Q1: Why does Criterion 3 in Circular Economy specifically require references from the waste management field when the template for the Transition Plan (in Table 2) calls for a comprehensive understanding of Circular Economy? We suggest expanding Criterion 3 to include broader aspects beyond waste management, reflecting the holistic approach needed for Circular Economy.

A1: This is a correct interpretation, and references mentioned will be evaluated as positive.

Q2: Regarding the financial threshold requirements for references (e.g. 30.000 EUR), is it necessary for references to individually meet this threshold, or can they cumulatively fulfill it?

A2: Individually, for the tenderer’s references.

Q3: In reference to the organization and responsibilities of the WGs as mentioned in the project's ToR, could you please clarify the intended structure of these WGs? Specifically, we seek confirmation on whether there will be a total of five WGs for all four municipalities collectively, or if each municipality will have its own set of five WGs. Furthermore, it is critical for us to understand the roles and responsibilities among the consultant, SEI, and WG members.

A3: Intended WG structure will follow local regulations. Our suggestions for WG structure, communicated to LSGUs is that WGs should 1) be of a manageable size, 4-6 members, 2) be with expert character, meaning having on board people that know the area and have experience; here we are aiming for people from public enterprises for example, 3) be open for external members that can contribute to the area. SEI will define details together with the Consultant and LSGUs on first joint meeting, so that everyone is clear about roles and responsibilities. With this we are allowing Consultant to also participate in the process with suggestions and their own unique views and experience, and not just come to a set and inflexible scene.  SEI experts will provide overall guidance from strategic perspective.

Q4: Please specify how many workshops and meetings (both online and in person) with the working groups are anticipated within the scope of this project?

A4: We anticipate consultations to happen in municipalities, if needed as hybrid event. Working group meetings will be agreed with local coordinators, and upon the need of municipality. We have no strict preference meetings to be in person or hybrid. It is safe to assume 3 WG meetings. Please note that travel expenses will be reimbursed, while any need for logistics will be covered by the SEI Local Partner.

Q5: Will there be a single webinar covering all municipalities and all thematic areas, or are individual webinars planned for each municipality for each thematic area? Also, is it intended to be a full-day event?

A5: Webinars will be for slightly wider audience (opened for CSOs and other stakeholders), hybrid and approximately 2-3 hours long. SEI envisages each thematic area to be involved in one webinar (to contribute with content). It is up to experts to follow other two webinars, but there will be no tasks.

Q6: Who is responsible for developing the baseline for the transition plans - the consultant or the members of the working group?

A6: The consultant will carry the responsibility for the preparation of the baseline. Working Group members should support with data sources and instructions. Draft baselines are prepared by Local Partner, and LP is also a resource that will be available to the consultant, with data search, compilation, editing and similar. The assessment should not be extremely detailed, the majority of time should be focused on the way forward and definition of measures.

Q7: Why is there a noticeable difference in the budget allocation, with biodiversity and agriculture being substantially lower than other areas? An explanation of the rationale behind this budget distribution would be appreciated for better understanding.

Q7: The tenders have been prepared based on envisaged workload per areas, and as a result of initial consultations and jurisdictions of local governments. The programme will have in place corrective mechanisms to answer in case the needs show up to be different.

Q8: It might be helpful to understand the mechanisms for feedback and revisions during the project.

A8: The consultants will work with SEI and SEI experts in areas, that will support revisions, together with contact points from LSGUs.

Q9: For Biodiversity: We would kindly ask you to reduce the requirement for Expert Biodiversity from 7 to 5 years of relevant experience, as it is required for each other expert under each thematic area and as the specific award criteria no 5 ensure sufficient expertise level.

A9: The remark related to the requirement for BD expert cannot be accepted, as this type of intervention is not in line with the Law on Public Procurement in Sweden.

Q 10: For all thematic areas, in Section 4.4.1 Technical specification it is stated that "The tenderer must have a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in the area ...". Does this mean that the legal entity (or at least one of the consortia members, if such is the case) bidding for the tender must be registered for at least 5 years.

A 10: Correct, this requirement is for the legal entity.

Q 11: Is it possible to nominate the same expert for multiple different thematic areas, assuming one meets the required criteria?

A 11: It is possible the tender does not put any limitations on this. The tenderer should plan realistic tasks for the nominated expert.