

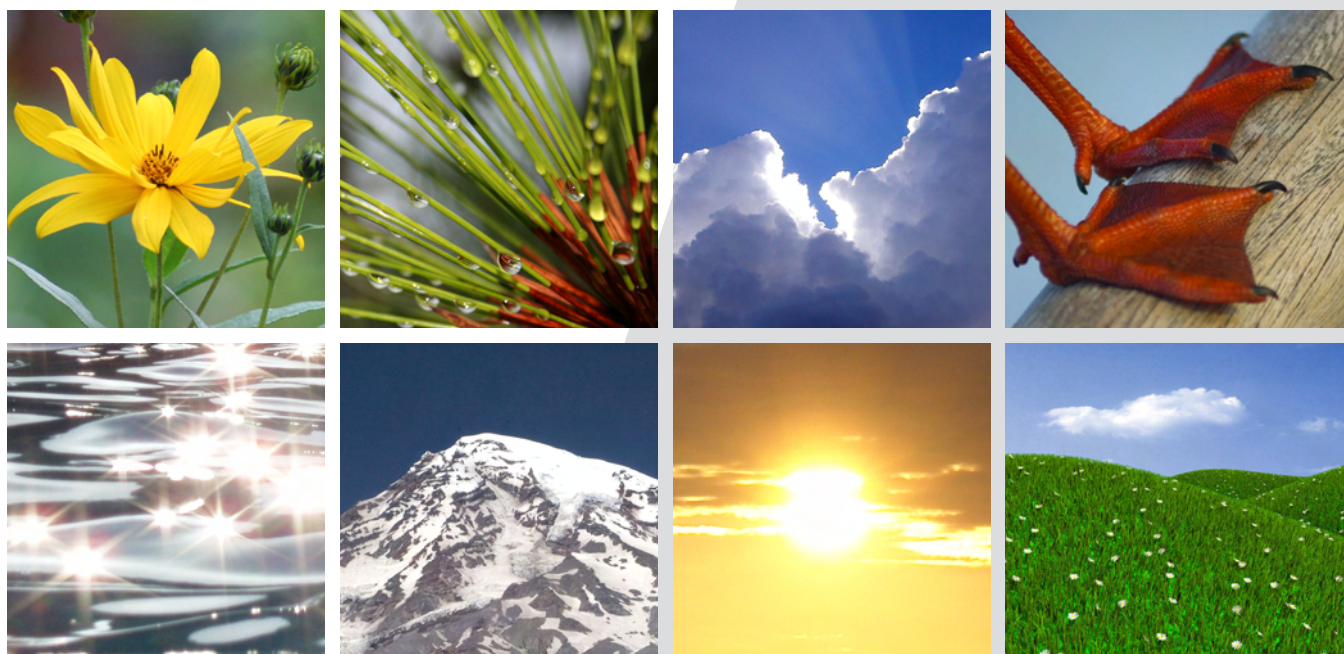
Directorate General Environment, Unit E.4. LIFE

# **Ex-Post Evaluation of Projects and Activities Financed under the LIFE Programme**

Country-by-country analysis

Malta

July 2009



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Document no. 7-3 Malta  
Version 1  
Date of issue July.2009  
  
Prepared BIM, IL  
Checked BIM, TIH, IL  
Approved BIM

This report has been prepared as a result of an independent evaluation by COWI being contracted by the Directorate General Environment  
**The views expressed are those of the Consultant and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission.**

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## 1 Executive summary

The LIFE programme has co-financed seven projects in Malta in the time period 1996-2006, including one Birds related **Nature** project, two Habitats related TCY projects, as well as four TCY projects concerning i.a. air pollution, soil, EMAS and evaluation of pollution risk and prevention measures. The **Nature** project is still ongoing, while the TCY projects have been finalized<sup>1</sup>.

The sustainability and utility of the projects finalized is assessed as high, while effectiveness has been assessed as medium to high.

## 2 Introduction

This country report on the implementation of the LIFE Programme in Malta is part of the overall ex-post evaluation of the LIFE Programme.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation was commissioned in July 2008 and covers all LIFE projects initiated in the period 1996-2006. The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance and impact of the activities and projects financed under the LIFE Programme. The evaluation comprises country studies in all Member States except Bulgaria, which has never had any LIFE projects. This report documents the analysis carried out concerning the implementation of the LIFE Programme in Malta. The ex-post evaluation focuses on assessing the effect of the LIFE Programme on Europe's nature and environment through looking at results and impacts of LIFE projects implemented under the Nature (NAT) and Environment (ENV) components. The results and impacts have further been assessed along three main evaluation criteria:

- Effectiveness, i.e. the extent to which planned objectives have been reached;
- Sustainability, i.e. the extent to which positive impacts have continued or are likely to continue;
- Utility, i.e. the extent to which impacts address key environmental needs and priorities in the EU and for the stakeholders concerned.

## 3 Environmental policy overview

Environmental issues are becoming increasingly important in Malta, as can be seen by the increasing budgetary focus on this sector. The Environmental Development pillar of the National Programme will be allocated at least EUR 300 million from EU and national funds.<sup>3</sup> The European priorities, as expressed by the four priority action fields of the 6<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme - climate change and energy, nature and biodiversity, environment and health, natural resources and waste, are reflected in the focus of the Prime Minister's Office in an increased effort to improve air and water quality, and waste management, as well as "the protection of people from the hazards, pollution and nuisance of construction".<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, although not bound in attaining quantified greenhouse gas emission

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<sup>1</sup> The TCY projects are not addressed in this country report, but evaluated as part of the evaluation of TCY evaluation report, which constitutes Part 5 of this evaluation.

<sup>2</sup> Further information is also available in the separate thematic report on LIFE Third Countries (TCY). The evaluation of LIFE TCY covers the period 1996-2006 and is focused on the following countries: Tunisia, Morocco, Gaza, Russia, Albania, Cyprus, Egypt, Bosnia, Syria, Algeria, Israel, Croatia, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. Among the New Member States, only Malta and Cyprus are part of the TCY study. Therefore the TCY projects in Malta are covered only briefly in this country report.

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Prime Minister, <https://opm.gov.mt/zvilupp-ambjentali>

<sup>4</sup> Office of the Prime Minister

targets,<sup>5</sup> the government has pledged to work towards a 20 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 and aims to increasing the use of alternative energy sources to 10 per cent of the total energy consumption, which has been primarily oil based.

The 2010 biodiversity target is being addressed through the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Maltese Islands. Malta has made progress with protecting species and habitats of importance: an analysis of 189 Maltese species of international importance indicates that 183 (97 per cent) species of international importance are protected by Maltese legislation. In contrast, under the protection regime in 2002, 39 per cent of the species of international importance were unprotected. The most marked improvements are with respect to: higher plants (29 per cent protected in 2002 vs. 100 per cent in 2005); fish (21 per cent vs. 93 per cent); and crustaceans (12 per cent vs. 89 per cent)<sup>6</sup>. According to the Natura 2000 Barometer,<sup>7</sup> Malta has 12 SPAs with a total area of 14 km<sup>2</sup> or 4.5 per cent of the total area, and 27 SCIs with a total area of 48 km<sup>2</sup> or 12.6 per cent of the total area, also one<sup>8</sup> marine SCI is registered with an area of eight km<sup>2</sup>. The progress in the designation of the two types of sites in Malta is in both cases considered incomplete.<sup>9</sup>

## 4 Overview of LIFE projects in Malta

During the period 1996 to 2006, the LIFE Programme co-financed seven projects in Malta including one Nature project (on-going), no Environment projects and six TCY projects (finalised<sup>10</sup>). A full overview table of the Nature project is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 4.1 Overview of LIFE projects 1996-2006 in Malta

	Number of projects	Total LIFE contribution (million EUR)	Main themes covered <sup>11</sup>	Average LIFE contribution per project (million EUR)	Average project duration (years)
Nature	1	4	Birds (100%)	0.4	4

Source: Butler

The single **LIFE Nature** project co-financed by the LIFE Programme during 1996-2006 concerns birds - more specifically the Yelkouan shearwater.

<sup>5</sup> 2006 Environment Policy Review (COM(2007) 195 final)

<sup>6</sup> Malta Environment and Planning Authority, [http://www.mepa.org.mt/environment/index.htm?Pub\\_General.htm&1](http://www.mepa.org.mt/environment/index.htm?Pub_General.htm&1)

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/barometer/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/barometer/index_en.htm)

<sup>8</sup> According to the Natura 2000 Barometer (newsletter December 2008), there are several marine sites, but no further information on marine areas is provided in the database.

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/barometer/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/barometer/index_en.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Two of the TCY projects were nature related projects (Integrated management of specially protected coastal areas in Malta and Setting up the first coastal nature reserve in Malta), while the remaining TCY projects concerned air pollution, EMAS, evaluation of pollution risk and prevention measures and a soil information system.

<sup>11</sup> For the purpose of this evaluation, the LIFE projects were categorised according to the thematic structure of the LIFE+ Programme (ref. Regulation EC No. 614/2007, Annex II). The themes included for LIFE Nature: Habitat Directive, Birds Directive and Biodiversity. For LIFE Environment: Climate change, air, water, soil, forests, natural resources and waste, chemicals, urban environment, strategic approaches.

## 5 Effects of projects implemented

The **LIFE Nature** project funded in Malta is still ongoing, so the project has not yet been fully implemented. Principally the Yelkouan Shearwater (*puffinus yelkouan*) is targeted by the nature project, but (as reported in the e-survey response received concerning this particular project) "all habitats and species present on project site also benefit" from it. The Nature project area, Rđum tal-Madonna, was identified as a globally Important Bird Area (IBA) because of the shearwater. The site has also been designated as an SPA (Special Protection Area) and a SAC (Special Area of Conservation) under Natura 2000. The project is developing the management plan for the area. According to the project manager (as reported in the e-survey) there are an estimated 282 and 408 specimens of Yelkouan Shearwaters at Rđum tal-Madonna, the project site and focus for the project. Although it is not possible to estimate the number of individual birds protected in the long term - as shearwater populations grow slowly - the project aims to maintain the population and improve the breeding conditions and adult survivorship. 74 hectares are estimated to be protected against invasive species (rats) within the project period.<sup>12</sup>

The Nature project has reportedly also led to or influenced other initiatives within nature conservation in Malta. This includes laying out a plan for Marine SPA designation for the national authority to follow, increasing observation of all seabird species and inspiring the national authority to look into rat eradication in other locations such as Comino Island. The Nature project has also influenced local policies<sup>13</sup> as well as demonstrated innovative technologies.<sup>14</sup>

## 6 The effectiveness of projects

Effectiveness can be assessed at two levels: the project level, which compares achievements with project objectives, and at programme level, which compares achievements with LIFE Programme objectives.<sup>15</sup> The LIFE Nature project is still ongoing and is reportedly<sup>16</sup> a rather controversial project due to conflicts between one of the project partners and a local interest group. According to the monitors, the project is approaching the end and is, in part, achieving most of its original objectives even at this stage. The desk officer concurs, stating that the project is implementing what they have promised and that the team is very motivated and dedicated to nature conservation. According to the interviewed stakeholders,<sup>17</sup> the TCY projects concerning nature have in general reached intended goals. The former national focal point adds that there is not much difference between the on-going Nature project and the nature projects that were carried out under TCY, except that the funding under TCY was more limited.

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<sup>12</sup> As reported in the e-survey

<sup>13</sup> As a result of the project LIFE06NAT/MT/000097, permits for camping on Natura 2000 site Rđum tal-Madonna were limited to a specific area to prevent damage to the designated site and a Notice to Mariners was introduced to prevent ships and boats from disturbing shearwaters (response, e-survey)

<sup>14</sup> For example, the use of telemetry devices on light weight seabirds, including the first use of GPS data loggers on Yelkouan Shearwaters, first use of solar panel satellite tags on their chicks and first use of geo-locator leg tags on adult Yelkouans for migration (response, e-survey).

<sup>15</sup> Specific objective for: LIFE Nature: to contribute to the implementation of Council Directive 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive); LIFE Environment: to contribute to the development of innovative and integrated techniques and methods and to the further development of Community environmental policy.

<sup>16</sup> Two of three interviewed stakeholders reported that there have been serious conflicts between the Hunters Association and BirdLIFE Malta.

<sup>17</sup> In this case, monitors and former national focal point

The **Nature** project and the nature projects carried out under TCY have directly contributed to the implementation of the Birds and Habitats directives in Malta, therefore at a policy level the effectiveness can be considered high.

## 7 The sustainability of projects

The interviewed stakeholders agree that the sustainability of particularly the nature related projects (Nature and nature projects under TCY) is high; in general, this assessment is based on the involvement of the local authorities in the nature projects which guarantees funding following the end of LIFE co-financing. The LIFE desk officer reports that a new project funded under LIFE + (communication)<sup>18</sup> is a continuation of sorts of the Nature project. In the e-survey response received for the particular project, the long-term impacts in relation to facilitating continued improvements in nature management are scored as four on a scale of one-five, where five is the highest score.

## 8 The utility of projects

The interviewed stakeholders report that all LIFE funded projects (Nature and TCY) have contributed to addressing EU environmental problems and priorities as set forth in the 6th EAP as well as the national priorities in Malta.

With respect to LIFE Environment themes, the former national focal point reports that Malta has not been successful in achieving funding for environment projects. In general, the funds have been less popular with, for example, private enterprises.<sup>19</sup> Nature funds are very popular with NGOs working with nature. In the view of the former focal point, the collaboration between the various types of stakeholders which is promoted by LIFE is unique to this financing instrument, and the collaboration between these various types of stakeholders would probably not have taken place without the funding.

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<sup>18</sup> The LIFE+ project is called "Changing cultural attitudes to trapping in order to facilitate implementation of the Birds Directive" and is an ambitious project based on the experiences and problems encountered in connection with the ongoing NAT project (LIFE Desk officer)

<sup>19</sup> The former national focal point indicated that private enterprises may be put off by the application form and process for LIFE ENV projects. They have access to other funds where the procedure is not so complicated. Furthermore, the former national focal point ventures that environmental projects are relatively expensive and the contribution from LIFE comparatively limited, which may lead private enterprises to assess that the funds are not appropriate for their needs.

## Appendix 1 Comprehensive overview of LIFE Projects in Malta

In connection with the ex-post evaluation, data was extracted from the BUTLER database of the LIFE Unit. Table 1 and Table 2 below provide an overview of the information available on each project as well as the LIFE+ theme attached by the evaluation team to the project. The budget figures for LIFE co-financing do not necessarily correspond to the actual payments made.

Table 1 Overview of LIFE Nature Projects in Malta

<b>Id.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>LIFE generation</b>	<b>Funding year</b>	<b>Start year</b>	<b>End year</b>	<b>Total budget (EUR)</b>	<b>LIFE co-financing (EUR)</b>	<b>Beneficiary type</b>	<b>International partners (yes/no)</b>	<b>Directive (Birds, Habitats) or biodiversity</b>
LIFE06 NAT/MT/000097	SPA Site and Sea Actions Saving Puffinus yelkouan in Malta	LIFE III Extension	2006	2006	2010	919,733	459,866	NGO- Foundation	No	Birds



## Appendix 2 Summary tables on LIFE Nature projects in Malta

Table 2 Overview of LIFE NAT projects in Malta, 1996-2006

Generation	Year	Number of projects	Total budget (EUR million)	Total LIFE co-financing budget (EUR million)	Average duration (years)	Average LIFE funding per project (EUR million)
LIFE II	1996	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1997	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1998	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1999	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
LIFE III	2000	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2002	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2003	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2004	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
LIFE III extension	2005	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2006	1	0.9	0.5	4.0	0.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Comparative figures for all NAT projects		771	1,224.1	637.2	4.2	0.8

Table 3 Categories of LIFE NAT projects in Malta, 1996-2006

LIFE NAT themes	No. of projects	In % of total	Total budget (EUR million)	In % of total	LIFE contribution (EUR million)	In % of total
Habitats Directive	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Birds Directive	1	100%	0.9	100%	0.5	100%
Biodiversity projects	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 Malta LIFE NAT projects 1996-2006 according to beneficiary type

Beneficiary type	No. of projects	In % of total	Total budget (EUR million)	In % of total	LIFE contribution (EUR million)	In % of total
<b>Public entities</b>						
National authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Regional authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Local authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Development agency	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Intergovernmental body	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Park-reserve authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Public and private enterprises</b>						
International enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Large enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
SME Small and medium sized enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Mixed enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Public enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>NGOs and research</b>						
NGO-Foundation	1	100%	0.9	100%	0.5	100%
Research institutions	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
University	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Training centre	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100%</b>
None indicated	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 9 Overview of LIFE TCY projects in Malta, 1996-2006.*

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total	Av./year
No. of projects	1	1		2	1		1				6	1,2
Total budget (million EUR)	248.624	472.911		935.821	600.000		302.329				2.559.685	511.937
LIFE contribution (%)	245.860	425.620		589.441	378.000		213.030				1.851.951	370.390