EN

ANNEX 18

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the 2017 Annual Action programme for the Partnership Instrument

Action Fiche for Policy Support Facility (PSF)

1. IDENTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the action</th>
<th>Policy Support Facility (PSF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country(ies)/Region</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>Total estimated cost: EUR 5 500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total amount of the EU budget contribution: EUR 5 500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total duration¹</td>
<td>24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of implementation</td>
<td>Direct management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procurement – Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grants – call for proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markers (from CRIS Dac form)</td>
<td>Rio Convention Markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological diversity</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat desertification</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change mitigation</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change adaptation</td>
<td>☑</td>
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</table>

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The overall aim of the Policy Support Facility (PSF) is to support the EU’s priorities and to influence the partner countries/regions’ agenda positively, so that it aligns as much as possible with the EU’s policies, objectives and values (especially when it relates to values, governance, standards, consumer protection including consumer

¹ Maximum duration of the operational implementation period of individual contracts upon their signature.
product safety, climate change or the protection of the environment); an active and engaging policy dialogue will foster mutual understanding as well as common responses to global challenges.

2.2. Context

The Partnership Instrument (PI) includes, amongst its thematic priorities, support for the implementation of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, Action Plans and similar bilateral instruments, strengthening the political and economic dialogue with third countries of particular relevance in world affairs, including in foreign policy; supporting engagement with relevant third countries on bilateral and global issues of common concern; enhancing policy dialogues and cooperation with relevant third countries, taking into consideration all areas within the scope of the Europe 2020 strategy; promoting the Union's internal policies with key partner countries and supporting regulatory convergence in this regard.

In order to address these priorities, a Policy Support Facility (PSF) was created by the PI AAP 2014 to respond to the dynamic and fast-changing global environment that European policies have been confronted with in terms of partner countries' regions' approaches to these policies and to promote European interests.

The AAP 2015 and AAP 2016 included a further allocation for the PSF which allowed the continuation of the implementation of the facility. The PSF allocation in AAP 2016 was already increased by EUR 1.500.000 early 2017 using 2017 budget through a non-substantial amendment of AAP 2016.

This PSF is conceived as a rapid-response tool enabling targeted, flexible and tailor-made short-term actions. As such, it is implemented primarily through a multiple Global Framework Contract with three lots; in duly justified cases however, services may be contracted through other existing framework contracts managed by other DGs upon agreement by the responsible service and/or tendered outside existing framework contracts. For some activities under this facility, in particular those targeting multilateral relations of the European Union, a grant under direct management is the most suitable implementation method.

2.3. Lessons learnt

The design of the PSF and its internal processes was based on lessons from existing similar dialogue facilities that point to the importance of identifying priority areas for enhancing the partnerships, allowing the facility’s efforts to be concentrated in sectors with clear strategic interest, specific engagements and foreseeable EU or shared benefits. However, several actions under these different facilities have not necessarily served the policy dialogue in the long-run due to their isolation, a lack of vision and/or work programme of the dialogue and/or the unwillingness of one of the partners to implement the activity. FPI strives to avoid the repetition of these shortcomings by an enhanced proposal assessment processes under the PSF.

Previous projects have shown the importance of maintaining a high degree of flexibility to respond to changing priorities or political commitments, while also planning and ensuring continuity of activities in a number of key priority areas. Careful planning will be also essential to help manage the financial and logistic
uncertainties derived from the demand-driven approach of the action. It will be also essential to ensure the active participation of relevant DGs responsible for each dialogue in the very labour intensive follow-up of political engagements.

2.4. Complementary actions

This global Policy Support Facility co-exists with several country-specific policy dialogue facilities funded through the PI (for Brazil under AAP 2015, China and Mexico under the current AAP). The overall objective of those country-specific actions is to contribute to strengthening and further enlarging bilateral relations through supporting sector dialogues on priority themes of mutual interest in order to enhance the Strategic Partnership between EU and the countries concerned. Complementarities and synergies will be sought with projects that will be covered under these facilities.

3. Detailed Description

3.1. Objectives

To support policy dialogues between the EU and partner countries on bilateral and global issues of common concern and to facilitate economic and trade relations with partner countries.

It will complement/support the external dimension of internal policies conducted under the other EU political programmes and instruments.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

R1: Improved bases for policy dialogues of the EU with partner countries and the improvement of the quality of co-operation with those partner countries in areas of common interest.

R2: Improved bases for activating or renewing debates relevant to EU, international or joint agendas.

R3: Improved bases for adoption/approximation to EU and international standards.

For the purpose of the PSF a Global Framework Contract was tendered, consisting of the following three Lots:

- **Lot 1 – Event organisation**: logistics, travel and accommodation associated to conferences, forums, workshops, study visits, incl. logistical support for working sessions on policy dialogues (in Europe or partner country), etc.

- **Lot 3 – Information and communication**: information and communication actions of the EU.

- **Lot 4 – Market Access and Trade & Investment Agreement Negotiation & Implementation**: legal analysis and advice, expertise to support Delegations coordinating Market Access Teams, translations, statistics and collection of
data and analysis, expert seminars, workshops, technical assistance to support partner countries implement necessary reforms, monitoring of trade agreements.

An additional Lot (Lot 2) on technical expertise was abandoned during the procurement procedure. The needs of this lot will be covered by the existing Framework Contracts such as BENEF2013 managed by DEVCO; this was rendered possible following an amendment of the Financial Regulation which came into force in January 2016.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

R.1. The activity is an isolated event and does not contribute to deepening the policy dialogue.

M.1 A proposal has to be presented for approval of the activity and one of the requirements for approval is that the proposal makes it made clear how this activity is embedded in a policy dialogue and/or agenda.

R2. The activity overlaps with or duplicates activities carried out by other Commission services.

M2. As part of the approval process, all relevant European Commission services are consulted on the proposed activity.

R3. Insufficient absorption capacity of the users (EEAS, European Commission line DGs) to provide the technical and policy steer of the activity.

R4. A proposal has to be presented along with an endorsement letter at an appropriate level of hierarchy; the endorsement letter specifically appoints a focal person in charge of the technical and/or policy steer.

A1 Sufficient staff is available in FPI both at HQ level and in EU Delegations to manage this facility.

3.4. Stakeholders

- Direct stakeholders and partners of the different activities within the facility are partner country administrations involved in the dialogues, together with the corresponding services of the European Commission, the EEAS and other partner country and European public and private institutions interested in the policy dialogues (regional and local governments, universities and research centres, business and socio-professional associations, NGOs, cultural institutions etc.).

- Indirect stakeholders are EU Member States, all private and institutional/public stakeholders at different levels in Europe and partner countries that may be consulted or involved in the implementation of the different activities.
4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

4.1.1. Procurement (direct management)

(a) Contracts: A Global Framework Contract consisting of 3 Lots was concluded in order to implement this facility. In duly justified cases, for a particular activity services may be contracted through other existing framework contracts managed by other DGs upon agreement by the responsible service and/or tendered outside existing framework contracts.

(b) Indicative number of specific contracts to be signed under the Global Framework Contract: 20

(c) Indicative number of direct contracts under calls for tenders: 5

(d) Indicative timing: Proposals are being received on an ongoing basis.

4.1.2. Grants: call for proposals (direct management)

In duly justified cases, grants may be deemed the most suitable implementation method for a particular activity under this facility.

(a) Objectives of the grants

Grants may be used to support organisations such as civil society organisations or international organisations in their activities that underpin policy dialogues.

(b) Eligibility conditions

The eligibility conditions will be developed on the basis of the actual needs.

(c) Essential selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria will be financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria will be relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

(d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants under these calls is 100% of the eligible costs of the action.

In accordance with Articles 192 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, if full funding is essential for the action to be carried out, the maximum possible rate of co-financing may be increased up to 100%. The essentiality of full funding will be
justified by the Commission’s authorising officer responsible in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

(e) Indicative trimester to launch the call

It will be further developed if and when required.

4.2. **Indicative budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Implementation</th>
<th>Amount in EUR million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 – Procurement (direct management)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2 – Grants (direct management)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. **Performance monitoring**

Day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of the facility is carried out by FPI. Furthermore, concerned Commission DGs/ EEAS are required to monitor closely the performance of activities that have been proposed by them. Common Partnership Instrument indicators will be used to monitor the performance of the actions under this facility. The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews.

4.4. **Evaluation and audit**

For this action or its components the Commission may carry out interim and/or final/ex-post evaluation(s) via independent consultants contracted by the Commission based on specific terms of reference.

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments.

As the "N+1" applies for contracting under this decision, external evaluations and audits, as well as additional external monitoring referred to under section 4.3 above, will be funded from sources other than those allocated to this specific action.

4.5. **Communication and visibility**

Most of the activities (conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.) are in themselves visibility-related activities, but it is essential to publicise results and achievements in the appropriate forums to increase visibility.

All documentation and promotional material produced in the framework of the project bears the EU flag and mentions that it is financed by the EU.