



MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP
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Terms of Reference (TOR) for the selection of an international expert to provide technical assistance for the preparation of study report on the nexus between Just Transition to Circular Economy and Climate Change.

1. Background

About MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP

MedWaves is a centre for international cooperation on development and innovation based on the sustainable consumption and production approach (hereinafter SCP). It is attached to the Catalan Waste Agency (Agència de Residus de Catalunya, referenced as ARC). The Centre is one of the Regional Activity Centres established in the framework of UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan (hereinafter UNEP/MAP), the programme of UN Environment established to support the member countries of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean. Since 2009, the Centre also operates in support of the Stockholm Convention, an international agreement involving 180 countries to fight against the generation of persistent organic pollutants, highly polluting and toxic substances. MedWaves has the mandate from the Barcelona and Stockholm Conventions to provide assistance to their Contracting Parties in fulfilling their commitments under those treaties, particularly through the support to the countries to shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns and circular economy. In the performance of its mandate, MedWaves fosters the introduction of solutions on eco-innovation, marine litter/plastic pollution prevention, circular economy and safe alternatives to toxic chemicals through the provision of advisory services, technical assistance, innovative training materials, networking services and accompaniment in the implementation of measures. MEDWAVES also leads a comprehensive support programme for the creation and development of green, circular business models and enterprises.

Why an analysis on the nexus between Just Transition and Climate Change?

The UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 (MTS) devises climate mitigation and adaptation as a core strategy towards a prosperous and sustainable Mediterranean.

The global context for the development of the MTS includes a number of processes, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework currently under negotiation, the Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), all relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The vision of the MTS is the following:

Progress towards a healthy, clean, sustainable and climate resilient Mediterranean Sea and Coast with productive and biologically diverse marine and coastal ecosystems, where the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its SDGs are achieved through the effective implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development for the benefit of people and nature.

The MTS Programme 3 "Toward a Climate Resilient Mediterranean" builds on the extensive knowledge gathered in the Region on the issue of climate change impacts on the marine and coastal zone, further explored by the 2020 Mediterranean Experts on Climate Change and Environmental Change (MedECC) First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) and the 2020 State of Environment Report.

Programme 3 directly contributes to a number of global and regional objectives and targets including the SDG's and the Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It also considers the resolutions UNEA in particular UNEA 4 (2019) resolution on Ecosystem-based adaptation which stresses ecosystem-based adaptation as a mechanism to reduce vulnerability to climate change and subsequent vulnerabilities in areas such as food security, water, health or biodiversity. It is also fully in line with UNEP's 2022-2025 MTS Climate Action Programme. Within Programme 3, MedWaves will support contracting parties of the Barcelona Convention to achieve the Outcome 3.4. Mitigation of Climate Change progressed through Circular Economy, increased resource efficiency and carbon neutrality business strategies.

This Outcome aims at supporting climate change mitigation efforts by exploiting the positive nexus between sustainable production and consumption and action-led societal transformation. To this end, Circular Economy, industrial symbiosis, eco-innovation and value co-creation will be fostered through a number of activities targeting primarily the private sector, including entrepreneurs and small businesses, with the aim to support circular economy entrepreneurs and business ventures to address climate change mitigation, increased resource efficiency and reduced emissions and to promote tools for improved measurement frameworks and consumption-based accounting.

In addition to technical solutions, social and ecological effect have to be explore to ensure the transition to a climate-neutral Circular Economy do not cause negative effects and actually contribute to fair equitable socioeconomics.

To this end MedWaves needs to procure external expertise and know-how to make the case for a just circular economy transition as a key driver for climate change mitigation strategies, promoting a clear understanding of circular economy impacts and benefits and a smooth engagement of policy-makers both at private and public level.

Audience and Use

The final report and analysis shall be a public document MedWaves can use to engage a vast number of stakeholders to fulfill its mandate and objective of mainstreaming Circular Economy in the Mediterranean.

Primary audience will be:

1. Partner organizations and practitioners
2. Public decision-makers
3. Private sector representative

The report will be the second of different tools MedWaves will use to highlight the contribution of CE and SCP to climate change mitigation strategies¹.

¹ The first working paper published in 2023 can be found here: [Report_CircularEconomy_ClimateAction](#)

2. Study Objective

The objective of this consultancy is to support MedWaves in demonstrating the value of the circular economy and sustainable business models, their synergy with the Just Transition framework, and the positive impact this nexus can have on Climate Action, including potential policy applications at micro, meso and macro levels. This will be achieved through a systematic review of existing literature and analysis of local practices, with the goal of providing a framework to translate Just Transition principles into action.

Specific objectives:

1. Comprehensive analysis and benchmarking of the Just Transition framework and its implication for the Climate Action.
2. Identification of circular economy strategies with the highest potential for impact in key domains and value chains.
3. Assessment of potential local solutions, governance systems, and operational models.
4. Exploration of gender, labour and class dimensions to inform targeted recommendations and nexus strategies.

Study Methods

Quantitative and qualitative analysis will have to be used to explore the potential of the nexus between a Just Transition to Circular Economy and Climate Action.

The expert/consultant might also resort on participatory methods and MedWaves will make available specific case study and contacts with key informants at different levels.

Micro dimension and human stories will also be used looking for tangible and real impacts and highlighting the multidimensional benefits of the nexus between CE and climate change mitigation toward social, environmental and economic benefits.

The local dimension will also be given a special attention, assessing the decarbonization capacity of specific policy measure, including local regulatory strategies.

Study methods will need to be gender-responsive, considering gender issues in all stage of the research cycle.

The study will be desk-based; no travels-related expenses are forecasted. Interviews, if any, will be conducted remotely.

3. Description of the work

In the framework of this assignment, the international expert/consultant firm shall undertake the following activities:

Activity 1. Analysis of MedWaves core services and UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention strategies regarding climate change mitigation actions.

The analysis will identify and isolate methodologies and approaches able to fight key climate change hotspots within the Mediterranean region. It will also help get acquainted with the type of objectives promoted by MedWaves, within the framework of the Barcelona Convention and assess its decarbonization potential.

Deliverables Activity 1:

- Peer review of ToR
- Map of services/action with higher potential for climate mitigation
- List of stakeholders to be engaged and participatory approach approved

Activity 2. Establishing the specific study method and peer-review.

The consultant will present the research method which will be used to conduct the study and discuss with the action responsible at MedWaves for validation and kick-off.

Deliverables Activity 2:

- Research methodology and workplan.

Activity 3. Phase 1: Review of existing literature and gap analysis in knowledge and evidence related to the nexus between Just Transition to Circular Economy and climate change mitigation.

A critical review of existing literature will be carried out to understand which are existing knowledge gaps on the nexus between Circular Economy and climate change mitigation, with specific attention to new sustainable business models and climate-positive business modelling practices.

The literature review will help understanding who are the main players in the debate and what are the main areas of dispute and also what evidence is there on either side. It will lay the ground for identifying which are the unanswered questions on the study topic and how the report will add to the debate.

This activity will have to explore the centrality of stakeholder knowledge and participation and critically address how this knowledge is being used to incentivise sustainable business models generation as a way to tackle climate change.

Deliverables Activity 3:

- Introduction and study baseline
- "Working Paper" structure proposal

Activity 4. Phase 2: Carrying out the study following established research methods and engaging multiple stakeholders.

Once these initial activities will be completed, the expert/consultant will implement the research according to the pre-established methods to respond to the key study questions.

The Study Report will be published a "Working Paper" and its structure will be discussed with and approved by MedWaves. structured as follows. MedWaves suggests the following structure as a baseline for further improvements:

1. Introduction
 - Objectives and scope of the study
 - Just Transition, Circular Economy, and Climate Change: defining the nexus
2. Conceptual Framework & Literature Review
 - Benchmarking Just Transition frameworks
 - Circular Economy strategies with high decarbonization potential
 - Policy and governance models supporting systemic change
3. Local-Level Analysis
 - Role of territories in advancing decarbonization through Circular Economy
 - Case studies of effective local policies and governance mechanisms
 - Private sector and civil society engagement in climate action
4. Policy Recommendations
 - Key levers for integrating Just Transition and Circular Economy in local policies
 - Strategic actions for policymakers, businesses, and communities
 - Roadmap for implementation and scaling
5. Conclusions & Next Steps
 - Summary of findings
 - Future research and action areas

Deliverables Activity 4:

- 1st draft research submitted to peer review and sign-off
- The report is expected to be no shorter than 10.000 words. Lengths and structure of the different sections will be discussed and validated with MedWaves.

Activity 5. Drafting a PPT and an opinion article for communication and dissemination purposes.

The expert/consultant will be required to provide with ready-to-use material for communication and dissemination objectives.

Deliverables Activity 4:

- A long-read article for MedWaves website. The article is expected to be no shorter than 1.500 words.
- A PPT presentation, fully describe study objectives, methods and key conclusions.

4. Deliverables and calendar

The expert/consultant will start the work after the validation of their offer by the contractor. The contract can cover a period of 365 days starting from the validation.

Activity	Deliverable	Deadline
1	Peer review of ToR	1 week after the notice
	Map of services/action with higher potential for climate mitigation	2 weeks after the notice
	List of stakeholders to be engaged and participatory approach approved	
2	Research methodology and workplan.	3 weeks after the notice
3	Introduction and study baseline	5 weeks after the notice
	"Working Paper" structure proposal	
4	1st draft research submitted to peer review and sign-off	8 weeks after the notice
	<i>Peer review of draft research complete</i>	10 weeks after the notice
	<i>Revised draft submitted to for sign-off</i>	
5	A long-read article for MedWaves website. The article is expected to be no shorter than 1.500 words. A PPT presentation, fully describe study objectives, methods and key conclusions.	11 weeks after the notice

All the deliverables will have to be presented in English and validated by the Contractor. Failure in submitting deliverables or not reaching enough quality may result in a reduced budget allocation. In addition, regular calls will be organized with the Contractor.

5. Means of work and eligible costs

This work should be conducted through literature review and consultation with stakeholders. Equipment, consumables, travel should be included in the financial offer as a lump sum. Travel to and from Barcelona to participate in activities relevant to this assignment will be discussed and validated by the contractor.

6. Eligibility

Applicants must fulfill the following requirements:

- Be an individual consultant, firm, association, University or research centre. Note: This ToR is not a subvention but a provision of services.
- Be able to comply with national fiscal context and rules for receipt of international funds.
- Have a bank account whose holder name must be the same as the applicant.
- Partnership and subcontracting are allowed, provided that the legal applicant entity has a substantial role in implementing the assignment. The applicant will be the only legal entity with which the contract relation will be established.
- Clear understanding of Circular Economy principles.
- Proved experience in research activities in contribution of private sector to climate change mitigation.
- Fluent communication in English and excellent writing skills.
- Knowledge of the UNFCCC role and governance and Climate Action and Mitigation objectives.

7. How to apply and selection process

Candidates should submit the following documents:

- Technical offer (maximum 5 pages): the Consultant should develop a research proposal, explaining the study methods and proposing an initial ToC.
- Financial offer (Annexed to this document): the consultant(s) should state the personnel dedication expressed in days (1 day = 8 working hours) as well as a lump sum for other costs related to the implementation of work.
- Profile and project references (maximum 2 pages): the consultant(s) should submit a brief explanation of the candidate (CVs shall be included as annex) and project references on the topic
- Bank form filled in, signed and stamped by the bank (see form as Annex).

Offers must be sent to Alessandro Miraglia (amiraglia@gencat.cat) with the subject "Technical Assistance Just Transition & Climate Change" before midnight of the 12th of March 2025 (CET).

Important:

The header of the technical and financial offers must clearly note the candidate data (Name, address, country, telephone, email and fiscal identity number or other official number) and those of the Contractor: «MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP / Agència de Residus de Catalunya / Passeig de la Zona Franca, 107 / 08038 Barcelona/ NIF: Q-5856373-E».

The maximum amount per offer is 13.990 euro (+VAT).

All candidates will be notified the reception of the offers.

Offers will be assessed according to the following criteria and scores:

Points	Criteria
Maximum 40 points	Quality of the technical offer to meet the work objectives
Maximum 20 points	Financial offer
Maximum 40 points	Profile and project qualifications

The Contractor may contact candidates to convene an interview to facilitate the evaluation.

If you have questions concerning these ToR, please contact: amiraglia@gencat.cat.

8. Selection and payments

The winning candidate will be notified by email on the selection of the offer. From that moment on work can start according to the calendar. Payments will be done as it follows:

- Submission and approval of Deliverables under activity 4: 100% of the contract value

Payments can be done in a period of 60 days after reception and validation of the invoice. The Contractor is not responsible for banking costs that might be applied by the consultant(s) bank, neither for changes in currency exchange.