Published: 11/04/2024

Annex A: Defra Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning - Service Order Form ■■■■■

Part A – Key data

Buyer's organisation & division/department	Blue Planet Fund Evidence and Analysis Team, International Sustainable Blue Finance (ISBF), International Biodiversity and Climate (IBC) directorate
Name of procurement lead for Buyer	■■■■■■
Procurement lead's email address	■■■■■■
Name of technical lead(s) for Buyer	■■■■■■ ■■■■■■
Technical lead's email address	■■■■■■ ■■■■■■
Date of request (submitted to Supplier)	01/08/24
Atamis Service Order Number	■■■■■■
Service order title	ODA-BPF OCEAN Independent Evaluator

MEL Lot	1☐ Climate, env't, etc.	2☐ Natural env't	3☐ Marine, fisheries	4☐ Food, farming, countryside	5☐ Gov't	6☒ International

Proposed start date	*12/08/2024*	**Proposed end date**	*31/03/2030*

Status of this request

Pre-procurement engagement (including scoping discussion with Supplier)	☐	*Buyer should complete at least Part B1 (B2 optional)*
Request for services based on final specification	☒	*Buyer should complete Part B1 and B2* *N.B. Where Star Chamber approval is required, such approval should be secured before the request for services is issued*

Commissioning of concept development / exploratory support or other low value requirement *(simplified order process, £50k max)*	☐	*Buyer should complete Part C*

Has this requirement previously been lodged on the MEL Pipeline for the relevant Lot?	Yes ☒	No ☐

Version control	*Version v2.0; Adopted: [17.03.2024]*

Reference: ███████   Version: 1.7 Security classification: OFFICIAL

Part B – Buyer's specification

B.1 Summary of requirements

This summary should (in no more than 500 words) explain the scope of the requirements.

The summary should include, but not be limited to: Subject matter; Service required; Scope – Evaluation design / In flight schemes or outcomes; Objectives – subject matter and what services are required, required outcomes/outputs; Background – relevant detail that will help the Supplier understand the subject matter background, including whether this is 'follow on' work / a repeat of a service previously delivered, or an entirely new service requirement; Method of delivery – social research methods (desk based/face-to-face/mixed/other) / ecological survey research methods; Suggested task list; Timetable of key milestones; Ways of working; Risk considerations; Travel & Subsistence considerations; Data Protection considerations.

Summary:

Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature (OCEAN) is a competitive grants programme, being delivered by the Authority as part of the Blue Planet Fund. OCEAN's intended impact is to place the ocean on a path to recovery, enabling local communities and nature to thrive. OCEAN seeks to attract proposals from organisations that have the potential to reach communities which – until now – may have had difficulty in accessing ODA funding. The Authority expects applications from a wide range of organisations ranging from smaller local community groups (Community Grants – up to £250k) to larger non-governmental organisations and academic research institutions (Partnership Grants - £250k-£3m).

The Authority is seeking a supplier to undertake an evaluation to: understand the efficiency and effectiveness of OCEAN; to support the Value for Money (VfM) assessment; and to support learning that contributes to a) improvements in programme delivery and b) informs programme design and delivery across the BPF portfolio as well as other ODA challenge fund/ grant schemes. The evaluation will consist of interim and final process and impact evaluations, along with providing data for the VfM assessment of OCEAN.

The evaluation will build on current programme monitoring and learning cycles. The evaluation should include a focus on the programme's ability to deliver against aims on GESI and poverty reduction, alongside progress towards achieving environmental impacts.

2

OCEAN is an adaptive programme and the supplier will support feedback loops to support learning and improvements to the programme.

The supplier will need a dedicated core team to maintain strong relations with the Authority and GA. Any planned changes to personnel must be discussed with the Authority. The supplier will be expected to adhere to a series of evaluation principles:

- Evaluation approach tailored to the programme and accounting for project beneficiaries
- Focus on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and poverty
- Safeguarding incorporated into evaluation design and delivery
- Commitment to high ethical standards
- Strong quality assurance processes

As detailed in the OCEAN Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Specification, the supplier will be expected to undertake a series of core tasks, with additional tasks supplementing these. These essential tasks will form the core of the OCEAN Evaluation and Learning strategy. These tasks include:

August 2024: Agreeing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)
- **Autumn 2024:** Inception Report
- **2025/26:** Interim Evaluation
- **2029/30:** Final Evaluation
- Annual updates to the OCEAN Theory of Change (ToC) and Logframe

The additional tasks also provide key insights and should be undertaken alongside the mandatory outputs. They include:

- Evidence Reviews
- Case Studies
- Deep Dives
- Annual Reviews
- Project-level evaluation support

These core and additional tasks will help drive learning within OCEAN, including vertical learning (grantees learning from the GA and authority and vice versa) and horizontal learning (grantees learning from each other). Learning outcomes will also be shared with other BPF programmes, to help inform and improve delivery in those programmes. We will also seek to share those learning outcomes with other Defra ODA programmes (such as Darwin and the Biodiversity Challenge Fund), and programmes external to Defra.

B.2 – Full Specification of Requirements

B2.1 Objectives

The key objective of the Independent Evaluation is to understand the success of the OCEAN Grant Programme's approach, and to share learnings about this with other relevant ODA programmes. The programme MEL will therefore focus on both impact and process evaluations. OCEAN is attempting to do something different in its approach, by identifying smaller organisations who may not have had the chance to access grant funding before and build their capacity to improve environmental and poverty outcomes in communities. OCEAN also is focussed on achieving positive Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) outcomes. The success of the programme's environmental impact will be measured against the seven key BPF objectives:

- Marine protected areas (MPAs) and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs)
- Illegal Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing
- Solid waste and other forms of marine pollution
- Small scale fisheries management
- Critical marine habitats for coastal resilience
- Aquaculture

Targets for relevant environmental and people-focused outcomes will be set against BPF Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as well as Defra's International Climate Finance (ICF) KPIs. These indicators are captured in the programme logframe, and will be developed further with the programme standard indicators framework.

The independent evaluation will test the success of OCEAN against these key target outcomes, including how successful the innovative grant funding approach was in delivering positive impacts. The evaluation will also focus on additional learning questions:

- How effective was OCEAN's grant funding approach, and how does it compare to other grant funding programmes?
- How successful was OCEAN's outreach in identifying the types of community organisation targeted?
- How has OCEAN built capacity in community organisations? Do projects now have the capacity to continue to deliver effective change once OCEAN funding ends?
- How effective was the adaptive learning strategy?
- How has learning and knowledge from OCEAN informed other BPF, Defra and external programmes?
- How did OCEAN perform with regards to Value for Money?

3.2 Background / context to the work

See the Summary section above. We are seeking a supplier to undertake an evaluation to understand the efficiency, effectiveness and support with Value for Money (VfM) of the OCEAN programme and to support learning that contributes to improvements in programme delivery and informs programme design and delivery across the BPF portfolio as well as other ODA challenge fund/ grant schemes. MEL is an essential part of OCEAN delivery and was budgeted for in the Full Business Case. The Authority needs to procure an Independent Evaluator to support understanding of the success of the OCEAN programme.

3.3 Scope of required work

As detailed in the Summary section above, the supplier will be expected to carry out a number of core and additional tasks. The core tasks include:

- Agreeing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)
- Inception Report
- Interim Evaluation
- Final Evaluation
- Annual updates to the OCEAN Theory of Change (ToC) and Logframe Additional tasks

include:

- Evidence Reviews
- Case Studies
- Deep Dives
- Annual Reviews
- Project-level evaluation support

Each of these outputs will need to have a strong focus on learning, including recommendations for how to improve OCEAN delivery, as well as BPF, Defra and external programmes. Gathering knowledge and evidence on OCEAN process and impact will be a crucial vehicle for making improvements in these programmes, helping to improve poverty and (marine) environmental outcomes for communities across the globe.

3.4 Method

The Independent Evaluator will be able to build on data collected by the Grant Administrator. This will include logframe and KPI data to help us understand OCEAN's impact, as well as information on process and delivery. The supplier will need to supplement this programme data with additional, and possibly more in-depth methodologies. Methods for strengthening the information being collected and shared include:

> In-country and remote case studies based on developed sampling strategies

- Primary research and stakeholder engagement
- Evidence reviews drawing on evidence internal and external to OCEAN, as well as internal knowledge and experience
- Data aggregation and presentation
- Seminars, webinars and workshops
- Written reports

We expect that the supplier will have previous experience with these approaches, and will be able to effectively deliver against them.

3.5 Required outputs

As noted above, the main outputs required (including the suggested topics to explore at each stage) are:

- **Inception Report** o Review of programme ToC and logframe o Review of programme MEL framework o Refined list of evaluation questions o Detailed sampling strategy
    - o Approach to learning from unsuccessful applicants o List of evaluation activities and outputs
- **Interim Evaluation** o Process evaluation of the various stages and elements of the programme o Quality-assurance of programme monitoring
    - o Quality assurance of process and effectiveness of embedding data into decisions o Review and update of the programme ToC o Progress towards programme objectives o Early findings from a first set of case studies
    - o Review of grant administrator learning processes and systems o Changes to programme design and/or delivery from programme learning o Recommendations for what should be included in the final evaluation o Interim Value for Money evaluation
- **Final Evaluation** o Assessment of whether OCEAN has achieved its outcome and impacts o Assessment of OCEAN's application of adaptive management o Recommended approach to assess Value for Money o Case study findings
    - o Assessment of the long-term sustainability of the projects o Synthesis of findings from the Deep Dives

- **Evidence Reviews** ○ Assessing evidence internal and external to OCEAN, as well as internal knowledge and experience, to address key questions on relevant emerging topics
- **Case Studies** ○ Examples of project successes and shortcomings, including highlighting the reallife impact of OCEAN
- **Deep Dives**
    - ○ Investigating bigger questions concerning programme delivery, which can lead to learning that can be applied to other programmes across the BPF portfolio

These outputs will help drive forward learning in the manner detailed above.

3.6 Timetable and key milestones

The outline timetable below highlights key milestones:

Timing	Output
August 2024	Agreeing the MoA
Autumn 2024	Inception Report
August 2025	Interim Evaluation
FY 2029/30 (tbc)	Final Evaluation

We anticipate that the supplier will carry out four to five Evidence Reviews and Deep Dives over the course of the contract, or around one of each per year. The supplier will input into programme Annual Reviews, which are due every August. Case Studies will be carried out as required for the Interim and Final Evaluations. The GA and Authority hold quarterly meetings to discuss key topics, and the supplier will be expected to attend at least one day of each of these meetings, either in-person or online. There will also be learning events – both in-person and online – with the timetable yet to be agreed for these, but likely in line with the yearly learning cycles.

3.7 Governance and ways of working

Ways of working between the Authority, GA and IE will be formally agreed through the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). This will include agreeing a timetable for regular catch-ups, and which members of the team will need to be involved. We will want to develop a collaborative approach, where all viewpoints are account for and respected.

As mentioned in section 3.4, the supplier will be able to build on data collected by the GA with its own additional insights. This will feed into the outputs produced by the supplier, feeding back into the GA and OCEAN programme to deliver improvements in delivery.

3.8 Expertise required

Given the bottom-up nature of the programme and focus on community-level intervention, a developmental evaluation approach is strongly encouraged: programme success is strongly dependent on involving beneficiaries within design and delivery, including feedback loops. Evaluation findings should be communicated in ways that suit different stakeholders. The Authority expects the Supplier to demonstrate the application of developmental evaluation approaches, particularly in developing contexts.

OCEAN projects will be operating across a wide geographic area. The supplier must demonstrate experience of conducting multi-country evaluations, including across ODA-eligible countries. The supplier will also be expected to utilise local expertise in designing and delivering evaluation and

learning as much as is possible: experience of working with in-country partners in this way is highly desirable.

In line with the OCEAN programme evaluation principles outlined above, the supplier is expected to demonstrate experience of incorporating GESI into evaluations, alongside a commitment to safeguarding.

3.9 Health and safety requirements (where applicable)

Health and safety principles will need to followed in particular when undertaking in-person visits, including for UK-based quarterly meetings and learning events, and for overseas trips to visit OCEAN projects. We assume that the supplier will have their own Health and Safety Policy of a similar standard to the Authority's policy, and this will be adhered to. This should include things like health and safety risk assessments for travel to ensure all involved are aware of any risks. All overseas trips should be planned with a timetable of events, and then these should be logged once carried out – including an issues log if any problems were encountered.

A standard health and safety policy will also need to be followed for day-to-day work.

3.10 Any other considerations

Refer to the full OCEAN MEL Specification for further detail and considerations.

3.11   Budget and resource guidance

The proposed budget was discussed between the Authority and the Supplier over the previous few months, and was based on the suggested activities in the OCEAN MEL Specification. The Supplier produced an activity-based costing model using their assumptions for time taken and day rates charged. The latest estimate as produced by the Supplier came to £3.12m, which is subject to change. This also does not include the cost of time taken to develop the Spec and prepare the proposal

Core tasks	
Fees	£2.33m
Expenses	£0.282m
Total	£2.61m
Additional tasks	
Fees	£0.396m
Expenses	£0.118m
Total	£0.514m
Overall total	
Fees	£2.72m
Expenses	£0.400m
Total	**£3.12m**

4. Data Protection

4.1. This Section shall be completed by the Controller, who may take account of the view of the Processors, however the final decision as to the content of this Annex shall be with the Buyer at its absolute discretion.

4.2. The contact details of the Buyer's Data Protection Officers are:

████████

4.3. The contact details of the Supplier's Data Protection Officer are:

███████

4.4. The Processor shall comply with any further written instructions with respect to Processing by the Controller.

4.5. Any such further instructions shall be incorporated into the tables below [**select correct descriptions and enter relevant detail].**

4.6. Should a Joint Controller and Processor relationship be agreed please refer to the terms set out in Annex 2 of Joint Schedule 11 Data Protection.

Description	Details
Identity of Controller for each Category of Personal Data	**The Buyer is Controller and the Supplier is Processor** *The Parties acknowledge that in accordance with paragraph 2 to paragraph 15 and for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation, the Buyer is the Controller and the Supplier is the Processor of the following Personal Data:* ● Types of personal data: ○ Names, addresses, email addresses, other contact details including phone numbers, age, gender, disability status, employer, images ● Categories of personal data: ○ Staff, suppliers, customers/clients, partner organisation employees, OCEAN webinar/workshop attendees, OCEAN website/online material users
Duration of the Processing	Data processing will last for the period the service order is in effect for. This is from onboarding in August 2024, to the end of the contract on 31st March 2030.
Nature and purposes of the Processing	The Independent Evaluator will be engaging related programme beneficiaries in questionnaires for the purpose of carrying out the evaluation. The IE will not be undertaking large scale surveys, but will be undertaking stakeholder interviews and individual surveys. Data from this engagement should be carefully handled according to standard Defra and Supplier guidelines. The Supplier has its own data protection policy, which it will be expected to adhere to for this contract. Personal data should not be included or shared in any outputs from the IE. All personal data collected will be anonymised before sharing with Defra, and destroyed at the end of the contract in line with relevant data retention requirements.

Type of Personal Data	Names, addresses, email addresses, other contact details including phone numbers, age, gender, disability status, employer, images. Age, gender and disability status may be collected if possible to inform disaggregation of beneficiaries for logframe reporting. This is to understand more about our GEDSI impact.
Categories of Data Subject	Staff, suppliers, customers/clients, partner organisation employees, OCEAN webinar/workshop attendees, OCEAN website/online material users
Plan for return and destruction of the data once the Processing is complete **UNLESS requirement under Union or Member State law to preserve that type of data**	All personal data collected will be anonymised before sharing with Defra and destroyed at the end of the contract (i.e. March 2030) in line with relevant data retention requirements.

Section 5 – Supplier response

To be completed by the Supplier. Explanation of how the requirements will be met.

5.1 Approach
(Strategic approach to meeting the objectives)

The purpose of this contract is to undertake an evaluation of OCEAN and support learning that contributes to adaptive management and leads to improvements in programme delivery. It will also inform programme design and delivery across the BPF portfolio and other similar ODA programmes, including those that use challenge funds or grant schemes.

Our approach builds on the existing OCEAN MEL framework and has been agreed with Defra and the Grant Administrator (GA) prior to the finalisation of this proposal. It is structured around two main workstreams – evaluation and learning – with 'additional tasks', which together aim to provide Defra and the GA with evidence and learning to inform decision-making, programme-level oversight and reporting, and support adaptation. The approach is summarised in the diagram below.
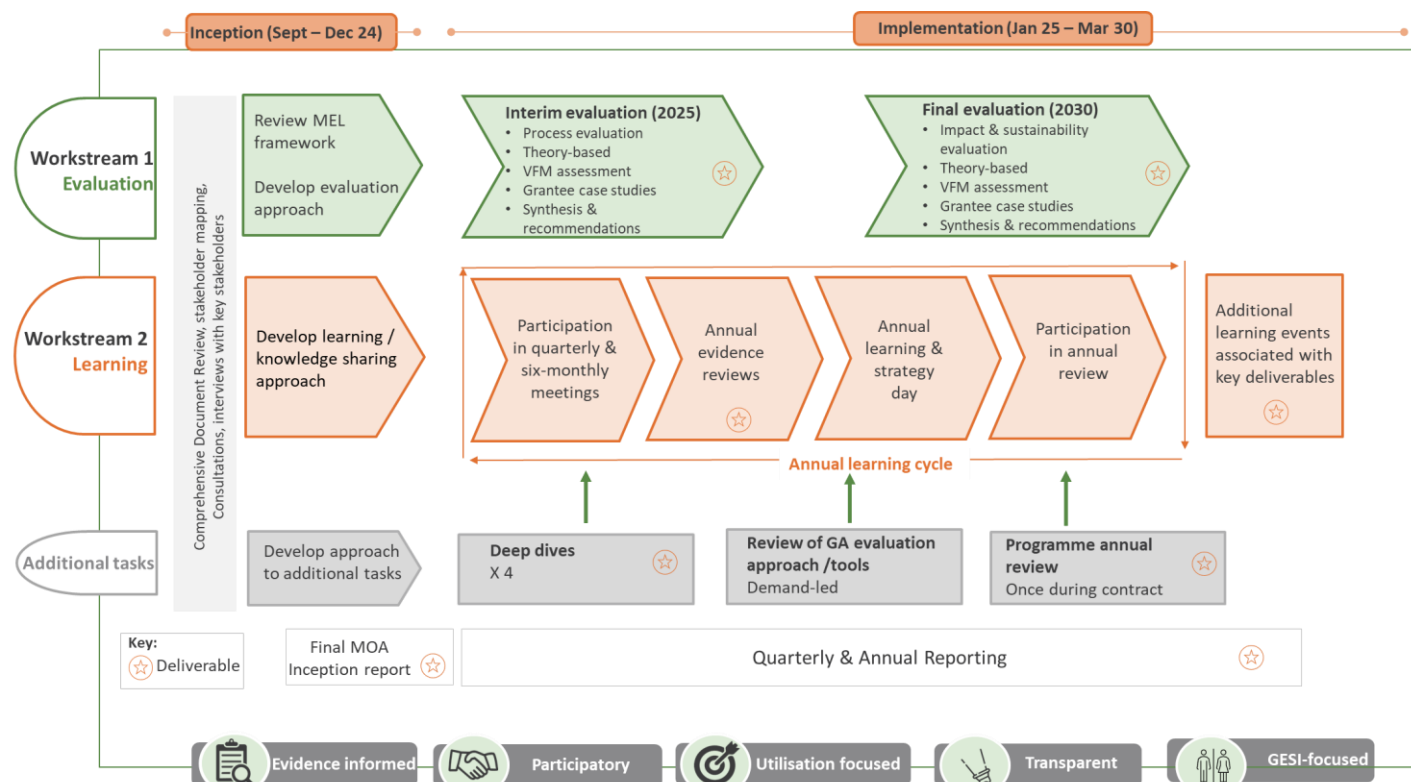
The evaluation will take place at two stages (interim in 2025 and final in 2029/30) and will include process and impact evaluations, as well as providing data for the value for money (VfM) assessment of the programme.

Our support to learning will focus on the portfolio level, with the GA managing grantee level learning. It will be structured around an annual cycle of learning activities, culminating in an annual 'strategy day' in June of every year.

The 'additional tasks' include:

- **Evidence reviews**. A key input into the annual learning cycle will be four annual evidence reviews based on key learning questions and primary and secondary data analysis.
- **Case studies**, which will be incorporated into the Interim and Final evaluations.
- **Deep dives**, which will be important to provide evidence to address agreed learning questions on an annual basis and feed into the annual 'strategy day'.
- **Annual Reviews**. We will lead up to three Annual Reviews, which take place each August.
- **Project-level evaluation support**, reviewing GA evaluation approaches and tools and undertaking up to three programme Annual Reviews.

Underpinning our approach are several core principles (in addition to those set out in the buyer's specification):

1. **Evidence-informed:** we will mobilise the best possible evidence to support programmatic decisionmaking. All our outputs will be triangulated and contextualised using a comprehensive evidence base.
2. **Participatory:** we will collaborate with Defra and the GA to develop the MEL strategy and to interpret and apply evidence, building ownership and understanding.

3. **Utilisation-focused:** our approach will be designed to meet the needs and priorities of Defra and the GA, to ensure ongoing MEL efforts add value to programme delivery.

4. **Transparent:** our communications will be regular and open. This is the best way of building strong trusting relationships, which are essential for learning.

5. **Focus on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and poverty:** OCEAN is committed to being GESI sensitive from the start and by 2025 aims to be at least GESI empowering and ideally transformational. Our approach will embed GESI analysis in the evaluation design to support the achievement of these ambitions.

Additionally, we are committed to adhering to the BPF's vision for tackling sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), to high ethical principles for research, and the integration of strong quality assurance.

5.2 Method
(Task by task description of how the project will be implemented)

5.2.1 Inception Phase

The work will begin with an Inception Phase between September and December 2024, during which we will complete the following activities:

Kick-off Meetings: A series of kick-off meetings with Defra and the GA will allow us to develop shared expectations about our preferred ways of working (communication preferences and channels, check-in meeting cadence and focus, and other logistics); the roles and responsibilities of Defra, the GA, and Itad/OPM (finalised in a matrix); and the process for co-developing the approach to the evaluation, learning, knowledge management and dissemination, and the optional tasks. We will also establish a clear timeline for the Inception Phase and the delivery of inception outputs.

Review of Programme Documents: Our team will conduct an in-depth review of the existing OCEAN theory of change (ToC), logical framework (logframe), MEL Framework developed by the GA in consultation with Defra, and associated indicators, monitoring plans, and evaluation questions. This will provide the team with a comprehensive understanding of current MEL mechanisms and ensure that the programme-level evaluation and processes are grounded in those mechanisms.

Conversations with Key Stakeholders: We will undertake a series of conversations with key stakeholders to further expand our understanding of the context and needs, which will inform the development of our approach. Our team will work closely with Defra and the GA to identify the appropriate people for these conversations.

Refine the Evaluation Questions & Define Evaluation Approach: With the evaluation questions (EQs) developed already by Defra as a starting point, we will use the Inception Phase and the information gathered to refine the EQs to ensure that they are targeted to stakeholder needs, and appropriate for the existing opportunities and constraints (including the monitoring and evaluation processes planned by the GA). Based on these new EQs, we will define our evaluation approaches along the lines of the core principles shared above, noting the evaluation methodologies for the interim and final evaluation, sampling considerations for the case studies to be included, indicative sources of information, and a list of outputs to be developed. Evaluation outputs will be targeted and accessible. We will also discuss ways of working so that the evaluations promote participation and the development and uptake of learning. Our approach to each evaluation is set out in more detail below.

> **Learning from unsuccessful applicants**
>
> OCEAN's approach is to target organisations with limited or no experience in similar programs to increase inclusivity and expand its reach and impact. Our evaluation will include following up with unsuccessful applicants to understand how they experienced the application process, including barriers and challenges, and feedback on ways that the GA and Defra can support them in future. Findings can be used to iterate the application process and for OCEAN and for future Defra programmes.

Define Learning Approach: Based on the needs of stakeholders, we will develop a learning approach that is aligned with and mutually reinforcing to the grantee-level learning approach to be undertaken by the GA, while also providing actionable lessons learned at the portfolio level. The learning approach will be grounded in learning questions, which will be defined and refined annually and explored through evidence reviews and deep dives (see below). The Inception Report will outline the principles guiding the learning approach, associated ways of working, and priority outputs and activities (including the annual Strategy Day and other events).

Develop Approach to Additional Tasks: The Inception Phase will also serve to further develop the approach to the additional tasks, namely the evidence reviews, case studies (which are an integral component of the interim and final evaluations), deep dives, completion of up to three Annual Reviews, and project-level evaluation support. We will work closely with Defra and the GA to define the format and approach to the deep dives and scope potential topics. We will also work with the GA to identify potential needs for project-level evaluation support.

An indicative timeline (in weeks) is included below (see Table 1).

Table 1: Indicative Timeline for Inception Phase by Task

Task	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
Hold Kick-off Meetings with Defra and GA	�	▓										
Review Programme Documents	▓	▓										
Stakeholder Conversations			▓	▓	▓	▓						
Agree and Finalise MoA				▓	▓	▓						
Draft Inception Report					▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓		
Regular Check-ins with Defra	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	
Submit Draft Inception Report										▒		
Defra Reviews Draft Inception Report											▒	
Finalise Inception Report												▒

Based on the conversations and information collected during the Inception Phase, we will produce the following outputs:

- **Final Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)**, including:
    - ○ Roles and responsibilities ○ Governance / working arrangements, including a Communications Plan

- **Final Inception Report**, including:
  - Reflections on the existing MEL Framework (including ToC and logframe) that will inform the next grantee cycle
  - Refined list of EQs ○ Aligned evaluation approach, including methodology and sources of information for the interim and final evaluation as well as the sampling strategy and indicative work plan for the interim evaluation
  - Learning approach, including first cycle learning questions and plan for evidence reviews ○ Approach and agreed timeline for deep dives ○ Approach for Annual Reviews to be led by Itad/OPM ○ Overarching work plan (more detailed for the first year) ○ Outputs to be delivered, including format and purpose

5.2.2 Learning

We will facilitate an accessible and action-oriented learning process at the programme level to support adaptation and improvement within OCEAN as well as more broadly. Our partnership-based approach entails working closely with Defra and the GA, capitalising on existing processes to the extent possible, and undertaking a demand-driven process that responds to the learning needs of key stakeholders. A participatory and collaborative approach will help us to identify the most valuable learning questions and processes, including opportunities for peer-to-peer learning as part of the annual learning cycle.

Each annual learning cycle will be grounded in learning questions and priorities that are collaboratively defined with Defra and the GA and updated as new questions arise and information gaps are identified. Our goal is to provide useful information that sheds light on emerging inquiries; informs and augments the six-monthly and Annual Review process; and correspondingly increases OCEAN's relevance, effectiveness, and impact through adaptation. Relevant activities include:

Participation in Quarterly and Six-Monthly Meetings: We will have a light-touch presence at quarterly and six-monthly meetings to gather and share reflections relevant to the learning cycles and learning questions.

Annual Learning & Strategy Day: Each year, we will undertake an in-depth review of grantee monitoring data, evidence review and deep dive information and findings, evaluation products, and other relevant information in response to the defined learning questions and priorities. We will also review the existing OCEAN strategy and MEL Framework as well as related processes, tools, and systems. The information will be summarised in accessible outputs that can be used to co-develop programmatic learnings and identify recommended adaptations to the programme strategy, future grant cycles, and the MEL Framework (including the ToC, logframe, indicators, etc.). This codevelopment will take places as part of an annual Strategy Day in June, the outputs of which will feed into OCEAN's Annual Review in August as well as future grant cycles.

Ad-hoc Review of GA Evaluation Approaches & Tools: We will support the GA with ad-hoc reviews of evaluation approaches and tools as the GA plans for grantee-level evaluations. This will include the identification of potential synergies and points of connection with the programme-level evaluations.

Learning outputs will be designed collaboratively and strategically with Defra, the GA, and other relevant stakeholders based on their objectives, key messages, audience, etc. These outputs will include:

- Products, presentations, tools, etc. to facilitate annual learning conversations.

- An annual learning report that provides accessible, high-level summaries of key lessons learned and associated programmatic adaptations. This will include any relevant recommendations for changes to the OCEAN MEL Framework.

- The co-delivery of learning events for key deliverables produced, such as the interim and final evaluation or deep dives.

5.2.3 Interim Evaluation

The interim evaluation in 2025 will focus heavily on process with the intention of producing usable findings that can feed back into OCEAN's strategy and implementation. It will incorporate processsbased questions and an operational focus that assesses aspects of the funding mechanism, such as the grantee application process, grant administration, existing monitoring data, and the GA's learning and adaptation systems and processes. Using a theory-based approach, it will also assess early grantee progress in the broader context in which OCEAN operates to understand if OCEAN is being implemented according to its ToC, whether that ToC is reflective of and relevant to existing needs, and if the underlying assumptions still hold true. The evaluation will also explore OCEAN's VfM and approach to fund management.

Taken together, this will allow us to assess OCEAN's relevance, effectiveness, economy, efficiency, and equity across areas such as fund design, fund marketing, grantee selection, project implementation, and early results. We will also consider the potential for impact and sustainability, using the results to make recommendations for adaptations to improve the remainder of OCEAN's implementation.

Likely methods for the evaluation include mixed methods such a quantitative analysis of grantee monitoring data, qualitative analysis of grantee reports, findings from completed evidence reviews and deep dives, and primary data collection in the form of stakeholder interviews, a grantee survey, and case studies (see box below). Analysis of the data collected will follow the EQs and include a strong focus on GESI, poverty reduction, and safeguarding and conflict sensitivity considerations in the evaluation's design, implementation, and dissemination of results. We will also include a peer review by MEL and technical experts. Additional details on the approach will be defined during the Inception Phase.

Case Studies & Sampling

The interim and final evaluations will include case studies of grantees. Case studies will be selected to cover both Community and Partnership projects. Other sampling criteria will include grantee application score, project size, project focus/objectives, project geography and ecological context, environmental theme, and any previous assessments by the GA. In total, we will conduct: *Interim evaluation*

- 12 community grant case studies (8 remote and 4 in-depth)
- 8 partnership grant case studies (4 remote and 4 in-depth)

Final evaluation

- 24 community grant case studies (16 remote and 8 in-depth)
- 16 partnership grant case studies (8 remote and 8 in-depth)

Evaluation outputs will be tailored to the various audiences, keeping in mind their evaluation and learning needs, and targeting findings and recommendations accordingly. To this end, we will include:

- An **evaluation report format** that is accessible to the various audiences in terms of length, language, etc.
- Usable **findings** on progress toward programmatic objectives, including opportunities and barriers.

- Associated **recommendations** for improving programme design and/or delivery, such as those related to the grantee application and administration process, grantee monitoring and learning, and adaptations to the OCEAN ToC.
- **Updates** to the learning cycles and/or final evaluation plan.

5.2.4 Final Evaluation

The final evaluation in 2029/30 will provide an opportunity to focus more on progress made in achieving outcomes and impact. Using a theory-based approach, we will employ contribution analysis to assess the programme's effectiveness given the contexts in which it took place and the factors that affect its sustainability. We will also assess the ways in which OCEAN incorporated adaptive management processes during implementation by tracing processes over time and their resulting (contributions to) outcomes. Additionally, we will undertake a VfM evaluability assessment of the information available in order to make a recommendation to Defra on how it might go about conducting its own VfM evaluation. As with all our work, we will ensure the inclusion of GESI and poverty reduction considerations as well as a peer review process that incorporates thematic and technical expertise to verify the robustness and validity of the approach and findings.

Relevant information sources for this final evaluation will include secondary information from grantee monitoring data, evaluations of grantees undertaken by the GA, the result of the Annual Review and learning processes, evidence reviews, and other optional tasks such as deep dives. We will also undertake primary data collection, including an additional round of case studies (see box), as well as consultations with key stakeholders. The evaluation outputs will include:

> **Selecting Final Evaluation Case Studies**
>
> In addition to the criteria listed above, case studies for the final evaluation will also incorporate 1) a consideration of evaluations undertaken by the GA, and 2) the sampling approach of **positive deviance**, which entails identifying projects or countries that have demonstrated positive performance or outcomes and from which key learnings can be gathered. While we may also choose to look at cases in which performance has been less than optimal, this would be challenging given relational and political considerations.

- A full **evaluation report** that incorporates: 1) findings structured according to the evaluation questions; and 2) **recommendations** for future programme implementation, including ways to improve impact and sustainability according to contextual opportunities and challenges.
- A **recommendation on VfM assessment**, grounded in evidence, for Defra to take forward.
- **Presentations** of the final evaluation, its findings and recommendations, as well as facilitated discussions on lessons learned and good practices. The presentations will support the conversion of evaluation findings into action among relevant stakeholders.
- Other **learning events** as agreed upon with Defra and the GA.
- **Assumptions** (sampling for case studies). The sampling strategy for the case studies will take into account similar considerations as the interim evaluation as well as any progress made by the GA in conducting project-level evaluations and any findings from the learning cycles.

5.2.6 Additional tasks

We understand that the 'additional tasks' will be commissioned based on demand. However we consider that two of the additional tasks listed in the buyer's specification are integral to the delivery of

the core components of the contract: (i) the evidence reviews will be critical to inform the annual learning cycle; and (ii) the case studies are critical components of the Interim and Final Evaluations.

Our budget has made assumptions on the cost of each additional task, but in reality the cost of some of the additional tasks (the deep dives, annual reviews and project-level evaluation support) is impossible to predict with any accuracy before the detailed scope for each has been agreed. For this reason, we propose that the total budget for additional tasks is managed on a drawdown basis, with the budget for each task being agreed with Defra prior to its commencement.

Evidence Reviews: We will undertake four evidence reviews over the duration of the contract, around one per year. The focus of these reviews will be collaboratively developed with Defra and GA, evolving each year to respond to specific needs. They may focus, for example, on evidence gaps identified in the ToC, the defined learning and evaluation questions and priorities, or emerging thematic issues or innovations. Evidence reviews will entail 1) a review of secondary sources of literature such as research, evaluations, white papers, etc. based on a specific scope; 2) an assessment of evidence generated by OCEAN, such as grantee monitoring data, deep dives, etc; and 3) relevant experiences and knowledge of internal stakeholders. Itad is already undertaking six-month evidence reviews for COAST, which will create efficiencies in the OCEAN process. A database of relevant evidence will be collated and shared with key stakeholders if requested.

Case Studies: As noted above, we will conduct in-person and remote case studies as part of the Interim and Final Evaluations. These will showcase programmatic achievements and challenges with in-depth information on the real-life results.

Deep Dives: In our budget, we have assumed four full deep dives (about one per year). The exact subject of each deep dive will be driven by the learning cycle, but these activities are designed to address evidence gaps related to the delivery of OCEAN or to a cross-cutting theme. We will develop an indicative methodology for the deep dives during inception, updating the approach annually based on lessons learned and once the subject matter has been agreed.

Annual Reviews: Up to three Annual Reviews may be undertaken by us during the lifetime of OCEAN to provide an independent review of progress. They will follow Defra's standard approach to Annual Reviews. They will be led by the Team Leader with contributions from others on the team

Project-level Evaluation Support: Evaluation support to the GA and delivery partners will be provided on a demand-led basis and within budgetary limitations. It is likely to include support to the design of project-level evaluations to ensure that the evaluation outputs will be useful to inform the programmelevel interim and final evaluations. It may also include developing the tools for GA in-person monitoring visits. We will assess the extent of this support required based on the MEL capacity of grantees and develop a corresponding budget to ensure that this support is balanced with the ability to conduct deep dives and evidence reviews.

5.2.7 Management and reporting

Key aspects of our ways of working with Defra and the GA are summarised below:

- **Regular communication, prioritisation, and feedback**: we will maintain open, ongoing communication with Defra and the GA to stay informed about evolving priorities. This will be through formal meetings (such as quarterly learning events with Defra and the GA and quarterly reporting meetings with Defra), as well as regular informal and ad hoc interactions.

- **Reporting:** At the start of the contract, we will work with Defra to agree on reporting requirements. We propose quarterly reporting (aligned with our reporting on the overall contract), which will include: (i) financial reporting; (ii) update on key deliverables; (iii) reporting on agreed KPIs; and (iv) updates to the project risk register.

- **Feedback mechanisms:** we will establish regular review mechanisms for the project through which we will seek feedback on the quality of delivery and how to improve our services. This will include six monthly and end of service feedback questionnaires incorporating:

  o Technical quality of deliverables o Quality of team's engagement and communication o Usefulness and uptake

We will ask Defra to score our performance on each category and provide qualitative feedback. Through regular feedback and review sessions, we will discuss and document the feedback and means of improvement on an ongoing basis.

5.3 The team and its organisation
(Team expertise, organogram; CVs of key personnel to be supplied at Appendix A)

Our team composition, structure, and management processes have been designed to deliver our work with rigor and uphold the highest standards of quality. We bring together a wealth of expertise in project management, evaluation, and relevant thematic areas, ensuring comprehensive and impactful research outcomes.

██████████

The core management and administration of the project is led by Co-Project Directors ██████████ (Itad) and ██████████ (OPM, supported by a dedicated team overseeing project and finance management, and a stringent quality assurance process. The Technical team will comprise of: ██████████ (Team Leader), ██████████ (Evaluation Lead), ██████████ (Learning Lead) and ██████████ (Thematic Lead). They will be supported by: ██████████ (Evaluation Support), ██████████ (Learning Support), ██████████ (VfM Lead) and ██████████ (GESI Advisor).

We also work with a Thematic Advisory Pool and Regional Experts to enhance the relevance and impact of our work.

Full CVs of the core team are included in Appendix A.

5.4 Delivery partners
(Name and summary credentials of any subcontractors of the lead Supplier)

The delivery of this contract will be led jointly by **Itad and OPM**. They are two of the UK's leading specialist providers of MEL services for development and diplomacy.

Itad combines technical excellence, independence, and integrity, as well as four decades of experience in designing and delivering the complete range of monitoring and evaluation designs (from process to theory-based to quasi- / experimental designs, and from formative to summative evaluations) for a range of clients.

OPM has 30 years' experience in providing rigorous analysis, policy advice, technical assistance, and training services to over 120 national governments, international aid agencies and public sector and non-government organisations. This includes over 200 large-scale project and programme MEL and reviews, in 65 countries worldwide.

Howell Marine Consulting is our core specialist marine partner, bringing a credible track record with Defra, such as evaluating the contribution of fisheries management plans to ocean sustainability and evaluating Fisheries Control and Enforcement.

Our **regional experts** will supplied by partners based in the following regions: Southern Africa Region (ANSA, Mozambique); East Africa Region (LlandDev, Madagascar; ICED Kenya); West Africa Region (ICED, Ghana); South Asia Region (MITRA, Bangladesh); Southeast Asia Region (Mekong Economics, Vietnam); Latin & Meso America Region (ENSOME, Nicaragua).

5.5 Programme
(Include Gantt chart and show milestones)

Figure: Gantt chart

Year	2024				2025				2026				2027				2028				2029				2030
Month / Quarter	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
INCEPTION																									
Kick off meetings with Defra and GA	Y	Y	Y	Y																					
Review programme documents including existing MEL framework	O	O																							
Stakeholder conversations	O																								
Refine EQs and develop evaluation approach, including methods, data sources and sampling		O	O																						
Define learning / knowledge sharing approach, set the learning agenda		O	O																						
Develop approach to 'optional tasks' including deep dives and programme evaluation support		O	O																						
Agree MoA and draft inception report		O		O																					
Finalise inception report				R																					
Interim evaluation					Y	Y	Y																		
Preparation / refinement of approach, including EQs/ logistical planning with in country partners					O																				
Process evaluation						O																			
VFM evaluation						O																			
Contribution analysis towards programme objectives						O																			
Community grants - x 8 remote case studies						O																			
Community grants - x 4 in-depth case studies						O																			
Partnership grants - x 4 remote case studies						O																			
Partnership grants - x 4 in-depth case studies						O																			
Synthesis and recommendations							O																		
Interim inception evaluation report							R																		
Final evaluation																						Y	Y	Y	
Preparation / refinement of approach, including EQs/ logistical planning with in country partners																					O				
Impact & sustainability evaluation																						O			
Process evaluation																						O			
VfM evaluation																						O			
Community grants - x 16 remote light touch case studies																						O			
Community grants - x 8 in-depth case studies																						O			
Partnership grants - x 8 remote light touch case studies																						O			
Partnership grants - x 8 in-depth case studies																						O			
Synthesis and recommendations																							O		
Final Impact and Process evaluation report																									R
LEARNING																									
Evidence Reviews x 4					O				O				O				O								
Annual programmatic learning cycle																									
Attendance at quarterly and six monthly learning events 1 day per event					O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		
Collation of evidence to inform learning questions						O			O	O				O							O	O			
Review of GA MEL tools, processes and systems						O				O				O								O			
Programmatic level review of TOC / logframe						O				R				O								O			
Annual strategy and learning event						R				R				R				R				R			
Additional learning events associated with publication of key deliverables (timing tbd)																									
Additional tasks																									
Full deep dives x 4						O				O			O	O			O	O							
Ad hoc review of GA evaluation approaches and tools (timing tbd)																									
Programme annual reviews x 3 (timing tbd)																									
Management																									
Quarterly reporting & meetings with Defra	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Monthly Technical Team Meetings	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Bi-weekly Management Team Meetings	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

21

5.6 Project management approach
(Include risk register)

The project management team for OCEAN MEL, overseen by OPM and Itad's co-Project Directors, provides comprehensive support and oversight throughout the project's lifecycle. This team is responsible ensuring delivery of high-quality work, financial management, risk management, and reporting to the Defra OCEAN team.

Our approach to project management is grounded in combining clear processes, open communication, flexibility, and proactive change management. Continuous planning and resource allocation are key aspects of our adaptive management approach and enable us to stay informed and ensure we are delivering against evolving priorities. To support this our project teams engage in regular work planning and review cycles, allowing for reassessment and reprioritisation as needed. Comprehensive documentation of project changes, their impacts, and associated risks is maintained, ensuring clear communication and informed decision-making across the life cycle of the project.

Our commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in annual project reviews led by the Project Manager, working with the Defra Lot 6 QA and Learning Director (OPM). These will include retrospectives to identify lessons learned and areas for enhancement. Reporting and review mechanisms, to be agreed upon in the MoA during inception, will include quarterly and annual reviews of progress against the project workplan, financial reporting, risk reporting, performance against agreed KPIs, and a forward look at planned delivery of work.

Any issues arising during the project will be promptly addressed by our Project Management Team, with the Co-Project Directors accountable for resolution. Quality issues are also escalated to the Project Directors if necessary, and serious concerns will be reported to the Defra OCEAN MEL team immediately. Less serious issues will be documented in regular management information reports with proposed actions.

Performance management will be overseen by Itad and OPM Co-Project Directors, who ensures the team's performance, including subcontractors. Quality expectations will be embedded throughout the project lifecycle, beginning with team selection and concluding with internal learning reviews to inform future work. This comprehensive approach ensures high standards and continuous improvement, contributing to the project's overall success.

Risk management

Project risk management is embedded in Itad and OPM's joint organisational approach and grounded in our policy and regulatory framework to ensure we implement the contract effectively and maintain the safety and wellbeing of our staff and partners. If required, significant risks may be escalated to Itad's Audit, Risk and Resilience Committee (ARRC)

Project risks identified, assessed (probability and impact), and scored. → Mitigation strategy developed for each risk. Scoring is repeated. → Project Director confirms escalation procedures for each risk. → Risk register communicated and agreed with Defra Ocean team. → Risk register reviewed and updated quarterly as part of quarterly reporting.

Risk assessment and management processes reflect an organisational approach to risk management
Assessment scoring informed by Itad experience **A-Severe, B-Medium, C-Low**
Assessment criteria include complexity, safety/security, stakeholder relationships, team capability, data sensitivities, financial and contextual concerns.

At project initiation, project risks will be categorised (delivery, operational, contextual, security, safeguarding), assessed against impact and probability and scored (high, medium and low). Scores will influence subsequent management and escalation processes. Risks will be discussed quarterly, along with mitigation strategies, owned by the Project Manager, and flagged to the Defra OCEAN programme team in real time as soon as they become issues.

5.7 Health and safety plan
(To be completed only where special provisions are required)

At Itad and OPM, we are dedicated to providing insight and ideas to drive more effective use of resources in international development. To fulfil this strategic objective, the employees and consultants of Itad and OPM operate in environments that contain a broad range of safety and security risks.

In recognition of this, Itad and OPM have developed a Global Safety & Security Risk Management Framework that aims to manage and minimise the safety and security risks that their employees and consultants may be exposed to when travelling overseas, following an incident, and during the delivery of projects.

At Itad and OPM, the management of safety and security risks is seen as an enabling process that forms an integral part of day-to-day decision making, and that positively contributes towards their broader strategic objectives rather than inhibiting them.

The Global Safety & Security policy of Itad and OPM applies to all employees and consultants working or travelling across the entire breadth of activities they may undertake internationally. The policy articulates their corporate risk appetite and outlines roles and responsibilities, core principles, and standards, that should all be adhered to by employees and consultants travelling on behalf of Itad and OPM.

Third parties such as subcontractors, agents, joint venture associates, or suppliers engaged by Itad and OPM must not do anything to put either Itad or OPM, or any of their employees or consultants, in breach of this policy. They must also reasonably co-operate with Itad and OPM to ensure that this policy is put into effect and remains in effect throughout the duration of the relevant project they are involved in.

For Itad and OPM, Duty of Care is defined as an obligation to ensure that reasonable care is taken to protect employees, consultants, and associated parties from unnecessary risks when performing foreseeably harmful activities during the course of their work. Itad and OPM accept this Duty of Care towards their employees and consultants.

The approach of Itad and OPM to the management of safety and security risks is not to simply avoid them but to manage them within acceptable limits to ensure that the likelihood and impact of their employees and consultants suffering unnecessary harm is minimised as far as reasonably practicable. They have a clearly defined corporate risk appetite statement set by their boards of directors and used to benchmark decisions against. This allows a universal tolerance level to apply across the breadth of Itad and OPM's overseas activities, spanning all projects, staff, and contractors.

5.9 Fixed price cost

£3,179,662.00

Price is exclusive of VAT. Detail is provided in the costing spreadsheet

5.10 Invoice plan
(Add more rows as required)

6. Conflict of Interest

Supplier declares no conflict of interest	☒
Supplier declares a conflict of interest (perceived or otherwise) that may impede the provision of MEL Services. Proposed mitigating measures are detailed below.	☐

Mitigation measures:

Supplier contract signatory (for use by Buyer in Atamis/Docusign)

Supplier's designated contract signatory, name	██████
Supplier's designated contract signatory, email address	██████

Supplier signature		*Authority signature*	
Full name	██████	*Full name*	██████
Job Title / Role	Partner	*Job Title / Role*	
Date signed	21/08/2024	*Date signed*	

Signatures

Supplier	**Buyer Organisation**
Full Name: ██████	Full Name: ██████
Job Title/Role: Partner	Job Title/Role: Commercial Lead - ODA
Date Signed: 28/08/24	Date Signed: 29/8/24

Document Control (Supplier Use Only)

Service Order Reference No.	
Response authors	
Pre-submission QC	

Response submission date	

Part C - Simplified Order Form (<£50,000)

C.1 Statement of requirements

C.2 Supplier response

C.3 Fixed price cost

£

Price is exclusive of VAT. Detail is provided in the costing spreadsheet

C.4 Invoice plan

Professional fees		
Milestone	**Date**	**Value (exc. VAT)**
Expenses	**Date**	**Value (exc. VAT)**

Signatures

Supplier		*Buyer Organisation*	
Full name		*Full name*	
Job Title / Role		*Job Title / Role*	
Date signed		*Date signed*	

Document Control (Supplier use only)

Service Order Reference No.	29
Response authors	
Pre-submission QC	
Response submission date	

Appendix A: CVs of key personnel

[One page CV for each of Supplier's key personnel to be provided here]

██████