RTD Talos

Interreg NEXT MED

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SmartGreenEcos

Procurement of Software Development Services for SmartGreenEcos Platform 3 - Digital Procurement Platform and Supporting Testing Services for SmartGreenEcos Platforms 1, 2 and 4.

Questions and Answers No. 2

Tender procedure No.: 01082026

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The following clarifications are provided in response to additional questions received from a prospective tenderer. They are shared with all participating tenderers to ensure a common understanding and equal access to information.

These responses should be read together with Questions and Answers No. 1 dated 24/08/2026 and with the Invitation to Tender, Part A - Instructions to Tenderers, Part B - Contract and Special Conditions, Annex 1 - Technical Specifications and the prescribed Tender Forms. Where a matter has already been answered in Questions and Answers No. 1, the relevant earlier answer is incorporated by reference and is not superseded by this document.

Question 1: Will any pre-existing accelerators, templates, reference implementations, reusable components, or reference architecture be made available to tenderers to support delivery within the available budget and timelines?

Answer: No Authority-provided accelerator or reference implementation is guaranteed. Tenderers may propose reusable components subject to the disclosure, licensing, portability and handover requirements. See Part A, Section 4.3 and Part B, Sections 7.2-7.4.

Question 2: Is remote delivery acceptable, or is in-country presence expected for pilot support, SME (small and medium-sized enterprise) engagement, training, testing, or deployment activities?

Answer: Remote delivery is acceptable. Presence in Cyprus may be required where an activity cannot reasonably be completed remotely; related costs are included unless otherwise agreed in writing. See Part B, Sections 4.2 and 5.4 and Annex 1, Sections 8.3-8.5.

Question 3: What is the implementation status and expected availability of the shared IAM (Identity and Access Management), API (Application Programming Interface) Gateway, Event Bus (service for exchanging system events), Shared Analytics Platform and IWDT (SmartGreenEcos project partner) Back-Office Platform, and will integration artefacts (ICDs (Integration Control Documents), API specifications, event schemas, authentication flows and sandbox environments) be available at contractor onboarding, or are these expected to be jointly defined during discovery?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Questions 2 and 4. Available artefacts will be shared at inception; remaining interface details will be agreed during early integration planning. See Annex 1, Sections 6.1-6.2.

Question 4: What technology/provider backs each shared service, including IAM/Identity Provider standards, Event Bus technology, and Analytics ingestion/export interfaces?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Question 4. No specific technology or provider is guaranteed by the Tender Documents; final choices and interfaces will be confirmed through the agreed integration process. See Annex 1, Sections 6.1-6.2.

Question 5: Can Talos provide a system-context diagram or data-flow definition showing specific interactions between Platform 3, Platforms 1/2/4, the Back-Office Platform, Analytics Platform and Event Bus?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Question 2. The detailed system context and data flows will be documented in the ICD during the design phase. See Annex 1, Sections 6.1-6.2.

Question 6: Is there a platform-level administrator role with cross-tenant authority and, if so, what responsibilities are expected regarding tenant onboarding, policy templates, pooled procurement governance and reporting?

Answer: Yes. A platform-level administrator role is required, subject to least-privilege access and tenant confidentiality. See Annex 1, Sections 4.1, 4.4, 5.4 and 7.

Question 7: Can Talos clarify the mandatory configuration requirements for the procurement evaluation engine? 1. Is a specific evaluation formula already defined for implementation? 2. If so, can the formula and associated weighting rules be provided before the Design Confirmation Milestone ML1 (Milestone 1 - Inception and Design Confirmation)? 3. If no predefined formula exists, will the contractor be expected to define and configure one during implementation? 4. What aspects of evaluation logic are expected to remain configurable by platform administrators?

Answer: No single formula is prescribed. The evaluation logic must remain configurable as specified in Annex 1, Section 4.5 and requirement FR-31-004. Any mandatory formula will be communicated before ML1.

Question 8: Can Talos clarify the governance model for pooled procurement events, including which roles may initiate pooled RFQs (Requests for Quotation)/RFPs (Requests for Proposal), the eligibility criteria for participating SMEs, any governing rules or restrictions (e.g., category, geography, administrator approval), and whether SMEs may withdraw from a pooled event and at which stages of the process?

Answer: The detailed pooled-procurement governance rules will be agreed during ML1 and implemented as configurable policies. See Annex 1, Sections 4.1.3, 4.4 and 7.

Question 9: What information is visible across tenants during pooled procurement activities, is there a dedicated pooling coordinator role with elevated cross-tenant permissions, and is participant consent captured per pooling event or governed through platform-wide terms and conditions?

Answer: Only aggregated demand may be shared where required; confidential participant data must remain protected. Event-specific participation confirmation should be supported. See Annex 1, Sections 4.1.3, 5.4 and 7.

Question 10: Can Talos describe the end-to-end post-award process for pooled procurement events, including: 1. Allocation of awards, contracts and purchase orders to participating SMEs; 2. Contractual structure (individual SME contracts/POs versus master agreements); 3. Supplier invoicing, budget ownership, spend tracking and financial accountability; and 4. The treatment of SME withdrawal, disputes or cancellations after award and the resulting impact on other participating SMEs.

Answer: The default approach is allocation and contracting at individual SME level, unless an approved pooled arrangement provides otherwise. Platform 3 records the process but does not execute payments in the MVP (Minimum Viable Product). See Annex 1, Sections 4.1.1, 4.1.3, 4.4 and 4.6.

Question 11: Can Talos describe the onboarding, verification and governance process for marketplace participants, including buyer and seller approval criteria, whether verification is manual or automated, and who is responsible for marketplace moderation and ongoing participant management?

Answer: The MVP requires a minimal, policy-based participant verification and entitlement process. Pilot moderation will be undertaken by TALOS or its designated administrator. See Annex 1, Sections 2.2, 4.2.1 and 4.4.

Question 12: Does FR-31-005 (Functional Requirement 31-005) require supplier-facing exception-resolution workflows within Platform 3, or is supplier communication expected to occur outside the platform with only exception records maintained in the system?

Answer: Yes. FR-31-005 requires an in-platform exception and non-conformance workflow with an audit record. External communications may be used, provided material outcomes are recorded in Platform 3. See Annex 1, Sections 4.1.1 and 4.4.

Question 13: Are there any approved, preferred or restricted AI (Artificial Intelligence)/LLM (Large Language Model) providers for the MCP (Model Context Protocol)-enabled AI layer, and to what extent is provider selection left to the tenderer subject to data residency, governance, auditability and grounding (restricting outputs to approved source records) requirements?

Answer: No provider is preferred or prohibited by name. The Tenderer may propose a provider, subject to the applicable data, security, audit, portability and approval requirements. See Annex 1, Sections 3.2, 4.3 and 7; Part A, Section 4.3; and Part B, Sections 7.4 and 8.2.

Question 14: Part B indicates that retention requirements will be communicated in accordance with project and funding rules. Can Talos clarify the specific retention and archival requirements applicable to Platform 3? 1. Retention periods for procurement records, bids and marketplace transactions; 2. Retention periods for audit logs, AI interaction logs and retrieval traces; 3. Required regulatory or programme reporting obligations related to stored records; 4. Whether data should be archived, anonymised or permanently deleted at the end of the retention period.

Answer: The Tender Documents do not specify fixed retention periods. TALOS will communicate the applicable schedule; the solution must support configurable retention, archiving and secure deletion. See Annex 1, Section 7 and Part B, Sections 8.1, 8.5 and 11.2.

Question 15: Can Talos clarify the intended scope of AI grounding and knowledge retrieval within the SmartGreenEcos ecosystem? 1. What controlled vocabularies, taxonomies, supplier classifications or procurement templates will be provided? 2. Should AI operate solely on Platform 3 data or across multiple

SmartGreenEcos platforms? 3. Are there any restrictions on cross-platform retrieval and indexing? 4. What sources should be considered authoritative for AI-assisted recommendations and responses?

Answer: AI grounding should primarily use authorised Platform 3 records. Cross-platform retrieval is permitted only through approved, permissioned interfaces. See Annex 1, Sections 4.3, 6.2 and 7.

Question 16: Can Talos clarify the expected analytics scope, including whether KPI (Key Performance Indicator) definitions are already standardised across SmartGreenEcos, whether Platform 3 is responsible only for KPI data export, and whether user-facing dashboards and reporting capabilities form part of the mandatory scope?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Question 2, for cross-platform exchanges. Platform 3 dashboards and reports remain mandatory; KPI definitions will be agreed during integration planning. See Annex 1, Sections 4.4 and 6.2.

Question 17: Can Talos clarify the scope of the ML5 (Milestone 5 - Supporting Testing Services for Platforms 1, 2 and 4) testing services for Platforms 1, 2 and 4, including the expected testing activities, minimum deliverables, anticipated SME participation, and responsibilities relating to test management, defect lifecycle management, regression testing, retesting, and test reporting? 1. For Platforms 1, 2 and 4, is the contractor expected to perform only integration testing related to Platform 3 interfaces, or is there an expectation to conduct end-to-end functional and user testing across the broader SmartGreenEcos ecosystem?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Question 3. ML5 is a bounded testing and reporting service and does not transfer responsibility for correcting or fully assuring Platforms 1, 2 and 4. See Annex 1, Sections 2.4 and 8.3-8.4.

Question 18: While the tender forms provide for the declaration of hosting and third-party costs, can Talos clarify responsibility for ongoing operational costs associated with the platform? 1. Who is expected to fund cloud infrastructure costs during pilot operation? 2. Who is expected to fund AI/LLM consumption and inference costs during pilot operation? 3. Following project handover, who is expected to assume responsibility for ongoing hosting and operational costs? 4. Are there any operational services that must remain the responsibility of the contractor after acceptance beyond the contractual warranty period?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Question 4, for the infrastructure split. Mandatory Contract and pilot operating costs must be included or clearly declared; post-handover costs must be estimated. After acceptance, only the warranty obligations apply unless further services are contracted. See Part A, Sections 5.1-5.3 and Part B, Sections 3.3, 5.1 and 6.5.

Question 19: Can Talos clarify the implementation expectations for multilingual and accessibility support? 1. Must English, Greek and Arabic be fully operational from the initial pilot release? 2. Will translation content be provided by Talos, or is translation expected to be provided by the contractor? 3. What level of Arabic RTL (right-to-left) support is required across the platform? 4. Are there any specific accessibility compliance validation or certification requirements beyond WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) 2.1 AA?

Answer: English, Greek and Arabic are required for the production pilot and final acceptance. Unless supplied by TALOS, localisation is the Contractor's responsibility. Talos and project partners will support the translation process. See Annex 1, Sections 5.5, 8.2 and 10.

Question 20: Annex 1 references optional ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) and financial-system integrations. Can Talos clarify the intended scope of these integrations? 1. Are ERP/financial-system connectors part of the mandatory MVP scope? 2. If included, which ERP platforms should be assumed? 3. If not included, should they be treated as future tenant-specific extensions? 4. Should any integration framework or connector architecture be included in the base implementation?

Answer: Tenant-specific ERP connectors are not part of the mandatory MVP unless separately activated. The base solution must remain integration-ready. See Annex 1, Sections 3.2, 4.1.1, 4.6 and 6.2.

Question 21: How will contract governance, acceptance and milestone assessment be handled where delivery is affected by evolving shared-platform interfaces or unavailable ecosystem dependencies, and can mock services be used to satisfy milestone or acceptance requirements pending availability of external

integrations? 1. If ML5 testing activities are delayed due to the unavailability of Platforms 1, 2 or 4, how will associated milestone payments and acceptance decisions be managed?

Answer: Refer to Questions and Answers No. 1, Questions 2-4. Delays caused solely by TALOS or an identified external dependency will be managed through change control. Mocks may support interim evidence but do not automatically satisfy final acceptance. See Part B, Sections 2.4, 6.2 and 9.3.

Question 22: Can Talos provide the expected number of SME participants, buyers, suppliers, procurement administrators and marketplace users anticipated during the pilot phase and at full programme maturity? 1. Are specific SmartGreenEcos consortium members or pilot organisations already committed to using Platform 3 during the pilot phase? 2. What adoption and success criteria will be used to measure platform acceptance by SMEs and other ecosystem participants?

Answer: The required pilot and scale-up assumptions are stated in Annex 1, Sections 5.1-5.3. Participating organisations will be confirmed through the project pilot process. Acceptance remains governed by Annex 1, Section 10, rather than guaranteed adoption or transaction volumes.

Question 23: Has budget been allocated for post-project platform operations, support and enhancement activities? 1. Is a separate phase or budget expected for production rollout following successful pilot completion? 2. Are there anticipated follow-on contracts, extensions or additional implementation phases beyond the current tender scope? 3. Can Talos clarify whether ownership of future enhancement work will be subject to a new competitive procurement process or offered through existing contractual mechanisms?

Answer: No post-project budget or follow-on contract is guaranteed by the Tender Documents. Tenderers must not rely on future work when pricing the mandatory scope. See Part A, Sections 1.6 and 5.2 and Annex 1, Section 8.2.

Question 24: Who are the key business stakeholders responsible for platform adoption, procurement-process ownership and marketplace governance? 1. what business-level criteria must be satisfied for project success and final sign-off? 2. Which stakeholders will ultimately determine whether the platform progresses from pilot into long-term production use?

Answer: TALOS is responsible for contractual acceptance and final sign-off, with technical coordination and user evidence provided through the project governance structure. See Annex 1, Sections 1.2, 6.1 and 10 and Part B, Sections 4 and 6.4.

Question 25: Following pilot completion, what is the intended long-term operating model for Platform? 1. Is Platform 3 expected to continue as a production platform beyond the funded programme period? 2. Has Talos defined a commercialisation strategy for broader rollout beyond the initial pilot participants? 3. Are there plans to onboard additional organisations, regions or industry sectors following the initial deployment? 4. Are procurement transactions, marketplace listings or supplier onboarding expected to involve any future charging or commission model?

Answer: The intended direction is continued post-project operation, but no detailed commercial or charging model forms part of this Contract. See Annex 1, Sections 1, 2.3, 5.1 and 8.2.

Question 26: What are the primary programme KPIs for Platform 3 success, for example: • SME participation rates • Procurement cycle-time reduction • Supplier engagement • Procurement value transacted • Sustainability impact metrics • User adoption metrics • Marketplace activity levels 1. Are any minimum adoption, transaction-volume or participation targets contractually linked to project success criteria?

Answer: The relevant programme outcomes, reporting requirements and design assumptions are stated in Annex 1, Sections 1, 4.3.1, 4.4 and 5.2. Transaction and adoption figures are not Contractor acceptance guarantees; acceptance is governed by Annex 1, Section 10.