

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RfP)

Technical Assistance for Decarbonisation, Energy Transition, IMO
Fuel Readiness, and City-Port Collaboration at the Port of
Durban

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12 March 2025

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C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group Inc. (“C40”)

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world’s leading cities, who are working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis, and create a future where everyone, everywhere can thrive. Mayors of C40 cities are committed to using a science-based and people-focused approach to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. Through a Global Green New Deal, mayors are working alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to go further and faster than ever before.

The strategic direction of the organisation is determined by an elected Steering Committee of C40 mayors which is co-chaired by Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, United Kingdom, and Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Three-term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the C40 Board of Directors, which is responsible for operational oversight. A nine-person management team, led by Executive Director, Mark Watts, leads the day-to-day management of C40. C40’s three core strategic funders are Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit our [Website](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

We strongly encourage suppliers (individuals and corporations) that are diverse in terms of size, age, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, majority-owned and controlled by a minority group, physical ability or neurodiversity, ethnicity, and perspective to put forward a proposal to work with us.

About C40’s Ports & Shipping team

The C40 Ports & Shipping Programme brings together an ambitious community of action through public-private partnerships with cities, ports, and industry. By working collaboratively, cities and ports can support each other to enable the change needed to make a decarbonised future a reality.

About the Green Ports Forum

Green Ports Forum (Forum) members are cities and ports leading the charge globally on climate action. Members are engaged in leading practices and are looking at ways to accelerate action further. Through the Forum, members aim to learn from their peers, sharing lessons learned and best practices with each other and with the ports and shipping industry more broadly. The Forum includes activities such as convening workshops, establishing and operating working groups, providing technical assistance, and conducting comprehensive benchmarking studies.

Summary, Purpose, and Background of the Project

Project background

To support Green Ports Forum members, C4O has undertaken a benchmarking study to assess current city-port climate initiatives, identify best practices, and determine key challenges. This study, alongside a targeted needs assessment, has highlighted priority areas where technical assistance can drive impactful change.

Building on these insights, C4O is now seeking a third-party consultant (the “Consultant”) to provide targeted support to eThekweni Municipality (the “City”) and Transnet National Ports Authority (“TNPA”) in enhancing city-port collaboration for decarbonisation (the “Project”).

The Project aims to assess decarbonisation pathways for the Port of Durban, with a focus on electrification, renewable energy integration, enhancing operational energy resilience, and, critically, readiness for International Maritime Organization (IMO)-aligned clean fuels.

Project outputs will also feed into C4O’s ongoing implementation support with Green Ports Forum members to support scalable and catalytic green port projects.

Project Objectives

- Provide a clear, data-driven assessment of decarbonisation pathways for the Port of Durban’s container terminal operations and marine fleet (tugs and dredgers), with a particular focus on IMO fuel readiness, electrification, renewable energy integration, and enhanced operational energy resilience.
- Strengthen coordination between eThekweni Municipality and TNPA to enhance climate action in ports and the shipping sector.
- Identify gaps in technical capacity and provide targeted support to ensure the effective implementation of the proposed activities, addressing potential barriers and maximising impact.
- Ensure alignment with ongoing strategies and activities, whether city- or TNPA-led (e.g. eThekweni Integrated Resource Plan and Regional Hydrogen Strategy), or initiatives led by the World Bank, UK PACT, or other organisations, to maximise synergies and avoid duplication.
- Generate insights to help attract additional funding and/or financing and partners for project implementation in a subsequent phase (outside the scope of the Project).

Project

Activity 1:

As part of this fixed scope of work, C4O envisions the following activities. **These activities are provided on an indicative basis only, and the potential suppliers are encouraged to put forward any alternative approach that they would deem more appropriate/efficient.**

A. Renewable energy integration & electrification

- Review relevant city and port strategies, such as the eThekweni regional hydrogen strategy and the Port Development Framework Plans.
- Assess renewable energy options to supplement energy demand for current and future container operations (in light of the aforementioned strategies)
- Assess the electrification potential for terminal operations, including but not limited to shore power for vessels, terminal equipment, cargo handling, and on-road trucks associated with port activities.
- Assess the feasibility of infrastructure upgrades required for electrical grid reliability and resilience specific to the container operations in the Port.
- Assess the broader economic, social, and environmental co-benefits of electrification and renewable energy integration, including impacts on local economic development, the ocean economy (such as offshore wind potential), job creation, public health, and energy security.

B. Alternative fuels and IMO compliance readiness

- Assess the readiness of the Port of Durban's marine fleet to meet IMO clean fuel targets as a core component of this project. Proposals that also demonstrate the capacity to evaluate the readiness of incoming vessel lines will be considered particularly competitive.
- Conduct current and future fuel demand scenario analysis, considering LNG, hydrogen, ammonia, biofuels, and other fuels for the marine fleet. Fuels considered must meet IMO standards and certification targets, with the analysis presented in green/blue/grey granularity, including a comparative analysis of the different fuel types. Proposals that also demonstrate the capacity to include incoming vessel lines will be considered particularly competitive.
- Assess short and long term infrastructure needs for clean fuel bunkering and distribution.

C. Stakeholder engagement and policy alignment

- Map key port stakeholders to assess demand and supply potential for alternative fuels
- Develop a stakeholder engagement plan outlining consultation methods and timelines to gather input on energy transition needs and priorities from key stakeholders, including port authorities, fuel suppliers, shipping lines, and energy bodies
- Develop a collaboration strategy aimed at municipal and national energy bodies to integrate port energy transition strategies with city-wide and national strategies.
- Identify regulatory and financial barriers to clean fuel adoption and renewable energy deployment with respect to TNPA and eThekweni Municipality, including recommendations for overcoming these barriers.
- Propose a benchmark methodology to estimate the emissions intensity of the Port using activity-based methods.
- Ideally (contingent upon availability of data), determine emission intensity of port compared to other ports globally for both air pollutants as well as GHG's as well as other inefficiencies that lead to higher emission intensity.

D. Decarbonisation pathway development

- Develop an initial decarbonisation roadmap with short-term actions specific to the Port of Durban's container operations and marine fleet. The roadmap should include incremental actions to reduce air pollutants where related to container operations, including emissions from trucks.
- Map best practices from similar jurisdictions, for instance regarding mandatory incentives to accelerate the deployment of zero-emissions equipment.
- Provide high-level recommendations on policy interventions focused on the Port of Durban, factoring in their feasibility and implementation constraints.
- Identify potential funding mechanisms and financing opportunities related to the decarbonisation of the container terminals and marine fleet operations. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of previous and current funding and financing methods used for green port projects, as well as identifying any gaps between projected costs and available budgets.
- Ideally (contingent upon availability of data), assess the feasibility of closing these gaps through scalable and sustainable financing options, including cost estimates and projected cash flows. This will support the identification of the most suitable funding or financing options for future decarbonisation projects and ensure alignment with the financial strategies and goals of the port.

E. Reporting and deliverables

- Interim deliverables and progress reports: throughout the Project and at minimum once every 2 weeks, provide progress updates and interim reports summarising key findings, insights, and recommendations.
- Final deliverables - Consultant may propose an alternative set of deliverables, ensuring all key aspects are addressed. They may also restructure or merge deliverables where appropriate and suggest additional activities that would enhance the achievement of the Project's objectives.
 - **Energy transition assessment report**: a detailed assessment of renewable energy integration, electrification, and alternative fuel adoption pathways.
 - **Decarbonisation roadmap for the Port of Durban's container terminals and marine fleet**: high-level strategic plan with phased implementation steps for the targeted areas.
 - **Infrastructure readiness report**: a comprehensive analysis of grid resilience, clean fuel bunkering facilities, and the renewable energy and electrification potential within the targeted areas. This should include investment estimates and a cost-benefit assessment to inform decision-making.
 - **Future fuel demand and IMO compliance strategy**: roadmap for meeting IMO targets and adopting clean fuels within the container terminal and marine fleet.
 - **Stakeholder mapping and engagement plan summary**: gathers insights from stakeholder mapping and rationale for engagement, recommended consultation methods and timelines, next steps and strategies for fostering ongoing or new collaboration.

- **Business case for investment and policy intervention:** identification of investment opportunities tailored to the scope of the project, drawing on lessons from previous and current investment attraction efforts.
- **City-specific and policy recommendations:** High-level recommendations on policy interventions, regulatory, strategic and operational changes, and targeted capacity-building programs for city officials to support the effective implementation of activities outlined in the project scope.

Given the ambitious scope of work and the project timeline, we encourage Potential Suppliers to demonstrate their competitiveness by outlining how they will effectively deliver the project's objectives within the available timeframe and budget. Proposals should highlight the value-add of their approach, ensuring a balance between analytical depth and actionable outcomes. Potential Suppliers applying a multiple-criteria decision-making approach, i.e. integrating economic and social factors alongside decarbonisation benefits - will be particularly well-positioned. The selection will be based on the best combination of expertise, strategic insight, cost-effectiveness, and the ability to deliver a holistic assessment.

Activity 2:

Separately from the fixed scope of work and on an ad-hoc basis, C4O and the Consultant may agree to a limited scope of related activities (e.g. in-person workshops, communication activities, follow-up work, etc.) to enhance the delivery of the Project. Such activities constitute the open-ended scope of work.

Services provided under the open-ended scope of work will be covered under a separate agreement and billed on an hourly basis, at the blended hourly rate put forward as part of the proposal (see Section - Project Budget for details).

Working with C4O and planning engagement with external stakeholders

For this project, C4O will oversee direct outreach and requests for information to eThekweni Municipality, TNPA, Port of Durban, and other stakeholders (e.g., government economic development or trade agencies, energy utilities, development banks, investors, unions and workers, etc.). Potential Suppliers should list in their proposal all stakeholders they plan to consult and/or engage to achieve the objectives of this proposal.

Guidelines for deliverables

- All deliverables should be written in an accessible and engaging style, using British English, and follow C4O Lexicon and Style Guidelines (which will be provided by C4O).
- Public-facing documents, if any, should meet C4O's design standards, and feature C4O's name and logo (all will be provided by C4O). Deliverables should include both PDF and editable versions of the documents to facilitate edits by the C4O team if required after the project concludes.
- If a third-party graphic design vendor is engaged to design public-facing deliverables, the Potential Supplier should indicate how they will effectively collaborate with the designated graphic designer. Whether an in-house or external

designer is engaged, the proposal should specify how and when the C4O team can provide feedback on the draft files.

- Translation in languages other than English is not required for this project.

Proposal Guidelines

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until **28 March 2025, 11pm GMT**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. All proposals should include clear timetables, how you will work with C4O, clear costs and detail on experience in this area.

The proposal should give C4O evaluators all the information they need to assess your bid. Please clearly indicate where applicable:

- How your proposal is responsive to the Evaluation Criteria;
- The assumptions you are making about the project;
- Data requirements and risks you have identified and appropriate mitigation measures;
- Information about your fee;
- Proposed timeline of implementation;
- Any additional support that you need to make the project a success, including any inputs you will need from third parties or C4O staff;
- Proposed working partnership with C4O, including (as applicable) project governance and management, key personnel, key roles and responsibilities, and escalation procedure for issues.

You must include adequate information about how your costs were calculated to enable evaluation of cost reasonableness. The successful applicant will demonstrate a high-level breakdown of costs - itemised per task - aligned with their proposed staffing and work plan.

Desired Potential Suppliers' attributes and expertise

- **Ports and maritime sector expertise** – Strong understanding of ports' climate action, including renewable energy integration, electrification, and clean fuel adoption. Familiarity with actors along the maritime supply chain, including port authorities, shipping lines, and fuel suppliers.
- **Urban climate action knowledge** – Good understanding of cities' climate action, particularly in electrification, renewable energy, and clean maritime fuels, with an ability to identify and leverage synergies between city and port initiatives.
- **Local knowledge and contextual adaptation** – Proven experience working in South Africa, with a strong preference for expertise in Durban. Ability to tailor projects to the local context, ensuring alignment with regional policies, stakeholder priorities, and practical constraints.
- **Stakeholder engagement and consensus-building** – Proven ability to work with diverse stakeholders, understand their priorities, and facilitate compromise to ensure broad support and successful project implementation.

- **Regulatory and policy understanding** – Familiarity with IMO clean fuel targets, national and local energy policies, and regulations affecting port decarbonisation and renewable energy adoption.
- **Strategic and financial planning** – Experience working with multilateral development banks (MDBs) or the finance sector to attract and channel investment into green ports projects, including knowledge of funding mechanisms and partnership models.
- **Data synthesis and communication** – Ability to compile, analyse, and document relevant studies, distilling key findings into clear, concise, and actionable recommendations.
- **Presentation and reporting skills** – Ability to effectively communicate complex technical information to both technical and non-technical audiences, including city governments, port authorities, and financial institutions.
- **Project execution in time-sensitive contexts** – Proven track record of delivering high-quality work within tight deadlines, ensuring efficiency while maintaining a strong focus on project objectives.

Proposals should be written in English, submitted in a PDF format and not exceed the maximum number of pages outlined in the below table (reference material may be provided in annexes).

Doc #	Content	Max number of pages
1	Short description of your company	1 page
2	Summary of your qualifications most relevant to the Scope of work. Emphasis will be given to port decarbonisation, renewable energy integration, and alternative fuel adoption. Experience working with ports, city governments, and maritime stakeholders in South Africa (preferably Durban) will be prioritised.	2 pages
3	Description of proposed approach to the scope of work, including methodology, staffing approach, timeline, and strategy for engaging key stakeholders (e.g. port authority, city government, fuel providers, shipping lines, energy providers, financial institutions).	2 pages
4	Demonstrated experience in stakeholder engagement and consensus-building, particularly in bringing together port authorities, city governments, private sector actors, and financial institutions. Ability to align different priorities, generate project interest, and secure buy-in from relevant partners, including multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other financiers, to enhance the project's catalytic impact.	1 page

5	Description of your organisation's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and ethical alignment with C40 (see Section - C40 Policies).	0.5 page
6	Fee proposal for the fixed scope of work and blended hourly rate for use at C40's discretion under the open-ended scope of work (see Section - Project Budget)	0.5 page
7	Examples of previous technical reports, feasibility studies, or strategy documents related to port decarbonisation, renewable energy, or alternative fuels. Resumes of proposed key personnel.	1 page per sample document, max 5 examples 1 page per resume
8	Supplier Onboarding Form. Template here (please create a copy).	n/a
9	Confirmation of your review of C40 standard agreement and absence of any provision that would prevent a swift execution of the agreement. <i>Note: if material concerns on specific provisions of C40 standard agreement, please outline and suggest alternative language to mitigate.</i>	1 page

Supplier Diversity

C40 is committed to supplier diversity and inclusive procurement through promoting equity, diversity and inclusivity in our supplier base. We believe that by procuring a diverse range of suppliers, we get a wider range of experiences and thoughts from suppliers and thus are best able to deliver to the whole range of our diverse cities and the contexts that they operate within.

We strongly encourage suppliers (individuals and corporations) that are diverse in terms of size, age, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, majority owned and controlled by a minority group, physical or mental ability, ethnicity and perspective to put forward a proposal to work with us.

Feel welcome to refer to [C40's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement](#) as supplier diversity and inclusive procurement is one element of applying equity, diversity and inclusion to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities.

Contract

Please note this is a contract for professional services and not a grant opportunity. Organisations unable to accept contracts for professional services should not submit bids. The work will be completed on the C40 Standard Services Contract.

Respondents are asked to flag any clause that would prevent them from signing the terms and conditions as presented, to help C40 mitigate execution risk.

If C40 are unable to execute a contract with the winner of this competitive process, we reserve the right to award the contract to the second highest Potential Supplier

Subcontracting

If the organisation submitting a proposal needs to subcontract any work to meet the requirements of the proposal, this must be clearly stated. All costs included in proposals must be all-inclusive of any outsourced or contracted work. Any proposals which call for outsourcing or contracting work must include a name and description of the organisations being contracted.

RfP and Project Timeline

RFP Timeline	Due Date
Request for Proposals sent out	12 March 2025
Questions submitted to C40	18 March 2025, 11pm GMT
C40 responds to questions Anonymised responses to questions will be provided here when the Q&A period closes.	21 March 2025
Deadline for receiving Offers	28 March 2025, 11pm GMT
Evaluation of Proposals	31st March - 3 April 2025
Individual presentation sessions (offered at C40's discretion to shortlisted proponents)	1 -2 April 2025
Selection decision made	3 April 2025
All Potential Suppliers notified of outcome	From 3 April 2025 (until the signed contract is in place)

Project Timeline	Due Date
Project kick-off	4 April 2025

Interim deliverables	Throughout the Project and at minimum once every 2 weeks - Potential Suppliers to outline approach in their bid
Final written deliverables due Note: consultants may propose additional activities and include them in the project timeline as appropriate.	30 June 2025
The project is due to run until	31 July 2025

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

All written proposals will be evaluated by a selection panel comprising staff from C4O based on the following criteria:

Evaluation criteria	Description	Weighting %
Demonstrable expertise	Demonstrated subject matter expertise relevant to this RFP, particularly in renewable energy integration, electrification, and clean fuel adoption in the ports and maritime sector. This includes experience conducting similar studies or projects in ports or industrial settings, and in urban climate action. Understanding of South African and international maritime decarbonisation regulations (e.g. IMO) and demonstrated ability to adapt projects to the local context of South Africa (preferably Durban). Awareness of financial and regulatory barriers to clean energy adoption.	30%
Strategic approach	<p>Proposals should demonstrate a clear, robust approach to delivering the project's objectives within the specified timeline, identifying and mitigating risks, and prioritising key actions.</p> <p>Proposals must also outline how data will be accessed and used, including strategies to address potential data challenges, and ensure alignment with existing strategies and ongoing initiatives from eThekweni Municipality, the Port of Durban, TNPA, and other stakeholders such as UK PACT and the World Bank. Models and methodologies used for the emissions intensity benchmark methodology must also be outlined.</p> <p>Proposals that integrate economic and social factors alongside decarbonisation considerations will be considered positively.</p>	30%

Management plan	<p>Proven capacity to manage the project and meet the required objectives within the specified timeline. Proposals must include a project timeline, demonstrating alignment with the RFP's timeline, and articulate the coordination and collaboration plan with C4O and other stakeholders to ensure successful project delivery.</p> <p>Provide a detailed stakeholder engagement plan, identifying key stakeholders to consult and/or engage, outlining the methods of engagement, and specifying the stages of the project at which engagement will take place to effectively achieve the objectives of this proposal.</p>	15%
Cost reasonableness	<p>The Project Budget is set at a fixed amount of US\$140,000 for the Fixed Scope of Work.</p> <p>Proposals should include a detailed budget breakdown for the Fixed Scope of Work, showing how resources will be allocated to deliver the project effectively and efficiently.</p> <p><u>For the open-ended scope of work:</u> applicants will provide a blended hourly rate. For extra clarity: this blended hourly rate may only be used at C4O's discretion, for services to be agreed upon with the Consultant, and outside the Fixed Scope of Work. Priority will be given to lower blended hourly rates.</p>	15%
Mission alignment	<p>Alignment with C4O's goals on greenhouse gas emission reduction/climate action, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy (see Section - C4O Policies)</p> <p>EDI and climate action alignment demonstrated by, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity of the proposed team - Policies, commitments, or certifications related to EDI as an organisation - Policies, commitments, certifications, etc. as an organisation related to reducing GHG emissions, waste reduction, promoting renewable energy, etc. - Organisational mission alignment with C4O's goals. <p>Consultants based in the Global South are strongly encouraged to apply.</p>	10%

Project Budget

The budget for the Fixed Scope of Work (the 'Project Budget') is US\$140,000, inclusive of tax ('Total Contract Amount'). Note that C40 will neither bear the risk nor cover any additional costs arising from tax or exchange rate considerations.

Final payment schedule to be agreed between C40 and the awarded bidder, with the possibility of scheduling up to one payment per month. Payment will be made according to meeting project milestones as approved by the C40 point of contact.

All budgets are to be prepared in USD. All proposals must include proposed costs to complete the tasks described in the project scope, including all VAT and taxes. Costs should be stated as one-time or non-recurring costs or monthly recurring costs. All costs incurred in connection with the submission of this RFP are non-refundable by C40.

C40 Policies

C40 expects third parties to be able to abide by these C40 policies

- Non-Staff Code of Conduct Policy [here](#)
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy [here](#)
- C40 Non-Staff Travel and Expenses Policy [Here](#)

Submissions

Each Potential Supplier must submit 1 copy of their proposal to the email addresses below by **28 March 2025, 11pm GMT**:

- Ariane Colson, Knowledge Manager Ports & Shipping, acolson@c40.org
- Ports & Shipping team, ports@c40.org

Anonymised responses to questions will be provided [here](#) when the Q&A period closes.

Based on the submissions received, C40 reserves the right to promote the establishment of consortium relationships or request potential suppliers refine their submission after receipt.

Disclaimer

C40 will not accept any liability or be responsible for any costs incurred by Potential Suppliers in preparing a response for this RFP. Responses submitted will be accessible by all C40 staff and external evaluators (if any).

Neither the issue of the RFP, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of C40 (or any of its partners) to enter into a contractual arrangement. Nothing in this RFP should be interpreted as a commitment by C40 to award a contract to a Potential Supplier as a result of this procurement, nor to accept the lowest price or any tender.