Brussels, 11 February 2019

Tender Specification
Applying the principle of “ecodesign” to plastic products

Background

ECOS promotes and defends environmental interests in the development of standards at European and international level, as well as in the development of technical environmental product policies. As part of our work, we aim to promote the principles of resource and material efficiency from the very start of a products’ lifespan, i.e. at the design stage.

ECOS supports the view that we need to dramatically cut our plastic footprint to maintain a healthy, sustainable society that respects planetary boundaries. In the design of plastic products, plastic reduction and re-use should be prioritized at all cost and when not possible, recycling of the plastic components should be enabled. Unnecessary plastic should be cut out at the source, and problematic chemicals excluded from the formulations of plastics.

The responsible and improved design of plastic products should incorporate all of the above requirements and be applicable across all sectors. However, there appears to be a lack of organised effort to introduce these requirements in a systematic manner into product policy.

While the European Commission’s Plastics Strategy outlines some useful actions to further promote principles of re-use and recycling by e.g. revising the essential requirements of the Packaging directive; the measures foreseen for other sectors which are similarly dependent on plastics, remain vague. There seems indeed to be a lack of coordinated effort to apply waste hierarchy principles to all sectors heavily reliant on plastics and this includes, for example construction, electronics, and the automotive sector.

Objective of this tender

ECOS seeks to commission a study exploring ways to drive more environmentally responsible design of plastics and plastic containing products. This means that plastics and products containing plastic parts should be designed for a long useful life and at the end of their useful life they should be easy to disassemble, fit for re-use, or easily recyclable. The aim of this work is to help us better target our activities and to develop a more comprehensive approach to them. The study is also intended to provide contribution to the implementation of the European Commission’s Plastics Strategy, the EU’s Product Policy Framework contributing to the Circular Economy, and its efforts to promote the ecodesign of plastics and plastic-containing products.
Therefore, the objective of the study is to provide a solid and comprehensive analysis of different tools and the potential to integrate ecodesign principles of plastics and of plastic containing products into these, including:

- Avoidance of unnecessary plastic, e.g. by tackling over-packaging, or where better alternatives exist
- Modularity of components (such as those made of plastic)
- Durability of plastics for easy re-use
- Safe and practical/effective recyclability of plastics and plastic components
- Use of recycled materials (focusing on plastics) in products (e.g. minimum recycled content)

The study should examine various product policy options to achieve the above objectives including regulation, sectoral policies, standards and other potential tools. Both existing and potentially new instruments should be explored and recommendations formulated towards achieving objectives of reduction, re-use and safe recycling.

We propose that the process have three distinct steps:

1. **Mapping of tools**

A preliminary mapping and research phase to identify all legislative, policy, standards and other relevant tools that could drive more environmentally conscious design of plastic products. This would result in a comprehensive review of existing instruments that can accommodate for the better design of plastic products to limit material use and create framework conditions for the easy and safe recycling at the end of a products’ useful life. The scoping should focus on, but not be limited to, the Ecodesign directive, the Packaging and Packaging waste directive, the Construction Products Regulation, REACH, End-of-waste criteria, and European standards for plastic products. Tools outside the EU acquis are also to be considered, for inspiration in approaches that could be integrated into EU mechanisms, for example Cradle2Cradle.

2. **Assessment and identification of gaps**

An assessment is to be made of existing tools (the list to be agreed with ECOS) against their potential for including mandatory material efficiency and chemical composition design rules in plastic and plastic-containing products, and identify potential gaps and regulatory needs. This step will inform the first draft conclusions and recommendations and will be subject to a round of feedback from ECOS staff involved in the study, as well as potentially interested partners from the Rethink Plastic alliance (RPa).

3. **Policy recommendations and asks**

Following feedback from ECOS and RPa partners, final recommendations will be agreed upon. The recommendations are required to be as specific as possible, and should include concrete asks in the framework of clearly identified pieces EU political processes, EU policy, and EU legislation, as well as standardisation activities, etc.
Other related activities

Delivery of the analysis will involve contribution from ECOS, notably through as a minimum a kick-off meeting, an interim meeting, and a final meeting. Ideally the kick-off meeting should be a physical meeting in Brussels. ECOS can organise a venue with no cost to the delivery of the work. It is proposed that any subsequent physical meetings proposed by the tenderer be held in Brussels.

ECOS is part of the Rethink Plastic alliance and a selected number of partners will be consulted for feedback. Delivery of the analysis will ideally include a presentation of preliminary results to this group, to allow their feedback to be incorporated into the final outputs.

Outputs

A series of outputs are requested to allow the wider diffusion of the study. These are:

- 1 report providing a detailed presentation of the analysis; including background, methodology, analysis, and conclusions and recommendations. For ease of understanding, graphs, maps, infographics, real-life examples and other images are to be used when possible. The length of the report should not exceed 50 pages (excluding references and annexes).
- 1 executive summary of no more than 4 pages providing analysis highlights, conclusions and recommendations.
- 1 powerpoint presentation presenting highlights of the study (background, methodology, mapping, analysis, conclusions and recommendations (to be presented at the interim meeting, and to be used by ECOS and RPa partners in future)

The tenderer will assign to ECOS the exclusive right to own and use the outputs of this study. The authors will be acknowledged in the published ECOS report.

Tender preparation

Tenderers are requested to submit a proposal by 12:00 CET Wednesday 27 February 2019 outlining:

- A brief description of the tenderer’s understanding of the analysis demanded.
- A description of the anticipated activities to achieve the desired analysis.
- A description of how close coordination with ECOS will be ensured throughout the project.
- A description of the proposed outputs, including a draft structure for the full report.
- A detailed timeline on milestones and deadlines.
- Budgeting for each element of the work.
- Biographies and time availability of the key staff delivering the work, as well as their areas of expertise.

Note that sub-contracting is accepted in cases where a delivery team involves individuals from different institutions or organisations. In this case, the lead tenderer retains responsibility for legal and financial arrangements for any sub-contracting.
Budget

The budget available for this work is €40,000, inclusive of VAT, and all other costs incurred by the subcontractor. The table below provides an indication of percentage of time against the headlines of the different activities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage of time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Analysis</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Mapping of (policy) tools</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Assessment &amp; identification of gaps</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>3. Policy Recommendations &amp; asks</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td><strong>2. Outputs</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Full report</td>
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<td>2. Executive report</td>
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<td>3. PowerPoint presentation</td>
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<td><strong>3. Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Project management (including meetings, coordination calls, travel, ...)</td>
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Timeline

The results of this study will be the topic of the ECOS annual workshop to be held in June. Therefore, the final report should be provided by 10th May 2019. A pre-kick off online meeting will be held with the successful applicant(s) on 28 February, or immediately following, for finalising negotiations and/or to launch the work.

Tender Assessment

Assessment of the tenders will be made using a weighted multi-criteria approach. The award criteria are:

- 70% quality (delivery team expertise, relevance of application, usefulness of the expected outcome for communication, etc.) and
- 30% price

Tenderers are requested to submit a proposal by Wednesday 27th February to info@ecostandard.org.