

# Sustainable Blue Economy Project

## West Africa Sustainable Ocean Program (SBE-WASOP)

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### Terms of reference

#### 1. General information

Consultancy title	Terms of Reference for a MEAL Specialist consultancy under framework agreement
Country or geographic area	Remote working with possible missions to the 13 countries benefiting from the WASOP programme, particularly to Praia
Project title	West Africa Sustainable Ocean Program (WASOP)
Mobilisation	50 man/days for the entire consultancy
Preferred start date	ASAP. Mission from May to Novembre 2025

## 2. Context and justification

The « **West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme** » (WASOP), with a European Union funding of €59 million, aims to improve the sustainable and integrated use of ocean resources in West Africa by stimulating inclusive economic growth.

The 5-year programme is divided into three pillars:

- Pillar 1: "Strengthen ocean governance in West Africa".
- Pillar 2: "Support an innovative and sustainable blue economy".
- Pillar 3: "Strengthen marine and coastal resilience".

**Expertise France** is responsible for the **direct implementation of Pillar 2** and for the **overall coordination of the programme**. A budget of €28.5 million has been allocated for these actions.

The aim of Pillar 2 is to provide the technical services and expertise required to develop and implement a sustainable intervention in favour of the blue economy in West Africa.

Four results are expected from Expertise France:

- **R 1: Effective implementation of WASOP by coordination services.**
- R 2: Provision of thematic expertise and technical support to stakeholders (support from WASOP thematic lines of work).
- R 3: Selection and implementation of pilot actions in the sustainable blue economy.
- R 4: Support WASOP's communication activities, including raising awareness on the potential of the blue economy.

Pillar 1 is implemented by the FAO, EFCA with the 2 sub-regional fisheries commissions (SRFC and FCWC) and Pillar 3 is implemented by the IUCN. The programme is carried out in partnership with ECOWAS and benefits the following 13 West African coastal countries: Cape Verde, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria.

## 3. Objective and scope of the assignment

The scope of the strategy is broad as it must address both a dedicated MEAL strategy for Pillar 2, the Sustainable Blue Economy, and also cover the MEAL issues for the entire WASOP program (including Pillars 1 and 3, which are implemented by FAO, EFCA, SRFC, FCWC, IUCN), which fall under the responsibility of Pillar 2, implemented by EF.

The MEAL strategy must therefore provide an overarching MEAL framework for the programme to facilitate:

- Effective **coordination** and **alignment** across all 3 pillars and agencies
- Effective and harmonized performance framework and reporting,
- **Monitoring the deployment of actions and the achievement** of targets across the 3 pillars, facilitated by harmonised (when relevant) MEAL tools,
- Monitoring the deployment of the '**seascape**' approach and contributions to programme-wide impacts.

Expertise France (EF) is looking for a Specialist to support the team on various MEAL related activities throughout the programme. He or she will be responsible in the establishment of a comprehensive MEAL framework and implementation plan. He or she will carry out the necessary training and/or coaching to EF team, especially the MEAL Coordinator who will be recruited late 2025.

Once the MEAL Coordinator will be autonomous on the deployment of the MEAL framework and implementation plan, the Specialist will intervene on a regular basis to assess the progress made on MEAL activities, to support with unblocking impediments in the implementation of MEAL processes and tools, and to provide an independent and external perspective during yearly “pause and reflect”/review exercises.

## Scope of services

The following tasks will cover all pillars and deliverables such as the overall Theory of change, logframe, MEAL framework guidelines, learning strategy and data systems recommendations should apply across the entire programme.

### Programme inception phase

→ Participate and support the programme team in the **refining of the logic of intervention**:

- Develop a programme theory of change (TOC) oriented around the “seascope” approach, and possibly separate TOCs for pillar if relevant, in collaboration with programme team and stakeholders,
- Linked to the activity above, facilitate a process to reflect on programme impacts and outcomes, ensuring they are clear, realistic, feasible and measurable,
- Examine whether the assumptions behind the intended outcomes, especially relating to the support provided to WASOP stakeholders, are valid and likely to lead to the desired impacts,
- Support the programme team (EF + other implementing partners) in analysing the synergies, complementarities, overlaps and distinctions both within and across programme pillars, to refine the logic of intervention,
- Produce / refine the Programme Logframe in alignment with the TOC(s), including critical analysis of the indicators and proposition of new or adjusted indicators.
- Participate in the WASOP-SBE team's strategic and operational planning workshop in July 2025 in Cape-Verde: the expert's mission in this context will enable him/her to engage in participatory reflection to refine the theory of change and the program's logical framework.

### ***Expected deliverables package 1: May-july 2025***

- A WASOP overarching Theory of change structured around the seascope approach and key indicators for monitoring results and the deployment of identified synergies
- A detailed Theory of change on Pillar 2 that illustrates the short, medium and long term changes the programme wishes to generate and/or support
- A revised Programme Logframe, with gender-sensitive indicators, risks and assumptions (for Pillar II)

- A narrative accompanying the theory of change, along with comments on the indicator

→ Establish an **operational MEAL system** for the programme, and provide the team with **tools to effectively monitor programme progress and achievement**, and to provide evaluations with sufficient information to assess the programme success:

- Develop a set of indicators to measure progress towards achieving the desired changes, as well as performance indicators at output level and relevant context indicators. These indicators should capture both quantitative and qualitative information. *The EU and EF framework will be taken into account.*
- Lead the discussions to provide specific definitions for each indicator and develop indicator reference sheets,
- Based on the relevant indicators, help design baseline socioeconomic surveys to avoid collecting redundant information,
- Lead the process of setting realistic and appropriate targets for each indicator,
- Identify data sources that can serve as verification for indicators. As much as possible, use existing data sources embedded in existing systems,
- Review existing documents and input from team/partners to compile baseline values; identify missing data and recommend how to fill those gaps (e.g. surveys or other tools),
- Recommend data collection and management processes, clarify responsibilities among partner organizations, and suggest appropriate data visualization tools/software. Create user guides if the tools are complex or users need support. At a minimum, produce visual/graphical dashboards based on collected data,
- Draft and finalise the WASOP SBE MEAL framework guidelines document. This document should include: (a) MEAL principles, (b) procedures and templates for data management, (c) guidance on outcome and output indicators and data sources, (d) assigned roles and responsibilities, (e) formats and reporting frequencies,
- Support the team in developing the programme's learning strategy, including knowledge management, and propose an action plan along with an estimated budget,
- Provide advice and training on results-based management and MEAL to EF team and the implementing partners already identified, if necessary, including initial tool usage if needed.

#### ***Expected deliverables package 2: July-September 2025***

- Indicator reference sheets
- Initial baseline + baseline terms of reference and plan for baseline values and information gaps that require further surveys or other data collection tools
- Indicator target values
- MEAL framework guidelines
- Data collection and management systems and processes
- Harmonized reporting framework and guidelines
- Dashboard for visualizing the progress of programme activities and indicators

- Concept note, action plan, and high-level budget for the learning strategy.

=> All these deliverables will be provided in detail for Pillar 2 and will also be supplied for the overall programme, along with the data collection framework that will organize the data collection to be carried out and submitted by the implementing partners pillar 1 and 3. This implies that the consultant will need to engage with all implementing partners, and his or her role will be to support harmonisation, technical coherence, quality assurance and possibly aggregating reporting from across all pillars.

### Programme implementation

➔ Support the programme team, including the MEAL Coordinator, in the **deployment of the M&E system**, and provide and/or facilitate **regular critical reviews of programme implementation** to ensure the M&E system feeds into the programme management:

- Provide advice, if needed, to the MEAL Coordinator on the development of tracking and data collection tools, in particular with the 2 others pillar
- Support on conducting monitoring missions and qualitative review exercises to:
  - Confirm the smooth running of activities and analyse the operational and budgetary progress of the programme including the pilot projects,
  - Highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the programme including for the pilot projects, whether operational or strategic, through different information collection methodologies,
  - Facilitate yearly review exercises as planned in EF processes,
  - Make recommendations on the adjustments to be made and the operational strategy to be followed to ensure that the programme's objectives are achieved,
  - Review the programme TOC and identify unexpected changes that may affect its success,
- Support the MEAL Coordinator, if necessary, on the development of an evaluation strategy that corresponds to the programme's operation context, learning and operational needs, as well as donor requirements.
- Support the MEAL Coordinator, if necessary, on learning activities ("capitalisation") to be undertaken, and ensure that a continuous learning process is developed and documented,
- Facilitate technical support if necessary, such as trainings, workshops and access to resources.

### ***Expected deliverables package 3 : July 2025-course of the project***

- Recommendations on data collection tools
- Monitoring mission reports and recommendations follow-up table
- Aide-mémoire of review exercises
- Updated TOC, if relevant.

➔ Support the integration of **participatory and outcome-focused** monitoring and evaluation methods in order to complement traditional quantitative and output-focused project indicators. These methods should foster adaptive learning and project responsiveness.

- Assess and recommend the most suitable participatory and outcome-oriented methods (e.g. Most Significant Change (MSC), Outcome harvesting and/or Outcome mapping) to complement output and indicator-based monitoring,
- Design tailored frameworks or protocols for these methods, aligned with the project context, objectives and learning priorities,
- Facilitate capacity building workshops with the team and partners to build skills in applying participatory and outcome-oriented approaches,
- Use findings from participatory methods to generate actionable insights and learning.

#### ***Expected deliverables package 4: July 2025-course of the project***

- Participatory M&E methods guidelines and tools
- Ongoing support on implementation of methods and reporting

## **Deliverables**

The deliverables should be, generally speaking, concise, visual, and adapted to the users.

They should be provided in English.

## **Institutional arrangements**

The WASOP SBE Programme Director, based in Praia, will directly supervise the specialist and the WASOP MEAL Coordinator, who will be joining the WASOP team during this period. The Deputy project director and the HQ WASOP SBE project manager will be also involved in the supervision of the mission, as well as the EF Sustainable Development Department MEAL Coordinator in Paris.

The MEAL expert will be in direct contact with the component/activity leaders of the Sustainable Blue Economy pillar 2, as well as the implementation partners for Pillars 1 and 3, namely: FAO, EFCA, FCWC, and SRFC, also including ECOWAS and the European Union, co-chair of the steering committee.

## **Timeframe and logistics**

The consultant will accompany the WASOP programme from May 2025 to November 2025 for the inception phase. It is expected that he or she will travel to West Africa for 1 to 2 weeks during the inception phase, especially in July 2025

## **4. Required profile**

Expertise France is looking for one Specialist. Service providers (including firms) are encouraged to apply.

The consultant should be a senior professional with an advanced degree in a relevant field and a minimum of **10 years' experience** in MEAL-related positions in **large, complex, long term programmes**. The candidate should bring to the position:

- Master's or doctoral degree, preferably in social sciences, international relations, project management, environmental studies, or another relevant field,
- Demonstrated proficiency in the design and delivery of robust and appropriate Theories of change for large and complex programmes,
- Demonstrated ability to design and deliver robust and adapted performance monitoring and results frameworks (including expertise and experience in indicator development, testing and data collection/analysis),
- Demonstrated proficiency and experience in participatory and outcome-focused M&E methods, such as MSC, Outcome harvesting and/or Outcome mapping,
- Good knowledge of donor MEAL guidelines and practices, mainly the European Union,
- A strong team leadership and management track record with demonstrated ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team environment,
- Ability to produce well-written reports that demonstrate excellent analytical and communication skills,
- Ability to work within a team and partners to ensure the delivery of high-quality product in a timely manner,
- Regional/country experience and knowledge is an asset,
- Excellent command of English and French is mandatory. Portuguese is an asset,
- Experience in West Africa,
- Experience in blue economy, ocean governance, sustainable development is an asset.

## 5. Additional information

To apply, please submit the following documents by **6th May 2025 at 23: 59 PM Paris**:

- A curriculum vitae or a maximum of 5 past similar assignments (indicating the client, scope, duration, amount of the assignment) for firms
- A cover letter including your daily rate (for all individual experts for firms)
- A methodology note of approximately 5 pages on the approach you would take for the assignment, including any suggestions for its successful implementation
- Three professional references, including email addresses and phone numbers
- Application subject: "WASOP MEAL Strategy"
- Applications received will be reviewed upon receipt, and Expertise France may contact applicants before the deadline.