



**Guidelines for applicants**

**LIFE Integrated Projects 2020**

**Environment and Climate Action sub-programmes**

Dear applicants, taking into account the impact of the outbreak of Covid-19 on our society, we understand that the preparation of your application for the 2020 call for proposals might prove to be more challenging this year. Therefore, we have decided to grant you more time than usual to prepare and submit your concept note. Please note that the application deadlines mentioned in this document take into account this additional extension. We trust that the additional time will help you establish your project consortium and gather all the necessary information. Please note that, for the submission of concept notes, no administrative and/or physically signed declarations are requested, the submission is entirely electronic. We are looking forward to receiving your LIFE applications.

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The current guidelines apply to the preparation of proposals for Integrated Projects (*in the areas of nature, water, waste, air under the sub-programme for environment; and climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation under the sub-programme for climate action*) to be submitted to the Contracting Authority in 2020. They are intended to help the applicants to prepare the content of the project proposal.

This document only applies to 2020 call for LIFE integrated project proposals under the sub-programme for environment and sub-programme for climate action. Separate guidance documents are available on the LIFE web page for other LIFE 2020 calls.

The current guidelines are part of the call for proposals application package 2020 which also includes the following documents that should be carefully read before submitting a LIFE proposal:

- Guide for the evaluation of LIFE Integrated Project proposals
- Grant Agreement model for Integrated Projects

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For those familiar with the previous year call for proposals, the 2020 call has several relevant updates:

- more time for applications;
- electronic submission of concept note;
- slightly increased overall budget per program;
- update on Brexit;
- increased financial support to third parties;
- simplified project phases approach (see section 1.10.10);
- updated references to legislation and policies;
- clarification on complementary funding;
- increased emphasis on the policy plan or strategy implementation;
- updated financial instructions and simplified financial forms;
- concept note technical form without coordinating beneficiary declaration and other minor updates in that form and full proposal technical form.

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## TABLE OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
AQP	Air Quality Plan
CN	Concept Note
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETS	Emissions Trading System
IP	Integrated Project
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
MAWP	LIFE Multiannual Work Programme
NCFF	Natural Capital Financing Facility
PAF	Prioritised Action Framework
PIC	Participant Identification Code
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
VAT	Value Added Tax
WMP	Waste Management Plan
WPP	Waste Prevention Programme

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 What is LIFE?

**LIFE** is the European Programme for the Environment and Climate Action, for the period from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2020. The legal basis for LIFE is Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as "the LIFE Regulation").

The LIFE Programme is structured in two sub-programmes: the sub-programme for environment and the sub-programme for climate action.

The **sub-programme for environment** covers three priority areas:

- ***LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency***
- ***LIFE Nature and Biodiversity***
- ***LIFE Environmental Governance and Information***

The thematic priorities for each priority area are further described in Annex III to the LIFE Regulation.

The **sub-programme for climate action** covers three priority areas:

- ***LIFE Climate Change Mitigation***
- ***LIFE Climate Change Adaptation***
- ***LIFE Climate Governance and Information***

The overall financial envelope for the implementation of the LIFE Programme is EUR 3.457 Billion, 75% of which is allocated to the sub-programme for environment (EUR 2,592,491,250) and 25% of which is allocated to the sub-programme for climate action (EUR 864,163,750).

According to Article 17(4) of the LIFE Regulation, at least 81% of the total budget shall be allocated to projects supported by way of action grants or, where appropriate, financial instruments. The second LIFE Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP) covering the period 2018-2020 foresees a budget of EUR 1 243,81 million for the sub-programme for environment and EUR 413,25 million for the sub-programme for climate action<sup>2</sup>.

During the 2014-2020 period, the Contracting Authority will launch one call for LIFE project proposals per year.

### 1.2 What are Integrated Projects?

#### ***Definition***

Integrated Projects (hereinafter 'IPs') are defined in Article 2 of the LIFE Regulation and are further specified in the MAWP:

**IPs** are projects implementing on a large territorial scale, in particular, regional<sup>3</sup>, multi-regional, national or trans-national scale, **environmental or climate plans or**

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, published in the Official Journal L 347/185 of 20 December 2013  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0185:0208:EN:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> Contracting Authority Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/210 of 12 February 2018 on the adoption of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018D0210&from=EN>

<sup>3</sup> Implementation at local level for the case of local air quality plans is an exception, please see section 2.1

**strategies required by specific Union environmental or climate legislation**, developed pursuant to other Union acts or developed by Member States' authorities, while ensuring involvement of stakeholders and promoting the coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other relevant Union, national or private funding source.

For **both sub-programmes**, the **LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020** defines for each of the areas **nature, water, air, waste, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation** the specific related plans under EU legislation, which are to be implemented through IPs.

IPs shall aim **towards the full implementation of the targeted plan or strategy**. This does not mean that the IP will cover all actions foreseen in the plan or that the plan will be fully implemented during the lifetime of the IP. However, the IP shall include strategic actions **to catalyse a process and mobilise supplementary commitments and funding** that will lead, in due time, to the full implementation of the plan or strategy. The IP should therefore be designed in a way to address this long term objective.

The actual full implementation of the given plan or strategy would then happen through complementary measures or actions financed outside of the IP, using other available funding (Union, national or private). Some of these complementary measures or actions are expected to be linked to the IP implementation, while others might be carried out after its end. It is in general expected that beneficiaries of grants for LIFE IPs – together with other relevant actors in charge of the complementary actions – **commit to implement the targeted plan** and in particular that the relevant actors undertake to implement at least those complementary actions that are foreseen in the IP proposal as actions closely linked to the IP itself.

IPs shall **promote the coordination with and mobilisation of other relevant Union, national or private funding sources** for the implementation of the complementary measures or actions outside of the IP in the framework of the targeted plan or strategy, giving preference to Union funding. **Within the IP itself, however, co-funding may not come from other Union funding sources.**

IPs are expected to **demonstrate** effective and well-coordinated implementation of a plan or strategy in a given geographical area to realise Union environmental / climate objectives, and provide examples of how to replicate success in other geographical areas within that Member State or in other Member States.

IPs should include **a high quality multi-purpose delivery mechanism** (e.g. aiming at environmental and climate benefits and capacity-building) that make it possible to achieve results in other policy areas<sup>4</sup>, to create synergies with these policies and to integrate environmental and climate action objectives into them.

IPs shall ensure that the **main stakeholders are actively involved** in the design and implementation of the given project. This involvement is expected to be achieved by including them - where possible and reasonable - as associated beneficiaries of the IP, or through their active participation in the implementation of the IP itself and/or of the complementary actions.

The design of IPs and the composition of the project partnership is again expected to facilitate and result in the **building up of strategic capacities** among the competent authorities and stakeholders to ensure a **long term sustainability** of project results and

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<sup>4</sup> In particular the marine environment in accordance with the objectives of Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive), OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19.

actions, and to ensure that they will be able to function as co-deliverers of the targeted plan or strategy after the end of the IP.

### 1.3 Scope of Integrated Projects for the period 2018-2020

#### 1.3.1 General

In line with the priorities laid down in the LIFE Regulation, the LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020 specifies that IPs under the **sub-programme for environment** shall aim at co-funding actions with the main purpose of **helping Member States and regional/local authorities in the implementation of the following specific set of strategic environmental plans or strategies**:

- **Nature IPs**: should aim at the implementation of Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAF) elaborated pursuant to Article 8 of the Habitats Directive<sup>5</sup> which may include Green Infrastructure actions that contribute to the coherence of the Natura 2000 network in a cross-border context;
- **Water IPs**: should aim at the implementation of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) pursuant to the Annex VII to the Water Framework Directive<sup>6</sup>;
- **Waste IPs**: should aim at the implementation of Waste Management Plans (WMP) or Waste Prevention Programs (WPP), as required by articles 28 and 29 of the Waste Framework Directive<sup>7</sup>, respectively; and
- **Air IPs**: should aim at the implementation of Air Quality Plans (AQPs) developed pursuant to the Air Quality Directive<sup>8</sup> or national air pollution control programmes pursuant to the National Emission Ceilings Directive<sup>9</sup>.

In line with the priorities laid down in the LIFE Regulation, the LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020 specifies that IPs under the **sub-programme for climate action** shall aim at co-funding actions with the main purpose of **helping Member States and regional/local authorities as well as main stakeholders in the implementation of the following specific set of strategic climate plans or strategies**:

- **Climate change adaptation IPs**: should aim at the implementation of national, regional or local specific adaptation strategy or action plan;
- **Urban climate change mitigation and/or adaptation IPs**: should aim at the implementation of urban or community-based action plan pioneering the transition to a low carbon and/or climate resilient society; and

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<sup>5</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7).

<sup>6</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1).

<sup>7</sup> Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3)

<sup>8</sup> Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1)

<sup>9</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC (OJ L 344, 17.12.2016, p. 1 )

- **Climate change mitigation IPs:** national, regional or industry-/sector-specific greenhouse gas mitigation strategy or low carbon economy roadmap.

Projects financed by the LIFE Programme under one priority area **shall avoid undermining environmental or climate objectives in another priority area** and shall promote synergies between different objectives, improving the functioning of ecosystems and provision of their services as well as the use of green public procurement.

### 1.3.2 Multi-purpose mechanism, synergies and integration:

In order to fulfil the requirement for IPs to include high quality multi-purpose delivery mechanisms, IP proposals should present comprehensive projects that will deliver on their core objective (increased biodiversity, better air quality, good water status, better managed waste, increased climate resilience and/or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions) and do so in a way that also delivers benefits for other environmental and climate objectives<sup>10</sup>. In this respect the following aspects may be relevant:

#### Sub-programme for environment

- for **Nature IPs** dealing with the implementation of PAFs for Natura 2000, their contribution to other targets of the EU biodiversity strategy as well as the achievement of 'good environmental status' under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and for achieving Water Framework Directive objectives like the:

- evaluation, assessment and restoration of ecosystems and their services,
- increase of the contribution of agriculture and forestry to biodiversity,
- reduction of the impact of fisheries and of other uses of marine and coastal natural resources on biodiversity,
- monitoring, prevention, eradication and control Invasive Alien Species

- for **Water IPs** dealing with the implementation of RBMPs and their proposed actions such as targeted afforestation, wetland creation, re-instatement of floodplains, their contribution towards good status of inland waters, carbon sequestration, reduction of nutrient flows to marine waters, reduction to flood risk and support for improvements in terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity.

- for **Waste IPs** dealing with the implementation of WMPs and/or Waste Prevention Programmes (WPPs), their contribution to the objectives set in the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM(2011) 571), the Communication on the Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan (COM/2008/0397) and the Communication on the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials (COM(2012) 82) and its Strategic Implementation Plan adopted on 25/09/2013. Where relevant, specific attention should also be given to marine litter.

- for **Air IPs** dealing with the implementation of AQPs, their contribution to multiple requirements of the EU Air Quality Strategy (including contributions to National Air Pollution Reduction Programmes), to the urban dimension, to energy consumption, transport and to agricultural practice through e.g.:

- contribution to decreasing concentrations of multiple pollutants (PM, NO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>) at the same time,

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<sup>10</sup> in particular the marine environment in accordance with the objectives of Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive), OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19.



- contribution to reaching limit values in regional AQPs under Directive 2008/50/EC as well as to reducing emission for reaching compliance with the new National Emission Ceilings Reduction Commitments at national level at the same time,
- reduction of noise problems by linking them to or integrating them into a Sustainable Urban Mobility strategy and/or noise plan,
- encouragement of innovative local and regional energy projects addressing air quality PM hotspots in areas with continued high use of coal and biomass burning heating applications,
- promotion of innovative and high quality biomass burning applications and their proper use,
- reduction of energy consumption by being linked to or integrated in the national Energy Efficiency Action Plans mentioned in Directive 2012/27/EU,
- support to the implementation of the UNECE code of Good Practice for reducing emissions from agriculture which should also contribute to minimising the losses of agricultural emissions to water.

Also, projects showing synergies with actions financed or submitted for financing under the LIFE sub-programme for climate action will be considered for higher scoring, particularly if these synergies are expected to have a positive effect on biodiversity protection.

#### Sub-programme for climate action

- for IPs dealing with the implementation of **climate change adaptation strategies or action plans**, their contribution to the objectives of the EU Adaptation Strategy, including ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation as well as support for improvements in biodiversity and nature conservation. Moreover, contributions to climate change mitigation and improved governance and capacity building in climate change as well as mainstreaming adaptation objectives across different sectors are relevant.

- for IPs dealing with the implementation of **urban action plans implementing the transition to a low carbon and/or climate resilient society**, their contribution to the implementation of the 'Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy' and 'Mayors Adapt'. Moreover, contributions to improved governance, awareness raising and capacity building as well as mainstreaming climate change action across different policy areas are relevant.

- for IPs dealing with the implementation of **greenhouse gas mitigation strategies, action plans or low carbon economy roadmaps**, their contribution to the implementation and development of Union policy and legislation on climate change mitigation including the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), the Effort Sharing Decision for sectors not covered by the EU ETS, the Renewable Energy Sources (RES) Directive, the Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases and the decision governing the inclusion of emissions and removals related to Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). Moreover, contributions to climate change adaptation, improved governance and capacity building in climate change as well as mainstreaming mitigation objectives across different policy areas are relevant.

Also, projects showing synergies with actions financed or submitted for financing under the LIFE sub-programme for environment will be considered for higher scoring, particularly if these synergies are expected to have a positive effect on climate resilience and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

In case of both sub-programmes, projects financed under one priority area that might undermine environmental or climate objectives in another priority area will likely receive a lower score unless this impact is clearly explained and justified in the proposal in the context of overall ecosystem service provision and mitigation measures have been correctly foreseen.

Furthermore, all projects will also be evaluated with regard to their contribution to economic and social objectives.

### **1.3.3 Replicability and transferability:**

Replicability and transferability is the potential of the project to be replicated in other regions of the same Member State or in other Member States during and after the implementation of the IP. Successful replication and transferability requires a clear plan at the outset, an evaluation strategy, a capacity building strategy (skills, communication, funding) and a legacy strategy that will reach critical mass during the project and/or in a short and medium term perspective after the end of the LIFE project.

This goes beyond transfer of knowledge and networking, and involves putting the techniques, methods or strategies developed or applied in the project into practice elsewhere. It may be achieved by implementing some of the IP actions only within a limited part of the IP project area (e.g. in the case of Air IPs only in 1 of the 5 cities participating in the overall IP) and replicating those via complementary actions in the entire area covered by the IP (e.g. all 5 cities) and by the plan (e.g. the entire region or country). For water IPs, having trialled a range of river restoration measures on a large scale in the IP, the most successful measures (that deliver widest ecosystem and societal benefits) would be included into other RBMPs through the most relevant EU or national funds in other regions in the next planning cycle.

For a climate change adaptation IP, having trialled a range of adaptation measures on a large scale in the IP, the most successful measures (that deliver widest ecosystem and societal benefits) shall be applied in the entire area covered by the IP and by the plan (e.g. the entire region or country) or in other regions or Member States.

## **1.4 Funding of Integrated Projects**

### ***Budget***

There is no fixed minimum size for IP budgets. Beneficiaries should, however, be aware that considering their scale, the proposals for IPs are expected to be **large and ambitious with a substantial budget** that well exceeds the average LIFE grant size awarded to LIFE "traditional projects".

It is foreseen that the LIFE programme would contribute – on average – EUR 10 million to each IP (e.g. the total project budget could be around EUR 17 million).

Applicants should be aware that based on the availability of funds for the given budgetary year, and considering the number of proposals eligible for funding, the requested contribution under the LIFE programme may have to be decreased. This can especially be the case when that request is beyond the above mentioned average LIFE contribution.

Please note that the **total indicative budget available for 2020 call for IPs under the sub-programme for environment is about EUR 103 million and under the sub-programme for climate action it is about EUR 35 million.**

### ***Co-financing rate for Integrated Projects***

The **maximum co-financing rate from LIFE for the IPs is 60% of the total eligible project costs**. The remaining 40% of the cost shall be covered fully by the own contributions of the project beneficiaries or supplemented by co-financers. In order to avoid any potential double-funding of projects using EU funds, **no other EU funds may be used to contribute to this 40%**. This means that the specific actions targeted and co-financed by LIFE funds cannot receive co-financing from any other EU fund.

**N.B.:** Financial obligations resulting from application of the "polluter-pays-principle", such as fines or obligatory compensation payments for damage to the environment, will under no circumstances be co-funded under LIFE.

***Mobilisation of and complementarity with other funds***

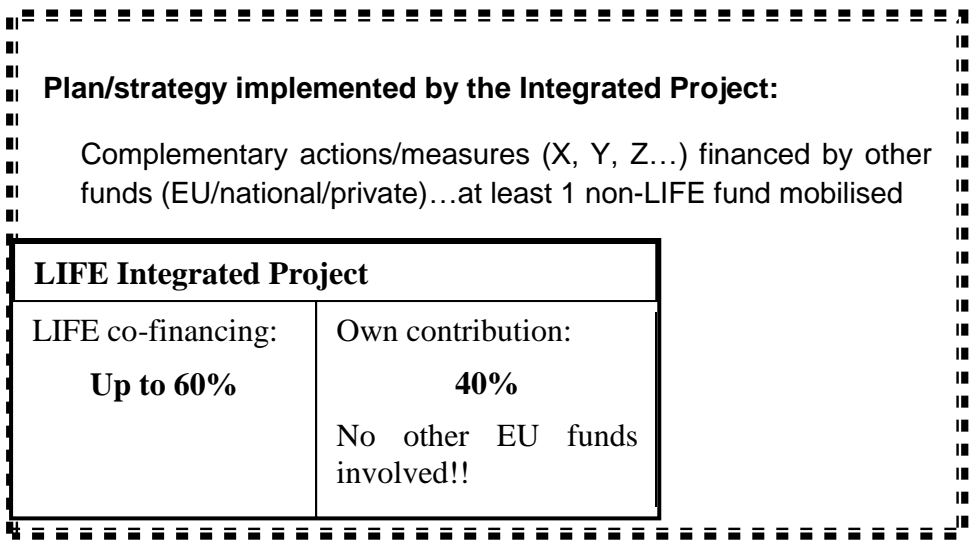
One of the fundamental characteristics of IPs is that they have to **mobilise at the proposal stage and engage with other (EU, national or private) funds for the financing of complementary measures or actions within the targeted plan or strategy, but outside of the IP itself**. Financing from other EU funds can - and is in fact expected - to be used for this purpose.

Conditions to consider an action as complementary and a fund as mobilised are discussed in the following pages.

The proposal for an IP should therefore not only identify the funds that will contribute to the project itself, but should also provide **a summary description of the complementary actions that will be carried out during the IP period by using funding sources mobilised in addition to the LIFE project**.

Please remember that an IP **must** be able to **mobilise at least one** relevant Union, national or private funding source **other than LIFE** to finance complementary actions needed for the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy. However, during the IP other LIFE projects may be part of the complementary actions contributing to the plan's implementation.

The general concept of an IP is illustrated in the following schematic diagram:



Accordingly, applicants should design the LIFE IPs by **selecting from the targeted plan or strategy a coherent set of measures or actions for which LIFE is the most appropriate funding source**. Other complementary measures or actions should be largely financed using other (Union, national or private) funding sources and should be implemented in complement to the LIFE interventions.

In particular, the LIFE Programme should be complementary to **other major Union funding** programmes, including the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, INTERREG, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and Horizon 2020 (the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation). At the same time other financial instruments such as JESSICA, Natural Capital Financing Facility<sup>11</sup> (NCFF), etc. can also provide complementary funding, even though NCFF – being supported by LIFE – will not be considered as a mobilised fund.

In addition to these EU funding sources, international (e.g. EFTA, UNESCO funds, etc.), national or private donors will be equally considered. Please note that international, national, and private funds can also contribute co-financing to the 40% of the eligible costs of the IP itself, which have to be provided by its beneficiary/ies.

Complementary actions shall always implement **the same large scale plan or strategy** that the IP is targeting. This **complementarity** could take the form of:

- **Actions similar** to those financed by the LIFE IP, but implemented on **a different geographical area**. Activities implemented in the framework of the IP would thus be replicated at a larger scale. This would allow solving a given set of critical issues possibly in the entire area covered by the plan (e.g. ensuring removal of all barriers to fish migration from source to sea in a river basin or sub-catchment).
- **Actions different** from but **complementary** to those implemented in the framework of the LIFE IP, implemented in the **same geographical area** as the IP. This would allow the implementation of a broader range of actions foreseen in the plan/strategy in this area (e.g. to restore rivers, 10 m buffers could be established through rural development programmes, fish barriers removed through fisheries funds and restoration of floodplains could be implemented in certain locations through LIFE funding.)

In most cases, in order to ensure the largest possible impact by the LIFE IP and complementary actions, **a combination** of the above described **two** forms of complementarity is expected.

The quality of the coordination with other funding mechanism(s) and the level of mobilisation of complementary funds as well as the likelihood of their actual mobilisation and their functional link to the plan to be implemented will have an impact on the evaluation of the **EU added value** of the IP.

It is therefore important to highlight that for the purposes of the IP proposal, complementary funding can only be considered to be "**mobilised**" if such funding:

- has not been granted to or spent by one of the beneficiaries of the IP before the launch of this call for applications. In exceptional cases and having explicit justifications from the applicants, funds granted before that date can also be accepted but under no circumstances will funds granted or spent before the launch of the LIFE2018 call (18/04/2018) be accepted; and
- has been committed/confirmed by the relevant funding source by the time of the submission of the full proposal and evidenced by **a formal letter of intent (i.e. A8 form)** signed by the competent body representing the funding source **clearly**

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<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/financial\\_instruments/ncff.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/financial_instruments/ncff.htm)

**confirming the availability or the actual commitment of the complementary funding; or**

- in the absence of an actual commitment/confirmation by the time of the full proposal, **a formal letter of intent** has been signed by the competent body representing the funding source referred to by the applicant, **confirming the potential eligibility of the actions proposed by the applicant** for funding from this source and indicating **the timing and likelihood of a future funding commitment**.

If, for objective reasons, such as the timing of application periods of other funds, these general requirements for a "mobilisation of additional funding sources" are not met, the applicants must provide – at the latest **with their full proposal** – an appropriate justification for the lack of a formal commitment or letter of intent regarding the funds concerned.

**In any case, for the application to be eligible, at least one letter of intent clearly confirming the availability or the actual commitment of the complementary funding to be mobilised has to be submitted with the full proposal.**

While fulfilling the requirement for mobilisation of funding for complementary actions, applicants must comply with the provisions of Article 8 of the LIFE Regulation. Accordingly, "activities supported from the LIFE Programme must ensure consistency and synergies, and avoid overlap with other funding programmes of the Union. In particular, the Contracting Authority and the Member States must ensure coordination with the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and Horizon 2020."

It is essential therefore that, prior to submitting their IP Concept Note and full proposal, beneficiaries check thoroughly whether the actions proposed within the IP itself **are already or could be more appropriately funded** through other EU funds.

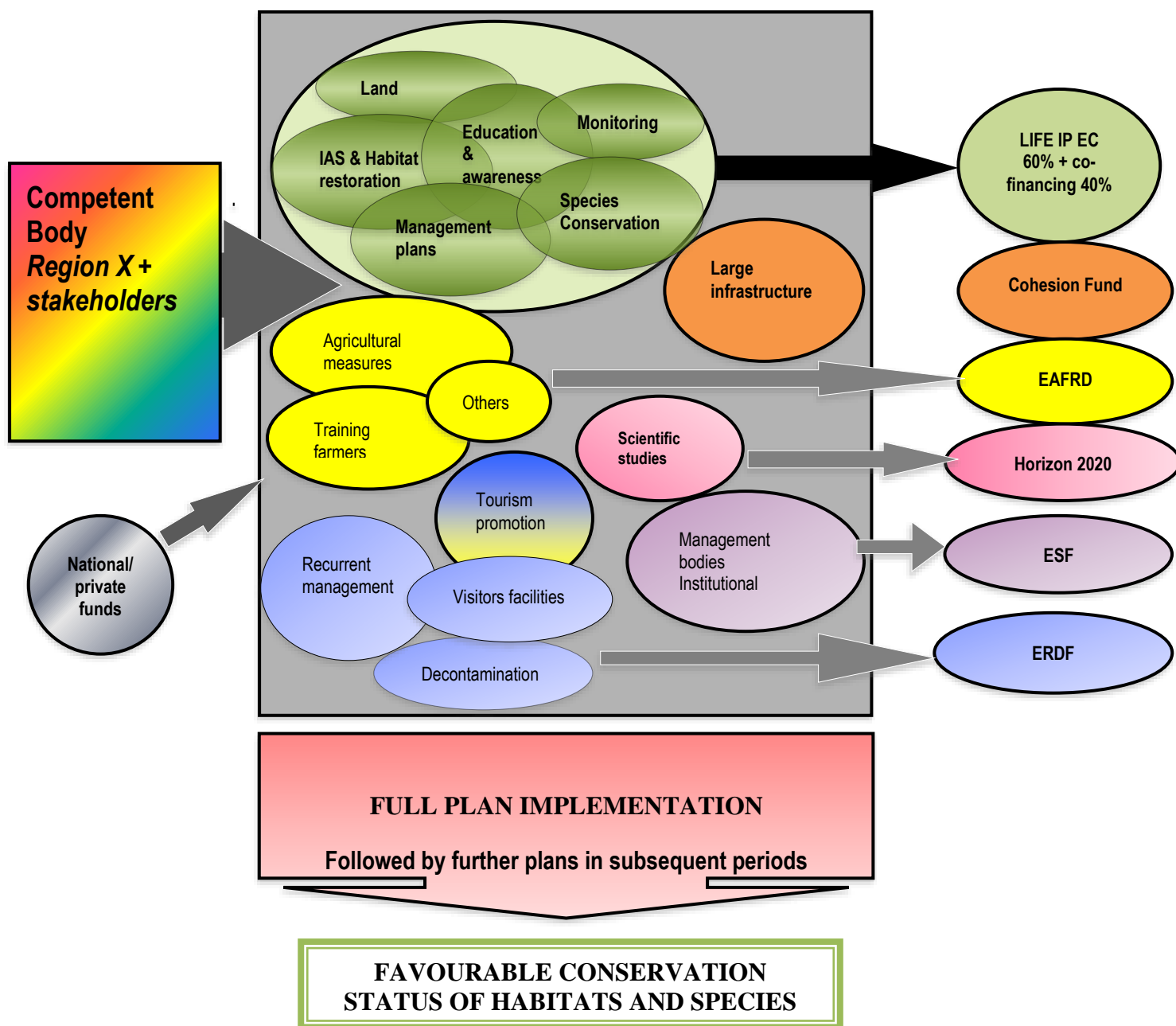
In addition, at the project revision stage, the relevant national authority may also be required to indicate the steps it has taken to ensure the coordination of LIFE funding with and complementarity to other EU funding programmes.

Besides the mobilised funding (i.e. signed A8 form(s)), most likely, there will be the range of complementary funds relevant to the IP and the policy plan or strategy implementation that are and will be implemented in parallel to the IP. These funds are very relevant and should be listed in the proposal and counted towards the complementary funds of the IP, as they will help to implement the plan or strategy. The level of engagement with these funds will differ from project to project. **Examples**

The concept of an IP and complementary actions and funding is demonstrated in the following schematic diagrams that give examples of the implementation of a PAF, a RBMP and a Climate Change Adaptation Plan using LIFE funds and mobilising other funding sources for the implementation of the actions foreseen in the plan for a given period.

## Diagram 1: Implementation of a PAF

The competent body responsible for the implementation of the PAF submits an IP proposal under LIFE covering specific activities of the PAF. The proposal also shows how other funds (at least 1) will be used to finance complementary activities.

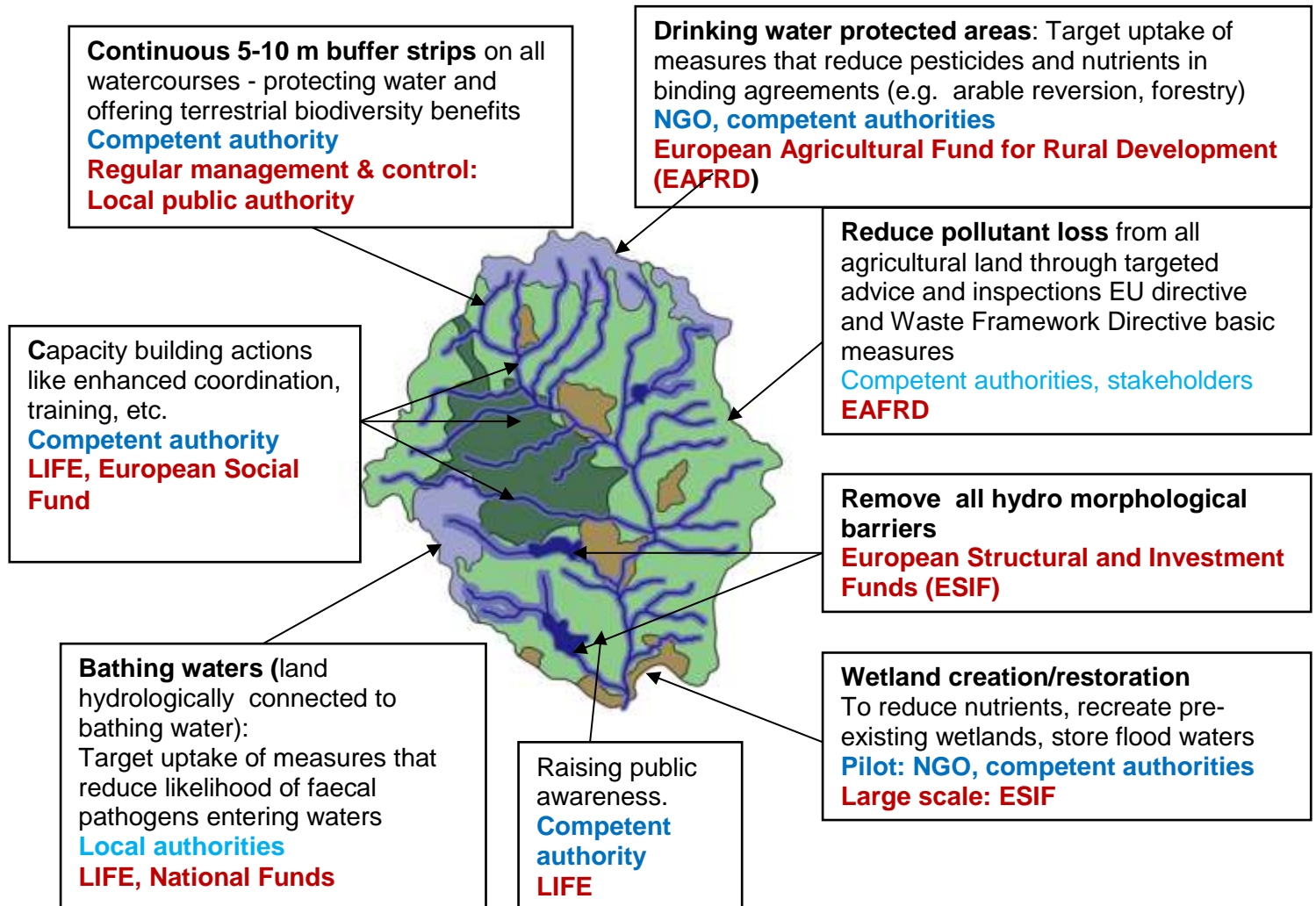


This diagram only details the involvement and mobilisation of various EU funds, but national or private programs and funds could also finance these or other complementary interventions in order to implement the given plan or strategy at regional or national level.

An IP and its complementary activities are only a step of an evolutionary process that has already started before and will continue afterwards through subsequent iterations of planning and implementation activities. The final goal of this process for a Nature IP is the favourable conservation status for all habitats and species. The same logic applies to any IP even though the final objectives may differ.

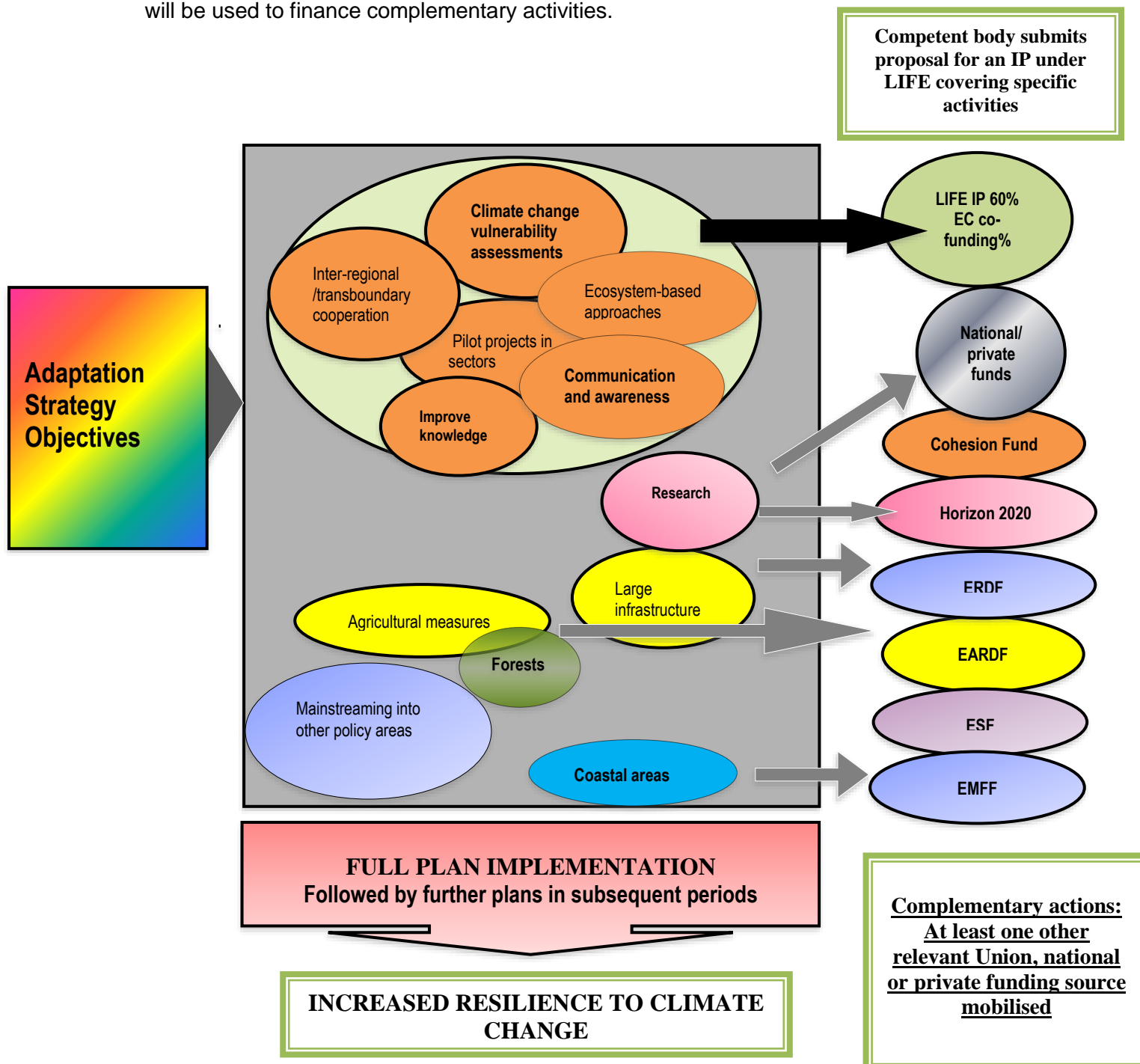
## Diagram 2: Implementation of a RBMP

Competent body responsible for the implementation of a RBMP submits an IP proposal under LIFE covering specific activities of the RBMP. Proposal also shows how other funds (at least 1) will be used to finance complementary activities.



**Diagram 3: Implementation of a climate change adaptation strategy**

The competent body responsible for the implementation of the climate change adaptation strategy submits an IP proposal under LIFE covering specific activities of the adaptation action plan. The proposal also shows how other funds (at least 1 mobilised) will be used to finance complementary activities.



This diagram details the involvement and mobilisation of various EU funds. National or private programs and funds can also finance complementary interventions in order to implement the given plan or strategy.

An IP and its complementary activities are only a step of an evolutionary process that has already started before and will continue afterwards through subsequent iterations of planning and implementation activities. The final goal of this process for a Climate



Change Adaptation IP is increased climate resilience. The same logic applies to Climate Change Mitigation IPs even though the final objectives may differ.

### 1.5 What is the application process for Integrated Projects?

The submission and selection process for IPs has been designed based on a **two stage procedure** as foreseen in the LIFE Regulation. The details of this process as well as the specific eligibility and award criteria are defined in the LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020. The process should facilitate the work of potential applicants and ensure that they receive the best possible guidance from the Contracting Authority during the process and thus optimise the quality of the projects that will eventually receive LIFE financing. The workflow is structured in a way to accompany the progressive development and fine-tuning of each proposal.

#### Stage 1 - Submission of a Concept Note:

The applicant shall submit a **Concept Note** for the project that should:

- summarize the context and indicate the geographical location(s) of the project;
- present the main objectives of the project;
- describe the main actions and means foreseen for the implementation of the IP itself together with their overall costs (so not an itemized budget) for the whole project period;
- summarise the related complementary actions (implemented outside of the IP and for which complementary funding is foreseen);
- outline the expected contribution to the implementation of the plan/strategy;
- describe the qualitative and quantitative expected results (main outputs and achievements);
- indicate the potential beneficiaries and stakeholders expected to be involved;
- provide summary information on the long term sustainability (including capacity building) aspects;
- describe expected major constraints and risks.

**The following** should be attached to the Concept Note:

- A full copy of the **relevant plan or strategy** (as specified in section 1.3.1) the IP aims to implement. The plan or strategy should have been formally adopted by the competent authority by the time of the submission of the Concept Note and be considered by the European Commission as being of acceptable quality. In case formal adoption has not yet taken place, the applicant has to provide a note explaining the status of adoption and the expected date of adoption. In such a case **the adoption must happen before the deadline for the submission of the full IP proposal**. When no formal adoption is foreseen, the applicant should demonstrate that the plan has completed all procedural steps foreseen in the legal base for it to be considered as final. In case of Nature IPs, the PAF officially submitted to the European Commission is considered as the relevant plan.
- **A financial plan** (according to form CNf) describing the overall financing of the project and demonstrating the mobilisation of funds (other than LIFE) for the implementation of measures or actions complementary to the IP within the targeted plan or strategy. The financial plan, where appropriate, shall take into account the financing arrangements foreseen in the plan or strategy being implemented.

Section 3.2 of the current guide contains information on how to fill in the forms for the Concept Note (CN forms). Other supporting documents beyond the plan/strategy and financial plan - such as maps, photos, diagrams, graphs, etc. - may also be submitted as deemed necessary by the applicant.

## **Stage 2 – Submission of the full Integrated Project proposal**

If the Concept Note is retained by the Contracting Authority, the applicants concerned will be invited to submit a full proposal including all forms duly completed as foreseen in Section 3 of this guide. Following the issuance of invitations to submit full proposals, there will be a written question and answer phase to allow applicants to clarify doubts, with the resulting information made available to all invited applicants.

The full proposal should in particular:

- provide details on the context and specify the geographical location(s) of the IP;
- specify the associated beneficiaries and the stakeholders expected to be involved, including the roles they will play in delivery of the project;
- present the objectives of the project;
- describe the actions and means foreseen for the implementation of the IP itself together with their budgeted costs;
- describe the qualitative and quantitative expected results (outputs and achievements) of the IP;
- provide a summary of the above listed aspects also for the related complementary actions (implemented outside of the IP and for which complementary funding is foreseen);
- provide detailed information on the long term sustainability of the project, including capacity building aspects.

In order to demonstrate the availability of funds intended to be mobilised by the applicants to finance complementary actions, letters of intent (A8 forms) signed by the managing authority/entity of the relevant funding source must be submitted with the full proposal. The letters of intent must indicate the status of the financial commitment by **clearly confirming the availability or the actual commitment of the complementary funding, or by confirming the eligibility of the (potential) funding request** and the likelihood of it being granted, as well as the expected (and if applicable maximum) amount to be granted, and indicating the timing and likelihood of a future funding commitment

**Please note that in order for the application to be eligible at least one letter of intent clearly confirming the availability or the actual commitment of the complementary funding has to be submitted with the full proposal.**

While the full proposal should in principle be a detailed follow-up of the Concept Note, for the purposes of improvement it may differ in content, including the duration of the project or the partnership structure.

The applicants must resubmit the underlying plan/strategy with the full proposal **only in case a new updated version has been adopted since the submission of the Concept Note**. In such a case, re-submission is compulsory.

In case the underlying plan/strategy was not adopted at the time of the Concept Note it must be formally adopted prior to the submission of the full proposal and be attached to it (with the exceptions discussed in the previous sub-section (Stage 1)).

*When preparing the proposal, the applicants are encouraged to consult the relevant LIFE National Contact Point; the complete list of the names and contact addresses can be found on the LIFE website at*

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/life-national-contact-points>

The individual grant agreements are expected to be signed in **October 2021** (for a detailed timetable, see **Annex 1**).

### **1.6 Who may submit a Concept Note and/or a proposal for an Integrated Project?**

While other LIFE project proposals may be submitted by any legal person registered in the European Union, in the case of IPs, it is strongly recommended that **the competent authority or entity responsible for the implementation of the plan or strategy targeted by the IP** submits both the Concept Note and the full proposal. In any case, the competent authority must take part in the project as a beneficiary (coordinating or associated). If the grant is awarded, the organisation submitting the Concept Note and/or the proposal for an IP would become the coordinating beneficiary.

In exceptional and well justified cases, the applicant submitting the full proposal may be different from the one that submitted the Concept Note (e.g. in the case of restructuring of the public administration in the given country/region; or if during the evaluation process of the Concept Note, a more appropriate authority/entity to lead the project is identified).

Applicants may fall under one of the following three categories: (1) *public bodies*, (2) *private commercial organisations* and (3) *private non-commercial organisations* (including NGOs).

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 applicable 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 "Public body declaration" (form A3a).

The applicant must demonstrate its legal status (by completing application form A2) confirming a legal registration in the EU.

Please refer to the '*Guide for the Evaluation of LIFE Integrated Project proposals 2020*' for full details regarding the compulsory administrative documents that are required with the proposal depending on the legal status of the coordinating beneficiary.

### **1.7 Who may participate in an Integrated Project?**

Once a proposal has been accepted for LIFE co-funding, the applicant will become the **coordinating beneficiary** which will be the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority and the only beneficiary to report directly to the Contracting Authority on the project's technical and financial progress.

The coordinating beneficiary receives the EU financial contribution from the Contracting Authority and ensures its distribution as specified in the partnership agreements established with the associated beneficiaries. 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.

In addition to the coordinating beneficiary, in view of the requirement to actively involve the key stakeholders, an IP proposal has to include one or more **associated beneficiaries in order to be eligible**. The nature and range of beneficiaries should bring an added value to the project, strengthen the feasibility or the demonstration character of the proposal, its European added value and/or the transferability of its results and lessons learnt. The composition of the project partnership (beneficiaries) should also take into account the long term sustainability of the project results and activities as well as the requirement for **capacity building** ensuring the eventual implementation of the entire plan/strategy.

While keeping in mind this expectation, the project applicants should avoid exceeding a reasonable number of beneficiaries so as to ensure that the activities of the project can still be efficiently managed. In case the number of stakeholders is found to be beyond this reasonable level, a form of involvement other than as associated beneficiary needs to be sought. The coordinating beneficiary, when preparing the full proposal, may decide to change the composition or list of associated beneficiaries compared to the foreseen in the Concept Note.

Each associated beneficiary must 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. Furthermore, it must provide the coordinating beneficiary with all the necessary documents required for the fulfilment of its reporting obligations to the Contracting Authority.

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 public administration's 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 these undertakings.

For private beneficiaries, the Contracting Authority may accept that **affiliated entities to a beneficiary** participate in a project as long as all conditions listed in the Model Grant Agreement and its Annex X (Financial and Administrative Guidelines) are fulfilled. However, the association of entities as affiliates may complicate the project structure and thus have a negative impact on the technical and financial coherence of the project. It is therefore entirely in the Contracting Authority's administrative discretion to accept affiliates, and in no case will affiliated entities be accepted for public beneficiaries.

An **associated beneficiary** may be legally registered outside the EU, provided that the coordinating beneficiary is based within the EU. Any activities to be carried out outside the EU must be necessary to achieve EU environmental / climate objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply. To this end the proposal should include detailed and tangible evidence showing that the actions foreseen outside the EU are indeed necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the work done in the EU. Only if such evidence is provided will work outside the EU be considered eligible.

All associated beneficiaries must show their legal status (by completing application form A5) and provide full information on the Member State or third country in which they are registered. In addition, all beneficiaries, whether registered or not in the EU must declare that they are not in any of the situations foreseen under Article 136(1),

136(4) and 141 of the EU Financial Regulation<sup>12</sup> (by signing the application form A3 or A4 – see instructions in section 3 of this document).

Besides associated beneficiaries one or more project **co-financers** may also be involved to cover the cost of the project.

If you plan to engage young volunteers for specific actions, please consider applying for the European Solidarity Corps calls. The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) offers young people aged from 18 up to 30 years old the chance to support a non-governmental organisation (NGO), local authority or private company active in addressing challenging situations across the European Union. For further information: [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/organisation\\_info\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/organisation_info_en). A **project co-financer** only contributes to the project with financial resources but has no technical responsibilities and cannot benefit from the EU financial contribution. Furthermore, it cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor to any of the project's beneficiaries.

Project proposals involving business-sector co-financing will be favourably considered during the evaluation process where this co-financing contributes to the probable sustainability of the project results.

Free of charge support from entities established in non-EU countries and cooperation with international organisations is also possible provided it is functional to the project objectives.

For specific tasks of a fixed duration, a proposal may foresee the use of **sub-contractors**. Sub-contractors provide external services to the project beneficiaries who fully pay for the services provided. Beneficiaries (including their affiliated entities) may not act as sub-contractors. Sub-contractors should normally not be identified by name in the proposal; if they are, the conditions on external assistance set in the Grant Agreement must still be respected.

Note that, entities which are not associated beneficiaries may not benefit from the LIFE financing. Changes in the partnership such as the introduction of a new associated beneficiary will involve a formal amendment to the grant agreement.

For a more detailed description of the respective rules related to the coordinating beneficiary, associated beneficiaries, affiliates, co-financers and sub-contractors, please refer to model grant agreement applicable to LIFE IPs.

For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement<sup>13</sup> on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in the United Kingdom.

UK legal persons are therefore eligible to participate under this call.

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<sup>12</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1

<sup>13</sup> Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community

## 1.8 How, where and when to submit a proposal?

LIFE applicants must submit their IP Concept Notes and, if invited, IP full proposals, using the forms included in this application guide and attaching all relevant documents.

### 1.8.1. Concept Note submission

Concept Note submission is fully **electronic**.

The proposal (all files) shall be sent to [EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu) . If the files are too large (>10 MB), please provide a download link. Otherwise you may risk that the message is not received.

**Confirmation of receipt** of the Concept Note will be sent by e-mail to the applicants indicating also the allocated LIFE project reference number.

**Concept Notes** have to be submitted no later than **06 October 2020**.

### 1.8.2. Full proposal submission

Full proposal submission is **physical**.

The full proposal and all their obligatory annexes must be **submitted on CD-ROM, DVD or USB stick, in an electronic format, accompanied by a signed cover letter**. The title of the proposal should be clearly labelled on the CD-ROM/DVD/USB and on the letter.

Applicants may choose to submit application documents:

- (a) either by post or by courier service, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the postmark or the date of the deposit slip;
- (b) by hand-delivery to the premises of the authorising officer responsible by the participant in person or by an agent, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the acknowledgement of receipt.

**Full proposals** have to be submitted to one of the following addresses:

Postal address:

**LIFE 2020 – Integrated Projects  
European Commission  
EASME Unit B3  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium**

Delivery by hand is possible at the following address only:

**LIFE 2020 – Integrated Projects  
European Commission  
EASME Unit B3  
Avenue du Bourget 1  
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)  
Belgium**

*The Central Mail Service is open from 08.00 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.*

In addition, once the applicants send their full proposal, they should **notify by email its submission** to [EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-LIFE-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu). Please note that the sending by email of the project proposal files will not be considered as official submission of the proposal. Submission notification email is requested to facilitate the tracking of the official proposal submission.

**Confirmation of receipt** of the full proposal will be sent by e-mail to the applicants indicating also the allocated LIFE project reference number.

The deadline for the submission of the **full proposal** will be specified in the relevant invitation but, **indicatively** it is foreseen to be **on 25 March 2021**.

In the case of a full proposal which is sent before the expiry of the prescribed submission period but arrives after the closure of stage 2 (i.e. after the notification of results is sent to the applicants), the proposal will not be considered.

### ***1.8.3. Other relevant considerations on concept note and full proposal submission***

With regards to the full copy of the plan or strategy, in view of its volume and complexity, this document may also be submitted by simply providing in the proposal an internet link where the plan/strategy may be viewed. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the provided internet link is operational and that the plan is fully accessible for an external user. If access to the plan is restricted, the applicant shall provide the necessary access rights to the Contracting Authority, including a clear set of instructions on how to access it in the cover letter accompanying the proposal. Please take into account the provisions of 1.5 above regarding the requirements for the adoption status of the plan.

The Concept Note or full proposal itself must be submitted as **one pdf document**, including all technical forms (i.e. CN forms for the Concept Note; A, B and C forms for the full proposal) and all financial forms (Financial plan for the Concept Note; F forms for the full proposal). Prior to submission, the proposal must be printable on a black-and-white printer, and in an A4 format. For the full proposal, these forms should then be **submitted as a single pdf file of the original, printed, completed and signed** (where applicable) paper forms. Applicants should ensure that the corresponding pdf file is of a readable quality (at a maximum resolution of 300 dpi - applicants must avoid sending files scanned at a higher resolution in order to keep file sizes manageable). Where proposal forms are signed, beneficiaries are strongly advised to check whether the signatures are still identifiable on a printout of the form.

The Concept Note does not have to be resubmitted with the full proposal.

The financial forms (F forms) of the full proposal should be submitted in addition to the pdf version also in Excel format for validation purposes.

**Note that applicants should retain the original, signed Word and Excel files containing all of these forms, for possible use in preparation of the final grant agreements.**

**Very important: Please note that the e-mail address specified by the applicant as the contact person's e-mail address in forms CNb and A2 will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all correspondence with the applicant during any given stage of the evaluation procedure. It should therefore correspond to an e-mail account that is valid, active and checked on a daily basis throughout the duration of the evaluation procedure.**

Section 3 of this guide contains detailed information and instructions on how to fill in the Concept Note (CN) forms and the administrative (A), technical (B and C) and financial (F) forms of the full proposal. Other supporting information - such as maps, photos,

diagrams, graphs, etc. - may be submitted within the full proposal forms as deemed necessary by the applicant. Additional documents/annexes, other than those required (please see the Checklist, Mandatory annexes point at the end of these guidelines), submitted by applicants (e.g. brochures, CVs, additional information etc.) will not be evaluated and therefore applicants must not include any such material in the CD-ROM/DVD/USB.

When preparing their Concept Note or full proposal, applicants are invited to consult the “Frequently Asked Questions” from the 2014-2019 calls as well as the one that will be prepared for 2020 and made available on the LIFE website at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/frequently-asked-questions-faqs>

## **1.9 How will LIFE Integrated Projects be selected?**

The Contracting Authority is responsible for conducting the evaluation process.

The technical methodology for the project selection procedure and the selection and award criteria are described in section 5 of the LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020. For a detailed description on how this procedure will be implemented, please refer to the *'Guide for the evaluation of LIFE Integrated Project proposals 2020 – Environment and Climate Action sub-programmes.*

### **1.10 Specific issues**

The current chapter replies to some **frequently asked questions** on how to conceive a Concept Note and a full IP proposal. For specific guidance, see sections 3 and 4 of this document.

#### ***1.10.1. In which language may I submit the Concept Note and full proposal for an Integrated Project?***

The **Summary description of the project** (form CNd and form B1) must be submitted in English. Applicants are encouraged to also complete all other forms for both stages in English, although they may also be submitted in any of the official EU languages, except Irish.

The detailed strategies or plans accompanying the Concept Note may be submitted in any of the official EU languages.

#### ***1.10.2. Is there a national allocation for Integrated Projects?***

National allocations are not foreseen for IPs in financial terms. However, in order to ensure a geographical balance and an equal access to funding for these projects, indicatively maximum 3 IPs per Member State (including at least one IP per Member State under the sub-programme for climate action) could be financed during in 2014-2020 period.

It should be noted that at least 60.5% of the total budget for IPs under the environment sub-program should be allocated to Nature IPs.

Note that if an IP includes associated beneficiaries from other Member State(s), the above referred minimum of 2 IPs per Member State is applied only considering the applicant entity's nationality and does not count towards the country of the associated beneficiaries.

#### ***1.10.3 How much should beneficiaries contribute to the Integrated Project budget?***



The coordinating beneficiary and the 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.

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

Moreover, where public bodies are involved as coordinating and/or associated beneficiaries in a project, the sum of the financial contributions of all public bodies to the project budget must exceed (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs charged to the project for personnel who are not considered 'additional'. In this respect, their contribution cannot be replaced by co-financers. For details, please refer to section 3.4 of this document.

#### ***1.10.4. What is the optimal starting date and duration of an Integrated Project?***

When preparing the project's time planning, beneficiaries should be aware that the expected earliest date of the signature of the grant agreements for the LIFE 2020 IPs will be in **October 2021**, while, the earliest possible starting date for these projects is defined in Annex 1. A definitive date will be fixed in the invitation to submit the full proposal. 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 IP. However, considering the project's direct link with long term plans and strategies most IPs are expected to last between **6 and 10 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.

#### ***1.10.5. Where can a LIFE Integrated Project take place?***

LIFE projects shall in general take place **in the territory of the European Union Member States**. The LIFE Programme may also finance activities outside the EU and in overseas countries and territories (OCTs), provided that the coordinating beneficiary is based in the EU and strong evidence is provided that the activities to be carried out outside the EU are necessary to achieve EU environmental / climate objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply (e.g. actions supporting migratory birds or actions implemented on a transboundary river). Note that the Treaties do not apply to the OCTs.

For example, a project targeting a migratory bird species that has conservation actions in one of the Member States as well as conservation actions in an overseas country and/or an OCT could be eligible. Any action that takes place entirely outside the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply, i.e. entirely in overseas countries and/or OCTs and is not necessary to ensure the effectiveness of a related action inside the EU, will not be eligible.

The eligibility criteria formulated in European Commission notice Nr.2013/C-205/05 (OJ EU C-205 of 19/07/2013, pp. 9-11), concerning the eligibility of Israeli entities and their

activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards, shall apply for all actions under this call for proposals, including with respect to third parties referred to in articles 204 and 205 of the EU's Financial Regulation.

#### ***1.10.6. Who should manage an Integrated Project?***

**The competent authority or entity responsible for the implementation of the plan or strategy targeted by the IP** is normally expected to submit both the Concept Note and the full proposal, and thus become the coordinating beneficiary of the IP.

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 an associated beneficiary or by sub-contractor under the coordinating beneficiary's direct control. Very often a proper project management implies the involvement of a It is also strongly advised that each project has a full-time project manager for a smooth coordination and implementation of the project . The proposal should 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).

#### ***1.10.7. Is outsourcing of project activities possible?***

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.

In line with Article 19 of the LIFE Regulation, beneficiaries (public and private) are strongly advised to use "green" procurement. 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](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm).

#### ***1.10.8. May I give financial support to third parties as part of a LIFE IP?***

Under specific conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement the beneficiaries of the LIFE IP may provide **financial support to third parties** in order to assist entities outside the project partnership in the implementation or development of local initiatives (by e.g. non-profit organisations, local authorities or citizens groups) that will contribute to the project's objectives. They should finance specific actions that for objective reasons cannot be implemented by one of the beneficiaries of the IP but are considered instrumental for the implementation of the targeted plan.

Applicants should explain clearly why they wish to provide financial support to third parties, how they will manage the process and provide a list of the different types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support. The proposal must also clearly describe the results to be obtained.

These costs are eligible only if:

- a) This type of support is foreseen in the project – the different types of activities that may receive such financial support should be listed in the project proposal (in particular they should be clearly identified in the C forms);
- b) The Contracting Authority is informed about the allocation procedure and gives its prior approval;

- c) The criteria for allocation and financial support are transparent, non-discriminatory and clearly documented;
- d) The support is provided to private, non-profit, educational/research or public local entities and regulated by specific contracts or agreement based on a model agreed by the Contracting Authority;
- e) The maximum amount allocated to any third party involved may not exceed EUR 60,000 and the total amount of such costs overall may not exceed EUR 200,000 during the lifetime of the IP.

#### **1.10.9. Are transnational Integrated Projects favored?**

The LIFE Regulation indicates that, while selecting the projects to be co-funded, the Contracting Authority shall have special regard to transnational projects, when transnational cooperation is essential to guarantee environmental or nature protection or for the achievement of the project's climate objectives.

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.

#### **1.10.10. How will a LIFE Integrated Project work in practice?**

An IP will usually last several years and involve a rather ambitious budget. It will also deal with a complex task: the implementation of a plan or a strategy. The IP will cover a large geographical area and will involve several stakeholders and many complementary activities funded by different funds.

This complexity requires an adaptive approach in the design of the implementing mechanism. For this reason, IPs will be implemented based on a revolving programming mechanism structured in phases (i.e. Phase 1, Phase 2, etc.).

Each phase should normally last between 1.5 and 2.5 years. The duration of each phase should be determined in view of the total duration of the IP and, each phase should, as far as possible, be of the same duration.

How will this work in practice?

Let's assume an IP will last 8 years and that each phase will cover 2 years. This means that an IP will be organized in four phases.

The applicant will be asked to provide full technical and financial details concerning all actions foreseen during phase 1. For the following phases, the applicant will have to provide (at least) more concise information that is still sufficient to demonstrate the technical and financial coherence of the project as well as the EU added value.

Three months before the end of phase 1, the beneficiary will be subject of a monitoring visit where the proposed new detailed planning for phase 2 will be discussed (including the necessary adaptations for the summary information on the remaining two phases). The need to amend the grant agreement, and the time to submit the request, will be discussed.

At the latest 3 months after the end of phase 1, the beneficiary must submit an interim report together with a request for payment (see also Article I.4.9 of the model Grant agreement) and the Contracting Authority will evaluate the report and request for payment and, if accepted, will release the payment.

The interim report will include as part of it the an updated, and if required more detailed, planning for phase 2, which once approved will form the reference base for the work during that phase.

This mechanism will be repeated for each phase until the end of the last one when the final report and cost claim will be submitted. In this way a beneficiary will be able to adapt the IP to a constantly changing reality while providing sufficient information to allow the Contracting Authority to carry out its monitoring and verification functions.

Note, that in the case of projects where the original application and thus the signed grant agreement included full technical and financial details for the entire project period there may be no need to provide an updated planning attached to the interim reports.

#### **1.10.11. How voluminous should a LIFE Integrated Project proposal be?**

Differentiation has to be made between a Concept Note and a full IP proposal.

a) **The descriptive part of the Concept Note (CNd form)**, depending on the scope and timescale of the project, should not be longer than 10 pages. Similarly, the **financial plan (CNf form)** should be brief and concise (maximum 3 pages). The accompanying plan (e.g. PAF) or strategy should be the full document as prepared in line with the requirements of the relevant legislation. In order to provide adequate information and details, a Concept Note will have to make **precise references** to the relevant points/chapters of the plans/strategies being implemented.

b) **The full project proposal** will be longer than the Concept Note, but still should be as concise and clear as possible. Applicants should avoid voluminous proposals and should not provide excessively detailed descriptions of project areas, environmental / climate technologies, lists of species, etc. To this effect, while they should provide clear and detailed descriptions for all project actions, they may do so by making precise references to the relevant points/chapters of the plans/strategies being implemented. Maps should be annexed (and may be in colour) wherever this would be useful to clarify the location of the proposed actions (note that they are obligatory in some cases).

Applicants should take note of the different requirements - described in section 3.3.2 of this guide - regarding the level of details in the description of actions to be implemented during the first phase of the project and beyond.

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

#### **1.10.12. Can the Integrated Project include ongoing activities?**

Actions already ongoing before the start of the project are not eligible.

Where actions to be undertaken in the project are significantly different from previous or ongoing activities in terms of frequency or intensity, they are not considered ongoing. Applicants should provide explanation and justification why such actions would be considered "significantly different".

Exceptionally, in case of actions that were undertaken and completed in the past and that are proposed to be repeated at a similar frequency or intensity during the project, the applicant must provide evidence that such actions would not have been carried out in the absence of the LIFE project.

#### **1.10.13. Can the Integrated Project include recurring activities?**

A recurrent management action is an action that needs to be carried out periodically (at least annually) in order to maintain e.g. the conservation status of a species, habitat, or ecosystem.

In line with the general rule about ongoing actions, ongoing recurrent actions are generally ineligible. For example, any site surveillance, periodic mowing or long-term monitoring actions, which were ongoing already before the start of the project, is generally ineligible.

New recurrent actions are, in principle, eligible for funding in LIFE IPs. In particular recurring actions with a clear pilot demonstration value may be considered as eligible for funding.

However, projects foreseeing recurring actions must sufficiently demonstrate the long term sustainability and European added value of the proposed action. The applicant must therefore explicitly undertake that the project beneficiaries will continue after its end any recurrent actions started and carried out during the project, and explain how this continuation will be financed. The implementation of this commitment will be checked at the time of the final payment, when the Contracting Authority will verify that the recurring actions are still being undertaken at the required periodicity, or that all administrative and budgetary conditions are fulfilled to ensure their continuation at the appropriate time. If there is no such assurance that the recurrent action will be continued after the end of the project, all related costs will be ineligible.

#### ***1.10.14. Is the long term sustainability of the Integrated Project and its actions important?***

IPs represent a considerable investment, and the European Union attaches great importance to the long term **sustainability** of these investments. It is obligatory that throughout the duration of the project, the beneficiaries consider how these investments will be secured, maintained, developed and made use of after the end of the project.

While an IP normally cannot achieve during its lifetime the full implementation of the targeted plan or strategy, it shall facilitate the **capacity building** at the competent authority and other main stakeholders **to catalyse a process towards the full implementation of that plan**. To this effect actions aiming at the satisfactory coordination of the implementation of the activities foreseen in the targeted plan or strategy (whether funded by LIFE or not) and the use of various funds should also be foreseen.

These considerations should be built into the Concept Note and the possible full proposal and will be carefully checked during the evaluation process.

#### ***1.10.15. Can the Integrated Project include research activities?***

Whereas EU funding for research activities is provided under Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014–2020)<sup>14</sup>, 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 applicant shall explain in detail how the proper implementation of the project relies on these research activities, showing that the existing scientific basis is insufficient, and how the additional knowledge will be used to implement the project actions. In such a case, scientific publications are considered important deliverables of the project.

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<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)" and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 81).

However, as IPs are implementing existing plans or strategies, in most cases no need for such research activities is expected.

#### **1.10.16. Can the Integrated Project include construction of large infrastructure?**

The target plan or strategy may include the establishment of infrastructure, however, projects dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure do not fall within the scope of the LIFE Programme and are therefore not eligible. A project is considered to be dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure if the cost of a "single item of infrastructure" exceeds 500,000€. A "single item of infrastructures" means all elements that are physically bound to ensure the functionality of the infrastructural investment (e.g. for an eco-duct: the bridge, barriers, signposting, etc.). Such amount may be exceptionally exceeded if full technical justification is provided in the proposal demonstrating the necessity of the infrastructure for ensuring an effective contribution to the objectives of any of the following articles of the LIFE Regulation: 10, 11, 14 or 15..

#### **1.11 Personal Data Protection Clause**

The personal data supplied with the proposal, notably the name, address and other contact information of the beneficiaries and co-financers, will be placed in a database called BUTLER, which will be made available to the EU Institutions and agencies 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 list of successful beneficiaries and the relative amounts awarded to successful proposals will also be published in a public database called the Financial Transparency System<sup>15</sup>.

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

Throughout this process, data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested, which are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Head of Unit LIFE and CIP Eco-innovation of EASME.

Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-easme.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System by the EASME, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 136 and 141 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1046>). For more information see the Privacy Statement on: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en).

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<sup>15</sup> [Financial Transparency System \(FTS\) - European Commission](#)

Submission of a proposal implies that the applicant accepts that the personal data contained in the 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 INTEGRATED PROJECTS

### 2.1 What are LIFE Integrated Projects versus traditional LIFE projects? Which one to choose?

When applying for LIFE funding, applicants shall choose the appropriate project category. **A project application may only be submitted under one LIFE project category.**

The following table provides a summary comparison highlighting the major differences between LIFE "traditional projects" and LIFE IPs:

	Traditional projects*	Integrated Projects
<b>Scope</b>	<p>(sub-programme for environment):</p> <p>Target one or several thematic priorities for the sub-programme environment indicated in Annex III of the LIFE Regulation <u>and</u> possibly targets one or several project topics implementing the thematic priorities, as laid down in the MAWP.</p> <p>(sub-programme for climate action):</p> <p>Target one or several of the priority areas for the sub-programme climate action and policy areas as laid down in the Multiannual Work Programme.</p>	<p>Are limited to specific areas of intervention related to certain strategic plans in nature, air, water, waste, climate change adaptation and mitigation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature IPs implement the PAFs;</li> <li>• Water IPs implement the River Basin Management Plans;</li> <li>• Waste IPs implement Waste Management Plans or Waste Prevention Programs;</li> <li>• Air IPs implement Air Quality Plans.</li> <li>• IPs implementing climate change adaptation strategies or plans;</li> <li>• IPs implementing climate change mitigation strategies, action plans or low carbon economy roadmaps ;</li> <li>• IPs implementing urban mitigation and/or adaptation action plans ;</li> </ul>
<b>Co-financing rates (%) and amounts (EUR) of LIFE contribution</b>	<p>Up to 60% (or up to 75%)</p> <p>Historical average of EUR 1-2 million</p>	<p>Up to 60%</p> <p>Expected average of EUR 10 million</p>
<b>Application</b>	<p>Two stage submission (sub-programme for environment):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concept Note.</li> <li>2. Full proposal.</li> </ol> <p>One stage submission (sub-programme for</p>	<p>Two stage submission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concept Note.</li> <li>2. Full proposal.</li> </ol>



	climate action):  1. Full proposal	
<b>Geographical scale</b>	Shall be implemented on a local, regional, multi-regional, national or trans-national scale.	Shall be implemented on a regional, multi-regional, national or trans-national scale.  For IPs in the air sector, a scale of minimum 5 cities is required.  For IPs in the climate sector, local plans can be considered under certain circumstances.
<b>Required link to a plan or strategy developed pursuant to EU/national legislation</b>	No.  Link to plans/strategies is optional (may get better score).	Yes.  Must contribute to and catalyse the <u>full</u> implementation of specific plans or strategies developed pursuant to EU/national legislation.
<b>Mobilisation of complementarity funds outside of the project itself</b>	Not required.  No double funding or overlaps with other EU funds.	Yes.  <u>Compulsory</u> mobilisation of at least one other relevant Union, national or private funding source for the implementation of complementary activities, within the same plan or strategy.  No double funding or overlaps with other EU funds for the LIFE IP per se.  The implementation of IPs may result in better access to other EU funding.
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Public or private bodies.	Public or private bodies.  The competent authority in charge of the implementation of the relevant plan or strategy is in general expected to submit and lead the Integrated Project.
<b>Stakeholder involvement</b>	Expected	Compulsory

<b>Project period (average)</b>	Historically, 1 to 5 years	Expected, 6 years or more
<b>Type of projects</b>	Pilot, demonstration, best practice or information, awareness and dissemination projects.	IPs are a combination of elements of "traditional" project types: they should include mainly best practice elements that can be combined with pilot, demonstration and information, awareness raising and dissemination elements. A capacity building element is mandatory.
<b>Eligible costs</b>	As per Grant Agreement.	As per Grant Agreement.
<b>Implementing mechanism</b>	Full detailed project plan from beginning	Revolving programming and reporting in phases
<b>Sustainability</b>	Required for most projects.	Required for all Integrated Projects, including long term commitment and capacity building.

\* For further details on traditional projects please see the Guidelines for applicants under *LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency*, *LIFE Nature and Biodiversity* and *LIFE Climate Action*.

## 2.2 What type of actions can be included in Integrated Projects?

Due to their possible complexity, IPs normally do not fall into any of the specifications seen under LIFE "traditional" projects but rather combine elements of those.

It is expected that IPs address and resolve environmental / climate problems at a larger scale. Most IPs would therefore implement actions that apply **mostly best practices**. At the same time, there will probably also be actions of **demonstrative** or **innovative/pilot** nature if those are needed in order to find the best solution to a problem that has not been resolved so far at a given scale or under the given conditions or no solutions exist at all. A capacity building element to allow an efficient and well-co-ordinated implementation of the targeted plan or strategy is mandatory in all IPs.

IPs are expected to be set up in such a way as to ensure replicability or transferability of the core project actions. IPs are expected to pave the way for the actual replication and transfer of the core project actions at the latest right after the end of the project. The replicable/transferable actions are to be identified and would need to be foreseen in the Concept Note and in particular in the full proposal.

**"Best practice elements"**: "best practice actions" apply appropriate, cost-effective and state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project.

It is foreseen that IPs will aim at the implementation of measures and actions foreseen in the relevant plan or strategy, using in most cases previously tested and confirmed methods and techniques.

**"Demonstration elements"**: put into practice, test, evaluate and disseminate actions, methodologies or approaches that are new or unknown in the project's specific context,

such as geographical, ecological, socio-economic, and that could be applied elsewhere in similar circumstances;

**"Pilot elements"**: apply a technique or method that has not been applied or tested before, or elsewhere, and that offer potential environmental or climate advantages compared to current best practice;

IPs should facilitate the **building up of capacities** of the beneficiaries and stakeholders with special regard to competent authority(s) in order to ensure the implementation of the complementary actions and of the entire plan or strategy targeted by the project as well as the sustainability of the investments made by the IP. The actions targeting capacity building can include the strengthening of human resources by hiring staff for the beneficiaries or training staff and stakeholders to improve their technical capacities and knowledge. They can also include the strengthening of the technical capacities of the entities or systems involved e.g. via the establishment of monitoring systems or other technical facilities. In this respect, actions aiming at the efficient coordination of the use of various funds should also be foreseen. This may also entail the set-up of specific coordination groups or structures, the adoption of administrative or legal instruments, etc.

While an IP normally cannot achieve a full implementation of the targeted plan or strategy, it shall include strategic capacity building actions to catalyse a process towards the full implementation of that plan. IPs should therefore facilitate the building up of capacity for a more efficient implementation of the relevant plan or strategy including an enhanced absorption capacity for available funds.

## **2.3 Areas of intervention of Integrated Projects**

### Sub-programme for environment

#### **2.3.1 Nature Integrated Projects**

Nature IPs shall contribute towards achieving, in particular, target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the general objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives. The IPs should in particular contribute towards improving the conservation status of species and habitat types of Community Interest (Habitats Directive) and/or the status of bird species (Birds Directive)<sup>16</sup>.

Specifically, IPs should be used to facilitate the implementation of Prioritized Framework Programmes (PAF) - elaborated pursuant to Article 8 of the Habitats Directive<sup>17</sup> - for Natura 2000 networks of the countries or regions concerned. To this effect, LIFE Nature IPs should support the further development, implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network, in particular via the development, testing, demonstration and application of conservation methods and practices, improving knowledge base about the nature values of the sites, raising awareness and improving administrative capacity of the beneficiaries and management authorities. The IPs may include Green Infrastructure<sup>18</sup> actions if referred to in the PAF, so as to for instance improve the

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<sup>16</sup> Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:020:0007:0025:EN:PDF>

<sup>18</sup> Green Infrastructure (GI) is a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. It incorporates green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. On land, GI is present in rural and urban settings. See <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0249>

structural and functional connectivity of the Natura 2000 sites or the condition of ecosystems and the services they provide<sup>19</sup>.

IPs are expected to implement a chosen set of actions foreseen to be financed by LIFE in the corresponding PAF or PAFs of a country or region (or a combination of countries/regions). Due to this requirement, neither a Nature IP Concept Note nor a full proposal can be submitted in the absence of a PAF approved/adopted at the appropriate level and submitted to the European Commission which considered it of acceptable quality.

It is worth noting that the majority of the PAFs have already been developed by the Member States/regions and submitted to the European Commission in the course of 2013-2014. However, should the PAF require a major modification regarding e.g. selection of conservation measures or financial architecture, e.g. as a result of the operational programmes negotiations, the relevant authority should submit the updated PAF to the European Commission through the normal channels and attach it together with the full proposal.

Depending on the administrative structures of the Member States, PAFs cover either an entire country or a region. This has a direct impact on the geographical scope of a Nature IP as in most cases they would address the implementation of only one PAF. Nevertheless, applicants may find it appropriate to submit an IP covering territories falling under the scope of more than one PAF of the same or a neighbouring country.

*The PAFs are expected to describe the measures that are necessary to achieve the objectives of Natura 2000, and as such contribute to meeting the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy. They should also indicate the financing sources intended to be used for their implementation. The timeframe for the PAFs corresponds to the deadlines set in the Biodiversity Strategy and in the Multiannual Financial Framework, i.e. it covers the period 2014-2020.*

The authorities that elaborated the PAF normally indicated the LIFE programme among the funds that can contribute to achieving in particular targets 1 and 2 of the Biodiversity Strategy. Other complementary funds (ERDF; EAFRD, INTERREG, Horizon 2020, EMFF) could provide financing for achieving targets 3, 4 and 5 and, in some cases, also target 2. The applicants of Nature IPs can in principle base themselves on these indicative funding arrangements when designing the IP itself.

In a Nature IP application, the applicants should demonstrate how the project aims at the implementation of the PAF. To this effect the project should include actions that may facilitate the mobilisation and use of other complementary funds that can finance the implementation of actions or measures beyond those supported by the LIFE IP – both as regards scope and timeframe.

This means in practice that the IP shall include (i) a combination of actions that contribute directly to the implementation of measures – and achievement of targets - of the PAF foreseen to be financed by LIFE; and (ii) horizontal actions that facilitate the implementation of the PAF.

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposal should therefore present information on:

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<sup>19</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/ecosystem\\_assessment/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/ecosystem_assessment/index_en.htm)

- the expected level of implementation of the PAF as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP,
- the area covered by measures, the number of sites, the relevance of these sites in terms of species and habitat types within their bio-geographical regions,
- the expected improvement of the conservation status of species and habitats with particular attention to those habitats and species that are considered as priority and/or those that have been reported as being in unfavorable conservation status,
- the expected improvement on the long term capacity to monitor and assess the status of species and habitats of EU importance (art 11 and 17 of the Habitats Directive).

### **2.3.2 Water Integrated Projects**

IPs falling under the thematic priority area of Water shall support the targeted implementation of measures that will deliver progress towards achievement of Water Framework Directive good status/potential objectives, in line with RBMP established in Member States pursuant to the Water Framework Directive.

Due to this requirement, neither a water IP Concept Note nor a full proposal can be submitted in the absence of a RBMP adopted at the level at which the IP is to be carried out.

IPs should implement a chosen set of measures identified as necessary in the RBMP in a whole river basin or large sub-catchment.

The projects should focus on large scale (e.g. major sub-catchment or river basin) planning and establishment of measures to increase water retention in urban and rural areas, enhance infiltration, increase water storage capacity and remove pollutants through natural or "natural-like" processes. They should seek synergies to implement actions that will redress existing hydro-morphological pressures and improve biodiversity and amenity value.

The proposed actions should target significant pressures impacting on current water status in that river basin in general, and significant pressures affecting the environment's capacity for water retention in particular. Such pressures should have been identified in the most recent assessments carried out by the Member State for the preparation of implementation plans for relevant EU legislation and policies (e.g. Water Framework Directive, MSFD, Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Drinking Water Directive, Bathing Water Directive, Flood Directive and/or Drought plans).

The extent to which proposals for Water IPs contribute to one or several of the general and specific objectives of LIFE as set out in articles 3, 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation will be evaluated.

Water IPs should demonstrate their EU added value with regard to their contribution towards achieving Water Framework Directive objectives – either in a quantified reduction of pressure or a predicted improvement in water bodies towards good status. Where possible this should be supplemented with an assessment of the wider ecosystem service benefits that will be realised through the IP.

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposals should address the following aspects:

- the expected level of implementation of the target RBMP as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP,
- the impact of the project in terms of addressing significant unaddressed pressures and or improvement towards Water Framework Directive good status/potential objectives,
- how an ecosystems approach will be used to define and implement actions that deliver for Water Framework Directive but also for other EU water policy objectives (MSFD, Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Drinking Water Directive, Nitrate Directive, Bathing Water Directive, Flood directive and/or Drought plans), and an assessment of the environmental, social and economic benefits that are expected to be realized through the IP,
- how the IP will help delivery of the Water Framework Directive outside the scope of the IP - transferability of results to other river basins.

### **2.3.3 Waste Integrated Projects**

IPs falling under the thematic priority area of Waste shall be designed to support the application, development, testing and demonstration of integrated approaches for the implementation of the WMPs as required by article 28 of the Waste Framework Directive and/or WPP as requested by article 29 of the Waste Framework Directive.

Due to this requirement, neither a waste IP Concept Note nor a full proposal can be submitted in the absence of a WMP or WPP adopted at the appropriate level.

With the chosen set of actions, the Waste IP proposals should demonstrate their EU added value with regard to their contribution to the implementation of the waste hierarchy (article 4 of the Waste Framework Directive), the achievement of the recycling targets as foreseen in article 11 of the Waste Framework Directive and additional targets included in the EU waste legislation, as well as the implementation of necessary measures to support those objectives.

The extent to which each proposal contributes to one or several of the general and specific objectives of LIFE as set out in articles 3, 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation will be evaluated.

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposals should therefore address the following aspects:

- the expected level of implementation of the WMPs/WPPs as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP in particular for investments for collection and treatment of waste;
- the impact on the reduction of waste generation, the re-use of products and preparing for re-use activities, increase in separate collection (in particular for paper, glass, metal, plastic and bio-waste), recycling, phasing out landfilling, reduction of littering and reduction or adequate treatment of hazardous waste;
- the implementation of specific waste streams directives, like the WEEE Directive, Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, Landfill Directive;
- the implementation of economic instruments in support of sustainable waste management (extended producer responsibility, Pay-As-You-Throw schemes, landfill/incineration taxes);

- the development of communication and awareness-raising actions in support of the above mentioned objectives;
- the expected improvement of the long term capacity to monitor and assess the generation of municipal waste, its composition, its treatment according to the waste hierarchy, as well as the reinforcement of controls on movements (shipments) of waste;
- where applicable, the contribution to the implementation of the recommendations to the Member States included in the Roadmap elaborated under the compliance-promotion exercises in support of the implementation of the European waste legislation  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support\\_implementation.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm)

#### **2.3.4 Air Integrated Projects**

IPs falling under the thematic priority area of Air shall be designed to support support the application, development, testing and demonstration of integrated approaches for the implementation and monitoring of local and regional AQPs as defined by Directive 2008/50/EC with the ultimate goal of contributing to the National Air Pollution Reduction Programmes.

Due to this requirement neither an air IP Concept Note nor a full proposal can be submitted in the absence of an AQP adopted at the appropriate level.

In general, large scale projects will be favoured. Accordingly, if an Air IP is based on local AQPs, then it should include coordination and cooperation between at least five cities with such plans.

In case the Air IP is based on one or more regional AQPs, the LIFE IP projects should include coordination and cooperation between all local administrations and regional administrations concerned.

The extent to which each proposal contributes to one or several of the general and specific objectives of LIFE as set out in articles 3, 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation will be evaluated.

The proposals should therefore address the following aspects:

- the expected level of implementation and associated air quality improvements of the AQP as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP (in particular the contribution towards compliance with EU air quality legislation (existing limit and target values for ambient air quality and, where possible, levels recommended by the WHO), as well as with the National Emission Ceilings and national emission reduction commitments),
- the attention given to the chain of actions required to develop, implement and evaluate an AQP: monitoring and modelling, establishing emission inventories and source attributions, policy development and implementation, public information and participation,
- the contribution to strengthening the air quality management and governance, including the level of involvement and commitment of the relevant competent authorities at local, regional and national level,
- the geographic area and the number of people that would benefit from better levels of air quality, taking into account any challenging geographical, meteorological and socio-economic conditions.

### **2.3.5 Climate change adaptation Integrated Projects<sup>20</sup>**

IPs falling under this category aim to implement climate change adaptation strategies or plans addressing specific climate change vulnerabilities (e.g. coastal areas, drought or flood prone areas) or vulnerable sectors (e.g. water, agriculture, forestry, public health), using ecosystem-based approaches where relevant.

Synergies with other environmental and climate policies (e.g. between climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity and water policy) should be a central theme of adaptation projects and should be promoted, wherever relevant. The EU value added will also be assessed with regard to the project's contribution to meeting climate resilience objectives, the level of mainstreaming into different sectors, and the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders.

IPs are expected to implement a chosen set of actions in the corresponding adaptation strategy or plan to be financed by LIFE. Measures funded via the LIFE programme should complement measures funded from national sources or from other relevant EU funding programmes, in order to implement an overarching adaptation strategy or plan.

Applicants should demonstrate how the project will implement the strategy, plan or roadmap. The project therefore should include actions to help mobilise complementary funds that can finance actions beyond the scope and timeframe of what is funded by LIFE, like measures to integrate climate considerations in private investment decisions.

This means in practice that the application/ IP shall include

- (1) a combination of actions that contribute directly to the implementation of measures – and achievement of targets – of the IP foreseen to be financed by LIFE; and
- (2) horizontal actions that facilitate the implementation of the overall strategy or plan, such as capacity-building.

The submission of a climate change adaptation IP Concept Note or full proposal requires that the national, regional or local adaptation strategy/plan in question is approved/adopted at the appropriate level.

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposal should therefore present information on:

- the expected level of implementation of the adaptation strategy/ plan as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP,
- the geographical area covered by measures and the number of citizens reached under the adaptation strategy or action plan,
- the expected improvement of climate resilience, compared to a reference scenario or baseline, in a region and in economic sectors through actions funded under LIFE and complementary projects
- the expected improvement of climate resilience or the reduction of vulnerabilities identified in the EU Adaptation Strategy
- the expected increase in the number of countries/regions/cities applying integrated approaches with support of the IP or replicating the results from the IP
- the contribution to strengthening climate change adaptation management and governance, including the level of involvement and commitment of the relevant competent authorities and stakeholders at local, regional and national level,
- the contribution to mainstreaming climate change action into different sectors

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<sup>20</sup> **Note:** specific urban adaptation plans are included under section 2.3.6



**Example of an IP concerning the implementation of adaptation strategies or plans, such as a National Adaptation Strategy<sup>21</sup>:**

A national adaptation strategy may contain research, knowledge transfer and communication measures, in addition to further assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change. **The IP funded by LIFE** could be used to fund risk or vulnerability assessments, and communication and awareness raising on climate change adaptation. While the LIFE IP can include limited research activities, dedicated research actions identified in the adaptation strategy could be covered by **complementary actions** through national funds or Horizon 2020. Related knowledge transfer activities (e.g. investments in education and training and infrastructure) may also be implemented through **complementary actions** funded by national funds or ESIF.

To be successful, the development and implementation of adaptation strategies often requires interdisciplinary, participative, cross-government and cross-sectoral approaches. The **IP funded by LIFE** may for instance be used to establish and manage inter-regional or trans-boundary cooperation on a specific action, or apply multi-stakeholder participatory methods to address a shared challenge.

Further, the **IP funded by LIFE** should also include capacity-building action and must include monitoring and evaluation actions.

A **LIFE funded IP** may focus on a number of sectors and adaptation options. e.g. addressing agriculture, forestry and water management in a given area. While the **IP funded by LIFE** may be used to pilot new methods for flood management, large-scale flood management actions should be funded by ESIF. Regarding agriculture, the **IP funded by LIFE** may include actions to establish networks on climate change and agriculture and rural development, as well as pilot projects. **Complementary actions** such as organic farming, forest conservation, prevention and restoration of damage to forest fires and natural disasters should then be funded from ESIF or national funds.

### **2.3.6 Urban climate change mitigation and/or adaptation Integrated Projects**

IPs under this category shall support the targeted implementation of urban action plans pioneering the transition to a low carbon and/or climate resilient society. Projects are encouraged to address the following themes:

- the implementation of urban or local adaptation and/or mitigation strategies and action plans, such as those linked to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy<sup>22</sup>
- developing and deploying innovative adaptation solutions in urban areas, including in the **water, energy and construction sectors**, promoting and developing **blue and green infrastructure**, contributing to **nature conservation and biodiversity objectives in urban areas**; and implementing **public-private partnerships** on climate change resilience.
- the implementation of urban or rural low-emission strategies, including transport, energy efficiency of public and private buildings, district heating, low-emission city lighting.

Urban action plans contributing at the same time to climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives are highly encouraged.

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<sup>21</sup> This example is given for illustrative purposes to show how an IP could take shape and should not be considered as a priority area,

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/>

**An IP under this category must cover several cities and should support the implementation of whole strategy or action plan.**

The applicants should demonstrate how the project aims at the implementation of the strategy, plan or roadmap. To this effect the project should include actions that may facilitate the mobilisation and use of other complementary funds that can finance the implementation of actions or measures beyond those supported by the LIFE IP – both as regards scope and timeframe. This includes measures to integrate climate considerations in private investment decisions. This means in practice that the application/ IP shall include

(1) a combination of actions that contribute directly to the implementation of measures – and achievement of targets – of the IP foreseen to be financed by LIFE; and

(2) horizontal actions that facilitate the implementation of the overall strategy, plan or roadmap, such as capacity-building .

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposal should therefore present information on:

- the expected level of implementation of the adaptation and/or mitigation action plan as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP,
- the geographical area covered by measures and the citizens reached under the adaptation and/or mitigation action plans,
- the expected contribution to a shift towards a low emission and climate-resilient economy in the cities/local communities targeted through actions funded under the IP and complementary projects,
- the expected increase in the number of cities/local communities applying integrated approaches with support of the IP or replicating the results from the IP,
- the contribution to strengthening climate change adaptation and/or mitigation management and governance, including the level of involvement and commitment of the relevant competent authorities and stakeholders at local, regional and national level,
- the contribution to mainstreaming climate change action across different policy areas.

### **2.3.7 Climate change mitigation Integrated Projects<sup>23</sup>**

IPs falling under the area of climate change mitigation shall support the implementation of greenhouse gas mitigation strategies, action plans or low carbon economy roadmaps and concern specific municipalities or regions (e.g. as announced in the Global Covenant of Mayors), industrial or agricultural (by analysing land use on a regional scale, in a social and economic context) sectors, or other economic sectors (e.g. maritime transport, aviation) by introducing technology and services based approaches in a sustainable and innovative way.

IPs should contribute to the implementation and development of current and future Union climate change mitigation policy and legislation, which could include:

- the EU ETS;
- Effort Sharing Regulation (EU) 842/2018 for sectors not covered by the EU ETS;
- the LULUCF Decision (EU) 529/2013 and the LULUCF Regulation (EU) 841/2018;

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<sup>23</sup> Note: Specific urban mitigation plans are included under 2.3.6

- the revised RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001;
- the Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases (EU) 517/2014;
- the EU initiatives on sustainable finance, including uptake of the taxonomy climate benchmarks.

By developing breakthrough solutions and processes, integrated projects should aim at achieving sectoral mitigation strategies and targets as outlined in a Member State's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), and/or pathways and milestones, mitigation actions underlying the EU climate neutrality/long-term strategy<sup>24</sup>.

IPs to be financed by LIFE are expected to implement a chosen set of actions supporting the NECP, underlying the EU 2050 long-term strategy on climate neutrality. Measures funded via the LIFE programme should complement measures funded from national sources or measures funded from other relevant Union funding programmes in order to implement the mitigation strategy, plan or roadmap described in the NECP, underlying the EU 2050 climate neutrality strategy. The applicants should demonstrate how the project aims at the implementation of the strategy, plan or roadmap. To this effect the project should include actions that may facilitate the mobilisation and use of other complementary funds that can finance the implementation of actions or measures beyond those supported by the LIFE IP – both as regards scope and timeframe. This includes measures to integrate climate considerations in private investment decisions. This means in practice that the application/ IP shall include

- (1) a combination of actions that contribute directly to the implementation of measures – and achievement of targets – of the IP foreseen to be financed by LIFE; and
- (2) horizontal actions that facilitate the implementation of the overall strategy, plan or roadmap described in the NECP, underlying the EU climate neutrality strategy, such as capacity-building.

The submission of a climate change mitigation IP Concept Note or a full proposal requires that the transnational, national, regional or industry/sector strategy/action plan/roadmap in question is approved/adopted at the appropriate level and appropriately related to the NECP, in line with the EU 2050 climate neutrality strategy.

Further to the general objectives of IPs, the proposals should therefore address the following aspects:

- the expected level of implementation of the mitigation strategy/ plan/ roadmap described in the NECP, EU 2050 climate neutrality strategy as a direct consequence of the actions foreseen in the IP or through the complementary actions financed by other means mobilised in parallel to the IP,
- the geographical area covered by measures and the number of citizens reached under the mitigation strategy or action plan,
- the expected decrease in GHG emissions in a region or economic sector,
- the increased number of innovative technologies, systems and instruments and/or best practice solutions for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions,

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<sup>24</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2050\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2050_en)

- the expected increase in the number of countries/regions/sectors applying integrated approaches with support of the IP or replicating the results from the IP,
- the contribution to strengthening climate change mitigation management and governance, including the level of direct involvement and commitment of the relevant competent authorities and stakeholders at local, regional and national level,
- the contribution to mainstreaming climate change action into different policy areas.

Three examples of IPs concerning the implementation of climate change mitigation strategies, action plans or roadmaps are illustrated below<sup>25</sup>:

### **Example on the implementation of Effort Sharing legislation**

#### **Greenhouse has mitigation strategy for the dairy sector**

Non CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from agriculture are subject to the member states' reduction targets under the Effort Sharing Decision and the future Effort Sharing Regulation. While they have gone down during the past years, further progress can be made in view of the liberalisation of the dairy market.

In this context, the implementation of the strategy for the dairy sector at **local, regional, national or translational level** in the context of LULUCF could require a broad range of actions to be funded by different sources available to **the potential stakeholders to be involved** (sector representatives, dairy farms, grazing land owners/ feed providers, dairy industry, supply chain, advisors, researchers, local or national authorities, managing authorities of EU funds, the National Rural Network, local Action Groups, etc.).

For example the **IP funded by LIFE** could be used to fund different measures to implement such a dairy sector strategy or roadmap, including capacity building, mandatory monitoring and evaluation actions, preparatory actions such as the analysis of the carbon footprint and mitigation potential of the sector and development/testing/implementation of dairy breeding and feeding system, IT-system based linking of dairy farms and milk processing facilities with schools purchasing and distributing milk to children under the EU school scheme.

**Complementary actions** in this field could come from other sources such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Horizon 2020, the European Innovation Partnership for agriculture, ESIF, nationally funded projects, private funds, etc. These actions that would help reduce emissions from the dairy sector could include research, development testing and implementation of dairy breeding and feeding techniques, carbon audit and development of farm level decision making tools taking into account carbon benefits, innovative waste management, short supply chains but also advisory services, vocational training and collective and individual investments needed for the implementation of these complementary actions. Some of these actions could also be included in the IP funded by LIFE, if necessary.

**The implementation of the whole sectoral strategy is expected.**

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<sup>25</sup> These example are given for illustrative purposes to show how an IP could take shape and should not be considered as a priority area,

## Example on the implementation of LULUCF legislation

### **Reduction of emissions and enhancement of removals through climate-friendly management of wetlands**

In the context of the implementation of LULUCF mitigation actions, an IP could envisage funding part of the nationally appropriate measures to limit or reduce emissions and to maintain or increase removals from the LULUCF sector.

LULUCF actions can for example include measures to protect and restore wetlands. The **IP funded by LIFE** could fund the mapping and analysis of wetlands in a region, the elaboration of a climate friendly management plan of these wetlands as well as the implementation structure of this plan, including the mandatory monitoring and evaluation actions.

The **potential stakeholders** to be involved could include wetland owners and managers, **local, regional and national** authorities, NGOs, farmers and foresters and other economic actors, managing authorities of EU funds, the National Rural Network, local Action Groups, etc.

**Complementary actions** could be funded from other funding sources such as ESIF, Community Led Local Development strategies, Horizon 2020 as appropriate, to research, test, incentivise the most appropriate sustainable paludicultural practices, adapted agricultural practices, such as minimising soil disturbance or extensive practices or measures to prevent drainage and to incentivise rewetting of wetlands. Some of these actions could also be included in the IP funded by LIFE, if necessary.

**In duly justified cases a partial implementation might be required.**

### **Example on the implementation of the 2050 Roadmaps for competitive low-carbon economy**

Industrial sectors have prepared 2050 Roadmaps for competitive low-carbon economy, analysing how particular industries can contribute to reaching EU's 2050 climate action targets<sup>26</sup>, while maintaining their international competitiveness. These Roadmaps could therefore serve as a strategic basis for proposed investments under this LIFE IP priority. **Other strategic documents, with clear contribution to the 2030 climate and energy targets and the climate-neutrality by 2050, possibly combined with resource efficiency goals<sup>27</sup>, can also be considered.**

The **IP funded by LIFE** could be used to finance concrete implementation actions such as sector-specific application of advanced resource and energy efficient industrial processes, recycling and equipment. For example, multiple paths for emission

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<sup>26</sup> In March 2011, the European Commission published a “Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050”, a document presenting possible actions to enable the EU to reduce the GHG emissions in the long term, and encouraging industrial stakeholders to develop specific Roadmaps. It was followed by a Roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe, Energy Roadmap 2050 and Transport White Paper, as well as finally the new Climate change and energy package 2030. Recently the European Commission adopted a strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral economy by 2050 – A Clean Planet for all. The Commission has invited other European Institutions to consider the strategy. [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies_en)

<sup>27</sup> Resource efficiency goals need to be complementary with the climate and energy goals, and linked with EU targets, as stipulated in the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe and Communication Towards a circular economy: a zero waste programme for Europe.

reductions could be explored as part of an enhanced process, such as application of alternative fuels, substitution of fuels or raw materials, optimization technologies or higher energy efficiency during the production process. Furthermore, the **IP funded by LIFE** should also include capacity-building and must include monitoring and evaluation actions.

**Complementary support** for larger infrastructure, research and innovation activities, short supply chains and other services in this field could come from other sources like the European Structural and Investment funds, Horizon 2020, other EU sources, national funds, private funds etc. In addition, financing through development banks (EIB, EBRD, IBRD, or national development banks) could be used.

**Potential stakeholders to be involved could include industry associations, companies along the supply chain, research institutions, public authorities, NGOs. Applications for implementation at local, regional, national or transnational level are welcome.**

#### **2.4. How to conceive a LIFE Integrated Project proposal?**

An IP project proposal should be **clear, coherent, realistic and feasible** in terms of actions and timetable. The proposal should be carefully structured in relation to the pre-operational context, the problems and threats, and the priorities as described in the related plan or strategy. Clear links should exist between the objectives/actions in the targeted plan or strategy, the project's objectives, the proposed actions and expected project's results.

The project proposal shall include **a clear description of all actions foreseen** including how, where, where and by whom each action in the proposal will be undertaken. The time planning must be realistic.

**Concrete implementation actions** (C Actions) shall be if possible **grouped**, taking as **reference** the structure of the targeted plan or strategy, in particular the way that the **objectives and indicators in the plan or strategy** have been defined, to facilitate the understanding of the actual contribution of IP Actions to the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy.

E.g. in a Waste IP, if the target plan is a waste management plan that has objectives and indicators structured by waste streams (waste electric and electronic equipment, construction and demolition waste, etc.), the IP applicant can group all the activities related to waste electric and electronic equipment into 1 action (e.g. Action C.1).

Actions shall follow a logical sequence, and inter-relation between project actions should be specified in the project description. Actions in the IP may be inter-related or dependent on actions outside the IP but necessary for the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy. The design of the IP should be done in a way as to minimize the risk that this interdependence jeopardizes the IP implementation, if the actions outside the IP are not feasible anymore.

To be considered eligible for funding, all actions must meet each of the following conditions:

- The concrete implementation actions (C Actions) must be foreseen in the targeted plan or strategy;
- The need of the action has to be well justified in view of the objectives of the project; and
- The long-term sustainability of the results must be guaranteed.

When designing the IP and in particular when preparing your IP proposal, the following main types of eligible actions must be clearly distinguished:

- Preparatory actions (A Actions),
- Concrete (conservation/implementation) actions (C Actions),
- Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (D Actions),
- Communication and dissemination actions (E Actions),
- Project management and monitoring of project progress (F Actions).

The attention of applicants for IPs is drawn to the **required large territorial coverage** of the IP. The implementation of the targeted plan or strategy must cover **a large territorial area**, in particular regional, multi-regional, national or trans-national. For example, for Water IPs, the projects should have large scale coverage, such as the sub-catchment or river basin.

In the case of Waste IPs, large territorial coverage means the full or a substantial coverage of the territory covered by the relevant waste plan. The coverage should be designed in a way to ensure that in the long term the plan may be implemented in the whole area it covers.

In the case of Air IPs, if the project is based on local AQPs, it should include coordination and cooperation between **at least 5 cities** with such plans. If based on a regional AQP, the project should include coordination and cooperation between all local administrations and the regional administration.

The success of IPs is dependent on close cooperation between national, regional and local authorities (as relevant) and the non-state actors concerned. IPs are aimed at **creating the long term capacity to implement the plan or strategy** they address. A proposal should therefore provide sufficient details and evidence to show that the necessary **capacity building** activities are foreseen and that all measures will be in place before the end of the IP to guarantee that the responsible authorities and stakeholders will be able to continue implementing the plan or strategy after the end of the IP. In this respect capacity building actions may be included among the concrete C actions.

IPs require the involvement of **key stakeholders**. The key stakeholders shall be involved in the implementation of the targeted Union plan or strategy. Applicants shall foresee appropriate actions in the project to allow the involvement of well-identified and appropriate stakeholders in project implementation.

#### **2.4.1 Preparatory actions (A actions)**

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

Preparatory actions should:

- be clearly related to the objective(s) of the project;

- not be actions targeting the elaboration of the plan or strategy the IPs are actually implementing (or plans that need to be elaborated in any of the four areas of possible IP intervention); however they can include actions targeting the revision of the plan or strategy being implemented if the validity of the present version of the plan submitted with the IP Concept Note or full proposal expires during the IP implementation period; they can also include additional planning activities if these are necessary for the full and effective implementation of the plan;
- not be actions that do not lead towards the actual implementation of the targeted plan;
- be significantly shorter than the project duration and should end well before the end of the project;
- not be research actions, unless they fall under the exceptions described in point 1.10.15 of this Guide,
- For Nature IPs: not be inventories of new Natura 2000 sites, with the exception of off-shore marine sites.

Preparatory actions, while normally being limited in their timeframe, do not have to commence or be completed during the first phase of the IP. Depending on their scope they may be implemented throughout the project period or may commence during a later phase of the project.

Preparatory actions may for example include:

- Review of the technical studies on technologies and processes to be implemented in the project;
- Data collection and modelling or setting up of databases required for the project implementation;
- Optimisation of the process to be implemented during the IP;
- Setting up of appropriate monitoring systems (including e.g. in the case of Nature IP those for the purposes of Art. 17 monitoring);
- Actions preparatory to the concrete conservation/implementation actions of the project (technical planning, permit procedures, stakeholder consultations, etc.);
- Drafting/revising site management plans (e.g. for Natura 2000) or action plans (e.g. for species and habitats);

#### **2.4.2 Concrete implementation actions (C actions)**

These are the core activities of the project proposal and **must implement the actions foreseen in the plan or strategy targeted by the IP**. They are mostly expected to be best practice but can also be innovative and/or demonstration actions.

Concrete implementation actions must have a **tangible and measurable environmental / climate benefit**. Actions' descriptions must therefore demonstrate a concrete environmental / climate benefit.

For the purposes of IPs, certain capacity building actions, in addition to those falling under the category of preparatory action, may also be considered to be implementation actions. This may include e.g. the development or improvement of coordination processes, structures and procedures required to better implement the plan.



The actual impact of the concrete implementation actions must be monitored during the project (see Monitoring of the impact of the project actions – D Actions).

There is no specific requirement regarding a minimum level of concrete actions under any type of IPs. However, it is expected that when implementing the targeted plan/strategy, most IPs would allocate a significant share of their budget to concrete actions with tangible results in accordance with the priorities of the plan/strategy. This aspect will be taken into account during the evaluation of the proposals.

Concrete implementation actions must aim to improve (or slow/halt/reverse the decline of) the environmental / climate aspects targeted either directly or through an increased capacity to implement the plan or strategy. Their impact must be measurable and must be monitored and evaluated during the project.

The actions may include the establishment of infrastructure, however, projects or actions dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure do not fall within the scope of the LIFE Programme and are therefore not eligible as indicated in chapter 1.10.16.

The maintenance of the investments made through these actions must be ensured in the long-term after the end of the project. Amongst others, where actions take place on land that does not belong to any of the beneficiaries, they must establish a convention with the owner in which he/she commits not to take any action that would compromise the investments/restoration made by the project. This convention must be for a suitably long period (ideally 30 years or longer). The establishment of these conventions must appear explicitly in the description of the relevant action(s) and in the corresponding "expected results" section.

#### **a) Land purchase/lease of land and/or compensation payment for use rights**

The concrete actions of Nature IPs may include the purchase or lease of land or compensatory payments. Inclusion of such actions in other types of IPs (e.g. Water, Climate Action IPs) can also be eligible in well justified exceptional cases.

This includes:

- the purchase of land and associated costs (e.g. notary expenses, taxes, etc.);
- the long-term lease of land and associated costs;
- one-off land use compensation payments and associated costs.

(Note: Short term lease and/or compensation payments can only be eligible for funding if they serve for demonstration of pilot actions – see below)

**Any land purchase payments, compensation payments or lease payments to public bodies are not eligible, with the exception of compensation or short-term lease payments to local authorities (i.e. municipalities or similar).**

It is recommended that local authorities re-invest the income from such payments into conservation or public awareness-raising measures for the Natura 2000 network or the Biodiversity Strategy. *Those proposals that include a commitment from the local authorities in question to do so will be considered for a higher scoring on EU added value in the project evaluation process and may therefore have a higher chance of being selected for co-funding.*

#### **a1) Land purchase**

The eligibility of any costs for land purchase is subject to the conditions listed below. The **applicant must address each of these conditions in his full proposal**, explaining how each condition is met or will be met during the project.

1. The land purchase must be clearly related to the objectives of the project.
2. The land purchased must contribute to improving, maintaining or restoring the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.
3. The purchase is the only or most cost-effective way of achieving the desired conservation outcome.
4. The land purchased is reserved in the long-term for uses consistent with the objectives set out in Article 11, 14 or 15 of the LIFE Regulation, through the most appropriate form of legal protection.
5. The beneficiaries must ensure that the sales contract / notary act and/or entry in the land register includes a guarantee that the land is assigned definitively (without time limitation) to nature conservation purposes. Where both possibilities exist (sales contract and land registry entry), the beneficiaries must use the option that offers the strongest long-term protection. Note that with the final report, the beneficiaries will have to submit a copy of the sales contract and/or entry in the land register including the above mentioned guarantee. Should they fail to provide such documents, the corresponding land purchase costs and associated costs will be considered ineligible. For countries where it would be illegal to include such a guarantee in both the land register and in the sale contract, the Contracting Authority may accept an equivalent guarantee, provided it offers the same legal level of protection in the long term.
6. The land must be purchased by one of the project beneficiaries who is either a well-established private organisation (e.g. nature conservation NGO or other) or a public body with nature conservation responsibility, and must remain in its ownership after the end of the project.
7. The proposal must demonstrate that each beneficiary that will carry out land purchase has the necessary competence and experience in land purchase for nature conservation, and that the planned target is realistic within the time framework of the project,
8. If the purchasing body is a private organisation, its statutes must include a provision that, in case of dissolution, the land will be transferred to another legal body primarily active in the field of nature conservation (e.g. another conservation NGO or appropriate public body).
9. Evidence must be provided in the proposal that the purchase price is consistent with the current market prices for the type of land and the region concerned.
10. Evidence must be provided that the land purchased was not owned by a public authority prior to the project starting date. Purchase of land that has recently been transferred from public to private ownership will not be eligible.
11. Land purchased must be the subject, during the project, of specific restoration and/or active management or restrictions of use that go beyond legal obligations and existing restrictions that could not be imposed without purchasing the land. The purchase of land that is in excellent conservation status (i.e. that requires no restoration or specific management or restrictions of use) is only eligible if strategic to the objectives of the project.

**a2) Long-term land lease, purchase of rights and one-off compensation payments**

The same conditions listed above apply, as and where appropriate, to these types of payments. The applicant must address each of these conditions in the proposal,

explaining how each condition is met or will be met during the project. The duration of a lease must be sufficient to guarantee the durability of the conservation investment (e.g. 30 years).

**ac) *Short term land lease or temporary compensation payments***

Land lease or compensation payments with a limited duration, within the project period, will **only** be eligible **insofar as** they are **necessary for the demonstration of pilot actions favourable to the conservation status of the species, habitats or ecosystem targeted**. Note that appropriate justification for the cost-effectiveness of short term lease payments (consistency with current market prices for the type of land and the region concerned) will have to be provided with the project's final report.

**2.4.3 Monitoring of the impact of project actions (obligatory D Actions)**

Each project will have to report on the outcomes and impact of the project taking into account the **LIFE IP performance indicators** (see further instructions under "Obligatory action" here below).

The proposal should therefore identify **specific indicators** to be used to measure the impacts of the project (or foresee action(s) to do so). These indicators should be coherent with the plan being implemented and its objectives, with the problems addressed in the IP and with the type of activities planned. The initial situation from which the project starts should be assessed (**baseline**) and progress should be regularly evaluated against it.

The monitoring of the **project impact on the implementation of the targeted plan**, on the particular conservation, biodiversity or environmental /climate problems addressed and on the capacities being built up, 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, also in terms of the impact on the implementation of the targeted plan.

Monitoring of the IP impacts and 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. All projects will therefore have to include monitoring actions. These activities are distinct from the monitoring of the project progress (see F actions).

***Monitoring of the project's contribution to the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy***

IP project actions, and in particular the concrete implementation actions (C actions) must lead to **a measurable increase in the rate of implementation of the targeted plan or strategy**.

Particular attention should also be paid to and covered by dedicated sub actions for:

- the monitoring of the **capacity building** impacts of the project for an efficient well-coordinated implementation of the plan or strategy; and
- the direct or indirect impact on mobilisation of and coordination with complementary funds used for the implementation of the targeted plan, including the After LIFE period.

***Monitoring of the project's environmental impact / project's impact on climate objectives***

IPs must have a tangible and measurable impact on the environment / climate objectives. Concrete indicators should be established in order to evaluate the project's impact, during its implementation, and at final stage, and their assessment against the baseline. Separate actions for the monitoring of the environmental / climate impact should be set covering also the multi-purpose delivery aspects of the project.

The indicators should be coherent with the targeted plan or strategy being implemented and its environmental / climate objectives, with the conservation, biodiversity or environmental / climate problems addressed in the IP and with the type of activities planned.

### ***Monitoring of the project's socio-economic impact***

In addition, each proposal must include – as applicable – separate actions aimed to assess the **socio-economic impact** of the project actions on the local economy and population, and to assess the IP's impact on the **ecosystem functions**, as relevant. This can take the form of a study or studies 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 and adapting to and limiting climate change. Examples of positive effects of a 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).

Furthermore, IPs having **pilot/demonstration elements** must have a clear set of actions for evaluating the main project findings and outcomes, including the cost-efficient replicability or transferability of the actions and results and the measures taken to ensure the actual replication or transfer of successful pilot/demonstration actions. Proposals that are insufficient in these aspects will not be considered to have a pilot/demonstration value.

For Nature IPs, the **direct linkages between the project measures and key ecosystem services provided**, such as carbon sequestration, water purification, pollination, etc., should be clearly assessed. The impact of project actions aimed at restoring multi-functional ecosystems such as rivers, floodplains, forests, peatlands or mires should be assessed as far as possible in economic terms (monetary terms or if this is not possible there should be a qualitative estimation). All these should be consistent in so far as possible with the methodology on Mapping and Assessing Ecosystems and their Services (MAES) agreed at European level within action 5 of the Biodiversity Strategy.

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/ecosystem\\_assessment/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/ecosystem_assessment/index_en.htm)

**Obligatory action:** A specific action to monitor and measure the impact of the project (that will feed the online dynamic indicator database), should be part of the proposal with a defined budget. Each project will have to report on the outputs and impact of the project taking into account the LIFE Key project level indicators. These indicators will contribute to evaluating the impact of the LIFE project. Each proposal must include an action to compile the information needed to regularly report on project indicators and enter data related to those indicators in the dynamic indicators database (KPI database). The data will need to be entered at the latest during the first phase of the project and at the end of the project (include clear quantification in absolute and relative terms) and 3 or 5 years after the project ends (please select the timeframe most suitable for your project).

A dynamic indicators database is available to successful applicants. The database preview can be accessed for information at the following webpage:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi\\_demo.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi_demo.htm)

In case the webpage is not working (this can happen, for example, if the applicant does not have the Flash Plugin installed in the browser), it is possible to download an .mp4 movie from the following link:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi\\_demo.mp4](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi_demo.mp4)

**At both the concept note and full proposal application stages, the applicants need to fill in the provided Excel table** (LIFE Key Project Level Indicators Call 2020.xlsx). The dynamic online database cannot be completed at this time and is presented only to show the applicants the type of information they will be asked to complete if and after their grant agreement is signed.

#### **2.4.4 Communication and dissemination actions (obligatory – E actions)**

LIFE IPs are expected to aim at the eventual full implementation of the targeted plan, in particular by building up capacities and facilitating the mobilisation of other funds. IPs shall provide **examples of good practice for an efficient and well-coordinated implementation of Union environmental / climate policies in Member States and regions.**

The IPs shall include actions to ensure project's **replicability and transferability** during and after its implementation. Successful replication and transferability require including tasks to multiply the impacts of the project's solutions and mobilise a wider uptake, reaching a critical mass during the project and / or in a short and medium term perspective after the end of the IP.

Therefore, IPs **must include a significant set of actions to disseminate the results of the project** so that the knowledge gained – e.g. through the demonstrative elements - is actively communicated to those targeted stakeholders that may best make use of it and apply the lessons from the project. A crucial element is active networking with, and dissemination to, other stakeholders that could apply the results, including at EU level. Proposals that are insufficient in this respect will not be considered favourably.

Certain communication actions are **obligatory** for IPs (**project web site, notice boards, use of LIFE / Natura 2000 logos**, etc.) and should therefore be explicitly foreseen in the proposal as separate actions. In addition, each proposal must include an action entitled **"Networking with other LIFE and/or non-LIFE projects"**. This must include visits, meetings, exchange of information, and/or other such networking activities with an appropriate number of other relevant LIFE projects (ongoing or completed). It may also include similar exchanges with other non-LIFE projects and/or participation in information platforms related to the project objectives (including at international level where justified).

Communication and dissemination actions will include, depending on the nature of the project, the following type of activities:

- information and awareness raising activities regarding the project to the general public and stakeholders. These actions should in general begin early on in the project and should aim at facilitating the implementation of the project;
- public 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;

- more technical dissemination actions aimed at transferring the results and lessons learnt from pilot/demonstration actions **to those stakeholders that could usefully benefit from the project's experience** and implement themselves the actions demonstrated in the project. These actions should in general begin only once the method/technique being tested has been evaluated. They should continue for a sufficiently long period so that the results and lessons learnt are extensively disseminated before the end of the project.

For Nature IPs, activities to raise the awareness of Natura 2000 network are obligatory. Should the proposal include the development of general guidelines for setting up management plans for e.g. Natura 2000 sites / habitat types / species / river basins / waste or guidelines for their practical management, it must demonstrate the need for such guidelines and that equivalent guidelines do not already exist elsewhere, and must identify the target "public" and how the guidelines will be distributed to them.

Should the proposal include the creation of **small-scale** visitor infrastructures, these may not exceed 10% of the budget allocated to concrete/implementation (C) actions in the proposal budget, and must be well-justified and cost effective or else they will be deleted from the proposal during the revision phase.

The range of possible communication actions serving the dissemination of result of pilot/demonstrative actions is large (media work, organisation of events for the local/regional community, didactic work with stakeholders or with schools, seminars, workshops, brochures, leaflets, newsletters, DVDs, technical publications, ...), and those proposed should form a coherent package. Each communication and dissemination action must clearly define and justify its target audience, and should be expected to have a significant impact, which is to be assessed within the corresponding project actions. To be effective, these actions should in general begin early on in the project.

The organisation of large and costly scientific meetings or the financing of large-scale visitor (or other) infrastructures is not eligible.

The LIFE website <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/life/toolkit/comtools/index.htm> also contains detailed advice on communication and dissemination actions, in particular [LIFE Nature: Communicating with stakeholders and the general public – Best practices examples for Natura 2000](#) and the guidelines on [how to design a LIFE web-site](#).

#### **2.4.5 Project management and monitoring of project progress (obligatory - F actions)**

The project's operational and management structures must be well organised and controlled by the coordinating beneficiary. Appropriate means (equipment, personnel etc.) shall allow a high quality implementation of the project.

Every project proposal must therefore contain an appropriate amount of both project management and project progress 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, provided the coordinating beneficiary retains full and day to day control of the project. The proposal should clearly describe how this control will be guaranteed. 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 staffs have previous experience in project management. It is **strongly recommended** that the project manager 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.

- Due to the implementation of the IPs in several phases, the project management should perform beyond the standard technical and financial reporting also the preparation of detailed plans for the next stages of the project (see 1.10.10) . The resulting plan for each stage will be a normal deliverable part of the scheduled reporting. As such it does not require to be specified as a single action, however, beneficiaries may decide if they wish to highlight this activity as a single action.
- Coordination/Working Group – or similar arrangement - with the relevant complementary funds is expected to be established to improve over the long-term the mobilisation of these funds for the implementation of the plan in question (e.g. PAF)
- Training, workshops and meetings for the project beneficiaries' staff, where these are required for the achievement of the project objectives.

### 3. APPLICATION FORMS

#### 3.1 General remarks

There are 2 sets of LIFE IP application forms:

- the **Concept Note (CN) forms** of stage 1 in a Word file; and
- the **Full proposal forms** of stage 2:

Technical A, B, C forms in a Word file, and

Financial F forms in an Excel file.

While filling in the Concept Note and technical forms A – C of the full proposal, please respect the standard A4 format. **Maps** illustrating the location of the proposed actions should be presented in annex. Insofar as possible, these maps should also be in A4 format but may if necessary be presented in A3 format. No formats other than A4 or A3 are allowed.

While in general – with the exceptions indicated in the following chapters - there are no formal limits on the number of characters in the various fields of the forms, please exercise prudence and include text and information that is strictly needed for the purposes of the proposal. The character numbers indicated in certain forms or fields only serve as indications of the normally expected length of text, but applicants do not have to strictly adhere to them.

The predefined texts of the various forms with special regard to declarations are in principle not to be modified so as to avoid that they would be considered incomplete and invalid. Exceptions to this general rule are indicated below.

Whenever several copies of one form need to be produced, please use the following reference number per page: 2020-XY/1; 2020-XY/2 etc.

The data between various technical and financial forms are intrinsically connected, therefore please ensure the coherence of information of relevant forms across the application.

Enter all dates in DD/MM/YYYY format.



### 3.2 STAGE 1: The Concept Note – CN forms

The CN forms in general require only concise and summarized information with precise references to details in the related plan or strategy that shall be provided with the Concept Note (in its original language).

Where you have no specific information to put on certain parts of the forms, indicate "not applicable" or "none" or "no relevant information" or an equivalent indication. Do not leave empty sections in the forms.

#### **Form CNa – General project information**

**Project title (max 120 characters):** It should include the key elements and objective of the project, such as the environmental climate issue targeted and the geographical scope. Note that the Contracting Authority may ask you to change the title in order to make it clearer. The title must be in English.

**Project acronym (max 25 characters):** The acronym must contain the word 'LIFE-IP', e.g. 'LIFE-IP RBMP-TAMDESI' or 'LIFE-IP PAF-BURGLANDIA'. All CN forms shall bear this acronym.

**Geographic location of the project:** Indicate the Member State(s), region(s) or/and cities where the project will take place, as relevant. If project actions will be implemented outside the EU, the country has to be specified here.

**Expected start date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. The earliest possible start date is presented in the Annex 1 – a definitive date will be fixed in the invitation to submit the full proposal. Please note that if you choose a later date, the costs of participation in the kick-off meeting for all new projects may not be eligible.

**Expected end date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**Project policy area:** the policy area is determined by the plan you wish to implement irrespective of the fact that project activities may also benefit other policy areas..

**The targeted plan/strategy:** Please provide the exact title of the plan or strategy being implemented by the IP - a full copy is to be provided with the Concept Note.

If the plan or strategy has **not yet** been officially **adopted**, please **provide the latest available draft**, and explain the expected date of adoption.

**Name of beneficiaries:** List the full name of the coordinating beneficiary and of all the associated beneficiaries identified at this stage.

**Project budget and requested EU funding:** Indicate the total cost of the actions foreseen within the LIFE IP itself as well as the total cost eligible for co-financing by LIFE. Indicate the requested amount and percentage of contribution from LIFE in proportion to the eligible cost.

**Note** that summary information on **funding** from sources **other than LIFE** needed for complementary actions serving the implementation of the targeted plan are to be provided in the financial plan (see form CNf).

**Authorisation to inform the LIFE National Contact Point:** indicate if the consortium authorises EASME to share with the LIFE National Contact Point the project title and coordinating beneficiary name.

### **Form CNb – Coordinating beneficiary**

**Short Name (max 10 characters):** The beneficiary will be identified throughout the technical forms, the financial forms and the reports by its short name.

**Legal name (max 200 characters):** Provide the full name under which the beneficiary is officially registered.

**Legal Status:** Select one of the following 3 choices: *Public body*, *Private commercial* or *Private non-commercial* (including NGOs). Tick the appropriate box. Further guidance on how to distinguish private entities from public bodies can be found in section 1.6 of this document.

**Value Added Tax (VAT) number:** If applicable, provide the entity's VAT registration number.

**Legal Registration Number:** If applicable, provide the entity's legal national registration number or code from the appropriate trade register (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce register), business register or other.

**Registration date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**Legal address:** Enter Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code.

**Member State:** Use the relevant member state code as indicated at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

**Contact person information:** Enter Surname, First Name.

**Function:** Provide the function of the person in charge of coordinating the proposal. Example: Managing Director, Project Manager, etc.

**Telephone/Fax:** Provide information for the contact person.

**E-mail: IMPORTANT** This e-mail address will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all notifications to or correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure.

**Department / Service Name:** Name of the department and / or service in the entity coordinating the proposal and for which the contact person is working. The address details given in the fields which follow must be for the department/service and not the legal address of the entity. Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country.

**Website:** Provide the beneficiary's official website.

**Brief description of the activities of the coordinating beneficiary (max 2000 characters):** Please describe the entity, its legal status, its activities and its competence in the field of the proposed actions. Please indicate whether the coordinating beneficiary is the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the targeted plan/strategy. The description given should enable the Contracting Authority to evaluate the technical reliability of the coordinating beneficiary, i.e. whether it has the necessary experience and expertise for a successful implementation of the proposed project.

### **Form CNd – Summary description of the project (MUST be completed in English)**

This form is the essence of the Concept Note as the descriptions provided herein would be the fundamental basis for the decision whether the concept fits or not the provisions

for IPs and whether it is suitable to be further elaborated into a full proposal. It must be completed in English.

The description shall be structured, concise and clear - with a total extent not exceeding 10 pages. Accordingly the applicants shall avoid including detailed description, instead they have to make precise references (with at least page and chapter numbers) to the plan/strategy being implemented.

Further to the description of the IP itself, the form should include sufficient information on the foreseen complementary actions intended to be financed by other funds and to be implemented in the framework of the plan in addition to the IP. Information concerning the IP itself and information concerning complementary actions is to be clearly separated, as indicated on the form.

The number of complementary action/measures and their description should be kept at a reasonable level that would be sufficient to demonstrate the plans of the applicants for implementing the overall plan without providing exhaustive details. In this respect, priority should be given to those that may be a prerequisite for implementing the IP itself and to those that build upon or are directly linked to the IP (e.g. by utilizing the methods demonstrated therein or by performing in parallel actions that are similar to the IP in other areas covered by the plan).

Where possible, make a distinction between the objectives and actions foreseen during the first phase the project and the following phases.

The form should include:

- **Overall context/background/geographical scope:**

Describe the environmental / climate issues directly targeted by the project within the framework of the relevant plan or strategy. Describe the present gaps or shortcomings that hinder the effective implementation of the plan. Indicate the geographical coverage of the LIFE IP actions. The applicant has to explain here why he considers that the proposal should fall under the IP definition.

Provide also similar brief information on the complementary actions foreseen during the implementation period of the IP strand.

- **Project Objectives:**

Provide a brief description of the main objectives of the IP itself, listing them by decreasing order of importance. These objectives must be realistic (be achievable within the timeframe of the project with the proposed budget and means) and clear (without ambiguity). They should be directly related to the identified gaps and shortcomings identified above and the environmental / climate issues targeted by the project, and should directly address the problems and threats identified in the underlying plan.

Provide also similar brief information regarding the complementary actions.

- **Actions and means involved:**

Describe those within the framework of the IP. Note that focus should be only on the main actions that outline the intentions of the project. The full scale of actions would be described later in the full proposal. Please explain clearly what means will be utilised during the project to reach the objectives indicated above (financial means should not be indicated). Please ensure that there is a clear link between the proposed actions and means and the underlying plan/strategy as

well as with the project's objectives. Please include specific references to sections of the plan/strategy.

Please also summarize – separately - the complementary actions/means financed by sources other than LIFE.

- **Expected results (quantified as far as possible):**

List the main results expected at the end of the project. These must directly relate to the environmental / climate issues targeted by the project and to the project's objectives. They should in general also relate to the objectives of the targeted plan and reflect the degree of implementation of that plan. The expected results must be concrete, realistic and **quantified** as far as possible.

Indicate separately those expected from the complementary actions.

- **Expected contribution of the project to the implementation of the target plan/strategy:**

In addition to the expected specific results, indicate the level or degree of implementation of the target plan/strategy intended to be achieved directly by the IP by the end of the IP. Include a **table or scheme where possible, showing links between objectives/targets in plan/strategy, and objectives/actions/results in the project.**

Indicate separately the expected contribution by the complementary actions.

- **Main stakeholders involved in the project:**

Provide the name and role of each main stakeholders (the associated beneficiaries already appearing in form CNa do not have to be repeated) and provide a brief justification for your intention to involve them directly or indirectly in the LIFE IP.

- **Long term sustainability (including capacity building, replication and transfer):**

Please indicate how sustainability of the project's results and effects will be ensured.

Also provide a brief description of how the requirement for capacity building – including the enhanced coordination in mobilising the use of various funds - would be ensured during and after the project.

Please explain if there will be any replication or transfer of the project results.

- **Expected major constraints and risks:**

It is important that applicants identify all possible **internal or external** constraints and risks that could have **major negative impacts** on the successful implementation of the project. Consideration should be given to possible constraints and risks due to the **socio-economic environment** or to **administrative** aspects (e.g. need for licencing). For the purposes of the Concept Note, it is sufficient to summarize here only aspects that would likely block the implementation of the entire project and indicate how you envisage overcoming these.

Make differentiation between the LIFE IP itself as well as the foreseen main complementary actions.

- **Climate-related project (not applicable to LIFE Climate Action IPs):** applicants are required to indicate whether their project is significantly climate-related by ticking the appropriate box. A significantly climate-related project is defined as a project where the main actions concern initiatives and measures that can be used to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects. If this is the case please provide a brief explanation.
- **Biodiversity-related project (not applicable for LIFE Nature IPs):** applicants are required to indicate whether their project is significantly biodiversity-related by ticking the appropriate box. A significantly biodiversity-related project is defined as a project where the main actions concern initiatives and measures that can contribute to the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. If this is the case please provide a brief explanation.

**Form CNe – Map of the general location(s) of the project area(s) in the country/region:**

Please indicate clearly the area covered by the targeted plan/strategy and the area(s) covered by the IP. If possible, please also mark the area of complementary actions (outside the IP). The map at this stage serves only indicative purposes facilitating the understanding of the concept. (Please include a scale of the map and clear explanation of the areas marked). You may include reference to the plan/strategy.

For this purpose a visual river/basin catchment plan (or other equivalent plans) indicating where and how interventions will be prioritised shall also be provided.

More than one map may be provided. The format of maps shall only be A4 or A3.

**Form CNf - Financial Plan:**

In accordance with the descriptions and logic of form CNd, the financial plan summarizes in a table format the main funding sources planned to be mobilised for the financing of the actions or measures intended to be implemented for the purposes of the targeted plan or strategy, at least during the lifetime of the IP.

Accordingly, the table must indicate funds expected to be co-financing the actions of the LIFE IP itself, as well as the funds financing the complementary actions/measures implemented in addition to the IP.

The format of the table cannot be modified with the exception of adding the required number of rows under the various funding sources.

The table can indicate larger individual actions (e.g. construction of XX) or groups/types of actions (e.g. support for grazing activities by farmers in ...., land purchase of X ha, etc.) as best fit for the purposes of a reasonable presentation of the intentions of the applicant.

For the LIFE project itself, only the amount of funding (EUR) needs to be filled in.

*For complementary actions the following information should be provided:*

**Sources of financing:** Indicate the name of the financing source/fund (e.g. EAFRD) if possible specifying the name of the measure, operational program or equivalent scheme of the given funds. The sources/funds shall be grouped according to their types (EU, public, private or international). Provide the subtotals per funding source and per funding type.

Note that the funds mentioned specifically in the form are only examples. If those funds are not relevant please delete them. If other funds will contribute please add rows as necessary to the right cluster (e.g. Horizon2020 should be listed under EU funds, etc.)

**Actions/measures to be financed:** Under each funding source/fund, list the actions/measures to be financed (for this purpose, it is advised to make references to the descriptions in form CNd and/or to the plan/strategy). Related to this listing, also indicate the corresponding **amount of funding (EUR)** and indicate whether this would be a contribution to the **Direct co-financing of the LIFE project itself** (yes) or complementary (no). N.B. No other EU funds than LIFE may be used as direct co-financing source to the budget of the LIFE IP.

**Status/date of Funding: granted/ at application stage/ not yet requested:** For each funding source/fund, indicate the status of granting. Choose between the following options if the funding scheme is already definitive:

- granted (indicate the date of the grant by dd/mm/yyyy), **or**
- at application stage (indicate the date of application); **or**
- not yet requested (indicate if known, the deadline of applications).

You may indicate in the notes field if the scheme (e.g. the Rural Development or Operative Program) is still to be formally adopted.

**Authority/entity managing the fund:** For each funding source/fund, indicate the full name of the authority managing (granting) the fund.

**Note:** add any notes you may find useful to better explain e.g. the status, magnitude and likelihood of the funding listed in the form.

**KPI excel table:** In addition, **an excel file with the KPIs must be attached to the application.** Please follow the guidance in 2.4.3 of this Application guide.

### 3.3 STAGE 2: The full proposal - Technical application forms

**IMPORTANT: These forms are required from the applicants whose Concept Notes have been positively assessed and who were subsequently invited to submit a full proposal in the second stage of the IP application process.**

The technical application forms of the full *LIFE IP* proposal consist of 3 parts (A, B and C).

The Contracting Authority strongly recommends that applicants complete the proposal in English.

The title of the proposal and form B1 ("Summary description of the project") must always be submitted in English.

The forms in general should include only concise descriptions with precise (e.g. chapter, page number) references to details in the related plan or strategy that has been submitted with the Concept Note or with the full proposal (in case updated version has been adopted since the Concept Note submission).

Where you have no specific information to put on certain parts of the forms, indicate "not applicable" or "none" or "no relevant information" or an equivalent indication. **Do not leave empty parts in the forms.**

Enter all dates in DD/MM/YYYY format.

#### 3.3.1 Administrative information (A forms)

##### **Form A1 – General project information**

**Project title (max 120 characters):** It should include the key elements and objective of the project, such as the environmental /climate issue targeted and the geographical scope. Note that the Contracting Authority may ask you to change the title in order to make it clearer. The title of the project must always be in English, even if the proposal itself is submitted in a different language.

**Project acronym (max 25 characters):** The acronym must contain the word 'LIFE-IP', e.g. 'LIFE-IP RBMP-TAMDESI' or 'LIFE-IP PAF-BURGLANDIA'.

**Geographic location of the project:** Indicate the Member State(s), region(s) or/and city(ies) where the project will take place. If project actions will be implemented outside the EU, the country has to be specified here.

**Expected start date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. Please note that if you choose a later date, the costs of participation in the kick-off meeting for all new projects may not be eligible.

**Expected end date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**Project policy area:** The policy area is determined by the plan you wish to implement irrespective of the fact that project activities may also benefit other policy areas. Please select only one project policy area.

**The targeted plan/strategy:** Please provide the exact title of the plan or strategy being implemented by the IP - a full copy is to be provided in case it has been updated since the submission of the Concept Note. The plan must be one of the strategic environmental /climate plans or strategies indicated in chapter 1.3.1 (page 6) of the Guidelines for applicants. In case the IP aims at implementing an existing plan, and some activities of the IP would contribute to the development of a new plan, **both** plans should be quoted in this section.

**Name of beneficiaries:** List the full name of the coordinating beneficiary and of all the associated beneficiaries.

**Project budget and requested EU funding:** Indicate the total cost of the actions foreseen within the LIFE IP itself as well as the total cost eligible for co-financing by LIFE. Indicate the requested amount and percentage of contribution from LIFE in proportion to the eligible cost.

**Note** that summary information on **funding** needed for complementary actions serving the implementation of the targeted plan from sources **other than LIFE** is to be provided in the revised financial plan (see form F8).

### **Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary**

**Short Name (max 10 characters):** The beneficiary will be identified throughout the technical forms, the financial forms and the reports by its short name.

**Legal name (max 200 characters):** Provide the full name under which the beneficiary is officially registered.

**Legal Status:** Select one of the following 3 choices: *Public body*, *Private commercial* or *Private non-commercial* (including NGOs). Tick the appropriate box. Further guidance on how to distinguish private entities from public bodies can be found in section 1.6 of this document.

**Value Added Tax (VAT) number:** If applicable, provide the entity's VAT registration number.

**VAT Reimbursement:** please note that non-deductible VAT is an eligible cost, except for those activities matching the concept of sovereign powers exercised by Member States.

If your organisation is unable to recover VAT paid (for public entities it can only concern VAT related to activities that do not match the concept of sovereign powers) you can opt to include the reimbursement of VAT in your costs submitted under this proposal, in that case then please tick the box 'YES', otherwise tick the box 'NO'.

**Legal Registration Number:** If applicable, provide the entity's legal national registration number or code from the appropriate trade register (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce register), business register or other.

**Registration date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**PIC Number (not compulsory):** The PIC (Participant Identification Code) is a unique 9-digit code used for the identification of validated legal entities of projects funded under a number of EU programmes. **It is not mandatory to provide this number at the time of the proposal submission**, however applicants are invited to create it, by following the instructions provided at the link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html><sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> During the registration for the PIC number, applicants will be required to provide some information which is used only for Horizon 2020 Programme and is irrelevant for the LIFE Programme. Therefore, when completing Step 1 - Status of the Organisation and if you wish to participate as a beneficiary only in LIFE projects, choose the minimal status by ticking only the 'Legal person' box. Similarly, for the cost method section, select the indirect cost method 'standard flat rate'. Should you decide at a later moment to participate in a project financed under the Horizon 2020 Programme, you may change the related information anytime.



The PIC will have to be validated at a later stage for all proposals selected for LIFE co-financing. Note that beneficiaries whose PIC is already validated will not have to submit anymore their legal and supporting documents.

**Legal address:** Enter Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code.

**Member State:** Use the relevant member state code as indicated at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

**Contact person information:** Enter Surname, First Name.

**Function:** Provide the function of the person in charge of coordinating the proposal. Example: Managing Director, Project Manager, etc.

**Telephone:** Provide information for the contact person.

**E-mail: IMPORTANT** This e-mail address will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all notifications to or correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure.

**Department / Service Name:** Name of the department and / or service in the entity coordinating the proposal and for which the contact person is working. The address details given in the fields which follow must be for the department/service and not the legal address of the entity. Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country.

**Legal representative information:** Enter Surname, First Name.

**Function:** Provide the function of the person. Example: CEO.

**E-mail:** Provide information for the legal representative.

**Address details:** Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country (if they are identical to the legal address, you may copy them directly).

**Website:** Provide the beneficiary's official website.

**Brief description of the activities of the coordinating beneficiary (max 2000 characters):** Please describe the entity, its legal status, its activities and its competence in the field of the proposed actions. **Please indicate whether the coordinating beneficiary is the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the targeted plan/strategy.** The description given should enable the Contracting Authority to evaluate the technical reliability of the coordinating beneficiary, i.e. whether it has the necessary experience and expertise for a successful implementation of the proposed project.

### **Form A3 – Coordinating beneficiary declaration**

Fill in the following fields:

- Full name of the coordinating beneficiary.
- 'At....on....': Indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

**Important:** Before completing this form, please check that the beneficiary does not fall into any of the situations listed in art. 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the Financial Regulation n° 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018 (JO L 193 of 30/07/2018), reference:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1549552252045&uri=CELEX:32018R1046>

and that the beneficiary complies with all relevant eligibility criteria, as defined in the LIFE MAWP for 2018-2020 and the LIFE Call for Proposals, including this Guidelines for Applicants.

For accuracy purposes, make sure that this form is **completed**, signed and dated **after** having entered all the technical and financial data into your application.

### **Form A3a – Public body declaration**

The Coordinating Beneficiary that is a public body must fill in, date and sign the template provided. Accordingly, fill in the following fields:

- Full name of the coordinating beneficiary.
- 'At....on....': Indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

### **Form A4 – Associated beneficiary declaration and Mandate**

The form has to be filled in separately for each associated beneficiary.

For completing this form, please also **see instructions for form A3**.

You need to fill in the following fields:

- Full name of the associated beneficiary.
- The forename and surname of the legal representative of the future associated beneficiary signing the form.
- 'At....on....': Indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

For accuracy purposes, it is strongly advised that this form is **completed**, signed and dated **after** having entered all the technical and financial data into your application.

### **Form A5 – Associated beneficiary**

**Short Name (max 10 characters):** The beneficiary will be identified throughout the technical forms, the financial forms and the reports by its short name.

**Beneficiary n°:** Fill-in associated beneficiary number in line with numbering in A1 form.

**Legal name (max 200 characters):** Provide the full name under which the beneficiary is officially registered.

**Legal Status:** Select one of the following 3 choices: *Public body*, *Private commercial* or *Private non-commercial* (including NGOs). Tick the appropriate box. Further guidance on how to distinguish private entities from public bodies can be found in section 1.6 of this document.

**Value Added Tax (VAT) number:** If applicable, provide the entity's VAT registration number.

**VAT Reimbursement:** please note that non-deductible VAT is an eligible cost, save for those activities matching the concept of sovereign powers exercised by Member States.

If your organisation is unable to recover VAT paid (for public entities it can only concern VAT related to activities that do not match the concept of sovereign powers) you can opt to include the reimbursement of VAT in your costs submitted under this proposal, in that case then please tick the box 'YES', otherwise tick the box 'NO'.

**Legal Registration Number:** If applicable, provide the entity's legal national registration number or code from the appropriate trade register (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce register), business register or other.

**Registration date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**PIC Number (not compulsory):** The PIC (Participant Identification Code) is a unique 9-digit code used for the identification of validated legal entities of projects funded under a number of EU programmes. **It is not mandatory to provide this number at the time of the proposal submission**, however applicants are invited to create it, by following the instructions provided at the link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>

The PIC will have to be validated at a later stage for all proposals selected for LIFE co-financing. Note that beneficiaries whose PIC is already validated will not have to submit anymore their legal and supporting documents.

**Legal address:** Enter Street name and no., PO Box, Post code, Town / City, Country name.

**Member State:** Use the relevant member state code, Country Code, as indicated at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

**Brief description of the activities of the associated beneficiary (max 2000 characters):** Please describe the entity, its legal status, its activities and its competence in the field of the proposed actions. Please indicate in case the beneficiary is the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the targeted plan/strategy. The description given should enable the Contracting Authority to evaluate the technical reliability of the beneficiary, i.e. whether it has the necessary experience and expertise for a successful implementation of the proposed project.

### **Form A6 – Co-financers**

The form has to be filled in separately for each co-financer.

For completing this form, please **see also the instructions for form A3 above**.

**Note that the co-financer contribution will have to be entered here and also in form FC** (see below).

**Status of the financial commitment:** please indicate either "*Confirmed*" or "*To be confirmed*". If the status is "to be confirmed", this must be explained with an indication

on when the confirmation is expected. Note that at a later stage in the selection process, you will be required to provide the A6 form with status "confirmed".

**Comments:** please make any relevant comments.

**Important note:** A coordinating / associated beneficiary should only appear in the proposal with that single role of coordinating / associated beneficiary and not also as a co-financer.

#### **Form A7 – Other proposals submitted for European Union funding**

**Applicants should not underestimate the importance of this form:** Clear and complete answers must be provided to each question (max 5000 characters for each question). LIFE projects should not in general finance actions that are better financed by other EU funding programmes with special regard to the requirement for mobilisation of complementary funding. Please also note point 1 of the declaration in form A3 that you have to sign; national authorities may be asked to review this declaration.

The primary purpose of the questions on this form is to ensure that there is no double funding from the EU for the actions that are planned under the IP itself and can also help to see if LIFE is indeed the best option for financing. You should include all relevant project applications, linked to the implementation of the targeted plan, that are ongoing and all projects that are already receiving EU finance, regardless of whether or not they make reference to the IP.

#### **Form A8 – Letter of intent from managing/competent authority/entity**

Clear and unambiguous **letters of intent are expected from each of the other complementary funding sources that are intended to be mobilised by the applicant.** The letter has to be provided separately **for each authority or entity** that manages public or private funds intended to be mobilised by the applicant to finance actions complementary to the IP itself.

N.B. To be considered for financing, an IP should show that **at least one additional fund (other than LIFE)** has been mobilised for complementary actions. The corresponding letter of intent **MUST** unambiguously confirm the commitment to finance.

Please note that this template form is provided only for your convenience but it can also be submitted in different formats if needed. However, irrespective of the format, **the information foreseen on this template must be provided.**

These letters should confirm that the proposed complementary actions are in principle eligible for financing from the given fund and provide information of the likelihood of getting actual financing (i.e. indicate if financing has been granted already, application has been received and is being processed; whether LIFE IP complementary actions are considered as a priority for financing decisions, etc.).

The letter should provide confirmation on **whether or not:**

- the complementary actions identified in the proposal and intended to be financed by the given fund are in principle eligible for financing from the given fund. Indicate as precisely as possible the matching scheme or measure.
- the current IP application indicates correctly the **potential financial contribution** from the given fund. Please indicate also the maximum percentage rate or amount of potential funding.
- the application indicates correctly **the timing** of potential funding from the given fund.

- during the assessment of applications for funding (to be) received by your authority/entity you (will) **take into account** that they are linked to the LIFE IP. You may specify here any specific conditions that may impact the likelihood of funding.

**Status of the financial commitment:** The letter should also provide information about the status of financial commitment from the given funding source. Please indicate if applications from beneficiaries/stakeholders involved in the IP have already been received or funds are already granted or when they can be expected to be granted.

In case the funds have already been confirmed or granted, also indicate here the date of the corresponding decision.

Comments may be provided on any of the above aspects.

**Important note:** A coordinating / associated beneficiary / co-financer of the LIFE IP may also sign this form if it is responsible for the management of the given complementary fund.

### 3.3.2 Project outline (B forms)

**IMPORTANT:** Throughout the B forms, applicants have to provide (at least) full details about all information requested in the forms for the first phase of their project - as described in section 1.10.10 of these guidelines - ("short term") of the implementation period of the IP unless otherwise stated in the instructions of the given form. For the remaining period ("long term"), the information can be more concise and be summarised as long as it provides a clear view on the technical and financial coherence as well as the EU added value of the IP.

This approach also applies to the complementary actions to be described in the forms where indicated.

In the case of complementary actions – throughout the application - the primary focus should be on actions financed by funds genuinely mobilised by the IP itself, with a secondary focus on complementary actions that are, if not mobilised, actively coordinated with the IP actions. In this regard, please pay attention to the provisions of chapter 1.4 of the guideline, in particular that:

- *"Complementary actions shall always implement **the same large scale plan or strategy** that the IP is targeting."*
- *"The quality of the coordination with other funding mechanism(s) and the level of mobilisation of complementary funds as well as the likelihood of their **actual mobilisation** and **their functional link** to the plan to be implemented will have an impact on the evaluation of the EU added value of the IP."*

**Actions and funds neither genuinely mobilised nor actively coordinated by the IP shall only be mentioned in case they are needed for the provision of comprehensive information on the implementation of the plan.**

It is up to the applicants, if they wish to, to provide detailed information about part of or the entire project beyond the first phase in order to better substantiate their proposal.

### **Form B1 – Summary description of the project (MUST be completed in English)**

The description shall be structured, concise and clear - with a total extent not exceeding 10 pages. Accordingly, applicants shall avoid including detailed description – instead, they have to make precise references (with at least page and chapter numbers) to the parts of the plan/strategy being implemented. Details of IP actions and various other aspects must be included in the subsequent B and C forms.

Further to the description of the IP itself, the form should include sufficient information – in line with the general instruction above - on the foreseen complementary actions intended to be financed by other funds and to be implemented in the framework of the plan in addition to the IP.

We advise avoiding listing complementary actions unless the beneficiaries are reasonably confident that they will be able to have a good overview of how these actions will be implemented in time and how they will contribute to the targeted plan and to the general objective of the IP.

Information concerning the IP itself and information concerning complementary actions is to be clearly separated, as indicated on the form.

The number of complementary action/measures and their description should be kept at a reasonable level that would be sufficient to demonstrate the plans of the applicants for implementing the overall plan without providing exhaustive details. In this respect, priority should be given to those that may be a prerequisite for implementing the IP itself and to those that build upon or are directly linked to the IP (e.g. by utilizing the methods demonstrated therein or by performing in parallel actions that are similar to the IP in other areas covered by the plan).

Where possible, make a distinction between the objectives and actions foreseen during the first phase the project and the following phases.

The form should include:

- **Overall context/background/geographical scope:**

Describe the environmental / climate issues directly targeted by the project within the framework of the relevant plan or strategy. Describe the present gaps or shortcomings that hinder the effective implementation of the plan. Indicate the geographical coverage of the LIFE IP actions. The applicant has to explain here why he considers that the proposal should fall under the IP definition.

Provide also similar brief information on the complementary actions foreseen during the implementation period of the IP strand.

- **Project Objectives:**

Provide a brief description of the main objectives of the IP itself, listing them by decreasing order of importance. These objectives must be realistic (be achievable within the timeframe of the project with the proposed budget and means) and clear (without ambiguity). They should be directly related to the identified gaps and shortcomings identified above and the environmental / climate issues targeted by the project, and should directly address the problems and threats identified in the underlying plan.

Provide also similar brief information regarding the complementary actions.

- **Actions and means involved:**

Describe those within the framework of the IP. Note that focus should be only on the main actions that outline the intentions of the project. The full scale of actions would be described later in the full proposal. Please explain clearly what means will be utilised during the project to reach the objectives indicated above (financial means should not be indicated). Please ensure that there is a clear link between the proposed actions and means and the underlying plan/strategy as well as with the project's objectives. Please include specific references to sections of the plan/strategy.

Please also summarize – separately - the complementary actions/means financed by sources other than LIFE.

- **Expected results (quantified as far as possible):**

List the main results expected at the end of the project. These must directly relate to the environmental / climate issues targeted by the project and to the project's objectives. They should in general also **relate to the objectives of the targeted plan and reflect the degree of implementation of that plan**. The expected results must be concrete, realistic and **quantified** as far as possible.

Indicate separately those expected from the complementary actions, **making as well linkage to the objectives of the plan and its degree of implementation**.

- **Expected contribution of the project to the implementation of the target plan/strategy:**

In addition to the expected specific results, indicate the level or degree of implementation of the target plan/strategy intended to be achieved directly by the IP by the end of the IP. **This information should also be presented in a clear quantitative way (table or scheme format where possible, showing links between objectives/targets in plan/strategy, and objectives/actions/results in the project)** indicating initial status and intended improvements. It is reminded that the IP is to be clearly designed with the aim of creating the conditions for the full implementation of the plan/strategy.

Indicate separately the expected contribution by the complementary actions, **presenting as well in a clear way (table or scheme format as suggested above)**.

- **Main stakeholders involved in the project:**

Provide the name and role of each main stakeholders (the associated beneficiaries already appearing in form A1 do not have to be repeated) and provide a brief justification for your intention to involve them directly or indirectly in the LIFE IP. It is reminded that key stakeholders must be involved in the implementation of the targeted plan/strategy.

- **Long term sustainability (including capacity building):**

Please indicate how sustainability of the project's results and effects will be ensured. Also provide a brief description of how the requirement for capacity building – including the enhanced coordination in mobilising the use of various funds - would be ensured during and after the project.

- **Expected major constraints and risks:**

It is important that applicants identify all possible **internal or external** constraints and risks that could have **major negative impacts** on the successful implementation of the project. Consideration should be given to possible constraints and risks due to the **socio-economic environment** or to **administrative** aspects (e.g. need for licencing). For the purposes of the Concept Note, it is sufficient to summarize here only aspects that would likely block the implementation of the entire project and indicate how you envisage overcoming these.

Make differentiation between the LIFE IP itself as well as the foreseen main complementary actions.

- **Climate-related project:** (not applicable to LIFE Climate IPs)

Applicants are required to indicate whether their project is significantly climate-related by ticking the appropriate box. A significantly climate-related project is defined as a project where the main actions concern initiatives and measures that can be used to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects. If this is the case please provide a brief explanation.

- **Biodiversity-related project (not applicable for LIFE Nature IPs):**

Applicants are required to indicate whether their project is significantly biodiversity-related by ticking the appropriate box. A significantly biodiversity-related project is defined as a project where the main actions concern initiatives and measures that can contribute to the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. If this is the case, please provide a brief explanation.

### **Form B2a – General description of the area(s) targeted by the project**

Please describe as precisely as possible where the project will be implemented (city, area, region, site(s), river, etc.). Please use only one form, which should include:

- Name of the project area(s) (max 200 characters): Please indicate the name of the city, area, region, river, etc. The name indicated should be short and must be used consistently on all maps and technical forms of the proposal.
- Please explain (in max 10,000 characters) where the project will be implemented and justify why you have selected this particular area(s) for your project within the geographical area covered by the targeted plan. You should explain why your choice is the most appropriate to reach the objectives of that plan.
- You should include both an overview description - and map(s) as per Form B2b - indicating also the specific sites where field actions will be implemented. Further details of those field actions can be provided on the C forms.

### **Form B2b – Maps of the general location of the project area**

This map should locate **the project area(s) described in form(s) B2a**. It should locate the project area(s) within the country and, if necessary, within the region(s) concerned. In case the project does not include actions targeting a defined area, you should locate as clearly as possible where the project is implemented (city, area, region etc.).

The **title and scale of the map** must be indicated. The map should be of **high quality** and **high resolution**, preferably in colour. The map should be easy to read. It should include, as a minimum, a clear legend and the background (main cities, main administrative delimitations, main rivers, lakes and sea(s) with the corresponding names, and the main roads). In addition, topography and vegetal coverage may be indicated on the map, if appropriate.

Note, that site specific maps need to be annexed to the relevant C forms as per instructions in 3.3.3 of these guidelines.

For complementary actions, only an overview map is obligatory that clearly indicates the areas of those actions and the ones within the IP itself.

### **Form B2c – Description of the strategy for the implementation of the overall plan**

Please describe your overall strategy for the implementation of the targeted plan: e.g. as regards the selection and combination of IP and complementary actions and their area



of coverage; describe your choice for project partnership; the institutional or technical background and capacity having an impact on the plan, etc.

Describe how these actions will contribute to solve the gaps and shortcomings identified as factors hindering the effective implementation of the plan/strategy.

The explanation should also cover the impact of the present state of institutional/technical background and capacity on the implementation of the plan (e.g. the PAF or RBMP). This explanation should reflect the situation with regard to the responsible authorities and main stakeholders. Lack of existing capacities among the beneficiaries or other stakeholders would provide the reasons for your capacity building efforts.

Please differentiate, where applicable, between short term and long term aspects (as indicated before).

### **Form B3 – EU added value of the project and its actions (max 10,000 characters):**

Note that the information provided on this form will be used for the evaluation of the proposal under award criteria 'EU added value'. For details, see the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE Integrated Project proposals 2020*.

Please provide arguments as regards the extent and quality of your project's contribution to the objectives of the given plan or strategy the IP implements in particular and of the underlying EU legislation in general. Please also refer to the information under chapter "2.3 Areas of intervention of IPs" of this application guide.

Please also describe here the extent and quality of the mobilisation of other funds, in particular other EU funds for the purposes of the implementation of the given plan or strategy. Note that projects financed by any other strands of the LIFE programme (e.g. traditional projects, NCFF) will not be considered as mobilised funds even though their actions should be coordinated with the IP whenever relevant.

Describe here if the IP contributes to the integration of the environment /climate issues into other policies and/or if it contributes to sustainable development. Also indicate if it created synergies with the objectives of other EU policies in particular those that can be subject of IPs. An IP should be, as far as possible, designed to deliver benefits in several other policy areas beyond the core target of the project and the related plan. For example, working on Natura 2000 will aim at ensuring a favourable conservation status for species and habitats of EU interest. Many project actions, while pursuing this final objective and being designed for this scope, will deliver many collateral benefits e.g. on ecosystems and their services, on water and marine pollution, on climate adaptation and mitigation, social and economic benefits and more. The most relevant of these additional benefits should be carefully considered in the design of the IP to ensure that they can be effectively delivered, measured and made visible to stakeholders and public. This is, in simple terms, what is meant by the expression "a multipurpose delivery mechanism". This aspect should be carefully considered by all applicants.

Please indicate to what extent the actions, methods, approaches or techniques put into place and tested are potentially replicable in other areas of the country or the EU.

A mechanism to ensure extensive application of green procurement or which foresees uptake of results from EU financed research projects may be considered as having added value.

A project with a well-justified **transnational approach** may be considered as having added value. In case actions take place outside the EU, the reasons for it should also be explained and argued here.

### **Form B4 – Character of project actions**

LIFE IPs usually implement best practice but may also include demonstration and/or pilot actions or elements. Please refer to section 2.2.

The form should include information at the overall level of the project, making reference to individual project actions, as needed. Not all individual actions have to be categorised here in an exhaustive manner.

**Best Practice character of the project actions (max 10,000 characters):** Please explain the best practice character of your project, if relevant.

**Demonstration character of the project actions (max 10,000 characters):** Please explain the demonstration character of your project, if relevant. In this respect, please provide a description of the technical scale of the given element of the project (pilot scale, pre-industrial scale, first full-scale application). Describe activities for monitoring / measurements (which, how?) and / or evaluation of the impacts/results.

**State of the art and pilot (innovative) aspects of the project actions (max 10,000 characters):** If applicable, provide a description of the state of the art of the technique or method addressed. Elaborate on the technical description of the processes or methods and / or proposed innovation(s), new elements, improvements. Describe the previous research and experience carried out in preparation for the project implementation, including feasibility studies.

#### **Form B5 – Stakeholders involved (max 10,000 characters)**

Indicate the stakeholders the proposal intends to involve and how. Please indicate what kind of input you expect from them and how their involvement will be used in and/or needed for the project. Also provide your arguments in case main stakeholders are not involved as associated beneficiaries.

Describe also the capacity building aspects of the project with the aim of the full implementation of the plan.

#### **Form B6 – Expected constraints and risks related to the project implementation and mitigation strategy (max 12,000 characters)**

It is important that applicants identify all possible **internal or external events** ("constraints and risks") that could have **major negative impacts** on the successful implementation of the project. Please list such constraints and risks, in their decreasing order of importance. Please also indicate any possible constraints and risks due to the **socio-economic environment**. For each constraint and risk identified, please indicate how you envisage overcoming it.

Please describe in particular the aspects of mobilisation of funds for financing complementary actions.

You are also strongly advised to include in this section any details on licences, permits, EIA, etc., and to indicate what support you have from the competent bodies responsible for issuing such authorisations. The experience of the LIFE programme has shown that some projects have difficulties completing all actions within the proposed project duration, due to unforeseen delays and difficulties encountered during the project. It is important that applicants identify all possible external events ("constraints and risks") that could cause such delays. One possible reason for such difficulties is the obligation to perform assessments that were not foreseen during the preparation of the LIFE project, in particular:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), according to the Directive 85/337/EEC (the EIA Directive), codified by Directive 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011<sup>29</sup>;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), according to the Directive 2001/42/WE (the SEA Directive)<sup>30</sup>;
- Assessment required under Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive; Article 6 assessment).

Sometimes LIFE projects could include "*projects*" (within the meaning of the EIA Directive) for which due to the EIA Directive itself or to the national transposition, an EIA must be preceded. Although unlikely, it is also possible that LIFE project actions may require changes of existing plans or programs (e.g. spatial planning documents), which may in turn require an SEA.

These assessments may involve long administrative procedures and data collection analysis. This is normally not a problem if the time and funds necessary are foreseen in the project.

Therefore, before submitting a LIFE IP proposal, applicants should find out whether one or more of the assessments mentioned above will be required under EU or national law. Consideration should be given for all actions that are intended to be implemented in the short or long term.

Applicants should describe in Form B6 how these issues are taken into account and how they envisage overcoming potential problems. To pre-empt unforeseen problems good communication and consultation with the competent authorities in charge of these procedures is essential. This should already be done at the beginning of the LIFE proposal preparation. Form B5 is the proper place to indicate whether the competent authorities in charge of assessments procedures have been consulted and the results of these consultations.

Another risk applicants should consider is the possible negative impact of ongoing or planned development projects (infrastructure or industrial projects) on the LIFE proposal's actions or sites. Direct or indirect impacts of development projects may lead to difficulties in the implementation of the LIFE project. Therefore, before submitting a proposal, applicants should check the spatial planning documents for the areas selected for the LIFE proposal and check ongoing EIA procedures for development projects planned on or near the LIFE proposal sites. Applicants need to be aware that compensatory measures resulting from implementing a development project (within the meaning of the EIA or Article 6.4 of the Habitats Directive) cannot overlap with the LIFE proposal actions. There are four elements that determine whether an overlap exists:

- geographic – whether compensatory measures are applied in exactly the same Natura 2000 site as LIFE measures;
- substantive – whether the LIFE measures are technically different from the compensatory measures;
- temporal – whether the LIFE actions and compensatory measures are applied at different moments;

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<sup>29</sup> Codified version of the EIA Directive:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:026:0001:0021:EN:PDF>

<sup>30</sup> SEA Directive:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:197:0030:0037:EN:PDF>

- financial – whether it is possible to clearly distinguish the funds used for the implementation of the compensatory measures and the LIFE funds (for example, through two different accounts).

Any costs related to actions that can be considered as a compensatory measure, that are the responsibility of the Member State and that are decided in relation to the Birds and Habitats Directives are ineligible.

**Include also the main risks concerning complementary actions that would have an impact on the IP itself.**

**Finally, please detail how you have taken into account the risks identified into the planning of the project (time planning, budget, etc.) and the definition of the actions.**

#### **Form B7 – Continuation/valorisation and long term sustainability after the end of the project**

Describe how the implementation of the plan/strategy will be continued after the end of the LIFE funding, and what actions are required to consolidate the results. Please indicate what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that this will be done. Please note that information provided in this section is indicative and will have to be updated during the project life.

In particular, please reply to the following questions:

- **How will you ensure the long term implementation of the plan and beyond? (max 5,000 characters):** please provide a strategic overview of your long term intentions for implementing the current plan and eventual subsequent ones for following periods.
- **Which actions will have to be carried out or continued after the end of the project? (max 5,000 characters)** Please list, where relevant, such IP actions indicating their reference (e.g. A1, A2,...) and title.
- **How will this be achieved? What resources will be necessary to carry out these actions and how these capacities will be ensured? (max 5,000 characters)** Please indicate how the above actions will be continued after the project, by whom, within what timeframe and with what financing. Please also describe how the human and technical capacities built up during the project would be maintained and expanded and how the necessary financing can be ensured.
- **Will the staff recruited/trained continue to work on the plan/strategy implementation?** Please explain how likely it will be that staff recruited and/or trained during the project will continue to be actively involved in the future implementation of the plan/strategy. Please quantify the minimum level of staffing required to ensure continuity in the plan implementation and the possible impact, should most or all the staff be dismissed at the end of the project.
- **How, when and by whom will the equipment acquired be used after the project end (max 5,000 characters):** Please list the main pieces of equipment to be purchased under the project and provide details on their utilisation after the end of the project. Please bear in mind that the eligibility of durable goods purchased under the project shall be subject to the beneficiaries undertaking to continue to assign these goods **definitively to nature conservation activities** beyond the end of the project.

- **To what extent will the results and lessons of the project be actively disseminated after the end of the project to those persons and / or organisations that could best make use of them? (Please identify these persons / organisations) (max 5,000 characters):** Please indicate how dissemination activities will continue after the end of the project. Please list the persons / organisations that have been so far identified as targets for these dissemination activities.

### 3.3.3 Detailed technical description of the proposed actions (C forms)

**Contrary to previous forms, the C forms shall in principle describe in detail only the actions implemented within the IP itself. However, where relevant, their link to complementary actions can be indicated with special regard to cases where an IP action may depend on such complementary actions (though such cases should be carefully considered when designing the IP and when assessing potential risks).**

**At the same time, the applicants should clearly differentiate the "short term" actions that will be implemented during Phase 1 from those foreseen in the following phases. Actions to be implemented during Phase 1 - or during the first 2.5 years in case Phase 1 is shorter - must be described with all details, while actions beyond that period may be described in a concise but clear summary format. Applicants may, however, provide full details of actions beyond Phase 1 if already known and if they consider that it is necessary for substantiating the coherence and/or the EU added value of the project. The actions foreseen beyond Phase 1 may be grouped if their objective is common and their scope or nature is similar.**

**The applicant must list and describe all the actions that will be implemented within the IP itself. There are 5 types of actions:**

- A. Preparatory actions (elaboration of management plans, obtaining licences and permits, etc.),
- C. Concrete (conservation/implementation) actions,
- D. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions,
- E. Public awareness and dissemination actions,
- F. Project management and monitoring of project progress

Under each type of action (A, C...), the applicant must list the different actions by giving sequential numbers under the same category of actions: A1, A2 ... C1, C2 ... etc. Note that there are no B actions.

Under each action (A1, A2,...etc.) specific sub-actions (A1.1, A1.2, ....) may also be included by the applicant if needed.

**Concrete implementation actions (C Actions)** shall be if possible **grouped**, taking as **reference** the structure of the targeted plan or strategy, in particular the way that the **objectives and indicators in the plan or strategy** have been defined. Please see section 2.4 for more information and examples.

It is recommended that each action that is expected to have an important output for the project (e.g. preparation of a management plan, purchase of X ha of land, etc.) is presented as a **separate action or sub-action. Actions, at the same time, must not be confused with deliverables.**

The actions and sub-action must be described as precisely as possible. The descriptions may be accompanied by **maps** locating the actions, explanatory graphs, tables or pictures, which may be added to the forms.

The description of each action or sub-action should clearly indicate the links with other actions (e.g. action C2 follows the purchase of land in action C1 which follows the preparation in action A2) and should clearly (and in quantitative terms) indicate how it contributes to the project's overall objectives. There should be a **clear coherence between the technical description of the action or sub-action and the financial resources allocated**.

**At the beginning of the description of each relevant action or sub-action, the applicant should include the specific reference(s) (section, page, etc.) to the appropriate chapter(s) of the targeted plans or strategy.**

For each action or sub-action, the applicant should provide the following information. Note that the max character numbers only serve to indicate the approximate length of information expected to be provided:

- **Name of the action/sub-action** (max 200 characters): Please ensure that the name is short (maximum 200 characters) and that it clearly reflects the objective of the action.
- **Beneficiary responsible for implementation** (max 500 characters): Please indicate which of the project's beneficiaries will be in charge of the coordination of the implementation of this action. Should more than one beneficiary be implicated, please give full but concise details of which beneficiary is responsible for what and include a brief justification of the involvement of each additional beneficiary.
- **Description (what, how, where, when and why)** (max 10,000 characters): Please describe the content of the action indicating what will be done, using what means, on which location / site, with what duration and within what deadline. Specify the links with other actions.

Please also indicate why the action is necessary and how it will contribute to reaching the project's objectives. For actions implemented outside the EU, full details should be provided on why such actions are necessary to achieve EU environmental / climate objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out during the LIFE project in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply.

- **Constraints and assumptions (max 2,000 characters)**: Indicate what may prevent you from implementing the action as planned and what will be done to address this risk. Please ensure that these constraints and assumptions are in line with those indicated on Form B6.
- **Expected results (quantitative information as far as possible) (max 2,000 characters)**: Please indicate concisely what results will be achieved at the end of the action (e.g. xx ha of habitat type restored or yy ha land purchased) and what deliverable products (e.g. management guide) will be produced.
- **Cost estimation (max 2,000 characters)**: Please summarise the methodology used for estimating the costs of the main expenditures in this action/sub-action (e.g. number of ha \* cost / ha; number of days \* average cost / day,...). The descriptions should be sufficiently robust and detailed to justify the main cost items.

- **Deliverable products:** Please list all deliverable products associated with each action/sub-action and the corresponding completion deadline (day/month/year). **Deliverable products** are all those **tangible** products that can be shipped (e.g. management plans, studies and other documents, software, videos, etc.). Please note that any deliverable product will have to be **submitted separately** (bearing the LIFE and – for Nature IPs – also the Natura 2000 logos) to the Contracting Authority together with an activity report.
- **Milestones:** Please list all project milestones associated with each action/sub-action and the corresponding delivery / achievement deadline (day/month/year). **Project milestones** are defined as **key moments** during the implementation of the project e.g. "Nomination of the Project Manager", "Completion of land purchase", etc. The corresponding documents do not need to be submitted to the Contracting Authority. You will need to inform the Contracting Authority whether the milestone has been completed or not in the technical reports you will send to the Contracting Authority.

Please find below indication on the additional information to be provided for specific actions.

### **Form C1**

#### **A. Preparatory actions (elaboration of management plans, obtaining licences and permits, trainings, etc)**

The preparatory actions should cover all that has to be completed to allow the start or proper implementation of other project actions indicated in categories C, D, E or F. This includes the preparation of technical documents (blueprints, preparation of inventories, ...) and any administrative or legal procedure needed to be carried out (consultation, call for tender, deliberations, training etc.).

If the elaboration of a management plan and / or action plans is foreseen, the description of the corresponding preparatory action should specify what will be done to ensure that these plans will be implemented (e.g. competent authorities adopt the plan before the end of the project).

Where preparatory actions do not lead to direct implementation during the project, their description should include a sufficient set of explanations, commitments and guarantees to show that their full implementation after the project is effectively ensured. Otherwise, such actions may be deleted from the project.

#### **C. Concrete (conservation/implementation) actions**

Concrete implementation actions shall be if possible **grouped**, taking as **reference** the structure of the targeted plan or strategy, in particular the way that the **objectives and indicators in the plan or strategy** have been defined. Please see section 2.4.

In case any of the concrete actions depend on preparatory actions or land purchase / leasing, please indicate this clearly.

For *LIFE Nature* IPs targeting specific habitats/species, for each concrete conservation action proposed, please specify **which habitat types and / or species** are affected (and if possible provide their surfaces and numbers).

For all IPs, please specify which **environmental / climate issues and to what extent** are affected by the given action (if applicable indicate the surface or water body areas, or populations impacted), or **which environmental / climate aspects** are tackled, and how these relate to the project's objectives. If applicable, the impacts on other policy areas shall also be described.

Provide clear information on the location and expected impact of each of these actions. Also indicate your reasons for selecting the specific project area.

If the beneficiaries need to build **infrastructure**, these items should be listed, described and justified in detail. Please note the provisions under section 1.10.16 that no large infrastructure can be financed by LIFE.

Specify, if needed and applicable, who will take care of the **maintenance of investments** made, areas restored and of other results of the actions after the end of the project. Also, if appropriate, explain how, by whom and through which financing source the action will **be continued** after the project period. Note also that any anticipated payments for (management or similar) actions that take place after the end of the project are not eligible for LIFE funding.

The output of all C actions should be **concrete, measurable and with a clear benefit** for the habitats / species / biodiversity or environmental / climate issues targeted by the project in general and to the implementation of the targeted plans/strategy in particular. This benefit should be **measurable** and should be measured and evaluated under **D-category monitoring action(s)**. The outputs of each action should be indicated in the 'expected results' section and should be quantified when possible.

**Purchase / lease of land and / or compensation payment for use rights actions are primarily eligible under Nature IPs:** It is particularly important that the description of each action clearly indicates how **each** of the eligibility conditions described in section 2.4.2 on land purchase is met. For each action, please indicate the state of discussions with the landowners. Have they been consulted and do they agree in principle? Evidence of this may be the availability of pre-agreements or letters of intent to sell that are included in the proposal. Specify clearly what kind of habitats will be bought / leased and where they are located. Specify how much land will be bought / leased of each habitat types and justify the proposed cost/ha in relation to current land prices. Evidence in this regard could include – indicatively - statements from authorities monitoring land sales (Ministry of Agriculture or similar) or from real estate agencies, farmer organisations or other institutions or entities having a credible information. If the land is to be bought through **land swaps**, specify this clearly (to be eligible the swap must be completed before the end of the project). If land is to be bought or leased in order to undertake other actions within the project, **indicate which actions** are dependent on the land purchase being achieved. If appropriate, please indicate **'alternative' land** that can be bought should difficulties arise with the prime target.

**Note:** only concrete conservation/implementation actions should be listed as C actions. Many applicants incorrectly list as C actions, actions that are not concrete conservation/implementation actions (e.g. actions related to inventories, management plans, monitoring, management guides, stakeholder communication, etc.).

#### **D. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (obligatory)**

Each project will have to report on the outputs and impact of the project taking into account the LIFE Key project level indicators (KPIs) (see the excel table: LIFE Key project level indicators Call 2020).

All projects shall include separate impact monitoring action(s) to measure and document the effectiveness of the project actions as compared to the initial situation, objectives and expected results. Specific indicators must be identified. Regular reporting on monitoring should be foreseen. A distinct “monitoring” action – or set of actions - with an individual budget should therefore be proposed. In the description of this action, the "monitoring protocol", the “monitoring indicators” and “sources of verification” should be identified and described.



For projects that have a demonstration or innovation character, the monitoring action should also clearly include the evaluation of the technique or method demonstrated.

Special consideration shall also be given to the monitoring of the progress of the overall implementation of the plan or strategy.

An assessment of the **socio-economic impact** of the project actions on the local economy and population, as well as an assessment on the **ecosystem functions restoration** are also obligatory and shall be included as separate actions. These can take the form of studies consolidating the data and results over the project lifetime, to be delivered with the Final Report.

A distinct action must be included concerning the compilation of information needed to enter data in the KPI database. In addition, **the excel file with the KPIs mentioned above must be attached to the application**. Please follow the guidance in 2.4.3 of this Application guide.

Please note that, an KPI web tool database will be made available to successful applicants. KPI database preview videos can be accessed for information at the following webpage: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/life-reporting>. In case the videos cannot be displayed (this can happen, for example, if the applicant does not have the Flash Plugin installed in the browser), it is possible to download an .mp4 movie from the following link: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi\\_demo.mp4](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi_demo.mp4). The KPI web tool database cannot be completed at application stage and is only presented to the applicants in order to demonstrate to them the type of information they will be asked to complete **after** their grant agreement is signed.

The projects will need to enter their KPIs in the KPI web tool within the first 9 months from grant signature and a relevant deliverable should be included in the proposal. The deliverable should be an extract of the project data from the KPI web tool.

#### **E. Public awareness and dissemination of results (obligatory)**

For each action, please specify and justify the target audience. If an action involves meetings (e.g. with local stakeholders), you should specify how many meetings, where, when, who will attend, what will be discussed, how many persons are expected to participate and how this will help the project. If an action concerns brochures, leaflets, publications, ..., specify how many copies, how many pages (size, colour, ...), to whom they will be distributed and when. Should an action concern a film, specify the format, duration, number of copies, where it will be shown, etc. Should an action concern visitor access, specify what will be done, where, how many visitors are expected, how this will help the project, etc. Should beneficiaries plan to present the project results in national / international events (conferences, congresses), the relevance and added value for the project should be clearly explained.

All actions should specify the expected results in qualitative and quantitative terms (e.g. improved support from the local community, 2500 persons informed, 3000 newsletters circulated, ...), indicating how this serves the project's objectives.

The following dissemination activities are considered obligatory and shall be included as E-category actions:

- **Notice boards** describing the project shall be displayed at strategic places accessible to the public. The LIFE logo should always appear on them. For actions taking place in Natura 2000 sites or with the objective of improving the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, the Natura 2000 logo should also appear.

- A description of the project shall be included in a newly-created or existing **website** (with the LIFE logo, and the Natura 2000 logo if relevant), and full details of its objectives, actions, progress and results should be provided. The web site shall be regularly updated during the project period and shall be maintained on-line for at least 5 years after the project's end.
- **Networking with other projects** (including previous or current LIFE projects; and projects financed by other funds), information exchange activities etc. should be presented as one distinct E-category obligatory action with a separate budget.
- A **layman's report** shall be produced in paper and electronic format at the end of the project. It shall be presented in English and in the project's language. This report shall be 5 to 10 pages long and present the project, its objectives, its actions and its results to a general public.

The following dissemination activities are not considered obligatory, but may be foreseen in many IP with special regard to the requirement of replicability:

- **Media work** (press conferences, meetings with or visits by journalists, preparing articles for the press,...).
- **Organisation of events:** e.g., public information meetings, meetings with interest groups, guided visits,... Describe exactly what is planned and how it contributes to the objectives of the project. Describe final output.
- **Workshops, seminars, conferences:** If (one or more) beneficiaries are attending, specify which (if known already). If (one or more) beneficiaries are organising, describe exactly what the topic will be, how it contributes to the project objectives, who will be invited (whenever possible, LIFE beneficiaries and beneficiaries of complementary funding mechanisms implementing or having implemented similar projects ought to be invited in order to foster networking). Finally, describe the output of each event and how it will be disseminated.
- **Production of brochures, films, visitor maps, etc.** Specify exactly what is planned (subject matter, number of copies, distribution to whom). Note that all such material charged to LIFE must bear a clear reference to LIFE financial support (including the LIFE logo, and the Natura 2000 logo if relevant ) to be considered eligible for co-financing and that one copy of each product must be annexed to the interim reports or the final report.
- **Guidelines:** for example on how to manage species or habitats, implement a technique/method or tackle a specific biodiversity issue. Such guidelines must always be produced if the project is a demonstration or pilot project.
- **Technical publications on project:** If already known, indicate in which journal the publication will take place. Such publications must acknowledge the EU financial support.

#### **F. Project management and monitoring of project progress (obligatory)**

The applicant should list the different actions aiming at managing / operating the project and monitoring the progress of the project as well as quality control and risk management, including contingency planning.

##### **Overall project management:**

Each project must include one or several distinct actions named "Project management by (name of the beneficiary in charge)". This / these action(s) should include a

description of the project **management staff** and describe management and reporting duties of the project beneficiaries. The management should be described, even if no costs will be charged for this to the project. Reporting should include the preparation of the mid-term interim and the final reports with payment requests.

Please include a **management chart** of the technical and administrative staff involved. This chart must provide evidence that the coordinating beneficiary (Project Manager) has a clear authority and an efficient control of the project management staff, even if part of the project management would be outsourced. The chart should indicate **the links to the entities in charge of complementary actions** and/or funding implementing the same plan the IP targets.

A full-time project manager is **strongly recommended**. Explain if the management staff has **previous project management experience**.

#### **Audit (Certificate on Financial Statement):**

As required (see I.4.3 and I.4.4. of the model Grant Agreement), a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts ('certificate on the financial statements') for each beneficiary and for each affiliated entity, must be provided whenever an interim payment is requested as well as for the final cost claim, if:

- i. the cumulative amount of payments the beneficiary requests as reimbursement of actual costs (and for which no certificate has yet been submitted) is EUR 325,000 or more;
- ii. the maximum grant amount indicated for that beneficiary and its affiliated entities in the estimated budget as reimbursement of actual costs is EUR 750,000 or more.

This certificate must be produced by an approved auditor or, in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer and drawn up in accordance with Annex VII.

This audit should not only verify the respect of national legislation and accounting rules but should also certify that all costs incurred respect the conditions set in the Grant Agreement.

The audit may be conducted by the audit service of the public authority provided that it is indeed entirely independent of the beneficiaries.

In the financial forms, the costs for the audit should be under the budget item "other costs".

#### **After-LIFE Plan:**

The coordinating beneficiary must produce an "**After-LIFE Plan**" as a separate chapter of the final report. It shall be presented in the beneficiary's language and optionally in English, in paper and electronic format.

The After-LIFE Plan for IPs shall in general describe how the targeted plan would eventually be fully implemented (e.g. how actions implemented under the IP would be continued or replicated elsewhere, how human resource and management capacities built up during the IP will be maintained, how mobilisation of related funding would be ensured, etc.).

In this respect, the After-LIFE Plan shall describe how the actions with best practice character and initiated in the LIFE project will be continued and developed in the years that follow the end of the project, and how the longer term management of the site(s) /

habitats / species will be assured. For pilot and demonstration elements of the project, the After-LIFE Plan shall in addition set out how the dissemination and communication of the results will continue after the end of the project and how those would be replicated in the given region or nationwide. It should give details regarding what actions will be carried out, when, by whom, and using what sources of finance. A separate F-action for this plan should be added to the proposal and the plan must be added to the list of deliverables.

### **Form C2 -- Deliverables, milestones and reporting schedule**

#### **Main deliverables:**

Please provide information here **only on the main** deliverables of the project covering the entire project period. You may cluster such deliverables if needed, especially for later phases.

#### **Main milestones of the project:**

Please provide information here only on the main milestones of the project demarcating main achievements and completion of important actions or groups of actions.

#### **Reports foreseen (interim & final):**

The coordinating beneficiary shall report to the Contracting Authority about the technical and financial progress of the project. The project's achieved results and possible problems should be highlighted in these reports.

An interim report should be foreseen at the latest within three months after the end of each implementation phase. It will include as an attachment an updated implementation plan for the next phase(s), where the actions and the corresponding costs will be detailed. For this purpose, all relevant forms have to be provided.

Note that the grant agreement, project management, formal reporting (excluding annexes or deliverables) and all communication with the Contracting Authority must be in English, even if the language of the project proposal is different. The costs for translation of reports (excluding annexes or deliverables) are therefore eligible.

One "Final Report with payment request" shall be submitted, not later than 3 months after the project end date. It is then also suggested to put the submission of the Final Report in the reporting schedule on the date 'end date project + 3 months'.

### **Form C3 -- Timetable**

For each project (sub-)action, please tick the corresponding implementation period. When planning your timetable please add an appropriate safety margin at the end of the project to allow for the inevitable unforeseen delays.

#### **3.4 Financial application forms**

***Important: The project's budget may only include costs which are in accordance with the conditions set in the Grant Agreement. The EU contribution will be calculated on the basis of eligible costs.***

***The financial forms should include costs only of the IP itself with the exception of form FP with an overview of costs foreseen for complementary actions.***

#### **General remarks:**



Differently to the descriptions of actions in the C forms, applicants shall NOT differentiate information concerning Phase 1 of the project from the following

phases. Please provide only aggregated information for the whole project duration.

All costs must be rounded to the nearest Euro and must exclude VAT when the beneficiary can recover this cost from its national authorities. Decimals should not be entered in the forms. If the number is zero, put zero or leave the cell empty.

The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries, as well as other companies that are part of the same groups or holdings, cannot act as sub-contractors nor be considered as third parties referred to in 1.10.7 of this guide.

Internal invoicing (i.e. costs that result from transactions between departments of a beneficiary) is allowed only if it excludes all elements of profit, VAT and overheads.

All contracts attributed under any of the cost categories should respect the principle of absence of conflict of interest, regardless of the amount involved.

Value added tax paid by the beneficiaries is eligible except for:

- a) taxed activities or exempt activities with right of deduction;
- b) activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where it is a State, regional or local government authority or another body governed by public law.

For any procurement procedure (Equipment, prototype, infrastructure...)

Specify the procedure foreseen to contract by using for public bodies 'public procurement' and for private entities: 'direct treaty', 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' 'framework contract'. Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

For each cost line add the short name of the beneficiary that will incur the respective cost.

### **3.4.1 Instructions for completing the detailed budget**

When filling in the financial forms please make sure you also consult the model Grant Agreement, with special regard to its Article II.19

#### **Cover page:**

Please fill in the acronym of your proposal as stated in the technical forms.

#### **Form FA - Budget breakdown and project funding**

This form is filled in automatically, based on the data provided in the other forms in this section.

Only the total amount of overheads foreseen for the whole project shall be entered manually. Overheads are eligible at a flat rate of up to 7% of total eligible direct costs of the entire project, excluding land purchase / lease / one-off compensations (and the overheads themselves, which are indirect costs).

**Please do not modify any cells.**

The form summarises the financial structure of the project, by providing a budget breakdown for the project and an overview of the financing plan.

All cells must be completed for costs foreseen during the entire project duration.

### **Form FC – Project funding breakdown**

This form describes the funding of the project by the beneficiary/ies, as well as the EU contribution requested per beneficiary.

Goods or services which are to be provided “**in kind**”, i.e. for which there is no cash-flow foreseen, should not be included in the project's budget.

**Beneficiary country:** Select the relevant Member State code of the beneficiary as indicated at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

**Beneficiary short name:** Please use the short name given in the Coordinating beneficiary and Associated beneficiary profiles in the *LIFE* technical forms **A2** and **A5**.

**Total costs in EUR:** Indicate the total costs of the project undertaken by the beneficiaries as detailed in the C-forms. These amounts must include the purchase costs of durable goods infrastructure and equipment costs before depreciation. The sum of beneficiaries' "total costs " must equal the total cost of the project as shown in form **FA**.

**Coordinating beneficiary contribution:** specify the amount of financial contribution provided by the coordinating beneficiary to the actions included in the detailed budget.

**Associated beneficiary contribution:** specify the amount of financial contribution provided by each associated beneficiary to the actions included in the detailed budget.

**Co-financers contribution:** specify the amount of financial contribution from each co-financer to the actions in the detailed budget.

**Amount of EU contribution requested:** Specify the amount of EU LIFE financial contribution requested by the coordinating beneficiary and each of the associated beneficiaries to the actions in the detailed budget.

### **Form F1 – Direct personnel costs**

**Public body personnel:** The salary costs of public body personnel may be funded only to the extent that they relate to the cost of project implementation activities that the relevant public body would not have carried out had the project concerned not been undertaken. The personnel in question, irrespective of whether they are working full or part time for the project, must be specifically seconded/assigned to a project; the individual assignment shall either take the format of a contractual document or that of a letter of assignment signed by the responsible service or authority of the relevant beneficiary.

Moreover, the overall sum of the public bodies' contributions (as coordinating beneficiary and / or associated beneficiary) to the project budget must exceed (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs of their non-additional staff charged to the project. The applicants have to ensure that compliance with this 2% rule is reflected in the detailed costs for the first period in the financial forms and they have to be aware that this compliance will have to be ensured in the subsequent phases and will be checked at time of any relevant payment claims in each phase, including in particular the final payment.

The definition of 'additional' personnel costs include the costs of all personnel – permanent or temporary – of public bodies whose contracts or contract renewals:

- start on or after the start date of the project or on or after the date of signature of the grant agreement by the Contracting Authority in case this signature takes place before the project start date, and
- specifically seconded/assigned to the LIFE project

**Beneficiary short name:** Please use the short name given in the Coordinating beneficiary and Associated beneficiary profiles in the LIFE technical forms **A2** and **A5**.

**Type of staff: (For public entities only)** Please indicate "additional" if the personnel fall under the above definition of additional staff, else indicate non-additional. Subsequently each category of staff is aggregated in two rows (one for non-additional and one for additional staff (or only one row if only one of these types of staff applies)).

Note that service contracts with individuals (i.e. natural persons) may be charged to this category on condition that the person works under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed); the result belongs to the beneficiary (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise), and the costs are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

*Important: The time each employee spends working on the project shall be recorded and certified on a timely basis (i.e. every day, every week) using time sheets or an equivalent time registration system, unless the employee is specifically assigned to the project full time or for a fixed percentage of his/her time or if he/she works less than 2 days per month on average for the LIFE project within a calendar year.*

**Category/Role in the project:** You should identify each professional category in a clear and unambiguous manner to enable the Contracting Authority to monitor the labour resources allocated to the project. The description shall be brief and clear (e.g.: Senior researcher(s)). *Examples of staff categories / roles in the project are: senior engineer(s) / project manager, technician / data analysis, administrative / financial management, etc.* In case the professional category is not explanatory of the role that the person will play in the project, the ranges of expertise within a specific category of staff may be indicated in brackets; e.g.: Senior experts (biologists, geologists, foresters). ; *If you use more than one person for the same role, then there is no need to multiply the budget lines to reflect the number of persons, just indicate the number of persons in the description field.*



**For each beneficiary, per category of staff** only one or maximum two rows (if there is "additional" and "non-additional" staff) should be presented. If e.g. for beneficiary A the staff category "project manager" will work under several actions, the amount of days should be added into a single line. **There should be no mention of actions or different lines per action.**

**Daily rate:** The daily rate charged for each role is calculated on the basis of gross salary or wages plus obligatory social charges, any other statutory cost but excluding any other costs (see Annex X of the model LIFE grant agreement for further guidance on this). For the purpose of establishing the budget proposal, the daily rate may be calculated based on indicative average salary costs per role (not for each single person) which are reasonable to the concerned category of personnel, sector, country, type of organisation, etc. Please consider predictable salary increases when estimating the average daily rates for the project duration.

Please note that the rates indicated in the budget proposal must not be used when reporting the costs of the project. The rates reported should be based on actual costs incurred, i.e. the actual gross salary, obligatory social charges and any other statutory costs, and the actually productive working time for a given year.

The total number of productive time per year per person should be calculated on the basis of the total working hours/days according to national legislation, collective agreements, employment contracts, etc. An example for determining the total productive time per year could be as follows (provided what is established in the appropriate legislation):

Days/year	365 days
Less 52 weekends	104 days
Less annual holidays	21 days
Less statutory holidays (bank holidays)	15 days
Less illness / other (when relevant)	10 days
= Total productive time	<u>215 days</u>

Please note that the daily rates indicated in the budget proposal must not be used when reporting the costs of the project; only actual costs i.e. actual rates and actual hours worked on the project may be charged. Any significant increases will have to be justified. Personnel costs shall be charged on the basis of hourly rates obtained by dividing the actual annual gross salary or wages plus obligatory social charges and any other statutory costs included in the remuneration of an employee by the actual total productive hours/days for that employee. In case the actual total productive hours for the employee are not to be recorded in a reliable time registration system (e.g. when working less than 2 days per month on average for the LIFE project within a calendar year or when working full time or on the basis of a fixed percentage of time as indicated in the employment contract) a default value of 1720 productive hours shall be used.

**Number of person-days:** The number of person-days needed to carry out the project.

**Direct personnel costs:** Calculated automatically by multiplying the total number of person-days for a given category by the average daily rate for that category.

## **Form F2 – Travel and subsistence costs**

*Note: Under this budget category applicants should foresee the travel costs for 3 persons from the project to attend a Welcome meeting with the Contracting Authority representatives. Exceptionally, the participation of maximum 5 people at the revision meeting referred to in Chapter 6 of the Evaluation guide may also be eligible (but the project start date should then be set before the revision meeting).*

**General:** Only costs for travel and subsistence of personnel (or assimilated to personnel) must be included here. Costs related to the attendance of conferences, such as conference fees, should be reported under "Other costs" (form F7). The cost of participation in a conference is only considered eligible if the project is presented at the conference. The number of participants in conferences is limited to those for whose attendance there is a valid technical justification. Travel and subsistence costs related to persons not working on the project should be included under 'other costs' (subcontractor's travel should be under 'external assistance'.



**Destination:** Identify the destination of the trips, i.e. within the beneficiary's country "National", 'within Europe' or 'outside Europe' and indicate the number of trips (1 trip = 1 person traveling)

**Travel and Subsistence costs :** The travel costs are grouped per destination. Please include the total travel and subsistence costs for 'National', 'within Europe' and 'outside Europe'. (i.e. multiply the foreseen number of travels – for 1 person - with the average travel cost per destination). So if e.g. beneficiary A has national travels within several different actions, all travels should be added up and presented into a single budget line.

**Travel costs:** Travel costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary. Beneficiaries shall endeavour to travel in the most economical and environmentally friendly way – video conferencing must be considered as an alternative.

In absence of internal rules governing the reimbursement of the use of an organisation's own cars (in opposition to private cars) costs related to the use of these are to be estimated at 0.25 Euro per km. If costs for fuel are foreseen in relation to travel activities, they should also be listed here, otherwise fuel is reported under consumables.

**Subsistence costs:** Subsistence costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary (daily allowances or direct payment of meals, hotel costs, local transportation etc.). Make sure that meals related to travel / meetings of the beneficiaries are not included if subsistence costs are already budgeted as per diem allowances.

### **General remark applicable to Forms F3 – F7:**

**The same cost types are grouped and entered in one row** (e.g. production of plantlets for actions C2, C4 and C5 can be entered in one row; similarly chemical analyses foreseen under several A, C and D actions are aggregated in one row; design of communication materials for actions E1, E5 and E6 can be collected in one row; similarly for printing costs, catering costs, rentals and/or transportation of machinery costs etc.). A **brief but clear description of each (aggregated) cost should be provided**, especially for budget lines with major costs.

### **Form F3 – External assistance costs**

**General:** External assistance costs refer to sub-contracting costs: i.e. services / works carried out by external companies or persons (other than those for which costs can be included under Form F1), as well as to renting of equipment or infrastructure. Please justify in detail if the proposed costs of External assistance is above 35% of the total budget.

For example, the creation of a logo, establishment of a dissemination plan, design of dissemination products, translation services, publication of a book or renting of material should be included in external assistance.

Please note that any services supplied under subcontract, but which are **related to prototype** development should be budgeted under prototype and not under external assistance. Costs related to the **purchase or leasing** (as opposed to renting) **of equipment and infrastructure** supplied under subcontract (e.g. installation services) should be budgeted under those cost categories and not under external assistance if they are also depreciated in accordance with the accounting rules.

Costs for the **lease of land use rights** must be charged under "external assistance" only if it concerns a **short-term** lease that expires prior to the project end date. Longer-term leases must be declared under long-term lease of land.

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure(s) foreseen to sub-contract the work, by using for public bodies 'public procurement' and for private entities: 'direct treaty', 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' 'framework contract'. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

**Description:** Provide a clear description of the subject of the service that will be subcontracted, e.g. 'carrying out impact assessment', 'maintenance of ...', 'renting of ...', 'consultancy on ...', 'web page development', 'intra-muros assistance', 'organisation of dissemination event', etc. You may use maximum 200 characters for the description of the subcontract if necessary.

### **General comments on Forms F4.a, F4.b and F4.c – Durable goods**

Please list in this category the costs related to items that according to the accounting rules of the beneficiary in question are treated as durable goods (including goods obtained through financial leasing, i.e. with option to buy). Please be informed that items which are fully depreciated in the year of purchase, but which are recorded in any registry of durable goods for the purpose of this application should also be listed under this cost category. This often applies to low value electrical consumer goods, such as laptop computers, smart phones, tablets, photo equipment, GPS equipment, etc.

In the sub-categories equipment and infrastructure, you need to indicate the actual cost as well as the value of depreciation. Only the depreciation is an eligible cost for the project and the EU co-financing will be calculated on the basis of this amount.

*Important: Depreciation of durable goods already owned by beneficiaries at the start of the project is not eligible for LIFE funding.*

**Actual cost:** Full cost of the infrastructure or equipment without applying any depreciation.

**Depreciation:** Total value of the depreciation in the accounts of the beneficiaries at the end of the project. For the purpose of establishing the budget proposal, the beneficiaries should estimate as precisely as possible the amount of depreciation for each item, from the date of entry into the accounts (if relevant) until the end of the project. This estimation is based on their internal accounting rules and / or in accordance with national accounting rules.

The amount of depreciation to be included as eligible costs in the budget is limited to a maximum of 25% of the actual cost for infrastructure and a maximum of 50% of the actual cost for equipment.

**Exception 1:** For prototypes, the eligible costs are equal to real costs under the conditions set up in the Grant Agreement.

**Exception 2:** for the *LIFE IP* projects, the cost of durable goods purchased by beneficiaries that are public bodies or private non-commercial organisations shall be considered eligible at 100%, if the organisation complies with all conditions set in the Grant Agreement. In this case, the depreciation amount indicated should be the same as the actual cost.

### **Form F4.a – Infrastructure costs**

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure foreseen to sub-contract the work, e.g. 'public tender', 'direct treaty', 'framework contract', etc. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with the conditions set in the Grant Agreement. Please be aware that you should be ready to explain why a 'direct treaty' has been used in particular observing the principles of sound financial management.

**Description:** Give a clear description and breakdown of the infrastructure per cost item, e.g. 'supporting steel construction', 'foundation of installation', 'fencing' etc.

**Important:** *All the costs related to infrastructure, even if the work is carried out under sub-contract with an external entity, should be reported under this heading.*

*Investments in large-scale infrastructure are considered ineligible.*

#### **Form F4.b – Equipment costs**

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure(s) foreseen to sub-contract the work, e.g. 'public tender', 'direct treaty', 'framework contract', etc. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with the conditions set in the Grant Agreement. Please be aware that you should be ready to explain why a 'direct treaty' has been used in particular observing the principles of sound financial management.

**Description:** Provide a clear description of each item, e.g. 'laptop computer', 'database software (off-the-shelf or developed under sub-contract)', 'measurement equipment', 'mowing machine', etc.

#### **Form F4.c – Prototype costs**

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. It may not be used for commercial purposes during the life of the project. (See the conditions set in the Grant Agreement for definition of prototype.) Durable goods acquired under the project can only be accepted in this cost category when they are essential to the pilot or demonstration aspects of the project.

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure(s) foreseen to sub-contract the work, e.g. 'public tender', 'direct treaty', 'framework contract', etc. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with the conditions set in the Grant Agreement. Please be aware that you should be ready to explain why a 'direct treaty' has been used in particular observing the principles of sound financial management.

**Description:** Give a clear description of the prototype.

**Important:** *All the costs related to the prototype, even if the work is carried out under sub-contract with an external entity, should be reported under this heading.*

#### **Form F5.a – Costs for land purchase, Form F5.b – Costs for long-term lease of land / use rights and Form F5.c – One-off compensation payments costs**

**General:** Please consult the Grant Agreement, for the rules concerning land purchase. If short-term lease would be appropriate for achieving the project objectives, those costs should be presented under external assistance.

**Description of land purchase / long term lease / one-off compensation:** Give a clear description of each item, e.g. "purchase of acidic grasslands on sub-site X", "one-off compensation for peat exploitation rights on sub-site Y", etc. Use different rows for different land uses / habitat types / sub-sites, if their prices diverge significantly.

**Estimated cost per hectare:** Estimated cost, excluding taxes and other charges, rounded to the nearest €.

Your proposal has to include a letter from the competent authority or from a registered notary confirming that the price per hectare is not above the average for the types of land and locations concerned.

### **Form F6 – Costs for consumables**

#### **General:**

General: Consumables declared on this form must relate to the purchase, manufacture, repair or use of items which are not placed in the inventory of durable goods of the beneficiaries (such as materials for dissemination, repair of durable goods given that this is not capitalised and that they are purchased for the project or used 100% for the project etc.). Should the project include a significant dissemination activity in which substantial mailing, photocopying, or other communication forms are used, the corresponding costs may also be declared here. Costs for consumables must be specifically related to the implementation of project actions.

General consumables / supplies (as opposed to direct costs), such as telephone, communication costs, photocopies, office material, water, gas, etc. are covered by the overheads category.

However, please note that if the whole organisation of the conference is subcontracted, the corresponding cost should all be budgeted under external assistance.

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure(s) foreseen, e.g. 'public tender', 'direct treaty', 'framework contract', etc. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with conditions set in the Grant Agreement.

**Description:** Provide a clear description of the type of consumable materials, linking it to the technical implementation of the project, e.g. 'raw materials for experiments action 2', 'stationery for dissemination products (deliverable 5)', etc.

### **Form F7– Other costs**

**General:** Direct costs which do not fall in any other cost category should be placed here. Costs for bank charges borne by the Coordinating beneficiary, conference fees, insurance costs when these costs originate solely from the project implementation, etc. should be placed here.

**Auditor costs** (ONLY for those beneficiaries requesting a Union Contribution of at least € 750.000) related to the auditing of the project's financial reports should always be placed under this budget category. For projects with more than one beneficiary, the total audit cost will be mentioned as one consolidated amount in the proposal, to be incurred by the coordinating beneficiary.

**Costs for translation**, if needed, must always be reported in this category.

**Dissemination materials:** costs related to dissemination of information and reproduction (e.g. purchase or printing dissemination materials/products...)

The **financial guarantee if required, must always be reported in this category**. Please refer to the conditions set in the Grant Agreement and to the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE Integrated Project proposals 2020* for more information.

Expenditure related to **financial support to third parties**<sup>31</sup> should always be reported under this budget category and clearly labelled as such in the list of cost items. These

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<sup>31</sup> Maximum amount allocated to any third party involved may not exceed EUR 60,000 and the total amount of such costs overall may not exceed EUR 200,000 during the lifetime of the project

costs relate to the financial assistance to entities outside the project partnership (e.g. local authorities, non-profit organisations) for the development of initiatives that contribute to the project's objectives. In order to be eligible, they shall be exhaustively listed in Annex II according to the conditions laid down in Article II.12 of the Grant Agreement and in point 1.10.8 of this guide in order to finance certain actions that for objective reasons cannot be implemented by one of the beneficiaries of the IP - themselves or via external assistance - but are essential for the implementation of the targeted plan.

**Procedure:** Specify the procedure(s) foreseen e.g. 'public tender', 'direct treaty', 'framework contract', 'call for proposal' etc. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with the conditions set in the Grant Agreement.

**Description:** Give a clear description of each item, linking it to the technical implementation of the project.

### **FP – Financial Plan of Complementary actions**

This form should provide updated information from form **CNf** that was submitted with the Concept Note of the applicant.

In accordance with the descriptions and logic of form **B1**, the financial plan summarizes in a table format the main funding sources planned to be mobilised for the financing of the actions or measures intended to be implemented for the purposes of the targeted plan or strategy during the lifetime of the IP.

Accordingly, the table must indicate funds expected to be co-financing the actions of the LIFE IP itself as well as the funds financing the complementary actions/measures implemented in addition to the IP. Please pay attention to the interpretation of complementary funding in other chapters of this guideline when filling in this table and only include amounts that are in line with those provisions.

The format of the table cannot be modified with the exception of adding the required number of rows under the various funding sources.

The table can indicate larger individual actions (e.g. construction of XX) or groups/types of actions (e.g. support for grazing activities by farmers in ...., land purchase of X ha, etc.) as best fit for the purposes of a reasonable presentation of the intentions of the applicant.

For the LIFE project itself only the amount of funding needs to be filled in.

The following information should be provided for complementary actions:

**Sources of financing:** Indicate the name of the financing source/fund (e.g. EAFRD) if possible and known already specifying the name of the measure, operational program or equivalent scheme of the given funds. The sources/funds shall be grouped according to their types (EU, national, international or private). Provide the subtotals per funding source and per funding type.

Note that the Funds mentioned specifically in the form are only examples.

**Actions/measures to be financed:** Under each funding source/fund, list the actions/measures to be financed (for this purpose it is advised to make references to the descriptions in form B1 and/or to the plan/strategy). Related to this listing also indicate the corresponding **amount of Funding (in EUR)**.

**Remember**, that any non-EU fund (e.g. national, private or international) can either directly co-finance the LIFE IP itself – thus covering a part of the 40% "own contributions" from the beneficiaries; or it can finance complementary actions,

depending on the conditions set by the relevant donor. Funds from other EU sources, on the other hand, can only be used for complementary actions.

**Amount of funding:** For each funding source, please indicate the specific amount in EUR.

**Status/date of Funding: granted/ to be granted/ not yet requested:**

For each funding source/fund, indicate the status of granting.

Choose between the following options if the funding scheme is already definitive:

- granted (use this option if the fund has been granted and indicate the date of the grant by dd/mm/yyyy), **or**

- to be granted (use this option if the grant has been applied for but not yet granted and indicate the date of application); **or**

- not yet requested (use this option if the grant has not yet been applied for and indicate, if known, the deadline of application).

You may indicate under the notes that the funding scheme is still to be formally adopted.

**Authority/entity managing the fund:** For each funding source/fund, indicate the full name of the authority managing (granting) the fund.

**NOTE:** The form can be extended by additional lines.

**Other compulsory annexes:** please see checklist below.

#### 4. CHECKLIST

The questions below aim to help you check that your application is as well prepared as possible. Your answers should in all cases be "yes". However, the list of questions is not exhaustive and the questions do not provide all the detailed information necessary; please refer to the detailed information included in other sections of this document.

1. Have you checked whether your project is a *LIFE Integrated Project*? (especially versus a LIFE 'traditional' project)
2. Are forms A3 (and A3a if relevant), A4 and A6 signed and dated?
3. Are form(s) A8 signed and dated by the relevant managing/funding authority(s)?
4. Are CNd and B1 forms in English?
5. Have you included a time safety margin at the end of the project to allow for unforeseen delays?
6. Is the applicant (coordinating beneficiary) legally registered in the EU?
7. Have you included the mandatory annexes?:

Concept Note:

- a. the targeted plan or strategy (or latest draft available if the plan or strategy is not yet adopted)
- b. LIFE Key Project Level Indicators (KPI) table, in both excel and pdf formats.

Full proposal:

- a. the targeted plan or strategy
- b. for coordinating beneficiaries that are not public bodies:
  - i. the annual balance sheet and profit and loss account,
  - ii. audit report produced by an approved external auditor if the amount of the grant exceeds €750.000, where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by your national legislation. This report shall certify the accounts for the last available financial year. If such audit report is not available, the applicant shall provide a 'declaration on the validity of accounts' (see template published with the call) signed by the authorised representative and certifying the validity of its accounts for the last available financial year,
  - iii. simplified financial statement.
- c. for coordinating beneficiaries that are registered as private law bodies but that want to be considered as public bodies: public body declaration,
- d. A copy of the forms in a format file that allows to search for keywords or data, at least for the B, C and F forms (e.g. word, excel).
- e. LIFE Key Project Level Indicators (KPI) table, in both excel and pdf formats.

8. Have you included clear references to the relevant parts of the targeted plan or strategy throughout the Concept Note and the full proposal?
9. For each action, have you detailed the expected results as far as possible in quantitative terms?
10. Have you excluded ongoing activities (only allowed in certain specific cases) and ensured that the relevant conditions are met for any recurrent actions?
11. Have you excluded preparatory actions that do not produce practical recommendations for the project?
12. Have you included a coherent package of communication and dissemination actions?
13. Have you included actions resulting in capacity building and enhanced cooperation of the use of funds to implement the targeted plan or strategy?
14. Have you included indicators and actions to monitor the impact of the project, and the impact of its actions on the environmental / climate issues (including habitats and species) targeted?
15. Is the project management team sufficient? Is an organigram provided? Is there a full time project coordinator (not obligatory but strongly recommended)? Is there a financial coordinator?
16. Have you excluded all actions - in particular research activities and construction of large infrastructure – from the IP that could be better financed by other EU funding programmes?
17. Have you foreseen complementary objectives and actions and a well-structured multi-purpose delivery mechanism?
18. Have you detailed your efforts towards green procurement?
19. For land purchase / compensation payments, have you clearly explained how you meet all of the eligibility conditions?
20. Are all obligatory actions foreseen in your IP proposal?
21. Have you and your associated beneficiaries read the model Grant Agreement and the Financial and Administrative Guidelines in full?



## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: Calendar of the evaluation and selection procedure for the LIFE 2020 Integrated Projects

Date or period	Activity
March - April 2021  (it will be further defined in the invitation letter to submit full proposal)	Earliest possible starting date for the LIFE 2020 IPs
06 October 2020	Deadline for applicants to submit IP Concept Notes to the Contracting Authority
November 2020	Information to applicants about the results of the evaluation. Invitation to submit full proposals (indicating definitive dates of further process)
<b>Note: The dates below are indicative but reflect the length of the stages concerned</b>	
November 2020 – January 2021	Question-Answer phase
25 March 2021	Indicative deadline for applicants to submit the full IP proposals to the Contracting Authority
March – May 2021	Evaluation of the proposals
June - July 2021	Revision of the proposals
October 2021	Signature of individual grant agreements

### ANNEX 2: Important links

- [Regulation \(EU\) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013](#)
- [LIFE Multiannual Work Programme 2018-2020](#)
- Links to the [LIFE communication section](#) of the LIFE website and [LIFE Communication toolbox](#)
- [Financial Regulation](#)