



Request for Proposal RfP24/02848 Questions and Answers

Ref. no. **RfP24/02848**

Negotiation no. **UNDP-MDA-00516**

Date: **20/07/2024**

Subject: Services to support with satellite imageries processing for fulfilment of digital National Farmer Registry (dNFR) objectives

Question 1. The document mentions Copernicus Data Space Ecosystem. This service provides free access to the data to European institutions. Can we assume that the primary beneficiary can get access to this service?

Answer 1: Yes, the Bidder shall provide technical as well as administrative support to the Beneficiary to get access to this service via API, including support for registration and authentication to the EU Copernicus data Space Ecosystem; including supporting documentation, and arranging technical connections between digital National Farmers Registry (dNFR) and Copernicus Data Space Ecosystem. The Beneficiary acts as the administration entity (Paying Agency/Ministry of Agriculture) of the Republic of Moldova, such shall be reflected during the process of the Registration and authentication to opt for a proper user's account.

Question 2. Is the deliverable limited to data, or should we also operate services (APIs such as WMTS), to be integrated in dNFR? If yes, for how long and how many users are expected?

Answer 2: The bidder shall establish secure data transfer protocols to transmit the satellite imagery and related data to the digital National Farmers Registry geoportal, using secure APIs, in line with Chapter IV. TECHNICAL INTEGRATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE DELIVERABLES INTO THE DNFR GEOPORTAL. The API source and integration details shall be provided to the beneficiary to enable them to update protocols and manage connections further to execution of the services. There is no minimum number of users defined, therefore it can be considered as 1 (admin role).

Question 3. Should Planet Scope data be provided for all three Pilot areas, i.e. total volume of 25404 km²?

Answer 3: The Bidder is required to submit a price offer for all three Pilot areas individually, categorized under separate LOTs (3 LOTs). The UNDP reserves the right to award a contract for one LOT only, subject of budget capacity to cover the awarded offer.

Question 4. Pilot area definition - does the bidder have to pick necessarily one of the options or several options could be proposed?

Answer 4: The Bidder is required to submit a price offer for the Deliverables defined in chapter III for each of the pilot areas, categorized under separate LOTS (3 LOTS). The UNDP reserves the right to award a contract for one LOT only, subject of budget capacity to cover the awarded offer.

Question 5. Is there a minimum accuracy requirement for deliverable 1 (i.e. automatic parcel detection)

Answer 5: There is no minimum accuracy requirement defined by the RfP. Nevertheless, the algorithms to be applied, the methods to be used, training of the model, for the Automated Parcel Delineations and Automated Crop Detection and Classification, as well as the validation methodology to be applied must be clearly explained by the Bidder in the offer documentation in order to indicate that the proposed methods, algorithms and procedures are guaranteeing the high-quality output of the deliverables. The validation shall be conducted and well reported (e.g. delivering confusion matrixes with Overall, User's and Producer's accuracy, f-score and kappa coefficient for 1st level classification, and 2nd level classification). The bidder should also include a verbal description of the accuracy results.

Question 6. Ground truth collection is a task assigned to the beneficiary. Is there some (even partial) data that local authorities could provide, or all the training/validation datasets must be built from scratch?

Answer 6: Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and Geo-Spatial Application system (GSA) do not exist in Moldova to serve for the purpose of training (calibration). The Beneficiary does not possess enough reliable Ground Truth Data, hence, the model could be trained by using other available relevant data (e.g. Ground Truth data from other countries/regions having similar agricultural background as in the Republic of Moldova).

To note that under the RfP, the ground truth data is not a task assigned to the Beneficiary, but to the bidder. The Ground True data collection design, proposed options and data gathering are responsibilities of the bidder. The training dataset shall be created/obtained directly by the bidder, as well as description of the training data and metadata. The bidder shall also provide to the beneficiary the training dataset for its possible further re-use.

Question 7. Is the beneficiary also responsible to develop and deliver a web-based platform to visualize the results?

Answer 7: The bidder shall establish secure data transfer protocols to transmit the satellite imagery, outcomes of deliverables, and related data to the digital National Farmers Registry geoportal, using secure APIs, in line with Chapter IV. TECHNICAL INTEGRATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE DELIVERABLES INTO THE DNFR GEOPORTAL.

Question 8. As the UTM zone of Republic of Moldova is under zone 35, probably the corect sentence should be WGS84 / UTM zone 35N (EPSG:32636) and not WGS84 / UTM zone 36N (EPSG:32636) as stated in the document?

A8: Indeed, the UTM zone shall be 35N. This shall be reconfirmed to the awarded company prior initiation of the services.

Question 9. What are the accuracy requirements for the crop/crop group detection system?

Answer 9: There is no minimum accuracy requirement defined by the RfP. Nevertheless, the algorithms to be applied, the methods to be used, training of the model, for the Automated Parcel Delineations and Automated Crop Detection and Classification, as well as the validation methodology to be applied must

be clearly explained by the Bidder in the offer documentation in order to indicate that the proposed methods, algorithms and procedures are guaranteeing the high-quality output of the deliverables. The validation shall be conducted and well reported (e.g. delivering confusion matrixes with Overall, User's and Producer's accuracy, f-score and kappa coefficient for 1st level classification, and 2nd level classification). The bidder should also include a verbal description of the accuracy results.

Question 10. Can the requirements for qualification be met through the contribution of a subcontractor?

Answer 10. The requirements can be cumulatively met in case of Joint Venture/ Consortium/ Association submission, as follow:

Previous Experience	<p>Minimum 3 (three) years of experience in working with Earth Observation tools and mechanisms (particularly related to Copernicus Sentinel-2 and Sentinel-1 imagery) and/or in processing and analyzing Earth observation data for land monitoring objectives (ex. cloud-free mosaics, crop detection, and monitoring).</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, Lead Partner should meet the requirement).</i></p>
	<p>Minimum 2 (two) contract of similar or higher complexity services in applying Geographic Information Systems for creating and maintaining geoportals and geospatial databases with applied automatic machine learning and data science techniques for land management and data processing (parcels delineation, crop monitoring, or similar), successfully implemented in the past 3 (three) years.</p> <p>List of contracts managed, and their value shall be included in the Proposal.</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, all Parties cumulatively should meet requirement).</i></p>
	<p>Proven capacity to acquire required satellite imageries for the needs of the assignment (open account with Copernicus Open Access Hub or similar entry access capability)</p> <p>Submit proof of an open account with the Copernicus Open Access Hub or similar. This documentation can include account creation confirmation emails, screenshots of the dashboard showing active access, or any official documentation from the platform confirming your access.</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, all Parties cumulatively should meet requirement).</i></p>
Minimum key personnel	<p>The contractor must provide at least four (4) key experts. Failure to do so will be considered ground for disqualification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Key personnel 1: Product manager § Key personnel 2: Remote Sensing and Earth Observation Specialist § Key personnel 3: GIS Specialist § Key personnel 4: Machine Learning Data Scientist <p>Please note: The above listed roles cannot be cumulated under a single position.</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, all Parties cumulatively should meet requirement).</i></p>
Financial Standing	<p>Minimum average annual turnover of 200,000 US\$ for the last 3 years.</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, all Parties cumulatively should meet requirement).</i></p>
	<p>Bidder must demonstrate the current soundness of its financial standing and indicate its prospective long-term profitability.</p> <p><i>(For JV/Consortium/Association, all Parties cumulatively should meet requirement).</i></p>

Subcontracting is allowed under the RfP, however the bidders shall provide legal documentation related to the subcontracting agreement, shall detail what services will be subcontracted and their corresponding

weights in overall agreement amount as well as shall present the management and quality assurance processes within the subcontracting relationship.

Question 11. Can the requirements for awarding the maximum score also be met through the contribution of a subcontractor?

Answer 11. The Lead bidder may submit the application in consortium/JV with another company, to count cumulative experience for eligibility requirements. Subcontracted company is not considered for scoring, as this is part of the methodology proposed. The maximum score does not depend whether some services are subcontracted or implemented directly, but on the overall proposed approach and methodology for implementation, in line with SECTION 4: EVALUATION CRITERIA/ Technical Evaluation Criteria.

Question 12. What is the rough budget for such a demanding, intensive project?

Answer 12. UNDP cannot provide a price range for the services. Following the competitive procurement procedures applied, the proposal shall be evaluated based on combined scoring method using a distribution of 70%-30% Technical proposal - Financial proposal. Therefore, companies are invited to submit their price offer for implementation of the requested services in line with the TOR. The companies shall bid with the considered optimum price offer to ensure qualitative services implementation while keeping the financial competitiveness of their offer.

Question 13. In previous questions and provided clarification responses, it is still not clear if PlanetScope data should be purchased for the chosen Pilot areas, i.e. near-daily real data observations at 3,7m resolution for the whole season, or should the study be conducted just with Sentinel data, perhaps synthesized into "super-resolution" data

Answer 13. The services shall be primarily conducted based on Sentinel-2 data, supplemented by PlanetScope imagery (to complement the activities as another input data source) for one LOT only (area A, B or C). The PlanetScope data shall be provided by the Bidder. The area which will be contracted (A, B or C) will be subject of financial offers and budget availability. UNDP will award a single LOT (area) upon evaluation of the financial offers for the technical compliant proposals. The PlanetScope data (Level 2 product), or data with at least equivalent or higher resolution, shall be obtained for the pilot area for spring and summer season of the 2024 calendar year. However, the RfP does not exactly require applying daily revisit time of PlanetScope data. It's upon the Bidder to propose the appropriate methodology and algorithms for optimal use of PlanetScope cloudless data to supplement the Sentinel-2 data for the Deliverables.

Question 14. The only reliable way to do training and validation for both field boundaries and crop classification is to do a lot of field work in the pilot study area. Can we expect any cooperation (e.g. letters of authority, permissions, etc) to enable our field data collectors to access different parts of the pilot study area?

Answer 14. Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and Geo-Spatial Application system (GSA) do not exist in Moldova to serve for the purpose of training (calibration). The Beneficiary does not possess enough reliable Ground Truth Data, hence, the model could be trained by using other available relevant data (e.g. Ground Truth data from other countries/regions having similar agricultural background as in the Republic of Moldova). If field works shall become required by the Bidder for the scope of data training, UNDP will ensure rapid coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture for enable the field data collector to access different parts of the pilot area.

Question 15. Form I: Statement of exclusivity and availability: we do understand that staff cannot be in an offer from another Bidder. BUT being exclusively available for this project is too much. That would mean UNDP 'hires' staff for the duration of the project. Can we ask to discard this requirement?

Answer 15. The requirement cannot be voided. Please consider the Statement of exclusivity and availability as a general requirement to ensure that the proposed personnel will be available for the scope of the contract. In case the company which is awarded the contract is requesting to change one of the proposed and evaluated key experts, the company shall ensure that the substituted person possess minimum of similar expertise and years of experience as the evaluated personnel.

Question 16. Financial Statements - we have them in non-English language. Do the Financial documents need to be translated, or are they acceptable in other than English language?

Answer 16: In line with SECTION 3: DATA SHEET (DS), point 4. Language: "All proposals, information, documents and correspondence exchanged between UNDP and the proposers in relation to this solicitation process shall be in English". At the same time, there is no need for translation of documents issued by local public authorities. Financial statements can be provided in non-English language. However, you may consider translation of the lines from the balance sheets which refer to FORM F: ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION / Financial Standing, to facilitate review by the evaluators of the balance sheet number to justify the figures included in the form F.