1. Terms of Reference (ToR)

Technical Consultant – Habitat Mapping Analysis and GIS Mapping

Project: Habitat Mapping and Marine Spatial Planning of the Sint Eustatius National Marine Park
Organization: Sint Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA)
Project duration: Approx. 20 months, 2 October 2026 – 1 June 2028
Location: Sint Eustatius, Caribbean Netherlands (remote work possible)
Funding: BESTLIFE2030 programme, funded by the European Union and managed by IUCN (grant 2026A252)

Deadline for submission: 15 November 2026, 23:59 Atlantic Standard Time (UTC-4)

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1. Background

The Sint Eustatius National Marine Park currently extends from the shoreline to a depth contour of 30m. To support evidence-based expansion of the park and improve management, STENAPA will conduct habitat mapping surveys to a depth of 60m using drop-camera surveys.

The project will generate new benthic habitat data that will support Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), stakeholder engagement, and policy recommendations for the expansion and improved zoning of the Marine Park.

A technical consultant will be contracted to conduct **analysis and interpretation of habitat mapping data and produce GIS-based habitat maps**.

STENAPA has the vessels, drop-camera equipment and field staff needed to collect the imagery, but does not have in-house expertise in survey design at mesophotic depths, benthic image classification or the production of GIS habitat maps. An external consultant is therefore required to design the survey with STENAPA, train STENAPA staff, analyse the data and produce the maps.

The assignment is funded under the BESTLIFE2030 programme and is subject to the procurement, visibility and audit requirements of the grant agreement (see Section 13).

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2. Objective of the assignment

To process and analyze habitat mapping data collected by STENAPA and produce spatial outputs that support marine spatial planning and evidence-based decision making. The consultant will also support the design of the survey and train STENAPA staff in data collection.

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3. Scope of work

The consultant will work closely with STENAPA staff and undertake the following tasks.

Task 1 – Survey design and fieldwork support

- Advise on and help set up the depth-stratified sampling grid (0–60 m) and waypoint selection
- Advise on the installation, deployment and operation of the drop-camera system, including GPS/time synchronisation for georeferencing
- Deliver hands-on training on Sint Eustatius to STENAPA staff in drop-camera operation, image storage and image processing (one on-island visit of approx. 8 working days by up to two experts)
- Support STENAPA in supervising students and volunteers taking part in the fieldwork

Task 2 – Data processing

- Review and organize drop-camera imagery datasets
- Extract representative imagery frames
- Classify benthic habitat types

Task 3 – Spatial analysis

- Conduct GIS-based spatial analysis of habitat distribution
- Integrate habitat data with existing datasets where appropriate
- Identify key ecological zones and biodiversity hotspots

Task 4 – Habitat mapping outputs

Produce high-resolution spatial maps including:

- Coral reef habitats
- Seagrass habitats
- Areas of high anthropogenic activity
- Areas of ecological significance

Task 5 – Technical interpretation

- Provide scientific interpretation of mapping results
- Identify priority areas for conservation or management
- Support the integration of the results into the Marine Spatial Planning process, including input to materials for the stakeholder workshops

Task 6 – Capacity building

- Provide training for STENAPA staff on:
    - habitat mapping interpretation
    - use of resulting spatial datasets

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4. Deliverables

Deliverable	Description
D1	Processed and organized habitat imagery dataset
D2	Habitat classification dataset
D3	GIS spatial analysis outputs
D4	High-resolution benthic habitat maps
D5	Identification of key ecological zones
D6	Technical report describing the data analysis methods and results

Deliverable	Description
D7	Training session for STENAPA staff
D8	Field methods document: set-up and operation of the drop-camera system and the image-processing workflow
D9	QGIS project and habitat map files, including image locations, processed images and georeferenced data

All deliverables are to be provided in English and in electronic form. Spatial data must be supplied in open, QGIS-compatible formats (e.g. GeoPackage or shapefile, GeoTIFF) with metadata. Reports and maps must carry the EU and BESTLIFE2030 visibility elements (see Section 13).

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5. Duration

Estimated contract period: **14 months**, from contract signature (expected December 2026). All deliverables must be completed no later than 1st March 2028, so that the results can be used in the stakeholder and zoning workshops before the project ends on 1 June 2028.

Indicative timeline (to be confirmed in the contract):

- Contract signature: December 2026
- Survey design (Task 1): January – March 2027
- On-island fieldwork support and training visit: February 2027, dates to be agreed with STENAPA
- D1–D3 and draft habitat maps: by 31 November 2027
- Final maps, technical report, field methods document, QGIS files and final training (D4–D9): by 1st March 2028

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6. Level of effort and budget

The indicative level of effort is approx. 36 consultant days, of which approx. 16 person-days on Sint Eustatius (e.g. two experts for eight working days) for Task 1.

The maximum available budget is **€29,616**, made up of:

- Professional fees: up to €23,040
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence for the on-island visit: up to €6,576

Proposals above the maximum budget may be rejected. The financial quotation must be in euros and show fees (number of days × daily rate per expert) and travel costs separately. Air travel must be economy class, in line with the IUCN Travel Policy for non-staff; travel costs are reimbursed at actual cost against receipts, up to the amounts above.

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7. Required qualifications

The consultant should demonstrate:

- Experience with **marine habitat mapping**
- Strong **GIS and spatial analysis expertise**
- Experience working with **benthic habitat datasets**
- Experience with **marine spatial planning or MPA management**
- Ability to communicate results to non-technical stakeholders
- Fluency in written and spoken English

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8. Reporting

The consultant will report to the **Marine Park Manager of STENAPA** and work closely with the project team.

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9. Payment terms

Payments will be linked to deliverables:

Payment	**Milestone**
30%	Contract signing

Payment Milestone	
40%	Delivery of D1–D3 and draft habitat maps
30%	Final maps, technical report, field methods document, QGIS files and training (D4–D9)

Payments are made by bank transfer within 30 days of receipt of an approved invoice. The 30% payment on contract signing is an advance payment. Travel costs are reimbursed separately at actual cost against receipts (see Section 6).

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10. Submission requirements

Proposals must include:

- A brief technical proposal outlining the methodology, workplan and timeline
- CV(s) of the proposed expert(s) or company profile, including recent fee history
- A financial quotation in euros, with fees and travel costs shown separately, valid for at least 90 days
- If applicable, a funding overview showing which tasks and days are paid from the BESTLIFE2030 budget, and identifying any work, data or materials funded from other sources
- Examples of relevant previous work
- A signed conflict of interest declaration (template provided by STENAPA)

Proposals must be sent by email to **eleanor.butler@statiapark.org** with the subject line "RFQ Habitat Mapping – [name of bidder]" by **15 November 2026, 23:59 Atlantic Standard Time (UTC-4)**. Late submissions will not normally be considered.

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11. Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be assessed by an evaluation panel of at least three members (STENAPA management), using the following criteria:

- Experience and qualifications of the proposed expert(s) in marine habitat mapping, benthic image analysis and GIS: 40%
- Methodology, workplan and approach to staff training: 40%
- Price: 20%

The technical criteria will be scored before the financial quotations are opened. The contract will be awarded to the proposal offering the best value for money.

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12. Questions and clarifications

Questions must be sent in writing to **eleanor.butler@statiapark.org** by **1 November 2026**..

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13. Data ownership, visibility and grant conditions

- The intellectual property provisions of the BESTLIFE2030 Grant Agreement 2026A252 apply to all raw and processed data, imagery, GIS files, maps and reports produced under this contract and paid from the BESTLIFE2030 budget (the Results). The rights in the Results vest in IUCN. The consultant assigns all rights in the Results to STENAPA, for onward assignment to IUCN, and will sign any document needed for this.
- Work, data and materials funded from other sources and developed independently of this contract, as identified in the consultant's quotation, are not Results and remain with the consultant. The consultant grants STENAPA and IUCN a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, sub-licensable licence to use any such material that is built into the deliverables.
- Subject to prior written consent from STENAPA (and IUCN where required), the consultant may use the Results for its own non-commercial professional purposes, such as scientific publication and portfolio, with the required acknowledgements. This is a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence.
- The consultant keeps its pre-existing methods, tools and software, and grants STENAPA and IUCN a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, sub-licensable licence to use any of these that are built into the deliverables.

- The consultant confirms it has the rights to any third-party material it uses.
- All outputs must display the EU emblem and the BESTLIFE2030 funding acknowledgement, in line with the BESTLIFE2030 credit and logo usage policy (provided by STENAPA).
- The consultant must comply with the applicable terms of the BESTLIFE2030 grant agreement, including keeping records for the required period and giving IUCN, the European Commission and their auditors access to documents related to the assignment.
- The consultant must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest.