



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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TEEB/ZEN/2014/EOI-BAL

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SCOPING STUDY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION

17 March 2014

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The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), through its TEEB Office, is looking for technical institutions and researchers to participate in the scoping study for the Baltic Sea region.

Please find enclosed the Terms of Reference (ToR).

In order to participate in the call, please submit your detailed expression of interest, in PDF format, to teeb@unep.org by **30 April 2014 (17:00 CET)**.

All communications and queries related to this call should be sent to this email address and should clearly indicate the application ID (**TEEB/ZEN/2014/EOI-BAL**) and the institution name in the subject title. E-mails should not exceed 8MB.

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Terms of Reference

Background

1. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) is a UNEP-hosted project that aims to draw attention to the benefits provided by ecosystems and biodiversity. TEEB presents an approach that can help decision makers recognize, demonstrate and, where appropriate, capture these values.
2. A TEEB scoping study determines the appropriate scope, ambition and objectives of a full TEEB study which may subsequently follow. It identifies the elements presented in Box 1.

Box 1: TEEB scoping study outcomes

1. Objectives and Thematic Focus

- a. An understanding of the policy context within which the study falls
- b. Key thematic areas on which the study will focus
- c. Draft objective or set of objectives for the study
- d. Set of key questions which the study will aim to answer
- e. A list of outputs to be delivered by the study

2. Knowledge base

- a. An overview of the state of knowledge on natural assets – their stock, state, changes and roles
- b. Assessment of data availability and knowledge gaps
- c. These points will help to reflect upon the study focus given both the importance of issues and practical considerations of data availability

3. Stakeholders

- a. An understanding of who the relevant stakeholders are and their main interests and concerns
- b. A plan of how and when to engage them within the timeframe of a full study

4. Process and Governance

- a. A governance structure decided upon and put in place with appropriate documentation outlining the respective roles of those involved
- b. Work plan and milestones developed for a full study
- c. Budget and plan outlining how resources will be mobilized and agreed upon for a full study
- d. Communication strategy for a full study

3. The findings of the scoping study are the departure point for the main study phase. Based on these, terms of reference can be designed for a full study which can help to orient the formation of study teams on the different aspects identified as relevant.

4. A stepwise approach helps navigate through the different assessment options available. The six steps recommended for the main study phase are:
 - I. Refine the objectives of the TEEB study by consultation on the key policy issues with stakeholders to avoid misunderstandings during decision making and implementation.
 - II. Identify which ecosystem services are most relevant to the policy issue in order to focus analysis.
 - III. Define information needs and select appropriate methods for assessment.
 - IV. Assess and value ecosystem services.
 - V. Identify and outline pros and cons of policy options, including distributional impacts.
 - VI. Review, revise and report study results.
5. The overall aim of the current study is to scope a work plan that, upon completion as a full TEEB study, would contribute significantly to the economic argument for reducing eutrophication in the entirety of the Baltic Sea. In order to achieve this aim, a necessary pre-condition is that policy-makers who can influence the achievement or otherwise of this aim have buy-in, involvement and final acceptance of the proposed work plan.
6. The total budget available to the contractor would be up to 60,000 Euros.
7. The current paper sets out the Terms of Reference for a TEEB Scoping Study for the Baltic Sea Region. Section 2 presents a review of the key issues; Section 3 provides the Research Specifications.

Review of issues¹

6. The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, known as the Helsinki Convention (HELCOM) has coordinated monitoring and assessment activities in the Baltic Sea region for more than three decades. According to HELCOM, the effects of nutrient enrichment, also known as eutrophication, are perhaps the single greatest threat to the Baltic Sea environment. Excessive amounts of nutrients, nitrogen, phosphorus, and sometimes organic matter can result in a series of undesirable effects, including changes in the structure and functioning of the entire marine ecosystem and a reduction in ecosystem stability.
7. For many decades, the Baltic Sea has been affected by severe eutrophication. Elevated nutrient discharges cause more intense phytoplankton blooms, resulting in deterioration in the aquatic light climate, and thereby reducing the extent of submerged vegetation. Deep basins and long-lasting stratification enhance the accumulation of sinking phytoplankton biomass in bottom waters. In a region of poor water exchange, the result is severe oxygen depletion and the formation of abiotic zones. A particular problem, increasing the Baltic Sea's sensitivity to

¹ HELCOM 2009. [Eutrophication in the Baltic Sea – An integrated thematic assessment of the effects of nutrient enrichment and eutrophication in the Baltic Sea region. Balt. Sea Environ. Proc. No. 115B.](#)

eutrophication, is a tendency for the development of toxic cyanobacteria blooms, which can have effects on the entire food chain.

8. The first HELCOM Integrated Thematic Assessment of Eutrophication in the Baltic Sea, covering the period 2001–2006, provides a Baltic Sea-wide overview of the effects of nutrient enrichment on eutrophication processes. The assessment links the effects of eutrophication to the causative factors such as nutrient enrichment and anthropogenic activities which result in emissions, discharges, and the losses and deposition of nutrients to the marine environment.
9. In 2007, at the HELCOM ministerial meeting in Krakow (Poland), all the coastal states and the EU adopted a strategy known as the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021. The strategy is a crucial stepping stone for wider and more efficient actions to combat the continuing deterioration of the marine environment resulting from human activities. Moreover, the Plan provides a concrete basis for HELCOM work: incorporating the latest scientific knowledge and innovative management approaches into strategic policy implementation, and stimulating even closer, goal-oriented multilateral cooperation around the Baltic Sea region.
10. The plan states the following objectives specifically regarding eutrophication:
 - a. Concentrations of nutrients close to natural levels
 - b. Clear water
 - c. Natural level of algal blooms
 - d. Natural distribution and occurrence of plants and animals
 - e. Natural oxygen levels

Tasks to be undertaken

11. Provide input to UNEP as to the constituency of a steering committee (of policy-makers) for the current project.
12. Systematic review of economic literature on the benefits of eutrophication reduction. Note that this review should not focus on the issues of eutrophication (which are relatively well-established).
13. Synthesis report on geographical coverage of available valuation data points and gaps.
14. Proposal to carry out economic valuation using both non-market valuation and other methodologies that would advance the overall project aim. The proposal should be fully costed, with a Gantt chart and a discussion of project risks.
15. Development of a dissemination strategy to engage the steering committee to achieve buy-in and support, to include some proposed metric of success therein.
16. All project deliverables are to be finalized by 31 December 2014.

Documentation for Response to the Research Specification

17. UNEP invites interested parties to submit their expression of interest covering the above points and include the following in their submission:

- A methodological and logistical overview of how the project would be carried out; a presentation of expected challenges and how these would be managed
- Evidence of competence and relevant experience
- A detailed budget
- A project timeline, bearing in mind that all deliverables are due by 31 December 2014
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of expert(s) who would work on the project
- Institution's legal status, if applicable.
- Contact name and details (direct phone number and email address)