

Update to the Annual Work Programme for grants in the Environment
Policy Area for the year 2009

The present work programme constitutes an update to the initial annual work programme for grants in the area of Environment adopted on 8 October 2008 (C(2008)5625).

It covers in particular :

1. Four grants to be awarded without a call for proposals to a body with a de jure / de facto monopoly
2. Revision of the Call for proposals – projects to be supported through action grants under "Nature and biodiversity", "Environment policy and governance" and "Information and Communication"

The present work programme serves as financing decision in accordance with article 75 of the Financial Regulation.

1. LIFE + PROGRAMME - GRANTS TO BE AWARDED WITHOUT A CALL FOR PROPOSALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 168(1)(C) AND 168(1)(F) OF THE DETAILED RULES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL REGULATION.

1.1. Action grant to IUCN – The World Conservation Union, Regional Office for Europe (IUCN ROeE) – "CountDown 2010"

1.1.1. Beneficiary

IUCN – The World Conservation Union, Regional Office for Europe (IUCN ROeE), Association Internationale sans but lucratif (a.i.s.b.l.) Brussels, Belgium.

1.1.2. Legal basis:

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) (OJ L 149 of 9 June 2007, p.1), and in particular article 5, paragraph 6.

1.1.3. Budget amount: EUR 100.000

Budget line 07 03 07 - LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment — 2007 to 2013)

1.1.4. Objective of the action/project:

The objectives of “Countdown 2010” are to encourage and support the full implementation of all the laws and binding international commitments on halting biodiversity loss that European governments have signed, as well as to champion and support the full implementation of all necessary supplementary actions. The goal of “Countdown 2010” is that all European governments, at every level, have taken the necessary actions to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

Countdown 2010 is a powerful network of more than 700 partners from national governments to local authorities, from business to civil society. As a strong promoter of the 2010 biodiversity target in the European Union and worldwide, Countdown 2010 supports the full implementation of the EC Biodiversity Communication and Action Plan (COM/2006/0216), including policy initiatives on:

- Marine conservation
- Climate Change and Biodiversity
- Biodiversity in Development Cooperation
- Communication of biodiversity
- Biodiversity indicators and assessments
- EU Overseas Entities
- Close-to-nature forest management
- Invasive Alien Species
- Sectoral integration

So far, 30 governments (seventeen are EU Member States) as well as 250 regions, local governments, 60 businesses and other organisations have signed the Countdown 2010 declaration. This commitment and a strong collaboration with the respective EU presidencies makes Countdown 2010 an ideal partner to support the 2010 biodiversity target in the Member States, as well as in accession and candidate countries.

Partnership in the Countdown 2010 initiative is a powerful incentive for getting all levels of government plus NGOs, civil society in general and business engaged in the implementation of the 2010 objective.

1.1.5. Expected results:

In terms of activities :

Conferences and events, including with EU Presidencies, to ensure that biodiversity remains high on the agenda, with a particular focus on ensuring the implementation, monitoring and profiling of the EC Biodiversity Communication and Action Plan.

- Information and awareness raising activities on Biodiversity protection in support of the 2010 target and the EC Action Plan with European regions and local authorities, European business and the European Parliament.
- Assessment of progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target, consistent and co-ordinated with indicators and monitoring developed by the Commission, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the European Environment Agency (SEBI 2010, etc.).
- Extension of the Countdown 2010 partner network to missing Member States as well as relevant authorities, business and civil society, and continuous communication about the 2010 biodiversity target and means of achieving it to all partners and stakeholders.
- Follow-up on the EU Overseas Entities Conference with an aim of expanding the Natura 2000 network.
- Working with the EU institutions for raising awareness and informing decision making on EU nature conservation issues and, in particular, biodiversity.
- Contribution to the development of a post 2010 target by specific events to ensure ownership of the Countdown 2010 partners and other stakeholders in this post 2010 target.

In terms of impact:

- Greater awareness at all levels of government and society of the target for halting biodiversity loss based in particular on IUCN's extremely powerful and extensive network of members, which has a strong multiplier effect.
- Specific practical commitments by national, regional and local governments as well as civil society and Business to achieve specific targets for biodiversity protection. Each partner signing up for the countdown 2010 is required to commit to certain objectives which are tailor-made for each partner.
- Implementation of these tailor-made objectives will contribute to the completion of the Natura 2000 network, the effective conservation management, including priority species and the enhancement of connectivity of the protected areas (*EU Biodiversity Action Plan, Objective 1: To safeguard the EU's most important habitats and species*).
- Overall increase in the engagement of a broad range of stakeholders in working towards the 2010 target. This will result in greater ownership as well as direct real benefits for biodiversity protection.
- Stakeholder involvement, including partnerships, will contribute to the integration of biodiversity into other areas, such as tourism, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and contribute to diminishing negative impacts on biodiversity caused by territorial development and infrastructure building (*EU Biodiversity Action Plan, Objective 2: To conserve biodiversity in the wider EU countryside, Objective 3: To conserve biodiversity in*

the wider EU marine environment, 4: To reinforce compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity in the EU).

- The activities to integrate biodiversity protection policy into development cooperation will contribute to diminish negative impacts on biodiversity in this context (*EU Biodiversity Action Plan, Objective 7: To strengthen support for biodiversity in EU external assistance*).
- Countdown 2010 evaluation of progress to meet the 2010 target will significantly support delivery of this overall objective and help identify gaps.
- Commitment and ownership of the post 2010 target by all stakeholders; understanding and support for the need to continue and reinforce the efforts to halt the biodiversity loss.

1.1.6. Justification for proposing to award a grant without a call for proposals

IUCN, The World Conservation Union, is a unique organisation. Its members from some 140 countries include 77 States, 114 government agencies, and 800-plus NGOs. IUCN’s mission is “*to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.*” The IUCN Regional Office for Europe (ROfE) is a branch of IUCN global network. ROfE strives to meet its goals for a sustainable Europe, which are consistent with the EU Treaties, by utilising local expertise and the strength of the global IUCN network. At its first meeting in February 2004 the *Countdown 2010 Partners' Assembly* requested the IUCN ROfE to host the Countdown 2010 Secretariat, which is responsible for the day to day running of the initiative. In its implementation, Countdown 2010 is guided by a core Advisory Board, and the broader Partners' Assembly meets annually to review the overall direction of Countdown 2010. IUCN-ROfE is thus in a de facto monopoly situation as referred to in Article 168(1)(c) of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.

1.1.7. Implementation:

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	€ 100,000
Finance rate (max) :	Max 50 % co-financing of the eligible costs
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the agreement	June 2009

1.2. Action grant to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) – support to the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS) "Improving wild birds indicators"

1.2.1. Beneficiaries

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a charity organisation registered in the UK (Registration number 207076). It will be the main beneficiary/coordinator of the project.

The Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) is a Czech non-governmental organisation. It will act as a co-beneficiary/partner for the project.

These organisations are responsible for the coordination and management the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS), the initiative of a network of European organisations that the project intends to support. In particular RSPB is in charge of the Project and Contract Management and CSO runs the Central Coordination Unit.

1.2.2. Legal basis:

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) (OJ L 149 of 9 June 2007, p.1), and in particular article 5, paragraph 6.

1.2.3. Budget amount: EUR 250.000

Budget line 07 03 07 - LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment — 2007 to 2013)

1.2.4. Objective of the action/project:

The project will support the activities of the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS) by improving the annual production and delivery of biodiversity indicators based on wild birds.

The European wild bird indicator is a state biodiversity indicator integrating the balance of population trends of a basket of native bird species. The overall purpose of the indicator is to act as a barometer of environmental change in Europe and as a surrogate of changes in nature and ecosystem functioning. It is potentially sensitive to a number of different drivers and pressures in the environment (ones we perceive now and potentially unforeseen emerging issues).

Moreover, wild bird indicators have shown their ability to connect and communicate with the public and decision makers alike, allowing policy makers to understand changes in the environment and then make better decisions about how we manage natural resources.

In particular, the project will aim at:

- Ensuring the regular production of updated European wild bird indicators;
- Improving wild bird monitoring data analysis and quality control techniques;
- Improving quality and speed of data flow from contributing countries;
- Enhance the quality of the indicators;
- Extending the geographical coverage of the existing indicators, especially in eastern and southern Europe to cover EU-27 countries;
- Expanding the suite of indicators to other types of ecosystems;

- Developing detailed risk assessment for European birds and additional indicators linked to sector pressures.

1.2.5. Expected results:

Expected results of the project are, in particular, the following:

- Annual delivery of a set of wild bird indicators for EU and Europe, including updates of the Farmland Bird Indicator to the Commission with relevant interpretation;
- An improved system for collation and analysis of national trend data in operation;
- Methodology for improved data flows and data quality in developed and in use;
- Indicators for other ecosystems explored and tested;
- Press releases, reports, web updates and scientific paper(s) on wild bird indicators, population trend patterns and drivers in Europe;
- Extended geographical coverage of the existing indicators, especially in eastern and southern Europe to cover EU-27 countries;
- An active and growing network of PECBMS individuals and organisations maintained;
- Reports on project progress published on the EBCC web site;
- A risk assessment for European birds and additional indicators linked to sectoral pressures;
- A dedicated PECBMS Workshop organised and run;
- ‘State of Europe’s Common Birds’ report to published and distributed annually.

The improvement of these indicators will contribute to the consolidation of the knowledge base for the development, assessment and monitoring of Community environmental policy and legislation.

1.2.6. Justification for proposing to award a grant without a call for proposals

The Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Project was set up in January 2002. The project is undertaken through the common effort and shared goals of BirdLife International and European Bird Census Council (EBCC). BirdLife International is a worldwide partnership of conservation organisations, represented in more than 100 countries (including more than 40 in Europe) and with more than 2.5 million members worldwide. BirdLife International works for the diversity of all life and the sustainable use of natural resources through the conservation of birds and their habitats. The European Bird Census Council (EBCC) brings together ornithologists from all European countries representing national bodies responsible for monitoring bird populations and their distribution, to encourage bird-monitoring work (especially atlassing and common bird monitoring) aimed both at better conservation and management of bird populations and at providing indicators of the changing ability of European landscapes to support wildlife generally.

The wild bird indicators are the first headline indicators of their kind in Europe and they remain the only ones adopted at such high levels.

The PECBMS has built through its international networks of cooperating institutions over many years capable of delivering bird indices and indicators for Europe. Over twenty countries form the network and they use a common software tool and standardised bird count methods that enables data to be shared and combined into high quality, scientifically robust biodiversity indicators. No other grouping is capable of matching this unique work to deliver trend data on widespread birds.

Moreover, the strengths of PECBMS approach are its simplicity, transparency, temporal sensitivity, scientific credibility, policy relevance, relative ease of update, and, critically, the clarity of message.

Thanks to the high quality statistical information PECBMS provides to policy and decision makers in EU in the form of simple, understandable biodiversity indicators to allow them to make informed and improved decisions on the management and use of natural resources, it has acquired a significant authority and reliability who has helped to catalyse development and adoption of wild bird indicators in other European countries too.

This justifies the award of a grant to this organisation without a call for proposals, in accordance with article 168(1)c of the Implementing rules to the Financial Regulation.

1.2.7. Implementation:

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	€ 250,000
Finance rate (max) :	Max 50 % co-financing of the eligible costs of the action
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the agreement	April 2009

1.3. Action grant to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – "Test Methods Regulation".

1.3.1. Beneficiary

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

1.3.2. Legal basis:

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) (OJ L 149 of 9 June 2007, p.1), and in particular article 5, paragraph 6.

1.3.3. Budget amount: EUR 200.000

Budget line 07 03 07 - LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment — 2007 to 2013)

1.3.4. Objective of the action/project:

The objective of the action is to support the adoption at OECD level of alternative test methods that minimise the use of animals. These methods will be used for EU regulatory purpose.

The Commission has a strong commitment to alternative test methods to the vertebrate texts.

In a letter dated April 2008 to the Chairman of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament, Commissioners Verheugen, Potočnik and Dimas undertook to speed up the procedure for regulatory acceptance of alternative test methods. Having set out the streamlined EU procedure that had been agreed with Member States, they also committed to work with the OECD to make its process more efficient.

In this context, the policy is to wait for OECD acceptance (unless there is undue delay) before proceeding with EU adoption. This policy was endorsed by the Member States at a meeting of the REACH Competent Authorities in March 2008. Therefore, the quicker a method is agreed at OECD level, the quicker it will be available to be included in EU legislation, thus

complying with the fundamental principles of the 3 Rs – Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in procedures.

1.3.5. Expected results:

The outputs of the proposed action will include:

- Improved methods to identify Carcinogens, Mutagens and Substances Toxic to Reproduction (CMRs), as well as Persistent, Bioaccumulative, and Toxic substance (PBTs) and substances with other severe long term effects (e.g. endocrine disruption and neurotoxicity), and
- Alternative methods to the vertebrate tests made available. This will give the possibility to modify the Test Methods Regulation, a daughter regulation of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH¹), so as to be immediately applicable in all Member States. This will contribute to improved implementation of the Directive 86/609/EEC on the protection of Laboratory Animals;

Moreover, the fact that the methods developed at OECD level are accepted outside EU will facilitate data sharing under REACH and thereby supports the implementation of REACH (in line with specific priority 8.1 of Annex II to the LIFE Regulation).

The work to be undertaken by OECD will also directly contribute to the implementation of the 6th Environment Action Programme relating, in particular, to Article 7 (2) (b) "... developing a coherent system ... with testing procedures that minimise the need for animal testing and develop alternative testing methods".

1.3.6. Justification for proposing to award a grant without a call for proposals

The OECD Test Guidelines Programme is a well-established, internationally recognised programme with a network of correspondents who are experts in their field.

There are several reasons why it is appropriate to secure recognition of a test method by the OECD rather than at EU level only:

- OECD recognition means that the test is accepted throughout the world and not just within the EU; this is important to ensure that products that are manufactured in accordance with EU rules can freely circulate outside the EU; this is of benefit to economic operators within the EU. The OECD approach is based on the key notion of "Mutual Acceptance of Data" (known as "MAD"). The cornerstones of the OECD MAD have been implemented in EU legislation, including the Directive on Good Laboratory Practice.
- Under WTO rules, the recognition of a test that is only valid in the EU could lead to problems of enforcement regarding imported products. This is because any ban on imported products on grounds that they do not conform with a specific test method could be seen as an unlawful barrier to trade, particularly if the product has been tested in accordance with a different test that is internationally recognised (e.g. test recognised by the OECD);
- Acceptance of a specific test by the EU alone could trigger double testing to comply with both intra-EU and extra-EU rules and could therefore lead to an increase in the number of animals used for testing that substance.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and establishing a European Chemicals Agency

Most importantly, approved OECD guidelines are imported directly into the EU Test Methods Regulation and its adaptations to technical progress. No other organisation enjoys this unique recognition by EU of its technical work in this field. Only the OECD is in a position to build on its international reputation, experience and infrastructure and to provide the required, globally accepted, deliverables in a realistic timeframe. This justifies the award of a grant to this organisation without a call for proposals, in accordance with article 168(1)f of the Implementing rules to the Financial Regulation.

1.3.7. Implementation:

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	€ 200.000
Finance rate (max) :	Max 50 % co-financing of the eligible costs of the action
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the agreement	Mid-2009

1.4. Action grant to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – "Assessing the economic value of risk reduction".

1.4.1. Beneficiary

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

1.4.2. Legal basis:

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) (OJ L 149 of 9 June 2007, p.1), and in particular article 5, paragraph 6.

1.4.3. Budget amount: EUR 100.000

Budget line 07 03 07 - LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment — 2007 to 2013)

1.4.4. Objective of the action/project:

The objective of the project is to improve impact assessment by providing an overview of credible value estimates of risk reduction in selected environmental areas.

In particular, the action will provide a meta-analysis, comparing the estimates of the value of a prevented fatality ("value of a statistical life") from around 70 existing valuation studies (2009) in the environment, health and traffic areas, which provide more than 1,000 separate estimates in all. It would also provide an overview of credible value estimates in selected environmental areas, with some discussion of possible reasons for any significant differences in estimates that are found.

1.4.5. Expected results:

The expected results are the following:

- to provide a money value to the risks on health in selected environmental areas;
- to improve the impact assessment methodologies of environmental policies and legislation by adding the health impact risk estimate;
- to disseminate the results among Member States.

The project is intended to support the priority area of action "data linkage on the environment and health" in the Multiannual Strategic programme (Annex II of Life + Regulation, specific priority 9.1).

This estimation will be incorporated in the "economic valuation of key costs of inaction", thus allowing a better assessment of the impact of the environmental legislation. As such, the project will contribute to consolidating the knowledge base for the development, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of environmental policy and legislation according to Art. 4.3.d of the Life+ Regulation.

These results will benefit the Commission and the Member States by :

- improving the valuation of environmental and health impacts, that will inform EC and Member States decision making on environmental policy and legislation. In particular, in the next few years Member States will be introducing systematic impact assessment processes, which will be fed with this type of analysis. The preliminary results of this study will be presented and discussed in a workshop with all EU Member States.
- improving the quality of environmental regulation, as recommended by the mid-term review of the 6th EAP, through the applying the principles of "Better Regulation" to improve the effectiveness of environment policies.

1.4.6. Justification for proposing to award a grant without a call for proposals

OECD in fact combines the following key elements:

- technical competence - OECD has a high degree of specialisation in the area of economic valuation;
- credibility - OECD is seen as a rigorous and credible referee on some of the more technical issues, and is an organisation that can convince others that this is a serious and scientific issue. Any recommendations from the OECD on how to design and implement new valuation studies will carry a weight that would not be found with any other organisation.
- previous experience - OECD has already undertaken considerable analysis of the use of willingness-to-pay measures to value changes in risk to children.
- available data – OECD has also conducted primary data collection and analysis through interviews undertaken in a number of European Member States and so is generating new values for health impacts.
- an on going programme on regulatory management and reform. Through this programme, the OECD is seen as the standard bearer for how Impact Assessments can be undertaken and what data should be included in them. This will allow for recommendations through this project to be authoritatively communicated and effectively disseminated to the EC Member States, whether they are OECD members or not.

This justifies the award of a grant to this organisation without a call for proposals, in accordance with article 168(1)f of the Implementing rules to the Financial Regulation.

1.4.7. Implementation:

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	€ 100.000
Finance rate (max) :	Max 50 % co-financing of the eligible costs of the action
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the agreement	October 2009

2. LIFE + PROGRAMME (BUDGET ARTICLE 07 03 07). CALL FOR PROPOSALS – PROJECTS TO BE SUPPORTED THROUGH ACTION GRANTS UNDER "NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY", "ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND GOVERNANCE" AND "INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION".

2.1 Introduction

The Commission adopted on 8 October 2008 the Decision C(2008)5625 setting out, inter alia, the framework for implementation of the 2009 call for proposals for action grants in accordance with article 6 of the LIFE + Regulation, for an amount of EUR 225.000.000, on the basis of the amount of appropriations for budget line 07 03 07 set out in the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget.

When adopting the 2009 Budget of the European Union, the Budgetary Authority has increased by EUR 29 300 000 the commitment appropriations on budget line 07 03 07 – LIFE+ in comparison to the PDB. The associated budget remark indicates that this increase in funding aims to finance in particular climate change adaptation measures.

It is therefore proposed that an additional amount of EUR 25.000.000 is allocated to this call for proposals ; the detailed text of the call for proposals will be adapted insofar as the comments are in line with the LIFE+ Regulation.

2.1.1 Budget line

07 03 07 - LIFE+ (Financial Instrument for the Environment — 2007 to 2013)

2.1.2. Basic act

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) (OJ L 149 of 9 June 2007, p.1), and in particular article 5, paragraph 6.

Commission Decision C(2008)1246 laying down the methodology of the project selection procedure for 2008-2013 in accordance with Article 6 of the Life+ Regulation.

Commission Decision C(2008)1245 specifying the format, content and submission dates for national annual priorities for the purpose of Article 6(4) of the LIFE+ Regulation.

Commission Decision C(2008)1244 establishing indicators to assist the monitoring of measures financed by LIFE+.

2.2. Objectives of the call for proposals

The general objective of the LIFE+ programme is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of Community environmental policy and legislation, including the integration of the environment into other policies, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

In particular, LIFE+ supports the implementation of the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme, including the thematic strategies, and finances measures and projects with European added value in Member States.

The call for proposals will cover all three components of the programme:

- LIFE + Nature and biodiversity
- LIFE + Environment policy and governance
- LIFE + Information and communication

LIFE+ seeks funding complementarity with other Community financial instruments as set out in article 9 of the Regulation. To this end LIFE+ will not finance projects that fall within the eligibility criteria and main scope of other Community financial instruments; nor will LIFE+ finance projects that receive assistance for the same purpose from these programmes.

The Commission shall have special regard to transnational projects when transnational cooperation is essential to guarantee environmental protection, in particular species protection, and shall endeavour to ensure that at least 15 % of the budgetary resources are allocated to transnational projects.

2.3. Expected results of actions to be supported

Funded projects are expected to contribute to the implementation of the objectives set out in the Sixth Environmental Action Programme and related Thematic Strategies. The overall expected result is to increase and promote sustainable development at EU-level as well as at national and regional level.

More specifically the expected results for each of the three components are:

A) LIFE+ Nature and biodiversity:

To support the setting up of the EU network of protected areas (Natura 2000) and to protect, conserve, restore, monitor and facilitate the functioning of natural systems, natural habitats, and wild flora and fauna. In addition to aim at halting the loss of biodiversity, including diversity of genetic resources, in the European Union by 2010 in accordance with the Commission communication COM (2006) 216 of 22/05/2006 "Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 – and beyond – sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being."

B) LIFE+ environment policy and governance:

To contribute directly to the Lisbon process with respect to sustainable development: this will be achieved by testing and transferring new environmental techniques and processes. Particular emphasis will be given to the Sixth Environmental Action Programme and related Thematic Strategies. It is expected that the projects financed will contribute to the objectives set out by the programme and notably in areas such as climate change, water, air, soil, urban environmental, noise, chemicals, environment and health, waste and natural resources, forests and innovation.

C) LIFE+ information and communication:

To ensure regular and effective information flow in order to provide that basis for policy decisions on the environment, and to make information on the state and trends of the environment accessible to citizens.

In the context of the mid-term and final evaluations of the LIFE+ programme, indicators to assist in the monitoring of measures financed by the programme have been established in accordance with article 14(2)(e) of the Regulation².

2.4. Specific targets /actions/ themes for 2009:

The call for proposals will cover the following themes from the list of multi-annual objectives set out in Annex II to the LIFE + Regulation:

A) LIFE+ Nature and biodiversity:

² See Commission Decision C(2008)1244 establishing indicators to assist the monitoring of measures financed by LIFE+.

1. To protect, restore, monitor and facilitate the functioning of natural systems, natural habitats, wild flora and fauna, with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity, including diversity of genetic resources, within the EU by 2010.

B) LIFE+ environment policy and governance:

2. Climate change: To stabilise green house gas concentration at a level that prevents global warming above 2°C;
3. Water: To contribute to enhanced water quality by developing cost-effective measures to achieve good ecological status in view of developing the first river basin management plan under Directive 2000/60/EC (Water framework directive) by 2009;
4. Air: To achieve levels of air quality that do not give rise to significant negative impacts on and risks to human health and the environment;
5. Soil: To protect and ensure the sustainable use of soil by preserving soil functions, preventing threats to soil, mitigating their effects and restoring degraded soils;
6. Urban environment: To contribute to improving the environmental performance of Europe's urban areas;
7. Noise: To contribute to policy development and implementation on environmental noise;
8. Chemicals: To improve the protection of the environment and health from risks posed by chemicals by 2020 by implementing chemicals legislation, in particular Regulation n° 1907/2006 (REACH) and the Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of pesticides;
9. Environment and health: To develop the information base for policy on the environment and health (the Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010);
10. Natural resources and waste: To develop and implement policies designed to ensure sustainable management and use of natural resources and waste, and to improve the environmental performance of products, sustainable production and consumption patterns, waste prevention, recovery and recycling; To contribute to the effective implementation of the Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste;
11. Forests: To provide, especially through an EU coordination network, a concise and comprehensive basis for policy relevant information on forests in relation to climate change (impact on forests ecosystems, mitigation, substitution effects), biodiversity (baseline information and protected forest areas), forest fires, forest conditions and the protective functions of forests (water, soil and infrastructure) as well as contributing to the protection of forests against fires;
12. Innovation: To contribute to developing and demonstrating innovative policy approaches, technologies, methods and instruments to assist in the implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP)
13. Strategic approaches: To promote the effective implementation and enforcement of Community environmental legislation and improve the knowledge base for environmental policy; To ensure more efficient and coherent policies; To improve the environmental performance of SMEs; To provide the tools to develop environmental policy and legislation;

C) LIFE+ information and communication:

16. Ensuring regular and effective information flow to provide the basis for policy decision on the environment, and to provide accessible information to citizens on the state and trends of the environment.

In the context of the above themes Member States may identify national priorities as foreseen by article 6(3) of the LIFE+ Regulation³; these priorities will be published in a standard format at the same time as the call for proposals is launched.

2.5. Admissibility and eligibility criteria

In addition to compliance with the technical/administrative requirements for submitting a request for funding as will be detailed in the instructions given in the call for proposals, guidelines and application forms, attention is drawn to the following admissibility criteria:

- applicants and their partners must be public or private bodies, actors and institutions registered in the EU Member States.
- applicants must submit their proposals to the national competent authority of (one of) the EU Member State(s) where the applicant is registered. The national competent authority will then forward the LIFE+ project proposals to the Commission; the list of national competent authorities will be specified in the call for proposals.

Requests for funding will also have to comply with the following eligibility criteria :

- proposals to be co-financed must take place within the territory of the European Union.
- proposals must fall within the scope of one of the three strands of the LIFE + programme (Nature and biodiversity, Environment policy and governance and Information and communication). For each of the three strands, the call for proposals will contain further criteria for the proposed action. The most important of these relate to:
 - the geographic scope of the project (within EU except for LIFE+ Nature which is limited to the continental territory of the EU);
 - the proposal's links to relevant legislation (e.g. Birds' and Habitats' Directives; Communication on Halting the loss of Biodiversity; Directives connected to the principal objectives set out in annex II of the Regulation).

2.6. Selection criteria

The selection criteria shall be such as to make it possible to assess the applicant's ability to complete the proposed action :

- operational capacity of the applicant and partners: professional competencies, qualifications and requirements needed to undertake the proposal within stated technical parameters;
- financial capacity: stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the period during which the proposal is being carried out and to participate in its funding.

2.7. Award criteria

The award criteria are:

³ See Commission Decision C(2008)1245 specifying the format, content and submission dates for national annual priorities for the purpose of Article 6(4) of the LIFE+ Regulation.

- technical coherence and quality: proposal should be clear, detailed, coherent, realistic and feasible in terms of actions, timetable, budget and value for money;
- financial coherence and quality of the proposal: consistency with the technical actions; compliance with the rules set out in the LIFE+ application guide, the Common Provisions for LIFE+ projects and the LIFE+ Regulation, transparency, coherence, cost-efficiency, value for money;
- contribution to the general objectives of LIFE+: importance of the problem targeted, significance of solution, scope of application contribution to the integration of the environment into other policies and/or to sustainable development;
- added value in terms of best-practice, innovation, demonstration, forest monitoring etc. as well as ensuring the complementarity and optimal use of the EC funding;
- EU added value in terms of multi-national character of the proposal;
- national added value and the correspondence of proposals with national priorities based on comments made by the LIFE+ national competent authority.

In accordance with the general methodology defined for project selection 2008-2013⁴, once a list has been established based on the above award criteria, projects will be allocated to Member States in accordance with indicative national financial allocations based on the criteria defined in article 6.2 of the LIFE + Regulation.

The indicative national allocations for 2009 based on these criteria are as follows:

Country	Indicative amount (€ million)	Country	Indicative amount (€ million)	Country	Indicative amount (€ million)
AT	4.700	FI	8.967	MT	2.877
BE	5.167	FR	21.905	NL	8.029
BU	5.391	GR	8.511	PL	11.862
CY	2.600	HU	6.258	PT	7.011
CZ	4.968	IE	3.942	RO	10.900
DE	29.143	IT	22.039	SE	10.291
DK	6.149	LT	3.447	SI	5.395
EE	4.149	LU	2.737	SK	3.826
ES	26.821	LV	3.000	UK	19.915

Transnational projects shall count proportionately towards the indicative national allocations of the Member States involved.

⁴ See Commission Decision C(2008)1246 laying down the methodology of the project selection procedure for 2008-2013 in accordance with Article 6 of the Life+ Regulation.

Given the indicative nature of the above allocations, funds not used within an indicative national allocation may be allocated to projects submitted by other Member States which score more highly on the basis of the award criteria. Given this, the amounts set out in the above table are merely indicative and their attainment relies on sufficient quality projects coming from all the Member States.

2.8. Indicative timetable for call for proposals:

Timing of call for proposals :	
Publication date	May 2009
Closing date for sending proposals to the national competent authorities	The dates for submission of projects to national authorities will be specified in the call for proposals (September 2009)
Closing date for national authorities to send proposals to the Commission	October/November 2009
Information to unsuccessful applicants based on eligibility criteria	February/March 2010
Award decision and information to unsuccessful applicants based on selection/award criteria	August 2010
Signature of grant agreements	September/October 2010

2.9. Indicative budget and expected number of projects to be selected:

Strand	Indicative Budget	Indicative number of projects to be selected
A) Nature and Biodiversity	Minimum EUR 125 000 000	100-160
B & C) Environmental policy and governance, information and communication	Maximum EUR 125 000 000	100-160
TOTAL	EUR 250 000 000	200 - 320

Where applicable, appropriations may be used to cover the payment of interest on late payment due to beneficiaries in accordance with article 106 of the Implementing rules to the Financial regulation, arising from legal commitments concluded on budget lines 07 01 04 01 and 07 03 07, or contracted in previous years on the following budget lines : 07 01 04 01, 07 03 01, 07 03 02, 07 03 06, 07 03 08, 07 03 11 and 07 05 01.

2.10. Maximum rate of co-financing.

Strand	Maximum rate of cofinancing
A) Nature and Biodiversity	<p>The general financing rate is of maximum 50% of eligible costs.</p> <p>This rate may be raised up to maximum 75% of eligible costs for projects targeting priority habitats and species within the meaning of Directive 92/43/EEC or the species of birds considered as priority for funding under LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity by the committee set up pursuant to article 16 of Directive 79/409/EEC.</p>
B) Environmental policy and governance, information and communication	The general financing rate is maximum 50% of eligible costs.
C) Environmental policy and governance, information and communication	The general financing rate is maximum 50% of eligible costs.