

BE-CLME+ Project: Promoting National Blue Economy Priorities Through Marine Spatial Planning in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Plus (GEF Project ID 10211)

Terms of Reference for a National Consultancy to Conduct Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP in Belize

1.0 Background & Justification.

1.1 The BE-CLME+ Project is a regional initiative aimed at promoting blue economy development in the Caribbean region through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), development of climate-smart sustainable fisheries value chains, and knowledge management in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Panama. The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) is the Executing Agency for the project, while the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations are the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Co-Implementing Agencies.

1.2 The 2023-2024 BE: CLME+ Project Workplan & Budget was approved by the Regional Steering Committee on 29th September 2023, and calls for a national consultancy to conduct data gap and needs assessments to inform MSP.

1.3 On November 4th, 2021, the Government of Belize signed the Blue Loan Agreement (BLA) and Conservation Fund Agreement (CFA) in collaboration with the Belize Blue Investment Company (BZBIC) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The BLA and the CFA are contingent on eight primary conservation commitments and time-bound milestones to be realized by the Government of Belize by the 8th anniversary of the Agreements. Clause 1 of the CFA obligates Belize to complete a legally enforceable Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) no later than the 5th Anniversary of the Agreements. The Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI), under the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, has been designated as the government's lead agency for the Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) process.

On October 19th, 2022, Belize's MSP process was officially launched by the Government of Belize, marking the achievement of Milestone 3 under the CFA. The name selected for Belize's MSP is the "Belize Sustainable Ocean Plan" (BSOP), which was unveiled at the launch. The vision for the MSP is "a healthy, resilient, and equitably shared ocean that supports a thriving national economy and nurtures the culture and well-being of all Belizeans". The BSOP will guide sustainable development and designate up to 30% of Belize's ocean as biodiversity protection zones. The planning process will for the BSOP will be consistent with international best practices and based on cutting-edge science and the best available data. The BSOP will be guided by the principles of inclusivity, participation, transparency, and equity.

2.0 Objective of the Consultancy

The process of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) requires the collection of spatial data and information related to a variety of issues and processes and data forms the backbone of any decision-making and planning process. Data for MSP provides an overview of spatial distribution of human activities, marine

ecosystems, and hotspots, identifies conflicts and shared space opportunities, and allows spatial exploration of future economic and climate scenarios.

The objective of this consultancy is to comprehensively assess data availability, data gaps, and an assessment of needs to inform MSP in Belize. Several countries in the Caribbean have ongoing MSP and Blue Economy development processes, and as such, these assessments shall make every effort to build on and complement ongoing BE processes in Belize.

3.0 Key Activities will include, but not be limited to those listed below.

3.1 Assess the status of MSP processes in Belize and the types and sources of data being used to inform MSP.

3.2 Assess spatial and temporal data needs in Belize to include *inter alia*, pollution and habitat degradation linked to economic sectors active in the coastal zone as well as anthropogenic sources, geographic/physical, biologic, economic, social (including a prioritization of gender and other marginalized groups), physical and ecological patterns and processes, relative ecological importance of areas, ecosystem services, vulnerability and resilience, economic activities, benefits and impacts, distribution among current and emerging uses of the blue space, existing management measures, and future needs of existing or proposed uses of the blue space. The assessment of the data required to inform Belize's MSP should take into consideration matters of appropriate scale and resolution.

3.3 Assess availability, accessibility, and needs of relevant spatial and temporal data not covered in Section 3.2 of importance to inform national BE strategies. Consideration should be given to availability as well as potential resource and acquisition costs where applicable. Assessment should include interoperability between databases, especially resolving domestic and regional data needs, which ultimately foster data dissemination and use. In addition to identifying the gaps/data needs, an outline of the datasets that are top priority for the MSP would be beneficial. The assessment should also consider data to assess the viability of emerging and new BE activities by sector.

3.4 Consult with the MSP authorities in Belize to confirm data and other needs not addressed in this TORs that may be necessary to inform MSP in the country. Also, understanding the terms to access data from data producers and sources, including an assessment of barriers to access data.

3.5 Recommend data sources, acquisition costs (where applicable), and collection methods to address data needs identified. Such recommendations should be feasible and achievable considering the country's context.

3.6 Identify resources and capacity needs to inform and sustain data analysis and interpretation to inform MSP.

3.7 Consult with the CRFM/PMU and be informed of the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) triggered by the BE: CLME+ Project and identify what data is needed to ensure MSP in Belize complies with ESS triggered by the project.

3.8 In coordination with the CRFM/PMU, organize and convene a virtual national workshop to present the results of the Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP and to discuss synergies with other national and regional activities and projects.

3.9 Develop at least one (1) communication and visibility material on the Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP conducted for Belize. These materials will be submitted to the CRFM/PMU for review, vetting of content, and onward communication via the CRFM's Knowledge Management and Information System and broader regional network.

4.0 Expected Outcomes and Deliverables.

4.1 The consultant(s) are expected to deliver the following products:

Product 1: Inception Report detailing activities, milestones, timeline, and a robust methodology to carry out the assignment.

Product 2: Draft Report – Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP in Belize.

Product 3: Final Report - Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP in Belize and virtual national workshop to present the results of the Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP.

Product 4: Materials consistent with Section 6.0 of these Terms of Reference.

5.0 Project Schedule and Milestones.

Deliverable	Date	Payments
Product 1: Inception Report detailing activities, milestones, timeline, and a robust methodology to carry out the assignment.	0.5 month after contract signature	10% of contract value
Product 2: Draft Report – Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP in Belize.	2.5 months after contract signature	50% of contract value
Product 3: Final Report - Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP in Belize and virtual national workshop to present the results of the Data Gap and Needs Assessments to Inform MSP.	4.0 months after contract signature	40% of contract value
Product 4: Materials consistent with Section 6.0 of Terms of Reference		

6.0 Reporting Requirements.

6.1 The consultant will present the deliverables following the schedule established in section 5 of these terms of reference. The deliverables must include reports in Word, PowerPoint presentations, and other documents used as the basis of the analysis (including other formats such as Excel spreadsheets, etc. as applicable) and a folder with the list of bibliographic references used to develop the analysis. All materials must be delivered in English and in Spanish, in the case of materials used to for assessments in Panama. Products 2 and 3 must be delivered in both English and Spanish. All reports, studies, plans, drawings, source code, technical data, specifications, and any other material prepared by or worked upon by the

consultant exclusively for the CRFM under this Agreement are the sole and exclusive property of the CRFM and as such the CRFM has exclusive title, rights, and interest in all such material including the right of dissemination, reproduction, and publication. The consultant will also work closely with the Regional Project Coordinator and the Seafood Value Chain Specialist of the BE: CLME+ Project on the assignment.

7.0 Acceptance Criteria.

7.1 Payments will be authorized once the CRFM accepts the products specified by the TOR. The CRFM will have up to three weeks to provide written comments/recommendations to the consultant(s) reports. Unless previously determined, the CRFM will generally accept the deliverables once the consultant or consulting firm confirms the following: (i) receipt and additional inclusion of comments/recommendations in a revised version and (ii) provision of date for presentation of the revised versions of the submitted deliverables. The consultant(s) are expected to include these comments two weeks after receipt.

8.0 Consultant's Effort and Required Skills

8.1 This consultancy has been estimated to require a maximum of 35 Consultant Days.

8.2 Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- Master's Degree in Marine Management, Fisheries Science, Coastal Zone Management, or Marine Science.
- Training in Marine Spatial Planning and/or Blue Economy will be a distinctive asset.
- Minimum of 7 years' experience working as a technical expert in one of the marine fields listed above.
- Work experience in any or all the BE: CLME+ project countries.
- Experience in the elaboration of MPA management plans, CZM plans, or MSPs will be extremely valuable.
- Experience working with data sets, spatial information related to MSP and ICZMP processes.
- Ability to work with senior government officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities.
- Experience working with resource users across multiple sectors, especially in the fisheries, protected areas, tourism, and maritime transport, etc.
- A good understanding of biodiversity, Marine Protected Areas, Climate Change, Marine Spatial Planning.

9.0 Application and Selection Procedure.

9.1 Interested consultants are invited to submit their Curriculum Vitae (CV), a declaration of availability, and a declaration of no conflict of interest.

9.2 CVs will be evaluated against the criteria described in Section 8.2 and contracting will be subject to a successful price negotiation with the selected consultant.

9.3 Interested consultants should submit their Application Cover Letter outlining why they believe they are best suited for this assignment and CV in PDF format by **18th December 2023** to secretariat@crfm.int and delmar.lanza@crfm.int