



# EU LIFE Info Day



## EASME

Executive Agency  
for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

# Agenda

## **What is LIFE? Highlights for LIFE Call 2020**

Angelo Salsi, Head of LIFE and Eco-Innovation Unit

## **The application process**

Maja Mikosinska, Head of Sector “Nature and Biodiversity”

## **Applying successfully for LIFE – How does it work?**

Fabio Leone, Head of Sector “Environment and Resource Efficiency”

Anne Vermaelen, Head of Sector, Finance Unit, EASME

*Coffee break – enjoy LIFE! - 15 minutes*

**Q&A via Sli.do #EULife2020 - 1 hour**

# How to get involved?

1. Go to: [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do) or  
Download and Open the Sli.do app
2. Enter the event code: **#EULife2020**
3. Ask your question, vote for your favourite questions or vote on polls



# What is LIFE?

Angelo Salsi  
Head of Unit

*EU LIFE Info Day*

*30 April, 2020*



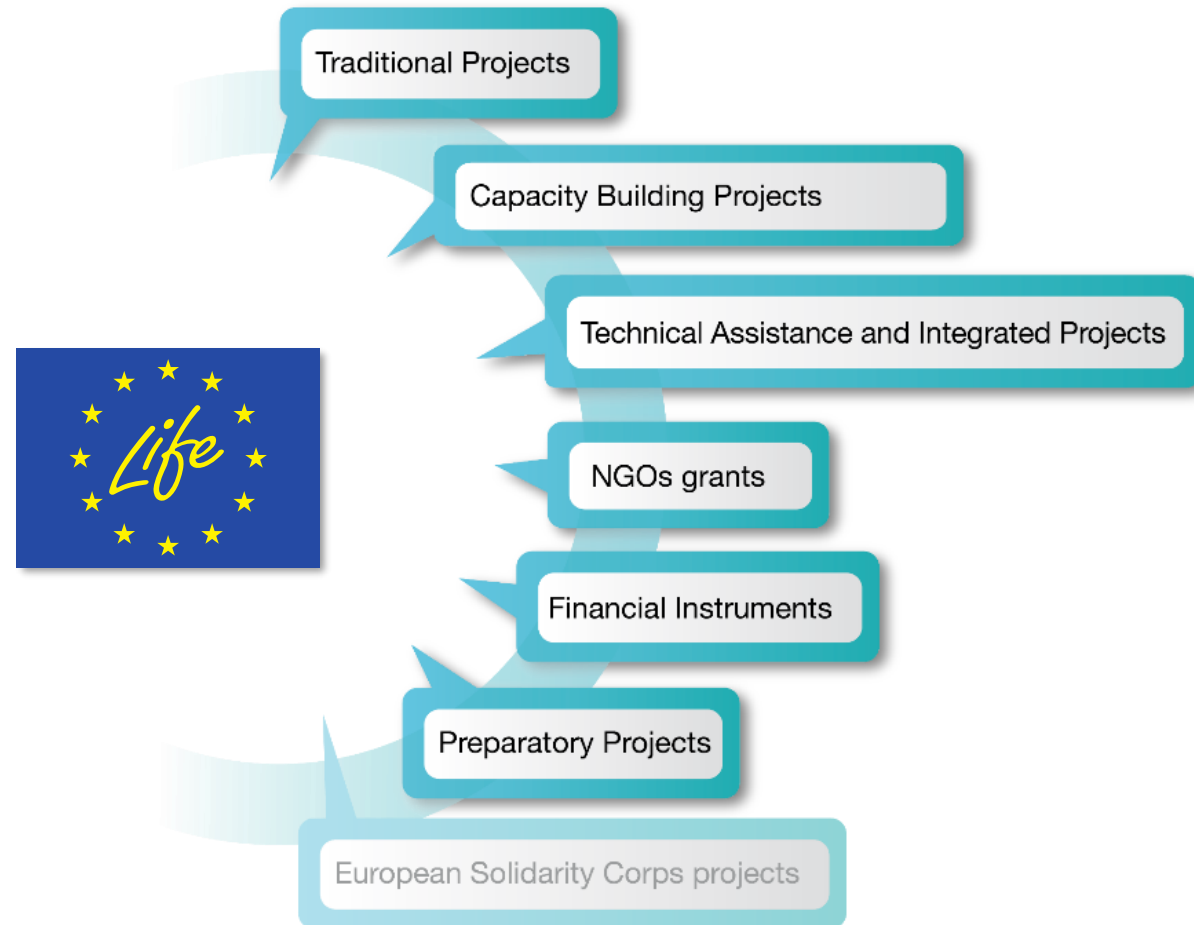
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# LIFE – how many projects?



- **LIFE 1992-2018:** more than 5000 projects in the fields of
  - **Nature & biodiversity**
  - **All Other environmental sectors**
  - **Climate action**
  - **Governance and information**

# What is LIFE financing?



# The "traditional" projects

## For whom?

- All legal persons registered in the EU

## For what?

- Pursuit of general and specific objectives of the 6 priority areas
- Additional focus on thematic priorities and on project topics (LIFE Multi-Annual Work Programme 2018-2020)

## Average size and duration?

- 1 to 5 beneficiaries; EU contribution: €500,000 to €1.5 million; 3/5 years (but no limits!)

## Co-funding rate?

- Max. 55%, with two exceptions:
  - NAT/BIO projects: max. 60%
  - NAT/BIO projects under specific conditions linked to conservation actions on priority habitat/ species: max.75%

# LIFE 2014-2020 – Priority Areas

## Environment sub-programme

- Environment & Resource Efficiency (ENV)
- Nature & Biodiversity (NAT)
- Environmental Governance & Information (GIE)



LIFE10 ENV/PL/000661



LIFE12 INF/BE/000459



LIFE05 NAT/FIN/000105



LIFE10 ENV/RO/000729



LIFE05 NAT/FIN/000104



# LIFE 2014-2020 Priority Areas

## Climate Action sub-programme

- Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)
- Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)
- Climate Change Governance & Information (GIC)



LIFE07 ENV/S/000908



LIFE10 ENV/ES/000456



LIFE07 INF/E/000852



LIFE09 ENV/IT/000186

# Important highlights for the LIFE Call 2020

Angelo Salsi  
Head of Unit



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# Covid19 related Flexibility measures

- All deadlines extended by one month
- Increased first pre-financing payment
- Grants to third parties
- New narrative on start-ups
- Private entities: no obligatory tendering above 139K€
- Increased flexibility for 2% rule
- Priorities and topics remain, but ideas connected with pandemics management welcome
- Dulcis in fundo: one to one bilateral chats with all those who need counselling on their proposals

# New feature: Financial support to third parties as part of a LIFE traditional project

LIFE projects may budget financial support to third parties in order to assist entities outside the project partnership (e.g. non-profit organisations, local authorities or citizens groups) in the implementation or development of local initiatives that will contribute to the project's objectives.

**Max 100K€ (200K€ for IPs) per project and 20K€ per initiative**

Applicants should explain:

- The rationale and results expected;
- How they will manage the process (e.g. criteria to select the entity);
- List types of activities for which third party may receive financial support.

# Support to start-ups

The LIFE programme favours innovation and commercialisation introduced by dynamic start-ups and the LIFE project could represent, in this sense, a risk-free incubation context that allows the start-up to safely bring its solution to the market, supported by appropriate financial, technical, business means and expertise.

In this context, the LIFE programme welcomes proposals whose partnership combines the knowledge and expertise of consolidated market players with the drive of start-ups which want to commercialise their solution.

# Private Land Conservation



Applicants are invited to consider private land conservation in their project design and to take stock of the experience and knowledge available. Examples:

- Alternative Ways to Support Private Land Conservation:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/life/publications/lifepublications/generalpublications/documents/support\\_land\\_conservation.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/life/publications/lifepublications/generalpublications/documents/support_land_conservation.pdf)
- LIFE Preparatory projects: Land is For Ever (<http://landisforever.eu>) and European Land Conservation Network (<http://elcn.eu>) financed to further develop private land conservation initiatives

# Invertebrates



**Applicants are encouraged to consider the conservation of invertebrates, through:**

- Addressing the EU pollinators initiative (e.g. promoting crop diversity, alternative methods for use of pesticides, data collection and monitoring of pollinators, etc).
- Species approach: target annex species of the HD & EU Red lists species
- Habitats approach: specific attention for groups of invertebrates in habitat restoration projects

# EU and IUCN Red Lists

**Applicants are encouraged to submit projects targeting the conservation of :**

- Threatened species or habitats that are not included in the annexes of the Habitats Directive but have a status of 'endangered' or worse in the European species or habitats Red Lists or, for those species not covered by the European Red Lists, in the IUCN Red List.



# IS LIFE (STILL) THAT COMPLEX?

- Reduced reporting
- Reduced monitoring
- Reduced auditing
- No VAT certificate required
- 2-stages approach...
- And much more



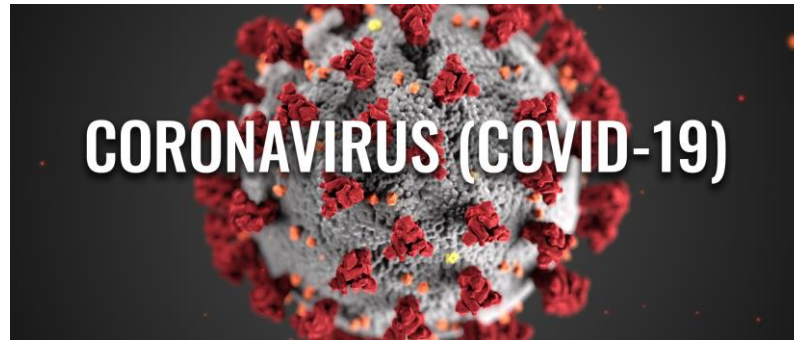
# LIFE 2020 – Indicative planning and Budget

LIFE Call 2020 opening: 2 April 2020

AREA	CLOSING C.N.	CLOSING Full P.	BUDGET 20	~ % vs 2019
CLIMATE	n.a.	6 October 2020	€ 73 Mill.	+ 31 %
ENV-RE	14 July 2020	February 2021	€ 84 Mill.	+6.3%
NAT	16 July 2020	February 2021	€ 143 Mill.	+ 4.4%
GIE	16 July 2020	February 2021	€ 11 Mill.	+ 33 %
IPE	6 October 2020	March 2021	€ 103 Mill.	+ 6%
IPC	6 October 2020	March 2021	€ 35 Mill.	+ 26%
TAE*	n.a.	16 July 2020	€ 1 Mill	+ 4%
TAC*	n.a.	16 July 2020	€ 0,35 Mill	+ 6%

\*: The **submission process** is explained in the [Participant Portal Online Manual](#) (together with detailed instructions for the IT tool)

Is



Stronger than



# Thank you



# The application process

Maja Mikosinska

Head of Sector “Nature and Biodiversity”




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# SUBMIT YOUR LIFE PROPOSAL IN E-PROPOSAL

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eproposalWeb/>

Contact Legal notice Logout

 EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
eProposal (on-line creation and submission of LIFE proposals)

European Commission > Environment > LIFE Programme > eProposal

Session will expire in 30 min [Help needed?](#)

[Home](#) [Call for proposals](#) [Messaging](#) [Account](#)

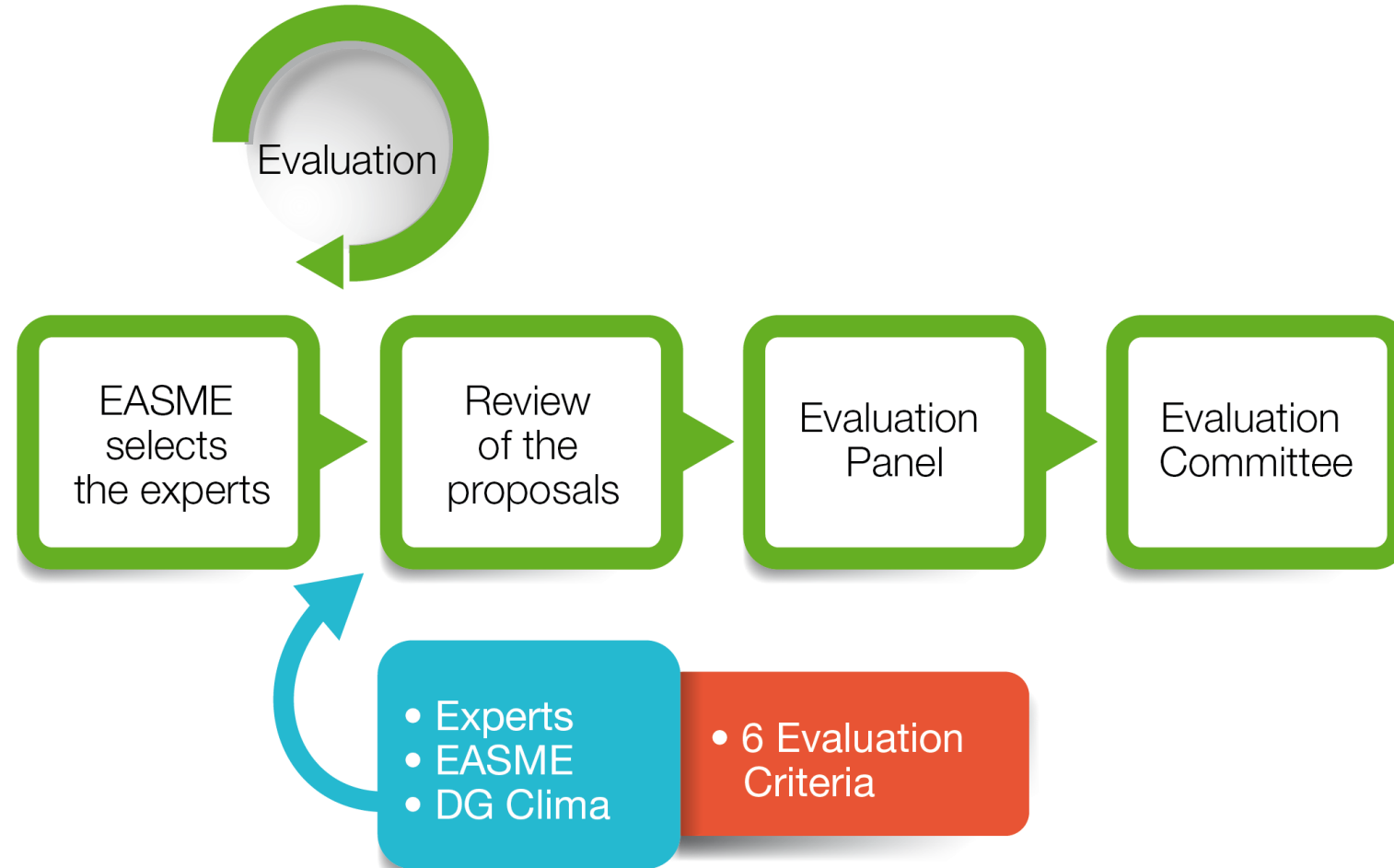
Welcome to eProposal

eProposal is the unique tool used by applicants to build and submit LIFE project proposals and by the Contracting Authority to organise the selection of projects to be financed.

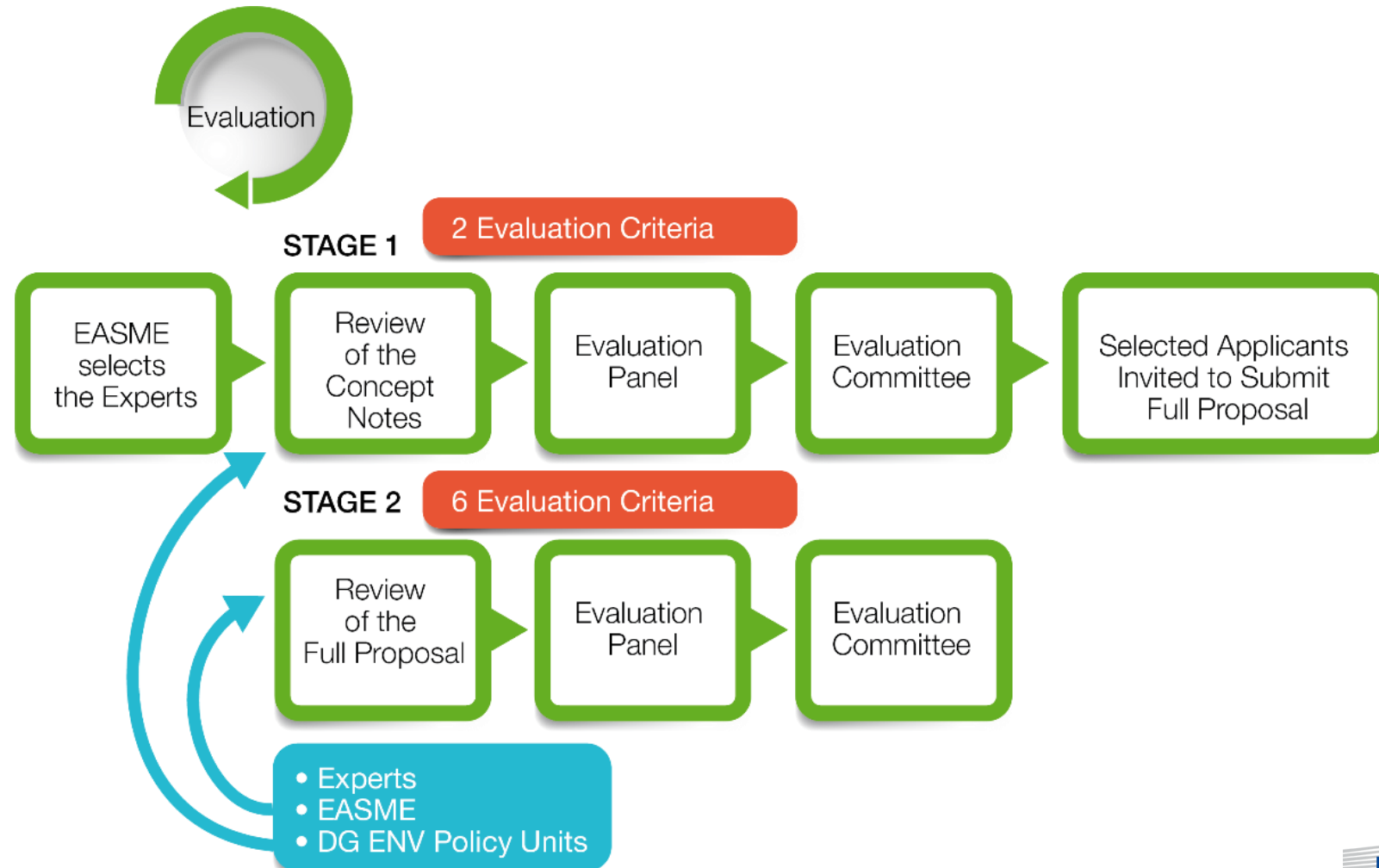
[Privacy statement](#) [General Data Protection Regulation\(GDPR\)](#)

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# Sub-Programme Climate Action – One stage

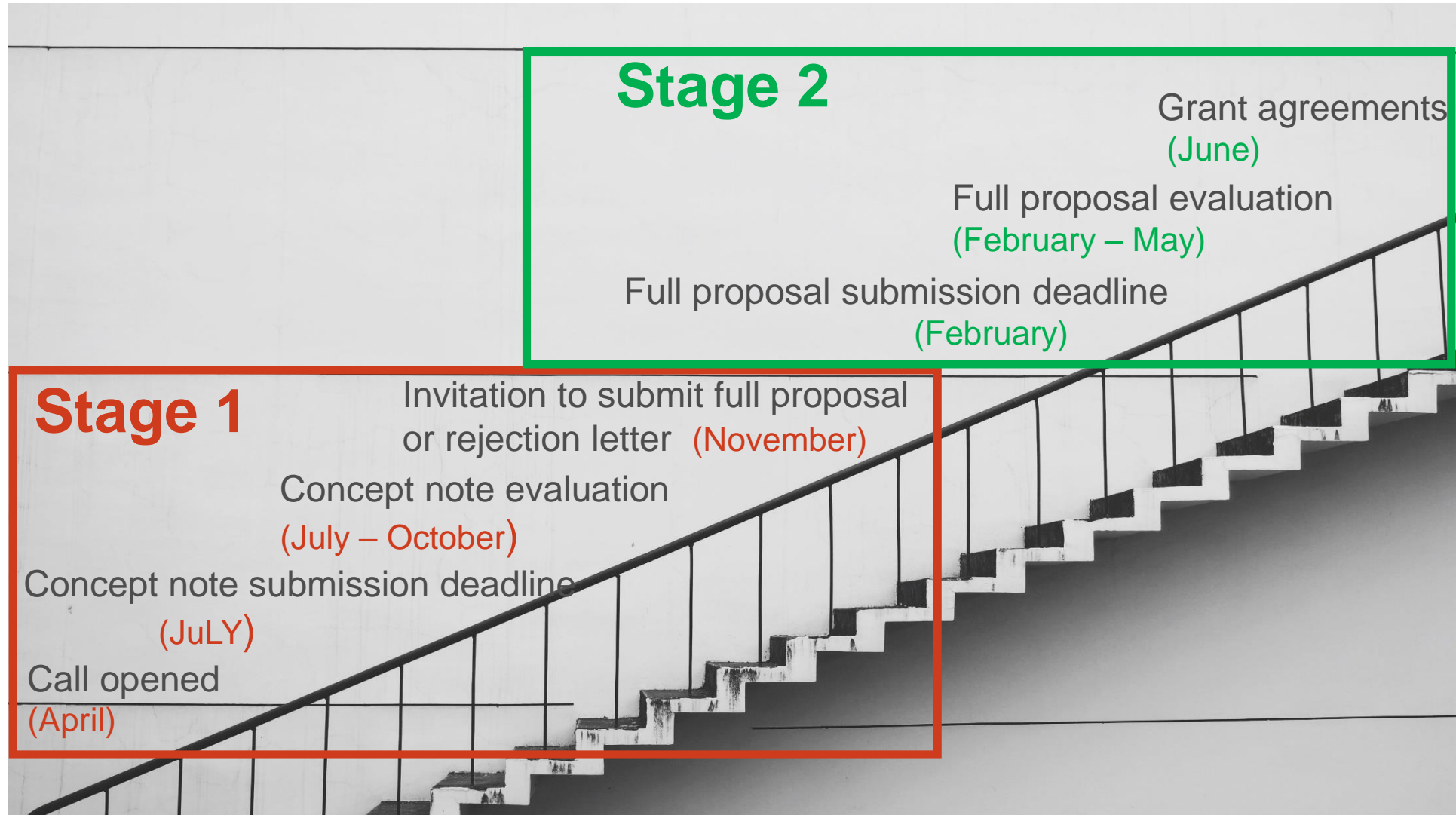


# Sub-Programme Environment – Two stage





# Two stage application procedure



# What should the concept note include ? (I)

- Information about the Coordinating Beneficiary
- Description of the environmental problem targeted (for environment and information & governance strands) / description of species, habitats, biodiversity issues targeted by the project (for nature and biodiversity strands)
- Project objectives

# What should the concept note include ? (II)

- The project partners (information on the coordinating and associated beneficiaries, and co-financers of the project)
- Description of the project actions
- Expected results and impacts of the project
- The sustainability of project results
- Project risks and constraints

# What should the concept note include ? (III)

- The EU added value of the project (understood at this stage as the contribution to LIFE priorities and objectives)
- The pilot or demonstration character of the project (and/or best practice for nature and biodiversity strand)
- An indicative budget for the project limited to main budget items and repartition between EU contribution, partners own contributions and co-financers.

**10 pages in total ! via eProposal**

# What the concept note should NOT include ?

- Signed commitments (mandates, etc)
- Maps, pictures, attachments

*10 pages in total –  
to be submitted via eProposal*

*Concept note preparation is not so difficult, so even in these challenging circumstances, please consider applying and presenting your LIFE project idea.*

# Navigating through concept note application in eProposal - common mistakes



## B1 - SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT (in English)

Species/habitats/biodiversity	Project objectives	<b>Actions and means involved</b>	Resubmission	Expected results and impacts	Sustainability of the Project Results	Project topic(s)	Project Partnership
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Expected constraints and risks

Is at least 25% of the eligible project costs dedicated to concrete conservation actions? Or alternatively does your project fall under one of the exceptions to the 25% rule?  Yes  No

Actions and means involved



Maximum characters: 4997 / 5000

Proposal Messaging Account

- Administrative part
- Technical part
- Reports R1 - Budget
- Proposal exports
- Access rights
- Proposal information
- Last validation

## Budget breakdown cost categories

	Total cost in €	Eligible cost in €
1. Personnel	100000	100000
2. Travel and subsistence	100000	100000
3. External assistance	100000	100000
4. Durable goods		
Infrastructure	100000	100000
Equipment	100000	100000
Prototype	100000	100000
5. Land	100000	50000
6. Consumables	100000	50000
7. Other costs	100000	50000
8. Overheads	100000	50000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>	<b>800.000</b>

**Total costs need to be equal or higher than eligible costs**

## Contribution breakdown

	In €	% of total
EU contribution requested	500000	50,00%
Coordinating Beneficiary's contribution	250000	25,00%
Associated Beneficiaries' contribution	0	0,00%
Co-financers contribution	250000	25,00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

!!! ACCEPTANCE ENVIRONMENT !!! Please keep in mind that this is ACCEPTANCE ENVIRONMENT and proposals prepared here will not be taken into account for further processing. Follow <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eproposalWeb> link to reach PRODUCTION ENVIRONMENT.

Proposals / LIFE19 NAT/AT/000002 LIFE CN 2019 test NAT / Reports / R1 - Budget

◀ Start ◀ Prev

Last update at 27/03/2019 17:53 by Manuel M Proposal status: Submitted Concept Note ⚠

### Budget breakdown cost categories

	Total cost in €	Eligible cost in €	% of total eligible costs
1. Personnel	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
2. Travel and subsistence	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
3. External assistance	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
Equipment	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
Prototype	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	12,50%
5. Land	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="50000"/>	6,25%
6. Consumables	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="50000"/>	6,25%
7. Other costs	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="50000"/>	6,25%
8. Overheads	<input type="text" value="100000"/>	<input type="text" value="50000"/>	6,25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>	<b>800.000</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Contribution breakdown

	In €	% of total	% of total eligible costs
EU contribution requested	<input type="text" value="500000"/>	50,00%	62,50%
Coordinating Beneficiary's contribution	<input type="text" value="250000"/>	25,00%	
Associated Beneficiaries' contribution	<input type="text" value="0"/>	0,00%	
Co-financers contribution	<input type="text" value="250000"/>	25,00%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	

Save

## Budget breakdown cost categories

	Total cost in €	Eligible cost in €	% of total eligible costs
Total	1.000.000	800.000	100%

## Contribution breakdown

	In €	% of total	% of total eligible costs
EU contribution requested	500000	50,00%	62,50%
Coordinating Beneficiary's contribution	250000	25,00%	
Associated Beneficiaries' contribution	0	0,00%	
Co-financers contribution	250000	25,00%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	

Save

In eProposal, the **concept note can be modified, validated and (re)submitted** as many times as needed until the deadlines set in the application guides.

Each subsequent submission overwrites the previously submitted version (earlier versions are not archived and are therefore not available anymore).

# Concept Note - Evaluation

Be aware – at the evaluation stage the concept note must fulfil the same eligibility criteria than those of the full proposal



# Evaluation criteria – Stage 1: Concept Note

## **Overall quality of the proposal:**

- Clarity of the proposals (including the description of the pre-operational context), its feasibility and the indicative value for money. (max. 20 – passing score: min 5)

## **Overall EU added value:**

- Project's contribution to the LIFE priorities, expected impact, and sustainability of the project results. (max. 30 – passing score: min 10)

# If the application is admitted to stage 2...

... the applicant **will be notified in eProposal** and will have access to the full application.

eProposal will contain the elements included at the concept note stage and the applicant will be able to expand the contents of the forms.

Changes can be introduced to the application including for the budget as long as the total EU contribution does not increase by more than 10%.

# If the application is admitted to stage 2...

Be aware that any changes introduced at the level of the full proposal shall not question the selection and award at the concept note in term of:

- Objective and results expected;
- Capacity of the partnership to implement the actions.

# Thank you



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# Applying successfully for LIFE: how does it work?

Fabio Leone

Head of Sector “Environment and Resource Efficiency”



# KEY CHALLENGES



- There is **significant competition** for LIFE funds
- It takes **time and money to** prepare an application
- Proposals that **fail are poorly prepared** or simply not as good as the others, funding is limited
- You can't get a grant if you don't submit an application (at concept note stage for environment subprogramme)

# MUST READ

- LIFE Web site <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/life> – It contains everything you need: in particular **LIFE project database**
- **LIFE Regulation**, in particular the priority areas
- **Multi-annual work-programme** – project topics
- **Application Packages**
- **Guides for evaluation** of LIFE project proposals
- Eventually, specific information, guidelines designed by your **National Contact Point**
- **Evaluation comments** from previous submissions

# PROJECT DESIGN - I

- **Baseline description should be clear** enough as it is essential for evaluating the potential of the project (AW1 CN/FP)
- The **sequence of actions should be logical** and clearly linked to project description (AW1 CN/FP)
- Expected results and quantitative **estimations of projects impacts** (during and 3/5 years after project end) (AW2 CN - AW3 FP)



# PROJECT DESIGN - II

- **Activities/plans to ensure sustainability** of the project results are absolutely crucial! (AW2 CN – AW4 FP)
- **Replication and/or transfer** needs to be taken into account and **related project actions** need to be well conceived (AW4 FP)
- Clear **description of beneficiary involved** in specific actions (AW1 CN/FP)

# PROJECT DESIGN - III

- **Transnational** projects:
  - the proposal has to show that there is sufficient evidence 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 – AW6)

# PROJECT DESIGN - IV

- Limit the number of **actions to the ones essential to achieve the project objectives**
- **Partnership** structure: look for complementarity and avoid redundancy of expertise (key stakeholders should be involved)
- Project duration should take into account:
  - Sufficient time to **gather information** about the impact of project activities
  - Delays in **obtaining permits and authorisations**

# CONCEPT NOTE EXPERIENCE

- Information on the baseline (scope and extent of the problem, expected change)
- Actions listing vs **main actions** list and **description**
- **Timeline** and use of **budget**
- Quantification of impacts (absolute and relative terms)
- Partnership and involvement



# PROJECT DESIGN FULL PROPOSAL

## Good design

**Solid analysis of the problem, state of play and solution proposed (baseline)**

**Key stakeholders involved (incl. users)**

**Robust assessment of impacts over the life cycle of the solution proposed**

**Clear strategy on how to sustain and multiply the impacts**

## Common problems

**Insufficient background information (why, who and how)**

**Rationale for projects is defined during the project**

**Objectives too broad, too many**

**Poor partnership (partners don't fit regarding know-how or insufficient budget)**

**Over-optimistic / unrealistic or lack of quantification of impacts**

**Replication confused with networking and dissemination**

**Vague plans to sustain the project/results after project end**

# Thank you

# Applying successfully for LIFE: the financial side

Anne Vermaelen

Head of Sector, Finance



# ESTABLISHING THE PROJECT BUDGET

## GENERAL REMARKS

- Read the model grant agreement /Annex X (updates will be published), FAQ and application guide
  - Art. II.10 (award of contracts), Art. II.11 (subcontracting), Art. II.19 (eligible costs), Art. II.21 (affiliated entities)
- Be realistic!
- Only costs incurred within project duration (except audit/final reporting)



# FINANCIAL APPLICATION FORMS (F1- F8)

- Put costs in the **correct cost category** (F-forms)
- Round costs to the **nearest EUR**
- Each beneficiary to include its **own/affiliate's costs**
  - No subcontracting between beneficiaries/affiliates
  - Avoid internal invoicing => costs to be included in the appropriate category
- **No VAT** to be included unless it cannot be recovered and for public bodies no VAT for activities engaged in as a public body

# PERSONNEL COST – ALL PARTNERS

- Only costs related to **employees** /personnel with an **equivalent appointing act** (e.g. secondment) or contracts with natural persons (e.g. consultancy/civil contracts) which are **assigned to the project**
- Ensure that tasks are carried out by the appropriate staff level
  - Number of person days
  - Daily rate
- Daily rate = Yearly salary cost/Yearly productive days
  - Salary cost includes social security contribution & other statutory costs (see Annex X)
  - Productive days = 261 – holidays - illness

# PERSONNEL COST – PUBLIC BODIES

- Only costs re. **activities that would not have been carried out** if the project would not have been undertaken
- **2% rule:** sum of public body contributions **MUST** exceed by at least 2% the salary cost of non-additional staff
- **Additional staff** = permanent/temporary staff whose contracts or contract renewals start
  - On or after the start date of the project OR on or after the signature of the grant agreement (if before start)
  - **Specifically seconded/assigned** to the project
  - Contract renewal (extension) <> contract **re-assignment**

# EQUIPMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE / PROTOTYPE

- General principle = **only depreciated costs** up to a limit
  - **50%** total purchase cost of equipment
  - **25%** total purchase cost of infrastructure
- **Exceptions** where the eligible cost can be 100% of purchase cost
  - **Prototypes** (specifically created for the project/not available as serial product/not commercialised)
  - **All action grants & all beneficiaries** : beneficiaries assign during and after the end of the project, the durable goods definitively and exclusively to the same objectives and purpose foreseen by the project for the whole economic life of the good.

# SUBCONTRACTING

- Only for implementation of **limited part of the project** (max. **35%** of budget unless justified)
- Only if really **necessary** for the implementation
- In principle not for project management unless justified

# OTHER COSTS

- Resulting directly **from requirements imposed by the grant agreement**
  - Financial guarantees (no need to budget upfront – will be communicated during the revision stage)
  - Audit certificate (costs of beneficiaries with Union Contribution at least 750,000 EUR)
  - Translation costs
  - Costs for dissemination materials
  - ...

# OVERHEADS

- **Flat rate**
- **Max. 7%** of total direct eligible costs excluding land purchase/LT lease/one-off compensations
- Maximum is **per beneficiary**
- **Fair share** of the overall overheads of the beneficiary

# AWARD OF CONTRACTS

- To tender offering **best value for money/lowest price**
- **No conflict of interest**
- Indicate **type of procedure** to be used (or used), use the types mentioned in the application guide
  - Public bodies = public procurement rules!
  - Private entities = use internal rules organisation (if not available, set up a procedure and make sure there is competition between suppliers !)



# FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTERED ISSUES

## 1. FINANCIAL VIABILITY CHECK

- Union requested contribution project > **750,000 EUR**, private applicant (coordinator) to submit **audit report produced by an approved external auditor** certifying the accounts for the **last financial year available**
- If the applicant is not required by law to have his accounts certified then a **self-declaration on the validity of accounts** will be required

# FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTERED ISSUES

## 2. SOLE TRADERS

- Are considered **Natural Persons** => not eligible
- Entities owned and run by one individual where there is **no legal distinction between the owner and the business**, no distinction between own assets and assets of the business

# FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTERED ISSUES

## 3. AFFILIATED ENTITIES

- We **may** accept inclusion of mother/daughter companies to assist private beneficiaries in the project (incl. members of associations)
- **Clear identification** needed (incl. acronym affiliate in description field of particular cost item)
- Need to comply with **eligibility & non-exclusion criteria** applying to the applicants
- Should demonstrate their **legal/capital link** with beneficiary concerned or membership
- Beneficiary remains responsible for the affiliate
- In case of an important role in project => associated beneficiary

# REMEMBER

- **Be clear and precise** – applications are only evaluated on what is submitted (not on the potential of the idea)
  - **Read documents**
  - **Read about and talk to ongoing projects**
- 
- Check the LIFE Database of funded projects  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm>
- 
- **!!! START EARLY!!!**

# Thank you

# Enjoy LIFE

during the break



Back after 15 minutes for

**Answers to your Sli.do questions!**

# See you at the networking session!

**[eu-life-2020.b2match.io](https://eu-life-2020.b2match.io)**

## Bilateral virtual meetings

- among applicants
- with your [National Contact Point](#)
- with EASME experts

# Thank you and keep in touch



[ec.europa.eu/life](https://ec.europa.eu/life)



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