Calls for Expressions of Interest to Undertake a Water Resources Quality Joint Basin Survey 3 in the Orange – Senqu River Basin

Commissioning party
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Brief Project title
Water Resources Quality Joint Basin Survey 3 in the Orange – Senqu River Basin

Country of assignment
Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa,

Period of assignment
May 2020 – February 2021

Project description
The Orange-Senqu River originates in the Lesotho Highlands, from where it flows westwards to its mouth at Alexander Bay/Oranjemund on the Atlantic West Coast. The river basin is the third largest in southern Africa, after the Zambezi and the Congo, covering a total area of 1 million square kilometres. Four countries, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa share the basin. The Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), established in 2000, was one of the first of the joint basin commissions to be established under the SADC Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses.

The Orange-Senqu River Water Resources Quality 1st Joint Basin Survey (JBS1) was undertaken by the Commission in 2010, to establish and set the baseline conditions against which ORASECOM could measure progress with regard to water resources quality throughout the basin. In line with ORASECOM’s Decision to implement these 5-yearly Water Resources Quality Joint Basin Surveys (JBSs), the second in the series (JBS2) was carried out in 2015.

The findings of the third Water Resources Quality Joint Basin Survey (JBS3) will be benchmarked against the findings of the JBS1 and JBS2, as well as available data from the intervening period, and will enable the Commission to a) establish the current status of the
water resources of the Orange-Senqu River Basin, (b) note changes in resource water since 2010, and (c) thereby contribute to advice to the Parties regarding measures needed to maintain or improve the status of the water resources.

The Joint Basin Surveys are also intended to provide a platform for sharing of knowledge and experiences among water resources quality specialists from the four nations, hence advancing the aim of establishing common approaches to monitoring water resources quality and transparency in transboundary water cooperation as a whole.

The goal of JBS3 will be to contribute towards the achievement of the Commission’s mandate of providing technical advice to the Parties on matters relating to the development, utilisation and conservation of the water resources in the River System as well as establishing standardised forms of collecting, processing and disseminating data. The development objective of JBS3 will be to determine the current state of the resource quality of the water resources of the Orange-Senqu River System based on the baseline resource quality identified and set in 2010 during the JBS1.

ORASECOM is therefore seeking consultancy services to undertake the following inter-related tasks as part of the JBS3:

i) **Aquatic Ecosystem Health (AEH) assessment** of the Orange-Senqu River Basin at (a) sites determined during the JBS1 Survey as a minimum, and (b) additional sites that may be identified and which would provide an improved assessment of the state of the Basin. The successful tenderer will use the protocols established for JBS1 and JBS2.

ii) **Chemical and microbial water quality assessment**, including a detailed sampling programme using and reviewing the 2010 water quality manual, identifying and incorporating relevant water quality and microbial data/surveys conducted after 2015;

iii) **Persistent Organic Pollutants, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and Heavy metals**, including sampling at the sites determined during JBS1 survey as a minimum. Also to incorporate the recommendations of surveys undertaken after 2010.

iii) **Benchmarking of capacities of selected laboratories**, including identifying and approaching laboratories selected for benchmarking purposes, with a view to an inter-laboratory calibration exercise.

iv) Organise **public participation, national and basin wide outreach events** to create awareness and public interest in JBS 3 and water resource management issues. This should be based on the JBS1 and JBS 2 initiatives.
The successful tenderer will be expected to produce the following reports:

- An inception report outlining the overall approach to the survey for discussion with ORASECOM
- An Inception report outlining the overall approach to the public participation and outreach events
- A review of the updated sampling manual produced in 2015, with a view to developing a detailed sampling programme for JBS 3;
- A final report outlining the results of the survey including an analysis of the data, and the inclusion of the data on the ORASECOM database.
- A final report for the public participation and outreach events undertaken.

Knowledge transfer is extremely important in terms of providing ORASECOM and specialists in each of the Member States with sufficient knowledge to assume a greater responsibility for future surveys.

In line with most Initiatives, the JBS3 also has potential risks associated with it, for instance, ensuring sustainability of JBSs in the medium to long term, and unforeseen weather variability. The field survey is planned to be undertaken during October-November 2020. Unforeseen weather variability such as late/early floods may impact on the execution of the field sampling/surveys. Nevertheless measures such as close monitoring of weather forecasts (long- and short-term) will be used to mitigate such risks, as well as availability of the consulting team throughout this period, in order to conduct the field work at short notice.

Data analysis, reporting and delivery of final deliverables are to be completed by February 2021.

Proper design, buy-in and participation by State Parties and stakeholders must be ensured to address the issue of sustainability of JBSs including JBS3.

The JBS3 is commissioned by the ORASECOM Secretariat through the support provided by the United Nations Development Programme –Global Environment Facility (UNDP-GEF).

| Personnel: specifications of inputs and necessary qualifications | The consulting team will include a Project Manager with experience in managing large, multi-disciplinary projects, financial management, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation; a Technical Manager with expertise in ecological monitoring and evaluation, and client liaison;

The contractor will need to include professionals covering the following disciplines as a minimum:
The required qualifications of the contractor include:

**Sector and regional competences:**
The implementing agent undertaking this assignment shall have a proven track record in following sectors: i) Working in transboundary river basins, particularly the Orange-Senqu Basin, ii) Working with the relevant Ecostatus models, iii) Accreditation of relevant methods is essential, iv) Experience in managing large multidisciplinary teams.

**International experiences:**
The implementing agent shall have proven track record in conducting similar projects in the context of international development and/or multilateral cooperation.

**General backstopping capacities:**
The implementing agent shall have the capacity to fully backstop the above subject-matter and sector areas. The implementing agent shall also have management and backstopping capacity of cross-cutting issues, in particular the administrative and financial management of (large) projects.

Inclusion of specialists from several of the ORASECOM Member States in the team would be an advantage.

If you are interested in tendering for this work, please complete the Expression of Interest document and return it to Michael Ramaano (on emails indicated above) by no later than 1600hrs, 31 January 2020. **Only email submissions will be accepted, no other means of submission will be accepted.**

Submission of the Expression of Interest will indicate to ORASECOM that the proposed team is available throughout the project period and is able to apply relevant monitoring protocols, include accredited practitioners and have the necessary equipment to undertake the survey.

The evaluation of the Expressions of Interest received is expected to be completed by 29 February 2020. You will receive notification regarding the status of your submission.