



LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

Guidelines for applicants 2012

Part 1 – Content of the proposal

The current guidelines apply to the preparation of project proposals to be submitted to the European Commission under *LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance*. They are intended to help the applicant prepare the content of the project proposal.

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1. Introduction to LIFE+

1.1 What is LIFE+?

LIFE+ is the European financial instrument for the environment, for the period from 1 January 2007 until 31 December 2013. The legal basis for LIFE+ is the **Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007¹**.

LIFE+ covers both the operational expenditure of the Directorate General Environment of the European Commission and the co-financing of projects. According to Article 6 of the LIFE+ Regulation, at least 78 % of the LIFE+ budgetary resources must be used for project action grants (= LIFE+ projects).

During the period 2007-13, the European Commission will launch one call for LIFE+ project proposals per year. The amount available for co-financing projects under the 2012 LIFE+ call for proposals has been set at EUR 276.710.000.

These guidelines for applicants only apply to this sixth call for LIFE+ project proposals ("LIFE+ 2012").

LIFE+ is open to public or private bodies, actors or institutions registered in the European Union. Project proposals can either be submitted by a single beneficiary or by a partnership which includes a coordinating beneficiary and one or several associated beneficiaries. They can be either national or transnational, but the actions must exclusively take place within the territory of the 27 Member States of the European Union.

¹ Regulation (EC) n° 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007, published in the Official Journal of the European Union L149 of 9 June 2007, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/l_149/l_14920070609en00010016.pdf

1.2 Priority actions and projects to be co-financed under LIFE+

LIFE+ aims at co-funding actions in the field of nature conservation (LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity) as well as in other fields of the environment that are of European interest (LIFE+ Environment and Governance). A third component of LIFE+ aims specifically at co-funding information and communication activities for the environment (LIFE+ Information and Communication). More specifically, the following types of projects can be distinguished under LIFE+:

1. LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity

- Best practice and/or demonstration projects contributing to the implementation of the objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council).
- Demonstration and/or innovation projects contributing to the implementation of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy outlined in the Communication "*Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020*"².

2. LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

- Demonstration and/or innovation projects related to any of the "*priority areas of action*" set out in the document "LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, Guidelines for applicants 2012".
- Projects contributing to the monitoring of the environmental status of forests within the European Union territory.

3. LIFE+ Information and Communication

- Communication and awareness raising campaigns related to the implementation, updating and development of European environmental policy and legislation set out in the document "LIFE+ Information and Communication, Guidelines for applicants 2012".
- Awareness raising campaigns for the prevention of forest fires and training for forest fire agents.

² COM(2011)244 is replacing the principle objective of halting biodiversity loss within the Community by 2010, as referred to in (EC) No 614/2007

1.3 How, where and when to submit a proposal?

LIFE+ beneficiaries must submit their proposals using the web tool eProposal available via the LIFE web page. The application contains all administrative (A), technical (B and C) and financial (F) forms required and functionalities to attach relevant documents (maps, photos, diagrams, graphs, mandatory administrative and financial annexes related to the legal status of the coordinating beneficiary according to section 1.5 below, pictures, other supporting documents, etc).

For complete details regarding the eProposal tool, please refer to the document '*LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, Guidelines for applicants 2012, Part 2 – Application forms*'.

The proposal will automatically be submitted (after clicking the 'Submit proposal' button and receiving a confirmation message) to the competent national authority of the Member State in which the coordinating beneficiary is registered. The complete list of the names and contact addresses of the national authorities for LIFE+ for the 27 Member States can be found on the LIFE web site at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/contact/nationalcontact/index.htm>

LIFE+ beneficiaries must submit their proposals by **26 September 2012, 23h59 Brussels local time.**

The national authorities will then forward through the eProposal tool all LIFE+ project proposals to the Commission, by **2 October 2012, 23h59 Brussels local time.**

When preparing the proposal, the applicants are invited to consult the "Frequently Asked Questions" section on LIFE website at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifepius2012/faq.htm>

1.4 How will LIFE+ projects be selected?

The LIFE Units of the Directorate-General Environment are responsible for the evaluation procedure. For a detailed description of the evaluation procedure, please refer to the *"Guide for the evaluation of LIFE+ project proposals 2012"*.

Very important: Please note that the e-mail address specified by the applicant as the contact person's e-mail address in form A2 will be used by the European Commission as the single contact point for all correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure (it should therefore correspond to an e-mail account which is valid, active and checked on a daily basis throughout the duration of the evaluation procedure).

The individual grant agreements are expected to be signed in **May-June 2013** at the very latest (for a detailed timetable, see **Annex 1**).

The earliest possible starting date for projects is **1 July 2013**.

1.5 Administrative and financial information to be provided

The LIFE+ Regulation states that applicants must be public or private bodies, actors or institutions registered in the EU. This application guide categorises such applicants into three types of beneficiaries: (1) *public bodies*³, (2) *private commercial organisations*⁴ and (3) *private non-commercial organisations* (including NGOs)⁵.

The term "public bodies" is defined as referring to national public authorities, regardless of their form of organisation – central, regional or local structure – or the various bodies under their control, provided these operate on behalf of and under the responsibility of the national public authority concerned. In the case of entities registered as private law bodies wishing to be considered for the purpose of this call as equivalent to "public law bodies", they should provide evidence proving that they comply with all criteria applying to bodies governed by public law and in the event the organisation stops its activities, its rights and obligations, liability and debts will be transferred to a public body. For a complete definition, please refer to the annex "Public body declaration".

All beneficiaries must show their legal status (by completing application forms A2 or A5) confirming that they are legally registered in the EU. In addition they must declare that they are not in any of the situations foreseen under Article 93(1) and 94 of the Financial Regulation (by signing the application form A3 or A4 – instructions for this are given in the document '*LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, Guidelines for applicants 2012, Part 2 – Application forms*');

All coordinating beneficiaries that have declared themselves as being public bodies in their proposal (application form A2) must provide as a financial annex a declaration (the "Public body declaration") stating that the coordinating beneficiary is a public body, fully completed, with a dated signature.

In addition all coordinating beneficiaries other than *public bodies*, that is to say the beneficiary types (2) and (3), must provide, as annexes to their proposal, evidence that they comply with the financial selection criterion set out in the Article 176 of the Financial Regulation i.e. that: "*the applicant has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out*".

Further details on how this criterion will be assessed are found in the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE+ project proposals 2012*.

Therefore, all coordinating beneficiaries other than *public bodies* will have to provide the following administrative and financial documents as annexes to their LIFE+ proposal:

³ Including public institutions which for the further purposes of these Guides are considered as public bodies

⁴ Including similar commercial actors which for the further purposes of these Guides are considered as private commercial organisations

⁵ Including similar non-commercial actors which for the further purposes of these Guides are considered as private non-commercial organisations

1. The most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account. This document must be annexed to the LIFE+ proposal as a scanned pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. Where the coordinating beneficiary does not yet have a balance sheet and profit and loss account, because the organisation has been only recently created, it must provide a management plan (for at least 12 months in the future) with the financial data prepared in accordance with the standard required under national legislation.
2. Where the EU contribution requested exceeds 300.000 €, the most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account must either have an *independent audit report* certifying that they present a true and fair view of the coordinating beneficiary's financial situation or a *certification by an independent auditor* that the accounts give a true and fair view of the coordinating beneficiary's financial situation. This document must be annexed to the LIFE+ proposal as a scanned pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. In the case of a newly created organisation, the auditor's certificate provided is based on the management plan where the financial data are presented in accordance with relevant national provisions.
3. A "Simplified Financial Statement"; coordinating beneficiaries are required to fill in the Excel table which is part of the application package. This document must be duly filled in and must be annexed to the LIFE+ proposal as an Excel file.

It should be noted that the above annexes will be required by the Commission irrespective of whether they are obligatory or not for the particular type of organisation, according to national legislation, in the coordinating beneficiary's Member State.

1.6 General recommendations for all LIFE+ beneficiaries

The current chapter replies to some frequently asked questions on how to conceive a project proposal, applicable to all three strands of LIFE+. For specific guidelines and recommendation on how to fill in the technical and financial forms, please refer to the document '*LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, Guidelines for applicants 2012, Part 2 – Application forms*'.

1.6.1. In which language may the proposal be submitted?

LIFE+ proposals may be submitted in any of the official EU languages, except Irish or Maltese. The Commission nevertheless recommends to fill in the technical part of the proposal also or only in English.

Form B1 ("Summary description of the project") must always be submitted in English. It may **in addition** also be submitted in the language of the proposal.

1.6.2. Who may submit a proposal?

A proposal may be submitted by any legal person registered in the European Union, i.e. (1) public bodies, (2) private commercial organisations and (3) private non-commercial organisations (including NGOs).

1.6.3. Who may participate in a project?

Once a proposal has been accepted for co-funding, the **coordinating beneficiary** will become legally and financially responsible for the implementation of the project. The coordinating beneficiary will be the single point of contact for the Commission and will be the only beneficiary to report directly to the Commission on the project's technical and financial progress.

The coordinating beneficiary receives the European Union financial contribution from the Commission and ensures its distribution as specified in the partnership agreements established with the associated beneficiaries (if there are any – see below). The coordinating beneficiary must be directly involved in the technical implementation of the project and in the dissemination of the project results.

The coordinating beneficiary must bear part of the project costs and must thus contribute financially to the project budget. It cannot therefore be reimbursed for 100% of the costs that it incurs. Furthermore it cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor to one of its associated beneficiaries.

In addition to the coordinating beneficiary, a LIFE+ proposal may also involve one or more associated beneficiaries and/or one or more project co-financiers.

An **associated beneficiary** must be legally registered in the European Union. It shall always contribute technically to the proposal and hence be responsible for the implementation of one or several project actions. An associated beneficiary must also contribute financially to the project. It cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor to the coordinating beneficiary or to other associated beneficiaries. Furthermore it must provide the beneficiary with all the necessary documents required for the reporting to the Commission.

Projects involving partnerships between beneficiaries are only encouraged when this partnership brings an added value to the project. A meaningful collaboration can be

expected for instance when the partnership strengthens the feasibility or the demonstration character of the proposal, its European added value and/or the transferability of its results and lessons learnt.

Multi-beneficiary projects are usually more difficult to manage and involve higher technical and financial risks. It is therefore strongly advised to keep the number of associated beneficiaries in a proposal to the necessary minimum. It is generally recommended not to involve more than 5 associated beneficiaries in a LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance proposal. Should the proposal involve more, this should be explicitly justified.

There is no obligation to involve associated beneficiaries in a LIFE+ proposal. A proposal that is submitted without any other participant other than the coordinating beneficiary itself is perfectly eligible. On the other hand, a beneficiary should not hesitate to associate other beneficiaries if this would bring an added value to the project.

Public undertakings whose capital is publicly owned and that are considered an instrument or a technical service of a public administration, and are subject to the administration control, but are in effect separate legal entities, must become beneficiaries if a public administration intends to entrust the implementation of certain project actions to the undertaking. This is the case for example in Spain for "empresas públicas" such as TRAGSA, or EGMASA and in Greece regional development agencies.

A **project co-financier** only contributes to the project with financial resources, has no technical responsibilities and cannot benefit from the European Union financial contribution. Furthermore it cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor to any of the project's beneficiaries.

For specific tasks of a fixed duration, a proposal may also foresee the use of **subcontractors**. Subcontractors cannot act as beneficiaries or vice-versa. Subcontractors provide external services to the project beneficiaries who fully pay for the services provided. Sub-contractors should not be identified by name in the proposal and, even if they are, Article 8 of the Common Provisions still has to be respected (in particular paragraph 8.4 on the selection of sub-contractors).

For a more detailed description of the respective rules related to the coordinating beneficiary, associated beneficiaries, co-financiers and subcontractors, please refer to Articles 3 to 8 of the Common Provisions applicable to LIFE+ projects.

1.6.4. What is the optimal budget for a LIFE+ project?

There is no fixed minimum size for project budgets. Beneficiaries should however be aware that the European Commission favours the co-financing of large, ambitious LIFE+ proposals with a substantial budget. Historically, the average grant awarded has been in excess of 1 million €.

When preparing a project budget, beneficiaries should also take into account the maximum ceilings for the LIFE+ allocation per Member State: a project proposal from one single Member State that requests an EC financial contribution higher than the national allocation for that Member State may have a reduced probability of being selected for LIFE+ co-funding (for the national allocations see *Guide for the evaluation LIFE+ project proposals 2012*).

1.6.5. What is the maximum rate of EU co-financing under LIFE+?

The maximum EU co-financing rate for LIFE+ projects is 50% of the total eligible project costs.

By way of exception, a co-financing rate of up to 75% of the total eligible costs may be granted to *LIFE+ Nature* proposals that focus on concrete conservation actions for **priority** species or habitat types of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

1.6.6. How much should project beneficiaries contribute to the project budget?

The coordinating beneficiary and (if applicable) any associated beneficiaries are expected to provide a reasonable financial contribution to the project budget. A beneficiary's financial contribution is considered as a proof of its financial commitment to the implementation of the project objectives - a very low financial contribution may therefore be considered as an absence or lack of commitment.

A proposal cannot be submitted if the financial contribution of any of the beneficiaries to the proposal budget is 0 €.

Moreover, where public bodies are involved as coordinating and/or associated beneficiaries in a project, the sum of their financial contributions to the project budget must exceed (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs of their staff charged to the project.

Finally, it is expected that all beneficiaries of a project receive a share of the EC financial contribution that is proportionate to the costs that they are expected to incur. Where the financial contribution of a beneficiary would be equal or superior to the costs that it would incur, this may indicate that the actions of this beneficiary would have been carried out anyway, even without LIFE+ co-financing. Such actions may therefore be deleted from the project during revision.

1.6.7. What is the optimal starting date and duration for a project?

When preparing the project's time planning, beneficiaries should be aware that the expected date of the signature of the grant agreements for the LIFE+ 2012 projects will be May-June 2013. Therefore, the earliest possible starting date for these projects is **1 July 2013**. Any costs incurred before the project's starting date will not be considered eligible and cannot be included in the project budget.

There is no pre-determined project duration for a LIFE+ project. Generally speaking, the project duration must correspond to what is necessary to complete all of the project's actions and to reach all its objectives. Most projects last for 2-5 years.

The experience of the previous LIFE programme has shown that many projects had difficulties completing all actions within the proposed project duration, mostly due to unforeseen delays and difficulties encountered during the project. Beneficiaries are therefore strongly advised to build an appropriate safety margin (e.g. 6 months) into the timetable of their proposal.

Beneficiaries should also be aware that a project that has completed all of its actions prior to the expected end date can submit its final report ahead of schedule and receive its final payment before the official project end date mentioned in the grant agreement.

1.6.8. Where can a LIFE+ project take place?

Projects submitted under the 2012 call may only take place on the territory of the European Union Member States. Actions are not allowed to take place and costs are not allowed to be incurred outside the EU territory. There are however 2 exceptions to this rule:

- a) a limited amount of travel and subsistence costs incurred outside the EU for the attendance of conferences, workshops or similar events, provided that these are useful to achieve the project objectives, and have been specifically foreseen in the proposal or have specifically been approved by the Commission in advance;
- b) any action to be carried out outside the EU which is necessary to secure reaching the project objectives in the EU. The action will have to provide direct added value in one or more of the Member States for the implementation, updating or development of EU environmental legislation. The applicant shall provide all necessary evidence to prove that these actions outside the EU are essential for the success of the project. To be eligible, these actions must be carried out directly by one of the project beneficiaries or sub-contracted to third parties. Associated beneficiaries legally registered in non-EU countries are not accepted in the project. However, free of charge support from entities established in non-EU countries is possible provided it is functional to the project objectives.

1.6.9. Which project beneficiary should be in charge of the project management?

It is expected that the project management is carried out by the staff of the coordinating beneficiary. However on the basis of an appropriate justification it may be carried out by a subcontractor under its direct control. Any other arrangements for the project management would have to be adequately explained and justified. It is also **strongly advised** that each project has a full-time project manager.

While there is no obligation for the beneficiaries to include in the proposal budget any costs related to the project management, the proposal should nevertheless clearly describe who will be in charge of the project management, how much personnel and time will be devoted to this task and how and by whom decisions on the project will be made during the project period (i.e. how and by whom the project management will be controlled).

It is important to note that if an agency associated with the beneficiary carries out the technical and/or financial administration of the project, this body **MUST** be an associated beneficiary of the project in order for its costs to be eligible for co-financing.

1.6.10. To which extent are salary costs of public staff eligible for LIFE+ co-funding?

Please refer to the 'Financial application forms' section of the document '*LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, Guidelines for applicants 2012, Part 2 – Application forms*'. 'Form F1 – Direct personnel costs'.

1.6.11. Outsourcing of project activities

The beneficiaries should have the technical and financial capacity and competency to carry out the proposed project activities. It is therefore expected that the share of the project budget allocated to external assistance should remain below 35%. Higher shares may only be accepted if an adequate justification for this is provided in the project proposal.

If a beneficiary is a public body, any outsourcing (also including any outsourcing of the project management) must be awarded in accordance with the applicable rules on public tendering and in conformity with EU Directives on public tendering procedures.

For amounts exceeding 125.000 €, private beneficiaries shall invite competitive tenders from potential subcontractors and award the contract to the bid offering best value for money; in doing so they shall observe the principles of transparency and equal treatment and shall take care to avoid any conflicts of interest.

Green procurement: all beneficiaries (public and private) are strongly invited to carefully consider the possibility to "green" their procurement activities. The European Commission has established a toolkit for this purpose. More information can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm

1.6.12. Under which conditions does LIFE+ favour transnational projects?

The LIFE+ Regulation indicates that, while selecting the projects to be co-funded, the Commission shall have special regard to transnational projects, when transnational cooperation is essential to guarantee environmental or nature protection. A transnational proposal should therefore be submitted only if the project proposal provides sufficient arguments for an added value of the transnational approach. If such evidence can be provided, the proposal will be considered for a higher scoring in the project selection process and will therefore have a higher chance of being selected for co-funding (see the *Guide for the evaluation LIFE+ project proposals 2012*).

1.6.13. How voluminous should a LIFE+ proposal be?

A proposal should be as concise and clear as possible. Avoid voluminous proposals and do not provide excessively detailed descriptions of project areas, environmental technologies, etc. Clear and detailed descriptions should however be provided for all project actions. Maps should be annexed wherever this would be useful to clarify the location of the proposed actions.

Brochures, CVs and similar documents should not be submitted and will be ignored if provided.

1.6.14. Recurring activities are ineligible for LIFE+ funding

The LIFE+ Regulation (Article 3.2) does not allow the financing of recurring activities. See chapter 2 of the present guidelines for further details and for possible exceptions.

Some flexibility in respect to recurring activities for projects developing and implementing European Union objectives relating to broad based, harmonised, comprehensive and long-term monitoring of forests and environmental interactions, that avoid the financing of day to day operations, may be applied.

1.6.15. Limited research activities are eligible

Whereas research activities are being funded in the EU under the Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities, limited research aimed to improve and enhance the knowledge data underpinning the project may be carried out within a LIFE+ project. Research must be strictly and intrinsically related to the project's objectives and the beneficiary shall have to explain in detail that the proper implementation of the project relies on these research activities, showing that the existing scientific basis is insufficient. In such case, scientific publications are considered important deliverables of the project.

1.6.16. Complementarity with other EU funding instruments must be ensured

According to Article 9 of the LIFE+ Regulation, LIFE+ may not finance any "measures which fall within the eligibility criteria and main scope of, or receive assistance for the same purpose from, other Community financial instruments". These include, amongst others, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, the European Fisheries Fund, the Civil Protection Financial Instrument and the seventh Research Framework Programme.

It is thus essential that, prior to submitting their proposal to the European Commission, beneficiaries check thoroughly that the actions proposed under their project **in practice cannot be and are not funded** through other European funds. Beneficiaries will be required to sign a declaration to this effect.

The beneficiaries must inform the European Commission about any related funding they have received from the EU budget, as well as any related ongoing applications for funding from the European Union budget. The beneficiaries must also check that they are not receiving operating grants from LIFE+ (or other EU programmes) with respect to the on-going operations.

In addition, at the project revision stage, the national authority may also be required to indicate the steps taken to ensure the coordination and complementarity of LIFE+ funding with other European Union financial instruments.

1.6.17. Role of national annual priorities

Article 6 of the LIFE+ Regulation allows Member States to submit national annual priorities – for 2012 several Member States have taken advantage of this possibility.

Proposals submitted to the Commission may receive an enhanced score during the evaluation process which may play a role in the proposal's success when the national indicative allocations are to be fulfilled (see the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE+ project proposals 2012*). On the other hand, projects that do not meet a Member State's national annual priorities may also be selected on quality grounds alone.

National annual priorities can be viewed at the following web address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2012/call/index.htm>

1.7 Additional elements to be considered when preparing the proposal

Efforts for reducing the project's "carbon footprint": Please explain how you intend to ensure that the "carbon footprint" of your project remains as low as it is reasonably possible. Details of efforts to be made to reduce CO₂ emissions during a project's life shall be included in the description of the project. However, you should be aware that expenses for offsetting greenhouse gas emissions will not be considered as eligible costs. Furthermore, beneficiaries should ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem services are maintained or enhanced.

For all proposals aimed at **direct or indirect tourism related sectors** or activities, we invite applicants to carefully consider the Commission Communication COM(2010) 352 of 30/6/2010 "Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe"⁶ and to describe if and how their project is likely to support any of the objectives set out in this Communication.

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/files/communications/communication2010_en.pdf

1.8 Personal Data Protection Clause

The personal data supplied with your proposal, notably the name, address and other contact information of the beneficiaries and co-financiers, will be placed in a database named ESAP that will be made available to the EU Institutions, as well as to a team of external evaluators who are bound by a confidentiality agreement. ESAP is used exclusively to manage the evaluation of LIFE+ proposals.

The same personal data of successful projects will be transferred to another database, BUTLER, which will be made available to the European Union Institutions and to an external monitoring team who are bound by a confidentiality agreement. BUTLER is used exclusively to manage LIFE projects.

A summary of each project, including the name and contact information of the coordinating beneficiary, will be placed on the LIFE website and made available to the general public. At a certain point the coordinating beneficiary will be invited to check the accuracy of this summary.

The Commission, or its contractors, may also use the personal data of unsuccessful applicants for follow up actions in connection with future applications.

Throughout this process, Regulation (EC) n° 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 "on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data" will be respected by the Commission and its sub-contractors. You will notably have the right to access data concerning you in our possession and to request corrections.

Submission of a proposal implies that you accept that the personal data contained in your proposal is made available as described above. It will not be used in any other way or for any other purposes than those described above.

2. LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

2.1 What is LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance?

These guidelines concern uniquely ***LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance***.

LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance aims specifically at contributing to the implementation, updating and development of European Union environmental policy and legislation, including the integration of the environment into other policies, thereby contributing to sustainable development. Furthermore, actions financed must have a European added value and be complementary to those actions that can be financed under other European Union funds during the period 2007-13.

LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance supports **innovative or demonstration projects**⁷ within the spirit of the Göteborg strategy⁸, in particular those contributing to the Lisbon process and Europe 2020, by adding measurable social and economic benefits to environmental benefits and building on a knowledge based approach.

In relation to the objectives of the 6th Environmental Action Plan⁹, the specific objectives of *LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance* call for proposals are as follows:

- (a) to contribute to the development and demonstration of innovative policy approaches, technologies, methods and instruments;
- (b) to contribute to consolidating the knowledge base for the development, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of environmental policy and legislation;
- (c) to support the design and implementation of approaches to monitoring and assessment of the state of the environment and the factors, pressures and responses that impact on it;
- (d) to facilitate the implementation of European Union environment policy, with particular emphasis on implementation at local and regional level;

Taking into account the activities of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan¹⁰ and the objectives of the Framework Programme for Competitiveness and Innovation, *LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance* encourages proposals that lead to:

- the identification of promising environmental technologies/approaches (*or methods or processes*) and of the obstacles to their development leading to solutions to overcome those barriers.

⁷ Only projects characterised by a 'high' degree of innovation can claim to be really innovative in this context (i.e. new technology or method, resulting from a study or research, which affects all or most of a production process or service).

⁸ At the Göteborg European Council in June 2001, a strategy for sustainable development was agreed, by adding an environmental dimension to the Lisbon Strategy.

⁹ Sixth European Union Environmental Action Plan Decision 1600/2002/EC
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm>

¹⁰ See COM(2004) 38 final, Brussels, 28.01.2004 'Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: an Environmental Technologies Action Plan for the European Union'.

In order to attain the best results projects should to the greatest extent:

- promote the widest possible application of scientifically verified technologies and/or *approaches* (i.e. network projects, dissemination of results by relevant bodies, etc.);
- integrate capacity building measures;
- involve public administrations in the diffusion of the technologies and/or *approaches* developed by the projects.

LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance support will be allocated to the best proposals in terms of innovative solutions for important environmental issues, leading to viable as well as qualitatively and quantitatively measurable concrete results. Proposals must be highly visible and technically and financially sound. They should incorporate the dissemination of knowledge. The demonstration character is particularly important; projects must be implemented on a technical scale that allows evaluation of technical and economic viability of large scale introduction. *LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance* is not directed at research or at investment in *existing* technology. LIFE+ aims to bridge the gap between research, policy and development results and widespread implementation, and to improve innovative solutions with a public dimension. The proposal should not be driven by the desire to seek a competitive advantages, but environmental solutions which should be actively disseminated to and taken up by other actors.

LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance support will also be allocated to projects promoting the integration of environmental concerns into other policies. More specifically, this includes projects acting as a catalyst in the mobilisation of other funds (national, regional, local or from other EU instruments - in particular the CAP and regional funds) for the environment.

Since *LIFE+ Environmental Policy and Governance* projects must either be demonstration or innovative projects, it is understood that there should not generally be any significant high risk of overlap with the main scope of other EU funding instruments, except with the Competitiveness Innovation Framework Programme.

The Competitiveness Innovation Framework Programme¹¹ (CIP) finances market-oriented activities related to the take up of environmental technologies and eco-innovative activities by enterprises as well as promotion of new or integrated approaches to eco-innovation through first application and market replication projects (CIP Eco-innovation)¹². CIP Eco-innovation pays particular attention to small and medium-sized enterprises and aims to support projects that are concerned with the first application or market replication of eco-innovative techniques, products, processes or practices, which have already been successfully demonstrated, but due to remaining risks need incentives to penetrate significantly the market. The initiative funds projects that are *clearly innovative* and *present substantial environmental benefits* in support of Europe's environmental policies. They must also demonstrate a potential for replication, broader marketability and wider application.

¹¹ For further information on the CIP programme: http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_en.htm

¹² <http://ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation>

In this context *LIFE + Environmental Policy and Governance* component marks the difference in respect to the CIP eco-innovation that covers market-oriented activities focused on competitiveness, which is a less important issue for the public sector¹³.

To better illustrate the difference between CIP and LIFE+, two theoretical examples of projects that would fall under these programmes are provided below:

(1) CIP Market replication project example

Project objective

The objective of the project is to enable the **market uptake** within the EU of an innovative recycling technology which has already been successfully demonstrated but due to remaining risks needs incentives to **penetrate significantly the market**. A Prototype or testing installation has been done, demonstrating that the new technology is a technically feasible solution.

Means and actions

The new way of recycling creates a possibility for a widespread use across the EU. The market size is estimated at 800 ktons of waste per year, in North-West Europe alone, which currently ends up in a landfill. A **barrier** to market acceptance is represented by the investments needed to industrialise the recycling solution, coupled with availability of waste material and some aspects of the technology itself. Therefore, the applicant and its partners have developed a project in order to **conquer the market** and to replace environmentally unfriendly solutions of handling of waste by introducing an environmentally sound technology. An important element of the project is a **business plan** in order to **exploit and replicate** the solution proposed.

(2) LIFE+ project example

Project objective

The project aims to demonstrate a technically feasible alternative to incinerating a certain type of waste or depositing it in landfills. The proposed approach involves the construction of a **pilot plant to demonstrate** an innovative methodology to recycle the material into products. The project expects to achieve a recycling rate of 80,000 tonnes of waste per year, using a technology that can later be **easily transferred** to other countries in Europe facing the same **environmental problem**.

Means and actions

The project is a perfect way of **demonstrating** that environmental protection can be achieved at the same time by an **innovative** way of recycling, by making use of **newly developed** techniques and a unique **collaboration** between **public** and **private** actors. Dissemination also plays a very important role: in fact the project will communicate to **local communities** the importance of the results achieved by the project in order to make those results **sustainable** and **raise public awareness**.

¹³ For example, an innovative municipal waste management should be financed by LIFE +, while a new recycling process with a clear business approach and market uptake of this technology should be financed by CIP Eco-innovation

In addition, *LIFE + Environmental Policy and Governance* supports projects for the development and implementation of European Union objectives relating to the broad-based, harmonised, comprehensive and long-term monitoring of forests and environmental interactions.

Finally, the environmental component of the 7th *Framework Programme for Research (FP7)* focuses on research, development and demonstration. Insofar that LIFE+ projects would innovate or be demonstration projects based on such earlier research, development or demonstration there would be little risk of overlap with the FP7.

Indicative list of themes for LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

In this section applicants will find a favoured list of themes and actions for which the EC would welcome receiving proposals. This does not exclude the possibility of submitting proposals for themes that are not listed here, in accordance with Annex II of the LIFE+ Regulation.

1. “Climate change”

Stabilise greenhouse gas concentration at a level that keeps global warming below 2°C compared with the pre-industrial level.

Contribute to the implementation of EU commitments under UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol, including the EU greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments in 2020 under the Climate and Energy Package, in particular policies and measures in order to meet national targets;

Contribute to development and implementation of low carbon and renewable energy technologies to drive low carbon economic development in Europe.

Contribute to the adaptation and increased resilience of the EU economy and society, nature and biodiversity, water resources and human health to the predicted impacts of climate change and mitigating its impact.

Indicative favoured actions:

- Implementation and use of market-based instruments in particular in order to achieve a cost-efficient emission reduction and adaptation to adverse climate change impacts.
- Development of best practice examples for more climate friendly transport that also delivers substantial environmental and social co-benefits.
- Demonstration and implementation of innovative technologies that substantially reduce GHG emissions.
- Development and deployment of CO₂-negative materials (innovative biological materials, CO₂-absorbing cement, etc.) - usually to replace carbon intensive materials.

- Development of practical climate change proofing methodologies and standards for mitigation or adaptation measures at project level in specific sectors
- Development of best practice examples of strategies to obtain "investment grade" for low carbon projects to facilitate investments e.g. through pension funds.
- Implementation of best practice examples in greenhouse gas emission foot printing in products and services such as for energy use or freight transport.
- Support will also be given to strategies and actions on analysis and facilitation of energy "prosumers" (own energy production leading to more rational energy consumption) and on promoting regional renewable energy service companies (production and consumption).
- Increasing adaptive capacity to climate change of public institutions and private organisations by education, training and development of adaptation plans.
- Development of climate change projects that brings synergies between greenhouse gas emission reductions and adaptation objectives.
- Development of innovative adaptation approaches that demonstrate social, economic or environmental benefits of adaptation in addition to the avoided damage.
- Development of schemes for market based instruments to promote adaptation to climate change.
- Implementation and demonstration of small-scale (<10 MW) renewable energy technologies.
- Development of innovative practices in the management of smart grids in the context of a high share of decentralised renewable energy production.
- Contributing to enlarging the implementation of EU climate policy and legislation including the Directive on the geological storage of carbon dioxide and the Effort Sharing Decision.
- Contribute to the knowledge base on policies that impact on mitigation actions and their interactions across sectors, both on the global and the local scales.
- Contribute to ensuring that the potential impacts of global emissions scenarios are appropriately understood and are coupled with effective dissemination mechanisms.
- Develop and implement best practice examples of feedback mechanisms between the use of low carbon technologies and the skills set of the population (training, best practice exchanges, technology incubators, new businesses, etc.).
- Develop best practice examples of participative models for ensuring public acceptance of and investments in low carbon technologies and projects (municipal investments, citizens' funds, association of communes, etc.).
- Development of innovative tools and implementation of innovative activities to promote the safe use of environmentally sound alternatives to gases with a high Global Warming Potential.
- Development of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and action plans at local, regional, transregional or national scale.

- Support will also be allocated to projects acting as a catalyst in the mobilisation of other funds (national, regional, local or from other EU instruments) for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

NB Proposals aimed at promoting and implementing innovative or demonstrative projects combining biodiversity and climate change, such as protecting and restoring natural ecosystems to conserve or enhance their carbon stocking capacity (for example: forests, water bodies), should be submitted under the LIFE Biodiversity strand.

2. “Water”

Contribute to an enhanced water quality by developing cost-effective measures to achieve good ecological status in view of developing the river basin management plans under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Contribute to the implementation of the Floods Directive.

Contribute to the development of marine strategies under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) for the achievement of good environmental status of marine waters.

Support activities to ensure safe and efficient use of water resources, improving quantitative water management, preserving a high level of water quality and avoiding misuse and deterioration of water resources.

Contribute to the implementation of the principles of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Contribute to improving quantitative water management and water efficiency.

Contribute to decrease vulnerability of water and ecosystems to climate change impacts and other anthropogenic pressures.

Contribute to increased safety of the drinking water supplies in small communities.

Indicative favoured actions:

- Development of the revised WFD programmes of measures for 2015, including the integration of basic requirements from other water-related directives such as e.g. the Urban Waste-water Treatment Directive, the Bathing Water Directive, the Drinking Water directive, the Plant Protection Products and Nitrates Directive, the Flood Directive and the IPPC Directive
- Development of best practice examples for integration of WFD concerns into sector policies:
 - sustainable use of hydropower based on ecologically based minimum flow requirements and other mitigation measures;
 - improving long-distance fish migration;
 - habitat restoration and reconnection of alluvial floodplains;

- reduction of impacts from navigation such as soft engineering of embankments, reduction of impacts from waves and pollution from ships;
- reduce eutrophication from diffuse sources and direct discharges;
- implementation of innovative technologies to reduce use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture;
- Development of innovative tools and best practices for using Ecosystem Approach and utilization of ecosystem services for support implementation of WFD (for supporting enforcement of RBMPs and PoMS implementation/enforcement and revision)
- Development of innovative tools (technologies, practices, etc.) to improve water efficiency, flood protection and prevention in distribution networks, households, agriculture and industry sectors, including testing in demonstration sites;
 - Tools allowing SME's and farmers to assess water efficiency and apply to stewardship/labelling schemes
 - Diffusion and implementation of technologies and practices for decreasing water abstraction, consumption and increasing re-use of water.
 - Tools for tapping non-conventional water resources (such as waste water re-use, aquifer recharge, rainwater harvesting, marine freshwater streams)
- Implementation of multifunctional natural water retention measures in different catchment areas focusing on increasing climate change resilience of water resources. These may include forestry, agricultural measures, sustainable urban drainage systems, restoration of floodplains and wetlands and increasing river capacity.;
- Tools for early detection and management of droughts;
- Development and testing of indicators for water scarcity and droughts, including the assessment of their link to other indicators and applicability across the EU;
- Technologies for efficient coupling of desalination with renewable energy sources;
- Improving the Nitrate Directive implementation, in particular focusing on the entire nitrogen cycle;
- Development of innovative urban waste water treatment systems;
- Development of innovative and cost-effective technologies for the improvement of the quality of drinking water;
- Development of innovative actions contributing to increased safety of the supply in small communities;
- Water saving/ efficiency approaches that contribute to the reduction of energy consumption of housing;
- Implementation of innovative measures of Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
- Implementation of innovative measures to adapt to coastal risks and the impacts of climate change;

- Development and implementation of innovative measures to prevent and manage coastal erosion;
- Implementation of innovative actions for the improvement of bathing waters;
- Implementation of innovative activities contributing to a "good environmental status" of marine water according to the Marine Directive;
- Implementation of green/blue infrastructures, linking urban and rural areas, as well as marine and coastal areas (fish passes, restoration of river morphology, water retention in urban areas, restoration of links between water bodies and their flood- and marshplains);
- Development and implementation of flood risk reduction measures which provide synergies with water and environmental protection objectives, including setting up of demonstration sites for innovative measures, including green infrastructure / natural water retention measures in rural and urban areas, in different parts of EU addressing different types of floods and climatic conditions.
- Development and implementation of measures to identify, assess, model, map and manage environmental risk in relation to floods (such as pollution from point or diffuse sources due to floods, disruption of ecosystems, human health impacts of floods),
- Development and implementation of innovative methods for involvement of interested parties in flood risk management and water management at the level of the river basin
- Development of innovative tools to reduce the pressure of economic activities on the marine environment.
 - reduce the disturbance (noise)
 - reduce/prevent physical disturbance of sea floor
 - management plans which restrict impacts of economic activities
- Development and implementation of protection measures
 - management plans of MPA's
- Support will also be allocated to projects acting as a catalyst in the mobilisation of other funds (national, regional, local or from other EU instruments) for the water sector.

N.B. When dealing with green/blue infrastructures that aim directly at creating the necessary connectivity among Natura 2000 sites, the proposal should be submitted under LIFE+ Nature.

3. "Air"

Achieve levels of air quality that do not give rise to significant negative impacts on and risks to human health and the environment.

Indicative favoured actions:

- Supporting the implementation and regular reviews of the Thematic Strategy on air pollution, including the identification of cost-effective pollution sector

abatement measures (in particular industry, urban transport, non-road mobile machinery, domestic heating, and agriculture).

- Testing technologies, methodologies and practices that can reduce air pollution and exposure of the population and/or the environment to poor air quality;
- To develop or upgrade, validate and demonstrate methodologies for assessing and/or managing air pollution, strategies, policies and measures based on measurement or modelling, of emissions, depositions, and/or concentrations, in support to air quality management at global, EU, regional, and/or urban level. Support will also be allocated to projects acting as a catalyst in the mobilisation of other funds (national, regional, local or from other EU instruments) for the air sector.

4. “Soil”

Implementation of the Soil Thematic Strategy (COM(2006)231, 22.9.2006) which aims to protect and ensure the sustainable use of soil by preserving soil functions, preventing threats to soil, mitigating their negative effects and restoring degraded soils.

Indicative favoured actions:

- Demonstration activities at regional, provincial or municipal level, in line with the Soil Sealing Guidelines, to limit, mitigate or compensate for soil sealing, particularly those involving a re-thinking of planning and budgetary approaches with a view to achieve economic development without further land take and soil sealing.
- Expansion of the knowledge base concerning soil degradation processes (erosion, loss of soil organic matter, salinisation, acidification, compaction, landslides, contamination, loss of soil biodiversity) with a view to supporting the 'priority area' approach called for in the proposed Soil Framework Directive.
- Developing and implementing land use practices and techniques, particularly in farming and forestry production processes, which protect and improve the status of soil in terms of structure, organic matter, pollution, biodiversity, etc. This might include supporting farmers and foresters through pilot agro-environmental schemes, different types of environmental friendly agricultural management and technologies, reduction of residues coming from agriculture, etc.;

N.B. When dealing with green/blue infrastructures that aim directly at creating the necessary connectivity among Natura 2000 sites, the proposal should be submitted under LIFE+ Nature.

5. “Urban environment”

Contribute to improving the environmental performance of Europe’s urban areas.

Indicative favoured actions:

- contributing to a better implementation of existing EU environment policies and legislation at the local level by supporting and encouraging local authorities to adopt a more integrated approach to urban management, including mainstreaming of climate change impact monitoring and preparedness; a special focus on the transport and energy sectors and green public procurement; and climate proofing of (infrastructure) development plans;
- contributing to urban green infrastructure, and its linkages to the peri-urban and rural countryside and relevance for creating resilience towards climate change induced environmental/health stress;
- contributing to 'greening' existing energy and transport infrastructure and strengthening the functionality of the spatially linked ecosystems

N.B. When dealing with green/blue infrastructures that aim directly at creating the necessary connectivity among Natura 2000 sites, the proposal should be submitted under LIFE+ Nature.

6. “Noise”

Contribute to policy development and implementation on environmental noise.

Indicative favoured actions:

- to test technologies, methodologies and practices which reduce noise, especially in the urban environment;
- to prevent and reduce the harmful effects from exposure to environmental noise.

7. “Chemicals”

Improve the protection of environment and health from risks posed by chemicals by 2020 by implementing chemicals legislation, in particular the REACH Regulation.

Indicative favoured actions:

- enhancing science-policy integration and the transfer of results to provide a solid technical background in support of REACH or other chemicals legislation¹⁴;
- development of non-toxic alternatives that can substitute toxic chemicals,
- safer handling of chemicals, including chemicals in products
- a more economical or sustainable use of chemicals,
- ways of re-using chemical waste products
- elimination of dangerous chemicals from the recycling stream

¹⁴ This could also include support to other chemical safety legislation including promotion of non-animal testing.

- ways to promote chemically safer consumer products
- ways to promote chemically safer products in the industry supply chain
- awareness raising of and contributing to synergies between chemicals and other environment and health policies
- sustainable use of biocidal products
- improving knowledge on risk assessment of nanomaterials
- actions related to the protection of animals used for scientific purposes
- development and demonstration of techniques reducing the impacts of mercury on the environment, including through redesigned processes and products

8. “Environment and health”

Contribute to the policy on the environment and health (the Environment and Health Action Plan).

Indicative favoured actions:

- Data linkage among the environmental monitoring data (chemicals, etc), human biomonitoring and human health
- Development of best practice examples to use environmental monitoring data to protect human health
- Development of best practice examples to reduce/minimise impacts of use of pharmaceuticals on the environment and human health
- protection of the ozone layer to reduce negative health and environmental impacts;

9. “Waste and natural resources”

Support the implementation, monitoring and development of EU waste legislation and policies designed to ensure sustainable management of natural resources and wastes - with particular emphasis on resource efficiency and lifecycle impact of products, consumption patterns, dematerialisation of the economy and waste prevention.

Indicative favoured actions:

- Awareness-raising and training concerning implementation, application and enforcement of EU waste legislation for local, regional and national authorities.
- Establishment of installations in Member States, including all necessary preparatory and supportive measures, in order to ensure an integrated and adequate network of waste disposal installations and of installations for the recovery of mixed municipal waste as required by Article 16 of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (the EU waste framework directive).
- Development, monitoring and implementation of waste management plans, waste prevention programmes and measures to encourage the application of the waste hierarchy to be established and applied under the new EU waste framework directive, in particular Articles 4, 28 and 29.

- Support for Member States and institutions with a view to analyse and identify problematic issues and shortcomings in connection with implementation, application and enforcement of EU waste legislation, including exchange programmes between Member States.
- Develop and disseminate best practices for the implementation, application and enforcement of EU waste legislation, including exchange programmes between Member States.
- Support the preparation and development of new waste legislation and policies designed to correctly implement EU waste legislation and to update its requirements at EU level taking into account technical and scientific progress. Support will also be allocated to projects acting as a catalyst in the mobilisation of other funds (national, regional, local or from other EU instruments) for the waste sector.

10. “Forests”

Provide, especially through an EU coordination network, a concise and comprehensive basis for policy relevant information on forest in relation to climate change (impact on forest ecosystems, adaptation, mitigation, substitution effects), biodiversity (further develop the existing baseline information and protected forest areas), forest fires, pests, forest condition and the protective functions of forests (water, weather, soil and infrastructure) as well as contributing to protect forests against fires.

Indicative favoured actions:

- promoting the collection, analysis and dissemination of policy-relevant information concerning EU forests and interactions between forests and the environment;
- promoting harmonisation, efficiency, and effectiveness of existing or new forest monitoring activities and data collection systems and making use of synergies by creating links between monitoring mechanism established at regional, national, European and global level;
- stimulating synergies between specific forests related issues and environmental initiatives and legislation (e.g. EU soil strategy, Natura 2000, Water Framework Directive, Sustainable Production and Consumption, Green Public Procurement, Energy Efficiency, etc.);
- contributing to sustainable forest management in particular by collecting data related to the carbon balance of EU forests, forest biodiversity and the improved Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management as adopted by the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting 7-8 October 2002, Vienna, Austria;
- building capacities at national and European Union level to allow for coordination and guidance on relevant and EU representative forest monitoring;
- strengthening forest ecosystem services by (re)-establishing functional or spatial linkages between forested areas which also guarantee the permeability between forest areas and open land as part of Green Infrastructure.

N.B. When dealing with green/blue infrastructures that aim directly at creating the necessary connectivity among Natura 2000 sites, the proposal should be submitted under LIFE+ Nature.

11. “Innovation”

Contribute to developing and demonstrating innovative policy approaches, technologies, methods and instruments to assist implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP) and the Eco-innovation Action Plan (EcoAP), through actions complementary to those of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

Indicative favoured actions:

- identifying, testing and communicating innovative and emerging techniques, which could be potentially considered as Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the updating of the BAT Reference Documents (BREF) in specific sectors.;
- identifying, testing and communicating innovative and emerging good practice for enhancing resilience to climate change

12. “Strategic approaches”

Promote effective implementation and enforcement of EC environmental legislation and improving the knowledge base for environmental policy.

Improve the environmental performance of SMEs.

Promote strategic integrated planning approaches for improving the use of land and sea.

Mainstream climate change preparedness into key policies and programmes.

Indicative favoured actions:

- strengthening the knowledge base for policy making and implementation through:
 - The development of Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) and supporting the implementation of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security initiative (GMES);
 - The improvement of access to and exchange of data and information on environment through implementation of INSPIRE and SEIS guidelines;
 - The promotion of coastal and marine information systems to support strategic planning across the land-sea boundary.
- implementing the Environmental Compliance Assistance Programme for SMEs (ECAP)¹⁵.
- promoting integrated planning approaches which consider ecosystem approaches to tackle fragmentation, and developing a Green Infrastructure

¹⁵ COM(2007)379. More information is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sme>

approach, supporting the multi-purpose use of land by safeguarding and improving ecosystem services.

- Resource efficiency, to develop and implement policies designed to ensure sustainable management and use of natural resources.

Whilst any project dealing with the abovementioned priorities is welcome, for the 2012 call for proposals the European Commission would favour those dealing with water.

A project on any of these priority areas but that is essentially targeting awareness raising campaigns should be submitted under **LIFE+ Information and Communication**. The EC would, in particular, be interested to receive under LIFE+ Information and Communication, proposals that compile the techniques developed and results and lessons learnt from a significant number of previous LIFE projects for a specific theme/sector (e.g. waste water treatment, renewable energy production, management of farm waste) and actively transfer them to the corresponding key stakeholders that could usefully implement these techniques.

2.2 General principles of LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance

Who may participate?

Proposals may be presented by legal entities established in the Member States of the European Union e.g. NGOs, private non commercial, industrial and commercial firms, local authorities, etc. Under *LIFE + Environmental Policy and Governance* the participation of public authorities at regional or local level is in particular encouraged.

Demonstration and/or innovation

LIFE+ Environmental Policy and Governance projects must either be demonstration or innovative projects. *LIFE+ Environmental Policy and Governance* projects must therefore have as an integral part of the project the evaluation and active dissemination of the results and lessons learnt.¹⁶

A "**demonstration**" project puts into practice, tests, evaluates and disseminates actions/methodologies that are to some degree new or unfamiliar in the project's specific context (geographical, environmental, socio-economical ...), and that **should be more widely applied** elsewhere similar circumstances. The project must therefore be designed right from the start to demonstrate whether the techniques and methods used work or not in the project's context.

The proposal should therefore demonstrate that the necessary steps have been taken to ensure that the foundations of these hypotheses have been appropriately secured (i.e. the type and amount of previous research needed). As regards the demonstration scale, the project should be implemented on a technical scale that allows the evaluation of the technical and economic viability of the proposed pilot on a larger scale. The proposal must justify the choice of a particular scale for the project in the light of the above. In particular, for projects developing decision support systems, planning tools or the like, there has to be a specific project action implementing the tool to demonstrate its technical and economic viability and to enable a comparison with the baseline situation.

Monitoring, evaluation and active dissemination of the main project results and/or lessons learnt are an integral part of the project and its aftermath. A demonstration project therefore ultimately aims to encourage other stakeholders to use the techniques and methods demonstrated in the project.

An "**innovative**" project applies a technique or method that has not been applied / tested before or elsewhere and that offers potential environmental advantages compared to current best practice.

Where the proposed actions are presented as innovative, the level of innovation can be evaluated from different perspectives:

- a) relative to the technologies applied by the project (technological innovation) and,
- b) regarding the way technologies are implemented (innovation in processes or methods),

¹⁶ Only projects for the "development and implementation of European Union objectives relating to the broad-based, harmonised, comprehensive and long-term monitoring of forests and environmental interactions" are exempt from this rule (Article 3.2.d of the LIFE+ Regulation).

These different dimensions of innovative nature have to be compared with the state of the art at a global (world) level. Innovation should not be restricted to pure technological breakthroughs. For instance, a new procedure may change one specific step in the process of manufacturing a product or, alternatively, it may bring about a more general transformation of the entire production cycle, and thus of that cycle's total impact. The same applies for a new economic or business model which would have the potential to turn a hitherto valueless waste into an input by means of business reengineering or change in the economic model. Geographical technology or practice transfer alone (without a genuine development of innovative character) cannot be considered as innovative. Equally, projects which involve pure research and development or merely preparatory activities (studies, surveys, etc) cannot be considered innovative per se.

The monitoring, evaluation and active dissemination of the main project results and/or lessons learnt is an integral part of the project. An innovative project therefore aims to evaluate whether the innovative techniques and methods work or not. Moreover, it aims to inform other stakeholders of these results and to encourage them where appropriate to use the techniques and methods successfully tested in the project.

Note that the application of an established best practice action/methodology in a particular geographical region where it has not been applied before is not considered to be an "innovative" activity but a "demonstration" activity

Monitoring of the environmental status of forests

As regards the data collected or processed as part of, or as the result of, a project concerning the monitoring of forests, the applicant must demonstrate that:

- access to all the information sources mentioned in the proposal can be secured,
- information systems put in place can be sustained after the end of the project,
- all the information will be transferred to the European Forest Data Center (EFDAC of the JRC) for public dissemination if requested,
- the lessons learnt contribute to the public debate following the Green Paper On Forest Protection and Information in the EU: Preparing forests for climate change (COM(2010)66).

Recurring actions cannot be financed

The LIFE+ Regulation (Article 3.2) does not allow the financing of recurring activities.

A *recurring action* is understood in the context of this application guide as "any day to day operation". Any recurring monitoring or management action that was already carried out prior to the project and/or that needs to be continued after the end of the project (at the same level of intensity, using the same techniques and material...) can not be included in the proposal budget as it would query both the added value and the sustainability of the project. However, *recurring actions with a clear demonstration value* and/or *innovative recurring actions* may be considered as

eligible for funding¹⁷. In such cases, the proposal must clearly explain the demonstration/innovation character.

Maximum co-financing rates

The maximum rate of European Union financial support for *Environment Policy & Governance* projects shall be 50% of the eligible costs of the proposal.

Eligibility of costs

Applicants should avoid presenting to *LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance* costs related to any of the following activities or items since they are considered **ineligible** for financing (further ineligible costs are listed in Article 26 of the Common Provisions):

- research and development activities;
- studies not specifically addressing the objective aimed at by the proposal;
- costs for intellectual property right protection (e.g., patents);
- investments in major infrastructure or investments of a non-innovative nature, including activities already confirmed on an industrial scale;
- costs for EMAS and ECOLABEL registration procedures;
- land purchase or any other related costs.

To be considered **eligible**, costs must:

- be provided in the provisional budget of the proposal;
- correspond to actions that are technically and financially coherent and feasible and providing value for money; and be directly linked to and necessary for carrying out the proposal covered by the decision;
- be actually **incurred during the project's lifetime**, as defined in the grant agreement, be recorded in the beneficiaries' accounts or tax documents, and be identifiable and controllable.

¹⁷ Some flexibility may be appropriate for projects clearly linked to the development and implementation of European Union objectives relating to the broad based harmonised, comprehensive and long-term monitoring of forests and environmental interactions.

2.3 Conceiving a project proposal

When preparing your proposal, the following main types of eligible actions must be clearly distinguished:

- A. Preparatory actions,
- B. Implementation actions (obligatory),
- C. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (obligatory),
- D. Communication and dissemination actions (obligatory),
- E. Project management and monitoring (obligatory).

Preparatory actions

As a general principle, all preparatory actions must produce practical recommendations and/or information which can be implemented (either during the project or after the project) and be used without requiring further preparatory work. Furthermore, where preparatory actions do not lead to direct implementation during the project, the proposal must provide sufficient set of explanations, commitments and guarantees to show that their full implementation after the project is effectively ensured. Most projects include preparatory actions. Projects may not include preparatory actions that have been fully completed prior to the start of the project.

In general, and amongst others, preparatory actions:

- should not be research actions,
- should be of limited duration (i.e. should be significantly shorter than the project duration),
- should be clearly related to the objective(s) of the project

Preparatory actions should thus primarily remain restricted to the preparation of the actual implementation phase of the project (technical planning, permit procedures, stakeholder consultations, etc.).

Implementation actions (obligatory)

These are the core actions of the proposals; they should always be *innovative and/or demonstration actions*.

The actual impact of these actions must be *monitored* during the project.

Monitoring of the impact of project actions (obligatory)

All projects will have to include monitoring actions.

The implementation actions (B actions) must lead to a measurable improvement of the state of the environment targeted by the project. Monitoring these effects should take place throughout the project and its results should be evaluated on a regular basis. In this regard, every project proposal must contain an appropriate amount of monitoring activities in order to measure the project's impact on the environmental problem targeted. These activities are distinct of the monitoring of the project progress (E actions). For this purpose, the project management should identify specific indicators to be used to measure the impact of the project. These indicators should be coherent with the environmental problem addressed and the type of activities planned during the project. The initial situation from which the project starts

should be assessed and progress should be regularly evaluated against it. The monitoring of the project impact on the environmental problem should allow the project management either to confirm the adequacy of the developed means to address the specific problems and threats, or to question these means and alternatively develop new ones. At the end of the project, the beneficiaries should be able to quantify the progress achieved, in terms of impact on the targeted environmental problem.

In addition, each proposal must include an action aimed to assess the **socio-economic impact** of the project actions on the local economy and population. This can take the form of a study consolidating the data and results over the project lifetime, to be delivered with the Final Report. Projects should aim to increase social awareness and acceptance of the benefits of protecting the environment. Examples of positive effects of the project are: direct or indirect employment growth, enhancement of other activities (e.g. ecotourism) aimed to develop supplementary income sources, offsetting social and economic isolation, raising the profile of the area/region, resulting in increasing the viability of the local community (especially in rural areas).

Communication and dissemination actions (obligatory)

LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance projects are innovative and/or demonstration projects (except where they concern the comprehensive, long-term, harmonised monitoring of forests). They **must include a significant set of actions to disseminate the results of the project** so that the knowledge gained is actively communicated to those targeted stakeholders that may best make use of it and apply the lessons from the project.

These typically include:

- information activities regarding the project to the general public and stakeholders aimed at facilitating the implementation of the project
- awareness and dissemination actions aimed at publicising the project and its results both to the general public and to other stakeholders that could usefully benefit from the project's experience and implement themselves the innovative actions demonstrated in the project.

The range of possible actions is large (media work, organisation of events for the local European Union, didactic work with local schools, seminars, workshops, brochures, leaflets, newsletters, DVDs, technical publications, ...), and those proposed should form a coherent package. To be effective, these actions should in general begin early on in the project. Each communication and dissemination action must clearly define and justify its target audience, and should be expected to have a significant impact. The organisation of large and costly scientific meetings or the financing of large-scale visitor infra-structures is not eligible.

Note that certain communication actions are obligatory (project web site, notice boards ...) and should therefore be explicitly foreseen in the proposal. See Article 13 of the Common Provisions: "Communication actions ..." for full details.

Please see also <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/toolkit/comtools/index.htm> for detailed advice on communication and dissemination actions.

Project management and monitoring of the project progress (obligatory)

Every project proposal must contain an appropriate amount of both project management and monitoring actions. This typically involves at least all of the following actions and associated costs:

- Project management, activities undertaken by the beneficiaries for the management of the project (administrative, technical and financial aspects) and for meeting the LIFE+ reporting obligations. The technical project management may be partially outsourced. Outsourcing of project management is possible, provided the coordinating beneficiary retains full and day to day control of the project. The project management structure must be clearly presented (including an organigram and details of the responsibilities of each person and organisation involved). It is strongly recommended that the project management staff has previous experience in project management.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness, the environmental benefit etc. of the main project actions.
- Where obligatory, the external audit and the bank guarantee.
- Training, workshops and meetings for the beneficiaries' staff, where these are required for the achievement of the project objectives.
- The participation in and the organisation of networking (for example, with other LIFE projects) and information platforms related to the project objectives (including at international level where justified).

It is strongly recommended that the project coordinator be full-time. If a coordinator or project manager also directly contributes to the implementation of certain actions, an appropriate part of his/her salary costs should be attributed to the estimated costs of those actions.

3. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Calendar of the LIFE+ 2012 evaluation and selection procedure

Date or period	Activity
26/09/2012	Deadline for applicants to submit proposals to Member State authorities
02/10/2012	Deadline for the Member States to forward proposals to the European Commission
16/10/2012	Deadline for the Member States to comment on individual project proposals
October 2012 to April 2013	Evaluation and revision of the proposals
May-June 2013	Signature of individual grant agreements
01/07/2013	Earliest possible starting date for the 2012 projects

ANNEX 2: Important links

General documents for all applicants:

- [Regulation 614/2007 of the European Parliament and the Council of 23/05/2007 \(LIFE+\)](#)
- Link to the [LIFE+ Communication toolbox](#)
- National Annual Priorities
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2012/call/index.htm>
- [Financial Regulation](#)