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Final Report to European Commission
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Executive Summary

AEA Technology Environment has been contracted by the European Commission Directorate General Environment to carry out a mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE III financial instrument. The LIFE Programme was launched in 1992 as one of the spearheads of Community environmental policy and has been implemented in three phases, LIFE I (1992-1995), LIFE II (1996-1999) and, the current phase LIFE III (2000-2004). As few LIFE III projects have been completed the evaluation has examined the outputs and impacts of LIFE II projects also.

The evaluation has been carried out at the programme level and has therefore not focussed on individual projects. Instead the study has reviewed summary information provided by the LIFE Unit and concentrated on a series of structured in-depth interviews with stakeholders including: members of the LIFE Unit, Commission Desk Officers from relevant policy areas, National Authorities, and project beneficiaries. LIFE days (large national meetings where national authorities, beneficiaries and other stakeholders meet to discuss LIFE outputs and priorities) were attended in Italy, Spain and the UK.

The evaluation has focused on a series of questions that can be grouped under two headings:

- ❑ Questions that look retrospectively at LIFE, examining its impact and efficiency, and
- ❑ Questions that look at whether LIFE has a future role in supporting Community environmental policy and to identify potential improvements.

The study has been based on an evaluation framework that has concentrated on three key areas:

- ❑ The **scope and rationale** of the programme to identify whether the programme is fulfilling a useful role.
- ❑ The **processes** involved in managing the programme to identify how efficiently the programme is managed.
- ❑ The **impact** of the programme to ensure it is achieving its desired outcomes.

In general we have found the LIFE programme is efficiently managed and controlled using systematic and rigorous procedures that have been introduced by the LIFE Unit. However, some stakeholders feel that the processes are starting to become bureaucratic and there may be an opportunity to simplify them. Other stakeholders particularly in Member States have called for greater transparency in the project selection process, particularly in the case of LIFE Environment. A number of stakeholders both in the Commission and the Member States have commented on the excellent professionalism and high workload of the LIFE Unit.

It became apparent very early on in the evaluation that the three thematic components of LIFE Nature, LIFE Environment and LIFE Third Countries have very different characteristics and would need to be treated independently for much of the evaluation. The specific findings of the evaluation for each theme are summarised below.

LIFE Nature

LIFE Nature has been very successful in defining and helping to set up approximately 20,000 Natura 2000 conservation sites across the EU. The main impact of the programme has been to define the sites, an activity which is now largely complete, and develop management plans. However, to date, LIFE has only been able to fund practical conservation measures at around 10% of the Natura sites. While this is in itself a significant and valuable achievement, the key challenge for LIFE Nature is to achieve a multiplier effect by stimulating activity at the other 90%.

All stakeholders we have contacted consider that LIFE Nature has been a necessary and highly effective instrument for implementing the birds and habitats directives. They felt that more actions could be carried out if additional budget was available but most considered that LIFE Nature is best suited to funding initiating measures or “pump-priming” projects and that it should not be the sole instrument for implementing Natura 2000. It was also observed that there is not a large enough capacity of conservationists in Europe to carry out many more projects. LIFE Nature is therefore considered particularly important for developing management capacity in the conservation sector.

The programme is effectively controlled using established procedures and there have been many supporting comments made about the LIFE Unit and the monitoring teams. However, many stakeholders believe that it may be possible to simplify some of the management processes and it is generally felt that the project selection process is too long and opaque.

Dissemination of project outputs at the European level was considered by all stakeholders to be a weakness of the programme, although most of those contacted had observed a steady improvement in this area. Some have suggested that the Commission should establish a “Dissemination Bureau” to improve the dissemination of programme results.

LIFE Environment

There is only very limited evidence that LIFE Environment is supporting “preparatory actions” to assist the testing, update and development of either EU or Member State policy. However, there is good evidence that LIFE Environment has demonstrated and proven a variety of clean technologies in key areas, such as improving water quality and recycling waste, the adoption of which will aid the implementation of EU environmental policy. LIFE Environment is addressing the main environmental problems but some stakeholders feel that it could be better targeted to the priorities of the Community’s Sixth Environmental Action Programme (6EAP). This comment may reflect a historical perspective of LIFE’s activities and as LIFE III develops it is likely that newer projects will align more closely with current policy.

Member States value the programme and feel that LIFE complements and fills the gaps in national programmes. It is felt that LIFE projects are most effective where the private and public sectors work together and where larger SME’s are involved.

There has been considerable debate both in the Commission and amongst Member States over the definition of innovation and whether only projects that are innovative across Europe should qualify for support. In addition, nearly all stakeholders feel that LIFE Environment is let down by poor dissemination of the results of projects. While all projects have a dissemination element and produce dissemination outputs such as case studies and videos, it is rare for project teams to contain marketing professionals and it is clear that the outputs are not used to their maximum effect. The poor dissemination

of the results of LIFE projects means there is very limited evidence of replication of the projects.

Accordingly, it is recommended that, if LIFE Environment continues in its current form, it should identify two distinct types of projects:

- “Innovation” projects which support the first commercial use of a technology or practice in Europe; and
- “Dissemination” projects that facilitate the transfer of technology across Europe by supporting the first commercial use of a technology or practice in a country even though the technology has been demonstrated elsewhere in the EU.

It is also recommended that Innovation projects should be funded at a higher level than Dissemination projects and that Member States make a commitment to disseminating the results of their Dissemination projects. In addition, the use of specialist marketing skills should be considered to assist in the dissemination of the results of successful LIFE Environment projects at the Community level.

LIFE Third Countries

There is good evidence that LIFE Third Countries is well managed and that projects are contributing significantly to developing capacity in third countries. LIFE fills an important niche in that it is able to respond relatively quickly and flexibly to the environmental need and priorities of third countries. It is well coordinated with the larger aid programmes such as SMAP, CARDS and TACIS through close liaison with the EU delegation in the target countries.

The bottom up nature of the programme, with the project ideas being developed by the recipients, has meant that LIFE has addressed key environmental issues in the target countries in a timely manner. There does not seem to be a strong correlation between expenditure on LIFE projects and the major European level environmental issues such as climate change, waste and biodiversity but that is predominantly because some of these environmental aspects are being addressed by the larger funding programmes, with LIFE playing a “pump priming” or facilitating role.

The geographical coverage of LIFE Third Countries will need to change post enlargement in 2004 when ten countries including Cyprus and Malta join the European Union. The future geographical coverage of LIFE Third Countries should be in line with the European Commission’s position on co-operation with its European neighbours set out in its communication on Pan-European Environmental co-operation after the 2003 Kiev conference. Consideration should be given to expanding LIFE Third Country coverage to include Serbia-Montenegro, Macedonia and the Western NIS countries that border the Black Sea.

Acknowledgement

The study team gratefully acknowledges the co-operation of all stakeholders consulted during this study and for all the information provided. These included:

- National Authorities;
- The European Commission;
- Past and current LIFE beneficiaries; and
- The LIFE Unit management and staff.

A detailed list of individuals contacted and their organisations is provided in Appendix 2.

It should be noted that the content of this report remains the responsibility of the authors and should not be interpreted as reflecting the official position of any of the above.

Contents

1	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
1.1	<u>BACKGROUND</u>	1
1.2	<u>SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION</u>	1
1.3	<u>OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</u>	1
1.4	<u>STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT</u>	2
2	<u>EVALUATION METHODOLOGY</u>	3
2.1	<u>CLARIFICATION OF THE INTERVENTION LOGIC</u>	3
2.2	<u>DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY</u>	4
2.3	<u>ASSEMBLY AND ASSESSMENT OF INITIAL DATA</u>	5
2.4	<u>IN-DEPTH DATA COLLECTION THROUGH INTERVIEWING</u>	7
2.5	<u>EVALUATION OF KEY QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA</u>	7
3	<u>FINDINGS</u>	8
3.1	<u>LIFE NATURE</u>	8
3.2	<u>LIFE ENVIRONMENT</u>	15
3.3	<u>LIFE THIRD COUNTRIES</u>	24
4	<u>DISCUSSION</u>	30
4.1	<u>LIFE NATURE</u>	30
4.2	<u>LIFE ENVIRONMENT</u>	33
4.3	<u>LIFE THIRD COUNTRIES</u>	36
4.4	<u>PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY</u>	38
5	<u>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	39

Appendices

APPENDIX 1	QUESTIONS, INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES
APPENDIX 2	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

1 Introduction

The European Commission, Directorate General Environment, has contracted AEA Technology Environment to undertake a study contract entitled '*Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument*' (ref: B4-3200/2002/SI2.349011/MAR/D1).

This Final Report under that study presents the findings and conclusions of the evaluation.

1.1 Background

The LIFE (The Financial Instrument for the Environment) Programme was launched in 1992 as one of the spearheads of Community environmental policy. LIFE has been implemented in phases, LIFE I (1992-1995), LIFE II (1996-1999) and, the current phase, LIFE III (2000-2004).

Under Article 12 of EC 1655/2000 the Commission must submit a report to the European Parliament and Council, by 30 September 2003, on the implementation of the Regulation, its contribution to the development of Community environmental policy etc, together with appropriate proposals for any adjustments to be made for a potential fourth LIFE phase.

Accordingly, the Commission required a mid-term evaluation of the LIFE III programme in order to inform its report to the Parliament and Council. This requirement provides the rationale for the study reported herein.

1.2 Scope of the Evaluation

The scope of this evaluation concerns the LIFE III programme (2000-2004), however, not surprisingly due to the typical length of projects, few LIFE III projects are completed and thus few results are available. Accordingly, the scope of this evaluation includes LIFE II project outputs and stakeholders' experience with LIFE II projects as the basis of the evaluation of LIFE-Environment and LIFE-Nature objectives.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the evaluation is to provide the Commission with a review and assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current programme including recommendations for continuing improvement. In order to achieve this objective, the evaluation needed to consider how the resources devoted to the programme lead to the various outputs (i.e. to evaluate the processes), and how these in turn lead to the achievement of the general and specific objectives as detailed in Articles 1, 3, 4, and 5 of the LIFE Regulation. Accordingly the key evaluation objectives are to consider:

- **Scope** - to what extent LIFE objectives are relevant to national and EU needs;
- **Efficiency** – how efficiently have resources been converted into outputs or impacts;
- **Effectiveness** – how far has the programme contributed to achieving its general and specific objectives;

- **Utility** – how do the programme impacts compare with stakeholder needs at the national and EU level; and
- **Sustainability** – to what extent are the programme/project benefits promulgated following conclusion of projects.

Each of the three thematic components of the LIFE programme have very different characteristics and accordingly it is necessary to evaluate each component, in turn, against these objectives in order to inform the overall programme evaluation.

1.4 Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the evaluation methodology;
- Section 3 provides a description of the key evaluation findings for each LIFE thematic component;
- Section 4 provides a discussion or synthesis of the findings from Section 3, for each LIFE component and for the overall programme; and
- Section 5 provides conclusions, and where appropriate, recommendations for improvements for each LIFE component and the overall programme.

Additional data including the evaluation matrix and list of stakeholders interviewed are provided in Appendices.

2 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology was based on an evaluation framework that facilitates a structured approach for collecting, evaluating and presenting information. The methodology can be summarised as:

1. Clarification of the intervention logic;
2. Development of the evaluation methodology;
3. Assembly and assessment of initial data;
4. In-depth data collection through interviewing; and
5. Evaluation of key quantitative and qualitative data.

Each of these five stages is described in the following sections.

2.1 Clarification of the Intervention Logic

The intervention logic of a programme is an explanation of the aims of the programme and how it is to achieve them. The general objective (i.e. *the aims*) of the LIFE programme is stated within Article 1 of EC Regulation 1655/2000:

"The general objective of LIFE shall be to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of Community environment policy and of environmental legislation, in particular as regards the integration of the environment into other policies, and to sustainable development in the community".

This general objective is to be achieved through co-financing of environmental initiatives in the European Union, certain third countries and certain east European accession candidate countries. Furthermore;

Article 2 of the Regulation describes eligibility criteria for co-funding and the three thematic components for LIFE; LIFE-Nature, LIFE-Environment, and LIFE-Third countries. Each of these three themes also have a specific objective, as detailed in Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Regulation:

- ❑ LIFE-Nature – to contribute to the implementation of Council Directives; 79/409/EEC, 92/43/EEC; and the Natura 2000 European network through financing conservation projects that contribute to maintaining or restoring natural habitats and/or species populations to a sustainable level. LIFE-Nature accounts for 47% of the available LIFE programme funds.
- ❑ LIFE-Environment – to contribute to the development of innovative and integrated techniques and methods and to the further development of Community environmental policy. This objective is principally to be achieved through the co-financing of demonstration projects in one or more of five key areas that can contribute to sustainable development. The five key areas for funding are: land-use development and planning; water management; reduction of the environmental impact of economic activities; waste management; and reduction of the environmental impact of products through an integrated product policy.

The LIFE Environment objective can also be achieved through co-financing projects that are preparatory to the development of new Community environmental actions or instruments and/or influencing legislation and policies. LIFE-Environment accounts for 47% of the available LIFE programme funds.

- LIFE-Third countries – to contribute to the establishment of capacities and administrative structures needed in the environmental sector and in the development of environmental policy and action programmes in certain third countries through co-financing actions that are of interest to the Community, promote sustainable development or address environmental issues of major significance at the local, regional or national level. LIFE-Third countries accounts for up to 6% of the available LIFE programme funds.

2.2 Development of the Evaluation Methodology

In the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this study a number of key questions were raised. These are broadly divided into two key types; retrospective questions designed to gauge the impact of the LIFE programme to date (i.e. how has it performed in relation to Article 1); and prospective questions, designed to identify what actions, if any, are necessary for further evolution of the LIFE programme (i.e. how may it be enhanced). Accordingly, we have identified three key themes for the evaluation:

- Scope and rationale, (Scope)
- Process (Efficiency), and
- Impact (Effectiveness, utility and sustainability).

Each of the principal questions, identified by the Commission in the ToR, together with supplementary questions, were grouped and categorised according to these themes within an evaluation framework. The basic evaluation framework is shown in Figure 1.

	Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources	
Evaluation aspect	Initial assessment	Detailed evaluation
Theme 1: Scope and Rationale <i>1.3 Rationale</i> e.g. As regards candidate countries, would it be opportune to establish a specific financial and thematic component targeting these countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of type and location of third country project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT); and/or • Commission Country Desk officer views (EU-D)
Theme 2: Process efficiency <i>2.4 Follow up/review</i> e.g. Does the dissemination of the results stimulate debate at national, regional and/or European level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of projects with results/case studies on LIFE web-site (DOC) • No. of projects with wider dissemination activities identified (DOC, LPM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative awareness of LIFE project outputs (NAT) • Awareness of stimulation of other activities (NAT)
Theme 3: Impact <i>3.1 Impact on EC policy development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of projects vs legislation (DOC, LPM) • No. of projects which are actions to implement existing Community legislation or policy. 	Degree importance and impact of LIFE on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of existing policy and legislation; and • development of policy and development of new legislation (EU-D)

Data sources: DOC: Project files, databases and other documents; LPM: LIFE Programme Managers; NAT: National stakeholder representatives; EU-D; EU decision makers.

Figure 1 Basic evaluation framework

The first column of the framework lists the individual questions to be answered for this theme of the evaluation. The second column indicates the initial data to be collected to answer the question and the initial assessment that could be made with these data. The data may come from project files, databases or discussions with EU project officers and/or other stakeholders. The third column identifies the additional areas to be explored during interviews and describes the evaluation of outputs from the interview stage.

This generic methodology was tailored to the specific requirements of DG Environment during the project inception phase. The full evaluation framework, with detailed questions, developed for each of the three evaluation themes is provided in Appendix 1.

2.3 Assembly and assessment of initial data

This stage corresponds to the second column in the evaluation framework. The LIFE Programme management team provided valuable information on LIFE projects under both LIFE II and LIFE III. A list of these information sources is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 List of information sources provided by the LIFE Unit

Item	Brief description	Applicability to the evaluation
Reports LIFE Nature 97 LIFE Nature 98 LIFE Nature 99	Summary of projects and breakdown by type of beneficiary for each LIFE year under LIFE II. In addition a summary of each project including background, objectives, funding, beneficiary etc is provided on a country-by-country basis.	There are no complete LIFE III Nature projects. Thus these reports provide useful quantitative data e.g. funding and habitat areas.
Report under Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 1404/96 LIFE. COM(1998) 721 final.	Report from the European Commission to the European parliament and Council on the implementation of the LIFE II Regulation.	Useful background information for the current evaluation. In particular to compare findings for the current evaluation against the recommendations made within the Commission's report.
Country Profiles of the 12 non-EU Mediterranean Partners. The Short and Medium Term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP). European Commission 2002	Provides details of funding and projects in Third Countries for both LIFE and other EC funded activities up to 2001.	Source of quantitative data for LIFE Third Countries activities and comparative data for other programmes.
LIFE Evaluation Report. Summary of Final Report. Arthur Andersen, June 1998	Consultant's report on the evaluation of the LIFE II programme.	Background information and useful for comparison with LIFE III evaluation findings.
Informal meeting of the LIFE Committee on 19/12/02 at Vienna – notes of meeting.	Notes of Committee meeting on what should be the future of LIFE.	Very useful insight into MS recent thinking/issues.
Annual report concerning the financial year 1994 together with the institutions' replies <i>Official Journal C 30, 14/11/1995 p. 0001 – 0328.</i>	Court of auditors' report together with responses from institutions. Report contains observations and recommendations for the LIFE programme (LIFE I).	Useful to test the findings of the current evaluation against previous recommendations/responses.
Final Report on Financing Natura 2000. Working Group on Article 8 of the Habitats Directive.	Discussion of the resource implications of co-financing Natura 2000 and the role of LIFE-Nature.	Background information on the importance of Natura 2000 and the impact of LIFE-Nature on its implementation. Includes recommendations/options for LIFE-Nature.

Item	Brief description	Applicability to the evaluation
The LIFE Unit Website Analysis (2001-2002).	Report on the evolution of the LIFE website from Jan.01 to Nov. 02. Contains background information on the website plus much quantitative data on the number of visits to the website disaggregated by section. Also useful comparative quantitative data (Pg 10) for other Commission websites.	Source of quantitative data for assessing the impact of LIFE/dissemination activities.
LIFE Website (2001-2002)	Summary/presentation of the above report.	As above
CD-ROM LIFE Environment. : Layman's reports (x7) 98-99 Monitoring files (ENV =1383, NAT = 566, 3C = 19 files) for projects by all countries from 1992-2002 LIFE evaluation guides for each theme. Individual decisions, contracts List of videos	Summary reports produced by beneficiaries. Detailed project information on on-going and completed projects. Detailed guidelines for evaluators. Legal acts/administrative provisions etc for beneficiaries. List of videos produced by beneficiaries.	Informs evaluation of the impact of the LIFE programme with respect to dissemination activities. Informs stakeholder discussions. Informs evaluation on how the LIFE programme operates. Informs understanding of LIFE and LIFE processes. Indicator of the scale of dissemination beneficiaries.
List of key environmental legislation	List of key environmental policy actions 1999 – 2000.	Provides a focus for evaluating the impact of LIFE on Policy at the Community level
LIFE website	Various information sources including the LIFE projects database (summary information on all projects/all years), application procedures, reports etc.	Useful background material and some quantitative data on values, numbers and geographical distribution of projects. Could inform prioritisation of interviews etc.
Butler	Database – access via web to individual project files (financial data and descriptions/beneficiaries etc) for all LIFE projects.	Useful for informing interviews with LIFE stakeholders.
ESAP	Database – contains all administrative/financial data for all LIFE III proposals starting 2002 (2001 for LIFE ENV). Access via LIFE Unit.	Provides information on unsuccessful proposals (this info. is not in Butler). May be useful later in the evaluation to follow up comments on these received during interviews.

Initial research and discussions with the LIFE Unit indicated that the three LIFE thematic components have very different characteristics, namely:

- ❑ LIFE-Nature accounts for around 47% of the LIFE programme budget and has two very specific objectives: support of implementation of Council Directives; 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC:
- ❑ LIFE-Environment – also accounts for around 47% of the LIFE programme budget but has much more general objectives; and
- ❑ LIFE-Third Countries has a specific objective of providing capacity building in third countries but accounts for only around 6% of the LIFE programme budget.

Accordingly, it was necessary to consider each LIFE programme theme independently throughout most of the evaluation process. In particular, given the general objectives of

the LIFE-Environment theme, for this component we concentrated the evaluation on the LIFE-Environment sub-themes of: reduction of environmental impacts of economic activities; waste management; and reduction of environmental impacts of products through an integrated product policy. The first two of these sub-themes are the most commonly funded under LIFE during 2000 and 2002 whereas the latter theme is the least commonly funded.

2.4 In-depth data collection through interviewing

Questionnaires were developed for interviews with LIFE programme stakeholders including: National Authorities, Commission stakeholders, and project beneficiaries. The interview questions were based on the questions provided in the first column of the evaluation matrix.

Visits were carried out to eight Member States for face-to-face interviews with National Authorities. For Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom, project beneficiaries were also contacted. Telephone interviews were conducted for the remaining five Member States, three selected Candidate Countries and two Third Countries. In addition, interviews were carried out with Commission officials within DG Environment and DG Research as well as members of the LIFE Unit. Interviews were conducted in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish depending upon the preference of the interviewee.

A full list of individuals interviewed and their organisations is provided in Appendix 2.

2.5 Evaluation of key quantitative and qualitative data

Information from LIFE programme stakeholder interviews was collated and evaluated in accordance with the evaluation framework as presented in Appendix 1.

The key findings from this evaluation are presented in this report for discussion with the LIFE Unit management team. This final report presents key findings, discussion of these findings and conclusions and recommendations for each of the evaluation themes.

3 Findings

In this section the key findings from stakeholder interviews and the initial data review are provided for each of the three LIFE thematic components in turn. These findings are discussed in Section 4.

3.1 LIFE Nature

3.1.1 Scope and Rationale

For the period 2000-2004, the European Union has allocated approximately €300 million for LIFE-Nature to co-finance actions exclusively linked with implementation of the Birds and Habitats directives and consequently a great deal of the focus has been on Natura 2000. The rate of Community co-financing may be up to 50% of the project costs or for projects concerning priority natural habitats or priority species the Commission can finance up to 75% of the eligible costs.

In 2002, the European Commission approved grant aid of €72 million for projects under the LIFE III programme for some 70 new LIFE-Nature projects (of which 13 were in the five candidate countries: Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Romania and Slovenia). Out of these 70 projects, selected from some 154 eligible applications, 38 concern sites and species covered by the "Habitats" Directive, 18 cover species listed in the "Birds" Directive and 14 target listed species not linked to particular sites.

For projects targeting Natura 2000 sites, the most frequent actions include drawing up and implementation of management plans, management of watercourses or grazing, land purchase (especially in northern Europe), elimination of exotic species and site restoration and improvement.

The beneficiaries (of which 51% are new to LIFE) are predominantly regional or local authorities (70%) and NGOs (25%). Almost 75% of them work in partnerships, most often between a public body and an NGO, in this way professional expertise is combined with administrative planning, thereby ensuring the viability of protected areas, which is an important criterion in selecting projects. Particular attention has also been given to the involvement of citizens and public awareness actions. Several projects aim to facilitate the co-existence of economic activities and nature.

In addition to these projects, LIFE Nature also includes provision for additional measures for co-operation and international initiatives in nature conservation:

- ❑ Co-operative projects in order to facilitate exchange of knowledge and experience in nature management between participants in ongoing and completed LIFE Nature projects; and
- ❑ Starter projects which facilitate the bringing together of partners from different countries in order to prepare international LIFE Nature projects for submission in the 2003/04 round.

For 2002, four Co-operative projects were selected from 12 applications and 12 Starter projects were selected from 46 applications. Around €600 000 has been set aside for

financing Co-operative and Starter projects, of which 42% for Co-operative and 48% for Starter. A call for Co-operative applications is again to be made in 2003.

We have evaluated the Scope and Rationale of LIFE Nature under five headings.

a) Has the programme performed a useful role and is it still required?

The specific objectives of LIFE Nature are laid out within Article 3 of the LIFE Regulation:

"to contribute to the implementation of Council Directives; 79/409/EEC, 92/43/EEC; and the Natura 2000 European network through financing conservation projects that contribute to maintaining or restoring natural habitats and/or species populations to a sustainable level".

These objectives supported Community policy on biodiversity in the framework of the Community's Fifth Environmental Action Programme "Towards Sustainability" which provided a Community strategy for the period 1993–2000. In September 2002, this was superseded by publication of the Sixth Environmental Action Programme (6EAP) "Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice". Again, one of the four key areas of the 6EAP is Nature and Biodiversity.

Accordingly, whilst LIFE III was framed within the context of the 5EAP, the objectives of LIFE Nature remain directly relevant to the 6EAP. All the National Authorities interviewed during the course of this evaluation supported this view and that the programme was still required.

b) Is the programme covering the most important environmental issues?

Community legislation on biodiversity comprises two directives: the "Birds" Directive and the "Habitats" Directive. The European Union adopted The "Birds" directive of 1972 in order to provide for a legal basis for the long-term protection and management of all bird species living in a wild state on Community territory and their habitats. The "Habitats" Directive of 1992 on the conservation of habitats and species introduced legal obligations for Member States to preserve habitats and species of Community interest. Practical implementation of these Directives remains a significant challenge and important issue for Member States.

c) Is the programme a useful and effective instrument and is there scope for improvement?

All stakeholders (National Authorities, Commission Stakeholders and programme beneficiaries) considered that LIFE Nature was a necessary and highly effective instrument for implementing the birds and habitats directives and consequently, Natura 2000. Stakeholders also considered that if LIFE III were to be replaced, then a similarly specific financial instrument would be required as a replacement. No stakeholders could cite national or EC programmes that could provide co-funding on the scale of Natura 2000 for "pump-priming" measures.

Stakeholders did not feel that specific objectives should be defined for candidate countries, as the Birds and Habitats directives are equally relevant to these countries as they are to current Member States and most candidate countries will shortly become part of the European Union. However, many stakeholders felt that the scope of LIFE Nature should be broadened to include countries bordering the Black Sea in order to include areas where human activities impact on European Wildlife e.g. Migratory birds.

The European Union is preparing to enlarge to include ten new Member States during 2004. A further three countries hope to join at a later date. This process of enlargement will ensure eventual inclusion of many countries bordering the Black Sea (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey) and will expand the European Union's borders close to others, e.g. the Ukraine. This process of enlargement will introduce new actors in nature conservation and accordingly will lead to increasing pressure on the scarce Community funds available for nature conservation.

d) What should be the duration of a future programme?

Most stakeholders felt that the duration of a future programme should be extended and suggestions ranged from four to twenty years. Many suggested that the duration of a future programme should be aligned with the timescales of the Sixth Environmental Action Plan i.e. up to 2010.

e) Is the budget of the programme commensurate with the programme's objectives?

The Natura 2000 network has a key role in protecting the Community's natural resources. However, the resources of the programme are very small compared to funding required to implement Natura 2000. These costs, for all current Member States, are estimated¹ to range from €3.4 billion and €5.7 billion per year (c.f. LIFE Nature funds of around €60 million per year). In this context, the budget of LIFE Nature could be considered to be inadequate. However, although LIFE Nature funds are very small in comparison, all stakeholders felt that LIFE Nature projects were very effective in facilitating Natura 2000 implementation through funding strategic "pump-priming" actions such as land purchase and development of management capacities, to establish a strong basis for long-term and sustainable nature conservation.

All stakeholders considered that more of such actions could be carried out with additional budget. However, it was observed that a significant barrier to further implementation was a lack of capacity in the nature conservation sector to carry out additional projects. Therefore additional activities and funds may be required to further develop capacity in nature conservation.

3.1.2 Process

a) Is the project selection process timely and efficient and could it be improved?

Calls for proposals generally occur annually. However, due to the timing of the European Parliament and Council's adoption of the LIFE III regulation, a call for LIFE proposals in 2000 (for projects in 2001) was not possible.

All stakeholders, with only one exception, felt that the current annual call for projects was appropriate. One stakeholder considered that a biennial call for proposals would be more appropriate. However, many considered that the call for proposals and accordingly the final decision on projects should occur during a fixed month every year and preferably earlier in the year so that organisations know when to begin planning and so that projects could begin during the spring. This is particularly important in Northern Europe where the field/growing season is short.

¹ Financing Natura 2000. Final Report on Financing Natura 2000. Working Group on Article 8 of the Habitats Directive. 2003

Stakeholders felt that the application forms were complex and that this deters some, particularly smaller, organisations from applying. Most stakeholders recognised that the structure of the forms has ensured the preparation of strong proposals thus making a key contribution to ensuring successful project outcomes. However, most stakeholders also commented that the complexity of the application forms and guidelines appeared to increase every year and that the application guidelines were not sufficiently clear.

It should be noted that for the call for proposals for funding in 2002, the Commission received 154 eligible projects of which funding was available, on the basis of merit, for only 70.

Stakeholders generally felt that the selection process was too long and opaque. It was not entirely clear to all National Authorities as to what their role was in the selection process. Whilst some National Authorities considered that they should have more involvement in the evaluation process, most considered that this should be left to the Commission albeit with the National Authorities involved in defining the evaluation guidelines and selection criteria for experts.

Most stakeholders felt that better communication between the Commission and the Member States was necessary during the evaluation phases.

It should be noted that for the latest round of LIFE Nature proposals, National Authorities have been granted access to the Commission's ESAP database so that the comments of experts and scoring of individual proposals can be reviewed. National Authorities are also able to enter their own scoring and comments on individual proposals.

Beneficiaries were generally frustrated at the length of time involved in the decision making process from submission of proposals to receiving confirmation of the status of their proposals. In particular, both beneficiaries and National Authorities considered that unsuccessful applicants should be notified, with reasoning, sooner.

b) Are the current management arrangements effective and appropriate?

All stakeholders considered that the current management system works well and that the LIFE Unit carries out its activities in a professional manner. LIFE beneficiaries generally found that LIFE Desk Officers were supportive of their projects, however beneficiaries were also frustrated at a lack of flexibility in the project management with respect to handling variations within a project. For example, it was considered that the original detailed project plan had to be adhered to when it is difficult to predict from the outset the precise pathway a three-year project will take from the outset. Some felt that there would be a benefit in greater flexibility.

The proposal evaluation and management process was considered by most stakeholders to be bureaucratic and in need of simplification. However, it was also appreciated that the LIFE Unit is constrained by the Commission's internal financial procedures that are necessary to ensure financial probity. Most stakeholders considered that the LIFE Unit operated very efficiently within these constraints.

There appears to be excellent co-ordination between LIFE and the Nature thematic unit, which provides technical evaluation of proposals and a source of technical expertise for the LIFE Unit. However, there could be better co-ordination with DG Agriculture as no evidence of formal or informal links between the LIFE Unit and DG Agriculture were found.

Support for the project monitoring teams was widespread but many stakeholders considered that it would be useful if the teams could be delegated more authority in

order to make decisions on what they considered to be minor variations to projects rather than having to wait up to several months for a decision from the Commission.

It should be noted that some minor variations of projects could already be decided by the beneficiary without need for approval by the Commission or the monitoring team.

Stakeholders generally considered that there were no compelling reasons to manage all three LIFE themes within one management unit. Equally, few stakeholders considered that LIFE Nature or its successor should be managed in a separate unit. However, there was universal support for LIFE Nature, or its successor, to be managed by Directorate-General Environment as this DG has responsibility for developing environmental policy and ensuring that directives on the environment are implemented.

c) How effective are the dissemination activities and should they be improved?

Dissemination of project outputs at the European level was considered by all stakeholders to be a weakness of the programme, although most stakeholders had observed a steady improvement in this aspect. In particular, some National Authorities considered the recently released communications strategy² as a major step forward although noted that this was launched rather late in the programme.

Some National Authorities considered that they should have a greater role in disseminating project results but would need funding to assist with this. Many stakeholders suggested that the Commission should establish a "Dissemination Bureau" with offices in each Member State in order to disseminate programme information.

Most stakeholders considered that whilst some case studies were publicly available on the LIFE website, together with a database of all LIFE projects, more should be done to foster links between projects and project managers, for example, by highlighting recent projects and providing links to other project web-sites. However, most stakeholders volunteered that since the inception of LIFE III, dissemination activities were improving and all cited Green Weeks and "Newsflash" as being particularly useful.

NEWSFLASH is sent to subscribers on a monthly basis. There is no charge and subscribers simply register online. During early 2003 the "NEWSFLASH" newsletter has evolved significantly into an increasingly useful communications tool, highlighting recent project successes, providing links to project websites and dissemination events.

It should also be noted that under LIFE III, there is already provision for funding of "co-operative projects" in order to facilitate exchange and deepen information on nature conservation. The first call under LIFE Nature for these projects was initiated during 2002.

Further findings with respect to programme dissemination activities are provided in section 3.1.3.

² Communication Strategy LIFE III. European Commission, March 2003.

3.1.3 Impact

a) What has been the impact of LIFE Nature on EC Policy Development?

Stakeholders did not think that LIFE Nature projects influenced policy making at the EC level.

This area of the evaluation is more appropriate to LIFE-Environment. The objectives of LIFE- Nature are to specifically to contribute to the **implementation** of the Birds and Habitats directives.

b) Has LIFE Nature met its policy aims?

All stakeholders considered that LIFE Nature was the principal driving force behind implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives. It was noted that the impact of the programme is limited by the funding available in relation to the overall cost of implementing Natura 2000. LIFE funded conservation projects were seen by National Authorities as being particularly effective compared with other projects funded through similar national schemes.

In general, stakeholders considered that LIFE Nature provided excellent value for money in terms of its effectiveness in comparison with other funding programmes.

Most stakeholders considered that a particular strength of LIFE Nature was that it provided an opportunity to involve a wide range of stakeholders in each project, which was generally considered not to be possible through other funding mechanisms. This aspect was thought to contribute to project success. No national funding programmes were identified that could provide for practical actions in nature conservation such as land purchase.

Beneficiaries were generally "proud" to have LIFE funding as this was considered by many as providing an endorsement, by the Commission, of the quality of their projects. This in turn was perceived to raise the profile of projects and provide some political influence and thus interest other key project stakeholders, such as regional authorities, in becoming involved in projects.

A detailed study on the impact of LIFE Nature on the implementation of Natura 2000 has been undertaken on behalf of the Commission and reported³. This report covers the impact of LIFE I and II programmes and demonstrates that LIFE-Nature projects have made a positive impact on around 10% of all those sites designated within the Natura 2000 network including 13% of Special Protection zones (SPZ) from the Birds Directive and 9.4% of the Community interest sites (CIS) from the Habitats Directive.

c) What has been the interaction with other EC programmes/initiatives?

LIFE Nature was considered to be particularly successful in developing management capacity and preparing the way, e.g. through land purchase, for sustaining and promulgating conservation in the long term. In this respect LIFE was considered to be complementary to larger national and structural funds including INTERREG, LEADER+, and Objective 1 and 2 funds that could be used to support conservation activities initiated by LIFE. For example, LIFE99 NAT/DK/006456 (Wadden Sea estuary, nature and environment improvement project) where following conclusion of LIFE funding, on-going management of the site has been secured through agri-environment funds for the next 20 years.

³ European Commission An Evaluation of the Impact of LIFE Nature on Natura 2000. Final report, May 2003.

No negative interactions with other funding sources were cited.

d) What has been the impact on national policies and programmes?

Stakeholders considered that LIFE Nature project outcomes were making a significant impact in implementing the Birds and Habitats directives and, consequently, European policy on Natura 2000.

Some Member States (The United Kingdom and Greece) offered evidence of LIFE Nature projects influencing regional or national policies with respect to approaches to practical implementation of the habitats and birds directives. Greece has modelled its own national programme in support of nature conservation on the LIFE Nature programme.

National policies for conservation were considered to be in-accordance with Community policy as implemented through the Habitats and Birds directives. In this respect, LIFE Nature was universally considered to be the driving practical implementation of these directives at the national level and consequently at the Community level.

e) Does the dissemination of results from LIFE Nature stimulate debate?

Most stakeholders considered that the outputs of LIFE projects did not stimulate debate beyond the national level. However, many National Authorities considered that LIFE projects have influenced national thinking and, in some cases policy implementation on nature conservation (e.g. LIFE 99/NAT/UK/006081 influenced UK thinking and policy on coastline management).

The key barriers to debate in crossing national boundaries was generally thought to be due to lack of adequate dissemination at the EC level on project outputs and lack of fora for beneficiaries to exchange experiences at the community level. This is partly addressed by the NEWSFLASH and NATURA 2000 newsletters.

Stakeholders considered that more co-operative projects would help to develop Natura 2000 as a network of sites and would further promulgate the benefits of LIFE projects.

Stakeholders also considered that it would be useful to follow up LIFE Projects, several years after completion, to evaluate their sustainability or how much replication was possible. This would provide for identification and dissemination of critical success factors and also of barriers to the long-term success of projects.

A review of the long-term effects of nine selected projects funded under LIFE-Nature I has been undertaken and recently reported⁴.

⁴ Life after LIFE. The long-term effects of nine projects funded under LIFE-Nature I. Ecosystems Ltd on behalf of the European Commission 2000

3.2 LIFE Environment

3.2.1 Scope and Rationale

LIFE Environment can support three types of measure:

- ❑ Demonstration projects in the five priority areas of land-use development and planning, water management, minimisation of the environmental impact of economic activities (largely through cleaner technologies), waste management and integrated product policy.
- ❑ Preparatory projects which aid the development of new Community environmental actions and instruments, and/or help to update legislation and policies.
- ❑ Accompanying measures to disseminate information or evaluate, monitor or promote activities undertaken.

The level of financial support given by DG Environment depends on the type of measure and the nature of the project. For demonstration and preparatory projects, the maximum level of Community financial support is 30% for projects generating substantial net revenue and 50% for other projects. Accompanying measures can be funded at up to 100% of their cost.

Demonstration projects form the bulk of the programme, with only a few preparatory projects being undertaken so far. Demonstration projects aim to develop and test innovative solutions to environmental problems and should lead to concrete, practical results. Their role is to bridge the gap between research and development (R&D) and large-scale application.

LIFE Environment priorities map loosely onto three of the four priorities for the 6th Environmental Action Programme (6EAP) as shown below. The fourth 6EAP priority area – nature and biodiversity – is covered by the LIFE Nature programme.

6EAP priority area	LIFE Environment priority area
Climate change	Minimisation of the impact of economic activities.
Environment and health and quality of life	Land-use development and planning. Minimisation of the impact of economic activities. Integrated product policy.
Natural resources and waste	Water management. Waste management.

Based on analysis of the LIFE project database, the breakdown of projects by priority area can be estimated as shown in Figure 2. The largest area is the minimisation of the impact of economic activities, while the smallest is integrated product policy. Following this analysis, it was agreed with the LIFE Unit that we would focus our evaluation of LIFE Environment on three priority areas – economic activities, waste management and integrated product policy. However, in practice our interviews with EC policy makers and MS representatives have covered the full range of areas.

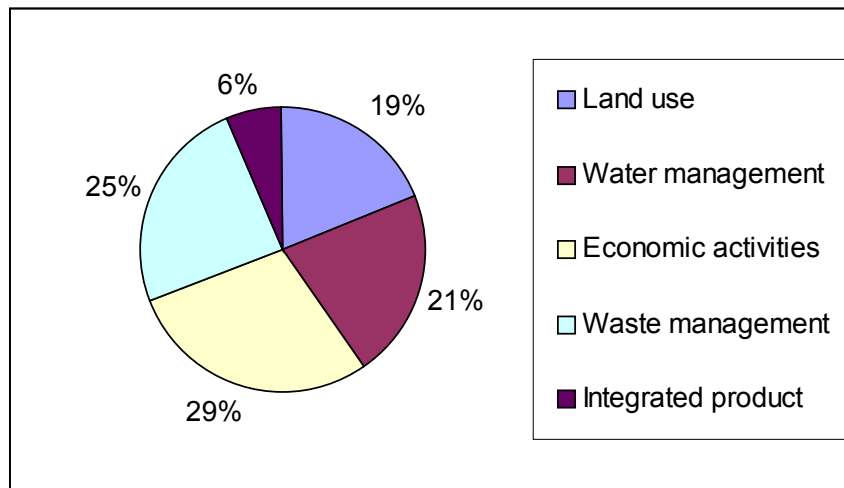


Figure 2 Number of LIFE Environment projects by priority area for 2002

We have evaluated the Scope and Rationale of LIFE Environment under five headings.

a) Has the programme performed a useful role and is it still required?

The specific objective of LIFE Environment, as laid out in Article 3 of the LIFE Regulation, is:

"to contribute to the development of innovative and integrated techniques and methods and to the further development of Community environmental policy".

The programme's emphasis on demonstration projects means that the focus is on the development of techniques and methods rather than the development of Community policy. All stakeholders understood this and many commented that LIFE Environment contributes to policy implementation but less so to policy development or testing. Several stakeholders were able to point to specific examples where LIFE projects have contributed to policy implementation at a national or EU level; these examples are given in Section 3.2.3 - Impacts.

All Member States and Candidate Countries value the LIFE Environment programme as a link between research and commercialisation. In some countries LIFE Environment funding fills gaps in national programmes. For example, in Austria most LIFE projects are in the waste management area because national programmes cover demonstrations relating to climate change and economic activities. In other countries, LIFE is the only source of funding for environmental technology demonstrations, as there are no comparable national programmes.

Stakeholders were not able to identify another EU programme or initiative that can support the range of projects supported by LIFE Environment. However they noted some potential overlaps in the climate change area, with European Recovery Programme and the SAVE and Altener energy programmes of DG Energy and Transport, and in the waste management area with the CRAFT programme. It was suggested that structural funds could be used to support certain activities, and that it may be worthwhile considering a separate component of structural funds dedicated to improving the environment.

b) Is the programme covering the most important environmental issues?

Nearly all stakeholders considered that LIFE Environment is addressing the main environmental problems but some were concerned that the programme is not sufficiently targeted on 6EAP priorities. Additional topics suggested for consideration for future LIFE activities included the marine environment, noise, new product development, renewable energy, traffic, health impacts and environmental monitoring technologies.

Most stakeholders were in favour of keeping LIFE Environment as a separate financial instrument rather than integrating it into other activities. They recommended that DG Environment retain the responsibility for LIFE Environment, although some suggested that management tasks could be delegated to a separate agency or to Member States. These management issues are discussed in Section 3.2.2 – Process.

c) Is the programme a useful and effective instrument and is there scope for improvement?

National representatives and beneficiaries considered that LIFE Environment is effective in demonstrating novel technologies but much less effective in disseminating and replicating the results of its projects. In the absence of effective dissemination, LIFE tends to be more effective at a local level than it is at a national or EU level.

Some EU stakeholders were less certain about the programme's effectiveness, particularly in the area of water management where other larger funding sources such as structural, regional and cohesion funds tend to dominate.

Projects are considered to be most effective when the private and public sectors work together and where larger SMEs are involved. Smaller SMEs are often inadequately equipped to submit proposals and manage LIFE projects, while larger companies are in less need of financial support from the programme.

National stakeholders considered that LIFE Environment should be retained, but many offered suggestions for improving management processes and impacts, which are discussed in the sections on process (3.2.2) and impacts (3.2.3).

With the exception of one candidate country, all stakeholders felt that there was no need for specific objectives or a separate thematic component for candidate countries. However, it was noted that candidate countries and some Member States are further behind in the adoption of environmental measures and that they are therefore less well equipped to pioneer innovative technologies. This led to discussion of the related issue of whether LIFE Environment should support projects to transfer environmental techniques to these countries, rather than just supporting first demonstrations of novel techniques. There was no consensus on this issue, with some national representatives favouring technology transfer projects and other national representatives and most EC stakeholders recommending support for innovative projects only.

Guidelines for applicants are considered to be essential as they ensure proposals are focused on LIFE Environment priority areas, and help EC stakeholders to decide who is best placed to evaluate the proposal. However, stakeholders suggested that the guidelines should be simplified and updated more regularly. An annual update of priorities was recommended, with the application procedures changed less frequently. Some National Authorities commented that they had been involved in discussions with the LIFE Unit about revising the guidelines but the recommended changes had not been adopted in response.

d) What should be the duration of a future programme?

Stakeholders felt that the current effective duration of 3-4 years was the minimum possible duration for the programme and many suggested that a future programme should be extended to around 5 years to provide a better framework for planning. Some suggested that the duration of a future programme should be aligned with the timescales of the Sixth Environmental Action Plan i.e. up to 2010.

National stakeholders and beneficiaries favoured the annual updating of programme priorities to ensure that projects address current needs but requested that application forms and procedures are not changed so frequently.

e) Is the budget of the programme commensurate with the programme's objectives?

Several stakeholders commented that the budget for LIFE Environment is not always spent. This is due to the drop-out rate of a relatively few unsuccessful projects and an insufficiency of reserve projects, but does not indicate that the budget is excessive. Indeed many national stakeholders considered that additional budget is required to support more projects, and that the demands will be greater in future as a result of EU enlargement.

Some EC stakeholders commented that the LIFE programme accounts for a large proportion of DG Environment's budget and questioned whether it might be more cost-effective to give the funding directly to policy units instead. These comments related to the balance between LIFE Environment objectives – if the programme's primary aim is to support policy development then policy units may be better equipped to do this, because the existing demonstration programme is mainly aimed at supporting policy implementation.

3.2.2 Process

This section addresses process aspects relating to the solicitation, evaluation, selection and management of LIFE Environment projects. Table 1 summarises the annual processes involved in evaluating and selecting projects, and the associated timetable for LIFE Environment 2002. This information is provided as background to the stakeholder comments that follow.

Table 2 Evaluation and selection procedure for LIFE Environment 2002

Dates	Procedures
By end November 2001	Proposals submitted to EC Proposals are initially submitted to Member States (MS) and then forwarded to the Commission. On receipt, the Commission checks that proposals are eligible and informs MS of any that are not.
December 2001 – April 2002	Commission services evaluation Eligible projects are evaluated against two eligibility criteria, five evaluation criteria and two bonus criteria; these criteria and the responsible evaluators are shown in Table 2. This is a two-stage process with initial evaluation against criteria 3 and 4 and the bonus criteria followed by a second stage of evaluation against criteria 5,6 and 7. Monitoring teams and other DGs are consulted at the first evaluation stage while independent external experts are involved in the second stage of evaluation.
December 2001 –	Member State consultation

Dates	Procedures
April 2002	Evaluation by National Authorities proceeds in parallel to evaluation by Commission services.
April 2002	Preliminary selection made Selection is made by the LIFE Unit in consultation with colleagues in the thematic units.
April 2002 – June 2002	Proposal revisions Commission services revisit selected project proposals and work with the potential beneficiaries to improve the quality of the proposals. This process produces a draft list of selected projects and a list of reserve projects.
11 June 2002	LIFE Committee vote and approval of final selection The LIFE Committee comprises representatives of the 15 MS and observers from the candidate countries eligible for LIFE funding.
End July 2002	Commission decision
August 2002	Beneficiaries receive decision
November 2002	Formal acceptance by beneficiaries

Table 3 Evaluation criteria for LIFE Environment 2002

Evaluation criterion	Type of criterion	Evaluator
1: Soundness of participants	Eligibility	LIFE Unit
2: Compliance with LIFE III Regulation and guidelines	Eligibility	LIFE Unit
3: Coherence and quality, integration	Evaluation	LIFE Unit
4: Demonstration character and dissemination of results	Evaluation	LIFE Unit
5: Community interest and environmental problem	Evaluation	Thematic Units
6: Co-operation and transferability	Evaluation	External Experts & Thematic Units
7: Innovatory nature and progress, cost/benefit ratio	Evaluation	External Experts & Thematic Units
8: Multinational approach	Bonus	LIFE Unit
9: Job creation and SMEs	Bonus	LIFE Unit

Applicants have about two months to respond to calls for proposals, depending on the release date of the call for proposals and Member States' requirements. Typically the calls for proposals will be made in June/July and Member States will set submission deadlines in September.

a) Is the project selection process timely and efficient and could it be improved?

Calls for proposals are issued each year, according to the annual selection process shown in Table 2. Most stakeholders considered that this was the right frequency but some

suggested 6-monthly calls would be better as this would allow faster development of new technologies and could encourage more involvement from SMEs.

The application process was widely criticised by stakeholders as being too slow and complex. However, many recognised the need for thoroughness and considered that the process did lead to good quality proposals. It was felt that some applicants have been put off by the complexity, particularly smaller SMEs without the necessary administrative support.

The selection process was also criticised as being too opaque, with many stakeholders unclear on how decisions are taken and who is involved. Whilst the procedures and responsibilities are well described in the programme's evaluation guidelines, these are not publicly available.

Member State representatives would like to have a greater role in the selection process, such as the development of guidelines and the appointment of external experts. However, many felt that they would require additional resources to do this. Some MS representatives also noted that they were given insufficient detail on short-listed proposals and so could not judge their merits. National representatives can provide valuable knowledge of local environmental problems and priorities.

Some stakeholders considered that the long timescale between proposal submission and project initiation could deter companies that want to demonstrate and then market new technologies. One suggestion for reducing time and complexity was to eliminate the two-stage selection process such that all evaluators see the proposals at the same time.

Some stakeholders suggested that more time should be given to applicants. Two to three months may not be sufficient to prepare a good proposal, particularly as this period tends to fall over the summer when many people are on holiday.

The standard of external experts is seen as variable, with perhaps two in every five experts ill equipped to undertake the role. EC stakeholders suggested that it was difficult to recruit external experts with the right level of skills and experience, mainly because they considered that day rates for experts are set at a low level. However, most stakeholders recognised the need for the use of external experts as it was considered that all the expertise and experience required to evaluate all proposals was not available within the Commission.

One stakeholder suggested it might be better to limit the number of languages in which proposals can be submitted. Currently many evaluators rely on one-page summaries and this makes it more difficult for them to judge the proposal. Limiting language options may discourage some applications but the ability to disseminate results in other languages will be an important requirement if the project is supported.

Most stakeholders were unaware of the distinction between demonstration and preparatory projects and so were unable to comment on whether the distinction should be maintained.

b) Are current management arrangements effective and appropriate?

Many stakeholders praised the LIFE Unit for its professional and efficient management practices. However, it was considered that some management procedures were unnecessarily bureaucratic and that this was contributing to excessive workload for the LIFE Unit. In general, stakeholders felt that less time should be spent on the selection process and more on project monitoring and follow-up.

Some stakeholders considered there would be advantages in separating the three components of LIFE to reflect their different management needs. Others felt that the current arrangements were appropriate. There was also some support for a separate management agency.

Stakeholders considered that the administrative burden for LIFE projects was relatively high for both beneficiaries and Commission officials, particularly at the proposal stage. The DG Research EUREKA programme was noted as having a lighter administrative burden and perhaps being an example from which LIFE could learn.

Some stakeholders considered that National Authorities could take a greater role. However, most Member States would be unwilling to take on additional responsibilities for monitoring and managing projects unless a budget was made available. Furthermore there was some concern that delegation to Member States would lead to inconsistent quality of project management.

c) How effective are the dissemination activities and should they be improved?

Dissemination activities were widely criticised by stakeholders as being ineffective and poorly targeted although it was recognised that the LIFE Unit is taking steps to improve the situation. Individual projects each have a dissemination plan that may require the beneficiary to present results at trade shows or conferences, and perhaps to publish a case study. However there is no tracking of these activities and no evidence that they are leading to replication either nationally or across the EU. Stakeholders considered that some beneficiaries could be reluctant to disseminate results as this would conflict with their business interests. In other cases beneficiaries may be lacking the skills or resources for effective dissemination.

In some countries, such as Spain, National Authorities are taking a proactive role in disseminating the results of LIFE Environment projects to industry and local authorities, and this is having an important impact at the national level. Spain has developed a national and European network of LIFE activities with meetings, conferences and a dedicated web site. Most other National Authorities would be willing to take on a greater role in disseminating results of LIFE projects but only if funding were made available.

National and EC representatives would both appreciate more information on ongoing and completed projects tailored to their needs. They are busy people and they are unlikely to spend time browsing the LIFE project database or reading large technical reports. Instead they would appreciate shorter case studies, briefing meetings and/or emails informing them of completed projects in their area of interest.

Note: since these stakeholder interviews were carried out, the LIFE web site has been updated to provide newsflash information on projects and a review of 2002 projects with one-page summaries of each project.

Some national stakeholders suggested that dissemination materials should be provided in different languages, perhaps by commissioning Member States or a separate marketing agency to translate and distribute materials.

Several stakeholders suggested that specialist-marketing support was needed at the EU level, perhaps through a marketing agency working with the LIFE Unit. A separate budget for marketing was also suggested.

3.2.3 Impacts

No quantitative information is available on the impacts of LIFE Environment, as projects are not monitored after completion. To provide a full assessment of impact it would be necessary to track how project results are used and the extent of replication on a national and EU level.

a) What has been the impact of LIFE Environment on EC Policy Development?

EU stakeholders noted that there might be differences in the ability of LIFE Environment to influence policy implementation depending on the policy area concerned. In areas such as Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) or Integrated Product Policy, results from LIFE projects can make a more direct contribution by, for example, informing IPPC guidance notes on best available techniques. In the water management area its impact is likely to be much smaller because LIFE Environment is only spending about €25-30 million per year on water related projects against overall European expenditure of about €30-40 billion per year in this area.

One example was provided of an impact on EC policy development and this related to IPPC. The thematic unit representative was able to show emails sent to the IPPC Bureau in Seville where he informed them of LIFE projects and asked them to take account of the results when revising guidance (BREF notes) on cleaner production, textiles and tanneries.

b) Has LIFE Environment met its policy aims?

Stakeholders were divided on whether LIFE Environment met its policy aims. The programme is considered successful in demonstrating innovative techniques but this does not generally feed through to policy development at EU or national levels.

Most stakeholders considered that the programme helps to develop innovative techniques but there is an ongoing debate over the definition of innovation. As discussed earlier, some stakeholders are in favour of supporting projects to transfer technology from more developed to less developed regions of Europe while others believe support should only be given to innovative first-of-a-kind demonstrations. It was suggested that the definition of innovation should be clarified in the guidelines for applicants.

Stakeholders were able to highlight some examples of successful projects that have significantly influenced EU or national level thinking. Some examples are given below.

- ❑ Tragamobil: Mobile phone recycling project in Spain.
- ❑ REMAS: Multi-country assessment of the impacts of EMAS.
- ❑ Ecobus: Demonstration of waste vegetable oil as a transport fuel in Spain.
- ❑ Development of an integrated environmental management system for the Portuguese chemical industry.
- ❑ Coastal change, climate and instability project on coastal management in the UK.
- ❑ Development of a treatment plant for PVC in Denmark.
- ❑ Development of an ecological toolkit for the Nordic/Baltic region.
- ❑ Project on eco-design of cars in France.

c) What has been the interaction with other EC programmes/initiatives?

LIFE Environment is seen as complementary to other EC programmes such as the 5th Framework Programme, EUREKA, URBAN, INTEREG and structural funds. LIFE tends to follow on from DG Research support and precede structural funds support. For example, the former LIFE funded DIVERS urban regeneration project in Barcelona is being applied on a larger scale with the help of structural funds. Stakeholders felt that more interaction with DG Research would be beneficial. A proposed strategy being developed between DG Research, DG Environment and DG Health may help to facilitate this interaction.

Stakeholders noted that there might be some overlap with other EC programmes in the energy efficiency and climate change area, e.g. SAVE and Altener.

d) What has been the impact on national policies and programmes?

There is little evidence that LIFE has influenced national policy but projects have helped to raise industry awareness and improve environmental performance. LIFE often complements national activities and helps to fund projects that are too large for national support. The LIFE brand on a project is also seen as a valuable indicator of quality and credibility, which can help to convince banks and other institutions to support follow-up activities.

There is no evidence of adverse impacts but several stakeholders noted the potential for market distortion, particularly if companies are funded to undertake environmental improvements that they are required to do anyway to meet regulations.

e) Does the dissemination of results from LIFE Environment stimulate debate?

Most stakeholders considered that dissemination of project results stimulated some limited debate at national and regional levels but little or no debate at the EU level. National Authorities that had initiated their own dissemination activities, e.g. France and Spain, responded more positively to this question and were able to give examples of projects which had been debated.

Some EU stakeholders questioned whether some projects might be too localised to have any impact beyond their region, and therefore wider dissemination would have little effect.

3.3 LIFE Third Countries

3.3.1 Scope and Rationale

LIFE Third Countries aims to stimulate the European Union's neighbours to improve their environmental performance. It does this by helping to build their capacity in the environmental sector and assisting in the development of environmental policy and action programmes. The programme is targeted at third countries bordering on the Mediterranean and Baltic seas but excludes central and east European candidate countries. At present sixteen countries are eligible for funding:

- Albania
- Algeria
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Egypt
- Israel
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Malta
- Morocco
- Russia
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Palestinian Authority

This number will reduce next year when Cyprus and Malta join the European Union.

LIFE Third Countries co-finances up to 70% of the total cost of technical assistance projects and typically funds projects at a level of around €100,000 to €500,000. The average size of the LIFE Third Country contribution to projects under LIFE III has been €360,000. LIFE is therefore able to fund projects that are too small to be covered by other environmental aid programmes, making it well suited to supporting urgent pump priming activities. The programme gives priority to projects that promote cooperation and focuses on projects that:

- Contribute to implementing regional and international guidelines and agreements;
- Promote sustainable development at international, national or regional levels; and
- Provide solutions to major environmental problems.

A key difference between LIFE Third Countries and many other support programmes is that it employs a "bottom up" approach. The programme is open to all "natural and legal persons" as long as they are technically competent to manage and carry out the proposed work and are financially sound. This gives the programme two important benefits. Firstly, recipients have a great deal of flexibility to design a project so that it closely meets local needs, secondly the programme is accessible to Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) who may not be able to access funding from their National Authorities.

161 projects have been supported under LIFE Third Countries since it started. The programme currently has a budget of €38 million for the period 2000 – 2004 that represents about 6% of the budget of LIFE III. Compared to LIFE Nature and LIFE Environment, Third Countries is therefore a very small component of the overall programme. It shares many of the management systems and procedures used by its two larger siblings.

Sixteen Third Country projects were supported in 2002 under LIFE III. The projects were selected from 74 proposals and will receive €5.77 million co-funding from the EU. The total cost of the projects amounts to €9.32 million making the EU contribution 61%.

Fifteen of the projects will be implemented in the Mediterranean region and one in the Baltic region. The projects cover a wide range of activities, from improving the sustainability of water resources in Bosnia to conserving wolves in Croatia and tackling hazardous substances in Jordan.

We have evaluated the Scope and Rationale of LIFE Third Countries under five headings.

a) Has the programme performed a useful role and is it still required?

All the stakeholders contacted believe that LIFE Third Countries has played an extremely valuable role in helping to build environmental capacity in neighbouring countries. Some see the programme as essential. As mentioned above, the programme fulfils an important niche not covered by other international aid programmes and EU instruments.

LIFE Third Countries has two very important aspects. Firstly, it funds projects which are too small to be considered under programmes such as SMAP (The short and medium term priority environmental action programme), PHARE, TACIS, CARDS, OBNOVA, MEDA etc). This means that LIFE Third Countries can respond much more quickly and flexibly than the bigger instruments to urgent needs. This was demonstrated by LIFE's ability to respond quickly and support important capacity building projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia after the war in the region. Secondly, LIFE Third Countries employs a bottom up approach with recipients able to design projects specifically to meet the most urgent environmental needs in their region.

The programme has gained a very good reputation in third countries and the problems and issues that the programme addresses continue to be relevant.

b) Is the programme covering the most important environmental issues?

In the invitation to tender we were specifically asked to answer the question - *should LIFE Third Countries "retain the current general objective, i.e. the contribution of projects to the establishment of capacities and administrative structures relating to environment, but target more specific objectives (alignment to the EU policies, implementation of Kyoto climate change principles etc)?"*

The bottom up approach adopted by the programme helps to ensure that projects meet the most important local environmental needs. Those needs are likely to reflect the third country's stage of development. In a relatively undeveloped country or following a war, food production, clean water and sewage treatment will be high on the agenda. As a country develops, energy production, clean air and solid waste management start to become more important. Cleaner production, climate change, transport and conservation issues will come to the fore in more developed countries. A review of the projects supported to date in various third countries suggests that there is some, though perhaps rather weak, correlation with this principle. LIFE Third Country projects address a very wide range of environmental aspects but many cover major environmental issues such as water quality, waste management and air quality. In the more developed countries, such as Cyprus, projects focus more towards Integrated Industrial Pollution Control, transport and special areas of conservation. It is important to recognise that LIFE projects are working alongside other funding programmes that tend to fund large infrastructure projects covering the major environmental themes such as water, waste and energy.

Stakeholders feel that it is important that this approach continues in future. It is important that the projects supported reflect the needs and environmental priorities of the recipient country.

c) Does the programme have the right geographical coverage?

LIFE Third Countries was initially aimed at protecting the Mediterranean and Baltic seas. However on 1 May 2004, 10 new Member States will accede to the European Union, including Cyprus and Malta who currently benefit from LIFE Third Countries. Post accession the EU will have a new set of neighbouring countries and consideration should be given to expanding LIFE Third Countries to encompass these countries in some way.

The European Commission's position on cooperation with its European neighbours in the area of environment is set out in its communication on Pan-European Environmental Co-operation after the 2003 Kiev Conference. The communication puts forward a regionally differentiated approach that categorises European neighbours into four distinct groups.

- ❑ The 13 EU candidate countries (which includes Cyprus, Malta and Turkey).
- ❑ The 5 Western Balkan countries (which includes Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia)
- ❑ The Western newly independent states (NIS) and the Caucasus
- ❑ The NIS countries of Central Asia.

The communication states that the European Commission will channel its future cooperation through existing bilateral mechanisms with candidate countries, the Western Balkans and the NIS. It will also take the lead in supporting action in the sub-regions bordering the enlarged EU. The report specifically mentions LIFE Third Countries in relation to Turkey and identifies institution building as a key action for the Western Balkans, though CARDS (Community Assistance for Reconstruction Democratisation and Stabilisation) is identified as the main support instrument.

Against this background it makes sense to incorporate Serbia-Montenegro and Macedonia into LIFE Third Countries. It is also worth considering whether the Western NIS countries that border the Black Sea should also be included as neighbours bordering the enlarged EU.

d) What should be the duration of a future programme?

All stakeholders contacted felt that the need for capacity building in Third Countries will continue into the foreseeable future. To provide consistency it is important that a programme like LIFE should run for at least 5 years. Ideally any future programme should build upon the current LIFE Third Countries programme to ensure continuity of approach.

e) Is the budget of the programme commensurate with the programme's objectives?

There is a continuing need to support capacity building projects in Third countries, but the quality of proposals is variable. At present the budget is commensurate with the programme's objectives and its capacity to generate good quality projects. However, an expansion of the number of countries eligible for support under LIFE Third Countries would mean that a bigger budget would be required.

There is, currently, a problem in that the less developed countries arguably have the greatest need for LIFE support to develop infrastructure tend to submit fewer and poorer proposals. Consequently, it is the more developed countries that tend to receive the most support from LIFE. This is because proposals are evaluated on their quality and more developed countries, which already have some institutional capacity, have the capability to put together better proposals, partly as a result of that capacity.

3.3.2 Process

LIFE Third Countries shares its management procedures and systems with LIFE Nature and LIFE Environment. The programme is managed by a main desk (full time), a part time desk and a part time secretary.

An external team provides monitoring support to the LIFE Unit. Currently the external support is equivalent to two full time consultants but this is due to be increased to three soon. The internal team are responsible for the project selection process and managing ongoing projects. The external team do not have a role in the selection process but are responsible for assisting the LIFE Unit in the day-to-day monitoring activities of the 75 projects that are currently running.

Our evaluation of the process issues for LIFE Third Countries has concentrated on three areas.

a) Is the project selection process timely and efficient and could it be improved?

Most stakeholders feel that the annual call is timely and that the selection process is reasonably efficient. The procedures and timescales are felt to be in line with those of similar EU programmes and the effort involved in preparing a proposal for LIFE Third Countries is commensurate with the level of funding provided.

An annual call for proposals can cause some scheduling problems for the internal and external management teams because it causes the workload to peak in waves. This is particularly true for the external monitoring team who receive large batches of interim reports at the same time and causes a bottleneck in the evaluation and progress payment process.

Another process problem is that new contracts always incorporate the start date that was included in the proposal. However, many organisations submitting proposals aren't aware of the time it takes between submitting a proposal and signing a contract and suggest unrealistic start dates. This often means that a contract time extension is needed from the day when the contract is signed and adds extra administrative effort into the system. It is recommended that either the start date is agreed and revised as the contract is signed or clearer guidance on the timetable of the selection process is provided to potential bidders.

b) Are the current management arrangements effective and appropriate?

In this area we have been asked to identify whether LIFE Third Countries benefits from being part of a single LIFE programme or whether it should be integrated into other existing financial instruments managed by other DGs.

The incorporation of the management of LIFE Third Countries into the LIFE Unit has ensured that the programme is managed in a systematic and rigorous way. Stakeholders feel that the quality of projects and information has improved over the last two years. Butler is felt to be an excellent project management tool and the systems introduced by the LIFE Unit have reduced risks to the Commission. There are some views that the programme is now over-managed and that the LIFE Unit's management team should review procedures to ensure that they are all still necessary. (For example monitoring reports on projects have grown from 1 page to around 15 pages).

The split of responsibilities between the LIFE Unit and the monitoring contractor works well. The LIFE Unit is well placed to deal with policy issues and coordination in the Commission while the monitoring contractor is free to deal with detailed project issues. It is planned to increase the size of the monitoring team by around one person, which will be around 50% additional effort. This will be helpful because at present the monitoring contractor has very little time for missions to country. The bulk of their effort has been in updating Butler and evaluating progress reports. There is a strong argument that the involvement of a monitoring contractor at the start of a project will assist the smooth running of that project and reduce effort spent correcting problems later on.

There is good evidence of strong co-ordination between both the LIFE Unit and the monitoring team with the EU Delegations in Third Countries. However the inter-service links between the LIFE programme and other EU instruments such as TACIS and CARDS seem less strong. Now that Aidco has been set up and is running efficiently there could be advantages to moving the management of LIFE Third Countries into Aidco to assist coordination with other Third Country initiatives. Disadvantages to this move would be that the work may be less well co-ordinated with EU environmental policy and there is a danger of the budget for environmental projects being reprogrammed into different priorities. The management arrangements for LIFE Third Countries should be reviewed post enlargement in line with the recommendations of the Kiev Conference and any evolving institutional structure in the Commission.

c) How effective are the dissemination activities?

There was a general feeling amongst stakeholders that as LIFE Third Countries is predominantly aimed at capacity building and the dissemination of project results is not quite as critical as it is for LIFE Environment and LIFE Nature. However, dissemination is still important in that capacity-building lessons learned from LIFE projects should be replicated in other Third Countries. Information on projects is available on the LIFE website but much of this information should be updated. Extra project monitoring effort should help in this regard.

More effort could be put into promoting LIFE Third Countries and some of its success stories. This could be particularly useful if the programme is expanded to cover new neighbours post enlargement in May 2004.

3.3.3 Impacts

We have been asked to answer the question -*"to what extent have LIFE Third Country projects contributed to building up capacity and administrative structures in the environmental sector in countries bordering the Mediterranean and Baltic seas"*.

Without carrying out a thorough review of the status and impact of individual LIFE Third Country projects, which is outside the scope of this evaluation, it has not been possible to quantify the impact of the programme in building capacity in target countries. However it is clear from interviews with programme managers, policy makers and recipients that there are many examples of LIFE projects playing a significant role in developing policy and capacity in a number of countries.

Examples include the way in which LIFE was able respond quickly and develop capacity in Balkans after the war in Kosovo. It is unlikely that other instruments could have responded as quickly. Croatia and Bosnia have both made good use of the funding available. A recent project in Bosnia is creating a secretariat that will represent Bosnia-Herzegovina when dealing with international organisations under UNEP. This illustrates the use of LIFE to develop capacity that will then allow the Third Country to make use of other environmental instruments.

Cyprus and Malta have found LIFE projects particularly helpful in preparing for accession. A good example is a recycling demonstration project that was set up in Cyprus. The project demonstrated that it was possible to achieve good recycling rates in Cyprus and following the success of the demonstration the Cypriot Government implemented a much larger scheme. We have been told that EMAS projects in both Cyprus and Turkey are having a significant impact on the environmental policies of the respective national governments as well as helping to build the capacity of Ministries and Agencies.

A recent Russian project has demonstrated the benefit of clean production over end of pipe solutions and is starting to change entrenched thinking, while a healthcare project in Albania has been cited for its importance.

4 Discussion

In this section the key findings given in the previous chapter are analysed and discussed for each thematic component. This chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of the effectiveness of the LIFE Unit in terms of value for money.

4.1 LIFE Nature

4.1.1 Relevance and effectiveness

LIFE Nature is a highly effective and valued instrument for implementing Community policy on nature conservation through Council Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC; and consequently there has been a significant focus on the Natura 2000 network. These directives and the Natura 2000 network directly support implementation of the Community policy on nature and biodiversity. The success of LIFE Nature is in no small part due to its specific focus on these directives. They continue to provide a significant financial and logistical challenge in terms of their implementation in the Community and consequently LIFE Nature remains a highly relevant and valuable instrument.

LIFE Nature is widely considered to be providing the principal impetus for implementation of conservation actions for Natura sites. However, funding, on an annual basis, provided by LIFE Nature is only a tiny fraction (circa 1%) of that estimated to be required for implementing Natura 2000. Accordingly whilst LIFE Nature has a clearly significant role in driving the implementation of Natura 2000 it cannot be considered as the primary funding mechanism.

The main impact of the programme has been to define the sites, an activity which is now largely complete, and develop management plans. However to date LIFE has only been able to fund practical conservation measures at around 10% of the Natura sites. While this is in itself a significant and valuable achievement, the key challenge for LIFE Nature is to achieve a multiplier effect by stimulating activity at the other 90%.

4.1.2 Efficiency

The application process for funding is widely considered to be overly complex, although once understood, it does facilitate the delivery of high quality proposals leading to successful projects. The main criticisms relate to the application guidance that is very detailed but considered to be unclear.

A call for proposals made during a fixed month every year would enable applicants to schedule their preparation of proposals. In addition, an earlier call for proposals each year or, alternatively, a shorter selection process could usefully facilitate the starting of projects in the spring season.

Evaluation of proposals is considered to be fair but opaque (i.e. the overall scoring was considered fair but the process by which they were scored was not transparent). National Authorities and beneficiaries considered that greater transparency was required, particularly as to who was scoring projects and how. However, this area of concern has already been improved by the LIFE Unit; from this year National Authorities have access to ESAP in order to provide improved accessibility to the Commission scores and comments on each project, and even to provide their own evaluation of a proposal.

Previously National Authorities were only able to access evaluations of single projects following a specific request to the LIFE Unit.

National Authorities would like more input into defining the procedures for proposal evaluation and all, but one, of the Member States interviewed felt that the operation of the programme and project selection should be left to the Commission in order to ensure that proposals are selected on merit and their likely contribution to Community policy implementation.

Management of LIFE Nature through the LIFE Unit, and supported by external teams, appears to be, and is widely perceived to be very professional. Whilst some stakeholders feel that there is scope to reduce bureaucracy, programme beneficiaries consider the LIFE Unit as being helpful and supportive.

4.1.3 Utility

The “bottom up” approach of the Programme helps to ensure its utility in meeting the needs of stakeholders in each country. In addition, the focus of LIFE Nature on the “Birds” and “Habitats” Directives ensures that the programme directly supports Community needs on nature and biodiversity. However, the impact of the programme is severely limited by the funding available. In addition, there is also concern that there is a need for increased capacity in terms of knowledge and skills within Europe to fully implement all the necessary activities at Natura 2000 sites. Accordingly, LIFE Nature could have a key role in helping to develop the required capacity, although it is likely that additional budget would be required in order to make a significant impact.

The programme could also have a stronger role in signposting funding sources for conservation and assist in the development of training materials for nature conservation workers. This could take the form of guides or toolkits and would complement the demonstration activities carried out already.

4.1.4 Sustainability

The capacity building and “pump-priming” measures developed through LIFE Nature are likely to be long lasting particularly where national funding programmes and/or larger structural funds are able to continue funding e.g. for site management activities after LIFE funding has ceased. Some evidence for this is provided in the “Life after LIFE” study report; a review of the long-term effects of nine projects funded under LIFE I.

Further promulgation of LIFE-Nature project outputs and experiences would help to address the perceived shortage of capacity of conservationists in Europe to carry out many more conservation projects. Accordingly, there should be increased focus on Co-operative projects. These projects essentially facilitate an exchange of skills and sharing of knowledge between conservationists, learned from on-going and completed LIFE projects, and accordingly promulgate capacity building in nature conservation across Europe.

LIFE Nature is an essential instrument for supporting nature conservation and is necessary to support the continuing implementation of the Birds and Habitats directives. Progress in this area would be severely limited if the programme did not continue.

4.1.5 Management

All stakeholders (beneficiaries, National Authorities and Commission interviewees) felt strongly that Directorate-General Environment should retain management of LIFE Nature, or its successor. However, stakeholders had no strong feelings as to whether LIFE Nature should be managed within the same Unit as LIFE-Environment or LIFE Third Countries.

It is clear that the LIFE Unit manages LIFE Nature efficiently and that there is good co-ordination between the LIFE Unit and Unit B2 (Nature and biodiversity). However, co-ordination between the LIFE Unit and DG Agriculture should be improved as their activities both impact on European nature conservation.

Co-ordination between the LIFE Unit and the monitoring team is good and both the National Authorities and beneficiaries have praised the role of the monitoring teams. However, most beneficiaries and National Authorities did not think that more of the day-to-day management of the programme should be delegated to the monitoring contractors or other contractors. Consequently it is recommended that the current management structure for LIFE Nature be retained.

The only significant criticism of LIFE Nature relates to its dissemination activities, although most of this relates to stakeholders' experiences with LIFE II. Since the inception of the third phase of LIFE, significant efforts have been made in order to improve communications between LIFE Beneficiaries and the transparency of project results. Much of these improvements have come from an expansion of the LIFE website and the use of the "NEWSFLASH" newsletter which appears to an especially useful tool in disseminating latest developments and facilitating contact between the beneficiaries. However, it is still possible to do more and consideration should be given to making use of specialist marketing support.

In addition, the LIFE Unit produces an annual publication "LIFE Nature 99" summarising its activities, projects funded etc for each particular year. It would be useful if this could be further developed to provide an on-going assessment of the impacts of LIFE Nature. Reporting of progress using key performance indicators (e.g. No. of priority habitats conserved by LIFE projects etc) would enable an on-going evaluation of the programme's activities and thus facilitate further development or any necessary change of emphasis during the course of the programme.

4.2 LIFE Environment

4.2.1 Relevance and effectiveness

There is only limited evidence that LIFE Environment is supporting “preparatory actions” to assist the testing, update and development of either EU or Member State policy. However there is good evidence that LIFE Environment has demonstrated and proven a variety of clean technologies in key areas such as improving water quality and recycling waste, the adoption of which will aid the implementation of EU environmental policy. LIFE Environment is addressing the main environmental problems but some stakeholders feel that it could be better targeted to the priorities of the Community’s Sixth Environmental Action Programme (6EAP). This comment may reflect a historical perspective of LIFE’s activities and as LIFE III develops it is likely that newer projects will align more closely with current policy. The objectives of LIFE Environment under LIFE III are broadly aligned with three of the four priority areas of the 6EAP (the fourth priority area, biodiversity, is covered by LIFE Nature). Member States value the programme and feel that LIFE Environment complements and fills the gaps in national programmes.

LIFE Environment predominately supports demonstration projects (typically funding projects at around €800,000). Whilst these projects make a worthwhile contribution to addressing European environmental issues on a local and/or regional level, we have not seen any evidence that they have a major impact at the Community level. However, the impact of LIFE Environment projects at the Community level could be enhanced through improved dissemination of project results aimed at encouraging the replication of demonstrated projects across the Community.

Consideration should be given as to how greater impact can be achieved at the European level. One possible option is to focus LIFE Environment funding on larger multi-country projects with a pan European dimension, leaving Member States to fund smaller projects under their own programmes. Another is to continue to support the type of project that is currently funded but to then set aside a budget for monitoring the technical success of the project and “marketing” the results of the project to potential replicators across the Community.

There has also been considerable debate both in the Commission and amongst Member States over the definition of innovation and whether only projects that are innovative across Europe should qualify for support.

While there are attractions to LIFE, as a Community instrument, focussing on larger innovative projects with a pan-European dimension LIFE does provide a useful function in its current form particularly as Member States and Candidate Countries have variable capacities to manage their own demonstration programmes. Furthermore the scope for spreading environmental best practice across Europe is likely to be more readily achievable than the scope to improve practice in the most advanced areas. If LIFE Environment continues largely in its current form, we recommend that two distinct types of projects should be supported:

- ❑ “Innovation” projects which support the first commercial use of a technology or practice in Europe; and
- ❑ “Dissemination” projects that facilitate the transfer of technology across Europe by supporting the first commercial use of a technology or practice in a country even though the technology has been demonstrated elsewhere in the EU. This vehicle should be particularly helpful to new Member States post enlargement.

It is also recommended that Innovation projects should be funded at a higher level than Dissemination projects and that Member States are asked to make a commitment to using their own resources for disseminating the results of their Dissemination projects. In addition, the use of specialist marketing skills should be considered to assist in the dissemination of the results of successful LIFE Environment projects at the Community level.

The proposed approach should ensure that new environmental technologies are adopted in Europe and accelerate their diffusion across Europe.

4.2.2 Efficiency

The management of the LIFE Environment is considered to be efficient but there are opportunities to reduce bureaucracy. Stakeholders are concerned at the complexity of the application forms and guidance and that the administration effort and support required to produce a successful proposal is beyond the means of many small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). However, many stakeholders, particularly National Authorities, considered that the application process is logical and facilitates high quality proposals leading to successful projects.

The proposal selection process was considered to be both slow and opaque although most of the criticism appears to stem from LIFE II experiences. Since 2000, National Authorities have access to ESAP in order to review expert's scores, and comments and even to provide their own evaluation of a proposal.

The priority is to review and simplify the selection process. Several options have been suggested for example, a simplified and quicker application and selection procedure specifically for SMEs, but there is no consistency in these views. An internal review of the process carried out by the LIFE Unit should help to identify improvements.

4.2.3 Utility

LIFE Environment contributes to policy implementation but there is limited evidence that it contributes to policy development at the Community level. In addition, there is little evidence of formal networks within the Commission to ensure that LIFE Project outputs can inform policy makers within the Commission. Whilst preparatory projects have the potential to contribute more widely to the full policy cycle, there is little awareness of preparatory projects and few organisations would be willing to contribute 50% of funding to a project primarily aimed at EU policy development. However, preparatory projects could potentially have an important role in supporting capacity building and policy development in the new Member States following enlargement and it would be useful for the LIFE Unit to explore this possibility with candidate countries.

Most Member States feel that the programme is meeting an important need. This will be particularly true where the Member State doesn't have a demonstration programme of its own. The inclusion of dissemination projects, outlined in 4.2.1, would also increase the usefulness of the programme to new Member States post-enlargement.

4.2.4 Sustainability

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that the benefits of some LIFE Environment projects continue following the completion of the formal project and the cessation of funding. This should be expected where project results are of commercial interest. However, at present there is no tracking of LIFE Environment projects following their completion and therefore it is not possible to assess the extent of the sustainability of these projects.

A lack of effective dissemination of project results at the Community level is a significant barrier to the promulgation of project benefits across Europe. The LIFE Unit have recognised this barrier and under the current phase of LIFE have made significant improvements to the LIFE website in order to improve dissemination. However, it is likely that specialist marketing-skills will be required to identify target potential replicators and maximise the effectiveness of dissemination.

4.2.5 Management

There is a consensus that LIFE Environment is well managed, though there is scope to lighten some of the management systems which can be seen as bureaucracy.

The most common view was that LIFE Environment should continue to be managed by DG Environment but there was a spread of views over whether the programme should be managed together with LIFE Nature and LIFE Third Countries in a single unit. Some stakeholders considered that National Authorities could play a larger role but most Member States felt that they did not have sufficient resources to take on additional monitoring and management responsibilities and so supported the current arrangements. There are no significant advantages to moving the management of LIFE Environment into a different area so it is sensible for the current management structure to remain in place.

Many Member States interviewed would like a more proactive role in setting the programme's direction and in the project selection process. Many of the criticisms may be historical, not taking account of recent improvements. However it is recommended that the LIFE Unit carry out periodic in-house reviews of its management and selection processes with an aim of continuously improving and simplifying procedures.

All stakeholders have identified a need for better dissemination of the results of projects. Some have suggested that specialist-marketing skills are required to supplement the management skills of the LIFE Unit. Strengthening in this area is essential if LIFE Environment continues to focus on demonstration activities.

4.3 LIFE Third Countries

4.3.1 Relevance and Effectiveness

While it has not been possible to quantify the impact of LIFE Third Country projects it is clear that many projects have had a significant impact on the development of institutional capacity and environmental policy in third countries. We have been given a number of examples of where LIFE has had an invaluable role in either developing capacity in Third Countries or has contributed towards changing mindsets or developing policy.

LIFE Third Countries projects have covered a wide range of environmental aspects as shown by the breadth of projects supported in 2002. Many of these projects cover key European environmental issues such as biodiversity, waste management and water resources. Other projects cover issues that are particularly important to the third country at their current stage of development. This bottom up approach has been cited consistently as a strength of the LIFE programme and should be retained.

The geographical coverage of the programme has been appropriate to date, though it is possible that Serbia-Montenegro and Macedonia could have been incorporated into the programme. The enlargement of the Union in May 2004 will have an impact on the coverage of LIFE Third Countries and consideration should be given to the inclusion of Western NIS countries bordering the Black Sea at that point. LIFE Third Countries could potentially play a significant role in assisting to implement the European Commission's approach to co-operation with its European neighbours as set out at the 2003 Kiev conference. The present focus on Mediterranean countries is delivering benefits and should continue.

It is clear that LIFE Third Countries will remain highly relevant over the next few years. The current budget is commensurate with the objectives of the programme but may need to be revised in line with changes to geographical coverage.

4.3.2 Efficiency

LIFE Third Countries is managed efficiently using rigorous systems. The management of the programme has improved greatly since its inclusion in the LIFE Unit but some stakeholders feel that there may now be an opportunity to simplify some of the procedures. It is recommended that the LIFE Unit management team review the current procedures in the light of experience gained over the past 2 years.

There have been some concerns over the time taken to evaluate project progress reports and pay invoices. This has occurred partly because the monitoring contractor has been under resourced, which is being addressed, and partly because the workload is cyclical as the projects start at the same time, following the annual call. The monitoring contractor has also needed to spend a great deal of effort bringing systems up to date and bringing older projects into line with the more recent procedures. Once more monitoring effort has been contracted and the catch up phase is complete, it is recommended that more monitoring effort should be targeted at the early stages of projects to ensure that projects set off in the right direction. This should reduce the management effort required to sort out problems later on and yield an overall efficiency gain.

A specific recommendation is that the project start date should be agreed when the contract is issued rather than taken from the proposal. The current practice results in a

high level of administrative effort required to extend the project completion date after the project started later than expected.

The level of effort expended by the LIFE Unit and the monitoring team together is in line with the management effort we have seen on other EU programmes of a similar size, suggesting that the level of programme management effort is about right.

4.3.3 Utility

The “bottom up” approach of the programme ensures its utility in meeting the needs of third countries. Unlike many similar programmes it is open to NGOs as well as Ministries and this is seen as being very positive by a number of stakeholders.

There is an issue that some of the more developed third countries tend to be more successful in winning projects because they generally submit better quality proposals, which means that other countries which most require capacity building support receive the least funding. There are 2 mechanisms that could be put in place to address this problem.

- ❑ Guarantee a level of funding to each country so that the less developed countries still have proposals supported even though they may be of a lower quality than some submitted by more advanced countries. This could be achieved through a quota system. However such a system may be difficult to implement given the limited resources of the programme and therefore a distribution target over the life of the programme may be more realistic.
- ❑ Provide some external support to help the countries with less developed infrastructure develop good quality proposals. This could take the form of training workshops or the use of experts to help develop proposals.

These mechanisms should only be needed in the short term because they should have a “pump priming” effect. As a country becomes more successful in winning projects its institutional capacity should develop and it will become more capable of submitting good quality proposals itself.

It is recommended that the LIFE Unit reviews this situation and consideration is given to developing a list of priority countries.

4.4.4 Sustainability

The institutional capacity and environmental regulation developed by LIFE Third Countries is likely to be long lasting. There is evidence that the programme has had an invaluable “pump priming” effect on a number of occasions. While these particular activities would continue in the absence of further LIFE funding, the continuing need for institutional development in Third Countries means that LIFE Third Countries remains an important funding instrument.

4.4.5 Management

The most difficult question to answer is whether LIFE Third Countries benefits from its inclusion together with LIFE Nature and LIFE Environment or whether it would be better to locate it in a unit with specific expertise in international relations or aid funding.

It is clear that LIFE Third Countries is well managed in the LIFE Unit. It is also clear that the LIFE Unit and the monitoring contractor coordinate their activities well with other funding programmes via their contacts in the EU delegations in third countries. Inter-

service coordination with other EU funding programmes seems less strong. There could be benefits to moving the management of LIFE Third Countries into Aidco. However, there would be disadvantages in that the programme would then be more difficult to coordinate with the EU’s environmental policy and there is a danger of budget being reprogrammed from environment into other priority areas. It is possible that the Commission’s organisational structure will evolve post enlargement, consequently it is recommended that the management of LIFE Third Countries remains in the LIFE Unit up until enlargement and the situation is reviewed at that time.

It may be possible to delegate some of the daily management of LIFE Third Country projects to the EU delegations in recipient countries. However this would depend on the delegations having the necessary resources and it would still be important for a central team like the LIFE Unit to have an overall coordination role to ensure that lessons learned in one area can be implemented in another.

4.4 Programme management and value for money

Indicative project benchmarking data, comparing the LIFE III programme with other EC funding programmes, is shown in Table 4. The data for these programmes are based on a simple division of the approximate number of live projects in a given year divided by the total number of staff within the functional unit (i.e. this includes technical desk officers, financial officers and secretarial support). It is by its nature a crude calculation but it does provide evidence of a high workload of the financial and technical desk officers within the LIFE Unit, as noted by many stakeholders.

Table 4 Benchmarking data on project management

Programme	No. of projects per equivalent staff member	Average size of grant (€k)
Altener II	10	119
SAVE II	15	155
SYNERGY	7	127
CARNOT	8	78
PACT	15	204
LIFE III	19	754

Note: All data based on 1999 figures except data for LIFE III, which is based on 2002 figures.

These data suggest that the management of the LIFE Programme is cost-effective in comparison with other programmes. Although the above data do not include allowance for the assistance given to the LIFE Unit by the external monitoring teams, it does indicate that the Unit is providing value for money and that the Unit’s activities are only sustainable through external support.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

General

The LIFE Programme remains the only instrument dedicated to supporting Community environmental policy. The general objective of LIFE is “*to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of Community environment policy and of environmental legislation, in particular as regards the integration of the environment into other policies, and to sustainable development in the community*”.

There is abundant evidence that the Programme contributes to the *implementation* of policy. However it is less clear as to whether LIFE contributes to stimulating debate and *developing* policy or legislation. This is not surprising since the Programme is comprised of three very different thematic components, each with their own objectives. Of these components, only LIFE Environment has an objective to develop Community policy. The remaining two components, LIFE Nature and LIFE Third Countries are concerned with implementing current policies and/or developing capacity for their implementation. All three elements of LIFE are fulfilling useful roles and continue to be useful.

Management

Most stakeholders both in the Commission and the Member States have commented on the excellent professionalism and high workload of the LIFE Unit and the management of the LIFE Programme appears to be cost-effective in comparison with other EC programmes. In general we have found the LIFE programme is effectively managed using systematic and rigorous procedures that have been introduced by the LIFE Unit.

The Unit has also adopted some extremely useful management tools, particularly the ESAP and Butler databases. **These databases should be considered as representing best practice and be adopted or used as models for a future LIFE programme or its successor.**

Many stakeholders feel that the management processes are becoming bureaucratic and that there may be an opportunity to simplify them, though our review of the processes has not revealed any obvious areas where significant simplification can be made. **It is recommended that the LIFE Unit’s management team reviews processes periodically as a continuous improvement activity to identify scope for streamlining them. This review process could be usefully facilitated through tasking small project teams, including technical and financial desk officers and representatives from a limited number of National Authorities, to review and, if necessary, revise specific procedural documents, for example the application guidance.**

Most stakeholders had no strong feeling as to whether all three LIFE themes should be managed within one unit. **There is no advantage to changing the management structure at present, but consideration should be given to the management of LIFE Third Countries post enlargement.**

However, the LIFE Programme and its three components or successors should be managed within DG Environment. The principal reasoning for this being:

- ❑ DG Environment is responsible for development of environmental policy, thus facilitating the co-ordination of policy and implementation;
- ❑ Any contractor employed to undertake some, or all, of the Unit's and monitoring team's responsibilities would still require co-ordination from the Commission and financial monitoring. It is possible that a contractor could be given more autonomy if it had agency status but the benefits of this mechanism need to be proven; and
- ❑ If some or all LIFE programme activities were delegated to the Member States then funding for these activities would need to be allocated by the Commission to support administration for this in Member States. This could also predicate the number of projects from each country and accordingly the programme would lose its European dimension and independence from national interests.

Application and proposal selection process

Most stakeholders considered that an annual call for proposals was appropriate but considered that this should occur during a fixed month, early each year. This would enable applicants to schedule the planning of their proposals. **We believe that an annual call is appropriate but the process should be moved forward by 2 months if possible.** This is particularly important for LIFE Nature projects in northern countries where the growing season is shorter.

Many stakeholders feel that the application and proposal selection process is too bureaucratic and would benefit from simplification. **Consideration should be given to ensuring that proposal selection criteria, application guidance and, the structure of the application forms are more clearly correlated to each other, particularly through simplification of the application guidance.** This would provide applicants with an insight as to how their proposals would be evaluated and simplify the tasks of the evaluators.

Other stakeholders, particularly in Member States, have called for greater transparency in the project selection process. However, we consider that the extension of access to the ESAP database, previously available to National Authorities for LIFE Environment, to all National Authorities, should address most Member States' concerns.

The specific findings of the evaluation for each LIFE thematic component are summarised below.

LIFE Nature

Life Nature has been very successful in defining and helping to set up the 20,000 Natura 2000 conservation sites across the EU. The main impact of the programme has been to define the sites, an activity which is now largely complete, and develop management plans. However to date LIFE has only been able to fund practical conservation measures at around 10% of the Natura sites. While this is in itself a significant and valuable achievement, the key challenge for LIFE Nature is to achieve a multiplier effect by stimulating activity at the other 90%.

All stakeholders contacted considered that LIFE Nature has been and continues to be a necessary and highly effective instrument for driving implementation of the Birds and Habitats directives. Without LIFE Nature it was considered that very little progress would have been made in implementing these directives and Natura 2000. They felt that more actions could be carried out if additional budget was available but most considered that LIFE Nature is best suited to funding pump-priming projects. A key problem is that there is not a large enough capacity of experienced and skilled conservationists in Europe to carry out many more projects.

Accordingly, LIFE Nature should continue to have a significant role in driving the implementation of Natura 2000 or serve as a model for future instruments with an emphasis on building capacity for Natura 2000 implementation. The programme could have a stronger role in signposting funding sources for conservation and assist in the development of training materials for nature conservation workers. This could take the form of guides or toolkits and would complement the demonstration activities already carried out.

Applications for more co-operative projects should be encouraged to help develop Natura 2000 as a network of sites and would further promulgate the benefits of LIFE projects.

The Birds and Habitats directives are equally relevant to candidate countries, most of which will shortly become part of the European Union. **Accordingly, we recommend that specific objectives for these countries are not required. However, consideration should be given to expanding the scope of LIFE Nature to include countries bordering the Black Sea.**

LIFE Projects should be systematically followed up several years after completion, to facilitate evaluation of sustainability or how much replication was possible. This would provide for identification and dissemination of critical success factors and also of barriers to the long-term success of projects.

The only significant criticism of LIFE Nature relates to its dissemination activities. Most criticism relates to stakeholders' experiences with LIFE II. During the third phase of LIFE, significant efforts appear to have been made in order to improve communications between LIFE Beneficiaries and transparency of project results, particularly through the development and implementation of a communications strategy.

A communications strategy should form a key part of any similar future programme. The "NEWSFLASH" and "Natura 2000" newsletters appear to an especially useful tool in disseminating latest developments and facilitating contact between project managers. This should also be considered an area of best practice. Consideration should be given to contracting specialists with skills in marketing to support the dissemination activities of the programme.

LIFE Environment

There is only limited evidence that LIFE Environment is supporting “preparatory actions” to assist the testing, update and development of either EU or Member State policy. However there is good evidence that LIFE Environment has demonstrated and proven a variety of clean technologies in key areas such as improving water quality and recycling waste, the adoption of which will aid the implementation of EU environmental policy.

Member States and Candidate Countries value the programme and feel that LIFE complements and fills the gaps in national programmes. It is felt that LIFE projects are most effective where the private and public sectors work together and where larger SMEs are involved. If LIFE Environment funding were not available then it is likely that only projects of strong commercial or national interest would have been implemented.

There has been considerable debate both in the Commission and amongst Member States over the definition of innovation and whether only projects that are innovative across Europe should qualify for support.

Consideration should be given as to how greater impact can be achieved at the European level. One possible option is to focus LIFE Environment funding on larger multi-country projects with a pan-European dimension, leaving Member States to fund smaller projects under their own programmes. Another is to continue to support the type of project that is currently funded, but to then set aside a budget for monitoring the technical success of the project and “marketing” the results of the project for replication across the Community.

We recommend that, if LIFE Environment continues in its current form, it should identify two distinct types of projects:

- ❑ **“Innovation” projects that support the first commercial use of a technology or practice in Europe; and**
- ❑ **“Dissemination” projects that facilitate the transfer of technology across Europe by supporting the first commercial use of a technology or practice in a country even though the technology has been demonstrated elsewhere in the EU.**

Dissemination projects would be particularly important in assisting Candidate Countries to achieve EU standards as part of an enlarged European Union.

We also recommend that Innovation projects should be funded at a higher level than Dissemination projects and that Member States make a commitment to disseminating the results of their Dissemination projects.

To date only limited use has been made of preparatory projects under LIFE Environment. These projects could play a useful role in helping to accelerate the development of capacity and policy in Candidate Countries, and new Member States following enlargement. **The LIFE Unit should explore opportunities for preparatory projects with Candidate Countries.**

The standard of external experts is considered by many Member States to be extremely variable. However, most stakeholders recognised the need for the use of external experts as it was considered that all the expertise and experience required to evaluate all proposals was not available within the Commission. **We recommend that the Commission review the criteria for selection of external experts.**

Nearly all stakeholders feel that for LIFE Environment, dissemination of the results of projects at the Community level needs to improve. While all projects have a dissemination element and produce dissemination outputs such as case studies and videos, it is rare for project teams to contain marketing professionals and it is clear that the outputs are not used to their maximum effect. Accordingly there is very limited evidence of replication of the projects.

It is therefore recommended that specialist marketing skills be employed to assist in the dissemination of the results of successful LIFE Environment projects.

LIFE Third Countries

There is good evidence that LIFE Third Countries is well managed and that projects are contributing significantly to developing capacity in third countries. LIFE fills an important niche in that it is able to respond relatively quickly and flexibly to the environmental need and priorities of third countries. It is also well co-ordinated with the larger aid programmes such as SMAP, CARDS and TACIS through close liaison with the EU delegation in the target countries. It is likely that most of the activities funded by LIFE Third Countries would not have occurred or would have occurred much later if LIFE funding had not been available.

The bottom up nature of the programme, with the project ideas being developed by the recipients, has meant that LIFE has addressed key environmental issues in the target countries in a timely manner.

Some of the more developed third countries tend to be more successful in winning projects because they generally submit better quality proposals, which means that other countries that most require capacity building support receive the least funding. **Accordingly, we recommend that the LIFE Unit reviews this situation and consideration is given to developing a list of priority countries and bringing this priority into the proposal selection process, or to providing proposal development support to the most needy countries.**

The geographical coverage of LIFE Third Countries will need to change post-enlargement in 2004 when ten countries including Cyprus and Malta join the European Union. **The future geographical coverage of LIFE Third Countries should be in line with the European Commission's position on co-operation with its European neighbours as set out in its communication on Pan-European Environmental co-operation after the 2003 Kiev conference. Consideration should be given to expanding LIFE Third Country coverage to include Serbia-Montenegro, Macedonia and the Western NIS countries that border the Black Sea.**

As with Nature and Environment, the dissemination of the results of Third Country projects could be improved.

Appendices

CONTENTS

Appendix 1	Themes, Questions, Indicators and Data Sources
Appendix 2	Stakeholders Interviewed

Appendix 1

Themes, Questions, Indicators and Data Sources

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
Theme 1: Scope and Rationale		
1.1 Is the rationale of the LIFE programme still valid?		
Is a financial instrument such as LIFE required to support the testing, update and development of Community environmental policy and legislation with reference to the 6 th EAP?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the LIFE regulation objectives and themes against the seven thematic priorities of the 6th EAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D) and LPM: and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Are there specific examples of where it has been helpful or where it will be helpful in future?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D) and LPM: and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Are there other ways in which the same results could be achieved more quickly or more cheaply?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D) and LPM: and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Is LIFE effectively addressing the main environmental problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE regulation against the 6EAP priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D) and LPM: and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
If a financial instrument such as LIFE is necessary, should it be specific to DG ENV or be integrated into other existing financial instruments managed by other DGs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of Article 8 report (Natura 2000) recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D) and LPM: and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
1.2 Is the LIFE programme a useful and effective instrument in each of the policy (subject) areas it covers and is there scope for improvement?		
Do stakeholders feel that LIFE is a useful instrument?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of Article 8 report (Natura 2000) recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), (LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Has each of the components of LIFE been effective in achieving its aims?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data in LIFE Nature annual reports Quantitative data in SMAP Report (2002) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM); and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
Where has it been most effective and where has it has less impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data in LIFE Nature annual reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Are there more cost effective ways of achieving its aims for each component? If so what would they be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Should the current three LIFE components be retained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), (LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Should the current scope and objectives be retained for the three components?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Should specific objectives be defined for candidate countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of objectives of currently funded projects via Butler Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), (LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
Are there any additional areas which should be covered under the LIFE programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
What improvements could be made to the LIFE programme to make it more useful, usable or more effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
		D)
As regards candidate countries, would it be opportune to establish a specific financial and thematic component targeting these countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) • Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report • Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views • Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), (LPM): and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)
1.3 Does LIFE 3C cover the right geographical areas?		
Has LIFE been more effective or of more value in some regions than others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SMAP report 2002 • Review of LIFE projects data base to identify distribution and no. of projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT) – if available in Brussels i.e at SMAP meeting; • Commission Country Desk officer views –ENV.2 (EU-D), • Views of Commission officials responsible for other 3rd country activities (PHARE, TACIS etc) (EU-D) • ECODIT views • LIFE Desk officer views (LPM)
What are the reasons why LIFE has been more effective in some areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT) – if available in Brussels i.e at SMAP meeting; • Commission Country Desk officer views –ENV.2 (EU-D); • Views of Commission officials responsible for other 3rd country activities (PHARE, TACIS etc) (EU-D) • ECODIT views • LIFE Desk officer views (LPM)
How has LIFE complemented other EU and international initiatives in these regions. (e.g. – Phare, Tacis, World Bank)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SMAP report 2002 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT) – if available in Brussels i.e at SMAP meeting; • Commission Country Desk officer views –ENV.2 (EU-D); • Views of Commission officials responsible for other 3rd country activities (PHARE, TACIS etc) (EU-D) • ECODIT views • LIFE Desk officer views (LPM)
Should the current geographical scope be maintained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMAP report and LIFE website will provide details of current and historical geographical scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT) – if available in Brussels i.e at SMAP meeting; • Commission Country Desk officer views –ENV.2 (EU-D); • Views of Commission officials responsible for other 3rd country activities (PHARE, TACIS etc) (EU-D) • ECODIT views • LIFE Desk officer views (LPM)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
Are there areas that should be discontinued or added?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of most and least common type of activities funded - SMAP report and LIFE website will provide details of current and historical projects – details of projects can be examined in Butler. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT) – if available in Brussels i.e at SMAP meeting; Commission Country Desk officer views –ENV.2 (EU-D); Views of Commission officials responsible for other 3rd country activities (PHARE, TACIS etc) (EU-D) ECODIT views LIFE Desk officer views (LPM)
1.4 As regards the duration of a future programme, should it be shortened or lengthened?		
How long will the drivers and barriers, which necessitate each of the components of the LIFE programme, continue to be an issue? Answer for each component.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
How long should each component of the LIFE programme run?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
What are the reasons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in Article 8 report (For LIFE-Nature) Recommendations of LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
1.5 Is the programme budget commensurate with the objectives of the programme?		
In the past, for each component of the programme has the budget been spent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data in LIFE Nature annual reports Qualitative data on LIFE website Historical quantitative data in LIFE II, Article 14 report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review with LIFE Unit management.
Would additional budget have been useful? What would it have been used for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Qualitative data on total values of eligible proposal and total of co-funded projects for each theme – LIFE website, LIFE-Nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
Is the current budget for each component commensurate with the programme's objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Quantitative funding data for Natura 2000 – Article 8 report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM); Views of other relevant DGs (EU-

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
		D); and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views of ECODIT.
What budget will be required in future and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Predicted quantitative funding needed for Natura 2000 – Article 8 report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based assessment	Detailed evaluation
Theme 2: Process efficiency		
2.1 Is the project selection process timely and efficient and could it be improved?		
How frequently have there been calls for projects in the past?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data from LIFE website and Article 14 report 	Not required
Has this caused any problems (e.g. missed opportunities)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.
What would be the ideal frequency for future selection exercises?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.
How long does the application and selection process take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data from LIFE website and also from internal Guideline documents (held on CD-ROM) Comparison of current arrangements versus similar Commission financial instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/check with LIFE Unit (LPM).
Has the duration or complexity of the process caused problems (lost projects, discouraged applicants)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of strengths and weaknesses of increasing or decreasing frequency of calls for projects Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.
How do applicants feel about the process (clear/ opaque, efficient/ bureaucratic, fast/slow, makes reasonable demands/ not worth the effort)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.
How could the tender, evaluation and selection process be improved and what benefits would this yield?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of ECODIT.
LIFE ENV – Have there been any benefits or disadvantages to the distinction between demonstration and preparatory projects? Any examples?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
LIFE ENV – Should the distinction be maintained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder feedback from LIFE days/MS meetings; National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based assessment	Detailed evaluation
2.1 Are the current management arrangements appropriate and effective?		
<p>Does the structure and management of LIFE fit the needs of the subjects involved at different levels in the implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D),(LPM): and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) esp. ENV1.
<p>Has the management of the three components of LIFE under a single umbrella resulted in efficiency gains or disadvantages? What have been the benefits and what have been the problems?</p> <p>What are the alternative options and what would be the relative gains and losses of moving to them?</p> <p>Is the programme being managed efficiently and effectively?</p> <p>What management processes are in place and are they appropriate and effective?</p> <p>How does programme management/administration costs compare with other programmes (national and EU)? (Stakeholder perception and benchmark examples)</p> <p>How could the programme be managed more efficiently, what improvements could be made?</p> <p>Should the Commission retain the management of this instrument, or delegate some tasks to management bodies to be established in the participating countries or to the national authorities themselves?</p> <p>What would be the benefits and disadvantages of this approach?</p> <p style="color: #008080;">LIFE ENV – Have the guidelines for demonstration projects yielded any benefits or caused any problems? Please list.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of recommendations set out within Article 14 report against evaluation findings Review of annual cost of LIFE programme management vs total programme budget – Article 14 report provides historical budget data – comparison with other EC programmes Review of Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data from LIFE UNIT for current/recent costs; National representative views (NAT); Views of external assistance teams; Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) esp. ENV1 ECODIT views.

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based assessment	Detailed evaluation
<p>LIFE ENV – Should we keep the same system, or eliminate the guidelines altogether?</p> <p>LIFE ENV – If the guidelines are to be retained, how could they be improved, should their scope be broadened or limited and how often should they be revised?</p>		
2.2 How effective are LIFE’s dissemination activities and how can they be enhanced?		
<p>What dissemination activities have been carried out to date?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE website • Review of annual LIFE –Nature reports • Review of a selection of project reports/video list etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with LIFE UNIT; • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) • ECODIT views.
<p>Does the programme have a dissemination strategy and/or a person who coordinates dissemination activities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE website • Review of LIFE Guidelines • Review of LIFE Communication strategy(http://europa.eu.int/comm./environment/life/tools/strategy_part1_en.pdf) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with LIFE UNIT; • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) • ECODIT views.
<p>What communication media and channels (Case studies, web, videos, seminars) have been used and why?</p> <p>Which are felt to be the most effective?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE website • Review of annual LIFE –Nature reports • Review of a selection of project reports/video list etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with LIFE UNIT; • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) • ECODIT views.
<p>Who is the programme trying to reach/influence?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the LIFE Regulation • Review of LIFE website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with LIFE UNIT; • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
<p>Does each project have a dissemination strategy and if so how is it formulated and evaluated? Is it always implemented?</p> <p>How are target markets for programme outputs selected?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE application packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with LIFE UNIT; • National representative views (NAT); • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) • Views of external assistance teams.
<p>What do LIFE stakeholders feel about the programme’s dissemination activities? (Are they aware of them, do they feel they are effective)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT); • LIFE beneficiaries (LIFE days): • Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and • Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) • Views of external assistance teams.
<p>Is there any dissemination experience from other EU or national programmes which</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation team review of own experiences/knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT); • LIFE beneficiaries (LIFE days): • Views of thematic units within the

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based assessment	Detailed evaluation
could benefit LIFE?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of external assistance teams.
How could the transfer and implementation of project results be improved at EU, national and regional levels?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); LIFE beneficiaries (LIFE days); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D) Views of external assistance teams.
2.3 Does the dissemination of results from LIFE stimulate debate at the national, regional or European level?		
Is there any evidence that outputs from LIFE have stimulated debate at the national level? In what areas and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of projects with results/case studies on LIFE web-site (DOC) No. of projects with wider dissemination activities identified (DOC, LPM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative awareness of LIFE project outputs (NAT).
Is there any evidence that outputs from LIFE has stimulated debate at the EU level? In what areas and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
Theme 3: Impact		
3.1 What has been the impact of LIFE on EC policy development?		
<p>Where has LIFE contributed to the development or amendment of environmental policies? Examples?</p> <p>How has LIFE contributed to each of these policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of list of developing legislation (use to stimulate discussions) LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
<p>Where has LIFE contributed to the implementation of existing environmental policies? Examples?</p> <p>How did LIFE contribute in each case?</p> <p>Can a medium or long-term effect of actions undertaken in these sectors be estimated?</p> <p>Is LIFE effectively addressing the main environmental problems?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of list of developing legislation (use to stimulate discussions) Review of Article 8 Report (Natura 2000) LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views LIFE II evaluation report Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) Key issues highlighted in EEA Environmental Assessment Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of thematic units within the Commission (EU-D), and Views of other relevant DGs (EU-D).
3.2 Has LIFE met its policy aims?		
<p>LIFE NAT – To what extent did LIFE-Nature contribute to the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC?</p> <p>Provide examples of successes and failures. Could the successful outcomes have been achieved in another way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of quantitative data, "LIFE for Natura 2000" report Article 8 Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National LIFE- Nature representative views (NAT); Views of Commission policy makers/ Thematic heads (ENV/B1 & B2, DG AGRI) (EU-D).
<p>LIFE ENV – To what extent did LIFE-Environment contribute to developing innovative and integrated techniques and methods in the sectors listed in article 4,2.a?</p> <p>Provide examples of successes and failures. Could the successful outcomes have been achieved in another way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakdown of projects i.e. distribution of LIFE Env projects in each of the five Art 4.2a objectives. Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views Review of auditors report (LIFE II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National LIFE- ENV representative views (NAT); Views of Commission policy makers/ Thematic heads (ENV/A1, A2, E1, B1, DG AGRI) (EU-D).
<p>LIFE 3C – To what extent have the projects contributed to building up capacity and administrative structures in the environmental sector in countries bordering Mediterranean and Baltic Sea?</p> <p>Provide examples of successes and failures. Could the successful outcomes have been achieved in another way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of number of projects and value of support for LIFE –Third Countries – quantitative evaluation from SMAP 2000 report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT); Views of Commission policy makers/ Thematic heads (ENV2, DG External relations)(EU-D) ECODIT Views.
3.3 What has been the interaction with and impact on other EC Programmes/initiatives?		
<p>What is the added value of LIFE in the modification of areas of policy in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National representative views (NAT);

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
<p>comparison with other financial EC instruments for the development of environmental policy?</p> <p>For each component of LIFE what other EC Financial Instruments are acting in the same area?</p> <p>How does the objectives of LIFE complement or build upon the objectives of those instruments?</p> <p>What examples are there of LIFE projects complementing other Financial Instruments?</p> <p>What has been the significance and degree of importance of these contributions?</p> <p>Have there been any adverse impacts on other Financial Instruments as a result of the LIFE programme or its projects?</p> <p>Is there any evidence that LIFE has an impulsive impact (facilitates or accelerates) the impact of other environmental policy instruments.</p> <p>Are these actions effectively addressing the main environmental problems?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of quantitative data, "LIFE for Natura 2000" report • Article 8 Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIFE Unit views: and • Views of Commission policy makers/ Thematic heads (ENV1, DG External relations)(EU-D).
3.4 What has been the impact on national policies and programmes?		
<p>What is the added value of LIFE in the modification of areas of policy in comparison with other financial EC instruments for the development of environmental policy?</p> <p>For each component of LIFE what national programmes are operating in the same area?</p> <p>What examples are there of LIFE projects complementing these?</p> <p>What has been the significance and degree of importance of these contributions?</p> <p>Are these actions effectively addressing the main environmental problems?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of LIFE committee meeting notes/MS views • Review of quantitative data, "LIFE for Natura 2000" report • Article 8 Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT).
3.5 Dissemination/knowledge transfer?		
<p>How does the dissemination of results (at European or National level) stimulate debate or allow greater sharing of knowledge and uptake at the technical/operational level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the number of publicly available case studies (on LIFE website) versus number of complete projects. • Review of current programme procedures. • Comparison with other EC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National representative views (NAT); • Views of heads of relevant thematic units within the Commission (EU-D); and views of other relevant DGs (EU-D)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Illustrative Indicators and Data Sources		
Evaluation aspect	Desk-based review	Stakeholder Consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the level of dissemination be improved? If so, how? 	financial instruments	

Data sources: DOC: Project files, databases and other documents; LPM: LIFE Programme Managers; NAT: National stakeholder representatives; EU-D; EU decision makers.

Questions relevant to the overall LIFE programme/all themes

[LIFE NAT – Questions specific to LIFE-Nature](#)

[LIFE ENV – Questions specific to LIFE-Environment](#)

[LIFE 3C – Questions specific to LIFE-Third Countries](#)

Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument

Appendix 2

Stakeholders Interviewed

Stakeholder by Country/organisation

NAME	Status	Nature of Contact
Austria		
Gottfried Lamers	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email & telephone
Christian Ploessnig	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email
Belgium		
Robert Martens	Member of LIFE Committee	Email <i>No response</i>
Joelle Smeets	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email & telephone
Koen de Smet	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email <i>No response</i>
Denmark		
Gert Hansen	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email & telephone
Soren Korsholm	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email & telephone
Finland		
Pekka Harju-Autti	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Esko Jaakkola	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
France		
Pascal Magoarou	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Annick Bourdon	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Germany		
Ullrich Bruchmann	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Holger Galas	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Mr . Eichner	National authority – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Guenther Lanz	Representative of all Bundeslaender for LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Greece		
Artemis Gryllia	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Fotini Boura	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Rania Spyropoulou	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Ireland		
John Kiernan	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Telephone

NAME	Status	Nature of Contact
Alan Craig	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email <i>No response</i>
Italy		
Stefania Betti, Giuliana Gasparrini, Pietro La Grotta, Marco Venanzi.	Environmental Ministry – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Anna Maria Maggiore, Lucio Eleuteri, Eugenio Duprè	Environmental Ministry – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
	Approximately 80 beneficiaries for LIFE Environment and LIFE Nature	Face-to-face, LIFE day
Latvia		
Valdis Bister	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email
Ilona Medzina	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email
Luxembourg		
Jean-Paul Feltgen	National point of contact – LIFE Environment and LIFE Nature	Email
Netherlands		
Just van Lidth de Jeude	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Victor van Heekeren	Consultant, Member of the LIFE group	Face-to-face
Johan Havinga	NOVEM, Monitoring team – LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Carleen Weebers	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Portugal		
Isabel Lico	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email
Mario Silva	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email
Romania		
Costel Hanta	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email
Adriana Baz	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email & telephone
Slovenia		
Dusan Vojnovic	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	Email & telephone
Vesna Kolar-Planinsic	National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Email & telephone
Spain		
José Alvarez Diaz	Coordinator of programmes in Spain and National representative of LIFE Committee,	Face-to-face

NAME	Status	Nature of Contact
	National point of contact – LIFE Environment	
Borja Heredia Armada	Deputy Director General of Biodiversity Conservation, National representative of Habitat Committee, National point of contact – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Concha Olmeda	Monitoring team – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face, LIFE day
Victoria González	Monitoring team – LIFE Nature	Face-to-face, LIFE day
Xavier Marginet, Moisés Moya, Gonzálo Torralbo Pérez, José Luís Bosch Reig, Rafael Pinilla Muñoz, Miguel López Estebarez, Encarnación Porras Sarramayor, Iñigo Torres Andrés, Esther Roldán García, José Fernandez Robles del Salto, Mariona Salvatella, Albert Sorrosal, Antonio Cruz Bañeres, Carlos Vieites Fernandez	Beneficiaries	Face-to-face, LIFE day
Sweden		
Anita Moberg	National point of contact – LIFE Environment & Nature	Email & telephone
United Kingdom		
Isabelle Linnington	LIFE UK National Authority	Face-to-face
Robbie Craig	LIFE ENV National Authority	Face-to-face
Neil Oliver	LIFE Nature National Authority	Face-to-face
Andrew McKay	Scottish Executive	Face-to-face
Phillip Hobson	National Assembly for Wales	Face-to-face
Bangor University, English Nature, World Wildlife Fund, RSPB, Realise Network	Beneficiaries	Face-to-face
Eddie O’Sullivan	LIFE Nature National Authority	Face-to-face
Third Countries		
Gerrard Van Orrische	EU delegation based in Bosnia	Telephone
Nikos Georgiades	Ministry of project recipient, Cyprus	Telephone
Mr Antoniou	Responsible for one LIFE Nature project	Telephone & email

NAME	Status	Nature of Contact
European Commission		
Maria Dolores Becerril	DG Environment Unit D1 LIFE (Finance)	Face-to-face
Bruno Julien	DG Environment Unit D1 LIFE (Head of Unit)	Face-to-face
Angelo Salsi	DG Environment Unit D1 LIFE (Deputy Head of Unit)	Face-to-face
Nicola Brier	DG Environment Ecolabelling	Face-to-face
Bernard Brookes	DG Environment Unit D1, Co-ordinator LIFE Nature	Face-to-face
Joaquim Capitaó	DG Environment Unit B2 Nature and Bio-diversity	Face-to-face
Emer Daly	DG Environment ENV 1, Head of Strategic Planning	Face-to-face
Alban De-Villepin	DG Environment Unit D1, Co-ordinator LIFE Third Country	Face-to-face
Magnus Gislev	DG Environment Unit D3 Industry and implementation	Face-to-face
Peter Horrocks	DG Environment Unit E1 Climate Change	Face-to-face
Klaus Koegler	DG Environment Unit A2 Sustainable Resources	Face-to-face
Andy Murphy	DG Environment ENV 2, Environmental Co-operation with European third countries	Face-to-face
Patrick Murphy	DG Environment Unit B1 Water, the Marine and Soil	Face-to-face
Jose Milan Navaro	DG Environment Unit D1 LIFE Environment	Face-to-face
Callum Searle	DG Research	Face-to-face
Third Country Monitoring Team		
Xavier Guillas	Ecodit – Monitoring team for LIFE Third Country	Face-to-face