COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 4.7.2018

on the 2018 Partnership Instrument Annual Action Programme for cooperation with third countries to be financed from the general budget of the European Union
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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,


Having regard to the Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action, and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The objectives pursued by the annual action programme to be financed under the Partnership Instrument are to advance and promote Union and mutual interests through cooperation with third countries. The Commission has adopted an Implementing Decision on the second Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Partnership Instrument for the period 2018-2020. In line with the Multiannual Indicative Programme, this annual action programme includes measures in the following areas: support for the Union's cooperation partnership strategies, cooperation on global challenges, implementation of the international dimension of the "Europe 2020" strategy and promotion of the Union’s internal policies abroad, support for economic and trade relations as well as promotion of the Union's values and interests;

(2) The action entitled "Reducing plastic waste and marine litter in East and South East Asia – Supporting a transition to a circular economy in the region" aims to promote sustainable consumption and production of plastic, including waste management aspects and prevention of plastic waste entering into the marine environment, via a set of activities that will support a transition towards a more circular economy, in line with the EU Circular Economy Action Plan and the Plastic Strategy. The action will be implemented in indirect management with Member State agencies, notably Agence Française d'Expertise Technique Internationale (AFETI) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ);

1 OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1
2 OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95
4 C(2018) 4001
The action entitled "Promoting key aspects of environmental protection in Russia through civil society engagement" aims to contribute to tackling key environmental issues in Russia through strengthening the participation of civil society organisations in the process of environmental policy development, implementation and oversight. The action will be implemented in direct management via the direct award of a grant to the World Wide Fund for Nature Russia (WWF);

The action entitled "Follow-up to the strategic plan for biodiversity" aims to develop an effective EU environment diplomacy in the field of biodiversity at global level, and in particular in relation to China, by framing the Convention for Biological Diversity process and placing the EU as key interlocutor on biodiversity, and thereby contributing to the adoption of an ambitious follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The action will be implemented in indirect management with a Member State agency, notably Agence Française d'Expertise Technique Internationale (AFETI);

The action entitled "Ocean Governance: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems, catalysts for building peace and security, and fostering sustainable economies" aims to increase the EU's role as a global actor in international ocean governance by fostering regional and interregional cooperation relevant to the protection and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

The action entitled "International Ocean Governance: Strengthening international ocean data through the EU's ocean diplomacy" aims to promote international ocean governance with China and support the implementation of global commitments by making ocean marine data and data products available and by providing better data and data products. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

The action entitled "EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project – Phase II" aims to facilitate and strengthen the EU dialogue on migration and mobility with China. Building upon the results of the first phase of the EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project, this action will contribute to better organised legal migration and mobility between the EU and China and to the prevention and reduction of irregular migration flows stemming from China, including trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, in a balanced and comprehensive manner. The action will be implemented in indirect management with an international organisation, notably International Organization for Migration (IOM);

The action entitled "Promoting economic empowerment of women at work in Asia" aims to support sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth by promoting economic participation and empowerment of women in both Asian and EU countries. The action will be implemented in indirect management with an international organisation, notably UN Women;

The action entitled "Support to the development of Social and Solidarity Economy" aims to promote EU's core value related to inclusive growth, socially, societal and environmentally responsible business as well as facilitate the internationalisation of EU Social Enterprises. Through this action, the EU will support concrete partnerships with EU and local actors in selected partner countries (e.g. Brazil, Canada, India, Mexico, South Korea, and the United States of America) with tailor-made cooperation approaches. The action will be implemented in indirect management with an
international organisation, notably the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);

(10) The action entitled "EU-China Cooperation on Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion" aims to promote cooperation between the EU and China in the area of employment, social affairs and inclusion in a context of common challenges, such as demographic change, migration, or evolving employment patterns. The action will also support China in designing and managing its social protection system and collecting and analysing occupational safety and health data. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services and a call for proposals and in indirect management with an international organisation, notably the International Labour Organisation (ILO);

(11) The action entitled "Support to CETA Implementation and EU Chambers Coordination in Canada – II" aims to support, through legal analysis and advice, the targeted monitoring of the legal and practical implementation of CETA in Canada, both at federal level and across the provinces, and to supply EU businesses with practical tools to take advantage of CETA. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services and via the award of a direct grant to the European Chamber of Commerce in Canada (EUCCAN);

(12) The action entitled "Understanding Chinese legal economic reform 2020" aims to reinforce EU/China bilateral economic and trade relations by improving the policy and regulatory framework for trade and investment, facilitating bilateral dialogues and notably promoting a level-playing field for EU businesses. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(13) The action entitled "European Business and Regulatory Cooperation Programme (EBRC 2)" aims to advance the EU’s trade and economic interests in Taiwan and in the broader East Asian region by building on the success of the European Business and Regulatory Cooperation programme 2014-2017. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(14) The action entitled "Support facility for the implementation of EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)" aims at providing support to underpin the functioning of the EU-Japan EPA and its optimal use by EU operators. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(15) The action entitled "EU Asia cooperation on (Phyto-)sanitary and Food Safety Regulation" aims to deepen the cooperation between the EU and selected ASEAN and Asian trade partners through a regulatory dialogue on food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary measures with a view to expand economic opportunities for EU businesses in Asia. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(16) The action entitled "Enhancing EU-China Strategic Cooperation in Respect of the Made in China 2025 Initiative" aims to contribute to enhancing strategic cooperation between the EU and China by maximising business opportunities and promoting a level playing field in four priority sectors; i.e. new energy vehicles, semiconductors, robotics, and medical devices. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(17) The action entitled "Public and Cultural Diplomacy" aims to build trust and support the EU become a stronger global actor. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services and calls for proposals;
(18) The action entitled "EU - Indonesia and Vietnam Partnership Facility" aims to strengthen the EU-Indonesia relations and the EU-Vietnam relations by supporting the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(19) The action entitled "Support Facility for the implementation of the EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)" aims at deepening EU-Japan relations on priority themes of EU and mutual interest. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services;

(20) The action entitled "Policy Support Facility (PSF)" aims to provide targeted, flexible and tailor-made support to specific EU’s policy priorities. The action will be implemented in direct management via the procurement of services and calls for proposals;

(21) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012;

(22) The envisaged assistance to the concerned countries is deemed to strictly follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures concerning the said countries;

(23) It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants in accordance with Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 188(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. The work programme is set out in Annexes 2, 9, 10, 16 and 19;

(24) The action "Academic outreach through Jean Monnet activities", which is part of the action "Public and Cultural Diplomacy" should be implemented by the "Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)" in accordance with Decision No. 2013/776/EU of 18 December 2013;

(25) The Commission should entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the entities specified in Annexes 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9 to this Decision, subject to the conclusion of delegation agreements. In accordance with Article 60(1)(c) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that these entities guarantee a level of protection of the financial interests of the European Union equivalent to that required when the Commission manages European Union funds. Entities specified in Annexes 6, 7, 8 and 9 to this Decision comply with the conditions set out in points (a) to (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 60(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and the supervisory and support measures are in place as necessary. The authorising officer responsible deems that, based on GIZ’s and AFETI’s positive assessment prior to the entry into force of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with them, budget-implementation tasks can be entrusted to GIZ and AFETI.

(26) The authorising officer responsible should be able to award grants without a call for proposals only in the exceptional cases set out in Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012;

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It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012;

Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, any substantial change to a financing decision that has already been adopted should follow the same procedure as the initial decision. It is therefore appropriate that the Commission defines the changes to this Decision that are considered non substantial in order to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.

The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Partnership Instrument Committee established under Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 234/2014;

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Adoption of the programme
The 2018 Partnership Instrument Annual Action Programme for cooperation with third countries, as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The programme shall include the following actions:

– Annex 1: Reducing plastic waste and marine litter in East and South East Asia – Supporting a transition to a circular economy in the region
– Annex 2: Promoting key aspects of environmental protection in Russia through civil society engagement
– Annex 3: Follow-up to the strategic plan for biodiversity
– Annex 4: Ocean Governance: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems, catalysts for building peace and security, and fostering sustainable economies
– Annex 5: International Ocean Governance: Strengthening international ocean data through the EU’s ocean diplomacy
– Annex 6: EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project – Phase II
– Annex 7: Promoting economic empowerment of women at work in Asia
– Annex 8: Support to the development of Social and Solidarity Economy
– Annex 9: EU-China Cooperation on Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
– Annex 10: Support to CETA Implementation and EU Chambers Coordination in Canada – II
– Annex 12: European Business and Regulatory Cooperation Programme (EBRC 2)
– Annex 13: Support facility for the implementation of EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)
– Annex 14: EU Asia cooperation on (Phyto-)sanitary (SPS) and Food Safety Regulation
– Annex 15: Enhancing EU-China Strategic Cooperation in Respect of the Made in China 2025 Initiative
Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 81,900,000 and shall be financed from budget line 19.0501 of the general budget of the European Union for 2018.

The financial contribution provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Methods of implementation

Budget-implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entities identified in the Annexes 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

The elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 are set out in the Annexes to this Decision.

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the authorising officer responsible in accordance with Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20% of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation period shall not be considered substantial within the meaning of Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

The authorising officer responsible may adopt such non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 4.7.2018

For the Commission
Federica Mogherini
Vice-President