

Copernicus Information Day

Q&A presentation



2 February 2015

Introduction

Quite a number of delegates submitted questions in advance of the meeting. Some have already been answered as part of the presentations and we will answer as many of the remaining ones as we can in this session. I am sure you will appreciate that there is some information that we cannot release until we publish the ITTs and, where this is the case, we will indicate this. I encourage you to continue to monitor ECMWF's web site for progress updates and links to information that we publish.

The questions covered a variety of topics such as the procurement process, the terms and conditions for contracts and requests for further details on the nature of the Atmosphere and Climate services that will be procured. To allow us to give a consolidated answer to similar sets of questions I have grouped the requests for information into four topics:

Eligibility to bid

Procedural

Financial and contract

ITT content

I will summarise the questions and the members of the panel will provide answers. The text will be available on ECMWF's web site.

Eligibility

Question 1

We received several questions on the type of organisations who can bid and the role of the lead contractor.

Answer: Only organisations based or registered in a member state of the EU or ECMWF which meet the eligibility criteria which will be set out in the OJEU contract notice and the ITT documents are eligible to bid. This includes SMEs who meet the criteria. There is no requirement for a geographical balance or spread from bidders or their subcontractors. ECMWF will only consider bids from single legal persons/entities. That person/entity may bid as a lead contractor and may propose to



engage sub-contractors but ECMWF will not accept bids from consortia or partnerships of service providers. The winning tenderer will have to take legal responsibility for the whole service, including the performance of its sub-contractors.

Procedural

Question 2

What is the process and timescale for the ITTs and for future ITTs?

Answer: The procurement process was described in an earlier presentation. ECMWF's process is in accordance with its Financial Regulations which are available on its website. The OJEU contract notices corresponding to the PINs which have been released will be published in the first quarter of this year and bidders will have two to three months to respond (depending on which ITT). Please monitor ECMWF's website for news of when ITTs are published. Future ITTs will follow the same process and we plan to publish more later in the year.

Question 3

Are the evaluation criteria public?

Answer: High level evaluation criteria will be published when the OJEU contract notice is published.

Question 4

We were asked whether ECMWF could outline the expected Climate Service tenders for the rest of 2015 and 2016, including the timetable for the Climate Data Store and Evaluation and Quality Control parts of the service.

Answer: The timetable was given in the earlier presentation.

Financial and Contract

Financial

Question 5

Many questions were received concerning the financial scheme – whether it is overhead rate, full costs, includes taxes, allows re-imbursement of overheads and expenses and/or requires co-funding from partners. And there were enquiries about payment schemes and payment periods.

Answer: We cannot answer these questions at the moment. The information will be included in the contract notice and/or the ITT documents when they are published.

Question 6

There were also questions on provision of financial information and auditing of information prior to and following submission to ECMWF.

Answer: CAMS and C3S will be operated under the Indirect Management process allowed for in the EU Financial Regulations. As such, ECMWF is an Entrusted Entity, operating the services under a delegated budget of the EU, and which remains the EU's budget until all costs have been scrutinised, validated and cleared by it.

As such, all expenditures are open to audit by the EU and by ECMWF to ensure that they conform to the contractual terms and EU Financial Regulations. Full details of the audit requirements will be included in the ITT documentation.

Question 7

How will the funding for a Copernicus service be paid and what should we do if it becomes necessary to add another sub-contractor after the contract is signed?

Answer: A bidder for a contract to provide a Copernicus service (CAMS or C3S) must be a single legal entity and the bidder that wins the contract will receive all the funds for the relevant service from ECMWF. The lead contractor may enter into sub-contracts but the subcontractors will not be treated by ECMWF as “partners” of the contractor. Responsibility for the delivery of the service will rest solely with the lead contractor. While there could be in principle funds reserved for future sub-contractors, it is advisable that the bidder presents a response that already clearly identifies the sub-contractors. For many proposals, relevant experience and track record of the provider(s) will indeed form part of the evaluation criteria.

The contracts awarded will be framework contracts and the precise activities, their funding (and sub-contractors potentially) will be defined on an annual basis. Adjustments will be possible in this context.

Question 8

Are end users for a Copernicus service (e.g. proof of concept service for Climate Change) expected to be subcontractors, and can these end users receive a share of the budget for their services?

Answer: As stated in the PIN, it is expected that the successful bidder will bring together both providers and users as sub-contractors to operate a given lot. The budget share between the different contributors to a given bid is up to the lead contractor; the evaluation of bids will be based on the overall best value for money.

Contract

Question 9

We received a few questions about availability of contract templates and the contractual framework that ECMWF will use.

Answer: Neither ECMWF nor EC currently provide templates for contracts relating to CAMS and C3S services. ECMWF's contract for the procurement of Copernicus services will be made available when the OJEU contract notice is published. ECMWF is currently working on the framework for the contract. And in answer to another question: the framework will not mirror that of Horizon 2020.

Question 10

We were asked why is the duration of the CAMS contracts 36 months in all cases?

Answer: 36 months is the duration for the initial CAMS contracts. During this time we expect the service to develop and ECMWF will review the requirements before issuing a second ITT for each service for a similar duration.

ITT Content

Some specific questions were asked about the individual CAMS and C3S services. Where we can answer them now, prior to publication of the ITTs, I will put the questions (which may be a combination of questions from different authors) to the panel.

INTERFACES AND INTERDEPENDENCIES

Question 11

How will the interface between all the partners (organization of CAMS general assemblies, common reporting periods, etc.) be managed?

Answer: The responsible persons for each of the successful bidders will be involved in a service-level board, which will be used to discuss and manage cross-cutting activities and service-wide aspects. It is expected that there will be a general gathering of providers, users and other interested parties on an approximately annual basis.

Question 12

Some calls need input from another call or partly rely on those products. How will these interdependencies be dealt with given that the services are competed separately?

Answer: We have structured the calls to address these interdependencies on a functional basis. In addition to the cross-cutting coordination activity, which I have just mentioned, the agreement of work plans will allow for some adjustment given the specificities of the different successful bids.

Question 13

What is the foreseen sharing / split of responsibilities between the CAMS_94 ‘User interaction activities’ and other lots, where also close collaboration with users has a strong tradition.

Answer: User interaction activities will be handled by the selected contractor for CAMS_94 by working together with the Entrusted entity, which has the overall coordination and management responsibility. All the other service components will have a contribution to such activities (documentation, answering certain queries, participation in user events and training sessions...) as part of their mandate and scope, but they will not be expected to handle separate specific user interaction activities.

Question 14

Can you please clarify if training and communication are the responsibility of ECMWF and thus not covered in any of the lots to be procured?

Answer: The organisation of training and communication is the responsibility of ECMWF. This covers more aspects than those included in CAMS_94 ‘User interaction activities’. It is expected to have later procurements as needed for the organisation of specific events or support delivering the communications strategy for CAMS. The ITTs will describe what is included (and not) as part of CAMS_94.

Question 15

In CAMS_72: Are there any user interaction activities for policy products? How do you expect to organise the evolution of policy products and secure their utility without direct user interaction in CAMS_72?

Answer: CAMS_72 is organised in a different way than the precursor projects. CAMS_72 will focus on the delivery of the policy products on the basis of the documented User Requirements. The organisation of interactions with the policy users (as with the other categories of users) will be the responsibility of the Entrusted entity as well as of the contractor for CAMS_94 ‘User Interaction Activities’.

COST OF AVAILABILITY OF DATA

Question 16

Will the multimodel seasonal forecasts from C3S_441 be freely available (for use by third parties and/or other Copernicus services)?

Answer: It will follow the general EC Copernicus data policy, which wants to make results freely available for third parties to use and the facilitation of that will be part of C3S.

Question 17

Is the Copernicus service providing the operational products free of charge to end users or is a fee expected?

Answer: The Copernicus data policy applies to all services funded by CAMS and C3S.

Question 18

If a service needs one-time simulations with the IFS (ECMWF’s Integrated Forecasting System), should they be costed in the proposal as payment to ECMWF, or should ECMWF then be involved directly in the service?

Answer: Global chemical simulations (C-IFS) will indeed be performed by ECMWF, which is indeed an integral part of the service. Bidders need not include costs for performing this activity at ECMWF. However, proposals must justify clearly the need for specific simulations to support supplementary service delivery.

QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO SERVICES

Question 19

On CAMS_50: Are the regional ensemble validation activities included in this ITT?

Answer: Verification of all products from the regional production (analyses and forecasts, interim re-analyses and re-analyses) at the surface are an integral part of CAMS_50. Evaluation above ground and of episodes is part of CAMS_84 (validation activities).

Question 20

What is the foreseen interface between the CAMS_72 ‘Solar radiation products’ provider and ECMWF’s global production chain with its existing UV/UIVI component?

Answer: The products directly output by the global production chain operated by ECMWF, such as UV radiation, will not form part of ITT CAMS_72. The validation of these products will however be expected. Details will be published in the Invitation to Tender.

Question 21

Should the tenders propose potential new CAMS products or focus only on improving existing ones?

Answer: Responses to ITTs will have to address the corresponding requirements. Service evolution in response to evolving user requirements, observations (Sentinels...), technology and scientific understanding will be in scope of some of the ITTs.

Question 22

What balance should the evaluation activities strike between re-analysis products and Near-Real-Time products?

Answer: Evaluation activities for both re-analysis and NRT CAMS global products are part of CAMS_84 ‘Validation activities’. Both production streams serve indeed a large number of users. It is up to the bidders to determine the optimal use of resources permitting satisfactory evaluation of both product lines, given e.g. available observations for performing this task. The extent, quality and completeness of the solution offered will form part of the evaluation criteria.

Question 23

Will ITTs for CAMS and C3S include the provision of satellite data products on ozone, methane, aerosol and (in the case of C3S) also cloud?

Answer: For CAMS, while most of the input data for the service will be delivered by operational entities from Space Agencies or entities operating on their behalf (SAF, CCI...), the provision of “research” satellite retrieval data will be in scope for many of the R&D activities in support of production. Requirements will be detailed within the ITTs.

For some products having reached sufficient maturity but not yet available from an operational provider, additional specific ITTs might be considered also in the future.

Answer: For C3S, some support for the production of a number of ECV datasets (observation-based/reanalysed/simulated) will be provided, depending on maturity and quality, among which ozone, methane, aerosols and clouds have been identified.

Question 24

For the C3S calls, both 433 and 441, will the scope be at the European scale or global scale?

Answer: In the technical annex of the Delegation Agreement, EC and ECMWF agreed that the remit of the C3S climate information should be global with a special focus over Europe whenever possible. While the multi-model seasonal forecast product generation will be global by nature, the focus of SIS proof-of-concept is expected to be at European scale.