

Terms of reference

Consultant - Information and graphic designer 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 French law of 1901) created in 1977 acting as 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 seven RACs mandated by the 21 Contracting Parties and the European Union to implement its nine related protocols and annexes. Plan Bleu has hosted the MedECC Secretariat since 2018.

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 350 active scientists providing their expertise on a voluntary basis. Since 2018, Plan Bleu has hosted the MedECC Scientific Secretariat as part of a partnership with the UfM and contributes to ensuring its operation through various funding sources. Since 2018, the UfM supports MedECC through technical assistance contracts with the French Association Groupe régional d'experts sur le climat en région Sud Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur (GREC-SUD) (previously Association pour l'Innovation et la Recherche au service du Climat (AIR Climat)), thanks to funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The UNEP/MAP also supports MedECC. From September 2025 and until February 2029, MedECC is also supported by the European Commission Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (DG MENA).

The MedECC Secretariat is responsible for implementing the work programme. It carries out administrative, technical, scientific, and logistical functions, supports the Co-Coordinator and author groups, manages budgets and reporting, organises governance bodies, and ensures smooth and regular communication with partners and donors. It also acts as the technical unit for the production of MedECC scientific assessments and reports, providing editorial, methodological, and coordination support throughout the drafting, review, and publication process. It is currently composed of three staff members and a communication consultant.

Major achievements of MedECC include:

- The First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1), published in 2020.
- The Special Report Climate and environmental coastal risks, published in 2024.
- The Special Report Interactions between climate change and the Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus, published in 2024.
- The Expert Analysis Environmental change, conflict, and human migration in the Mediterranean Basin, to be published in 2026.

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. The MedECC Secretariat is looking for a graphic design expert ("Consultant") specialized in the visualization and presentation of complex scientific information, to support the production of MAR2 from a visual communication and information design perspective, and to enhance the understanding and impact of their key findings. The successful candidate will have exceptional skills in information design and infographics, as well as a strong understanding of climate and environment issues.

4. Role and tasks

As a graphics specialist with experience in information design and a strong understanding of climate and environmental change issues, the Consultant will **support the development of the visual components of MAR2**. He/she will prepare a **visual style guide for MAR2 graphics**, defining best practices for the design and production of visual materials throughout the report. He/she will **assess the needs for graphical support across all chapters** and identify areas where assistance is required. The Consultant will then carry out the necessary work, **enhancing existing figures and conceptualizing and producing new graphics** in close collaboration with the authors, and ensuring the consistent implementation of the visual style guide throughout the report. The selected candidate will play a key role in elaborating a strategy for the development of figures in the chapters of the report and coordinate the preparation of the graphics included in the Summary for Policymakers, which translate complex scientific information into a compelling visual narrative for a non-specialist audience. This may include interacting with groups of users of the reports ahead of the report production. The Consultant will organize, in collaboration with the MedECC Secretariat, and participate in necessary calls and virtual meetings, including possible brainstorming, and agree on the work plan with authors.

5. Deliverables

The deliverables will include: **(1) a visual style guide for the MAR2 graphics, and (2) co-design of graphics for the Summary for Policymakers (SPMs), the full report, and the Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) in English (the number will depend on the needs identified)**. The approved visuals will be delivered in formats appropriate for online posting, downloading, and public outreach purposes. All documents developed by the Consultant will be provided to MedECC/Plan Bleu in electronic format (PDF) and in vector formats (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 — whether the whole document or part of it — 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 September 2026. The assignment will have a duration of one year and will **include up to 150 working days**, ending in August 2027.

7. Requirements

The ideal candidate will have demonstrated experience in creating innovative and engaging visual communication products, with strong technical and creative skills. Experience working in climate and environmental science communication, and/or a related field, is highly desirable.

Required skills/experience

Scientific communication & subject matter understanding

- Ability to understand and communicate complex scientific information to non-specialist international audiences
- Strong interest in and solid understanding of climate and environmental issues
- Experience working with scientists in a co-production process

Visual communication & design skills

- Experience in information design using qualitative and quantitative data
- Proven ability to produce static and interactive graphics for print and digital media
- Proficiency with graphic design software, including image editing and data visualization tools

Professional experience & collaboration

- Experience working with international teams and engaging with the international science community
- Ability to work remotely in an international environment
- Capacity to work under tight deadlines and under time pressure

Personal skills

- Strong creativity and ability to generate new ideas
- Excellent attention to detail
- Experience in planning, organizing and executing multi-task workloads;

Education & language requirements

- Bachelor's or advanced degree in information design, communications, or a relevant field
- Proficiency in written and spoken English
- Proficiency with graphic design software
- Fluency in another Mediterranean language would be an advantage

Other requirements

- Willingness to undertake international travel

This consultancy may be carried out by an individual self-employed consultant, a company, or an association. Applicants must hold a SIRET number or another valid business identification number, in accordance with the legislation of the country in which the consultant is registered.

The MedECC Secretariat is based in Marseille, France. The Consultant will work mostly remotely (telework) and is expected to attend in-person author meetings from 30 November to 2 December 2026 and in May 2027, as well as the SPM workshop (TBC).

The selection process may include interviews via video call.

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 by email to contact@medecc.org. We welcome applications until **15 August 2026**.

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.