

Update to the Annual Work Programme for grants in the Environment
Policy Area for the year 2011

The present work programme constitutes an update to the initial annual work programme for grants Decision C(2010)6846/2 in the area of Environment adopted on of 11 October 2010.

It covers :

- the call for proposals for projects to be supported through action grants under "Nature and biodiversity", "Environment policy and governance" and "Information and Communication" for the year 2011;
- grants to be awarded without a call for proposals to bodies with a de jure / de facto monopoly.

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

1. LIFE + PROGRAMME - CALL FOR PROPOSALS – ACTION GRANTS - PROJECTS TO BE SUPPORTED UNDER "NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY", "ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND GOVERNANCE" AND "INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION".

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1 Budget line

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

1.1.2. 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+.

1.2. Objectives of the call for proposals

The general objective of the LIFE+ programme is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of the European Union's 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 Environmental 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 Union 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 Union 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.

1.3. 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 and the adequate management 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, in accordance with the Commission communication COM (2010) 4 of 19/01/2010 "Options for an EU vision and target for biodiversity beyond 2010 " and the Council Conclusions on Biodiversity of 16/03/2010 and 14/10/2010. In particular, LIFE+ is expected to contribute significantly to the implementation of the decisions taken at the COP10 in Nagoya in October 2010.

B) LIFE+ environment policy and governance:

To contribute directly to the implementation of EU 2020, the European Union's growth strategy for the coming decade. The LIFE+ contribution to sustainable growth 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 Regulation¹.

¹ See Commission Decision C(2008)1244 establishing indicators to assist the monitoring of measures financed by LIFE+.

1.4. Specific targets /actions/ themes for 2011:

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:

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);
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 Union 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:

14. 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+ Regulation²; these priorities will be published in a standard format at the same time as the call for proposals is launched.

1.5. 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:

- (1) applicants and their partners must be public or private bodies, actors and institutions registered in the EU Member States.
- (2) applicants must submit their proposals to the national competent authority of the EU Member State 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:

- (1) proposals to be co-financed must have a European added value in Member States.
- (2) 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:
 - (a) the geographic scope of the project (European added value in one or more EU Member States);

² 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.

- (b) 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).

1.6. Selection criteria

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

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

1.7. Award criteria

The essential award criteria are:

- (1) technical coherence and quality: proposal should be clear, detailed, coherent, realistic and feasible in terms of actions, timetable;
- (2) 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;
- (3) 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;
- (4) 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;
- (5) EU added value in terms of multi-national character of the proposal;
- (6) 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 2008-2013³, 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.

³ 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.

The indicative national allocations for 2011 based on these criteria are as follows:

Country	Indicative amount (€million)	Country	Indicative amount (€million)	Country	Indicative amount (€million)
AT	5.134	FI	7.055	MT	2.507
BE	5.526	FR	26.828	NL	8.141
BU	8.797	GR	9.412	PL	17.626
CY	2.571	HU	6.843	PT	7.088
CZ	5.658	IE	4.040	RO	11.191
DE	30.070	IT	23.327	SE	8.769
DK	4.586	LT	2.914	SI	5.369
EE	3.490	LU	2.898	SK	6.105
ES	26.103	LV	2.551	UK	20.760

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

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.

1.8. Indicative timetable for call for proposals:

Publication date	February 2011
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
Closing date for national authorities to send proposals to the Commission	June 2011
Information to unsuccessful applicants based on eligibility criteria	July 2011
Award decision and information to unsuccessful applicants based on selection/award criteria	February 2012
Signature of grant agreements	March/April 2012

1.9. 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 132 680 000	100-160
B & C) Environmental policy and governance, information and communication	Maximum EUR 132 680 000	100-160
TOTAL	EUR 265 360 000	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.

1.10. Maximum rate of co-financing.

Strand	Maximum rate of co-financing
A) Nature and Biodiversity	The general co-financing rate is of maximum 50% of eligible costs. The co-financing 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 2009/147/EC.
B) Environmental policy and governance	The general co-financing rate is maximum 50% of eligible costs.
C) Information and communication	The general co-financing rate is maximum 50% of eligible costs.

2. 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.

2.1. Action grant to the World Health Organisation (WHO) – Reviewing scientific evidence of air pollution effects on health and the environment

2.1.1. Introduction

The grant shall be covered by a written agreement.

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

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(2), point (c) of Annex I and points 4 and 9 of Annex II.

2.1.2. Beneficiary

The proposed beneficiary is the WHO (World Health Organisation). The WHO is an international organisation that represents the unique directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations' system.

2.1.3. Objective of the action/project:

The objective of the action is to update scientific assessment related to European Union medium and long-term objectives on air quality and health, by providing:

- guidelines for pollutants regulated under EU ambient air quality legislation, notably PM2.5;
- identification of and guidelines on emerging air pollutants or pollution cocktails.

Air quality standards for the protection of public health are a key pillar of European Union policy and legislation and further work on such standards by consulting WHO is explicitly required. This action is an essential component of the preparation of the 2013 air quality thematic strategy package as health benefits are a key driver of EU air quality policy, and in particular the reviews of the air quality directives (2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC)

2.1.4. Expected results:

The action will provide state-of-the-art knowledge base for the preparation of the review of EU Strategy on air pollution and the air quality directives. It will also indicate where maximized health benefits could be expected and thereby potentially also promote better implementation of the acquis by the Member States.

Guidance is expected to include the following elements:

- latest health standards and related environmental objectives bringing public health benefits (such as pollutant exposure reduction targets), notably for the pollutants covered by the EU air quality policies.
- latest information related to sensitive population including children, and description of specific health effects (e.g. child development, cardiovascular, respiratory), to help optimise air quality management and healthcare response
- where available, information on the contribution of specific sources (e.g. diesel in road transport) to adverse public health impacts which would guide air emission control policies.

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

No other organisation than the WHO can provide advice and guidance on behalf of the WHO. This "de facto" monopoly position – has been recognized in standing EU acts, i.e.:

- Article 7 of the 6th Environmental Action Programme sets out that the objective "achieving levels of air quality that do not give rise to significant negative impacts on and risks to human health and the environment" taking into account the WHO standards, guidelines and programmes.
- Article 32 of Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe provides that in 2013 the Commission shall review the provisions related to PM_{2,5} and, as appropriate, other pollutants, and shall present a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council. The review shall be undertaken taking into account, inter alia, 'the latest scientific information from WHO and other relevant organisations'. Recital 2 of the same Directive further provides that 'appropriate objectives should be set for ambient air quality taking into account relevant World Health Organisation standards, guidelines and programmes'.

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

2.1.6. Timetable, indicative amount and maximum rate of co-financing.

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	280 000
Finance rate (max) :	50 %
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the grant agreement	March 2011

2.2. Action grant to the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – Development of new test methods and nanotechnology

2.2.1. Introduction

The grant shall be covered by a written agreement.

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

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(2), point (c) of Annex I and point 8 of Annex II.

2.2.2. Beneficiary

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

2.2.3. Objective of the action/project.

The objectives are two fold:

- (1) to further support the OECD's activities for developing world wide acceptable alternative test methods and thereby accelerating the introduction of such methods into EU legislation. Promoting test method development at OECD rather than solely at EU level has the advantages that it reduces the cost of the method development (more countries contribute), reduces obstacles to trade (methods are accepted world wide), reduces costs to industry and reduces use of animals (as less animals are used world wide).
- (2) to support the work of the Working Party on Manufactured Nanomaterials in particular for the implementation of the work of the two steering groups relating to test method development (SG4 and SG7) for nanomaterials.

2.2.4. Expected results:

The outputs of the proposed action will include:

- Methods for genotoxicity and cell transformation assays for the detection of non-genotoxic and genotoxic carcinogens
- Methods for screening endocrine disrupters
- Skin and Eye irritation/corrosion
- Alternative method for acute inhalation toxicity
- Assay for Fish Embryo Toxicity testing
- Analysis of specificities related to the testing and hazard assessment of nanomaterials.

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".

2.2.5. *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.

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.

2.2.6. *Timetable, indicative amount and maximum rate of co-financing.*

Maximum amount of grant (EUR)	EUR 250 000
Finance rate (max) :	50 %
Calendar for the award decision / concluding the grant agreement	May 2011