THIRD REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs)
For the Development of Value-Added Tools for Decision-Making

Country:	**International**
Implementing Agency:	**International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)**
Executing Agency:	**General Secretariat / Organization of American States (GS/OAS)**
Project:	**Building the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN)**
Type:	**Grants to Institutions**
Duration:	**1-6 months**

I.   INTRODUCTION

This third Request for Proposals (RfP) intends to finance proposals from institutions that have experience in developing value-added tools to help guide environmental management, conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development decision-making processes throughout the Western Hemisphere. More details are provided in the attached Terms of Reference.

II.   <u>IABIN BACKGROUND</u>

Responding to the importance in the Americas of protection of biodiversity (the Americas houses eight of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots[1]), the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) was officially mandated at the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, convened by the Organization of American States (OAS) in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in December 1996. IABIN is an Internet-based forum for technical and scientific cooperation that seeks to promote greater coordination among Western Hemisphere countries in the collection, sharing, and use of biodiversity information relevant to decision-making and education.

The objective of IABIN is to promote sustainable development and the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the Americas through better access to and management of biological information. While IABIN is envisioned as a distributed system of data providers in which the data are maintained and controlled by the provider, coordinated access to the integrated resources of the network is a key component of IABIN.

IABIN is governed by the IABIN Council, comprising official Focal Points from the countries of the Americas and representatives from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and initiatives addressing biodiversity informatics issues. The IABIN Council is represented inter-sessionally by the IABIN Executive Committee (IEC), comprised of the IABIN Council Chair and Vice-Chair, six members elected from among the official IABIN Focal Points and one elected representative from an inter- or non-governmental organization.

The Project Implementation Plan (PIP) (accessible at http://www.iabin.net/Building-IABIN-GEF/ outlines a US$35 million plan. A five year Global Environment Facility (GEF) Grant of

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[1]   Myers N, Mittermeier RA, Mittermeier CG, da Fonseca GAB, Kent J. 2000. Biodiversity hotspots for conservation priorities. *Nature* 403 (6772): 853-858 (Feb 24).

US$6.0 million through the World Bank for the "Building the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN)" Project is executed by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS). Co-financing for the GEF project in the amount of approximately US$28.9 million,, has been identified from 76 regional and national institutions and programs.

The overall project will:

(i)   Develop an Internet-based, decentralized managed network to provide access to scientifically credible biodiversity information currently existing in individual institutions and agencies in the Americas,

(ii)   Provide the tools necessary to draw knowledge from that wealth of resources, which in turn will support sound decision-making concerning the conservation of biodiversity,

(iii)   Provide a mechanism in the Americas to exchange information relevant to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, thus promoting and facilitating technical and scientific cooperation to help fulfill the mandate of the Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

III.   RATIONALE

The demand for decision support tools for environmental management is increasing as decision-makers in both the public and private sectors are routinely required to make decisions in an atmosphere of uncertainty and, sometimes, without a complete understanding of the different factors that can affect the environment. In many cases, these decisions do not adequately account for risk or they fail to anticipate the second- and third-order effects that will result from a decision. The ability to make informed decisions which consider unforeseen circumstances is fundamental to achieving efficient and effective environmental management, conservation of biodiversity, and sustainable development.

The integration of natural and social science data and information is increasingly recognized as vital to scientific research and societal decision making related to a wide range of pressing environmental and biodiversity issues. In addition, the use of GIS for visualization and spatial analysis of data is well documented. Many information products have been developed that allow users to perform a variety of functions on biodiversity and remote sensing data. These functions include predictions of spatial distribution, changing distributions according to key variables, three dimensional visualization, and time-series animation (fly-through).

IV.   OBJECTIVE

An important ultimate objective of IABIN is to make biodiversity information useful to decision-makers in the public and private sectors. Therefore, IABIN is providing funding for the development, adaptation or modification of value-added applications that will demonstrate to decision makers how data and information can be effectively used in the decision making process to improve the environmental outcomes of their management decisions.

IABIN is seeking to foster the use and further development of current value-added tools created within the context explained above that can be either adapted or modified to fulfill the needs of the IABIN community. This provided that we understand the differences and capabilities between the diverse decision-support tools available or proposed in order to decide which tool should be used or recommend for a particular need within the network. Of course, innovative ideas for the development of the tools sought after are also welcomed.

In order to accomplish the above, IABIN is requesting proposals from institutions that have experience in developing value-added tools to help guide environmental management, conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development decision-making processes throughout the Western Hemisphere. IABIN is interested in forging partnerships with institutions involved in the development of decision support tools in order to promote an efficient use of the resources available for this task within the network. In this regard, proposals showing a substantial level of cost-sharing, creation of partnerships, tools that can be used throughout the network and that are multilingual will be favorably considered.

V.   PRIORITY AREAS

The basic principle of the proposals should be to demonstrate with concrete products how biodiversity information is useful to decision-makers in the public and private sectors and at the local, national, sub-regional and regional level. Under that principle, proposals should propose to integrate multiple tiers of IABIN data on a geospatial platform, develop, adapt, or modify a value-added tool that addresses the need for information products tools in one of the areas specified in the attached Terms of Reference (TOR). Proposals may be either for tools that will be built upon already developed tools by the proponent or for new tools to be developed.

Additionally, at the IABIN VI Council Meeting, July 14-16, 2009, held in La Romana, Dominican Republic, the IABIN Council emphasized that Value Added Products created under Component 3 should be based upon the following criteria:

–   Cross national requirements and to be completed within 6 months.
–   Consistent with national policy requirements using appropriate tools (e.g. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans [NBSAPs]).
–   Synergistic to international commitments (e.g. CBD, CITES)
–   Must be replicable
–   Information used in tools can be verified by Focal Points
–   Must leverage additional information resources

VI.   CLARIFICATIONS

The contacts for clarifications are as follows:

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Organization of American States
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Washington, D.C. 20006
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rhuber@oas.org

VII.   VALIDITY OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must remain valid until December 1, 2009.

VIII.   SCHEDULE OF PROCESS

Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM on Friday November 13, 2009 and should be addressed to Luisa Fernanda Neira (lneira@oas.org) copied to Richard Huber (rhuber@oas.org). Following receipt of all valid proposals, the review and contracting schedule is as follows:

1. Proposal evaluated and selected by December 1, 2009
2. Successful Proposal applicants contacted by December 15, 2010
3. The assignment to be commenced by January 1, 2010
4. The assignment to be completed by June 30, 2010.

VII. ELIGIBILITY

This award is open to firms registered in the member countries of the World Bank to be eligible to receive the GEF funds through the World Bank. Preference will be give to the IABIN participating countries that endorsed the IABIN GEF project. (The list of IABIN participating countries can be found in http://www.iabin.net/Building-IABIN-GEF/Countries-Participants-in-the-GEF-project.html.)

Firms may associate with other firm(s) in the form of a joint venture or of an agreement to complement their respective areas of expertise, strengthen the technical responsiveness of their proposals and make available bigger pools of experts, provide better approaches and methodologies, and, in some cases, to offer lower prices. Such an association may be for the long term (independent of any particular assignment) or for a specific assignment. In the case of a joint venture, the association should appoint one of the firms to represent the association; all members of the joint venture shall sign the Grant Agreement and shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire assignment.

VIII. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The institutions selected to develop value added tools must agree to make tools and applications developed by the project available through the IABIN Web Portal / Gateway under conditions described in the section "ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY REGULATION" found at:
http://www.iabin.net/Copyright-Policies/ and ,
 and conditions found at:
http://www.iabin.net/Links/list/onecat/Root+Biodiversity-Tools+Standards-Protocols/0/all_items.html

In general, those institutions that develop value-added tools with IABIN resources shall not have any title, copyright, patent, or other proprietary rights in any work –developed with funds provided by IABIN. All such rights shall lie with IABIN. At the request of IABIN, the beneficiary institution shall assist in securing the intellectual property rights of tools and applications produced and in transferring them to IABIN.

XI. GRANT AMOUNT

The Grant amount will be examined and determined based on the scope of the product. Project proposals must estimate the cost. Ideally, three or more proposals can be financed with IABIN available resources. Those proposals that include cost-sharing by proponents will be favorably evaluated (see Section XVII).

IX. COST SHARING

Co-financing is required; it is highly recommended 2:1 meaning $2 of co-financing must be provided for every $1 received from IABIN.   The co-financing can be from different sources or in different types such as:

- project funds from non-IABIN sources
- salaries of people involved in the project that are paid by non-IABIN funds
- volunteer time spent directly on the project calculated at an hourly wage equivalent
- In-kind support to the project (hardware, software, travel costs, etc.)
- Grants from other institutions in support of the development of IABIN decision-making tools

X. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be sent via e-mail to the persons indicated in Section VI. Proposals must be in either MS Word or PDF format, using the following outline. The proposals should be up to twenty (20) pages and will only be accepted if they conform to the following instructions:

REQUIRED FORMAT OF PROPOSAL:
Proposals may be submitted in Spanish, English, or Portuguese; abstracts are required to be in both the original language and as applicable in English or Spanish.

PAGE 1:
  A. Title of Proposed Project

  B. Cover letter signed by the authorized representative of the firm.

  C. Contact Information of the Firm
  - Name of Firm:
  - Name of Contact Person(s):
  - Address:
  - Country:
  - Telephone:
  - Fax:
  - Email:
  - Website:

  D. (In case of association) Contact information of Associated Firm(s)
  - Name of Firm:
  - Name of Contact Person(s):
  - Address:
  - Country:
  - Telephone:
  - Fax:
  - Email:
  - Website:

PAGE 2:

  E. Project Summary: An abstract of the proposal (200 words or less) both in English and Spanish. It should include the title of the project, geographic location, a brief

description of the rationale, goal(s), objectives, specific project activities, target decision-makers, beneficiaries, and expected products.

PAGES 3-18:

F. Project description (Maximum sixteen pages) - A description of the proposed outcome (product) of the project. This should follow a basic scientific proposal content in which the following questions are addressed: what is proposed and its relevance (objectives and relevance), how this will be done (methodology), what will be achieved, what outputs will be delivered, what innovation will be generated, how the project success will be measured (in keeping with IABIN project monitoring and evaluation methodology). This should be developed in the format below:

1. **Rationale**: Describe the project's value to IABIN; why it is important that this project be implemented (e.g., which commonly recognized need in the region or sub-region is addressed by the proposal). Describe any overlap or complementarities with existing tools to support decision-making developed by your organization or others and how this could be used, modified or adapted to IABIN community needs. Describe how this proposal will fill existing gaps.

2. **Project Goals and Objectives:** Project goals must be clearly defined and directly relevant to the need(s) identified above. Project objectives must be measurable, realistic (attainable within the project's period of performance), and be directly relevant to the goals identified.

3. **Project Activities and Methodologies:** Discuss in detail all proposed project activities and describe the methodologies to be used to implement the objectives. In this section you should explain your understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output, and the degree of detail of such output. You should highlight the problems being addressed and their importance, and explain the technical approach you would adopt to address them.

4. **Time frame / work plan:** Indicate when activities, tasks, and milestones or outputs will be accomplished, as well as responsible person, and monitoring and evaluation mechanism (based on the stated anticipated benefits and outputs and assurance that the products will reach the intended beneficiaries). In general, projects should last no more than six months. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan. A list of the final documents, including reports, drawings, and tables to be delivered as final output, should be included here.

5. **Team Composition and Task Assignment:** Indicate the structure and composition of your team. List the name of staff, firm, area of expertise, position assigned, and task assigned.

6. **CVs of Proposed Staff:** In addition to the general information about the individual, it would be helpful to have work undertaken by the individual that best illustrates capability to handle the tasks assigned.

7. **Staffing Schedule:** For Professional Staff the input should be indicated individually; for Support Staff it should be indicated by category (e.g.: draftsmen, clerical staff,

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etc.). Months are counted from the start of the assignment. If some staff are working part-time, it should be indicated so.

Example:

	Name of Staff	Staff input (in the form of a bar chart)													Total staff-month input	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	n	Home	Total
1																
2																
3																
												Subtotal				

8. **Work Schedule:** Indicate all main activities of the assignment, including delivery of reports and other milestones. Duration of activities shall be indicated in the form of a bar chart.

Example:

N°	Activity[1]	Months[2]											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1													
2													
3													

7. **Relevant literature cited as footnotes**

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G. Summary of Costs

A detailed budget should be presented, calculated in US dollars that shows how IABIN's financial resources for the development of the tools would be spent, and if applicable, how that support fits together with co-financing provided by your or partner institution(s) (please note the description of possible cost-share items, above). Clearly indicate budget items for which IABIN funds would be used.

Information on salaries may include staff name, position, inputs (as provided in staffing schedule above), and rate. Travel may include number of international flights, per-diem, local transportation, miscellaneous expenses, etc. Other expenses must provide description, quantity, unit price, and total.

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Attach a copy of the document(s) stating the legal status of your organization, agency, or institution. If you require further instructions on meeting this requirement, please contact one of the contacts mentioned in paragraph VI above.

XI. **AWARD NOTICES AND ADMINISTRATION**

Following the evaluation and selection process, the GS/OAS will send a written notice by email to the successful applicants with proposal awarded for financing. Successful applicants will be invited to the negotiations where revisions to the scope and/or budget may be

requested before an official Grant Agreement is issued. Successful applicants will be also informed of the approximate date they can expect to receive for review and signature the "Grant Agreement", which is normally sent via e-mail.

Unsuccessful applicants can expect to receive written notice, most often transmitted by e-mail, within 30 days after the final review decision.

Administrative and Legal arrangements and disbursement of funds will be performed by GS/OAS through direct payments, therefore, the Institution should comply with GS/OAS legal and administrative arrangements within two months; otherwise the funding will be automatically cancelled and assigned to another project.

XV.   SUPERVISION

Technical and administrative supervision will be done by GS/OAS.

XII.   REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting requirements are described in the attached TOR.

Products develop should be submitted according to work plan and made freely available through the IABIN web site and / or other agreed upon mechanisms.

XVII. PROCEDURE TO EVALUATE PROPOSALS

IABIN funds will be awarded to institutions submitting outstanding proposals to develop, adapt, or modify value-added tools to address the interest of IABIN community on environmental management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals. Institutions with the highest scores will qualify to receive financial resources to develop the tools proposed as per IABIN financial resources allocated for this year under Component 3. Information Products Tools for Decision-Making of the IABIN project.

Name of Institution: _____

Country: _____

Objective of Proposal:
_____
_____

Criteria	Scale	Score	Remarks
Administrative Aspects			
The organization's experience and capabilities relevant to the proposed tasks.	1-25		
Relevant technical experience of the proposed institution's staff in relation to the proposed tasks.	1-20		
General academic qualifications of institution or organization's staff in relation to the proposed tasks	1-20		
Knowledge and capacity to carry out training in IABIN´s official languages. (5 points for each language)	5, 10, 15		
Proven capacity to collaborate with similar organizations based on	1-20		

Criteria	Scale	Score	Remarks
the potential to complement each other and leverage additional resources.			
Subtotal/100 points			
Technical Aspects			
Tool addresses priorities laid out in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for the region	1- 25		
Integration of biodiversity and socio-economic data in resolving key questions and addressing pertinent issues in the Americas.	1 –15		
Tool will support priority "Areas To Be Addressed By The Proposed Value-Added Tools" detailed in the ToRs for the Third RfP for Component 3	1 - 15		
Tools allow users to visualize data and information in an interactive, as well as non-interactive manner	1 - 10		
Utilization of data with models to develop scenarios (options and consequences) for decision makers	1 - 15		
Mechanisms proposed to provide users with developed tools through the IABIN Web Portal / Gateway	1 - 10		
Tools are built with the capacity to be used throughout IABIN's regions (North, Central and South America and Caribbean)	1 - 15		
Tools are multilingual, or in IABIN official languages (at least English and Spanish, with Portuguese as a plus) 5 points for each language.	5, 10, 15		
Tools integrated information from various IABIN's Thematic Networks (5 points for each TN: SSTN, PTN, PATN, ETN, I3N, GeoSpatial) The proposal has to say clearly how IABIN's TN will be integrated	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30		
Subtotal/150 points			
TOTAL SCORE/%			
Criteria	Scale	Score	Remarks
Administrative Aspects			
The organization's experience and capabilities relevant to the proposed tasks.	1-25		
Relevant technical experience of the proposed institution's staff in relation to the proposed tasks.	1-20		
General academic qualifications of institution or organization's staff in relation to the proposed tasks	1-20		
Knowledge and capacity to carry out training in IABIN´s official languages. (5 points for each language)	5, 10, 15		
Proven capacity to collaborate with similar organizations based on the potential to complement each other and leverage additional resources.	1-20		
Subtotal/100 points			
Technical Aspects			
Tool addresses priorities laid out in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for the region	1- 25		
Integration of biodiversity and socio-economic data in resolving key questions and addressing pertinent issues in the Americas.	1 –15		
Tool will support priority "Areas To Be Addressed By The Proposed Value-Added Tools" detailed in the ToRs for the Third	1 - 15		

RfP for Component 3			
Tools allow users to visualize data and information in an interactive, as well as non-interactive manner	1 - 10		
Utilization of data with models to develop scenarios (options and consequences) for decision makers	1 - 15		
Mechanisms proposed to provide users with developed tools through the IABIN Web Portal / Gateway	1 - 10		
Tools are built with the capacity to be used throughout IABIN's regions (North, Central and South America and Caribbean)	1 - 15		
Tools are multilingual, or in IABIN official languages (at least English and Spanish, with Portuguese as a plus) 5 points for each language.	5, 10, 15		
Tools integrated information from various IABIN's Thematic Networks (5 points for each TN: SSTN, PTN, PATN, ETN, I3N, GeoSpatial) The proposal has to say clearly how IABIN's TN will be integrated	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30		
Subtotal/150 points			
TOTAL SCORE/%			

Date of Evaluation: _____