



LIFE Programme

Support to Circular Economy and Waste projects



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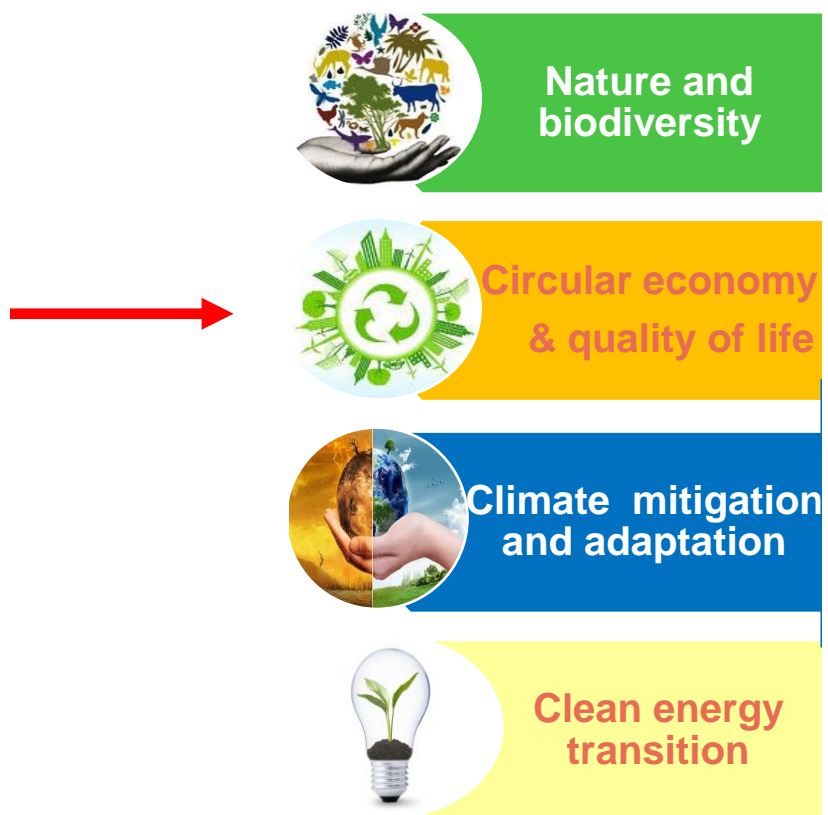
Platform Meeting on plastic waste prevention and reuse systems, 10/02/2025

Overview

- LIFE 2021 - 2027
- Support to Circular Economy & Waste projects

LIFE 2021-2027: 5.4 billion

Sub-programmes



LIFE 2021-2027

Circular Economy and Quality of LIFE subprogramme

- For 2021-2027, €1.3 billion earmarked
- **Recovery of Resources from Waste** (Innovative solution to support value-added recycled materials, components or products)
- **Circular Economy and the environment** (reduce or prevent resource use and waste at source / by design).
- **Environmental Governance**

What's NEW

- Stronger focus on implementation and impacts
- More emphasis on upstream solutions (prevention) vs. downstream (end-of-pipe)
- Higher cost coverage for investments in assets

Relevant types of activities funded

- **SAP: Standard Action Projects ('traditional' projects)** – direct action, generally demonstrating, testing or upscaling a solution on the ground. Can include governance solutions.
- **SIP: Strategic Integrated Projects** – catalysing actions, leading to full implementation of certain target plans, with full involvement of stakeholders and mobilising complementary finance / actions.
 - **Relevant eligible plans (among others):**
 - CE: national or regional CE action plans, strategies, roadmaps or similar
 - Waste: national and regional Waste Management Plans and/or Waste Prevention Programmes
 - **60% co-financing, typical LIFE grant 10-20 M€, duration 6-10 y**
 - **Annual Call, 2 stages, approx. 55 M€**

Relevant types of activities funded

- **TA-R: Technical Assistance for Replication Projects** – assistance to prepare for and/or facilitate the up-scaling and replication of results from other EU projects (incl. LIFE). E.g. by eliminating legal or technical barriers, or by facilitating access to finance
 - **Annual Call, approx. 3 M€ for CE, max LIFE grant 1 M€**
- **PLP: Projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities** – targeted topics, to support DG ENV policy-making work.
- **Operating grants to support NGOs: no Call this year, but in 2026**

Call LIFE-2024-SAP-ENV

Circular Economy and Quality of Life

- Budget: ~80 M€
- Projects covering innovation, best practices, etc. (see Ch. 2 of Call doc for details)
- Co-financing rate of 60% maximum
- Maximum 10 year duration
- Typical LIFE grant 0.7 – 7 M€ / project
- 1-stage, submission (call opening Mid-April 2024)
- All info in https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en

Priority topics CE & Waste

Recovery of Resources from Waste

- Implementation of **innovative** solutions to support value-added recycled materials, components or products for the following areas:
 - Separate collection and recycling of **waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)** in particular but not limited to photovoltaic panels, smartphones, tablets and computers;
 - Separate collection and recycling of **batteries and accumulators**;
 - Dismantling, remanufacturing and recycling of **End of Life Vehicles (ELVs) and End-of-Life Ships**;
 - Selective separation and recycling of **construction works or buildings**;
 - **Sorting and recycling of plastics**;
 - Separate collection and recycling of **bio-waste**;
 - Separate collection and recycling of **textiles**;
 - Recycling of **composite and multilayer materials** in particular but not limited to carbon or glass fibres. Special attention should be given to face-masks used by the general public for COVID protection purposes, in such case also best practice solutions will be considered;
 - Recovering **critical raw materials** from waste
 - **Sorting and recycling of packaging**.
- Implementation of **innovative** solutions for the identification, tracking, separation, prevention and decontamination of **waste containing hazardous substances**, to enable value-added recycling of the treated waste and safe disposal of the hazardous substances or reducing the scale of the problem within the framework of the project. Special attention should be given to those substances considered as the most harmful for the environment and human health, also known as substances of concern.

Priority topics CE & Waste

Circular Economy and the Environment → **Innovation not required (can be best practice)**

Implementation of **business and consumption models or solutions to support** value chains, particularly **the key product value chains** set out in the **new EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy**, aiming at reducing or preventing resource use and waste including one or more of the following:

- Implementation of **design for the environment solutions**, including circular design, to improve **durability, reparability, reusability, upgradability, recycling** and **use of recycled content in new products**;
These solutions shall aim at reducing impacts holistically by considering aspects such as: life cycle approach, wide uptake of labelling, green procurement and tracking of raw materials in components and products;
- Solutions (post-design) to support the implementation, **transfer and/or uptake of product durability, reuse and repair, including upgrading and remanufacturing**;
- Support to the implementation, transfer and/or uptake of one or more of the following:
 - a) **Product-as-a-service solutions** and other business models or technologies to optimise asset use,
 - b) **Industrial symbiosis and creation of circular value chains**, better tracking resources and matching surplus or by-product materials or recyclable waste across industrial sectors,
 - c) **Digital product passports**.

The models and/or solutions proposed should ideally consider the environmental performance of the whole value chain, but can equally focus on any specific stage of the value chain. Projects may include, as an element, the development of data to support value chain thinking. Particular attention should be given to the involvement and active participation of SMEs.

Priority topics Environmental Governance

1. Activities in support of public administrations' decision-making and voluntary approaches

- **improving the capacity of public administration** to implement a holistic vision of the environment, including managing, monitoring, assessing environmental plans, programmes and initiatives, by involving responsible authorities, also through institutional collaboration at different territorial level and/or where appropriate in partnership with private entities, with a view **to develop synergies, to reduce administrative burden and/or to optimise environmental outcomes** (...) Plans/Programmes targeted:

- National air pollution control programmes
- Air Quality Plans
- River Basin Management Plans
- Flood risk management plans;
- Nitrate action plans
- Waste management plans
- National or Regional Circular Economy Action Plans, Strategies, Roadmaps or similar
- National Radon Action Plans
- Actions, Measures and Plans to implement the Green City Accord

and/or decisions related to:

- industrial emissions
- waste management
- water pollution and water abstraction

Priority topics Environmental Governance

3. Behavioral change and awareness-raising initiatives

Raising awareness on environmental problems, EU environmental policies, tools and/or legislation among the relevant target audiences, aiming to change their perceptions and fostering the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviours and practices and/or direct citizen's engagement. Applicants need to provide substantial evidence that a change of awareness levels in the field(s) addressed by the project is a crucial factor supporting correct implementation and/or future development of EU environmental policies tools and/or legislation. The awareness-raising activities should have the widest coverage relevant for the specific issue targeted. These activities will contribute, where applicable, to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals. The environmental problems, EU environmental policies, tools and/or legislation targeted should be directly linked to one or more of the priorities included in:

- The European Green Deal to raise awareness on the environmental impacts to underpin the transformative changes towards more sustainable food, energy, mobility and building systems and to mainstream environmental considerations across policies and activities in line with the EGD oath to do no harm;
- The Circular Economy Action Plan to ensure waste prevention and reduction, sustainable production, sustainable products, services and business models, sustainable consumption and transformation of consumption patterns in particular in the sectors that use most resources and pose higher sustainability challenges, namely textiles, chemicals (including plastics), construction and buildings, electronics and ICT, batteries and vehicles;
- The Zero Pollution Action Plan addressing the protection of citizens from environmental pressures and risks to health as a result of Europe's zero-pollution ambition and measures for a toxic-free environment including, in particular, sustainability in the use and management of chemicals and promoting clean air.

To keep in mind

- Call 2025 opening: mid-April 2025
- Info Days: mid-May 2025
- Info in https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en
- Support to applicants:
https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-support-applicants_en

Good luck!