

## Frequently Asked Questions about the LIFE 2015 Call for Proposals

### Contents

1. General.....	2
1.1 General (except Capacity Building projects) .....	11
2.Traditional Projects .....	12
2.1 Traditional Projects, Environment sub-programme.....	16
2.1.1 Environment and Resource Efficiency priority area .....	16
2.1.2 Nature and Biodiversity priority area .....	17
2.1.3 Environmental Governance and Information priority area .....	19
2.2 Traditional Projects, Climate sub-programme.....	20
2.2.1 Climate Change Mitigation priority area.....	20
2.2.2 Climate Governance and Information priority area .....	21
3. Preparatory Projects.....	22
4.Technical Assistance.....	23
5. Integrated Projects.....	23
6. Capacity Building Projects.....	27

### NOTA BENE

This document does not apply to NGO operating grants (a different and specific FAQ document is available on the LIFE website).

Questions linked to Preparatory projects, Technical assistance projects and Integrated projects (Environment sub-programme) shall be sent to the following email address: [ENV-LIFE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ENV-LIFE@ec.europa.eu)

All the rest shall be sent to: [EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu)

## 1. General

#	Question	Answer
1	Do national authorities have the possibility to comment on proposals, as in previous LIFE calls?	No, under the LIFE Regulation 2014-2020, this is not possible.
2	The application guides 'strongly recommend' applicants to write their proposals in English. Will applicants who write their application in their own languages be penalised.	No, applicants will not be penalised for submitting proposals in another official EU language.
3	For a project involving an Overseas Country or Territory, is it a requirement for the applicant (coordinating beneficiary) to be based in the EU territory.	Yes, for all projects the applicant must be based in EU territory where the EU treaties apply.
4	The model grant refers to the possibility to transfer up to 20% of the budget between budget lines. Is this 20% of the relevant expenditure type or 20% of the overall budget?	It is 20% of the overall eligible costs.
5	In some circumstances, the rules for awarding contracts to external suppliers foreseen in the grant agreement for integrated and traditional projects are different both from National and Regional laws; in these cases, what is the applicable rule?	The beneficiary awarding the contract must apply rules generally applicable to procurements as set out in the grant agreement Art. II.9 and 10.
6	Which application package should I choose for a proposal that joins Nature & Biodiversity, Environment & Resource Efficiency and Information? May I choose any of them even if the project touches on more than one category?	Indeed, there are different application packages corresponding to the various priority areas under the LIFE programme. In some cases a project may address objectives from more than one priority area, however, you must decide which is the central focus of your project and submit under that priority area. On the web page for the call, you will find a link to a document called "Orientation Document" which may help you in making the choice.
7	Are individuals who act as freelance experts acceptable as partners for a LIFE programme? Freelance experts do not form part of any organisation.	Article 23 of the LIFE Regulation states that LIFE may fund "public and private bodies". This article should be read in the context of the EU Financial Regulation which makes it clear that "private bodies" does not include private individuals. Therefore both the applicant and any partners (associated beneficiaries) must be "bodies" and not individuals (i.e. natural persons).

		<p>Individuals can be involved in projects as employees of beneficiaries, as natural persons or through external assistance contracts. As indicated in art. II.19.2 of the Grant Agreement, costs of natural persons working under a contract with the coordinating beneficiary or an associated beneficiary other than an employment contract may be assimilated to costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:</p> <p>(i) the natural person works under the instructions of the beneficiary and, unless otherwise agreed with the beneficiary, in the premises of the beneficiary;</p> <p>(ii) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary; and</p> <p>(iii) the costs are not significantly different from the costs of personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary. In the case of external assistance, it should be recalled that it must be tendered so the proposal cannot name a specific individual or company as the provider of the external assistance.</p>
8	Can a project include a partner in Switzerland and carry out activities outside the European Union?	Yes, provided that the coordinating Beneficiary is based in the EU and that evidence is provided that the activities to be carried out outside the EU (i.e. Switzerland) are necessary to achieve EU objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of project interventions in the territory of the Member States. Please refer to article 6 of the LIFE Regulation.
9	Are profits generated after the end of a Project by using the results of the Project considered income to the Project? Will they be deducted from the grant received?	Income received <u>after</u> the end of a project is not considered income to the project.
10	We are developing a Project that will develop a prototype. In the final stages of testing and demonstrating, we plan to charge users of the prototype (in order to offset some of the costs of its	Any revenue generated by the project needs to be recorded and must be reported to the Agency/Commission at the latest in the final financial

	production). How should the resulting income be treated?	report. Further than this, in case of commercial use of the prototype it will have to be depreciated and considered as either equipment or infrastructure. In fact only if the prototype or any of its components are not used for commercial purposes during the lifetime of the project, then 100% of purchase costs are eligible for co-funding.
11	Can a potential applicant submit two applications, one under the ENV sub programme and another one under the CLIMATE sub programme?	An applicant can indeed submit under both sub-programmes, and each application will be evaluated, however if the projects are related, please note that this overlap should be indicated in "form A7 – Other proposals submitted for European Union funding" <sup>1</sup> (please include the information in response to question 2). If both of the projects reach the 'revision' phase, the beneficiary would be requested to cut any overlap. Before submitting multiple projects, applicants should carefully consider the above mentioned issue of overlaps and limit them as much as possible.
12	While editing free-text fields in our LIFE-Nature E-proposal, we have tried to follow the rules of the application guide: ("You may introduce the information either directly into the textboxes or you may copy and paste information in simple text format; note that for security reasons, a text copied and pasted from a Word document or an html page may not be accepted entirely, therefore simple, basic text editors such as Notepad suit better for this purpose;") However, we were not able not insert text into the e-proposal. In the part of the Coordinating Beneficiary details we have been able to copy a text from Microsoft Office word and paste it directly into the E-proposal. We have tried the same in the part	Please try Notepad for this purpose.

<sup>1</sup> This does not apply to Capacity building and Technical assistance projects.

	A7 (amongst others), but pasting texts does not work anymore. We have also tried to copy and paste from the Text Editor, but this does not work out either.	
13	How many countries must be involved in a project for it to be 'transnational' is it as soon as there is more than 1? Or does the score increase as more countries are involved? If so, as of how many countries do you get the maximum score?	A 'transnational' project involves more than one country. As per the application guidelines, transnational proposals shall be favoured and awarded extra points if there is sufficient evidence for an added value of the transnational approach.
14	Must a public associated beneficiary receive a part of the EU co-financing awarded to a project? If they do not receive it, does the 2% rule still apply?	A public associated beneficiary is not obliged to receive a portion of the EU co-financing (although, on the other hand, each beneficiary must obligatorily make a financial contribution to the project.) The 2% rule applies anyway.
15	<p>A nature project wants to build some infrastructure that will cost more than €500,000. Annex X (Financial and Administrative Guidelines) of the model grant agreement states that this makes this large infrastructure, which is generally not an eligible cost, but which is allowable in exceptional circumstances upon agreement with the Agency/Commission. Please can you let me know how we get this agreement or whom we should contact to inform them?</p> <p>Could you also clarify if it is possible to build infrastructure that will cost more than € 500,000, but part of the funding (€500,000) will come from the LIFE programme and the rest will be funded by one of the beneficiaries thus avoiding the limitation linked to large infrastructure?</p>	<p>The possible agreement of the Agency/Commission would be given only following a successful evaluation and acceptance of the project. In the past, and mostly for Nature &amp; Biodiversity priority area, we have accepted well-justified infrastructure that exceeded the 'large infrastructure' threshold, but of course the applicant cannot assume that it will also be accepted in this case. The applicant should therefore set out in the application clear arguments as to why the infrastructure has a high importance for the target species, and why the conservation of the species cannot be assured without it. Regarding your last question, please note that in order for any of the costs of constructing a new item of infrastructure to be co-financed by the LIFE programme, the overall cost for the construction of the infrastructure must be considered an eligible project cost, regardless of whether part of the cost is covered by co-financing. If then, as explained above, the higher cost is clearly justified in the project proposal as being essential to the project objectives (and accepted by the Agency/Commission during the evaluation process), the</p>

		cost will be considered eligible.
16	Is it correct that the matched funding would have to be received during the duration of the grant which would effectively rule out use of historic reserves?	Pursuant to the application guide, the coordinating beneficiary and any associated beneficiaries are each expected to provide a reasonable financial contribution to the project budget. A beneficiary's financial contribution is considered as a proof of its commitment to the implementation of the project objectives – a very low financial contribution may therefore be considered as an absence or lack of commitment (please refer to Award criterion 2 of the Evaluation Guidelines and to Application Guidelines on this point). A proposal cannot be submitted if the financial contribution of any of the beneficiaries to the proposal budget is EUR 0. However, the original source of the beneficiaries' contributions is irrelevant, provided that they do not originate from an EU financing programme. Therefore, in principle, historic reserves can normally be used to provide a financial contribution to the project budget. Please note that beneficiary's contributions may be complemented by co-financing from third parties
17	Can a company from a non-EU country be used as a sub-contractor?	In principle a company from a non-EU country may be used as a sub-contractor, provided that all of the LIFE rules on tendering are complied with, and provided that there are no specific EU constraints on trade with the country in question.
18	Can I submit an application without confirmed co-financing beyond the first year of the project? And, what happens if a confirmed co-financer withdraws after the start of a project?	Your application needs to show a balanced budget over the entire lifetime of the project. In case some of the co-financing is not confirmed at this stage, you can submit the A6 marked 'to be confirmed', but still the potential co-financer must sign it. A 'confirmed' form A6 is required before any grant agreement is signed.  In case a co-financer withdraws after a project has started, it will be the responsibility of the coordinating beneficiary to find replacement co-financing.

19	<p>1. Is it possible to implement similar activities in a LIFE project and in a project funded by another EU financial programme, but in different target countries?</p> <p>2. Can partners from another EU funded project participate in a LIFE project provided that the activities foreseen in LIFE are not double financed by the other programme?</p>	<p>Provided there is no double funding, similar activities can be financed under different EU financial programmes, provided of course that the actions are otherwise eligible.</p> <p>Partners from the other project can also participate in the LIFE project, as long as costs are clearly separated.</p>
20	<p>May I be the coordinator of the project without having a permanent contractual relationship or even not having any employment contract with the coordinating beneficiary, including my salary as project manager in the section of personal as additional staff?</p>	<p>Please refer to Faq 7 above and, further to this, note that there is no obligation for a project coordinator to be a permanent employee of the coordinating beneficiary. Even if it is expected that the project management is carried out by the staff of the coordinating beneficiary, outsourcing of project management is possible on the basis of an appropriate justification, provided the coordinating beneficiary retains full and day to day control of the project and must establish an appropriate mechanism to ensure adequate oversight.</p> <p>If the coordinating beneficiary wishes to subcontract the work of project management, all provisions regarding external assistance must be respected including regarding the tendering procedure.</p> <p>The coordinating beneficiary could also hire a project coordinator on a temporary staff contract for the duration of the project.</p> <p>For further details please refer to the 'Who should manage life a project?' of the Guidelines for Applicants.</p>

21	What information do I need to provide about affiliated entities, and where should I put this information in the application forms.	<p>First of all, please note that as indicated in the Guidelines for Applicants in no case will affiliated entities be accepted for public beneficiaries.</p> <p>Regarding the required information, there is no need to fill in separate A4/A5 forms for affiliates, although in practice, you have to provide the same information regarding their role in the project as for Associated Beneficiaries. The application must indicate the legal link between the parent company and the affiliate and identify the actions and budget of each affiliate.</p> <p>This should be done as follows:</p> <p>In form A2 (if the parent company is the CB<sup>2</sup>) or A5 (if the parent is an AB<sup>3</sup>) in the text box 'Description', there should be information about the affiliate(s) including the legal link with the parent company. If necessary, reference can be made to an annex which the applicant can upload and attach to the proposal in order to provide evidence of the legal link.</p> <p>In the C forms where the applicants need to indicate 'Responsibilities in case several beneficiaries are implicated', there should be a clear indication when an activity is to be implemented by an affiliate.</p> <p>In the F-forms, the costs should be declared under the applicant concerned, however, in the description field of the cost it must be clear that the cost will be incurred by an affiliate (if so, include name) of the applicant.</p>
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<sup>2</sup> Coordinating beneficiary.

<sup>3</sup> Associated beneficiary.



22	<p>Can entities recognized by the Italian Supreme Court as "soggetti di diritto" (and having their own assets and the rights to stand in Court and subscribe to agreements with third parties) apply for LIFE grants, even if they do not have a legal personality according to Italian legislation?</p>	<p>Art. 131 of the EU Financial Regulation stipulates that Grant applications may be submitted by legal persons including "entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons".</p> <p>Clear evidence must be provided that all criteria listed above are fulfilled</p>
23	<p>Our project involves use of a research vessel, which is property of one of the beneficiaries which has actual costs to move it (costs for personnel on board, their subsistence (meals), gasoline and maintenance)</p> <p>How should this be budgeted?</p>	<p>The actual costs for operating the vessel in the frame of the implementation of the LIFE project can be considered eligible expenses and should therefore be included in the appropriate cost categories. The costs that can be directly attributed to the LIFE project should be included under the "eligible direct cost categories" such as personnel, other costs, etc. The costs which cannot be directly attributed to the implementation of the project shall be part of the flat rate for indirect costs (max. 7%).</p> <p>In principle, the vessel's running costs can be included in the "other cost" category, except personnel costs that should be classified under "personnel costs", but in one line "personnel for ship"</p> <p>The running cost per time unit (hour or day) should be calculated on the basis of actual running costs, i.e. personnel, fuel and other ancillary costs (meals for the staff for example), for a period (e.g. the past year) in relation to the time the vessel have been used according to notations/registrations in a log book for that period. The costs to be entered in the budget should be the running costs per time unit multiplied by the time the vessel is estimated to be used in the project, i.e. an amount under personnel (if it is decided to report personnel costs) and other running costs under "other costs". A detailed and</p>

		<p>itemised calculation of the time unit rate should be kept on file with appropriate reference to accounting data, in particular to show what type of costs are being included in the budget if the eligibility of the individual cost items are discussed.</p> <p>It may be in your interest to annex or upload the following documentation to your proposal, but in any event you should, on request, be ready to provide the following documentation:</p> <p>a. a resolution signed by the person responsible for budgetary decisions specifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a detailed and itemised calculation of the time unit rate of the vessel being used in the project.</li> <li>ii. that the cost is real and without profit.</li> <li>iii. that the cost does not include depreciation, VAT and overheads.</li> </ul> <p>b. Auditor document endorsing the information in point a.</p> <p>The approval of the costs and therefore their correct classification will be evaluated, if the project proposal passes the evaluation 'award' procedure."</p>
24	<p>We have seen project with multiple beneficiaries but where all the actions are headed by the coordinating beneficiary. However, the guidelines state (old and new regulations) that the ABs should be responsible for the implementation of one or several project actions. Is it OK (eligibility wise) for an AB to be just involved in an action or must they always be named as the lead beneficiary on at least one action.</p>	<p>The ABs need to be actively involved in one or more project action, they do not need to have the lead however.</p>
25	<p>Are there national allocations? How are they calculated in the Multi-annual Work Programme 2014-2020</p>	<p>National allocations exist only for the Environment sub-programme. The calculation method to define the allocations is the same as used in the LIFE+ programme,</p>

		and is defined in article 6 of LIFE+ Regulation 614/2007 of the European Parliament and Council. However, while LIFE+ allocations were on an annual basis, for the present LIFE programme, national allocations are for the full period 2014-2017. The original numbers for the four year period can be found in the 2014-2020 Multi-annual work programme, rounded to two decimal points. The remaining national allocations for the period 2015-2017 will be published on the LIFE web page as soon as the grants for 2014 have been finalised
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### 1.1 General (except Capacity Building projects)

1	Concerning the 102% rule applicable to public bodies, we understand that this rule does not apply for personnel recruited or for whom their contract is specifically renewed for the duration of the LIFE project, regardless of their statute. Is this correct?	Yes, this is correct. It should be noted that this exemption concerns contract renewals, but not reassignments. Therefore if a staff member already has a permanent contract before the start of the project, their staff costs must be taken into consideration for application of the 102% rule.
2	How do we interpret the phrase 60% co-financing, does this mean the EC will contribute 40% or 60%? My colleague in finance feels this is not clear from how it is worded. Please could you confirm?	The EU co-financing rate is maximum 60% of the total eligible project costs, which means that the EU will contribute maximum 60% of the total eligible project costs.
3	When does the 75% EU co-funding rate apply under LIFE?	A co-financing rate of up to 75% of the total eligible costs may be granted only to LIFE Nature and Biodiversity proposals that focus on concrete conservation actions for

		<p>priority species or habitat types of the Birds and Habitats Directives. This higher financing rate will only be applied to projects allocating 50% or more of the total estimated cost for concrete conservation actions, to activities directly benefitting priority habitats or species. See Guidelines for Applicants 2015 Section 1.6.5.</p>
4	<p>Will there be a flat 7% overhead contribution? The guidance says 'Any organisation receiving an operating grant from the EU for the period of the project or parts of the period cannot claim the flat rate for the period in question.' If this applies to the whole University then we would not be eligible. Can you confirm?</p>	<p>Please note that you should make a distinction between 'operating grants' and 'action grants'. Operating grants are provided to finance the functioning of a body and in that sense the organisation is already receiving a contribution for the general operating costs (overheads). Action grants are intended to help achieve a Union policy objective (i.e. grants that contribute to the financing of specific projects) If your university receives an 'operating grant' which in principle finances your overheads already, then you cannot claim a flat rate for overheads for the period in question. Double funding is not permitted. It is not a problem if your organisation receives other unrelated action grants (i.e. for specific projects).</p> <p>Also note that the overhead rate will be set in your grant agreement at a fixed rate which may be up to 7% depending on the type of activities in your project.</p>

## 2. Traditional Projects

1	<p>What do you mean by replicability and transferability in the context of a LIFE project?</p>	<p>It is essentially a set of substantial activities (not just generic declarations of intents) included in the project, that are aimed at making tangible use of project results in other contexts than the specific one of the project. Replicability and transferability go beyond dissemination, transfer of knowledge and networking. They concern</p>
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		<p>activities and approaches, integrated in all relevant project actions, which aim to facilitate the replication and/or transfer of the project's results and experiences beyond the project, including in other sectors, entities, regions or countries.</p> <p>From this year all Guidelines for applicants include some illustrative examples and impose the obligation to include replicability and transferability activities under project actions.</p>
2	What is the difference between the concept of sustainability and the one of replicability and transferability?	<p>Sustainability is the capacity to maintain project results after its end, it presupposes a strategy including tasks to ensure the continuation of necessary project actions and the related funding after the end of the project.</p> <p>Replicability and transferability goes further and makes sure that project results will not only continue in the context of the project after its end, but are also tangibly used in other contexts.</p>
3	Is compulsory to attach the LIFE project performance indicators table? Will this be considered in the evaluation?	<p>Yes it is compulsory and it will be used in the evaluation process to assess the extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the sub-programme for Environment (Award criterion 3), while in the case of the sub-programme for Climate Action it will be used to evaluate the extent and quality of the contribution to an increased climate resilience and/or to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Award criterion 3). Please note that the indicators set is still provisional and may be subject to fine-tuning/adaptation after the close of the submission period. Successful applicants will be required to provide an updated list of indicators at a later date.</p>
4	Can you give me your opinion on the following idea for a traditional project .....	<p>Sorry, the Agency/Commission is unable to provide any opinion regarding a specific project idea as this would distort competition in the call. However, you may contact your national LIFE contact person for their support and advice. The list of national LIFE contact persons can be</p>

		found on the main LIFE web site.
5	What can we base ourselves on to show that a method is a 'best practice'? Can we base that on our own reasoned judgment or what does the Agency/Commission use as a measure to assess the 'best practice' nature of something?	In your application, you should provide a reasoned justification for why you consider that the methods you use is best practice providing solid arguments on appropriateness of the solution proposed including its cost-efficiency and why it is state-of-the-art. You could refer to manuals of best practice, scientific literature, etc. The evaluation committee will consider whatever justification you provide and assess its merit.
6	Regarding the budget per project under both sub-programmes, can we have an idea as to a maximum budget for 'traditional projects'?	Concerning the budget, see section 1.6.4 of the application guides in the Environment sub-programme (1.5.4 in the Climate sub-programme): There is no fixed minimum size for project budgets. While large ambitious projects (i.e. over 5,000,000 Euro total costs) have been financed several times in the past, very small projects (i.e. below 500,000 Euro total costs) have seldom succeeded due to the limited output and consequently the low added value. When preparing a project budget, applicants should also take into account the indicative national allocations per Member State for projects financed under the sub-programme for environment applicable for the period 2014-2017. A project proposal that requests an EU financial contribution higher than the total indicative national allocation for the applicant's Member State will have a reduced probability of being selected for LIFE co-funding. The national allocations can be found in section 5 of the LIFE multiannual work-programme for 2014-2017 and in the 'Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2015'.

		In other words, it is up to the applicant to define the budget.
7	When is a bank guarantee required?	During the financial selection phase a financial viability check will be performed to assess whether a financial guarantee would be required to cover fully or partially the EU pre-financing payment to the project. For further details see the related section 6 of the Evaluation guide.
8	Is land purchase an eligible expense for Biodiversity projects? For projects in the climate sub-programme?	Both land purchase and compensation are eligible under both sub-programmes. However, in all cases the criteria described in section II.19.2 of the General Conditions of the Model Grant Agreement apply.
9	<p>Do we understand well that 100% of the costs of a state of the art prototype are eligible in a LIFE project?</p> <p>Articles II.9 and II.10 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement says that the prototype or any of its components should not be used for commercial purposes the project. Could you please help us understand how the Applicant can fulfil this requirement if the prototype will be providing services for citizens?</p>	<p>First you should recall that state of the art technology is not used for prototype applications since state of the art technology has already been tested and its technical and cost efficiency been demonstrated. As stated in the application guide, a prototype is an infrastructure and/or equipment specifically created for the implementation of the project and that has never been commercialised and is not available as a serial product and its technical feasibility needs still to be demonstrated.</p> <p>If the technology can be considered a prototype, it may not be used for commercial purposes during the LIFE of the project as stipulated in Art. II.19.2 of the LIFE Model Grant Agreement. If the technology is used in a commercial context, as it appears to be in your case, the prototype would not be eligible for 100% co-funding. In this case, it would have to be depreciated in accordance with the rules applicable to the purchase of new or second-hand equipment and infrastructure.</p>

## 2.1 Traditional Projects, Environment sub-programme

1	<p>In Award criterion 3 of the Environmental sub-programme you refer to environmental benefits, presented in a LIFE-cycle approach, what do you mean by that? Do I need to have already an LCA study before I submit my proposal?</p>	<p>The proposers need to have an understanding of the environmental benefits in a lifecycle perspective to avoid that positive impacts 'gained' in one of phases (e.g.: production) are offset by negative ones in another phase (e.g.: end of life) with an overall impact that is, for example, negative rather than positive as it should be for a LIFE project. You do not need to have performed a full LCA analysis before submitting the proposal, but you need to be able to clearly and convincingly explain the impacts in the different phases of the lifecycle. Strictly speaking this approach might be less relevant in the case of LIFE Nature and Biodiversity or Environmental Governance and Information proposals, but also in such cases proposers need to consider and explain any adverse environmental impacts the project might have and make sure that, overall, the project brings clear and substantial environmental benefits.</p>
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### 2.1.1 Environment and Resource Efficiency priority area

1	<p>I would like to propose a Demonstration project that in my opinion is new Union wide. Will I get the additional 5 points foreseen under Award criterion 4?</p>	<p>You will only get the additional 5 points if the project fully complies with at least one of the priority project topics and if you are able to provide clear evidence of such novelty as compared to similar existing best practices in form B2 of eProposal. For further details please refer to the Guidelines for applicants (page 38) and the Guide for evaluation of sub-programme Environment (page 8).</p>
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## 2.1.2 Nature and Biodiversity priority area

1	<p>Does a project to develop a national Restoration Priority Framework fit under project topic 1b?</p>	<p>In principle, to 'fit' this topic a project must be applying an existing Restoration Priority Framework (RPF), which has already been approved at national or regional level. However, work to further develop an RPF which is already under preparation at a national or regional level may be accepted under the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work to develop the RPF should have already started when the project application is submitted (evidence should be provided in the application to show the RDF work started eg. through submission of a draft);</li> <li>- the project's concrete conservation actions (amounting to at least 25% of the project budget) should be aimed at implementing this RPF; and</li> <li>- the adoption procedure should be established in the proposal and accomplished before the end of the project. (In case there is no legal requirement for formal adoption of the RPF, adoption can be understood to mean administrative approval with a clear commitment that the RPF will continue to be implemented, for instance by officially integrating it in other legal planning tools.)</li> </ul>
2	<p>Section 2.4.3 of the guidelines for LIFE Nature &amp; Biodiversity says that “any land purchase payments, compensation payments or lease payments to public bodies are not eligible, with the exception of compensation payments or short-term lease payments to local authorities”.</p> <p>Does the term “compensation payments” in the second part of this sentence cover both “one-off compensation payments” and “temporary compensation payments” or only the latter?</p>	<p>This refers to cases where a public body gets a compensation temporarily (for the duration of the project) - so no one-off compensation is allowed when the land belongs to a local authority.</p> <p>In any case, land purchases/lease and compensatory payments are always carefully checked when assessing the LIFE project proposals and are expected to be sufficiently justified.</p>

3	Should all nature projects be developed in Natura 2000 areas?	<p>For LIFE Nature projects, actions targeting bird species must take place within SPAs<sup>4</sup>, actions targeting habitats or species of the Habitat Directives must take place within pSCIs/SCIs/SACs<sup>5</sup>. However, in case the investments foreseen contribute to an improvement of the ecological coherence and connectivity of the Natura 2000 network (conditions are listed in Section 2.4.3 of the Guidelines for Applicants), actions may be implemented outside Natura 2000 areas. Moreover, LIFE Nature projects may include actions for improving the conservation status of species listed in Annex IV, but not in Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Costs for site-based conservation actions for the conservation of Annex IV species not listed in Annex II is not conditional upon a Natura 2000 site status of the lands targeted.</p> <p>For the two cases above, a guarantee must be provided for the sustainability of any such investments, in the form of a commitment for giving these sites the most appropriate legal protection status before the end of the project.</p>
4	Land purchase outside Natura 2000: Could you explain when it is possible?	<p>Land purchase outside Natura 2000 sites is possible as long as it contributes to improving, maintaining and restoring the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, including through improving connectivity by the creation of corridors, stepping stones, or other elements of green infrastructure.</p> <p>The eligibility of any costs for land purchase is subject to the conditions listed in Section 2.4.3 (page 31-32) of the Guidelines for Applicants. The applicant must address each of the conditions explaining how each condition is met or will be met during the project.</p>

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<sup>4</sup> SPA: Special Protection Areas.

<sup>5</sup> pSCI: proposed Sites of Community Importance. SCI: Sites of Community Importance. SAC: Special Areas of Conservation.

### 2.1.3 Environmental Governance and Information priority area

1	The Guidelines for Applicants states Notice Boards describing the project shall be displayed at strategic place accessible to the public. As our project involves awareness raising across Europe, rather than in a specific location, we cannot see how to comply with this obligation. Please advise us on this.	In such cases the usual practice is that the notice board is placed outside the premises of the coordinating beneficiary, normally at a location where it can be seen by passers-by.
2	The Guidelines for Applicants states that auditor costs 'should always be placed under' Form F3 and F7– please clarify which is correct	It should be F7.
3	What do you mean by replicability and transferability in the context of a LIFE GIE project?	It is essentially a set of substantial activities (not just generic declarations of intents) included in the project, that are aimed at making tangible use of project results in other contexts than the specific one of the project. Replicability and transferability go beyond dissemination, transfer of knowledge and networking. Some illustrative examples: transferability strategy and action plan identifying area for replication, actors and actions; ensure funding for such activities after the project ends; commitments for applying the method elsewhere etc.
4	Are GIE projects supposed to achieve measurable impact only on attitudes and behaviours of target audiences?	The GIE Guide for Applicants for 2015 specifies that GIE projects should achieve measurable impacts on attitudes and behaviors and as much as possible on the state of environment (p. 21 GIE Guidelines for Applicants 2015).
5	How an information project's impact can be measured in quantitative terms?	Project impacts can be measured in quantitative terms by defining appropriate indicators to measure the contribution of the project to tackle the problem. The impact of the actions at the end of the project needs to be measured in relation to the defined baseline. Even if the contribution of the project is only indirect, appropriate indicators can still give an idea of the trends. Examples of possible indicators: raise in % of awareness of target audience in

		relation to baseline (quantified through surveys), market share of greener products, increase of collection/recycling rates of certain waste stream, update of legislative/governance framework, provision of further (economic) incentives, additional green public purchases, additional prosecution cases on environmental crimes etc.
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## 2.2 Traditional Projects, Climate sub-programme

1	I am confused about where to put the action "networking with other projects".	"Networking with other projects" should be presented in the E action 'Communication and dissemination of results'.
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### 2.2.1 Climate Change Mitigation priority area

1	Concerning the priorities mentioned in the climate change mitigation priority area, should it be understood that only projects falling under the 2015 policy will be retained? To what extent will projects relevant to other priorities be considered.	The link to policy priorities will be taken into account in the context of award criterion number 4, 'extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme for Climate Action'. Projects submitted to this subprogramme must contribute to the objectives defined in articles 14,15 or 16 of the LIFE regulation. Projects which contribute to these objectives and to the 2015 priorities will receive between 7 and 15 points for award criterion 4 depending on the extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives in these articles. The list of policy priorities is however not exclusive and proposals relevant to other priorities will be considered provided they contribute to the objectives defined in article 13,15 and 16 of the LIFE Regulation.
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### 2.2.2 Climate Governance and Information priority area

1	<p>For a Climate Governance and Information project, in the Guidelines for applicants, there is no specific explanation on the logical steps to follow as they are explained in the Guidelines for GIE : problem identification, goal setting, define actions, choose target public, construct indicators. Does that mean that this is less important for the GIC projects?</p>	<p>The logical steps to be followed when building up a GIC proposal are the same as for GIE proposals. The coherence of the project (i.e. problem identification, definition of actions) will be evaluated as part of the criterion for technical coherence and quality.</p>
2	<p>Climate Governance and Information projects need to be in line with the specific objectives as outlined in Article 16 of the LIFE Regulation. In addition, the application guide there are EU policy priorities listed for 2015. Does a Governance and Information Project also have to (or preferably should) relate to these policy priorities?</p>	<p>The list of policy priorities is not exclusive and proposals relevant to other priorities will be considered provided they contribute to the objectives defined in article 13,15 and 16 of the LIFE Regulation. However LIFE Governance and Information projects that choose and fully comply with project topics listed in section 2.2 of the application guide will get additional points. Please refer such section for further details.</p>
3	<p>Regarding the indicators, it is mentioned that "A climate governance and Information project should impact on the main targeted audience AND the climate problem." What type of indicators might be expected to measure impact on the climate problem?</p>	<p>A set of key indicators are listed in the LIFE project performance indicators table that the applicants need to fill in and attach to the proposal. We also encourage you to define indicators most relevant for your project to measure the impact of the actions in comparison with the baseline situation described. Examples might include: increased number of project practices or approaches taken up by households, enterprises, authorities or incorporated into national/regional programmes or action plans; reduced number of infringements; increased share of renewables etc.</p>

4	<p>What do you mean by replicability and transferability in the context of a LIFE GIC project?</p>	<p>It is essentially a set of substantial activities (not just generic declarations of intents) included in the project, that are aimed at making tangible use of project results in other contexts than the specific one of the project. Replicability and transferability go beyond dissemination, transfer of knowledge and networking. Some illustrative examples: transferability strategy and action plan identifying area for replication, actors and actions; ensure funding for such activities after the project ends; commitments for applying the method elsewhere etc.</p>
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### 3. Preparatory Projects

1	<p>I have a question related to the GI preparatory project. Under criteria, it says:          “The applicant is either a national authority, or if regional authorities apply, national authorities must be included in the proposal as associated beneficiaries for enabling lessons learnt to be applied at national level or by further regional entities in the future. By way of exception, in Member States with only regional managing authorities, their approaches must also respect national framework conditions (e.g. Partnership agreements or PAFs).” (p. 46 of the Guideline)          Does this mean the lead applicant should be a national authority or a regional authority? Or is it ok, if organisation X is the lead applicant and they are just part of the consortium?</p>	<p>The first bullet point says "At least one responsible programming or management authority delivering funding for the implementation of Green Infrastructure must be either applicant or partner in the project, as the focus is on testing and applying the guidance to be elaborated."</p> <p>Read together with the second bullet point, this does not exclude an application led by a private entity, provided that at least one programme or management authority is involved and that the national authority is involved unless competencies are fully regionalised.</p> <p>It is important to stress, however, the phrase "the focus is on testing and applying the guidance to be elaborated", therefore the programming or management authority must have a very significant role in the project, regardless of who is the lead applicant.</p>
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#### 4. Technical Assistance

1	Is it possible to submit an application for technical assistance to develop an Integrated Project under the Climate subprogramme?	Yes, under the 2015 call, technical assistance is available under both the Environment sub-programme and the Climate Action sub-programme, for the development of future Integrated Project applications under each sub-programme . Please note that there is a joint call for TA projects for the 2 sub-programmes.
2	How much time can there be between the submission of a proposal for TA and the submission of the proposal for the corresponding IP?	Generally speaking, the duration of a Technical Assistance project should not exceed two years. It is expected that a Technical Assistance project aims to prepare either a full proposal for an Integrated Project based on the LIFE15 call or a proposal based on the LIFE16 call.
3	Can an applicant submit a proposal for a Technical Assistance Project related to an Integrated Project, who may be different to the final applicant for the IP itself?	As the objective of a Technical Assistance project is the submission of a proposal for an Integrated Project, “it is expected that the applicant of a Technical Assistance project is the intended applicant of the future Integrated Project” (as provided under point 1.8.2 of the LIFE Technical Assistance Guidelines). However, if this is not the case, an explanation needs to be given providing the reasons and justifications, including the link of the IP applicant with the Technical Assistance project.

#### 5. Integrated Projects

1	Who can provide assistance and information on Integrated Projects in my country?	The LIFE National Contact Points – as indicated in section 1.5 of the Application Guide for IPs – can provide guidance to applicants. In order to enhance the chances of successful applications and in particular to avoid unintentional competition among projects having similar
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		targets, potential applicants are encouraged to make use of this assistance.
2	Do I understand well that under award criterion 3 (EU added value: Extent and quality of the contribution to the objectives of LIFE) only the direct impact of the LIFE IP will be considered during the assessment of the full project proposal?	No. As indicated in section 4 of the Evaluation Guide for IPs, the Extent and quality of the contribution to the objectives of LIFE will be measured by evaluating several factors. As described in first bullet point under each type of IP, these factors include the expected level of implementation of the targeted plan/strategy/roadmap as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilized in parallel to the IP. In addition, however, both the direct impact of the IP itself and the indirect impact resulting from actions catalysed by the IP project will be considered as described in the other bullet points. For instance, for applications related to PAFs, the evaluation will take into account the overall expected improvement of the conservation status of species and habitats, or for water IPs, the overall impact in terms of addressing significant unaddressed pressures or improvements towards WFD good status/potential.
3	What does the 'large territorial coverage' foreseen for IPs mean in practice in the case of waste management plans? Could the IP be implemented in some separate provinces or should it be a geographically uniform/continuous area?	It is up to the applicant to decide upon its choice of regions or provinces to be covered by the IP but they should correspond to the plan(s) targeted by the project.
4	If the partners of the integrated project are preparing also LIFE traditional project applications as well as Horizon 2020 projects, parallel to the integrated one will this synergy contribute to a position evaluation of the integrated project? Is mentioning the complementarity between an integrated project and a traditional one necessary or not? Where and how should it be reported in the concept note?	Synergy with other EU funds is encouraged for integrated project proposals. While of course it is good to ensure complementarity between a LIFE IP and a running/future LIFE traditional project, it is <u>primarily</u> the complementarity with actions financed <u>by other EU funds</u> (including Horizon 2020 funds, regional development funds etc.) that would be positively evaluated. The information should be indicated in the concept note, under 'complementary actions' and 'funds requested' (forms CNe and CNg).



5	Can a Public Body (i.e. Regional Administrations) directly award a financial contribution to its Regional Agency for the Environment for the implementation of some project activities? If yes, what is the maximum amount?	Financial support of such nature is not eligible under LIFE as public bodies cannot work with the so called 'members'/'affiliates'. The only possibility would be that the Regional Agency participates as an associated beneficiary or as a subcontractor (in the last situation the procurement rules need to be respected).
6	Can the concept note refer to an environmental or climate plan or strategy or roadmap that has not yet been agreed with the EC or not yet adopted?	As indicated in the Application guides, if the formal adoption has not taken place at the time of the submission of the Concept Note, the applicant should explain the status of the adoption and demonstrate that this adoption will take place before deadline for submission of the full IP proposal.
7	What is the difference between plans/strategies and roadmaps, the latter only featuring under the Climate Action Integrated Projects application guidelines?	<p>IPs implementing roadmaps is specific of the Climate Action sub-programmes.</p> <p>The Communication on the 2050 Roadmap for a competitive low-carbon economy encourages industrial sectors to develop low carbon roadmaps, analysing how particular industries can contribute to reaching EU's 2050 climate action targets. These are the <u>roadmaps</u> to implement with IPs. Examples of sectoral roadmaps which exist under the 2050 Roadmap that could be implemented under LIFE Climate Action IPs, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ceramic industry roadmap</li> <li>- chemical industry roadmap</li> <li>- steel industry roadmap.</li> </ul> <p>Contrary to plans or strategies such as an adaptation strategy or a river basin management plan that are led and will be adopted by public authorities, industrial low-carbon Roadmaps will be adopted by industry itself. Moreover IPs implementing such roadmaps are encouraged pursuant to the Union act "Communication on</p>

		the 2050 Roadmap” whereas for example an IP implementing a river basin management plan under the Environment sub-programme is a plan required by specific Union environmental legislation.
8	What does “partial” implementation mean in the context of a Climate Action Integrated Project?	<p>Integrated Projects shall aim towards the full implementation of the targeted action plan, strategy or roadmap. The term “partial” implementation referred to in the application guides relates to specific types of action plans/strategies/roadmaps that given their very broad scope, an IP could focus strategically on part of the action plan/strategy or roadmap. This would need to be duly explained and justified. For example in the implementation of an adaptation strategy, an IP could fund actions for a selection of vulnerable sectors addressed in an adaptation strategy. However, the IP needs to include strategic actions and mechanisms to catalyse a process that will lead to (in due time) the full implementation of the action plan, strategy or roadmap.</p> <p>Contrary to the Environment sub-programme, this wording on “partial” implementation was included given the divergence between types of IPs within the Climate Action sub-programme with some IPs types such as an adaptation strategy or industrial roadmap being much broader in scope than for example a GHG mitigation strategy for the dairy sector which is much more focused. However, the underlying philosophy behind IPs which is working towards the ultimate full implementation of the plan, is the overriding principle for both sub-programmes.</p>
9	How is the second element used for the compilation of the "Preliminary long list" indicated on p. 20 of the Evaluation guide for Environment sub-programme IPs to be understood?	In step 2, proposals (in any area) are listed based on the sub-programme geographical distribution approach, i.e. proposals coming from Member States that have not yet received any financing for IPs under the current 2015 call in the sub-programme for Environment listing them in order of quality. Hence proposals from those countries

		<p>that have not been listed based on the first step (55% allocation to Nature IPs) will be favoured and appear higher in the list.</p> <p>Note, however, that for the purposes of the third element both the 2014 and 2015 calls of the two sub-programs are considered.</p>
10	<p>What is the deadline for the submission of the Concept Notes for Integrated Projects.</p>	<p>The deadline for submission has been postponed from 1 October 2015 to 10 October 2015 only in order to remedy the contradiction between these differing dates mentioned in various parts of the application guide. Note, however, that 10 October is a Saturday, when Commission's mail services are closed, hence delivery in practice is only possible latest on 9 October. Please make sure therefore that applications sent by post, courier service or delivered by hand reach the Commission mail services on 9 October 2015.</p>

#### 6. Capacity Building Projects

1	<p>The application guide for Capacity Building projects (pg. 6) says that costs are eligible retroactively from the date of submission. But this seems to conflict with the information on page 30 of the guide which says that personnel costs are only eligible in relation to new personnel, whose contract is signed or amended after the date of contract signature. Can you please clarify?</p>	<p>The general rule for EU financing is that any costs incurred before the date of submission are ineligible. Furthermore, the LIFE General Conditions (art. II.19.1) clarify that only costs incurred after the start date of the project (or after the signature date if this is before the start date) are considered eligible. (In line with the EU Financial Regulation, the project start date may never be before the date of submission of the proposal.) For personnel costs to be considered eligible, they must meet an additional requirement, namely that the staff are 'new'. "New" is defined on page 30 of the application guide (in the instructions related to form F1) as meaning that the personnel was newly recruited or newly assigned to LIFE related tasks for the first time as of the date of signature of the grant agreement. This definition of "new" gives legal certainty regarding the 100% eligibility of</p>
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		<p>these costs from the grant signature onwards as opposed to the ineligibility of non-new personnel. However, in order to align more closely the notion 'new' personnel with the definition of 'additional' personnel in article II.19.2(a) iii of the General Conditions, it should be noted that staff will be considered as 'new' if the personnel was newly recruited or newly assigned to LIFE related tasks for the first time as of the date of signature of the grant agreement or from the date of the start of the project if that is before the signature date</p>
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