



Call for Service Provider - Terms of Reference (ToR)

Sustainable Tourism Practices for Monk Seal Habitat Protection in Greece

1. Background and Context

Monk seals (*Monachus monachus*) are endangered, and their habitats in Greece are under increasing pressure from human activities, particularly tourism. Unregulated marine tourism activities, driven by businesses such as boat rental companies, daily cruise operators, and tour organisers, significantly disturb Mediterranean monk seal habitats. Excessive boat traffic and the noise generated by boat engines and onboard activities in areas critical for feeding, resting, and breeding interfere with the natural behaviour of these highly sensitive marine mammals.

Visits to seal caves, crucial for pupping and resting, further exacerbate the problem. Tour operators frequently advertise these areas as prime attractions, drawing crowds that unknowingly or negligently enter sensitive zones. Such disturbances can lead to mother seals abandoning their pups, leaving them vulnerable to predation or malnourishment.

Moreover, inadequate waste management practices by marine tourism businesses introduce pollutants into these fragile ecosystems. Plastic waste, discarded food, and other debris degrade habitat quality and threaten monk seals directly.

Close to 20 % of Greece's territorial waters are designated as protected areas, of which 99% are Natura 2000 areas. However, the process from designation to actual protection by issuing Presidential Decrees and Management Plans is long. In the meantime, the project "[Supporting effective conservation measures for the Mediterranean monk seal and its habitat in Greece](#)" led by NECCA and supported by the Monk Seal Alliance aims to address management and mitigation of threats in important monk seal habitats.

Marine tourism businesses are uniquely positioned to influence the well-being of monk seals, either positively or negatively. These businesses can minimise disturbances and contribute to conservation efforts when guided by clear, responsible practices. To ensure monk seals' long-

term survival and sustainable co-existence, it is essential to promote responsible practices among tourism operators.

As one of the project's goals, the National Environmental Conservation and Communication Agency (NECCA) is leading an initiative to foster collaboration between key stakeholders in the tourism sector, encouraging the adoption of a Code of Conduct for sustainable tourism practices. This will be implemented by developing a clear set of guidelines, along with tourism operators' endorsement of these guidelines. The aim is to minimise disturbance to monk seal habitats and create a foundation for long-term conservation efforts.

We seek a service provider to define the Code of Conduct and develop a comprehensive plan for its adoption by key marine tourism related businesses , ensuring alignment with sustainable tourism practices in monk seal habitats.

This will involve collaborating with stakeholders to build consensus around the Code's principles, establishing practical steps for its implementation, and designing mechanisms to measure its effectiveness. The aim is to encourage voluntary commitment from tourism actors, fostering long-term behavioural change and promoting sustainable interactions within these sensitive habitats.

2. Objective of the Code of conduct

The primary objective of the Code of Conduct is for it to serve as a unified framework for tourism operators, ensuring consistent practices across various regions, and foster a culture of sustainability and responsibility within the marine tourism sector. The specific goals include:

- Developing a Code of Conduct for tourism operators (marine tour operators, private boat rental companies, marinas, daily cruise operators) operating close to key monk seal habitats in Greece, for them to comply with certain ethical and environmentally responsible behaviors.
- Obtaining agreement on the harmonization of the guidelines already developed by certain organizations and approval by the monk seal experts.

The campaign will run in Greek to facilitate communication with Greek stakeholders in their native language, but consultation with experts, as well as the deliverables and reports, will be required in both Greek and English.

3. Scope of Work

The current offer is relevant to the “planning phase” of the project. As an annex of the current offer, more information is given on the implementation and evaluation phases in the interest of ensuring comprehension of the full project objectives.

At the end of each phase, a new tender will be launched to identify the services providers and organization(s) to be involved in the following phase.

Applicants of the current offer (planning phase) should state their interest, availability and capacity in leading the implementation of the strategy and action plan as an extension of the contract may be envisaged upon validation of the deliverables.

The service provider will carry out the following tasks:

Benchmarking and Consultation:

The Planning Phase establishes the foundation for the Code of Conduct by identifying best practices, consulting stakeholders, and designing mechanisms for implementation and evaluation.

Benchmarking and Consultation:

The service provider will identify actionable elements from existing codes of conduct relevant to monk seal conservation and sustainable tourism practices.

- Review and analyze national and international guidelines, focusing on sustainable tourism for marine habitats, codes of conduct for marine species (e.g., seals, cetaceans), and best practices in voluntary certifications (e.g., eco-labels).

Stakeholder Consultation:

- Organize and lead consultations with NECCA, tourism operators, local authorities, and conservation organizations.
- Ensure the Code of conduct reflects national criteria, local realities, conservation needs, and stakeholder interests.

Code of Conduct Development:

Based on benchmarking and consultations, develop a tailored Code of Conduct for tourism operators in monk seal habitats.

The Code will include:

- Guidelines for minimizing disturbances (e.g., boat distances, speed limits).
- Best practices for noise reduction, waste management, and wildlife interactions.
- A commitment framework for operators to respect and adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- Assess relevance and identify potential partnerships with tourism companies and local stakeholders to facilitate adoption and include a provisional budget for engagement and implementation activities.
- Communication Tools: Materials to support the promotion and implementation of the Code (e.g., brochures, online resources, signage).

Endorsement Mechanism Development:

Define a process for tourism operators to formally endorse the Code of Conduct, including a branded label and terms of agreement.

Monitoring and Evaluation Scheme Design:

Develop a monitoring framework to track compliance and assess the impact of the Code of Conduct.

- Suggest and design monitoring tools (e.g., site visits, self-assessments, GPS tracking).
- Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as reduced disturbances and stakeholder adherence rates.

4. Deliverables

Each deliverable will provide theoretical frameworks and outline practical steps for implementation to ensure the adoption of the Code of conduct by tourism operators. The service provider will be required to deliver the following outputs:

1. **Benchmarking Report:** A short report summarizing the findings from the analysis of existing codes of conduct (national and international) and guidelines for sustainable tourism practices, with recommendations for national criteria and international standards, submitted by March 10th, 2025.
2. **Stakeholder Consultation Report:** A report documenting the outcomes of the consultation meetings, including agreed-upon national criteria and standards for the Code of Conduct submitted by March 20th, 2025.
3. **Code of Conduct:** A finalized document outlining the Code of Conduct for tourism operators, including rules and best practices for protecting monk seal habitats, defining the criteria, responsibilities, property issues, communication tools, and budget for the endorsement of the code of conduct, submitted by April 4th, 2025.
4. **Monitoring Scheme:** A comprehensive monitoring framework to assess compliance with the Code, including KPIs, tools, and methods for ongoing tracking as well as a budget, submitted by April 10th, 2025.
5. A summarising presentation for NECCA, MSA and invited stakeholders, due by the 14th of April 2025, with a detailed budget for the implementation and evaluation phases.

Presentation Schedule Flexibility :

The presentation date specified in the deliverables section may be subject to change based on unforeseen scheduling adjustments. The service provider is expected to remain flexible and accommodate revised timelines as communicated by the recruiting organization (NECCA/MSA). Any changes will be notified in advance to allow adequate preparation.

5. Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will span from early February to mid April 2025, with regular meetings and deliverables due as specified in the agreed timeline.

Flexibility Clause: While the proposed timeline outlines the expected milestones, we are open to considering alternative schedules or adjustments the service provider suggests, provided they align with the overall project objectives and deadlines.

6. Qualifications and Experience of Service Provider

The ideal service provider would have the following qualifications and experience:

- Fluency in Greek and proficiency in English (condition for consideration of the application).
- Proven experience in developing and implementing environmental campaigns focused on sustainable tourism (knowledge particularly on marine conservation and species preservation will be highly appreciated).
- Knowledge of monk seal conservation issues, marine protected areas, and sustainable tourism practices.
- Experience in stakeholder engagement and consultation processes, especially with diverse sectors such as government, NGOs, and the private sector.
- Familiarity with certification schemes, eco-labelling, and monitoring frameworks.
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of local and national tourism dynamics, ensuring the Code's relevance and applicability across all stakeholders.

7. Reporting and Coordination

The service provider will report to the NECCA project manager and the Monk Seal Alliance and will be expected to collaborate closely with relevant NGOs and other stakeholders involved in the campaign. Reports on activities, outcomes, and any challenges faced will be submitted to NECCA and MSA as defined by the contract schedule. The service provider will participate in weekly virtual progress meetings and submit draft deliverables for review and feedback before finalisation.

8. Budget and Payment terms

The budget for this assignment will be determined based on the submitted proposal, which is within the limit of 8 000€, including all taxes.

Payments will be made according to the agreed milestones, based on deliverables and approval by the Monk Seal Alliance as the contracting party.

This assignment covers the planning phase of the project.

9. Offer procedure, deadlines and selection Criteria Evaluation Grid

Send offers to Auriane Pertuisot (Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, Monk Seal Alliance)
: apertuisot@fpa2.org

Deadline for receiving offers: January 14th, 2025

Deadline for response to applicants: January 31st, 2025

Each score will be supported by evidence provided in the applicant’s proposal, such as references, portfolio examples, or documented past successes.

Criterion	Weight	Score (1-5)	Comments/Justification
1. Relevant Experience and Expertise	40%		
- Proven experience in developing and implementing sustainable tourism initiatives.	20%	[]	[]
- Expertise in marine conservation, particularly in monk seal habitats.	10%	[]	[]
- Knowledge of tourism impacts on sensitive marine ecosystems and mitigation strategies.	10%	[]	[]
2. Technical and Strategic Capacity	30%		
- Ability to design comprehensive Codes of Conduct and sustainable tourism practices.	20%	[]	[]
- Familiarity with innovative tools for monitoring and promoting sustainable tourism (e.g., mobile apps, digital campaigns)	10%	[]	[]
3. Knowledge of Local Context and Stakeholder Engagement	20%		
- Understanding of the Greek tourism landscape, including eco-tourism and marine-related businesses.	10%	[]	[]
- Proven experience engaging stakeholders such as tourism operators, NGOs, and local authorities.	10%		
4. Deliverables and Timeline Management	10%	[]	[]
- Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and provide high-quality deliverables with actionable recommendations	10%		

ANNEX – Information on the future phases of the project for which tenders will be launched

Implementation phase:

The service provider will be responsible for leading the process for tourism companies to adopt the national code of conduct, with the involvement of all relevant experts and supporting organizations as relevant, within a consortium.

Timeline and duration of the implementation phase: August to December 2025 (possibility to adjust timeline within the limit of June 2026)

Evaluation phase:

The service provider will be responsible for monitoring the engagements of companies which have committed to respect the code of conduct, based on the evaluation scheme developed during the planning phase.

Timeline and duration of the evaluation phases : January to April 2026 (possibility to adjust timeline within the limit of Dec 2026)