing Significant Adverse Impacts (SAIs) on VMEs.
- ToR5: Identify and update existing and potential SAIs within the SIOFA management area, particularly those related to fishing activities.

### 3. SOURCE of INFORMATION (References)

The following is a summary of resources, information and references that contain additional Information for the consultant, and which are available on the SIOFA website, <https://www.apsoi.org>. In particular, the following are relevant to this proposed consultancy.

- Scientific Committee Working Plan
- Final report of the 6<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee, March 2021, <https://www.apsoi.org/sites/default/files/documents/meetings/SIOFA%20SC6%20final%20report%20and%20annexes.pdf>
- Final Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> PAEWG, including supporting documents and PAEWG work plan. <https://www.apsoi.org/sites/default/files/documents/meetings/SIOFA%20SC6%20final%20report%20and%20annexes.pdf>
- SIOFA's VME Mapping (Consultancy report from Boorea Laboratories). <https://www.apsoi.org/sites/default/files/documents/meetings/PAEWG-03-06%20VME%20mapping.pdf>

### 4. SUBMISSION of the INFORMATION and CONFIDENTIALITY

The Consultant shall submit all the information collected to the SIOFA Secretariat (including that sourced from the Secretariat) before the final payment of the contract is made to the consultant. Such information includes electronic data files, analysis codes, biological samples, and other relevant data if applicable. Any arrangements for ownership, storage, or disposal of physical samples shall be agreed by SIOFA as a part of the contract. All Intellectual Property generated as a part of this contract shall become the property of SIOFA unless otherwise excluded in the proposal and agreed by SIOFA in the contract. The consultant shall not release confidential data provided for conducting this study to any persons nor any organisations, other than SIOFA Secretariat. The consultant shall delete all the confidential data upon the completion of the contract.

### 5. REPORTS

The Consultant shall provide the following reports to the SIOFA Secretariat:

- A project inception report, at least 2 weeks prior to starting technical work. The inception report will outline the tasks to be undertaken, a schedule for undertaking those tasks and an indication of resources used and/or required, including any SIOFA support.

- Interim, progress reports on both the project activities overall and on each ToR. These will be provided, in writing, at least 1 week in advance of scheduled quarterly teleconference meetings (see Project Monitoring below).
- A draft final report at the completion of the project.
- A final report within 2 weeks of receiving SIOFA's comments on the draft final report.

## 6. PROJECT MONITORING

Quarterly web-based meetings will be held between the consultant(s), the Chair of the PAEWG and the SIOFA Science Manager, Dr. Gary Morgan to review project progress and to address any issues that may arise.

## 7. SUBMISSION of APPLICATIONS

The applicants should have experience in the identification, characterisation, and management of deep-water VMEs, including undertaking ecological risk assessments related to deep-water VMEs. Demonstrated experience habitat suitability modelling and in working with industry is an advantage.

If these conditions are satisfied, then follow the next steps to apply this consultancy:

The applicant(s) should submit a proposal that contains the following items:

- A current CV that summarises the applicant(s) relevant educational background and professional experience.
- A brief proposal outlining the proposed methods and analyses, including a description of how the objectives of the ToR will be achieved.
- Any proposed exclusions to the intellectual property clause.
- Identification of any project risks and associated mitigation and management required to successfully complete the project.
- A statement that identifies any perceived, potential, or actual conflicts of interest of the applicant(s), including those described in paragraph 4 of the SIOFA recruitment procedure (see below); and
- Any additional information the applicant(s) wish to submit.

Conflicts of interest: Paragraph 4 of SIOFA's Recruitment Procedure

*To ensure that situations relating to potential and actual conflict of interests are avoided, persons falling into the following categories may not normally be considered for SIOFA consultancy: (i). any person designated as a designated representative or alternate representative of a CCP to the Meeting of Parties (MOP) as per Rule 3.1 of the Rules of Procedure, and to the SC and any other subsidiary bodies of the MOP, as per Rule 21.3 of the Rules of Procedure; (ii). any person fulfilling the function of Chair or Vice-Chair of the MOP or Chair or Vice-Chair of a SIOFA subsidiary body or working group; (iii). any person acting as a member of a delegation involved in the SIOFA decision-making process resulting in recommendations*

and/or approval for the SIOFA work requiring the engagement of a consultant; and (iv). individuals who were SIOFA Secretariat staff members at the time when the recommendations and/or approval for the SIOFA works were adopted or who are members of immediate family (e.g., spouse or partner, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister) of any Secretariat staff member or of the persons identified in 4 (i), (ii), and (iii).

Announcement of Call for the consultant will be placed in the SIOFA home page in May 2021 and will be circulated to all Cooperating and Contacting Parties (CCPs).

The application must be submitted to Thierry Clot, Executive Secretary, [thierry.clot@siofa.org](mailto:thierry.clot@siofa.org) by 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

## 8. WORK PLAN and PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The following Table describes the work plan and the payment schedule. The consultant shall follow this work plan.

| <b>Work Period</b>  | <b>TOR</b>  | <b>Activities</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> August – 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021     |   | Call for the consultant through the SIOFA web site and also through the circulation to Cooperating and Contacting Parties (CCPs) (4 weeks).  |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2021          |   | Selection of the consultant by Secretariat in consultation with the Project Manager and others included in the evaluation panel.   |
| Start of project technical work                             |   | 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2021  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2021                                |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Inception Report submitted <b>(Payment of €5,000 on submission of satisfactory Inception report).</b></li> </ul>  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2021- 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2022 | ToR1: Building on ongoing VME mapping activities being undertaken by SIOFA, to undertake classification of key biological, geological, and oceanographic data to provide a spatial framework for classifying the area's marine environment into bioregions and, where possible, smaller spatial entities within bioregions, that make sense ecologically and are at a scale useful for regional planning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First quarterly web-based meeting at beginning of project technical work, October 2021.</li> <li>A draft report should be presented to the SC HoD by 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</li> <li>Present progress report to PAEWG meeting, March 2022</li> <li>ToR1 final report, April 2022 <b>(Payment of €5,000 on submission of satisfactory ToR1 final report).</b></li> </ul> |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> October – 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2023     | ToR2: As part of the bioregionalization work (ToR1), investigate and advise   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project progress report and second quarterly web-based meeting, PAEWG 2022.</li> </ul>  |

| Work Period  | TOR   | Activities  |
|--|---|---|
|  | on the identification of representative protected areas within the SIOFA management area. particularly those related to fishing activities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A draft report should be presented the SC HoD by 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023</li> <li>• Present progress report to PAEWG meeting, March 2023</li> <li>• ToR2 final report, April 2023</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>(Payment of €10,000 on submission of satisfactory Project progress report).</b></p>   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> January – 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2023.   | ToR3: In support of ToR1, investigate and advise on the use of habitat suitability modelling in predicting benthic species diversity and distribution in the SIOFA management area, including assessing data availability for such modelling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation of representative protected areas (relevant to the ongoing bioregionalization work)</li> <li>• Project progress report and fourth quarterly web-based meeting, April 2022.</li> <li>• A draft report should be presented the SC HoD by 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023</li> <li>• Present progress report to PAEWG meeting, March 2023</li> <li>• ToR3 final report, March 2023</li> <li>• <b>(Payment of €15,000 on submission of satisfactory ToR3 report and Project Progress report).</b></li> </ul> |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> June – January, 2023                       | ToR4: Investigate and advise on a holistic framework for assessing and preventing Significant Adverse Impacts (SAIs) on VMEs.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project progress report and fifth quarterly web-based meeting, August 2022.</li> <li>• A draft report should be presented the SC HoD by 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023</li> <li>• Present progress report to PAEWG meeting, March 2023</li> <li>• ToR4 final report, April 2023</li> <li>• <b>(Payment of €10,000 on submission of satisfactory Project Progress).</b></li> </ul>   |
| June 30 <sup>th</sup> 2022 – January 15 <sup>th</sup> 2023 | ToR5: Identify and update existing and potential SAIs within the SIOFA management area, particularly those related to fishing activities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify SAIs using data from ongoing VME mapping activities .</li> <li>• Project progress report and sixth quarterly web-based meeting, November 2022</li> <li>• resent progress report to PAEWG meeting, March 2023</li> <li>• ToR5 final report April 2023</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>(Payment of €5,000 on submission of satisfactory ToR5 report).</b></p>   |
| February 28 <sup>th</sup> 2023                             |   | Submission of draft Project Final report  |
| March 1 <sup>st</sup> - 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023              |   | Review of draft Project Final Report and submission of Project Final report<br><b>(Payment of €10,000 on submission of satisfactory Final Report).</b>  |

| <b>Work Period</b> | <b>TOR</b>                                  | <b>Activities</b>        |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------|
| April 2023         | Submission of draft Project<br>Final report | final report, April 2023 |

## 9. CONTACT PERSONS

SIOFA Secretariat (administrative matters) Thierry Clot, SIOFA Executive Secretary, [thierry.clot@siofa.org](mailto:thierry.clot@siofa.org).

Mr Patrice Pruvost, PAEWG chairperson, [patrice.pruvost@mnhn.fr](mailto:patrice.pruvost@mnhn.fr) and the SIOFA Science Manager for technical matters [garymorg@hotmail.com](mailto:garymorg@hotmail.com)

## 10. EVALUATION CRITERIA for the SELECTION of CANDIDATES

The selection criteria will be developed by the evaluation panel along with the project manager, the Secretariat, and the Chairpersons of the relevant subsidiary bodies. The criteria may include following items:

- Adequate submission of information to allow the panel to evaluate the candidate.
- Evaluation of the proposal from the candidate.
- Ability to undertake and complete the analyses or work required in the ToR.
- The candidate's agreement with confidentiality provisions required for the project.
- Acceptable conflict of interest statement.
- Agreement with the data submission and intellectual property terms required in this ToR; and
- Financial and resourcing considerations