

DEVELOPING A MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING PLATFORM AND DATABASE FOR THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

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Closing date and time: 06/11/2026 @ 3pm

Background

The Solomon Island Government (SIG) is advancing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as an important mechanism for supporting sustainable and equitable management of the country's marine resources. Through the Solomon Islands National Ocean Policy and the Ocean12 coordination mechanism, the Government has taken important steps toward strengthening integrated ocean governance and advancing planning approaches that balance conservation, fisheries, economic development, cultural values and customary rights, climate resilience and community livelihoods.

Effective MSP requires a functional, centralised and accessible spatial database and GIS platform that enables the integration, management, analysis, and visualization of marine-related data from multiple government agencies, provincial governments, development partners, research institutions, and local communities.

With funding through the Blue Nature Alliance, the Wildlife Conservation Society seeks to engage a qualified consultant or consultancy firm to co-design, develop, and operationalize a MSP platform that will serve as the core data management platform underpinning national and supporting provincial MSP processes.

Purpose

The purpose of this consultancy is to co-design, develop, test, and implement an integrated Marine Spatial Planning platform that:

- Consolidates marine and coastal spatial datasets from multiple sources.
- Supports evidence-based MSP decision-making.
- Provides transparent and consistent data management standards.
- Enables integration with GIS platforms, national and global databases.
- Builds government capacity for long-term database administration and maintenance.

Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify existing marine and coastal spatial data across relevant agencies and stakeholders.
2. Co-design with SIG a database architecture suitable for MSP applications in Solomon Islands.

3. Develop a centralized geospatial database with user access controls and metadata standards.
4. Establish data governance protocols, standards, and workflows.
5. Facilitate integration of existing priority datasets.
6. Support visualization and analysis through GIS-compatible systems.
7. Build the capacity of government staff to manage, maintain, update, and utilize the database.

Scope of work

The consultant shall undertake, but not be limited to, the following tasks.

1. Inception and GIS capacity development training

- Conduct consultations with key government agencies (Ocean 12) to i) identify data sets and data custodians, ii) co-develop GIS platform and database architecture suitable for government requirements including user requirements, functional needs, and technical specifications and iii) assess hardware, software, hosting, and cybersecurity requirements.
- Deliver GIS capacity development training based on needs assessment (needs assessment to be undertaken by WCS).

2. Database Design

Develop a database architecture and data model including:

Database Components

- Spatial datasets
- Tabular datasets
- Metadata repository
- User management framework
- Data version control mechanisms
- Data backup and recovery systems

Technical Requirements

The database should:

- Be based on national government requirements.
- Support PostgreSQL/PostGIS or equivalent enterprise geospatial systems.
- Comply with international geospatial standards.

- Enable integration with:
 - ArcGIS
 - QGIS
 - Web GIS platforms
 - National information management systems
- Include role-based permissions.

3. Database Development and Configuration

The consultant shall:

- Build and configure the database.
- Import and organize priority datasets.
- Configure user access and security protocols.
- Develop automated backup procedures.
- Establish metadata cataloging functionality.
- Configure data quality control procedures.

4. Data Governance Framework

Develop a data governance framework including:

- Data management policy
- Data sharing protocols
- Data custodianship arrangements
- User access procedures
- Data security requirements
- Intellectual property considerations
- Traditional knowledge protection protocols
- Data update workflows
- Quality assurance standards

Special consideration should be given to protection of culturally sensitive information and customary marine tenure.

5. Pilot Testing and System Refinement

- Conduct user acceptance testing.
- Pilot the database using selected datasets.
- Address identified issues.
- Refine and optimize system performance.
- Validate functionality with government users.

6. Handover and training

The consultant shall:

- Complete final system deployment.
- Transfer all source files and documentation.
- Provide administrative access to designated government staff.
- Deliver training for government personnel covering:
 - Database administration
 - Data entry and maintenance
 - Metadata management
 - GIS integration
 - Data quality assurance
 - User access management
 - System troubleshooting

Deliverables

Deliverable	Timing
Inception Report including design considerations and outcomes from SIG consultations	Within 3 weeks of contract signing
Prototype Database System	Mar 2027
Operational Database with Integrated Datasets	July 2027
Final Database and Handover Package	By end of contract

Duration of Assignment

The consultancy is expected to start in November 2026 and be completed by August 2027.

Reporting and Supervision

The consultant will report to the WCS Project Coordinator and/or Country Director.

A Technical Working Group comprising representatives from relevant ministries and agencies will provide technical guidance and oversight throughout the assignment.

Consultant Qualifications

The consultant or consulting firm should demonstrate:

Essential Experience

- Advanced degree in GIS, spatial sciences, information management, database systems, marine science, ocean governance, or a related field.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in geospatial database development.
- Demonstrated experience developing enterprise GIS and spatial databases.
- Experience supporting Marine Spatial Planning, Integrated Coastal Management, fisheries management, or ocean governance initiatives.

Desired Experience

- Experience in Pacific Island countries, in particular Solomon Islands.
- Knowledge of customary marine tenure systems.
- Experience working with government agencies and multi-stakeholder processes.

10. Proposal Requirements

Interested consultants should submit:

Technical Proposal

- Proposed methodology.
- Work plan and timeline.
- Team composition and roles.
- Relevant experience and examples of similar assignments.

Financial Proposal

- Professional fees and number of days.
- Travel costs, if applicable (travel costs should be listed separately).
- Indicative software or hosting costs for sustaining the database into the future (acknowledging this may be dependent on SIG database hosting requirements).
- Other reimbursable expenses.

Note: Costs associated with government consultation and handover workshops will be arranged and covered directly by WCS.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weight
Understanding of Assignment	15%
Methodology and Technical Approach	30%
Relevant Experience	25%
Team Qualifications	20%
Cost Effectiveness	10%

RESPONSE PROCEDURE

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the WCS's procurement and contract administration.

Expression of Interest must be labelled with EOI title/description and delivered in hard copies or by email to solomonislands@wcs.org and marked with the address by: 3pm, Friday 6th November 2026.

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