



Statement of Requirements

**Natural Capital baseline assessment
and interpretation for
North West 2045 Regional Land Use Partnership**

Issued on

28/04/22

Submission by

Noon 11/05/22

NorthWest 2045 Highlands Regional Land Use Partnership



Scottish Wildlife Trust
Harbourside House
110 Commercial Street
Edinburgh
EH6 6NF

19/04/2022

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Invitation to Tender: Natural Capital baseline assessment and interpretation

The NW2045 Highlands Regional Land Use Partnership (RLUP) is seeking a contractor to carry out a natural capital baseline assessment of the project area¹.

This initial natural capital assessment needs to provide a baseline of the natural capital assets in the region and communicate these in simple plain English terms to a broad range of stakeholders within the local community. This baseline assessment will be built upon in the future to help inform decision making around land management options in the region. The aim of the assessment is to inform the ongoing work of a Regional Land Use Framework.

Background

The North West2045 project has been established by a diverse group of local organisations with a common desire to see a future where our communities thrive economically, socially, and environmentally. We want our population to grow sustainably, job opportunities to broaden and average salaries to rise. We think this will require a resilient and diverse economic base which encourages best use of our natural assets while enhancing local skills and opportunities. Further details, including those involved in the project, can be found here. www.northwest2045.scot

RLUPs are one way the Scottish Government hopes to help achieve Scotland's climate targets through land use change. Scottish Government reaffirmed their commitment to support the emergence of RLUPs from 2021 (with the 5 pilot areas) and for Regional Land Use Frameworks (RLUFs) to be developed by 2023.

Further on the background to the RLUPs can be found on the Scottish Government's blog [here](#) and from the Land Commission [here](#).

Each RLUF will identify opportunities for land use change at a landscape level to tackle the twin climate change and environment crises. The RLUFs should take a broad natural capital approach to land use change that facilitates the delivery of wider environmental goals as set out in the Scottish Government 2020 Environment Strategy and socioeconomic benefits, alongside the delivery of climate change targets.

The pilot projects are set up to develop the wider Scottish approach to RLUPs which should enable national and local government, landowners, stakeholders and local communities to work together to find ways to optimise land use in a fair and inclusive way - meeting local and national objectives and helping achieve Scotland's climate change targets.

Scope of Service

The RLUP Natural Capital Working Group envisions this research being largely desk-based and that the successful contractor will be required to source the data for the assessment, carry out the assessment itself and present it in easily accessible formats including considering digital outputs.

The RLUP pilot acknowledges that the area of land involved is vast and the challenges of drilling down to a certain level of detail is difficult, that choices will need to be made about narrowing, either to a subset of natural assets included, areas covered, or resolution of data. The group encourages suggestions from possible contractors what they determine is most suitable here. This will be an ongoing, iterative process with the need for future work anticipated.

The successful contractor will be required to work independently, but will report to the Project Manager and the RLUP Natural Capital Working Group, which includes:

- **Rachel Skene (Project Manager)**
- **Bruce Wilson Scottish Wildlife Trust**
- **Adam Rose Nature Scot**
- **Ewen McLachlan Assynt Development Trust**
- **Dr Laura Hamlet NWH Geopark**
- **Frances Gunn NW2045**
- **Helen Houston Scourie Community Development Company**
- **Andy Summers Highlife Highland**
- **David Shaw UHI**

In addition to reporting to the Natural Capital Working Group, the successful contractor will be required to meet with the NW2045 Group to present their initial proposal, provide updates, and present their report. In the view of the working group, the objectives of the RLUP Baseline assessment are primarily to identify:

- What resolution of data is needed for an appropriate natural capital assessment for this project area and whether there is a case for dividing the project area in logical “parcels”
- The need for local, fine resolution scale data that identifies areas of anthropically influenced fertile soil and pockets of valuable peat beyond data currently available through national land capability maps
- Where geographically the natural capital assets are in the region
- The condition of these natural capital assets
- An overview of the main drivers of decline now and probable drivers in the future
- A balanced overview of the different flows of services and benefits these assets are providing
- Opportunities where natural capital assets could be improved, restored or enhanced
- The way ecosystem services interact and how they might respond to natural capital interventions

- The highest impact, easiest to achieve interventions (bearing in mind social, economic and environmental considerations) which would help improve natural capital assets, including landscape scale interventions (the “low hanging fruit”)
- Which natural capital assets are most important for climate change and biodiversity
- Which natural capital assets are most important for social/economic/cultural interests including educational value and significance.
- Where communities are in proximity to these assets – settlements

The RLUP Natural Capital Working Group recognises the potential benefits of placing economic value on natural capital assets. However, in addition to a rigorous, quantitative report we are interested in a qualitative approach. This will identify the relative importance of the different natural capital assets and their cultural, social and economic benefits.

It should be kept in mind that the RLUP Natural Capital Working Group wishes that this assessment helps to bring stakeholders together to co-produce plans that can meet multiple objectives, helping pre-empt and manage conflicts of interest and generate opportunities that would not have been possible without taking a natural capital approach.ⁱⁱ

The tender application should outline:

- the approach that would be taken to deliver this project
- the relevant stakeholder groupings
- the skills and experience that will be provided at each stage, including personnel; and
- an anticipated timeline for each stage and deliverables.

Milestones

The dates below act as a guideline but can be discussed depending on the project details. Delivery of the final report and other outputs should be no later than Tuesday June 14th 2022.

- Contract responses due by noon May 11th
- Contract awarded 17th May
- Start-up meeting with the RLUP Natural Capital Working Group - week of 23rd May, to include presentation and discussion per next steps with RLUP Natural Capital Working Group
- Weekly updates with Project Manager
- Presentation to NW2045 Group, prior to report being finalised
- Delivery/presentation of NCA report to local communities, prior to report being finalised.
- Final report supplied to Project Manager by end of Monday 13th June
- Completion of all outputs confirmed, with final invoice submitted no later than noon on June 14th 2022

Outputs

A detailed report of the natural capital baseline assessment for North West Highland RLUP area, including:

- Review of the case study area;
- Sources of information available and any data gaps;
- An explanation of the methodology used;
- The findings of the assessment;
- Recommendations on how to integrate the assessment findings into the future decision making and the Regional Land Use Framework requested by Scottish Government;
- Challenges encountered, the lessons learned, and the potential barriers to progressing the RLUP approach in this area;
- Opportunities for further work that will help progress the RLUP, increase local ability to make decisions and be informed
- Presentations to update the RLUP Steering Group and a final presentation to the Steering Group. Both should be recorded and made available on-line so should be in very easy to understand formats which make sense to a broad audience.
- Concise briefing output summarising the report in plain English terms, thought should be given to how this can be disseminated and seen and understood by a wide audience locally.

Fees and cost The North West Highland RLUP has an appropriate budget to cover all the project outputs and invite tenders from suitably qualified contractors to fulfil the project aims.

Please provide a list of deliverables, a table of costs, with projected total cost, breakdown of contributions from staff to project, estimated hours of work and who will be doing the hours, and an invoicing structure with the tender response.

Evaluation of the Quote /Award Criteria The project will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Price (inclusive of any VAT)
- Staffing devoted to the project
- Delivery / Timescales proposed (as set out in milestones) and risk management
- Understanding of specific project requirements and the wider Scottish Government policy context
- Proposed deliverables
- Methodology and approach proposed
- Specific expertise proposed for the service, including:
 - o Knowledge of the RLUP process and requirements
 - o Experience with carrying out natural capital assessments (essential)
 - o Experience with quantifying social and cultural benefit
 - o Experience of working in and knowledge of land use and management in the NorthWest Highlands
- Environmental sustainability
- Fair working practices

The RLUP Natural Capital Working Group will evaluate tenders against qualitative as well as quantitative criteria. The successful tender is therefore the one that is deemed best and most suitable tender and this may not necessarily be the lowest-priced tender.

In the event of equally scored tenders (where two or more of the compliant highest-scoring scoring tenderers have the same total weighted score, considering both quality and price)

The RLUP Natural Capital Working Group reserves the right to come to a decision after discussion within the group.

Quotes may be disqualified for the following reasons:

- the price is considered to be ‘abnormally low’
- failure to submit requested information or failure to answer questions

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting (%)
Price (Commercial)	[40%]
Price will be evaluated as per the details in this Statement of Requirements using the ‘Tender Evaluation Sum’	[40%]
Quality (Technical)	[60%]
Guidance [Complete as appropriate to contract] A [e.g. Understanding of Requirements]	[20%]
B [e.g. Staffing & Resource]	[10%]
C [e.g. Timetable and delivery including risk management]	[15%]
Sustainability	[10%]
Fair Work Practices	[5%]

Evaluation	Description	Scoring
Outstanding	Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. It is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides robust detail and innovation.	4
Good	Response is relevant and good. It is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirement will be fulfilled.	3
Acceptable	Response is relevant and acceptable. It addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details in how the requirement will be fulfilled.	2
Poor	Response is partially relevant but poor. It addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient	1

Evaluation	Description	Scoring
	and/or limited explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.	
Unacceptable	Nil or inadequate response. It fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.	0

Contact

Tender applications should be submitted in electronic format to Rachel Skene, Project Manager, by noon on 11th May 2022 Rachel.skene@northwest2045.scot

Funding The North West Highland Regional Land Use Partnership baseline study is supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund, Nature Scot and Scottish Government funding and we acknowledge and thank them for this.

Tenderer Declaration

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Quote for Natural Capital baseline assessment and interpretation for North West 2045
Regional Land Use Partnership**

I/We hereby confirm the I/we have read and understood this Statement of Requirements are fully satisfied as to my/our abilities and experience in all respects to satisfy all the requirements stated therein.

I/We hereby offer to execute the contract in accordance with all the terms and conditions, as referenced in this Statement of Requirements or further instructions that may be provided, for the Price(s)/Rate(s) detailed in my/our submitted Quote.

Signed.....

Print Name.....

Company.....

Date.....

Tenderer Application Form

Tenderers should complete the following form as fully as possible. The successful tenderer(s) may be requested to supply further company information once the contract has been awarded.

BASIC DETAILS OF YOUR ORGANISATION	
Name of the organisation in whose name the quote is being submitted:	
Contact name for enquiries about this quote:	
Position (Job Title):	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Website address (if applicable):	

ⁱ RLUP indicative boundaries map (provided by SWT)

ⁱⁱ Adapted from **Land Use Partnerships using a Natural Capital Approach: Lessons for Scotland**
Mark S Reed¹, Kerry Waylen², Jayne Glass¹, James Glendinning¹, Rob McMorran¹, Leo Peskett³, Hannah
Rudman¹, Brady Stevens¹, Abigail Williams¹
¹ Scotland's Rural College; ² The James Hutton Institute; ³ University of Edinburgh
March 2022