



Call for tenders

Donau Soja is seeking a

Service Provider for an international Expert in the field of quality assurance and auditing

Background

The project aims to increase the competitiveness of the agri-food sector in Moldova through integration of Moldovan-grown soy into domestic and global value chains. The project is funded by the European Union through the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under the European Union's (EU) Action Document for the Development of Rural Areas in the Republic of Moldova. Moldova has a Deep Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU that opens up opportunities for economic development supported by trade with the EU. This new trade potential offers opportunities for economic development in Moldova catalyzed by the development of soy production and related value chains.

The Republic of Moldova is one of the soya cultivation countries in the Danube area. The cooperation between Donau Soja organization and Moldova Government started in 2014 with the signing of the Donau Soja Declaration. A starting point for the development work in this project is that the targeting of development activity onto a particular crop species, particularly one which is so food-system relevant as soybean, can stimulate development activity through a much wider part of the economy and society. In particular, most soybean production is linked directly to animal production. Incomes in Moldova are exceptionally low by EU standards and Moldova has challenges common of post-Soviet countries. In that context, developing soy and related value chains means developing good farming and food systems that bring wider economic, environmental and social benefits.

The project consortium comprises the Austrian-based Donau Soja Association (DS) and the Moldovan-based Pro Didactica organization. The project has been running from April 1st, 2018 until end of March 2021. The project has four components:

1. **Enhanced capacities for innovation and education in agriculture.**
2. **Increased access to markets**, especially for certified and organic agri-food products.
3. **Use of standards and certification** to raise the performance of value chains.
4. **The enablement of quality standards in the agri-food sector** (including organic agriculture and products) and alignment of Moldova's legal framework and EU quality standards.



Delivering on these four project components involves agricultural training and dissemination; developing cooperation between farmers and within value chains; developing R&D capacity; market and value chain development; developing standards and certification; supporting an enabling regulatory environment; supporting an enabling policy environment; project communication; and project management.

The project builds on existing cooperation between the Donau Soya Organisation, the Austrian Development Agency and the Moldovan Government. It will increase the competitiveness of the Moldovan agri-food sector through modernization, market development and alignment of value chains with European agricultural and food standards and best practices. The project will build on the strategic partnership between ADA and DS that is currently focused on Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine. This supports Donau Soja's wider goal to make a significant contribution to development of European agricultural systems and relevant value chains by promoting the sustainable cultivation and use of soybean in Europe. This supports of sustainable food security both in Europe and world-wide and also supports healthy, sustainable diets.

The project will directly and indirectly contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15.

The direct project beneficiaries consist of approximately 300 soya producers, 4 collectors, 15 feed and food producers, the Moldovan Centre of Excellence in Horticulture and Agricultural Technologies as well as 6 VET institutions. Additionally, 550 employees from all value chain actors, 150 teachers from all involved schools and 150 students will gain direct benefits from the project.

The Donau Soja Organisation is an independent, international, non-profit, multi-stakeholder organization aiming to effectively meet protein market demand and to provide a baseline for the development of high quality soy cultivation in the Danube region (www.donausoja.org). The Organization seat is in Vienna, Austria.

For further development and implementation of the project, the Donau Soja Organization has a registered Public Association Representative Office in the Republic of Moldova of VEREIN DONAU SOJA Association from Austria (DS representative office in Moldova).

The work of the expert

The further developments and implementation of Donau Soja Standards and the associated Quality Assurance System in Moldova are central aspects in the development of the value chain for soya. Some of the necessary activities and processes need specific knowledge and experiences, which cannot always be covered by internal staff of Donau Soja Quality Department. **Donau Soja therefore is seeking an international expert on quality assurance, training, auditing and development of control systems.**



Expected outputs

The general objective of this service request is the provision of external consultancy in the fields of Quality Assurance, conduction of audits and the development of the standards and control system for Moldova. Furthermore, the external expert shall perform conduction of audits, trainings for value chain partners and the development of quality assurance documents, which cannot be covered by DS staff. The period of this assignment is defined by the cooperation with ADA until 2021.

In his/her work, the service provider will be fully supported by local Donau Soja team in Moldova as well as relevant team from Donau Soja HQ in Vienna. The Service provider is expected to support and contribute to specific project outputs, as International Expert/ consultant, together with Donau Soja Team. The following table gives an overview of the expected outputs and tasks.

Output	Tasks
<p>3.2 Checklists for certification bodies</p> <p>Target: Checklists are available by 31.12.2020</p>	<p>Preparation of a Control Guideline as integral part of Donau Soja Checklists and based on already developed Donau Soja/Europe Soya Checklist for storage, trade, processing (details see Annex 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop in Vienna in order to define specific scope - Audit guidance defined for each question based on the "Catalogue of Remedial Measures" - Non-conformities and sectioning defined for each question, incl. examples
<p>3.3 Practical manual(s) for users in the value chain</p> <p>Target: Practical manual(s) are available by 31.12.2020</p>	<p>Preparation of a practice manual that can be used for companies in preparation to a Donau Soja /Europe Soya certification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop in Vienna in order to define the scope, content and format - Preparation of content as guideline/assistance for each company type (R 01 – R07 of Donau Soja /Europe Soya Guideline) - preparation of basic document templates to be used by companies (e.g. list of documents to be prepared for an audit, templet of list of suppliers, templet for a business description form, ...)



<p>3.4 Training courses and workshops for different stakeholders</p> <p>Target: At least 10 trainings and workshops are organized by 31.12.2020</p>	<p>Conduction of trainings for certification bodies and value chain partners (farmers, collectors, traders, processors, ...) on following topics (in total 2-3 trainings per year):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donau Soja and/or Non-GM Danube Region Standard and related quality assurance issues - how to carry out an audit - correct sampling - measurement to avoid GMO contaminations <p>Prepare and assistance for companies in process of certification in accordance with Donau Soja or Non-GM Danube Region Standard</p> <p>Conduction of audits and supervisory audits in Moldova in order to train certification bodies in good audit practice and implement Donau Soja quality assurance system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accompany audits from certification bodies - conduct supervisory audits at companies (in process of certification or already certified)
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Reporting

All services are to be provided in English language, if not defined in a different way. Regular communication, information exchange and updates with Donau Soja, Head of Quality Management, Martin Aigner aigner@donausoja.org and Quality Management in Moldova Olga Sculea sculea@donausoja.org is expected.

The Service Provider will submit documents as defined by Donau Soja in the request prior to the commissioning.

Service provider is expected to keep record of his/her time tracking.

The requirements

The service provider will be fully supported by local Donau Soja team in Moldova as well as staff in the Donau Soja headquarters in Vienna.



The following practical experience of the person/persons involved is required:

- Demonstrate practical experience in certification business (min. of 10 years)
- Demonstrate long-term practical experience and specific knowledge in the field of Non GMO and Organic certification
- Demonstrate long-term practical experience in the implementation of Standards for agricultural commodities, feed and food
- Demonstrate long-term experience as auditor in food and feed sector on all levels of production and processing
- Demonstrate practical experience in performing trainings
- Fluency in English, relevant communication and coordination skills
- Legal entities should provide evidence of registration and ability/proof to be registered for the scope of work outsourced/ service provided – legal authorization (if applicable)
- Professional capacity both in relevant technical/scientific areas
- Qualifications and skills (education)

The service provider shall be able to fulfill the tasks mentioned in an excellent and professional way.

In addition, the service provider is required to support high standards of social and environmental performance in the project and demonstrate gender and diversity competences.

The assignment is part-time/ short term, and the services will be provided based on an activity planning mutually agreed between expert/ consultant and Donau Soja Organization (Quality Department).

The service provider is expected to use his/her own office and technical equipment.

Flexibility and readiness for travel, both to Moldova (1-2x annually) and internationally (incl. visits to HQ in Vienna), depending on activity planning is required.

Remuneration

The service provider will work under a contract for services planned to be provided during the whole project period (provisional period: between May 15th, 2019 to December 31st, 2020).

For Output 3.2 and 3.3 consultant should submit a millstone-based offer. Remuneration will be made according agreed millstones as to be defined in the service contact. The person must be based in the European Union or Moldova and will receive compensation for travel and subsistence to and within Moldova.



The basic remuneration for Output 3.4 will be made on a per day basis for each day spent actively working on the project.

Selection criteria

The evaluation will be done based on following criteria:

1. Financial offer
2. Motivation of service provider as set out in the tender covering letter
3. Qualifications, experiences and skills (from the curriculum vitae)
4. References (numeral and/or reputational and/or service relevant)
5. Previous experience with service provider

Payment

Payments will be done based on issued invoices.

The contractor can accept offer including following cost items:

1. Fees
2. Travel costs
3. Other costs related to the tasks (subject of the offer)

The fees will be paid based on services provided and defined milestones and against accepted time tracking (subject of the offer).

Travel costs and other cost can be paid directly by the contractor or by the service provider - against proof of evidence- (incl. written confirmation of contractor, invoices for transportation, tickets/boarding passes, hotel invoices, entrance tickets- participation costs for events etc...)

Documents to be provided

Tenders are to be sent by email to **aigner@donausoja.org** by **10.05.2019**, indicating "International expert/ specialist for Quality Assurance" in the subject, with the following documents (in English):

1. a covering letter describing the motivation behind the tender and the overall approach to delivering the required services;
2. a statement of the expected number of days needed to fulfil the requirements (see Annex 1);
3. fee statement for the services to be provided (See Annex 1);
4. a description of the service provider as an entity; and
5. a curriculum vitae for each of the staff expected to be engaged in the work
6. a reference list of relevant projects



Annex 1

Please use following table for your financial offer

Output	Number of days (up to) and/or milestones	Fee (price per day or hour or milestone - please indicate)	Total
Preparation of a Control Guideline as part of Donau Soja Checklists			
Preparation of content for a practice manual			
Conduction of trainings for certification bodies and value chain partners	Not applicable		Not applicable
Prepare and assistance for companies in process of certification	Not applicable		Not applicable
Conduction of audits and supervisory audits in Moldova	Not applicable		Not applicable
Total			

Travel cost (upon request) will be paid/ please choose preferable option:

- 1) Through reimbursement (against proof of evidence: written confirmation of contractor, tickets, etc)
- 2) Directly by the contractor
- 3) Combined: through reimbursement and directly by the contractor

Please list possible other costs and estimate them, if applicable.



Annex 2

Detailed information's on Donau Soja/Europe Soja Checklist for storage, trade, processing incl. Non GMO Checklist:

Number of questions:

- Donau Soja Checklist (Donau Soja + non GMO requirements): 100
- Europe Soja (Approved by-Europe Soja additional requirements): 12

Example of question (extract from Donau Soja Checklist, non GMO part):

- 3.1 Is there an up-to-date **company description** (including, if applicable, a site plan for processing) for non-GM available, and does this description contain all relevant information about the company activities and all production lines produced at all sites— including, if applicable, any outsourced production processes/activities?
- 8.2. Does **evidence or do certificates for non-GM-certified raw materials** incl. animal products or for mixed products/mixtures, derived from high-risk crops or animals and produced from these raw materials, exist?