

Terms of reference

Consultant - Communication Officer

Assistance to the scientific Secretariat of MedECC (network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change)

1. Host Structure: Plan Bleu

Plan Bleu is a French non-profit association (under the law 1901) created in 1977 and a Regional Activity Centre (RAC) of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), one of the main components of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Seas Programme. Based in Marseille, Plan Bleu acts as an observatory for the environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean. It conducts thematic, systemic, and forward-looking analyses to inform decision-makers in the region about environmental risks and sustainable development challenges. MAP has a legal instrument—the Barcelona Convention—and relies on six RACs mandated by the 21 Contracting Parties and the European Union to implement its nine related protocols and annexes.

2. About MedECC

The **Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC, www.medecc.org)** is a collaborative and independent international network of scientific experts providing **rigorous, transparent, and policy-relevant scientific assessments** on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean region. Launched in 2015, the network counts more than 300 active scientists providing their expertise on a voluntary basis. Plan Bleu and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) jointly support MedECC within the frame of a Memorandum of Understanding. Since 2018, Plan Bleu has hosted the MedECC Scientific Secretariat, providing logistical, organisational, and administrative support to its activities, and facilitating the science-policy dialogue to promote sustainable development and strengthen resilience in the region. The MedECC Secretariat is responsible for implementing the work programme. It carries out administrative, technical, scientific, and logistical functions, supports the Co-Coordicators and author groups, manages budgets and reporting, organises governance bodies, and ensures smooth and regular communication with partners and donors. It is currently composed of two staff members.

Major achievements of MedECC include:

- The First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1), published in 2020.
- The Special Report on climate and environmental coastal risks, published in 2024.
- The Special Report on interactions between climate change and the Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus, published in 2024.

In 2025, MedECC launched the preparation of the Second Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR2), aimed at updating the data and findings of MAR1, consolidating the latest scientific knowledge on climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean basin, and making it accessible to policymakers, stakeholders, and citizens. This report will be published in 2028 and will serve as an up-to-date scientific resource to guide policies and actions on adaptation and mitigation.

3. Objectives of the consultancy

The MedECC Scientific Secretariat plays a central role in coordinating MedECC's assessment process, supporting expert groups, and ensuring the consistency, quality, and dissemination of MedECC scientific outputs. We are seeking a motivated Communication Officer consultant with a **strong understanding of climate and environmental science** to join a dynamic, international environment. The successful candidate will be responsible for **strategic communication, outreach, media engagement, and knowledge dissemination** for MedECC assessments and related activities. He/she will help strengthen **understanding and uptake of MedECC findings** among policymakers, practitioners, civil society, journalists, and the broader public across the Mediterranean region.

The Communication Officer will collaborate closely with the MedECC Secretariat team, MedECC Co-Coordicators, authors of MedECC reports, Communication Officers of Plan Bleu and other partner institutions/organisations (UfM, GREC-SUD, etc.).

4. Tasks to be undertaken

- **Developing and implementing the communication strategy** to enhance the understanding, impact, and uptake of MedECC outputs by Mediterranean stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, regional institutions, and international organisations.
- **Organising and delivering a training session** and providing guidance to authors on communicating key findings from MedECC reports to different target audiences.
- **Organising outreach events and webinars**, and supporting media interactions in collaboration with the MedECC Secretariat.
- Increasing the **media visibility** of MedECC, including the management of social media channels (LinkedIn and YouTube) and monitoring media coverage.
- Coordinating the development, regular updates, and content planning of the **MedECC website and newsletter**.
- **Overseeing the development of communication materials** (graphics, factsheets, videos, infographics, etc.) produced by external consultants or service providers, ensuring high quality, coherence, and consistency with MedECC's communication objectives.
- Proposing and developing **creative and innovative communication initiatives** to boost MedECC's visibility in alignment with its communication objectives.
- Additional tasks related to communication activities may arise during the course of the collaboration.

5. Key responsibilities and deliverables

1. MedECC communication strategy (2025–2028):

- Develop a written communication and outreach strategy plan for MedECC day-to-day activities and reports dissemination outlining objectives, principles and decision-making process, target audiences, communication channels, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and a timeline.
- Deliverable: First Draft of the strategy within the first 2 months.

2. Website strategy, supervision and contents updates:

- Website content audit and update plan: review existing content, outdated pages, and improvement proposals - deliverable due within first 3 months.
- Oversee regular website updates (on average once per week): new announcements (events, publications, meetings), news articles, MAR2 section updates, uploading publications, visuals, infographics, and regular improvement proposals.

3. Support to MAR2 development and communication

- Summary guidance for authors on communicating MAR2 results (preparing accessible presentations and visuals) - deliverable by the end of November 2026.
- Supervise a training session for authors (online or recorded) on communicating scientific content to various audiences - deliverable by the end of October 2026.
- Collaboration with graphic designers contracted by the MedECC in the preparation of infographics and visual summaries.

4. Press and media engagement plan

- Collaborate with supporting institutions concerning the media contacts and requests.
- Review and update the contact database of regional media - deliverable by the end of July 2026.
- Send press releases when there is an occasion, such as a new publication, an important event, or others.
- Monitor media coverage and social media presence - quarterly.

5. Events

- Support communication for the MedECC Second MAR2 Author Meeting - date to be defined, 2026.

- Support the organisation and communication of two online outreach events or webinars.

6. Digital communication and social media

- Define and implement the overall social media strategy and content plan for LinkedIn and YouTube, including scheduling of posts (minimum of 8 posts per month).
- Explore the development of new social media channels.
- Monitor social media metrics (followers, impressions, engagement rate) on a monthly basis.
- Creation of quarterly newsletter.
- Conduct interviews with MedECC authors in connection with key events (author's meetings, international conferences related to Med ...)

7. Reporting

- Short monthly progress reports (activities completed, indicators, delays, needs).
- End-of-Contract Summary Report (global evaluation, indicators, recommendations for future communication strategy).

All documents prepared by the Consultant will be provided to MedECC/Plan Bleu in electronic format (word, PDF) and graphical contents will also be provided in vector format (indesign or illustrator). The documents produced in the context of this contract will be the shared property of MedECC/Plan Bleu. MedECC/Plan Bleu reserves the right to mention or not the name of the Consultant at the time of publication, or for any use of the document - the whole or part - handed over to MedECC/Plan Bleu. Any further use by the Consultant shall be subject to prior approval.

6. Duration of the consultancy

The Consultant is expected to start in March 2026. The assignment will have a duration of one year and will **include up to 150 working days**, ending in February 2027.

7. Required skills/experience

- Strong understanding of **climate and/or environmental science communication** in an international and multicultural context.
- Awareness of the challenges of communicating scientific assessments in regions with diverse languages, media landscapes, and knowledge needs.
- Ability to **translate complex scientific information** into accessible messages for non-specialist audiences.
- **Ability to collaborate** with experts from across the Mediterranean region and provide guidance or training in communication. Motivation to work within an international network with shared long-term goals.
- Excellent **interpersonal skills** and capacity to engage with the international science and policy community.
- Experience producing communication materials **across multiple media** (written, graphic, video, social media).
- Experience with IPCC-like or scientific assessment processes would be an advantage.
- Academic background related to science communication, climate science, environmental science, or a related field is desirable.
- At least **three to five years of experience** in science communication, preferably in climate or environmental topics.
- Strong organisational skills and the ability to manage complex, multi-task workloads.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively.
- Flexibility, creativity, and interest in communication innovation.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.
- Willingness to undertake occasional international travel within the Mediterranean region.

- Fluency in written and spoken **English** and **French**.
- Knowledge of a Mediterranean language (Arabic, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Greek, etc.) is a plus.

Qualifications

Advanced university degree (master's degree or equivalent) in communications, journalism, media studies or related fields.

This consultancy can be carried out by an individual consultant or a group of consultants. The Consultant(s) should be self-employed. The MedECC Secretariat is based in Marseille (France). However, most of the work of the Consultant will be done through telework. Regular in-person meetings (at least twice a month) are required. The selection process may include interviews (either in person or any other online).

8. Terms regarding the use of AI :

Clause 1 - Controlled use of artificial intelligence

The service provider is authorized to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, provided that their use is strictly limited to support functions: assistance with structuring, brainstorming, document exploration, or editorial optimization. The use of AI may under no circumstances replace the analytical work, source verification, or expert writing expected within the scope of the assignment. Artificial intelligence must under no circumstances replace human expertise or rigorous scientific methods. In particular, it may not be used to produce numerical estimates or to generate modeling results (economic, econometric, mathematical, or other), which must be based on validated, documented approaches implemented by the service provider. Any reference to a study, article, numerical data, or academic source must be rigorously traceable and verifiable through precise references (title, author, publication, date, or link).

Clause 2 - Responsibility for content and transparency

The service provider remains fully responsible for the quality, accuracy, reliability, and consistency of the deliverable, including in the case of partial use of artificial intelligence tools. All information, data, or quotations appearing in the final deliverable must have been verified by the Consultant, regardless of the method of production. In the event of a clear breach (fictitious sources, fabricated quotations, inconsistent data), **Plan Bleu and MedECC** reserves the right to request a revision at no additional cost, or even to terminate the contract and cancel all or part of the payment in the event of failure to meet deadlines. The Consultant is obligated to explicitly declare any use of AI tools in the preparation of deliverables. The Consultant must transparently indicate the parts of the work that were carried out with the assistance of an AI tool and may be asked to provide the methodology or queries (prompts) used.

Clause 3 - Quality responsibility

The Consultant remains solely responsible for the accuracy, originality, verification, and professional quality of deliverables, including those produced or assisted by AI. The use of AI tools cannot, under any circumstances, justify factual errors, plagiarism, bias, or breaches of confidentiality.

Clause 4 - Non-compliance and consequences

In the event of non-compliance with this clause, we may request the Consultant to:

- revise the deliverables at no additional costs
- or, in the event of serious or repeated breach, to apply the contractual provisions relating to non-conformity or termination.

9. Application

The Applications must be submitted not later than **15 February 2026** by email to marini@medecc.org and gattacceca@medecc.org.

The applications should include:

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV),**
- **Cover letter,** and examples of past works in line with tasks described in the current terms of reference (**portfolio**),
- An **financial offer** (in euros VAT included if relevant),
- The **SIRET number** or **other valid business identification number**, in accordance with the legislation of the consultant's country of registration,
- For **French consultants**, a **valid URSSAF certificate** demonstrating that social security contributions are up to date, **or**, for **foreign consultants**, a **sworn statement (declaration on honour)** certifying compliance with applicable social security obligations in their country of establishment,
- The **names and contact details of up to three reference persons**, who may be contacted in the context of the application.