# Guide for the evaluation of Sub-programme Environment LIFE project proposals 2020

This document aims at explaining to the applicants the criteria and procedures that will be used for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals submitted for the 2020 Call for 'traditional projects' under the Environment sub-programme.

The following official documents are also referred to when relevant during the course of the evaluation: Regulation (EC) n° 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE), OJ L 347 of 20/12/2013; the Commission implementing Decision 2018/210/EU of 12 February on the adoption of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020, OJ L39 of 13/02/2018; the LIFE Environment & Resource Efficiency Guidelines for applicants 2020; the LIFE Nature & Biodiversity Guidelines for Applicants 2020; the Environmental Governance & Information Guidelines for Applicants 2020; the LIFE Model Grant Agreement; the Financial Regulations.

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## GENERAL REMARKS

This evaluation guide **ONLY** concerns the selection of **LIFE pilot, demonstration, best practice,** and **information, awareness, and dissemination projects** within the meaning of **Article 2(a), (b), (c) and (h) of the LIFE Regulation,** otherwise called “traditional projects”.

For the evaluation of LIFE Integrated projects, Technical Assistance projects, Capacity-building projects, Preparatory projects, Operating Grants and Financial Instruments, please consult relevant documents available on the LIFE website.

The evaluation, selection and award procedure is carried out by the European Commission and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises (EASME), hereafter called 'the Contracting Authority' with the assistance of a Consortium of independent expert evaluators, hereafter called ‘the Contractor’. However, the Contracting Authority remains responsible for the whole procedure, including the awarding of the final scores, the drawing up of the list of proposals to be co-financed and the rejection of the proposals.

This document only refers to the 2020 Calls for Proposals under the LIFE sub-programme Environment.

The submission and evaluation procedure will be organised in two stages:

- Stage 1: Concept note (around 10 pages)
- Stage 2: Full proposal

Only applicants with the best ranked concept notes will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Only concept notes submitted through the online tool eProposal before the deadline specified in Annex 1 of the Guidelines for Applicants 2020 and thereafter passing the opening phase (see point 2) will be registered in the LIFE ESAP (***E****valuation and* ***S****election* ***A****ward* ***P****rocedure*) database.

Full proposals will need to be received by the Contracting Authority through the online tool eProposal by the deadline specified in Annex 1 of the Guidelines for Applicants 2020. Applicants thereafter passing the opening phase (see point 2) will be registered in the LIFE ESAP (***E****valuation and* ***S****election* ***A****ward* ***P****rocedure*) database.

Any information or documents submitted otherwise, or after the deadline, will not be taken into account unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority.

***Basic selection and evaluation principles***

**Projects pursuant to Article 2(a), (b), (c) and (h) of the LIFE Regulation**

The selection of **pilot, demonstration, best practice, and information, awareness, and dissemination projects** within the meaning of **Article 2(a), (b), (c) and (h) of the LIFE Regulation** follows the same technical methodology for project selection and is subject to similar eligibility and award criteria, as outlined in this document.

All evaluators, from the Contracting Authority and the Contractor alike, must base their assessment of the proposals on the provisions of this evaluation guide, using as a basis the questions established for each criterion.

Within the limits allowed by the thematic allocation rules of the LIFE Regulation, the principle of equal treatment between all proposals must be strictly applied throughout all phases of the evaluation process. Evaluations and scores given to each proposal must be objective and equitable. Each decision and each score given must be clearly justified by reasoned comments.

**Applicants should note that evaluators will check the information that is relevant for each stage, step or criterion by concentrating their analysis on the specific application forms where that information should be available. For this reason it is very important that the relevant information is written in the right Form.**

# I. STAGE 1: CONCEPT NOTE

## 1) OPENING PHASE*

Proposals will be checked for compliance with the following criteria:

1. The proposal has been submitted before the deadline specified in Annex 1 of the Guidelines for Applicants 2020
2. The relevant LIFE 2020 application forms in eProposal have been used for preparing and submitting the concept note. Depending on the objectives of the project, the eProposal application forms used are those for "LIFE Nature and Biodiversity", "LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency", "LIFE Environmental Governance and Information".

**The opening check will be performed through the eProposal application, not in ESAP*.

All concept notes that were not rejected during the opening phase are admitted to an in-depth evaluation, using specific eligibility and award criteria and scoring system.

## 2) CONCEPT NOTE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to comply with the eligibility criteria, a concept note needs to demonstrate that the project:

- contributes to one or several of the general objectives set out in Article 3 of the LIFE Regulation and of the applicable specific objectives in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation,
- falls within the scope of the priority area (as set out in Article 9 of the LIFE Regulation) of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment under which the project proposal was submitted,
- takes place in the Union and/or territories to which the Treaties and relevant *acquis* apply or it fulfils one of the exceptions laid down in Articles 5 and 6 of the LIFE Regulation and specified in the Guidelines for Applicants 2020, and
- corresponds to one of the following project types as defined in Article 2 (a), (b), (c) and (h) of the LIFE Regulation:
    - "Pilot projects" are projects that apply a technique or method that has not been applied or tested before, or elsewhere, that offer potential environmental or climate advantages compared to current best practice and that can subsequently be applied on a larger scale to similar situations.
    - "Demonstration projects" are projects that put into practice, test, evaluate and disseminate actions, methodologies or approaches that are new or unknown in the specific context of the project, such as the geographical, ecological, socio-economic context, and that could be applied elsewhere in similar circumstances.

- “Best practice projects” are projects that apply appropriate, cost-effective and state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project.
- “Information, awareness and dissemination projects” are projects aimed at supporting communication, dissemination of information and awareness raising in the fields of the sub-programme for Environment.

– is **not** focused on research or dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure.

Concept notes shall ensure compliance with eligibility criteria specific to each priority area:

– Pilot and demonstration projects under the **priority area Environment and Resource Efficiency** must contain actions that lead to substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental and/or climate action issue(s) targeted.

– Pilot, demonstration and best practice projects under the **priority area Nature and Biodiversity,** must dedicate at least 25% of the eligible budget to concrete conservation actions (limited exceptions will be possible in view of the specific policy needs and will be explicitly identified in the application guidelines). Concrete conservation actions are those that have substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental and climate issue(s) targeted, in this case leading to the improvement or the slowing/halting/reversion of the decline of the conservation status or ecological condition of the species, habitats, ecosystems or ecosystem services targeted.

– Pilot, demonstration, best practice or information, awareness and dissemination projects under the **priority area Environmental Governance and Information** must contain actions that lead to substantial and measurable direct or indirect effects on the environmental issue(s) targeted by causing substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental governance, information, and/or awareness and dissemination issue(s) targeted.

***For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement* on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to legal persons established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including legal persons established in the United Kingdom. UK legal persons are therefore eligible to participate under this call.***

**** Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community***

### 3) CONCEPT NOTE AWARD CRITERIA

All the concept notes have to obtain at least a passing score for the following concept note award criteria to be considered for ranking:

| **Concept Note Award Criteria** | **Minimum pass score** | **Maximum score** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Overall quality of the proposal | 5 | 20 |
| 2. Overall EU added value | 10 | 30 |
| **Overall (pass) scores** | **15** | **50** |

**Overall quality of the proposal**

This criterion will focus on the clarity of the intervention logic of the proposal (including the description of the pre-operational context), its feasibility and indicative value for money.

The pre-operational context must be described, in particular environmental problems and threats need to be clearly identified. There should be a clear, logical link between problems / threats targeted by the project, and its objectives, the proposed actions and their expected results. Main actions and expected results should be sufficiently described and quantified. The concept note must also indicate how the project partnership is constructed.

To allow the evaluation of the project feasibility the concept note must describe how, where, when and by whom each main action will be undertaken. Indicative means necessary for the implementation of the project should be provided. Expected results should be clearly spelled out. Technical means, competencies and expertise of the beneficiaries involved in the project need to be adequate for its implementation. Any main potential difficulties must be assessed and a realistic mitigation strategy needs to be described.

The project should represent good value for money, i.e. the overall indicative investment should be reasonable in view of the expected impacts and results.

Concept notes may receive up to 20 points for the overall quality of the proposal. The pass score for this criterion is set at 5 points.

**Overall EU added value**

This criterion will focus on the project contribution to the LIFE priorities, its expected impact, and the sustainability of the project results.

The concept note needs to demonstrate how the project contributes to one or several of the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme

for Environment. These are set out in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation. The extent and the quality of this contribution will be evaluated.

The project expected impact is understood as the extent and quality of its contribution to the implementation, updating and development of European Union environmental policy and legislation as well its environmental benefits which must be concrete, realistic and quantified.

The sustainability of the project results in the medium and long term is understood as the capacity to maintain them after project implementation. Concept notes should sufficiently describe how the continuation of necessary project actions and necessary financing after the end of the project will be ensured. Transfer and replication are also considered part of sustainability.

Concept notes may receive up to 30 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 10 points.

***Ranking of the concept notes***

Concept notes will be ranked by merit, i.e. the points received on the basis of the award criteria 'Overall quality of the proposal' and 'Overall EU added value'.

For concept notes with equal scoring for the award criterion 'Overall quality of the proposal', priority will be given to those with a higher score for 'Overall EU added value'. In case concept notes achieve an equal scoring for both criteria, the final ranking will be decided by the Evaluation Committee.

The list of applicants invited to submit a full proposal will include the best ranked concept notes, for which the sum of the EU contributions requested represents 2 to 2.5 times the available budget. The long list will include sub-lists for each priority area. In case the demand under one priority area is insufficient, the lists corresponding to the other priority areas may be extended.

Concept notes that did not reach the minimum threshold regarding one or both criteria as well as those that are not longlisted will not be admitted to stage 2.

## II. STAGE 2: FULL PROPOSAL

The applicants with the best ranked concept notes will be invited to submit a full proposal. A limited flexibility is allowed between the concept note and the full proposal regarding the actions, partnership and budget. However, flexibility may not lead to a change of the nature of the project as presented in the concept note. The budget contribution requested (EC contribution) may not exceed by more than 10 % the one presented in the concept note.

With the exception of the opening phase, applicants should be aware that the different phases of the evaluation process may run in parallel. This is done in order to finalise the evaluation and notify applicants of the final results as rapidly as possible.

### 1) OPENING PHASE*

Proposals will be checked for compliance with the following criteria:

1. The proposal has been submitted before the deadline set in Annex 1 of the Guidelines for Applicants 2020
2. The relevant LIFE 2020 application forms in eProposal have been used for preparing and submitting the proposal. Depending on the objectives of the proposal, the eProposal Application Forms used are those for "LIFE Nature and Biodiversity", "LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency", "LIFE Environmental Governance and Information".

* *The opening check will be performed through the eProposal application, not in ESAP.*

### 2) FULL PROPOSAL AWARD PHASE

All proposals that were not rejected during the opening phase are admitted to an in-depth evaluation of their quality in the award phase using the specific criteria and scoring system for projects submitted under the Environment Sub-Programme.

| **Award Criteria** | **Minimum pass score*** | **Maximum score** |
|---|---|---|
| **Technical and Financial coherence and quality** | | |
| 1. Technical coherence and quality | 10 | 20 |
| 2. Financial coherence and quality (including value for money) | 10 | 20 |
| **EU added value:** | | |
| 3. Extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment | 10 | 20 |
| 4. Sustainability (continuation, replication, transfer potential) | 8 | 15 |
| ***Overall (pass) score*** | ***50**** | |
| ***Bonus*** | | |
| 5. Contribution to the project topics | - | 0 or 5 or 10 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6. Synergies (including multipurpose and integration/complementarity (max. 8 points), Green Public Procurement (max. 1 point), Ecolabel (max. 1 point), and uptake of EU-research results (max. 1 point)<br>- Transnational (max. 4 points) | - | 15 |
| **Maximum score** | | **100** |

* *A project proposal has to reach at least the minimum pass score for each award criterion AND the sum of scores for criteria for which a minimum score has been fixed has to be equivalent to 50 points or more*.

### *1. Technical coherence and quality*

This criterion will focus on the clarity and feasibility of the actions proposed for achieving the forecasted project outputs and outcomes. Neither the actions nor the foreseen outputs and outcomes should contradict any of the objectives pursued by the LIFE programme. The pre-operational context must be thoroughly described and there should be a clear link in the proposal between the problems and threats, the project objectives, the proposed actions and their expected results. All actions should be properly described and quantified and, if necessary, accompanied by adequate maps. The proposal must clearly describe how, where, when and by whom each action in the proposal will be undertaken.

The proposal must be drafted so as to allow the evaluators to assess to what extent the technical means and expertise of the consortium involved are adequate for implementing the project.

The time planning must be realistic and any potential difficulties must have been correctly assessed in the relevant forms.

Any actions that are not directly contributing to the achievement of the project objectives may be considered as ineligible (example: preparatory actions or studies that are not related to the project implementation, any fundamental scientific research, etc.).

Proposals may receive up to 20 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 10 points.

### *2. Financial coherence and quality (including value for money)*

The proposed budget and its consistency with the actions proposed and with the applicable rules as well as the cost-effectiveness of the proposed approach will be evaluated. Value for money of the proposed project against expected outcomes will also be assessed.

The financial contributions of the beneficiaries/co-financiers, the proposed budget and the proposed project expenditures must comply with the rules and principles foreseen in the LIFE guidelines for applicants, the LIFE Model Grant

Agreement[1] and the LIFE Regulation. The budget must be transparent i.e. the cost items should be sufficiently described, coherent and cost-efficient, including for the management of the project.

Proposals may receive up to 20 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 10 points.

### *3. EU added value: extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment*

The extent to which each proposal contributes to one or several of the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment as set out in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation and the quality of this contribution will be evaluated.

The assessment of this criterion will cover, in particular the extent and quality of the expected impacts (environmental benefits) at the end of the project. They must be concrete, realistic and quantified as far as possible. It will assess the magnitude of the environmental impacts expected due to the project actions at the end of the project in comparison to the state-of-play estimated or measured at the outset of the project.

When appropriate, it will take into account the relevance of the territorial and social contexts, which the project actions are expected to influence. The expected effects should be expressed having in mind the LIFE key project level indicators. This assessment only takes into account the actions considered feasible on the basis of the evaluation of the technical and financial coherence.

Proposals may receive up to 20 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 10 points.

### *4. EU added value: sustainability (continuation, replication, transfer potential)*

The sustainability of the project results in the medium and long term is the capacity to maintain them after its implementation, be it by continuation, by replication or by transfer.

Continuation means the continued use by the entities involved in the project of the solutions implemented during the project after its end. Continuation may also entail further spread geographically. Mere continuation and maintenance of project results will be sufficient for a passing score, while further geographical spread will be judged on its expected scope, which makes it comparable to replication or transfer.

[1]Including the General Conditions and the Annex X to the Model Grant Agreement, Financial and Administrative Guidelines: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/toolkit/pmtools/life2014_2020/index.htm

Replication means, the solutions applied in the project are used again in the same way and for the same purposes by other entities/sectors during or after the project end.

Transfer means that solutions applied in the project are used in a different way or for a different environment, climate action or related governance and information purpose by the same or other entities/sectors during or after the project end.

Applicants should demonstrate in their proposals that the solutions (i.e. techniques, methods, methodologies, approaches, and/or actions or support activities for communication, dissemination of information and awareness raising) aiming at direct and/or indirect positive effects with regard to the related objectives of the LIFE Regulation have the potential to be continued, replicated and/or transferred.

Successful continuation, replication and/or transfer require a strategy including tasks to multiply the impacts of the projects' solutions and mobilise a wider uptake, reaching a critical mass during the project and/or in a short and medium term perspective after the end of the LIFE project. This goes beyond transfer of knowledge and networking, and involves putting the solutions developed and/or applied in the project into practice beyond the project period, elsewhere or for a different purpose. Applicants have to provide a clear and credible description of the strategy and actions foreseen to ensure this.

Proposals may receive up to 15 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 8 points.

### *5. EU added value: contribution to the project topics*

Project proposals clearly falling under the project topics implementing the thematic priorities set out in Annex III for the sub-programme Environment as defined in the multiannual work programme[2] will receive additional points under this criterion.

Project proposals under the priority area Environment and Resource Efficiency will receive 5 points, if they fully comply with at least one of the project topics listed in section 3 under this priority area. If, in addition, the solution(s) (i.e. techniques, methods, actions, methodologies, or approaches within the meaning of Article 2 of the LIFE Regulation) to the environmental issue targeted is (are) new or unknown in the European Union, the project will receive a further 5 points.

Project proposals under the priority area Nature and Biodiversity and under the priority area Environmental Governance and information will receive 10 points, if they fully comply with one of the project topics under this priority area.

There is no minimum pass score for this criterion.

[2] Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/210 of 12 February 2018 on the adoption of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020

### *6. EU added value: synergies and transnationality:*

*- Synergies (including multi-purpose, integration/complementarity, green public procurement, ecolabel, and uptake of EU-funded research results):*

Synergies can be reached by multi-purpose approaches and integration in and/or complementarity with other EU policies and funding mechanisms. Proposals will receive bonus points for synergies and complementary actions, depending on their extent and quality.

A multipurpose delivery mechanism means that the proposal does not only plan to achieve the project's specific main environmental objectives, but has foreseen concrete actions aiming at achieving other purposes.

Project proposals that, while focussing on a specific environmental issue, improve integration of these specific environmental objectives in other policy areas and/or achieve complementarity with these, and thus create synergies with the objectives of other Union policies will be favourably assessed. Up to eight additional points can be given for multi-purpose mechanisms, integration or complementarity or a combination of any of these.

Synergies can also be reached through green public procurement and the use of eco-labelling scheme as regards the integration of green production and service provision goals, and the uptake of research results under Horizon 2020 or its predecessor programmes. Thus the commitment to apply green public procurement[3] and/or, the preference of products and/or services of officially recognised eco-labelling schemes such as the EU Ecolabel[4] through a clear delivery mechanism merit one bonus point, each.

The uptake of the results of environmental and climate-related research and innovation projects financed by Horizon 2020 or by preceding Framework Programmes will also lead to an additional bonus point, if there is sufficient evidence of the added value of this uptake for the project.

– *Transnationality* (max. 4 points)

Proposals shall be favoured, if transnational cooperation among Member States is essential to guarantee the achievement of the project's objectives. On the basis of this criterion, up to four additional points may be given to a proposal, if there is sufficient evidence for an added value of the transnational approach.[5]

There is no minimum pass score for this criterion.

[3] For green public procurement see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm and in particular http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/buying_handbook_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/eu_gpp_criteria_en.htm

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/eu-ecolabel-products-and-services.html.

[5] The meaning of "transnational" as foreseen in the LIFE Regulation only covers cooperation among Member States as well as cooperation among Member States and third countries participating in the LIFE Programme under article 5 of the LIFE Regulation. Activities outside the Union or in overseas countries and territories, while possible as foreseen under article 6 of the LIFE Regulation, will not entail additional points under this award criterion.

### *Conclusion of the Award phase*

On the basis of the evaluations each proposal will fall into one of the following situations:

- Any proposal that receives a final score below the pass score for any of the Award criterion for which a minimum pass level is indicated, OR for which the total sum of these same criteria is less than 50 points (minimum passing score), will be declared "rejected in the award phase" and will not be further evaluated.
- For all proposals not falling into the above situation, the total score (maximum score) to be awarded is calculated by summing up the final synthesis scores for the 6 Award criteria.

## 3) FULL PROPOSAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Proposals are checked for their compliance with the eligibility criteria. Please refer to the "Guidelines for applicants 2020" regarding the use of eProposal and the information which must be provided. In order to comply with the eligibility criteria, a full proposal needs to demonstrate that:

- it contributes to one or several of the general objectives set out in Article 3 of the LIFE Regulation and of the applicable specific objectives in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation,
- it falls within the scope of the priority area (as set out in Article 9 of the LIFE Regulation) of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment under which the project proposal was submitted,
- it takes place in the Union and/or territories to which the Treaties and relevant acquis apply or it fulfils one of the exceptions laid down in Articles 5 and 6 of the LIFE Regulation and specified in the Guidelines for applicants 2020, and
- it corresponds to one of the following project types as defined in Article 2 (a), (b), (c) and (h) of the LIFE Regulation:
  - "Pilot projects" are projects that apply a technique or method that has not been applied or tested before, or elsewhere, that offer potential environmental or climate advantages compared to current best practice and that can subsequently be applied on a larger scale to similar situations.
  - "Demonstration projects" are projects that put into practice, test, evaluate and disseminate actions, methodologies or approaches that are new or unknown in the specific context of the project, such as the geographical, ecological, socio-economic context, and that could be applied elsewhere in similar circumstances.
  - "Best practice projects" are projects that apply appropriate, cost-effective and state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project.
  - "Information, awareness and dissemination projects" are projects aimed at supporting communication, dissemination of information and awareness raising in the fields of the sub-programme for Environment.

- it is **not** focused on research or dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure
- it **does not serve** to fund compensation measures deriving from obligations under national or EU law.

Full proposals shall also comply with eligibility criteria specific to each priority area:

- Pilot and demonstration projects under the **priority area Environment and Resource Efficiency** must contain actions that lead to substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental and/or climate action issue(s) targeted.
- Pilot, demonstration and best practice projects under the **priority area Nature and Biodiversity,** must dedicate at least 25% of the eligible budget to concrete conservation actions (limited exceptions will be possible in view of the specific policy needs and will be explicitly identified in the application guidelines). Concrete conservation actions are those that have substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental and climate issue(s) targeted, in this case leading to the improvement or the slowing/halting/reversion of the decline of the conservation status or ecological condition of the species, habitats, ecosystems or ecosystem services targeted.
- Pilot, demonstration, best practice or information, awareness and dissemination projects under the **priority area Environmental Governance and Information** must contain actions that lead to substantial and measurable direct or indirect effects on the environmental issue(s) targeted by causing substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental governance, information, and/or awareness and dissemination issue(s) targeted.

Proposals which do not comply with one or several of the eligibility criteria listed above are declared not selected and are eliminated from the evaluation.

### 4) FULL PROPOSAL ADMISSIBILITY AND EXCLUSION PHASE

Proposals are checked for their compliance with the general eligibility criteria and with the admissibility and exclusion criteria (see section 13 of the current guide for the detailed list of questions) as explained below:

1. Where relevant, the **signed declarations** (forms **A3, A4, A6, A8**) listed below are uploaded in the relevant eProposal sections (see application guide for instructions). Failure to deliver these declarations or to clearly indicate the financial contribution in form **A6** may lead to an exclusion of the proposal from all further evaluation. Signing the forms A3 and A4 also confirms that the beneficiaries are not in one of the situations referred to in 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the EU Financial Regulation[6].
   - The scanned and uploaded (in eProposal) application forms **A3, A4** (only if there is one or more associated beneficiaries) and **A6** (only if

[6] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1

there is one or more co-financiers) bear signatures with the status and full name of the signatory clearly in evidence on the document. If the status of the co-financier commitment at this stage is 'not fully confirmed', the declaration must explain the current status of the commitment.

- For *LIFE Nature and Biodiversity* proposals, if required (see Application Guide), a complete and uploaded (in eProposal) form **A8** with a signature should be provided from the competent nature conservation authority of the Member State where the proposal is submitted (and from all participating Member States in the case of multi-national proposals).

2. Form B1 (Summary description of the project) is completed in English.

3. The coordinating beneficiary is legally registered in the EU.

**In case LIFE proposals do not fully comply with all the above criteria (e.g. mandatory signatures are missing)** the Contracting Authority will first send a message via eProposal to the coordinating beneficiary indicating which forms are missing. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check daily whether a new message has been sent via eProposal

The coordinating beneficiary will have **5 working days** to reply and provide, through eProposal, the missing or incomplete documents and forms. In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline.

**By the end of this process, all LIFE proposals that do not fully comply with all the above criteria are declared *inadmissible* and are eliminated from the evaluation.**

### 5) FULL PROPOSAL FINANCIAL SELECTION PHASE

Proposals are checked for their compliance with the financial selection criteria. Proposals which do not comply with one or several of the financial selection criteria listed hereafter are declared not selected.

**Step A:**

All applicants (coordinating beneficiaries) other than public bodies, must provide, as annexes to their proposal, evidence that they comply with the financial selection criterion set out in Article 198 of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018), namely that "the applicant shall have stable and sufficient sources of funding, to maintain his activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding". Therefore, coordinating beneficiaries other than public bodies have to provide the administrative and financial documents listed below s annexes to their LIFE proposal. It should be noted that these annexes will be required by the Contracting Authority irrespective of whether they are obligatory or not for the particular type of organisation, according to national legislation, in the coordinating beneficiary's Member State:

A. The **"LIFE Simplified Financial Statement"**, provided with the LIFE Application Package, must be completed and annexed (uploaded) to the proposal as an Excel file.

B. The most recent **balance sheet** and **profit and loss account**. This document must be annexed to the LIFE proposal as a scanned pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. If the applicant does not yet have a balance sheet and profit and loss account, because the organisation has been only recently created, it must provide a management / business plan (for at least 12 months in the future) with the financial data prepared in accordance with the standard required under national legislation.

   Where the total EU contribution requested in the application exceeds EUR 750,000, an **audit report** produced by an approved external auditor shall be submitted where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by the national law. The report shall certify the accounts for the last available financial year.sThe audit document must be annexed to the LIFE proposal as a scanned .pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. In the case of a newly created organisation, the auditor's certificate provided must be based on a management/business plan where the financial data are presented in accordance with relevant national provisions.

   **In all other cases a declaration on the validity of the accounts,** provided with the LIFE Application Package, will be signed by a legal representative and annexed to the LIFE proposal. The self-declaration shall certify the validity of the accounts for the last available financial year.

An applicant (coordinating beneficiary) that declared itself as being a public body (in application form A2) must provide as a financial annex the "Public body declaration", fully completed, with a dated signature. This annex is available as a separate word file with the LIFE application package.

**In case LIFE proposals are missing one or more mandatory financial annexes the Contracting Authority will first send a message via eProposal to the coordinating beneficiary indicating the annexes that are missing.**

**The Contracting Authority will also use this period to request the necessary financial annexes and/or supporting documentation in cases where it has doubt as to the status of any public body.**

**The coordinating beneficiary will have 5 working days to reply and provide, through eProposal, the missing or incomplete annexes. In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline.**

By the end of this process, all LIFE proposals that do not fully comply with all the above criteria are declared inadmissible and are eliminated from the evaluation.

**Step B:**

The purpose of the financial check is to verify that: "*The applicant shall have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding*".
The Contracting Authority will utilise all the information at its disposal to assess whether the applicant and the associated beneficiaries fulfil the selection and the

exclusion criteria. On the basis of Article 198 of the Financial Regulation[7], a proposal will be rejected if the evaluator has strong evidence showing that it falls into any of the following situations:

- if there is information available to indicate that the coordinating beneficiary and/or one of its associated beneficiaries, contrary to the declaration for exclusion, are in one of the situations referred to in art. 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the Financial Regulation [8];
- the results of audits carried out by European Union Institutions in relation to the coordinating beneficiary and/ or one of its associated beneficiaries have clearly shown their inability to comply with the administrative rules regulating European Union grants and in particular those applicable to LIFE;
- the coordinating beneficiary has an unpaid debt owed to the Contracting Authority at the time of the submission of its application.

For private commercial and private non-commercial organisations:

- the auditor's report or auditor-certified balance sheet and profit and loss account provided with the project proposal has not given an "unqualified opinion" about the coordinating beneficiary's financial viability[9];
- on the basis of the financial viability test, it is concluded that the coordinating beneficiary does not have the financial capacity to cover its share of co-financing within the proposed project period;
- on the basis of the financial viability test, it is concluded that the coordinating beneficiary does not have the capacity to manage the financial amounts provided for in the proposal budget within the proposed project period;

The financial viability of the coordinating beneficiary and its capacity to manage large EU grants are assessed on the basis of the financial information provided.

The financial viability check will also be used to assess whether a financial guarantee would be required to cover fully or partially the EU pre-financing payment to the project. In particular a financial guarantee will always be requested in the following cases:

1) Proposals from **private commercial organisations** if less than 2 of the following criteria are respected:

1. the ratio "total grant requested divided by the number of project years" / "shareholders' equity" is lower than 1
2. the ratio "current assets" / "current liabilities" is higher than 1
3. the ratio "total debts" / "total assets" is lower than 0.8
4. there is a positive operational profit

[7] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1)

[8] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1)

[9] i.e. a statement that the auditor has carried out the task in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and without restriction as to the scope of the work necessary to express his opinion, that the financial statements audited were drawn up in accordance with appropriate or generally accepted accounting principles, and that they give a true and fair view of the organisation's financial situation and the results of the operation.

2) Proposals from **private non-commercial organisations (NGOs)** if none of the following 3 criteria are respected:

1. the ratio "total grant requested divided by the number of project years" / "subsidies" is lower than 1
2. the ratio "current assets" / "current liabilities" is higher than 1
3. the ratio "total debts" / "total assets" is lower than 0.8

Proposals from private commercial and private non-commercial organisations will be rejected when none of the criteria are respected and the ratios diverge significantly from the thresholds indicated above.

## III. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FINAL LIST OF PROJECTS RECOMMENDED TO BE FUNDED AND ADMITTED TO THE REVISION PHASE AS WELL AS OF A RESERVE LIST

Following the conclusion of the award phase, the Contracting Authority will establish a final list of projects recommended to be funded and a reserve list with the best-ranked projects that cannot be funded in view of the available budget. The reserve list will encompass an additional 20% of the available LIFE budget. Both lists will be composed of separate sub-lists for each priority area i.e. Nature and Biodiversity, Environment and Resource Efficiency, Environmental Governance and Information. Each sub-list will be established based on the budget allocations foreseen for each priority area as foreseen in the Commission Decision on the financing of the implementation of the LIFE programme for 2020.

If proposals included in a given sub-list will not allow the full utilisation of the allocated budget, the Contracting Authority may reallocate the remaining funds to proposals of another sub-list.

The proposals will be ranked by their total score and taking into account the following conditions set out in the LIFE Regulation[10]

A. *"At least 60.5 % of the budgetary resources allocated to projects supported by way of action grants under the sub-programme for Environment shall be dedicated to projects supporting the conservation of nature and biodiversity". (Article 9(3)).*

B. *"The Commission shall have special regard to transnational projects where transnational cooperation is essential to guarantee environmental protection and climate objectives, and shall endeavour to ensure that at least 15 % of the budgetary resources dedicated to projects are allocated to transnational projects […] " (Extract of Article 19(7))*

In determining the final allocations available for "traditional" projects, the Contracting Authority will take into account grants awarded for Preparatory, Technical Assistance and Integrated projects.

[10] As amended by the Delegated Regulation on the increase of the percentage for nature and biodiversity.

For setting up a final list of projects recommended to be funded and a reserve list under the LIFE sub-programme for Environment, the following additional rules will be applied:

- Any proposal specifically supporting the conservation of nature and biodiversity objectives under the priority area Nature and Biodiversity and under Environmental Governance and Information will be taken into account for the 60.5 % threshold for "nature and biodiversity" including any proposal submitted under LIFE Environmental Governance and Information that would primarily target a nature or biodiversity issue. These proposals will be tagged as "Nature" proposals.
- In cases of proposals with equal scores within a sub-list (or across sub-lists whenever necessary), priority will be given to proposals with the highest overall pass score[11] (if this is also equal priority will be given to the proposal with the highest EU Added Value[12]).

## IV. EVALUATION DECISION AND INFORMING THE LIFE COMMITTEE

After the formal endorsement (Evaluation Decision) of the Contracting Authority of the selection results, applicants will be officially informed about the results of the evaluation of their proposals and, where appropriate, about the reasons for rejection. The LIFE Committee will also be informed of the results.

The proposals listed in the final list of projects recommended to be funded for a maximum of 100% of the available budget will thereafter enter into the revision phase.

### *Revision phase*

The aim of the revision phase is to clarify, for the proposals recommended to be funded, all open questions regarding feasibility, cost-effectiveness and eligibility of individual actions, compliance with the LIFE Regulation and the General Conditions of the LIFE Model Grant Agreement.

During the revision phase, the Contracting Authority may ask the applicant to provide further details about particular aspects of the proposal and/or to introduce modifications or improvements to the original proposal. The recommended adjustments or modifications to the proposal should not call into question the results of the already completed evaluation.

The applicant will have **15 calendar days** to reply to the questions.

The Contracting Authority will send all revision questions and instructions via eProposal (see also guidelines for the use of the eProposal Mailbox on the eProposal website) to the coordinating beneficiary.

**Applicants shall not introduce any modifications to their proposal other than those requested by the Contracting Authority.**

It should be noted that a revision letter sent out to an applicant with questions or requests for modifying the proposal does not entail, on behalf of the Contracting Authority, any commitment to a definitive funding of the proposal. Furthermore,

[11] The overall pass score is the sum of the scores for award criteria 1, 2, 3 & 4.
[12] The sum of the scores for award criteria 3, 4, 5 & 6.

on the basis of the replies received, the Contracting Authority may still decide to reduce the project budget or even exclude a project from financing.

By the end of the revision phase, all projects retained are expected to be fully coherent and in line with all technical and financial requirements of the LIFE Regulation and the Grant Agreement. An applicant who has successfully completed the revision process will be asked to provide all **fully confirmed** commitments from associated beneficiaries/co-financers with original signatures and stamps on the relevant forms and annexes.

Applicants should not introduce any modifications at all to the revised proposal after the conclusion of the revision phase unless explicitly asked by the Contracting Authority.

## V. USE OF PROPOSALS IN THE RESERVE LIST

As a result of the revision process or due to the withdrawal of one or several proposals of the initial list of projects recommended to be funded, LIFE co-financing budget may become available for proposals initially listed in the reserve list representing an additional 20% beyond the maximum 100% available budget.

These proposals will be identified by order of their ranking and conditional to respecting the earmarking of 60.5 % LIFE co-financing for proposals tagged as "Nature".

The selected proposals will then enter into the revision process to ensure their full conformity with the conditions for co-financing by LIFE.

This process may be carried out several times in order to fully use the available annual LIFE budget.

## VI. SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

Subject to the adoption of an Award Decision by the Contracting Authority, Grant Agreements will be prepared and signed by the Coordinating Beneficiary and Contracting Authority.

## *DETAILED EVALUATION FORMS FOR ENVIRONMENT FULL PROPOSALS*

| ***Opening phase**** |
|---|

| ***Opening criteria*** | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Proposal was submitted through the eProposal tool by the set deadline? | ***Yes / No*** |
| 2. Have the relevant LIFE 2020 application forms in eProposal been used? | ***Yes / No*** |

**The opening check will be performed through the eProposal application, not in ESAP.*

| ***Award phase[13]*** |
|---|

| ***1. Technical coherence and quality***<br>In evaluating this criterion, the following points should be taken into account: |
|---|
| 1. Is the pre-operational context well described (problems and threats, status of preparatory activities including previous testing/research, authorisations, permits, etc.) ? |
| 2. Is there a clear logical link between threats/problems, objectives, actions proposed and expected results? |
| 3. Are the actions appropriate to achieve the defined objectives? Do the actions clearly state how, when, where (maps, if relevant), why and by whom the actions will be undertaken? Are all actions directly contributing to the achievement of the project objectives? Are they properly quantified? Are relevant stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the actions? |
| 4. The nature of the project as presented in the Full Proposal does not substantially differ from the one presented in the Concept Note and changes to the objectives pursued; the composition of the partnership and the actions proposed in comparison to the Concept Note stage would not call into question the Concept Note evaluation? |
| 5. In case land purchase is foreseen in the proposal, to what extent has the applicant taken into account the technical land purchase criteria mentioned in the LIFE guidelines for applicants? Additionally, in the case of land purchase, long term land lease and one off compensation payments: has a letter been added from the competent authority or from a registered notary, confirming that the price per hectare is not above the average for this type of land and location? |
| 6. Are the expected results of the project properly described and quantified (e.g.: environmental impacts, replication impacts) both in the key project level indicators table and in the text of the proposal? Is monitoring both of the impacts of the project and of the progress of the project foreseen? |
| 7. Are the project operational and management structures well organised and controlled by the coordinating beneficiary? Are the necessary means proposed (equipment, personnel, etc.) for a correct implementation? |

[13] Please note that the following list of questions is indicative and not exhaustive. Reference text for the award criteria should remain the one contained in Section 2 of this document.

8. Is the partnership appropriate / sufficient / competent / coherent for the objectives and actions of the project? Are the technical means and expertise involved adequate for implementing the project?

9. Are deliverables, milestones and time planning comprehensive, realistic and coherent with the expected results? In particular, have the duration of preparatory actions and permit procedures, unfavourable weather conditions, etc. been adequately taken into account? Have implementation risks and contingent measures been identified? Are potential difficulties correctly assessed (feasibility of the actions, potential risks, etc.) and has sufficient preparation been undertaken to pre-empt these, for example through prior stakeholder consultation, a contingency plan, etc.? Are there still any permits, authorisations or Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) required prior to the project implementation, or are they already available?

10. To what extent does the proposal include a clear and realistic strategy on communication, experience-sharing, networking and dissemination? Are all obligatory communication requirements covered? Are these activities appropriate and well-designed for the purpose of communicating and disseminating the project results and lessons learnt?

***2. Financial coherence and quality (including value for money)***

In evaluating this criterion, the following points should be taken into account:

1. Is the budget justified and coherent and are costs adequate to the actions and means proposed?

2. Is the proposed approach cost-effective? Is the project cost-efficient and does it represent value for money?

   In particular: Is the overall investment reasonable in view of the expected outcomes and impacts? To what extent does the proposal show that other EU funding sources have been considered in the preparation of the proposal? Is there a risk that some of the actions are obligatory compensation measures for other projects (Article 6 of the Habitats Directive), or that some of the co-financing might come from obligatory compensation payments from other projects (Article 6 of the Habitats Directive)?

3. Are costs of all cost categories (direct personnel costs; travel and subsistence costs; costs for subcontracting (also referred to as “external assistance costs”); cost of durable goods: (depreciation) costs of infrastructure and equipment, prototype costs; costs for land purchase/long-term lease of land/one-off compensations for land use rights; costs of consumables; and other costs) reasonable, sufficiently described, correctly allocated and compliant with the rules and principles foreseen in the LIFE Guidelines for Applicants, and the Model LIFE Grant Agreement (in particular it Annex I - General Conditions and Annex X - Financial and Administrative Guidelines) and the LIFE Regulation (i.e. not ineligible)?

   In particular: will costs be tendered wherever required and/or possible? Are costs reasonable with respect to national conditions? Are the project management costs reasonable given the project's size and ambitions?

4. Is the co-financing foreseen compliant with maximum co-financing rates and is the budget allocation among beneficiaries justified? The EC contribution requested does not exceed by more than 10 % the one presented in the concept note?

5. Specific points:
   - 5.1. Direct personnel cost: In cases of civil servant salary costs, has the "+2%" rule been observed?
   - 5.2. External assistance costs: Where costs for external assistance exceed 35% of the total project budget, has a coherent explanation been provided to justify this high level of sub-contracting?

***3. EU added value: extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE sub-programme for Environment***

In evaluating this criterion, the following points should be taken into account:

1. To what extent does the proposal contribute to the specific objectives of the priority area as set out in Art.10, 11 and 12 and to the thematic priority as set out in Annex III of the LIFE Regulation targeted by the project? To what extent does it contribute to one or several complementary specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE Environment sub-programme as set out in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation complementary to the thematic priority primarily targeted by the project?

2. To what extent does the project achieve, by its end and in comparison to the state-of-play estimated or measured at its outset, concrete, realistic and quantified environmental impacts, in a life cycle approach where relevant?

***4. EU added value: Sustainability (continuation, replication, transfer potential)***

In evaluating this criterion, the following point should be taken into account:

1. Does the proposal convincingly demonstrate that the proposed solutions and related expected social and economic effects will be continued, replicated and/or transferred after project end? Is this sustained by a sufficiently ambitious yet credible strategy and action plan in order to reach a critical mass and mobilise a wider uptake during the project and/or in a short and medium term perspective after its end?

2. To what extent does the proposed approach go beyond transfer of knowledge and networking, and involves putting the solutions developed and/or applied in the project into practice beyond the project period, elsewhere or for a different purpose?

3. Are actions foreseen to ensure funding after the project ends? Does the project foresee that savings and/or income will be generated by the project's proposed solutions?

***5. EU added value: Contribution to the project topics***

In evaluating this criterion, the following points should be taken into account:

1. For Nature and Biodiversity ("NAT") and Environmental Governance and Information ("GIE") priority areas: does the project clearly and fully comply with one (or maximum two) of the project topics for the chosen priority area? Is this clearly described in the corresponding form? Are the core actions of the project clearly focusing on the project topics targeted?

2. For Environment and Resource efficiency ("ENV RE") priority areas: does the project clearly and fully comply with one (or maximum two) of the project topics for the chosen priority area? Are the core actions of the project clearly focusing on the project topics targeted? If so, is a clear justification given that the solution(s) (i.e. techniques, methods, actions, methodologies, or approaches within the meaning of Article 2 of the LIFE Regulation) to the environmental issue targeted is (are) new or unknown in the European Union?

***6. EU added value: synergies (including multipurpose and integration/complementarity, Green Public Procurement, Ecolabel and uptake of EU-research results) & transnationality***

In evaluating this criterion, the following points should be taken into account:

1. To what extent does the project, while focusing on one area, include a multi-purpose delivery mechanism and concrete actions to create synergies with other EU policies (e.g. jobs and growth, social integration) and funding mechanisms without compromising its objectives?

| | |
|---|---|
| 2. To what extent does the project integrate specific environmental objectives into other Union policy areas and/or achieve complementarity with these? Are these policy areas and expected project contribution clearly identified? Are relevant policy makers properly engaged? Are relevant actions foreseen to ensure the integration and/or complementarity? Is the impact on other policy areas appropriately qualified and quantified? Are concrete social and economic benefits identified and quantified? | |
| 3. Does the project consortium commit to the use of green procurement and/or to favouring the use of products and/or services of **officially recognised eco-labelling schemes** such as the EU Ecolabel[14] during project implementation? Is this promoted through a clear delivery mechanism? | |
| 4. Does the proposal foresee to take up results of EU Research and Innovation Programmes, in particular of environmental and climate-related research and innovation projects financed by Horizon 2020 or by preceding Framework Programmes? Are the research results relevant for the uptake adequately presented? Is the manner in which they will be used for the implementation of the LIFE project convincingly demonstrated? Is the added value of this uptake sufficiently evidenced? | |
| 5. Is transnational cooperation amongst EU Member States foreseen? Is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate the added value of the transnational approach to support the achievement of the project's objectives? Do project actions have an EU transnational scope? Is a multi-country partnership in place? [15] | |

## *Full Proposal eligibility criteria*

| ***1. Generic criteria for all of the LIFE components*** | |
|---|---|
| 1. The proposal fulfils the relevant project categories covered by Article 2(a), (b), (c), or (h) of the LIFE Regulation and aims at fulfilling the relevant LIFE objectives as laid down in Article 3 and Articles 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the LIFE Regulation. | ***True/False*** |
| 2. The proposal does not focus merely on research and excludes the construction of large infrastructure. | ***True/False*** |
| 3. The proposal does not fund compensation measures deriving from obligations under national or EU law. | ***True/False*** |
| 4. The project takes place in the Union and/or territories to which the Treaties and relevant acquis apply or fulfils one of the exceptions laid down in Articles 5 and 6 of the LIFE Regulation and specified in the Guidelines for applicants 2020. | ***True/False*** |
| 5. The targeted effects are already measurable and measured or modelled on the basis of measurements during the project period. | ***True/False*** |

[14] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/eu-ecolabel-products-and-services.html.

[15] The meaning of "transnational" as foreseen in the LIFE Regulation only covers cooperation among Member States as well as cooperation among Member States and third countries participating in the LIFE Programme under article 5 of the LIFE Regulation. Activities outside the Union or in overseas countries and territories, while possible as foreseen under article 6 of the LIFE Regulation, will not entail additional points under this award criterion.

| | |
|---|---|
| ***2. Operational capacity of the project participants*** | |
| 1. There is clear evidence that applicants have the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the project. | ***True/False*** |
| ***3. Specific criteria for each of the LIFE components*** | |
| *3.1 Criteria applicable to all LIFE Nature and Biodiversity proposals* | |
| 1. At least 25% of the proposal budget is allocated to concrete conservation actions (or, alternatively, the proposal falls into one of the exceptions as indicated in sections 2.4.1 of the *Guidelines for applicants 2020 – LIFE Nature and Biodiversity*. | ***True/False/ n.a.*** |
| 2. The project is targeting the conservation of non-domestic autochthonous species or varieties of plants or animals or of natural or semi-natural habitats or ecosystems. | ***True/False/ n.a.*** |
| *3.2 Criterion applicable to LIFE Nature proposals only* | |
| 1. The proposed actions are aimed at implementing the objectives of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and, more specifically, they concern conservation measures for species and/or habitat types that are covered by the relevant annexes of the Habitats or Birds Directive, where relevant within the Natura 2000 network. | ***True/False*** |
| *3.3 Criterion applicable to LIFE Biodiversity proposals only* | |
| 1. The proposed actions are aiming to fulfil targets 2 to 5 of the Communication "Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2011) 244)" | ***True/False*** |
| *3.4 Criterion applicable to LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency proposals, only* | |
| 1. The demonstrative and/or pilot character of the proposal is clearly outlined in the appropriate form B2 and/or B3 in eProposal. | ***True/False*** |
| 2. The proposed actions lead to substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental issue(s) targeted. | ***True/False*** |
| *3.5 Criterion applicable to LIFE Environmental Governance and Information proposals, only* | |
| 1. The proposal contains actions that will lead to substantial and measurable direct or indirect effects on the environmental issue(s) targeted by causing substantial and measurable direct effects on the environmental governance, information, and/or awareness and dissemination issue(s) targeted. | ***True/False*** |

## *Admissibility and exclusion phase*

| ***Admissibility selection criteria*** | |
|---|---|
| 1. The application forms A3, A4, A6 and A8 (where relevant) uploaded in the eProposal tool, signed. | ***True/False*** |
| 2. A summary in English has been provided on form B1. | ***True/False*** |
| 3. The proposal forms have been completed in an official EU language. | ***True/False*** |
| 4. The coordinating beneficiary is legally registered in the EU. | ***True/False*** |

## *Financial selection phase*

| ***Financial selection criteria*** | |
|---|---|
| 1. The following mandatory annexes have been uploaded in the eProposal application in the requested electronic format:<br>For coordinating beneficiaries that are not public bodies:<br>• the "LIFE Simplified Financial Statement"<br>• most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account (or if the applicant has been only recently created, it must provide a management/ business plan for at least 12 months in the future)<br>• **audit report** of an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last available financial year, where the EU contribution requested exceeds 750,000 € and always where a statutory audit is required by national law. **In all other cases a declaration on the validity of the accounts** (template included in call package) signed by a legal representative, certifying the validity of the accounts for the last available financial year.<br>For coordinating beneficiaries that are public bodies:<br>• the "Public body declaration" completed and with dated signature | ***True/False*** |
| 2. All beneficiaries have completed the declaration that they are not in one of the situations listed in Articles 136(1), 136(4) and 141of the EU Financial Regulation. | ***True/False*** |
| 3. According to the information available, the coordinating beneficiary is financially sound (based on profit and loss account, balance sheet, audit report/self-declaration). | ***True/False*** |
| 4. According to the information available, the coordinating beneficiary has the capacity to finance the project and/or to manage the financial amounts provided for in the proposed budget, within the proposed project period. | ***True/False*** |
| 5. All beneficiaries contribute financially to the proposal budget. | ***True/False*** |
| 6. All beneficiaries are absent from the Contracting Authority's Early Detection and Exclusion System. | ***True/False*** |