

Call for proposals: online decision support system for co-creation and co-governance of nature-based solutions

Background

A number of European Commission-funded research projects are collaborating to support practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders in the co-creation and co-governance of [nature-based solutions](#) (NBS).

As part of this work, there is opportunity to fund the development of an **online decision support system** (DSS) that will help users find solutions specific to their needs. It is envisaged that the DSS will guide users through different 'pathways' of options depending on the choices they make, determined by – for example – the resources they have available, their level of knowledge, the stakeholders involved in their project and other factors. The DSS will most importantly remind users to review and consider the steps in the process. It will also offer advice, links, case studies and guidance at each step of the pathway.

A summary of the proposed scope and content of the DSS is [available here](#).

This is a pilot project to explore how effective and practical an online decision support system could be for NBS practitioners and policy makers. We're open to a collaborative approach and suggestions for improvements and feedback are welcome throughout the development.

Aim

To create an easy-to-use, browser-based decision support system that can be used by the project team in building a decision support system for nature-based solutions.

Summary of tasks

- To build an environment in which the pathways and content of the DSS can be created and updated using an intuitive, browser-based content management system.
- To design an intuitive, accessible and attractive interface to the DSS, including a visual depiction of the pathways chosen by the user – see Appendix 1 for an initial concept.
- To work with the project team in mapping and populating the DSS with content, sufficient for the purpose of this initial pilot study (expected Technology Readiness Level 4 or 5 / Beta version).
- To help facilitate initial testing of the DSS with potential users. The project team will gather a focus group of users for this purpose and manage the organisation of online workshops.
- To provide handover and training to the project team in how to use the content management system in further developing the DSS.
- To provide an adequate amount of follow-on support for any necessary bug-fixing and technical advice to the project team.

Requirements

- The standalone online DSS should be user friendly and must include an ability to save individual user's progress (we expect some users will require up to 1 year to go through all steps) and enable users to map/track their progress through the DSS, including a visual interface.
- There must be an easy-to-use content management system for: (1) building and editing/updating the decision tree by creating/ deleting/ repositioning nodes / decision points and pathways; and (2) updating content and adding resources. The system should allow different levels of access permissions including technical administrator, content editor and end user.
- The DSS must be capable of hosting 100+ nodes and 100+ user pathways.
- It is envisaged that a pre-existing DSS software be used and adapted for this purpose; but we are open to proposals for bespoke solutions if viable within the budget available.

- The successful contractor will be expected to provide some basic graphic design support – for example, in designing both the user and administrator interfaces and any visual components of the user experience.
- The DSS should include facility for pathways created by the user to be collated and printed in PDF format, ideally including weblinks to any associated pages of the DSS and resources provided by it.
- Training and guidance on how to manage the DSS should be provided to the project team and factored in to the cost proposal. This support can be provided by video-conferencing.
- The DSS must be hosted as a standalone website, but it is expected to draw some content (e.g. links to web pages and downloads) from other websites, notably NetworkNature and Oppla. These platforms are built on Drupal and content on Case Studies and Resources is available via the Oppla Application Programming Interface (API). Details of the API can be provided on request.
- There should be no ongoing license fees and the DSS will be developed using free and open-source software.
- Please include in your specification any requirements for hosting the system. If possible the system should function correctly on an up-to-date Debian server.

Collaboration and support

You will be supported by a group of European Commission funded nature-based solutions (NBS) research projects, collaborating under [NBS Task Force 6: Co-creation and Governance](#).

Members from these projects will:

- Provide briefing sessions as and when required to clarify the functionality of the DSS and answer any questions during its development (e.g. explanation of the [proposed scope and content](#)).
- Support uploading content to the DSS via the content management system – i.e. the project team can support by adding nodes, pathways and content once trained in how to do so.
- Provide ad hoc support and guidance throughout the development process.

Proposed budget

The available budget is approximately €20,000.

There may be scope to source funding for further development of the DSS depending on the success of this initial project.

Time schedule

The project shall be completed by end of June 2023 with an expected starting date of 13 March 2023.

How to apply

Individuals and organisations interested in applying are invited to send the following documents:

- A proposal detailing your approach to developing the decision support system, including a description of development stages and the software technologies that will be used.
- Detail of your company's experience and at least three examples of relevant recent work, including web links.
- Pen portraits of the individual(s) who will carry out the work and a description of their role in the project.
- A cost breakdown showing estimated days / daily rate and any expenses.
- A timetable showing the key stages of the work.

Written applications must be sent by e-mail to: hello@networknature.eu by 12pm CET on **24 February 2023**. The email subject line should be: "Proposal: online decision support system for NBS Task Force 6".

Interviews with shortlisted applicants will be carried out between 6-7 March. The final notification will be made on 10 March.

Questions can be sent to hello@naturenature.eu until 5pm CET on 20 February. The project team will endeavour to respond within 48 hours.

Applicants are invited to attend a 1-hour webinar at 12:00 CET on 10 February during which members of the project team will give a 'walkthrough' of the DSS concept and answer any questions. Email hello@naturenature.eu to book a place at the webinar.

Appendix 1: design concept for the DSS

