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### ANNEX

#### **to the Commission Decision on the adoption of the work programme for 2018 and on the financing of the implementation of the preparatory action "Macro-regional strategy 2014-2020: EU strategy for the Alpine Region"**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

##### **1.1. Budget line: 13 03 77 22**

##### **1.2. Legal Basis**

Under Article 54(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, appropriations for preparatory actions in the fields of application of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), designed to prepare proposals with a view to the adoption of future actions, may be implemented without a basic act.

##### **1.3. Policy context**

The Alpine Region <sup>(1)</sup> is one of the richest areas in the world and among the economically most dynamic, innovative and competitive areas in Europe with unique geographical and natural features. However, the Region also faces important challenges requiring a joint response:

- economic globalisation that requires the territory to distinguish itself as competitive and innovative;
- demographic trends, characterised particularly by the combined effects of ageing, brain drain, low population density in the mountain areas and new migration models;
- high vulnerability to climate change and its foreseeable effects on the environment, biodiversity and the living conditions of its inhabitants;
- the energy challenge in managing and meeting demand sustainably, securely and affordably;
- its specific geographical position in Europe, as a transit region;
- a high degree of seasonality, especially in some touristic areas.

Significant differences also remain among the areas in the Region (for example between mountainous areas and the alpine foreland). One of the main added values of the Strategy is that it will result in a new relationship between metropolitan, peri-mountain, and mountain areas that will boost the economy and social prosperity of the area, as well as greater involvement of civil society in general with a focus on young people.

The European Council of 19/20 December 2013 invited the European Commission, working together with Member States, to establish an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), building on the solid background of cooperation in the Region, in order to address these

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<sup>1</sup> The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region covers seven countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

issues. The Strategy was adopted by the Commission on 28 July 2015 and endorsed by the European Council on 28 June 2016.

#### **1.4. General objectives of the preparatory action**

For its part, and in order to promote the success of the EUSALP, the European Parliament has decided to introduce an allocation of EUR 2 million in the 2018 budget in the form of a preparatory action at the initiative of the Commission.

The general objective is to promote sustainable economic and social prosperity of the Alpine Region through growth and job creation, by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity, while at the same time preserving the environment and ensuring a healthy and balanced ecosystem reducing the economic and social imbalance between the different areas of the macro-region because of the specific features of mountain areas. The Alpine Region contains Europe's largest mountain range, with low population density, high vulnerability to climate change and biodiversity loss, a high degree of seasonality, especially in some tourist areas, and ageing populations. Transport and energy infrastructure is also a critical factor because of its impact on the landscape.

The resources allocated to this preparatory action will be used to support the establishment of economic and social cooperation in the macro-region as well as sound governance, contributing to further integration and reconciliation of the participating Countries and Regions in a practical way.

## **2. ACTIONS/TYPE OF FINANCIAL INTERVENTION**

### **2.1. Annual Forum 2018**

The Annual Forum of the EUSALP is a yearly event that provides the necessary high level political and economic platform that is a prerequisite for a successful implementation of the Strategy. The Annual Forum takes the format of a two days conference with several panels, workshops and side events and provides a platform for communication, exchange of experience and capitalisation of results among the main stakeholders and ensures continuous political commitment.

Under Article 190(1)(f) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for actions with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals, duly substantiated in the award decision.

A direct grant will be awarded to the regional government of Tyrol, which holds the technical competence and administrative power for the organisation of the Annual Forum in 2018. The Land of Tyrol has taken over the Rotating Presidency of the EUSALP from Bavaria officially on 7 February 2018. The Tyrolean government is therefore entrusted with the organisation of the 2018 EUSALP Annual Forum. Furthermore, this decision was confirmed in the EUSALP General Assembly Meeting of 13 February 2017.

The award criteria for the evaluation of the proposal for this grant will be a) cost-effectiveness and b) consistency of the proposal with the objectives of the preparatory action.

## **2.2. Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund (ARPAF II)**

ARPAF II will support:

- the preparation and implementation of transnational projects which contribute to the objectives of the EUSALP, through activities such as tailored expertise to project holders and
- the establishment of economic and social cooperation in the macro-region, through more efficient and effective ways to coordinate different funding instruments in the Alpine Region contributing to further integration in a practical way.

Particular attention will be given to:

- Strategic projects with connections and/or spill-over effects between the different Action Groups
- Improving and further developing new solutions for handling expertise by means of accessible common platforms and project information, including building networks.

Under Article 190(1)(f) of the Rules of Application grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for actions with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals, duly substantiated in the award decision.

A direct grant will be awarded to the Land of Salzburg, as it is appointed by the Executive Board <sup>(2)</sup> of the EUSALP, to manage the Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund (ARPAF). The Land of Salzburg, as the managing authority of the Alpine Space transnational programme, has a long experience and the administrative capacity to deal with the kind of projects that this preparatory action intends to cover and was already in charge of the implementation and management of the first phase of the ARPAF Fund during 2017.

The Land of Salzburg is mandated to steer all the administrative arrangements such as organisation for the collection and assessment of a limited number of projects in each priority, selection of projects, follow-up of project results, follow-up and control of expenditures. Therefore, amongst other expenditure contribution to third parties will be foreseen in the grant agreement (grants in cascade).

The award criteria for the evaluation of the proposal for this grant will be a) cost-effectiveness and b) consistency of the proposal with the objectives of the preparatory action.

## **2.3. Governance and capacity issues in the EUSALP**

As highlighted in the Commission Report on the governance of macro-regional strategies published in May 2014, and reaffirmed in the Commission Communication on the EUSALP on 28 July 2015, the involvement of interested stakeholders – including civil society, academia, NGOs etc. – and the strengthening of their participation through consultative networks or platforms is a key element of success for the implementation of macro-regional strategies.

Therefore, a study will be launched with following objectives:

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<sup>2</sup> Representing all the countries involved in the EUSALP.

1. To describe the state of play of the current governance system in place for the EUSALP Region;
2. To analyse the gaps, missing links and bottlenecks of the system (regarding the capacity and governance issues), first at 'national coordinators' level and at 'action groups' level
3. To identify good practices (even from other macro-regional strategies) that could be useful to this group of internal stakeholders;
4. To suggest solutions to the problems identified at point 2;
5. To analyse and assess the possibilities of a Strategy Technical Support and to develop a concept, also based in the experiences of AlpGov project and the other three strategies.
6. To propose a way of organising the set-up of a stakeholder's platform, in line with objective 4 described in the EUSALP Action Plan. This also includes to detail the arrangements and the operating procedures for the functioning such a platform.

The action will be implemented through a service contract, following an open call for tenders.

#### **2.4. Communication issues in the EUSALP and across other macro-regional strategies**

A first conference (jointly organised by Commission and Slovenia) on Media and Communication – Know thy neighbour, took place in Portorož, Slovenia, 20-22 September 2017. During the EUSALP Annual Forum (in Munich, Germany, 23 and 24 November 2017) as follow up of the Media Conference, a workshop was organised on "A communication strategy for macro-regional strategies – elements of a strategic approach"

At both events, MRS communication strategies were presented, debated, compared, their practice and experience exchanged – in order to suggest an overall view, included in the final recommendations that shall enable future decisions about possible closer collaboration between the four macro-regional strategies on communication.

Based on these recommendations, expert contracts (following AMI-list) will be signed with following objectives:

1. To describe the state of play of the current communication strategy for the EUSALP Region and propose a review of the EUSALP draft communication strategy to overcome gaps and missing aspects. This can be complemented by the identification of good practices from other macro-regional strategies that could be useful to EUSALP;
2. Based on the current experience of EUSALP and on the several projects and initiatives that already exist inside each of the 4 MRS ("Let's communicate", EUSBSR, Horizontal Action "Capacity" EUSBSR, AlpGov EUSALP; and Facility Point EUSAIR): to explore and identify common elements, processes, and tools that can be used by all four macro regions, in order to maximise their effects and rationalise costs.
3. To prepare a roadmap of next possible steps to develop a kind of "horizontal communication pillar", common for all four EU MRS in order to enhance communication flows related to MRS.

## **2.5. Reporting and indicators**

A report on the progress of all macro-regional strategies is to be presented to the Council every two years. A first report was presented end 2016 and the second one is due by the end of 2018. This reporting schedule triggers the need to establish systems to monitor and report on the progress of each macro-regional strategy based on their objectives and targets. The development of such a system for EUSALP should also consider the territorial context of the region and allow for benchmarking and comparisons among regions in Europe.

Expert contracts (following AMI-list) will be signed with following objectives:

- To take stock of the current situation as regards the monitoring of the EUSALP;
- To propose and develop phase-specific indicators that capture the development of the Actions proposed in the EUSALP Action Plan

The results of this action should feed into the establishment of a macro-regional monitoring system common to all four MRS.

## **2.6. Alpine Youth Initiative**

The Commission communication <sup>(3)</sup> identifies demographic change and migration of young people as one of the most important challenges for the Alpine Region.

Accordingly, the aim of this action is to develop innovative ways to incorporate young people in the activities of EUSALP, to raise awareness for EUSALP and to get young people think about their connection to the Alpine space.

Building on the proposal of the Action Plan to set up a Youth Alpine Dialogue under Action 3, the action aims to foster transnational exchange among young people on the EUSALP territory. This exchange should take the form of a broadly organised EUSALP youth congress.

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A direct grant will be awarded to the regional government of Tyrol which holds the technical competence and administrative power for the set-up of the Alpine Youth Initiative as part of the Tyrolean Presidency Work Programme. The Land of Tyrol has taken over the Rotating Presidency of the European Strategy for the Alpine Region from Bavaria officially on 7 February 2018 and is therefore entrusted to implement its work programme accordingly.

As part of this initiative and to complement it, the Commission will organise a contest, aimed at macro-regional groups of young people from academic and professional environment. The groups will develop a project idea in line with the priorities of the action plan of the strategy. Three winning groups will be rewarded, either with money allocation, or expert consultancy,

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<sup>3</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning a European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region, COM(2015) 366final of 28.7.2015.

in order to turn their idea into a concrete project. These projects will then be implemented as part of the action plan of EUSALP.

For this contest, the Commission will select an expert from the AMI list, who will steer the process during the full lifecycle of the action.

### 3. INDICATIVE BUDGET AND CALENDAR

Action	Type of procedure	Estimated budget	Maximum co-financing rate (in case of grant)	Indicative timing
Annual Forum 2018	Grant to Land of Tyrol	EUR 250 000	85%	Q2 2018
ARPAF II	Grant to Land of Salzburg	EUR 700 000	90%	Q2 2018
Governance and capacity issues in the EUSALP	1 service contract following open call for tenders	EUR 500 000	N/A	Q4 2018
Communication issues in the EUSALP and across other macro-regional strategies	Expert contracts via AMI-list (approx. 3)	EUR 140 000	N/A	Q3 2018
Reporting and indicators	Expert contracts via AMI-list (approx. 3)	EUR 140 000	N/A	Q2 2018
Alpine Youth Initiative	Grant to Land of Tyrol	EUR 210 000	95%	Q4 2018
	Expert contract	EUR 60 000	N/A	Q2 2018