

WaterLIFE – LIFE13 ENV/UK/000497

“Delivery of the Water Framework Directive through collaborative action
between civil society and the private sector”



INVITATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:

Delivery of support for water sensitive farming in two chalk stream catchments:

to fulfil WaterLIFE objectives and the aims of the
WWF-UK & Coca-Cola Freshwater Partnership, 2015 – 2018.

1. Introduction to this Invitation for Expressions of Interest

WWF-UK is inviting applications from experienced civil society organisations to partner with and support water sensitive farming approaches within two chalk stream catchments, with an overarching objective of moving the catchments towards good ecological health as defined by the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

This work will deliver against two overlapping programmes currently being managed by WWF-UK:

1. WaterLIFE, an EC-funded LIFE project that commenced in 2014 and will run until June 2017.
2. The WWF-UK and Coca-Cola Freshwater Partnership which commenced in 2015 and will continue until June 2018.

This invitation for Expressions of Interest (Eoi) is the first stage of a three-stage selection process (see Section 5). The work will be let as two stand-alone contracts - one contract for each of the chalk stream catchments selected.

Potential delivery partners can submit an EoI for just one catchment, or both, depending on their operational areas and suitability of potential catchments. Selection for the two contracts will be based on both the catchment and the capacity of the partner to deliver the project (our Essential and Desirable assessment criteria are detailed in Section 10).

2. Project Details and Deliverables

Overarching project aims: We want to demonstrate the implementation of private sector Water Stewardship approaches by working with Coca-Cola and a selected delivery partner to support the agricultural community to deliver water sensitive farming approaches within two chalk stream catchments where sugar beet is grown as part of the rotation.

Our overall ambition in this approach is to intercept agricultural soil run-off carrying nutrients and pesticides from reaching chalk stream rivers, and reduce nutrients and pesticides leaching to groundwater. We expect, for each catchment, improvements to be made at a field level through bespoke advice, which leads to interventions which improve soil quality and thus increased soil permeability and reduced run-off. Additional interventions, such as silt traps and/or engineered wetlands and ponds - which halt run-off on its path to the river or which intercept run-off - will also be promoted and part-funded. This 'voluntary' approach to supporting agricultural improvements is expected to be technically comparable to the Rivers Trust Pinpoint model or Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming model. The ultimate aim of this work is to move the chalk stream towards Good Ecological Status, as defined by the WFD, by reducing the impact of diffuse pollution as a stressor.

WaterLIFE promotes knowledge sharing at multiple levels and across multiple stakeholders. Potential delivery partners must be able to fully embrace this approach and engage with knowledge sharing throughout the project. Lessons from the project are to be shared across European knowledge exchange events and workshops led by WWF-UK, and which the selected delivery partner(s) will have the opportunity to attend and provide input to - such as case studies, quotes and images.

Recruitment of delivery partner(s): We require a delivery partner in each of two chalk stream catchments that is knowledgeable about water sensitive farming and that is keen to support the agricultural community to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes for the environment and the farmer.

Water Stewardship approaches working with corporate business partners are new and we do not necessarily expect the successful partner(s) to come with experience of these approaches. We are looking for technically capable experts with good project management

skills and an understanding of donor needs that will work alongside us on this exciting new approach towards supporting healthier rivers.

As explained in Section 1, we are selecting two demonstration catchments, which will be run as two separate contracts, and the appointed delivery partner for one catchment could, potentially, be the same partner as appointed in the other. One delivery partner may therefore submit an Expression of Interest for more than one catchment, but each catchment must be a stand-alone EoI.

3. Background to WaterLIFE

WaterLIFE is a three year project, led by WWF-UK alongside our partners the Rivers Trust and Westcountry Rivers Trust. It started in July 2014 and is funded through the Environment Policy & Governance element of the LIFE+ programme - the European Union's environment fund.

Focussing on a total of five catchments across England and Wales, and sharing lessons across Europe, WaterLIFE will demonstrate how communities and businesses can work alongside government to protect and restore our freshwater environment. Two of these catchments will showcase how private sector water stewardship can support WFD implementation and are being recruited under this Invitation for EoIs. The other three catchments have already been selected and focus on supporting civil society groups to engage with river basin planning.

WaterLIFE has four key elements:

- 1) Developing collaborative ways of working to feed into policy-making in the UK and other EU countries to support accelerated delivery of the WFD.
- 2) Pioneering innovative water stewardship approaches showing businesses and civil society working together with land practitioners to tackle pollution and to support achievement of WFD Good Status.
- 3) Supporting local communities to engage with River Basin Management Plan development and deliver on-the-ground improvements.
- 4) Bringing together people from across Europe to share understanding and to showcase solutions to support implementation of the WFD.

See www.waterlife.org.uk for more details.

This invite is related to the second element, above. It will also connect with other WaterLIFE objectives as well as the three civil society demonstration catchments recruited under the third element.

This WaterLIFE aspect of contract delivery will run from autumn 2015 to spring 2017.

4. Background to the WWF-UK & Coca-Cola Freshwater Partnership

WWF-UK and Coca-Cola have been working together since 2012 to move English rivers towards WFD Good Status. In the first three years of our partnership we focused on two chalk stream catchments directly linked to Coca-Cola operations: the River Nar in Norfolk and River Cray in SE London. Alongside this, we used lessons from the partnership to promote healthy rivers nationally and work with Government to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

From 2015, a renewed WWF-UK and Coca-Cola Freshwater Partnership seeks to deliver further impacts to improve England's chalk streams, by supporting farmers to deliver water sensitive farming in areas directly linked to the Coca-Cola supply chain. This aspect of the project will run from autumn 2015 to summer 2018.

Coca-Cola's Replenish programme aims to *"safely return to communities and nature an amount of water equal to what we use in our finished beverages and their production, by 2020"*. The programme has supported more than 500 projects in over 100 countries globally. The Replenish volume can be measured in a number of ways, depending on the nature of the project. Examples include enhanced groundwater recharge, the restoration of water levels in a wetland, increased irrigation efficiency, and the volume of polluted water treated to a good quality. The Replenish benefits from the work in the two catchments being recruited from this EoI will be calculated by WWF-UK using a scientific peer-reviewed methodology.

5. Selection Process for the Delivery Partner(s)

WWF-UK will use a three-stage selection process to recruit the delivery partner(s) for the two catchments:

1. The process starts with this invitation for Expressions of Interest from potential partners. We will use these to assess the capability and technical expertise of the potential partner to deliver, alongside the suitability of the catchment proposed.
2. Stage two will involve WWF-UK technically assessing applications received and drawing up a shortlist of applicants to invite to interview. Potential partners and catchments will also be visited. During this stage, applicants will be scored against their ability to deliver against the Essential and Desirable criteria set out in Section 10. This scoring will form the majority of any final overall ranking for the delivery partner and catchment.
3. The final stage will involve working with selected catchments and delivery partner(s); to discuss and agree deliverables, timescales, how to plug capacity gaps, ways of

working, etc. This will lead to the production and agreement of a fully costed budget. Should more than two catchments/partners still be in consideration at this stage; the value of this budget will be assessed alongside the scoring from Stage 2 to identify the final two catchments and delivery partner(s). We will then use this budget and agreed methodologies, outputs, etc., to generate Terms of Reference and put in place contracts to start delivery.

6. Timescales

Publication of Invitation for Expressions of Interest	20 th July 2015
Deadline for submissions of Expressions of Interest (end of Stage 1)	21 st August 2015
Interviews with shortlisted applicants at WWF-UK offices, Woking	w/c 14 th Sept 2015
WWF site visits to short-listed catchments (end of Stage 2)	w/c 21 st Sept 2015
Confirmation of successful delivery partner(s)	w/c 28 th Sept 2015
Initial partnership start-up meeting and agreement of work programme and budget (end of Stage 3)	October 2015
Terms of Reference signed off and contracts put in place for two catchments	November – December 2015
Completion of delivery for WaterLIFE	April 2017
Completion of delivery for the Coca-Cola Freshwater Partnership	June 2018

To cater for qualitative assessments of contractual delivery, and as our Coca-Cola funding is subject to annual reviews, we will appoint the delivery partner(s) under contracts that contain break clauses. We would stress, however, that it is our intention to deliver this work through continuous contracts from autumn 2015 to June 2018, with the same delivery partner(s) and catchments.

7. Indicative Budgets

It is anticipated that there will be a budget of up to £70,000 per year, for each of three years, for each catchment. The decision regarding final funding amounts will be agreed with each delivery partner on agreement of the deliverables and capacity requirements within Stage 3 of the selection process, and reflecting the needs of each catchment individually and in combination.

8. Reporting Requirements and Payment Schedule

For each catchment, quarterly reports detailing progress against an agreed work programme and set of deliverables are to be provided to WWF-UK. Financial reports and a claim/invoice for costs due are also to be submitted quarterly, in arrears.

Both financial and progress reports are to be provided to the WaterLIFE Project Manager within two weeks of the end of each quarter, to enable WWF-UK to report to its funders.

9. Submission of Expressions of Interest

Please submit an EoI in writing to WWF-UK indicating your interest and experience to deliver the project in a specific, named catchment, over the entire duration to June 2018. Please specifically highlight how your organisation and catchment meet the Essential and Desirable criteria detailed in Section 10. Any relevant staff CVs, catchment photographs or project summaries of previous delivery work can be submitted as annexes if appropriate. Please also indicate if there are any dates in September you are unavailable for interviews or site visits.

Please send your Expression of Interest to arrive at the absolute latest **by 12 noon, Friday 21st August 2015**. Please send by email to: Simon Aguss, WaterLIFE Project Manager, SAguss@wwf.org.uk T: 01483 412514, M: 07901 510698 and use the email subject line "Water Stewardship catchment project: Expression of Interest"

For further enquiries please contact either the WaterLIFE Project Manager, Simon Aguss, (as above) or UK Freshwater Specialist, Kathy Hughes, khughes@wwf.org.uk, M: 07836 244515.

10. Essential and Desirable Criteria

These are the criteria against which scored assessments will be made in Stage 2 of the selection process.

Essential Criteria Applicant must demonstrate	
1	Civil society organisation.
2	Operates as/has ability to operate as part of a multi-stakeholder approach working within the Catchment Based Approach. <i>Please provide details of your relationship with other stakeholders within the</i>

	<i>catchment and more widely.</i>
3	Catchment with chalk stream characteristics.
4	Catchment failing to meet WFD Good Status due to diffuse pollution from agriculture.
5	Catchment with sugar beet as part of the cultivation. <i>Please indicate the nearest British Sugar factory to the catchment and knowledge of beet production in catchment.</i>
6	Technical capacity to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational experience of sustainable agricultural practices, specifically in relation to protecting the aquatic environment from the impacts of agriculture. - Organisational experience of catchment management approaches. - Organisational knowledge of ecological monitoring techniques.
7	Organisational capacity to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical capacity to deliver. Someone (or more than one person) able to deliver farming and water advice either in post, or potential to recruit. - Project management capacity. Ability to demonstrate track record of delivery of large scale projects of equivalent budget including: finance management and reporting; delivery against objectives; monitoring and evaluation of delivery; and open communication with partners and other stakeholders.
8	An understanding of the key private sector buyers of agricultural production from the catchment. <i>This can also be supported by WWF-UK.</i>
9	Ability to demonstrate impact of measures on Water Framework Directive elements directly or through collaborative working with the Environment Agency.
10	Experience of working with farmers towards implementation of sustainable agriculture techniques for the water environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of sustainable agriculture and farming pressures within the catchment. Demonstrate knowledge of soil quality and health. - Demonstrate understanding of support needs for the agricultural community and how you have/or would build rapport and provide bespoke technical support to farmers.
11	Ability to attend 3-4 one day knowledge exchanges with the other WaterLIFE catchments throughout the duration of the project.

12	Demonstration of understanding of donor and partner needs.
13	Ability to host two site visits with corporate sponsors or influential stakeholders each year.
14	Operate and implement their own appropriate policies, procedures and codes of conduct, such as health and safety.

Desirable Criteria

These are preferred but not essential

1	There is an easily accessible location within the catchment that can be used as a demonstration site for visits by influential stakeholders to discuss the project.
2	Ability to monitor impact of measures through best practice ecological monitoring techniques. <i>For example, non-WFD surveys such as additional non-EA phosphorous monitoring, angler catch surveys, white-clawed crayfish surveys.</i>
3	Catchment Based Approach host or key partner organisation.
4	Located within East Anglian River Basin District.
5	Good connections to other stakeholders outside the catchment and across the region.
6	An engaging 'communication' story within the catchment. <i>For example, a rare species, a protected area, or large numbers of the community engaged.</i>