

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Community Science Activity, Community Engagement,
and Local Action Plan Workshop (Canada)**

for the project

Reduction of Marine Litter



Commission for Environmental Cooperation

2023

I. Overview

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is requesting proposals from prospective consultants to raise awareness about the flow of commonly littered items downstream to the ocean through community engagement in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Specifically, the consultant would be expected to organize and facilitate a community science activity, support the rollout of a public awareness campaign, and facilitate a local workshop to develop an action plan.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) was established in 1994 by the governments of Canada, the United Mexican States (Mexico), and the United States of America (United States) through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, a side agreement concluded in connection with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). As of 2020, the CEC operates in accordance with the Environmental Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force at the same time as the new trade agreement known as CUSMA, T-MEC and USMCA in each of these three countries, respectively. The CEC brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, Indigenous people, youth, nongovernmental organizations, academia, and the business sector, to seek solutions to protect North America's shared environment while supporting sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. Find out more at: <www.cec.org>.

The CEC's Council, its governing body, approved the project entitled Reduction of Marine Litter as part of the Operational Plan for 2021, with the purpose of preventing marine litter by demonstrating, educating, and communicating about the flow of marine litter from inland communities to the marine environment. For a complete description of the project, including tasks and related budget, please visit the CEC website at: <<http://www.cec.org/reduction-of-marine-litter/>>

II. Terms of Reference

A. Overview and Scope

The *Reduction of Marine Litter* project aims to raise local awareness of the journey of marine litter and engage communities in developing solutions.

The proposed work includes a community science activity, public awareness campaign, and the development of an action plan through a workshop in Toronto. This work will complement the deployment of trash capture devices by the CEC and partners in local waterways and build on existing awareness-raising materials.

The purpose of the community science activity is to bring attention to local land-based sources of marine litter and to engage local stakeholders in the project. This will complement a public awareness campaign using materials from the CEC's [Last Stop: The Ocean toolkit](#). This work will culminate in a community workshop to discuss information collected during the project and develop an action plan to inform future land-based marine litter reduction efforts.

B. Description of Services

The consultant shall coordinate with the CEC's designated contacts to accomplish the following in Toronto:

Component 1 – Community Science Activity (Start of contract to August 2023)

1) Prepare community science activity

- 1.1 Participate in calls with CEC staff, consultant responsible for the operation of the trash capture device and local stakeholders to coordinate needs for community science activity. Propose methodology or tool for data collection by volunteers, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee to ensure that it can be integrated into larger dataset from trash capture devices.
- 1.2 Propose community science activity format and provide draft materials to the CEC and the Project Steering Committee, and incorporate feedback received. The consultant is expected to suggest a community science activity related to the local trash capture device that is suited to the local context. The general objectives of the activity are to: raise awareness of how litter enters and impacts local waterways through data gathering and monitoring, engage community members in marine litter reduction, and bring attention to the state of litter in the local waterway.

2) Identify participants

- 2.1 In collaboration with CEC staff and the Project Steering Committee, identify relevant local participants for the community science activity (from local government, local schools, environmental groups, etc.), including individuals from underrepresented groups. Prepare list of potential participants.
- 2.2 Prepare draft invitation letter for community science activity participants, for review by CEC staff.

3) Facilitate community science activity

- 3.1 Facilitate community science activity in Toronto. The community science activity is expected to take place between May and September 2023, at a date determined with the CEC to accommodate participants, and may include a series of events.
- 3.2 Report data collected during community science activity to the CEC, using reporting methodology from 1.1 to ensure that it can be incorporated into a trinalational “waterway litter snapshot” report. The majority of the data collection for the report will be done by the consultant responsible for the trash capture device over a period of several months, and the data collected during the community science activity will be incorporated into the larger dataset.

Component 2 – Public Awareness Campaign (Start of contract to December 2023)

4) Collaborate with the CEC on public awareness campaign

- 4.1 Participate in meetings with CEC staff, Project Steering Committee and local stakeholders on an as-needed basis (at least twice per quarter) to develop an engagement plan for the rollout of a public awareness campaign that focuses on overall prevention and reduction of land-based marine litter. Provide local context and information.
- 4.2 Support implementation of the public awareness campaign. This may require in-person attendance at events and activities, and media engagement in Toronto, as required, depending on the local context. The public awareness campaign will be based on existing

awareness-raising materials (e.g., ads, graphics, videos, social media) from CEC's [Last Stop: The Ocean campaign](#).

Component 3 – Local Action Plan Workshop (September 2023–March 2024)

5) Identify stakeholders

5.1 In collaboration with CEC staff and the Project Steering Committee, identify relevant local stakeholders to participate in local action plan workshop (from local government, local schools, environmental groups, etc.), including individuals from underrepresented groups.

5.2 Prepare draft invitation letter for local action plan workshop participants, for review by CEC staff.

6) Prepare local action plan workshop

6.1 Prepare draft workshop agenda and materials to be shared with the CEC and the Project Steering Committee, and incorporate feedback received. The consultant is expected to suggest a workshop format that is suited to the local context. The general objectives of the workshop are to: discuss information collected from the trash capture device and community science activity and contribute to an action plan using the data to inform future land-based marine litter reduction efforts.

7) Facilitate local action plan workshop

7.1 Facilitate local action plan workshop in Toronto. Data collected and other relevant information will be used to engage the participants in the development of a draft action plan. The workshop is expected to take place in fall 2023, at a date determined with local stakeholders and the CEC to accommodate participants.

8) Produce a local action plan based on workshop results to inform future land-based marine litter reduction efforts

8.1 Produce a community action plan based on the workshop results to be reviewed by the CEC and the Project Steering Committee, and incorporate feedback received.

8.2 In consultation with the CEC, share the final community action plan with workshop participants, in a manner that is appropriate for the local context (e.g., disseminating action plan electronically, holding follow-up meeting).

9) Participate in trinational virtual workshop

9.1 Participate in virtual workshop to present results from the local activities in Canada and lessons learned on this collaboration with trinational counterparts in Mexico and the United States.

Deliverables

1. Proposal for citizen science activity format, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee.
2. List of potential local participants, and draft invitation letter for community science activity.

3. Draft and final materials for community science activity, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee.
4. Facilitation of community science activity in Toronto.
5. Community science activity report, including data.
6. Report on Consultant's participation in public awareness campaign (contributions, participation in events, attendance at planning calls, etc.) (format to be determined with CEC).
7. List of potential local participants, and draft and final invitation letter for local action plan workshop.
8. Draft and final workshop agenda and materials for local action plan workshop, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee.
9. Facilitation of the local action plan workshop in Toronto.
10. Draft and final community action plan to inform future land-based marine litter reduction efforts based on workshop results.
11. Photos from community science activity and local action plan workshop, as well as any supporting materials and presentations from the activities.
12. Presentation of results and lessons learned from community engagement in Toronto in trination virtual workshop, as well as any supporting materials from the presentation.

Meeting Arrangements

The CEC can arrange remote conferencing and in-person meeting services for workshops, as needed. Costs associated with meeting logistics will be covered by the CEC and are not to be included in the proposal budget.

C. Periodic Reporting Requirements

Throughout the project, the consultant will work in close collaboration with the CEC, the Project Steering Committee, and experts to gather information to support delivery of the work. The consultant may consult directly with government officials and other experts, as needed. However, the consultant shall report only to, and receive direction only from the CEC designated staff.

The CEC Secretariat will forward draft deliverables to the project's Steering Committee and other experts, for their review and comment. The CEC Secretariat will arrange teleconferences with the consultant, the CEC designated staff, and other experts on an as-needed basis. The goal of these meetings will be to present the products and assess progress on the project. The consultant is expected to be available for these calls, at mutually agreed times.

The consultant will work in their own offices. The consultant will inform the CEC of any potential problems and suggest solutions and actions that could be taken to facilitate the achievement of desired results.

Provisional timeline of expected deliverables

Component 1 (start of contract to October 2023)	
early March 2023	Proposal for citizen science activity format, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee
early April 2023	List of potential local participants, and draft invitation letter for community science activity
late April 2023	Draft and final materials for community science activity, for review by CEC staff and Project Steering Committee
May-September 2023 (date TBD)	Facilitation of community science activity in Toronto
October 2023	Community science activity report, including data
Component 2 (start of contract to December 2023)	
February 2023–December 2023	Support implementation of the public awareness campaign
Component 3 (May 2023 to March 2024)	
mid-May 2023	List of local stakeholders, and draft invitation letter for local action plan workshop
mid-May 2023	Draft workshop agenda and materials for local action plan workshop
early June 2023	Final workshop agenda and materials for local action plan workshop
June-November 2023 (date TBD)	Facilitate local action plan workshop
December 2023	Draft community action plan based on workshop results
December 2023	Final community action plan based on workshop results
early 2024	Participate in virtual workshop to present results from Canada and lessons learned

D. Quality of Deliverables

The consultant is responsible for providing deliverables of **publishable quality** (i.e., copy-edited prior to submission) in English and, when applicable, for the technical editing of the materials. The consultant will submit to the CEC Secretariat all written material (including complete drafts and final reports) in Microsoft Word, following the format of the CEC’s [Report Template](#) and adhering to the precepts of the [Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products](#), as supplemented by the CEC’s English [Style Guide](#). Supporting documents for tables, figures and maps will be submitted with the report in their original file format (e.g., Excel or ArcGIS). Note that all amounts shall be presented in metric units. The CEC Secretariat will be responsible, when applicable, for translation, printing, publication and distribution of products from this activity.

Upon delivery by the consultant of a final version of the report or other written materials under the project, the CEC reserves the right to a 15-business day period to review the document(s), notify the consultant of any potential issues or errors, and return the document(s) to the consultant for appropriate corrections, at no extra cost. In all cases, contract payments will be withheld if products submitted to the CEC fail to fulfill the quality and formatting requirements specified above. In the event that the consultant neglects to make the required corrections or if, following corrections, a deliverable remains unsatisfactory, the document shall be edited or revised by a third party designated by the Secretariat, the cost of which shall be deducted from the consultant's fees at a rate of C\$60 per hour.

E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of conveying someone else’s original expression or creative ideas as one’s own and can be a violation of copyright law. Neither intentional nor unintentional plagiarism is

acceptable to the CEC. The consultant must follow good scholarly methodology in preparing reports and deliverables under the contract, including systematic referencing in footnotes or in-sentence references, for any secondary sources, quotations, data, etc., that do not originate with the author. Sources for tables and figures reproduced from other literature must be given in a "Source" attribution immediately below the table or figure. Failure to properly reference the source of such borrowed material constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a breach of contract. For further information, see [Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products](#). In addition, for every written deliverable submitted, the Consultant must use iThenticate, or an equivalent software approved by the Commission, to validate the written product in question and must forward the plagiarism review results to the CEC at the time of document submission. Contract payments will be retained if products do not fulfill these requirements.

III. Requirements and Proposal Evaluation

A. Mandatory Requirements

To be eligible for further consideration, all consultants must fulfill the following basic requirements.

1. In-country Ability

The consultant, as well as all their personnel and subconsultants, must reside and be authorized to work legally in Canada, Mexico or the United States of America. If travel is required, the consultant must possess valid documentation to travel within these countries.

2. Key Personnel

For the purposes of this RFP, the term "consultant" may refer to either a group or company or a single individual.

If a proposal is submitted by a consortium of individuals or institutions, a "lead" consultant should be designated to take responsibility for ensuring overall coordination, the coherence of activity outputs, and the integration of information and ideas.

3. Qualifications Required

The consultant must possess competence, knowledge, and experience in:

- Marine litter and inland litter
- Community science activity facilitation
- Multistakeholder processes related to local environmental issues
- Engagement with local environmental issues and stakeholders in Toronto

The consultant must be fluent in both written and spoken English; proficiency in French is an asset.

4. Proposal Submission

It is the intention of the CEC Secretariat to include the **Terms of Reference (Section II)** of this document) in the contract negotiated with the successful applicant. Therefore, prospective consultants should refer to these for more detailed information on the project and the services to be provided. Prospective consultants are requested not to reiterate the Terms of Reference in their submissions but are invited to suggest modifications to enhance the proposal.

Proposals must include the following:

- A brief statement of interest and intent. This statement should be based upon and serve to demonstrate the consultant’s experience and subject knowledge. The statement should address desired results; guidelines (parameters within which results are to be accomplished); resources (human, financial, technical, or organizational support available to help accomplish the results); and other aspects deemed applicable by the consultant. The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate not only the consultant’s general and specific familiarity with the subject area, but also to highlight writing skills;
- A general work plan for carrying out this project;
- Proposed methodology;
- Suggested modifications to the Terms of Reference, and the reasons for such modifications;
- Resumes of the key personnel involved in the project;
- Detailed cost breakdown, including number of person/days of key and other personnel, direct and indirect costs, travel costs and applicable taxes;
- Description of relevant experience and any other relevant information;
- Two samples of previous work;
- Two letters of recommendation from previous assignments; and
- List of no less than three references.

B. Other Information to be Provided

Potential consultants are encouraged to submit any additional information that they believe will assist the CEC Secretariat in the evaluation of their proposal. However, the proposal should not exceed six (6) pages, exclusive of applicant resumes, samples of previous work or corporate brochures.

C. Type of Contract to be Used for These Services

The CEC Secretariat intends to use its milestone-based contract for these services. A sample is available upon request. If the contract is negotiated with a consortium, the CEC will offer the consultants the option to have separate contracts between each consultant and the CEC.

All work within the contract must be completed by 31 March 2024.

D. Selection Procedure

The consultant deemed best qualified will be selected on the basis of a competitive process, in accordance with sections 2.5-2.7 of the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

Proposals that the CEC Secretariat determines to be complete will be evaluated according to the procedure described below. Prospective consultants who submit proposals determined by the CEC Secretariat to be incomplete will be so notified in writing.

Each complete proposal that is submitted will be evaluated by the CEC Secretariat according to the following criteria, with a point rating assigned for each:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Point Rating
Experience, qualifications and competency of key personnel	40
Understanding of project requirements and adequacy of work plan	30
Suitability of the proposed approach	10

Adequacy of budget	10
Writing ability	10
Total	100

A minimum score of 80 will be required for the prospective consultant's proposal to be eligible for further consideration. Cost efficiency will be taken into account in the evaluation.

Proposals in response to this request will be evaluated by the CEC designated staff and technical reviewers, who will form an Evaluation Committee. Each member of the Evaluation Committee will receive a copy of the proposals and will be asked to rate each proposal using the evaluation criteria and its maximum point ratings given above.

The CEC designated staff will arrange for a conference call/meeting among the members of the Evaluation Committee to discuss the ratings, arrive at final scores, and, subsequently, a ranking of all proposals. The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, in terms of the evaluation criteria, will be noted and summarized. Once the selection has been made, each prospective consultant will be provided with their score—if requested—along with their comparative ranking. However, neither the evaluations nor the scores of other bidders will be provided.

E. Estimated Level of Resources Required

The budget for this activity is not expected to exceed C\$30,000, including professional fees and expenses. Reimbursable expenses are detailed in the CEC standard contract, available upon request; in addition, the cost of using iThenticate or other approved software to detect plagiarism (US\$50) should also be considered.

For universities and nongovernmental organizations, note that the CEC accepts that overhead be charged for administration and other indirect costs up to 15% of the total value of the contract.

If the proposal were presented by a consultant established in Mexico, the applicable value-added tax will be 0%, in accordance with Article 29, section IV, paragraph a) of Mexico's VAT Act, as these are technical services that were engaged from abroad.

If a currency other than Canadian dollars is used, the consultant should indicate the total cost of the professional services in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes.

F. Basis of Payment Required

The consultant will be paid by milestone.

Payment shall be made only for *bona fide* consultant fees and legitimate expenses incurred in accordance with the contract for professional services, and only upon receipt and documented acceptance by the Secretariat of statement(s) of account/invoice(s) from the consultant. Settlement of invoices that are acceptable for payment will normally be made 30 days from the date of receipt by the Commission.

G. Conflict of Interest

"Conflict of interest" means, but is not limited to, a situation where a consultant's personal interest is sufficiently connected with professional duties under the contract, such that it results in a reasonable apprehension that said personal interest may influence the exercise of professional

responsibilities under the contract. For example, a direct conflict of interest exists when the consultant is also a CEC government official, or is related to or closely affiliated with a CEC government official, CEC staff member or third party involved with the performance of the services.

The consultant will inform the CEC Secretariat of any circumstance that existed prior to the execution of this contract, or that could manifest during the performance of this contract, which could constitute a conflict of interest. The consultant will complete and sign, on behalf of all their personnel, the attached *Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence* (see Annex). The Consultant will also take note of the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

I. Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Decision

The proposal, including all relevant attachments, must be received by the CEC Secretariat offices by **17:00 EST on 1 February 2023**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to lroy@cec.org. Proposal format may be in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Once the proposal has been submitted electronically, the CEC will confirm receipt within three business days. If receipt is not confirmed by e-mail within this time, **applicants must contact the CEC**. The contact person is:

Lauren Roy
Project Lead, Ecosystems Unit
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
700 de la Gauchetière St. West, Suite 1620
Montreal, QC, Canada H3B 5M2
Tel: 514-350-4300; Fax: 514-350-4314

The CEC Secretariat intends to select the consultant and notify the applicants within a reasonable period of time following the proposal submission deadline.

ANNEX (see also Schedule D in CEC standard contract)

CONSULTANT'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

ACCEPTANCE

hereby declare that I accept to serve as consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

(If you accept to serve as a consultant, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation ("CEC") representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

I am impartial and independent with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, I may set out measures I intend to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____