

ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Technical assistance to train mediterranean countries to mobilize the European fund for sustainable development+ (EFSD+) for water-energy-food-ecosystem projects

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Partner country

N/A

1.2. Contracting authority

Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS or Contracting Authority)

Palau de Pedralbes

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08034 Barcelona, Spain

Created by Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government meeting in Paris on 13 July 2008, the UfM Secretariat is a multilateral partnership composed of 43 countries (www.ufmsecretariat.org) (all EU Member States and 16 countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean) with the mandate of enhancing regional cooperation and integration between both shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Its Secretariat (the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean) is the first permanent structure dedicated to the intergovernmental Mediterranean partnership. The Secretariat is the platform to operationalize, and follow-up decisions taken at political level with a view to monitoring progress in the implementation of Ministerial Declarations' commitments and promoting the initiatives, programmes and projects intended to foster cooperation in the region.

Its multi-partner approach is crucial for seizing opportunities through the exchange of best practices, sharing of experiences, identifying new and innovative methodologies and developing regional and sub-regional networks, following the principles of co-ownership and variable geometry and in collaboration with other key stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

1.3. Country background

N/A

1.4. Current situation in the sector

The UfM in cooperation with other regional partners is preparing a strategy for the "Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum" to propose a strategic framework to assist countries in enhancing integration of policy across sectors and to promote leveraging of necessary funding.

Indeed, the sustainable management of all four Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) components is fundamental for peace, security, social welfare, health and prosperity. However, because these sectors are heavily cross dependent such management cannot be effectively obtained unless it is done, from the design phase, in an integrated way allowing each one of the four sectors/components to become, on equal footing, an "entry point" into a WEFE Nexus approach.

The draft strategy has undergone broad consultations where national players, representatives from local communities, financing institutions and academia have gathered to assess the added value of the WEFE nexus approach. The strategy will be finalized and approved in 2025 in order to be included in the Documentation Package for the next UfM Water Ministerial Meeting.

To support the implementation of UfM WEFE regional strategy and promote leveraging of the necessary funding, it is essential to increase the capacity of national administrations and institutions

to mobilize catalytic funds, specifically EFSD+ resources, for transformational WEFE projects for adaptation and mitigation to climate change and sustainable development.

The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) was established in 2021 as the main investment framework of the EU's Global Gateway and the Neighborhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI–Global Europe). It is dedicated to mobilizing sustainable investments aligned with EU policy priorities, across the globe. EFSD+ is specifically mandated to support country-driven, sustainable, and climate-resilient development, leveraging public and private sector financing. Offering a variety of risk-sharing instruments of up to €40 billion, and aiming at mobilising additional public and private financing, the EFSD+ is a key mechanism in the international development finance landscape.

To access support from EFSD+ for climate resilience WEFE (Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem) nexus projects, countries, local authorities and (macro)regional entities need to present impact-driven proposals and team-up with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) which have gone through a thorough “pillar assessment” to become an eligible EU partner, to formulate and submit programme investment proposals. This includes well-prioritized project ideas, strong investment cases, compelling concept notes, that will be integrated into comprehensive programme investment proposals. However, key agencies at national, regional, and local levels often operate in silos, with little to no shared understanding or varying interpretations of the WEFE Nexus concept, its co-benefits, and interdependence risks. Additionally, they are often unaware of the existence of the EFSD+ and its functioning, limiting collaboration on EFSD+-eligible project proposals. Capacity gaps also hinder countries from designing and preparing transformational and catalytic WEFE-related interventions that align with EFSD+ priorities. Additionally, a lack of understanding of EFSD+ funding modalities, blended finance options, and eligibility criteria remains, for project promoters in the various countries, a significant barrier to accessing its resources.

Technical assistance and regional cooperation can help Mediterranean countries develop investment-ready WEFE projects portfolios, aligned with national priorities and EFSD+ investments objectives. Countries are seeking greater clarity on EFSD+ financing structures, including its blended finance instruments, guarantee mechanisms, and investment requirements and the role of partner financial institutions. Strengthening regional collaboration and technical expertise and clarifying institutional arrangements will be crucial in ensuring that the Mediterranean secures increased EFSD+ funding for sustainable water and climate-resilient development.

1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities

N/A

2. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTPUTS

2.1. Overall objective

The overall objective (Impact) to which this action contributes is to support the adoption of UfM WEFE regional strategy by training Mediterranean countries on the EFSD+ to help mobilize and leverage necessary public and private funding for WEFE projects.

2.2. Specific objective(s)

The specific objectives (Outcomes) of this contract are as follows:

1. Objective 1 (outcome 1) Organization of a three day in presence training workshop on EFSD+

- a. Present the EFSD+ that covers, among other countries, Turkey, North Africa, Middle East, , its mandate, investment criteria, breakdown of responsibilities, investment cycle and calendar over the remaining years of the EFSD+ period, and operational modalities and procedures for delivering climate finance to WEFE initiatives.
 - b. Introduce main IFIs involved in accessing EFSD+ funding and present programmes that have been approved out of the first call for proposals in 2022, with a focus on those which may accept WEFE projects
 - c. Discuss EFSD+ financing mechanisms along with fit-for- purpose examples in the Mediterranean context, tackling priorities of the region.
 - d. Enhance participants' capacity to develop bankable WEFE project proposals by guiding them through the key components of WEFE aligned criteria, EFSD+ "Proposed Investment Programs", including investment structuring, risk mitigation, blended finance approaches, taking into account the role of the eligible development finance institutions, which act as the EU's implementation partners on the ground.
 - e. Facilitate knowledge exchange among stakeholders, including government agencies, financial institutions, private sector actors, EU Delegations and regional organizations—to clarify institutional arrangements and to strengthen collaboration and co-financing opportunities for EFSD+-eligible WEFE projects in the Mediterranean; each party should understand what role they can play in the submission process to access EU funding.
 - f. Include a one-day session to train on other instruments to leverage necessary public and private funding for WEFE projects. This will include the Instrument for Pre-Accession IPA3/ Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans, as well as other global funds (GCF, CIFs, Adaptation fund) and other financial instruments like green bonds, carbon and biodiversity credits, etc. that may apply to WEFE project.
2. Objective 2 (outcome 2) Preparation of a detailed concept note, including a roadmap, for establishing a Mediterranean cooperation mechanism coordinated by the UfM to promote capacity building and mobilize financing on water in the Mediterranean.

2.3. Expected outputs to be achieved by the contractor

The service will be paid on the basis of the delivery of the specified output(s). Payments might be totally or partially withheld if the contractual result(s) have not been reached in conformity with the detailed terms of reference. Payment(s) is/are based on the approval of this/these deliverable(s). Partial payment has to be determined according to the partial implementation of the output(s).

The expected outputs of this contract are as follows:

The TA will cover the two specific objectives (outcome):

Specific objective 1 (outcome 1): Three-Day In-Person Training Workshop

Target Audience: The Workshop targets the following participants from UfM member states to help them access EFSD+ funds to support WEFE project preparation and delivery in the Mediterranean: The primary audience are WEFE directors and/or assigned officials from WEFE Ministries/Agencies responsible for implementing WEFE projects in the region. The secondary audience are all public and private stakeholders involved in WEFE projects and staff from the European Commission and pillar-assessed IFIs involved in EFSD+ projects in the region.

Output 1.1: Successful Completion of the Workshop

- A minimum of 40 professionals equally distributed among the following countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan will be trained. The contractor will develop how it sees the selection process in terms of type of project promoters and core sectors of activity.
- The workshop will enhance participant's proficiency in coordinating with IFIs (i.e. EIB and EBRD) to jointly mobilize EFSD+ funding, including blending finance and guarantees, with a focus on bankable water-energy-food-ecosystem (WEFE) projects that support sustainable development and climate resilience in the Mediterranean region.
- The contractor will develop a methodology to evaluate and enhance the participants' skills throughout the workshop.
- Two days will be dedicated to EFSD+ and one day will be dedicated to other mechanisms, including IPA3/ Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans and other financial mechanisms to leverage financing for WEFE investments in the Mediterranean; a parallel will be established among these mechanisms to help country's representatives navigate the diversity of funding sources.
- Participants will engage in preparatory activities, including the development of draft project ideas, which may fit into IFIs' programs to access EFSD+ funding. Some working sessions will happen in plenary, other sessions will be clinics led by IFIs.
- The workshop will be given in English

Output 1.2: Report on the training workshop (in English)

- The report will include the main achievements of the workshop, an evaluation of the participants and an evaluation of the workshop with proposals for improvement for future capacity building activities for financing WEFE projects.
- The report will also identify project/programme proposals that have been identified/developed during the workshop and have the best potential for further financing through the EFSD+ with the support of selected IFIs (i.e. EIB and EBRD). A distinction will be made between projects that may fit into already approved¹ EFSD+ programmes and those which serve as basis to elaborate new blending applications and/or guarantee agreements in the remaining 2025-2027 period.

Output 1.3: Online presentation of the key takeaways from the workshop and project preformulations from project promoters

- The contractor will dedicate 2 hours maximum of presentation to wrap up with UfM and DG ENEST and DG MENA. During that presentation, the contractor will propose a mechanism, including indicators, to follow up into the success of accessing EFSD+ funds, with the understanding that it is difficult to only attribute funding of specific investments or projects to technical training.

Specific objective 2 (outcome 2): Preparation of a detailed concept note for the establishment of a Mediterranean cooperation mechanism on water (in English)

Preparation of a detailed concept note (10 pages excluding annexes), including a roadmap, for the establishment of a Mediterranean cooperation mechanisms to promote capacity building and mobilize financing on water.

¹ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/funding-instruments/european-fund-sustainable-development-plus/overview-efsd-and-efsd-guarantees_en?page=1

Target audience: Ministers of water of UfM member states will gather in 2026 and conclude their meeting with a declaration on water in the Mediterranean that will set out the ambition and priorities for achieving the water-related SDGs in the Mediterranean in the period 2025-2030. The ministers will conclude that declaration by supporting the development of a new regional initiative on as a practical proof or their collective commitment to work together to achieve their common water goals. In that context, the detailed concept note will be presented for discussion to UfM Member states who could then task the UfM Secretariat to establish a Mediterranean cooperation mechanism to promote capacity building and mobilize financing on water as a practical mechanisms to operationalize UfM Water Agenda ([Policy Framework for Actions 2030](#) and a [financial strategy for implementation](#)).

Output 2.1 Stakeholder Consultation & Feedback

- Review conclusions of UfM main studies done in that matter, including UfM Water Agenda ([Policy Framework for Actions 2030](#) and a [financial strategy for implementation](#)), UfM work on a UfM center for investment acceleration, EU study on the financing dimension of the WEFE, (these reports will be made available to the consultants)
- Conduct a rapid assessment of existing regional water initiatives, institutional frameworks, and financing mechanisms.
- Organize consultations with at least 10 UfM Member States, including 5 from EFSD+ beneficiary countries, 4 financial institutions, and 4 regional water sector stakeholders in the Mediterranean.

Output 2.2: Detailed concept note (in English)

- Define the objectives, scope, and added value of the cooperation mechanism.
- Develop a structured roadmap with key milestones and timelines for the establishment of such mechanism,
- Propose a Mechanism Establishment: Define governance arrangements and operational modalities, outline capacity-building programs and knowledge-sharing platforms, develop a financial strategy to mobilize resources and ensure sustainability.

3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

3.1. Assumptions underlying the project

The main assumptions are that (i) the UfM Regional Platforms, under the guidance of the UfM senior officials, maintains the necessary momentum and political will to deliver the UfM WEFE Nexus Programme of Work and (ii) the contractor has strong contacts to engage the EFSD+ experts from the European commission and assessed IFIs.

3.2. Risks

The main risk is that the UfM member states do not sufficiently engage in the activities described in this assignment, for example due to other priorities and lack of availability of qualified personnel.

4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

4.1. General

4.1.1. Description of the assignment

It is expected that the Contractor (single provider or consortia of several providers) shall offer the above-mentioned services all-inclusive and will be responsible for all outputs and reporting.

4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered

See 2.3

4.1.3. Target groups

See 2.3

4.2. Specific work

See 2.3 and 5.3

4.3. Project management

4.3.1. Responsible body

The project will be managed by UfM Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division.

All issues related to the technical elements in relation to this contract, mainly the specific activities as outlined in section 4 of these Terms of Reference, shall be taken by the project manager nominated by the contracting authority pursuant to special conditions of contract Article 2.1. The project manager will ensure these tasks in accordance with UfM internal rules and procedures.

5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1. Location

The TA will cover all the costs associated with the services.

Logistics for activity 1: For activity 1, the in-person training workshop will be a three-day workshop and should take place in one of the main cities of the following countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon or Jordan. The TA will cover all expenses including logistics support (for example, IT equipment, photocopies, book printing and binding, etc.), interpretation services (English, French and Arabic). The TA will cover the payment of travel and accommodation for a minimum of 40 participants from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan (purchase and payment of tickets, payment of hotels). The TA will not cover the payment of travel and accommodation for participants from other UfM member states (non-sponsored participants, between 20 to 30). The TA will cover the catering services for all participants, including the sponsored participants (minimum of 40 from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan), the trainers and the non-sponsored participants from UfM member states (between 20 to 30). Should the in-person event include a field visit, the cost associated with the visit would be covered by the TA.

5.2. Start date & period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is July 15, 2025, and the period of implementation of the contract will be **up to December 15, 2025**. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the special conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1. Personnel

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be able to provide input as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well on any potential interference or conflict of interest of the proposed expert in his/her function as expert and his/her present or previous

functions working as civil servant. Moreover, proof should be submitted that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

6.1.1. Experts

The selection procedures used by the contractor to select the experts who provide input to the contract must be transparent, must guarantee the absence of professional conflicting interests and the absence of any discrimination based on former or current nationality, gender, place of residence, or any other ground. The findings of the selection panel must be recorded.

The Organisation & Methodology must include a paragraph demonstrating that a gender sensitive experts' selection procedure has been applied².

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

Minimum requirements for experts are not defined.

The contractor will select the best possible staff to deliver the expected output(s). It is up to the contractor to define the precise inputs of the experts.

6.1.2. Support facilities & backstopping

The costs for support facilities, including backstopping, are included in the tenderer's financial offer.

The Contractor shall ensure that all services will be provided and where necessary, supplementary support/expertise will be provided to the three key experts through back-stopping which will be entirely covered by the TA.

6.2. Office accommodation

Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the Contractor. The Contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion

6.3. Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority / partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority / partner country at the end of this

² Note that gender balance refers not only to numerical parity, but also to the level of employment and remuneration, roles and functions.

contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

7. REPORTS

7.1. Reporting requirements

7.2. Submission & approval of reports

The administrative reporting be submitted to the Project Manager identified above. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports. Following the comments received, the Contractor will send a revised version, before formally submitting the final version.

Content: It is essential that the expert maintains close dialogue with all stakeholders and the Secretariat. The Secretariat must be kept informed of the project progress, through weekly meetings.

Language: The working and reporting language, as well as all writing communication between the Secretariat and the Contractor will be in English.

Submission/comments timing:

1. Inception report including detailed workplan
2. Interim report, including updated workplan and report of in person training workshop as an annex
3. Final report, including detailed concept note

REPORTS	EXPERT/WEEK
Inception report	2 weeks after signature
Mid-term report, including report of in person training workshop (output 1.2), Online presentation of the key takeaways (output 1.3) and Stakeholder Consultation & Feedback (output 2.1)	4 months after signature
Final report with detailed concept note (output 2.2)	5 months after signature

The Secretariat will provide their comments on the submitted report, within 10 working days upon receipt.

The contractor will submit the following reports in English in one original:

- **Inception Report** of maximum 10 pages (main text, excluding annexes) to be produced after two weeks from the start of implementation. In the report the contractor shall describe e.g. initial findings, progress in collecting data, any difficulties encountered or expected in addition to the work programme and staff travel. The contractor should proceed with his/her work unless the contracting authority sends comments on the inception report.
- **Mid-term report** after 4 months
- **Draft final report** of maximum 20 pages (main text, excluding annexes). This report shall be submitted no later a month before the end of the period of implementation of tasks.
- **Final report** with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 5 days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The detailed analyses underpinning the

recommendations will be presented in annexes to the main report. The final report must be provided along with the corresponding invoice.

7.3. Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the project manager identified in the contract. The project manager is responsible for approving the reports.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1. Definition of indicators

See 2.3 (output indicators)

8.2. Special requirements

N/A

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