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ANNEX 1

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION DECISION

on the adoption of a financing decision for 2017 and 2018 for the pilot project "Pilot project - Environmental monitoring of pesticide use through honeybees"

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Pilot project – "Environmental monitoring of pesticide use through honeybees"

1.1. Introduction

On the basis of the objectives given in the budget remarks this work programme contains the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for year 2017 and 2018 as follows:

for grant (implemented under direct management) (1.2): EUR 1 250 000

1.2. Grants

1.2.1. Pilot project – Environmental monitoring of pesticide use through honeybees

LEGAL BASIS

Pilot project within the meaning of Article 54(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

Budget line

In 2017: 07 02 77 38

In 2018: 17 04 77 06

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The objective of this pilot project is to put in place a tool for evaluation of pesticide exposure in the environment at landscape level and understand the sources of contamination with the help of bees and bee products. This approach combines environmental contaminant monitoring with animal health and food safety and security.

Honeybees come in contact with diverse environmental matrices due to their biological needs and behaviour. As a result of their foraging behaviour, bees regularly cover several kilometres from their hive (flying up to 15 km from their hive). Numerous plants are visited every day to collect nectar, secretions from sap-feeding insects, pollen and water, while plant gums are collected for propolis production. While flying they also come into contact with airborne particles, which stick to their body hairs, or substances diluted in the air. Scattered studies have been performed using bees and beekeeping products as biological 'monitoring instruments' to measure environmental quality. Various levels of environmental monitoring with honeybees have already been described, differing in their degree of complexity and sensitivity.

Concerned about honeybee colony losses, beekeepers, beekeeper technicians and scientists in specific areas of Europe started analysing the pesticide content of bees and bee products. The results are often the same: bees are exposed to a wide variety of contaminants simultaneously and consecutively. Surprisingly, on many occasions the pesticides detected were not authorised, while in others they were found in natural areas away from the sources of contamination.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

The pilot project will be implemented by a call for proposals for projects. Proposals must include the following actions:

- (1) The development of a non-invasive environmental monitoring system via the collection of biweekly pollen samples during two beekeeping seasons by beekeepers from several countries (n= 5-6) in Europe (citizens' science project). The countries will be chosen on the basis of the following criteria: existence of regional/national activities and scientists/technicians able to sample pollen in their country, at least one representative of each authorisation zone (Annex 1 of Regulation 1107/2009). This monitoring system should be easy to carry out and reproducible across Europe. In specific cases, fresh honey samples may be collected.
- (2) A protocol agreed between scientists and field practitioners will be proposed following official methodological recommendations (i.e. the European Food Safety Authority HEALTHY-B, the EPILOBEE study). In doing so, the outcome of the project can be integrated in multiple stressor models linked with bee health and risk assessment in accordance with the relevant parts of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report on pollinators, pollination and food production¹. Practitioners' work will be coordinated by scientists/technicians. Pollen and pesticide analyses will serve to establish the botanical origin and contamination of the samples, respectively.
- (3) The identification of areas at risk for bee health by putting analytical data in a geospatial context, aiming to understand the possible sources and variability of both bee food and contaminants.
- (4) Analysis will screen for both authorised and non-authorised pesticide and veterinary products. Additionally, the fate of the colonies participating to the sampling will be surveyed to explore potential correlations with the parameters measured. The interpretation of the monitoring results will contribute to the evaluation of the implementation of European legislation in terms of pesticide application (sustainable use directive), pesticide authorisation and efficiency of agro-environmental and greening measures from the common agricultural policy. Evaluation of the results and methodology to assess whether they could be enlarged to wild pollinators.
- (5) An indication of the plant biodiversity of the landscape linked to the biology of honeybees throughout the year.
- (6) The verification of the quality of the CORINE database (or other more detailed land use dataset available in the countries participating) for landscape-level exposure modelling.

¹ https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/pdf/individual_chapters_pollination_20170305.pdf

Essential eligibility, selection² and award criteria³

ADMISSIBILITY, EXCLUSION AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.

Admissibility criteria

Proposals received after the deadline for submission laid down in the call for proposals will not be considered for funding. Other formal requirements regarding the grant application will be specified in the call for proposals.

Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participation in an award procedure if they are in any of the situations of exclusion listed in Articles 106 and 107 of the Financial Regulation.

Eligibility criteria

Proposals must be submitted by consortia of legal entities (with or without legal personality) established in at least 2 different EU Member States. Actions that have already commenced by the date on which the grant application is registered will be excluded from participation.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Only proposals which meet the exclusion and eligibility criteria will be assessed on the basis of the selection criteria. The following selection criteria have to be met.

1. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the activity is being carried out and to participate in its co-financing.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies and international public organisations.

2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional resources, competences and qualifications required to complete the proposed action.

AWARD CRITERIA

² In accordance with Article 131 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 the verification of financial capacity shall not apply to natural persons in receipt of scholarships, to natural persons most in need and in receipt of direct support, to public bodies or to international organisations. The authorising officer may, depending on a risk assessment waive the obligation to verify the operational capacity of public bodies or international organisations.

³ In case of grants awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 or under a framework partnership the essential eligibility criteria are not to be specified since the description of the action shall specify the bodies to which grants may be awarded. Nevertheless the selection and award criteria shall be mentioned in all cases including for specific grants, even if those criteria are already provided in the framework partnership agreement or decision.

Only projects which meet the exclusion and eligibility and selection criteria will be further evaluated on the basis of the following award criteria.

1. Policy and contextual relevance (40 points, threshold: 20 points):
 - (a) Project's contribution to meeting the objectives and priorities defined in the financing decision (8 points);
 - (b) Strategic relevance with regard to the EU Health Strategy ((COM (2007) 630 final; http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/strategy/health_strategy_en.htm) and with regard to expected contribution to existing knowledge and implications for health (8 points);
 - (c) Added value at EU level in the field of public health (8 points):
 - impact on target groups, long-term effect and potential multiplier effect, such as replicable, transferable and sustainable activities,
 - contribution to complementarity, synergy and compatibility with relevant EU policies and programmes;
 - (d) Pertinence of geographical coverage (8 points):

Applicants must ensure that the geographical coverage of the project is commensurate with its objectives, and explain the role of eligible countries as partners and the relevance of project resources or the target populations they represent;
 - (e) Social, cultural and political context (8 points):

Applicants must explain how the project relates to the situation of the countries or specific areas involved, ensuring the compatibility of envisaged actions with the culture and views of the target groups.
2. Technical quality (30 points, threshold: 15 points):
 - (a) Evidence base (6 points):

Applicants must include a problem analysis and clearly describe the factors, impact, effectiveness and applicability of the proposed measures;
 - (b) Content specification (6 points):

Applicants must clearly describe aims and objectives, target groups, including relevant geographical factors, methods, anticipated effects and outcomes;
 - (c) Innovative nature, technical complementarity and avoidance of duplication of other existing actions at EU level (6 points):

Applicants must clearly identify the progress that is expected to result from the project within a given field in relation to the state of the art and ensure that there will be neither inappropriate duplication nor overlap, whether partial or total, between projects and activities already carried out at EU and international level;
 - (d) Evaluation strategy (6 points):

Applicants must clearly explain the methods proposed and indicators chosen and their adequacy;

(e) Dissemination strategy (6 points):

Applicants must clearly illustrate the adequacy of the envisaged strategy and methodology to ensure transferability of results and sustainability of dissemination.

3. Management quality and budget (30 points, threshold: 15 points):

(a) Planning and organisation (5 points):

Applicants must clearly describe the activities to be undertaken, timetable and milestones, deliverables, nature and distribution of tasks, and provide a risk analysis;

(b) Organisational capacity (5 points):

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the quality level of the structure of the project by describing its management structure, competence of staff, responsibilities, internal communication, decision-making, monitoring and supervision;

(c) Quality of partnership (5 points):

Applicants must clearly describe the partnerships envisaged in terms of extensiveness, roles and responsibilities, relationships between the partners, and the synergy and complementarity of partners and network structure;

(d) Communication strategy (5 points):

Applicants must clearly describe the communication strategy in terms of planning, target groups, adequacy of channels used, and visibility of EU co-financing;

(e) Overall and detailed budget, including financial management (10 points, threshold: 5 points):

Applicants must ensure that the budget is relevant, appropriate, balanced and consistent in itself, between partners and in relation to the specific objectives of the project. The budget should be distributed between partners at a minimum reasonable level, avoiding excessive fragmentation.

Applicants must clearly describe financial circuits, responsibilities, reporting procedures and controls.

Any proposal which does not reach all the thresholds will be rejected.

Following the evaluation, a list is drawn up containing proposals reaching all the thresholds and ranked according to the total number of points awarded. Only the highest ranked proposal will be awarded co-financing.

Implementation

Through a call for proposals managed by DG SANTE. Only 1 grant will be awarded.

Indicative timetable and indicative amount of the call for proposals

Reference	Date	Amount
Launch of the call for proposals	First semester 2018	1 250 000 EUR

Maximum possible rate of co-financing of the eligible total costs

The maximum rate for EU co-financing is 60 %
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