Tender Brief
November 2026

Project Title:	CLEARcoasts Solway
Project Partners:	The Solway Firth Partnership – Contract Lead The Solway Coast National Landscape Eden Rivers Trust West Cumbria Rivers Trust

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

The 'CLEARcoasts Solway' project is a collaboration between the the Solway Firth Partnership (Scottish Charity Number SC034376), Solway Coast National Landscape, Eden Rivers Trust and West Cumbria Rivers Trust to investigate and explore climate and environmental impacts on the Cumbrian Solway's coastal habitats, with specific interest in saltmarsh.

This piece of work is part of CLEARCoasts Solway and is focused around carrying out a preliminary climate risk assessment for the Cumbrian Solway Coast and exploring models for a source to sea Cumbrian Solway climate adaptation and resilience framework. The contract duration should be November 2026 - February 2027 with a final report submitted in March 2027.

The project area runs along the coastline from the Scotland / England border at Gretna along to St Bees in West Cumbria.

Full Project Overview

CLEARCoasts Solway is a collaborative initiative that will strengthen environmental resilience across the Cumbrian Solway Firth and its associated river catchments. The project will connect upstream catchment management with downstream coastal health and resilience through a practical source-to-sea approach, recognising that river systems, estuaries, coastal habitats and communities function as one interconnected environmental system.

Working across the Eden, Wampool, Waver and wider Solway catchments, the project will bring together coastal partnerships, catchment partnerships, local authorities, and designated landscapes as the driving partners; and environmental organisations, landowners, community groups and volunteers to develop a shared understanding of environmental and climate risks affecting the Solway. These risks include coastal flooding, erosion, sea-level rise, diffuse pollution, habitat degradation and coastal squeeze, all of which are influenced by the condition and management of the wider Cumbrian catchments.

Through catchment and coastal monitoring, volunteer training, citizen science, stakeholder engagement and climate risk assessment, the project will strengthen the evidence base needed to

better understand environmental pressures across the Solway. It will also help build local skills, knowledge and capacity; enabling partners, communities and volunteers to play a more active role in understanding and responding to environmental change.

The project will also help identify where future resilience, adaptation and nature recovery efforts could deliver the greatest benefits for people and nature. By improving understanding of the links between river catchments and coastal systems, CLEARCoasts Solway will explore opportunities for nature-based solutions and other approaches that could support flood resilience, water quality improvements, habitat enhancement and climate adaptation. The project will help develop the evidence, partnerships and understanding needed to inform future work.

CLEARCoasts Solway builds upon the learning, partnerships and community networks established through the Solway Firth Partnership's CLEARCoasts project, the extensive programmes of work delivered by the Solway Coast National Landscape, and the diverse work of the Eden Rivers Trust and the West Cumbria Rivers Trust. By bringing together existing knowledge, local expertise and practical activities, the project will test and strengthen a source-to-sea approach to environmental resilience in the Solway. In doing so, it will help build the foundation for future collaboration, investment and action to address climate adaptation and nature recovery challenges across the Solway as a whole.

The work included within this contract is complimentary to further project work that will include exploring innovative methods of salt marsh restoration, monitoring of current methods in use on the Cumbrian Solway, and environmental monitoring of water quality and invasive species impacting the rivers that discharge into the inner Solway.

The project is hereby seeking external support for a largely desk-based aspect of the project; to conduct a climate risk assessment specific to the Cumbrian Solway coast and explore possible models for a source to sea Solway resilience framework.

The CLEARcoasts Solway project has been funded by the Championing Coastal Coordination (3C's) fund. Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs) is a collaborative programme led by the Environment Agency, working in partnership with Natural England, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), The Crown Estate (TCE) and the Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs).

Solway Firth Partnership

Specification

This invitation to tender is specifically for the following project activity;

Activity 1: Climate Risk

1 Carry out a preliminary climate risk assessment for the Cumbrian Solway coast to identify key risks including coastal squeeze hotspots; flood-risk communities and infrastructure; and cross-border adaptation challenges and opportunities. This should include a review of current climate risk work taking place across the Solway. It should serve as a baseline report to influence a future Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Solway Coast National Landscape, which the third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) developed under the Climate Change Act (2008) states that all protected landscapes must have by 2028.

2 Explore possible models for a source to sea Cumbrian Solway Climate Adaptation and Resilience framework bringing together coastal partnerships, catchment partnerships, landowners, climate adaptation practitioners, local authorities and community groups around a shared Solway adaptation agenda; starting on the Cumbrian Solway and aligning closely with adaptation work proposed by other regional partnerships in the North West (England) such as Our Future Coasts, and with future potential to extend to a unique cross-border adaptation approach, aligning with Climate Ready D&G and future Scottish coastal adaptation planning. This should include a review of current climate adaptation work taking place across the Cumbrian Solway.

The expected outcome will be:

- Improved understanding of climate risks and adaptation gaps for the Cumbrian Solway.

We are looking for an individual, team or organisation with:

- Experience of working on / delivering regional climate risk assessments.
- Familiarity with the Solway Coast.
- Strong track record of producing clear, well written, high-quality reports and data presentation.

Your proposal should be a maximum of four sides of A4, and should include the following information:

- The methods you would propose implementing.
- Your understanding of this brief and the wider context within which the project sits.
- The reason you are interested in working with the team and your fit to our criteria.
- Your relevant experience including previous contracts and references
- How you will manage the project, including your anticipated time commitment.
- Your ideas about how you will present the project findings to us and to others.
- A budget, broken down against each output and against stages or tasks outlined in your methodology, with a breakdown for delivery.

It is anticipated that this contract will be Phase I of a two-part exploration of climate risk in the Solway, with a call for coastal climate risk assessment work for the Scottish Solway coast to follow. For any further information on this please contact jenna@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk

Milestones & Outputs

We would anticipate regular check-ins/progress updates as required between the contracted partner and the project leads.

Suggested Milestones

- Initial start-up meeting agreeing timeframe, project boundaries and outputs – November 2026
- Project check-in meetings each month with project wrap up meeting and final report at the end of March. All dates TBC in collaboration with contract holder and project partners. We would also encourage regular, informal and on-going communication as needed between the contract holder and the project partners to support the best possible outcome.
- Draft report due February 2027
- Final report due end March 2027

Outputs

- Climate risk assessment (report style), outlining key climate risks facing the Cumbrian Solway; alignment opportunities with other regional climate and adaptation works.
- Reporting and presentation of data in a simple clear format that can be used by third parties and for future funding opportunities.
- Presentation of possible future source to sea environmental or climate impact resilience frameworks based on strong examples from elsewhere or novel ideas specific to the Solway.

Insurance

The Consultants must confirm and evidence that they have the appropriate Employers Liability Insurance (£5 Million) and Public Liability Insurance (£5 Million).

Enquiries and submissions via email to: Jenna Cains jenna@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk
Closing date for tender submissions: Monday 16th Nov 2026
Pricing Guide: Consultants are invited to submit a fixed fee tender as described in this briefing document and the submission will be assessed on a quality/price (70/30%) basis.

Budget
This contract has a fixed budget £10,000 max (inc. of VAT) Payment schedule to be agreed upon appointment.

Solway Firth Partnership
https://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/