



<p>RETURN RESPONSES TO: RETOURNEZ VOS RÉPONSES À</p> <p>Response Receiving - Environment Canada / Réponse recevant Heidi Noble Heidi.noble@ec.gc.ca</p> <p>REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DEMANDE D'INFORMATION</p>	<p>Title – Titre Request for Information Regarding an External Service for Compliance Testing of Single-use Plastic Straws, Cutlery, and Checkout Bags</p>	
	<p>EC Request for Information No. /SAP No. – N° de la demande d'information EC / N° SAP 5000076186</p>	
	<p>Date of Request for Information (YYYY-MM-DD) – Date de la demande d'information (AAAA-MM-JJ) 2023-11-01</p>	
	<p>Request for Information Closes (YEAR-MM-DD) - La demande d'information prend fin (AAAA-MM-JJ) at – à 3 :00 p.m. 2023-12-15</p>	<p>Time Zone – Fuseau horaire EST</p>
	<p>Address Enquiries to - Adresser toutes questions à Heidi Noble Heidi.noble@ec.gc.ca</p>	
	<p>Telephone No. – N° de téléphone</p>	<p>Fax No. – N° de Fax</p>
	<p>Destination - of Services / Destination des services Canada</p>	
	<p>Security / Sécurité There is a security requirement associated with this requirement.</p>	
	<p>Vendor/Firm Name and Address - Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur</p>	
	<p>Telephone No. – N° de téléphone</p>	<p>Fax No. – N° de Fax</p>
<p>Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm: (type or print) / Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)</p>		
<p>Signature</p>	<p>Date</p>	



Request for Information Regarding an External Service for Compliance Testing of Single-use Plastic Straws, Cutlery, and Checkout Bags

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1. Background and Purpose

1.1 Introduction

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is responsible for administering and enforcing regulations published under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA). On June 20, 2022, the Government of Canada published the *Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations* (the Regulations), under CEPA. These Regulations include testing criteria for certain single-use plastic items (cutlery, straws, and checkout bags) intended to demonstrate what items will be considered “single-use”.

ECCC worked with Health Canada’s Product Safety Laboratory to develop testing methods for compliance testing of certain plastic items. The methods for testing straws, cutlery, and checkout bags are available on request.

ECCC is interested in investigating options to have this testing performed privately.

1.2 Request for Information Purpose

This is a Request for Information (RFI) only, and not a bid solicitation. Participation in this process is encouraged but is not mandatory.

The purpose of this RFI is to gather information from respondents regarding their ability to conduct testing of plastic items using the methods developed by ECCC and Health Canada, and to provide results of that testing to ECCC for compliance purposes. Responses will help determine if services are available to provide compliance testing for the Regulations that will support ECCC enforcement officers. Responses will also be used to help with enforcement planning and provide information for budgeting purposes. To this end, respondents are requested to provide cost estimates to deliver the testing described, preferably on a per-test basis.

In addition to responding to the specifications listed in this document, ECCC is interested in receiving input and suggestions as to the best way to support both a scheduled and on-demand enforcement program.



2. Response Information

2.1 Objectives of this RFI

A RFI is used when detailed information and feedback are required from respondents. This request outlines a potential requirement, and requests respondents to describe their ability to satisfy all or a portion of the requirements and to provide ideas and suggestions on how a solicitation might be structured. Responses will be used to assist ECCC to finalize its plan for the requirement and to develop achievable objectives and deliverables.

The main objectives of the RFI are to:

- a) Inform ECCC on potential options for external services that meet the needs of the requirement;
- b) Offer suggestions regarding potential alternative solutions that would meet requirements, such as solution with a lower environmental impact;
- c) Provide information to assist ECCC in determining whether to proceed with requirements/strategy as planned, and if so, further developing internal planning, approval and solicitation documents that may potentially lead to a solicitation;
- d) Refine the procurement strategy, project structure, cost estimate, timelines, requirements definition, and other aspects of the requirement; and
- e) Become a more "informed buyer" with an enhanced understanding of industry service offerings in the areas of interest.

2.2 Nature of RFI

This RFI will not necessarily result in any procurement action. This RFI is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a commitment by the Government of Canada. Responses to this RFI will not constitute a commitment from the industry provider. Potential suppliers of any goods or services described in this RFI should not allocate resources or incur undue costs as a result of any information contained in this RFI. Nor will this RFI result in the creation of any source list. Therefore, whether or not any potential supplier responds to this RFI will not preclude that supplier from participating in any future procurement.

This RFI contains draft requirements that may be used in future procurement action. This document remains a work in progress and respondents should not assume that requirements will not be added, changed or removed from any bid solicitation that is ultimately published by ECCC. Comments regarding any aspect of the requirements are welcome.

2.3 Confidentiality

All information obtained with this RFI will be treated as confidential.

- a) Although ECCC is seeking detailed responses from respondents to this RFI, it is understood that respondents may not be willing or able to address all of the information sought by ECCC.
- b) Nevertheless, and in an effort to encourage respondents to be as forthcoming as possible, it is understood and agreed that ECCC shall, during and after the period of the RFI, treat as confidential and not divulge, unless authorized in writing by respondents, any information obtained from respondents that has been identified by respondents as "confidential" or "proprietary", within their written response to this RFI.



- c) Although one of the primary purposes of this RFI is to obtain information and recommendations directly from industry knowledge leaders that will be used to support ECCC's preparation in project planning, ECCC will in no way make any direct attribution of any information obtained from respondents that has been identified by respondents as "confidential" or "proprietary" within their responses.
- d) ECCC will also not impose any future obligations or commitments on respondents with respect to claims or cost information contained within their responses to this RFI.

2.4 Response Costs

ECCC will not reimburse any respondent for expenses incurred in the preparation of responses to this RFI. This RFI will not result in the award of any contract. Potential suppliers of any goods or services described in this RFI should not reserve stock or facilities, nor allocate resources, as a result of any information contained in this RFI.

2.5 Process to Submit Responses and Closing Date

1. Responses are to be submitted electronically to the Contracting Authority.
2. It is requested that responses are not submitted by facsimile (fax) or physical mail, but rather only in softcopy format, submitted to the electronic mailing found on Page 1.
3. Any response submitted will become the sole property of the Government of Canada and will not be returned to the Respondent. The response will be used to assist ECCC in further analysing the presented requirement and, as such, may be used in the development of a future solicitation process to be posted on CanadaBuys.
4. Because this is not a bid solicitation, the Government of Canada will not necessarily respond to enquiries in writing or by circulating answers to all potential suppliers. However, respondents with questions regarding this RFI may direct their enquiries to:

Heidi Noble
heidi.noble@ec.gc.ca

5. Responses are required by the closing date: 2023-12-15 at 3:00 p.m. EST

2.6 Response Structure

- a) **Cover Page:** Respondents are requested to indicate on the front cover page the RFI number and the full legal name of the Respondent, as well as the title of the response.
- b) **Title Page:** The first page after the cover page should be the title page, and should contain:
 - (i) the title of the Respondent's response;
 - (ii) the name and civic address of the Respondent;
 - (iii) the name, civic address and telephone number of the Respondent's contact;
 - (iv) the date; and
 - (v) the RFI number.
- c) **Response Template:** In order to facilitate a consistent and structured assessment of the information provided to ECCC within the responses, respondents are asked to structure their



responses to match the order in which questions are asked in the “Response Template” in Section 3 and Annex A of this RFI package.

Respondents are requested to provide comments, concerns and, where applicable, alternative recommendations, regarding how the requirements or objectives described in this RFI could be satisfied. Respondents are also invited to provide comments regarding the content, format and/or organization of any draft documents included in this RFI. Respondents should explain any assumptions made in their responses.

Any functionality identified by respondents must be based upon the most recent release of a product that is currently commercially available.

- d) **Documentation and Number of Copies:** Respondents are requested to provide one (1) softcopy of their response and one (1) softcopy of any product datasheets, user, system and/or other manuals that describe the functionality and technical specifications of the Respondent’s product / solution. The documentation should be in one of the following file formats – PDF, MS Word or HTML.
- e) **Additional Capabilities:** Respondents may also provide explanations of additional functionality (e.g. functionality not mentioned in Annex A that the supplier believes may be relevant to the Department’s business requirements) or extended capabilities (e.g. functionality that exceeds the requirements set out in Annex A). Respondents wishing to provide such information are asked to clearly identify where their response deviates from the RFI template and may include with their submission a separate attachment that clearly itemizes additional functionality elements and extended capabilities, providing a brief description and including page references where more complete descriptions can be found in their documentation.
- f) **Numbering System:** Respondents are requested to prepare their response using a numbering system corresponding to the one in the Response Template in Section 3 and Annex A of this RFI. All references to descriptive material, technical manuals and brochures included as part of the response should be referenced accordingly.
- g) **Complete Responses:** Respondents are requested to address all concepts outlined in the Response Templates in Section 3 and Annex A of this RFI package where possible, however responses will still be accepted if the proposed solution only meets part of the requirements. It is preferable that respondents clarify up front which aspects can be met, and why others are out of scope.
- h) Product brochures and other vendor documentation provided **without** an RFI response will not be evaluated. ECCC reserves the right to determine which RFI response will be evaluated based on the quality and completeness of the responses received.

2.7 Treatment of Responses

- a) **Use of Responses:** Responses will not be formally evaluated. However, the responses received may be used by ECCC to develop or modify procurement strategies or any draft documents contained in this RFI. ECCC will review all responses that are received by the RFI closing date.
- b) **Review Team:** A review team composed of representatives of ECCC will review the responses. ECCC reserves the right to hire any independent consultant or use any Government resources that it considers necessary to review any response. Not all members of the review team will



necessarily review all responses.

- c) **Confidentiality:** Respondents should mark any portions of their response that they consider *Proprietary* or *Confidential*. ECCC will handle the responses in accordance with the *Access to Information Act*.

Although one of the primary purposes of this RFI is to obtain information directly from industry that will be used by ECCC to develop or modify procurement strategies or any draft documents contained in this RFI, ECCC will in no way make any direct attribution of any information obtained from respondents that has been identified by respondents as “confidential” or “proprietary” within their Responses.

- d) **Follow-up Activity:** Should respondents include information which is of particular relevance and interest to ECCC, and should ECCC (at its exclusive option) determine that follow-on clarification meeting(s) with one or more respondents would be of potential benefit to ECCC, then ECCC may (at its exclusive option) invite selected respondents to participate in one-on-one “clarification meeting(s)” to provide clarification on their response(s), demonstrate their technologies or make a presentation to ECCC Representatives, in order for ECCC to learn more about the capabilities and features of their Response.

In the event of such an occurrence, any requested clarification meetings may take place at ECCC’s facilities, location to be determined, or may take place via teleconference or other mutually convenient means, as agreed to between ECCC and the selected respondents.

ECCC will not reimburse any respondent for expenses incurred in responding to this RFI. Respondents will be responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and submission of any response to this RFI, including any costs associated with accepting ECCC’s invitation(s) to participate in any clarification meeting(s).

2.8 Reserved Rights

In addition to any other expressed or implied rights, ECCC reserves the right to:

- a) Cancel this RFI process at any time;
- b) Issue a new RFI for the same or similar information;
- c) Change the structure of the RFI process;
- d) Vary or extend any date or time in this RFI at any time, and for such period as ECCC, in its absolute discretion, considers appropriate;
- e) Make changes, including substantial changes to the requirements as described in this RFI. Substantial changes will be communicated to all potential respondents;
- f) Request written clarification or the submission of supplementary information from any or all respondents, or provide additional information or clarification;
- g) Contact any customer or reference provided within a respondent’s response, as part of its assessment process (contacting references); and
- h) Not consider any response which contains information which ECCC (in its exclusive opinion) believes to contain misrepresentations or any other inaccurate, suspicious or misleading information.



3. Response Template – Requirements

In order to gain the greatest value from responses to this RFI and to facilitate a consistent and structured assessment of the information provided to ECCC, respondents are asked to structure their responses in accordance with the following section and the Technical Requirements outlined in Annex A.

3.1 Corporate Profile

Please provide basic information on the company providing the Response, including:

- a) number of years in business;
- b) countries in which the Respondent does business;
- c) identity, including a brief description and location, of any partners in Canada;
- d) current accreditation status, or other relevant certifications;
- e) revenues (most recently completed fiscal year);
- f) number and location of Canadian offices;
- g) number of staff currently employed, and any sub-contracting relationships;
- h) other related business lines/products;
- i) recent corporate highlights (e.g. accomplishments, awards, etc.); and
- j) level of government security clearance, if available.



4. Reference Documents

In order to obtain laboratory methods ECCC-01, ECCC-02, and ECCC-03, contact the Contracting Authority: heidi.noble@ec.gc.ca

1. [Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#)
2. [Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations](#)
3. [Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations - Technical Guidelines](#)
4. ECCC-01 – Determination of Changes to Physical Properties of Plastic Cutlery and Straws Following Domestic Dishwashing (v1, April 2023)
5. ECCC-02 – Checkout Bag Laundering
 - it tests whether a bag will break or tear if the bag is washed in accordance with the washing procedures specified for a single domestic wash in the International Organization for Standardization standard ISO 6330, entitled *Textiles – Domestic washing and drying procedures for textile testing*, as amended from time to time.
6. ECCC-03 – Checkout Bag Durability/Carry Test
 - it tests whether a bag will break or tear if the bag is used to carry 10 kg over a distance of 53 m 100 times.



Annex A

Technical Requirements

The laboratory offering testing must be accredited to ISO/IEC 17025, entitled *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, by an accrediting body that is a signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement. ECCC is seeking a laboratory that can add the ECCC testing methods to its scope of accreditation. The laboratory must demonstrate proficiency in testing the physical characteristics of plastics as described in the definitions of the [Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations](#).

In addition to the laboratory methods specified in this RFI, ECCC also has a need for polymer identification of the materials found in the cutlery and straw samples submitted. While a specific method has not been provided for this testing, Fourier-Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy has been identified as a method that could be used. ECCC is open to suggestions of other techniques that may meet this need.

Respondents should identify the method, the process, the laboratory's capacity, and the turnaround time.

The proposed solution for a testing service should be able to operate throughout the year.

As the samples are shelf-stable plastic items, specific days of operation are negotiable. Lab results should be made available to ECCC within reasonable timelines for polymer identification of cutlery and straws samples, for Method ECCC – 0001, for Method ECCC – 0002, and for Method ECCC – 0003.

Reports of analysis should be made available in English or French.

Samples may be sent by ECCC to the lab at all times of year. Volume of samples sent by ECCC may not be evenly distributed throughout the year. The service should also provide the option for on-demand testing, as required. Control samples used during testing will be provided by the laboratory and will not be considered as samples submitted/tested.

Respondents should identify the maximum number of samples and the turnaround time for each method.

Confidentiality and government security clearance (reliability) will be required when dealing with sample identification information.

Laboratories handling samples received from ECCC enforcement must be capable of meeting chain of custody requirements while the sample(s) are in their possession. Chain of custody requirements include ensuring the sample container has not been tampered with prior to being opened at the laboratory, logging the receipt of the sample and its condition, documenting the location of the sample(s) in their possession, and storing the samples at all times in an area where unauthorized persons will not have access to the samples. Samples submitted by ECCC will have a chain of custody form included for the laboratory to complete.

The laboratory is expected to communicate all testing results to ECCC, including any unusual, unexpected, or anomalous results that may not align with suggested reports of analysis.

The laboratory must adhere to minimum storage times for samples following issuance of a report of analysis. If ECCC takes enforcement action as a result of a sample result, the laboratory must keep the sample in secure storage, meeting chain of custody requirements, for any time period (including an indefinite time period) as directed by ECCC in order to support the enforcement action.



Samples subject to enforcement action must not be discarded unless authorized by ECCC. The laboratory must ship the samples to ECCC, or another location, if requested. Laboratory technicians and analysts must be available to ECCC staff to provide any information and/or clarification requested by ECCC Program Officers or Enforcement Officers.

Response Template for Annex A

- Please provide a description of potential business and costing models, including a fee per test, and/or an annual fee. A breakdown of fees by test method will also be acceptable.
- Please provide laboratory operating hours (both when samples can be received and when ECCC officials can contact analysts with questions). Include any seasonal variations to this schedule throughout the year.
- Confirmation that the laboratory is capable of complying with ECCC chain of custody requirements, and a description of measures that would be taken to prevent unauthorized access to samples.
- Confirmation that the laboratory will communicate all testing results to ECCC and make analysts available to ECCC officials for questions.
- Confirmation that the laboratory has the capacity to store samples as directed by ECCC.
- Methods, processes, laboratory's capacity, and turnaround time as requested above.