Guidelines for applicants 2019

LIFE Environmental Governance and Information

The current guidelines apply to the preparation of project proposals to be submitted to the Contracting Authority under the LIFE sub-programme for Environment. They are intended to help the applicant prepare the content of the project proposal.

This document only applies to this call for LIFE project proposals ("LIFE 2019"). Furthermore, these guidelines only concern applications for the following types of "traditional" projects in the priority area *Environmental Governance and Information* . Separate guidance documents are available on the LIFE web page for other components of the LIFE 2019 call.

The document LIFE Orientation Document (also available on the LIFE web page) provides guidance to applicants on how to identify the most suitable LIFE sub-programme and priority area under which they could submit their proposal. This document also discusses the distinctions between LIFE and other EU direct funding programmes.

The current guidelines are part of the call for proposals application package 2019 which also includes the following documents that should be carefully read before submitting a LIFE proposal:
- Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals
- Model LIFE Grant Agreement with Special and General Conditions

Applicants are invited to read the present guidelines in conjunction with the model Grant Agreement that will be published with this call, as well as the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm

1. Introduction to LIFE

1.1 What is LIFE?

LIFE is the European Programme for the Environment and Climate Action, for the period from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2020. The legal basis for LIFE is Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013[1] (hereinafter "the LIFE Regulation").

The LIFE Programme is structured in two sub-programmes: the sub-programme for environment and the sub-programme for climate action.

The **sub-programme for environment** covers three priority areas:

- ***LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency***
- ***LIFE Nature and Biodiversity***
- ***LIFE Environmental Governance and Information***

The thematic priorities for each priority area are further described in Annex III to the LIFE Regulation.

The **sub-programme for climate action** covers three priority areas:

- ***LIFE Climate Change Mitigation***
- ***LIFE Climate Change Adaptation***
- ***LIFE Climate Governance and Information***

The overall financial envelope for the implementation of the LIFE Programme is EUR 3.457 Billion, 75% of which is allocated to the sub-programme for environment (EUR 2,592,491,250).

According to Article 17(4) of the LIFE Regulation, at least 81% of the total budget shall be allocated to projects supported by way of action grants or, where appropriate, financial instruments. The second LIFE Multiannual Work Programme covering the period 2018-2020 foresees a budget of EUR 1,243.81 Million for the sub-programme for environment[2].

During the period 2014-2020, the Contracting Authority will publish one call for LIFE project proposals per year under the LIFE Regulation.

[1] Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, published in the Official Journal L 347/185 of 20 December 2013 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0185:0208:EN:PDF

[2] Commission Implementing Decision (2018/210/EU) of 12 February 2018 on the adoption of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020, OJ L39 of 13.02.2018, p.11-79; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1518531793134&uri=CELEX:32018D0210

1.2 "Traditional" Projects

Article 2 of the LIFE Regulation defines the various types of projects, which may be supported by the LIFE 2014-2020 programme.

These "traditional" types of projects are:

- "pilot projects" means projects that apply a technique or method that has not been applied or tested before, or elsewhere, and 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” means 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” means projects that apply appropriate, cost-effective, state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project;
- "information, awareness and dissemination projects" means projects aimed at supporting communication, dissemination of information and awareness raising in the fields of the sub-programmes for Environment and Climate Action.

The following table shows which type of project may be submitted to which priority area:

Sub-Programme	Priority Area	Types of Traditional Projects Eligible
Environment	Environment and Resource Efficiency	Demonstration and pilot projects
Environment	Nature and Biodiversity	Best practice, demonstration, and pilot projects
Environment	**Environmental Governance and Information**	**Information, awareness and dissemination projects**
Climate Action	Climate Change Mitigation	Best practice, demonstration, and pilot projects
Climate Action	Climate Change Adaptation	Best practice, demonstration, and pilot projects
Climate Action	Climate Governance and Information	Information, awareness and dissemination projects

The amount available for co-financing action grants for all types of "traditional" projects under the Environment sub-programme is indicatively set at EUR 224 960 000 Projects financed by the LIFE Programme under one priority area shall avoid undermining environmental or climate objectives in another priority area and, where possible, promote synergies between different objectives as well as the use of green procurement.

1.3 Role of project topics

The LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020 defines project topics implementing the thematic priorities for the sub-programme for environment listed in Annex III to the LIFE Regulation for pilot, demonstration, best practice and information, awareness and dissemination projects ("traditional" projects). They reflect the priorities on which projects should focus during the relevant period. Eligible proposals that reach or pass the minimum pass scores (see section 5.1.1 of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020) and target a relevant project topic will be given priority over projects of comparable quality that do not fall under one of the project topics. See also the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019* for further details on scoring of proposals.

Please note that, in order to be considered as matching one of the project topics, a project should comply with each of the elements of the given topic and the project actions should clearly focus on this topic. For example a project for a regional awareness raising campaign will not be considered as matching the topic "National campaigns to raise awareness …".

1.4 How, where and when to submit a proposal?

Project submission procedure will be organised in two stages:

- Stage 1: Concept note
- Stage 2: Full proposal

Stage 1: Concept Note

Concept notes should be submitted through the online tool eProposal, available via the LIFE web page. The application tool contains all administrative (A), technical (B) and financial (F) forms required to submit a Concept Note.

For complete details regarding the application forms relevant at Stage 1, please refer to section 3 of this document. For complete details regarding the use of the eProposal tool, please refer to Annex 3 of this document.

Applicants must submit their concept notes to the Contracting Authority via eProposal before **19/06/2019, 16:00 Brussels local time.**

The concept note can be modified, validated and (re)submitted as many times as needed until the deadline. You are recommended to submit your draft(s) regularly during the entire submission period to avoid last minutes issues with your internet connection of other IT related failures. Each subsequent submission overwrites the previously submitted version (earlier versions are not archived and are therefore not available anymore).

Stage 2: Full proposal

The applicants with the best ranked concept notes will be invited (in 10/2019) to submit a full proposal using the web tool eProposal available via the LIFE web page.

The application tool contains all administrative (A), technical (B and C) and financial (F) forms required, and functionalities to attach relevant documents (maps, photos, diagrams, graphs, mandatory administrative and financial annexes). For complete details regarding the application forms, please refer to section 3 of this document. For complete details regarding the use of the eProposal tool, please refer to Annex 3 of this document.

Applicants invited to submit their full proposals to the Contracting Authority via eProposal will have to do it by the deadline communicated in Stage 2 invitation letter**.**

The proposal can be modified, validated and (re)submitted as many times as needed until the Stage 2 submission deadline. You are recommended to submit your draft(s) regularly during the entire submission period to avoid last minutes issues with your internet connection of other IT related failures. Each subsequent submission overwrites the previously submitted version (earlier versions are not archived and are therefore not available anymore).

For the proposals covered by these guidelines the Contracting Authority is the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME).

When preparing the proposal, the applicants may wish to consult the relevant LIFE National Contact Point; the complete list of the names and contact addresses of the national/regional authorities for LIFE in the Member States can be found on the LIFE website at

https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/life-national-contact-points

1.5 How will LIFE projects be selected?

The technical methodology for the project selection procedure and the selection and award criteria are described in section 5 of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020. For a detailed description of how this procedure will be implemented, please refer to the *'Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019'*.

Very important: Please note that the e-mail address specified by the applicant as the contact person's e-mail address in form A2 will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure. It should therefore correspond to an e-mail account which is valid, active and checked on a daily basis throughout the duration of the evaluation procedure.

The earliest possible starting date of projects is defined in Annex 1

1.6 General Guidance to Applicants

The current chapter replies to some frequently asked questions on how to conceive a LIFE project proposal. For specific guidelines, see section 2; for recommendation on how to fill in the technical and financial forms, please refer to section 3 of this document.

1.6.1 In which language may the concept note/full proposal be submitted?

The concept note must be submitted in English.

As for the full proposal, the Contracting Authority strongly recommends that applicants fill in the technical part and especially the financial part of the proposal in clear English only, although they may also be submitted in any of the official EU languages, except Irish.

Note that the grant agreement, project management, formal reporting, key deliverables and all communication with the Contracting Authority will have to be in English.

The title of the proposal and form B1 ("Summary description of the project") must always be submitted in clear English. Form B1 may **in addition** also be submitted in the language of the proposal.

1.6.2 Who may submit a proposal?

A proposal may be submitted by any legal person registered in the European Union.

Entities participating in the proposal may fall into three types of beneficiaries: (1) *public bodies*, (2) *private commercial organisations* and (3) *private non-commercial organisations* (including NGOs).

The term "public bodies" is defined as referring to national public authorities, regardless of their form of organisation – central, regional or local structure – or the various bodies under their control, provided these operate on behalf of and under the responsibility of the national public authority concerned. In the case of entities registered as private law bodies wishing to be considered for the purpose of this call as equivalent to "public law bodies", they should provide evidence proving that they comply with all criteria applicable to bodies governed by public law and in the event the organisation stops its activities, its rights and obligations, liability and debts will be transferred to a public body. For a complete definition, please refer to the annex "Public body declaration", which must be completed by all beneficiaries which wish to be considered and treated as a 'public body'. The only exception concerns those central (e.g.: Ministry) and local administrations (e.g.: Provinces, Municipalities, Regions etc.) whose nature of 'public body' is clear.

Please note that so called 'Sole traders' (i.e. entities owned and run by one individual and where there is no legal distinction between the owner and the business) are considered natural persons and are therefore not eligible to participate as beneficiary or affiliate in this call.

Please refer to the *'Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019 of Environment Sub-programme'* for full details regarding the compulsory administrative documents which are required with the proposal depending on the legal status of the coordinating beneficiary.

Once a proposal has been accepted for co-funding, the applicant will become the **coordinating beneficiary** who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the project. The coordinating beneficiary will be the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority and will be the only beneficiary to report directly to the Contracting Authority on the project's technical and financial progress.

The coordinating beneficiary receives the EU financial contribution from the Contracting Authority and ensures its distribution as specified in the partnership agreements established with the associated beneficiaries (if there are any – see below). The coordinating beneficiary must be directly involved in the technical implementation of the project and in the dissemination of the project results.

The coordinating beneficiary must bear part of the project costs and must thus contribute financially to the project budget. It cannot therefore be reimbursed for 100% of the costs that it incurs.

The coordinating beneficiary must show its legal status (by completing application form A2) confirming legal registration in the EU.

In addition to the coordinating beneficiary, a LIFE proposal may also involve one or more associated beneficiaries and/or one or more project co-financiers.

The associated beneficiary must always contribute technically and financially to the proposal and hence be responsible for the implementation of one or several project actions. Furthermore, it must provide the coordinator beneficiary with all the necessary documents required for the fulfilment of its reporting obligations to the Contracting Authority.

There is no pre-defined number of associated beneficiaries to be involved in a LIFE proposal. A proposal that is submitted without any participant other than the coordinating beneficiary itself is eligible. On the other hand, a beneficiary should not hesitate to associate other beneficiaries, if this would bring an added value to the project, such as when the partnership strengthens the feasibility or the demonstration character of the proposal, its European added value, its impact and/or the transfer of its results and lessons learnt.

Public undertakings whose capital is publicly owned and which are considered an instrument or a technical service of a public administration, and which are subject to the public administration's control, but are in effect separate legal entities, must become beneficiaries if a public administration intends to entrust the implementation of certain project actions to these undertakings[3].

Exceptionally an associated beneficiary may be legally registered outside the European Union, if the actions outside the EU it is responsible for are (the coordinating beneficiary of the project in any case be based in the EU) necessary to achieve EU environmental objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply. In other words, the participation of an entity established outside the EU that will only contribute with the know-how or will collaborate to implement actions in the EU will not be considered as sufficient.

[3] This is the case for example in Spain for "empresas públicas" such as TRAGSA, or EGMASA and in Greece for regional development agencies

All associated beneficiaries must show their legal status (by completing application form A5), and provide full information on the Member State or third country in which they are registered. In addition all beneficiaries whether registered or not in the EU must declare that they are not in any of the situations foreseen under Article 106(1) and 107 of the EU Financial Regulation[4] (by signing the application form A3 or A4 – see instructions in section 3 of this document).

For private beneficiaries, the Contracting Authority may accept that **affiliated entities to a beneficiary** participate in a project as long as all conditions listed in the Model Grant Agreement and its Annex X (Financial and Administrative Guidelines) are fulfilled. However, the association of entities as affiliates may complicate the project structure and thus have a negative impact on the technical and financial coherence of the project. It is therefore entirely in the Contracting Authority's administrative discretion to accept affiliates, and in no case will affiliated entities be accepted for public beneficiaries or entities that do not comply with the description of affiliated entities hereafter.

Affiliated entities need to comply with the eligibility and non-exclusion criteria applying to applicants and should have a structural link with the beneficiary concerned (i.e. a legal or capital link) that is neither limited to the project nor established for the sole purpose of the project implementation (so the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the project).

As affiliated entities could be accepted those directly controlled by the beneficiary (i.e. daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries), entities controlling the beneficiary (mother company) OR in case of Memberships, the beneficiary has to be legally defined as a network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities participate. However, if several beneficiaries want to work with the same 'affiliate', the 'affiliate' should be proposed as 'beneficiary' instead.

If you consider using young volunteers for specific actions, please consider applying for the European Solidarity Corps calls. The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) is conceived to offer young people between 18 and 30 in Europe the chance to support a non-governmental organisation (NGO), local authority or private company active in addressing challenging situations across the European Union. In 2019 additional emphasis is placed inter alia on response to environmental and climate challenges, including disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery (excluding immediate disaster response). For further information: https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/organisation_info_en

A **project co-financier** only contributes to the project with financial resources, has no technical responsibilities, and cannot benefit from the EU financial contribution. Furthermore, it cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor to any of the project's beneficiaries.

[4] 4 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

For specific tasks of a fixed duration, a proposal may foresee the use of **sub-contractors**. Sub-contractors provide external services to the project beneficiaries who fully pay for the services provided. Beneficiaries (including their affiliated entities) may not act as sub-contractors. Sub-contractors should normally not be identified by name in the proposal; if they are, the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement must still be respected.

For a more detailed description of the respective rules related to the coordinating beneficiary, associated beneficiaries, affiliates, co-financiers and sub-contractors, please refer to the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement.

For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article II.17.3 of the Grant Agreement.

1.6.3 What is the optimal budget for a LIFE project?

There is no fixed minimum size for project budgets. While large ambitious projects (i.e. over 5,000,000 Euro total costs) have been financed several times in the past, small projects (i.e. below 500,000 Euro total costs) have seldom succeeded due to the limited output and consequently the low added value.

1.6.4 What is the maximum rate of EU co-financing under LIFE?

For the duration of the second LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020, the maximum EU co-financing rate for "traditional" LIFE projects is 55% of the total eligible project costs. An exception is made for "traditional" LIFE projects in the priority area Nature and Biodiversity under the sub-programme Environment for which the EU co-funding rate can go up to 60%, or 75% in specific cases.[5]

The payment schedule foreseen is the following:

	1st pre-financing (might be subject to the receipt of a financial guarantee)	Further pre-financing(s)	Final payment
No Mid-term report (for projects with a duration of 24 months or less and where the Union contribution is less than or equal to EUR 300,000)	70%	0%	max. 30%
One Mid-term report (for projects with a duration	30%	40%	max. 30%

[5] This higher co-financing rate of 75% will only be applied to projects allocating 50% or more of the total estimated cost for concrete conservation actions to activities directly benefitting **priority** habitats or species of the Birds and Habitats Directives, when actions in the project are necessary to achieve the conservation objective.

exceeding 24 months or where the Union contribution exceeds EUR 300,000)			
Two Mid-term reports (Upon request of the coordinating beneficiary and only in case of projects with a duration of 48 months and where the Union contribution exceeds EUR 4,000,000)	30%	20%	max. 30%

1.6.5 How much should project beneficiaries contribute to the project budget?

The coordinating beneficiary and any associated beneficiaries are expected to provide a reasonable financial contribution to the project budget. A beneficiary's financial contribution is considered as a proof of its commitment to the implementation of the project objectives – a very low financial contribution may therefore be considered as an absence or lack of commitment.

A proposal cannot be submitted if the financial contribution of any of the beneficiaries to the proposal budget is EUR 0.

Moreover, where public bodies are involved as coordinating and/or associated beneficiaries in a project, the sum of their financial contributions to the project budget must exceed (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs charged to the project for personnel who are not considered 'additional'. For details, please refer to section 3.4 of this document.

1.6.6 What is the optimal starting date and duration for a project?

When preparing the project's time planning, beneficiaries should be aware of the expected date of the signature of the grant agreements for the LIFE 2019 projects as indicated in Annex 1. The earliest possible starting date for these projects is also defined in Annex 1**.** Any costs incurred before the project's starting date will not be considered eligible and cannot be included in the project budget. There is no pre-determined project duration for a LIFE project. Generally speaking, the project duration must correspond to what is necessary to complete all of the project's actions and to reach all its objectives. On average projects last for 3–5 years.

Only under exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may decide to grant an extension of the project duration. The experience of the previous LIFE Programmes has shown that many projects had difficulties completing all actions within the proposed project duration, mostly due to unforeseen delays and difficulties encountered during the project. Beneficiaries are therefore strongly advised to build an appropriate safety margin (e.g. 6 months) into the timetable of their proposal.

Beneficiaries should also be aware that a project that has completed all of its actions prior to the expected end date can submit its final report ahead of schedule and receive its final payment before the official project end date mentioned in the grant agreement.

1.6.7 Where can a LIFE project take place?

LIFE projects shall take place in the territory of the European Union Member States. The LIFE Programme may also finance activities outside the EU and in overseas countries and territories (OCTs), provided that the coordinating beneficiary is based in the EU and strong evidence is provided that the activities to be carried out outside the EU are necessary to achieve EU environmental objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply (e.g. actions aimed at the conservation of migratory birds in wintering areas or actions implemented on a trans boundary river). Please note that this is clearly an exception as normally actions should be carried out in the EU. However, when the problem at stake cannot be addressed successfully or efficiently unless actions are carried out also in non-EU countries, this will be possible. Qualitative and quantitative evidence to justify the need for those actions outside the EU must be given in the description of each of these actions in the relevant forms.

1.6.8 Who should manage a LIFE project?

It is expected that the project management is carried out by the staff of the coordinating beneficiary. However, on the basis of an appropriate justification it may be carried out by an associated beneficiary or by sub-contractor under the coordinating beneficiary's direct control. Very often a proper project management implies the involvement of a full-time project manager for a smooth coordination and implementation of the project. The proposal should clearly describe who will be in charge of the project management, how much personnel and time will be devoted to this task and how and by whom decisions on the project will be made during the project period (i.e. how and by whom the project management will be controlled).

1.6.9 Outsourcing of project activities

The beneficiaries should have the technical and financial capacity and competency to carry out the proposed project activities. It is therefore expected that the share of the project budget allocated to external assistance should remain below 35%. Higher shares may only be accepted if an adequate justification for this is provided in the project proposal.

The General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement must be respected for any external assistance.

In line with Article 19 of the Regulation, beneficiaries (public and private) are strongly advised to use "green" procurement. The European Commission has established a toolkit for this purpose. More information can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm

1.6.10 Under which conditions does LIFE favour transnational projects?

The LIFE Regulation indicates that, while selecting the projects to be co-funded, the Contracting Authority shall have special regard to transnational projects, when transnational cooperation is essential to guarantee environmental or nature protection. On the basis of award criterion 6, additional points will be given to a proposal if there is sufficient evidence for an added value of the transnational approach. If such evidence can be provided, the proposal will be considered for a higher scoring in the project selection process and will therefore have a higher chance of being selected for co-funding.

N.B. 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 award criterion 6.

1.6.11 How voluminous should a LIFE proposal be?

A proposal should be as concise and clear as possible. Applicants should avoid voluminous proposals and should not provide excessively detailed descriptions of project areas, environmental technologies, lists of species, etc.

Clear and detailed descriptions should, however, be provided for all project actions. Maps should be annexed wherever this would be useful to clarify the location of the proposed actions (note that they are obligatory in some cases).

Brochures, CVs and similar documents should not be submitted and will be ignored if provided.

1.6.12 Ongoing activities

Actions already ongoing before the start of the project are not eligible.

Where actions to be undertaken in the project are significantly different from previous or ongoing activities in terms of frequency or intensity they are not considered ongoing. The applicant must provide adequate information in the proposal that allows to assess this aspect.

Exceptionally, in case of actions that were undertaken and completed in the past and that are proposed to be repeated at a similar frequency or intensity during the project, the applicant must provide evidence that such actions would not have been carried out in the absence of the LIFE project.

1.6.13 Sustainability of the project and its actions

LIFE projects represent a considerable investment, and the European Union attaches great importance to the long term sustainability of these investments. The sustainability of the project results in the medium and long term is understood as the capacity to maintain them after project implementation, be it by continuation, by replication or by transfer. It is obligatory that throughout the duration of the project, the beneficiaries consider how these investments will be secured, maintained, developed and made use of or replicated/transferred during or after the end of the project. 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.

1.6.14 Research activities and large infrastructure

Whereas EU funding for research activities is provided under Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014–2020)[6], limited research aimed to improve and enhance the knowledge data underpinning the project may be carried out within a LIFE project. Research must be strictly limited and intrinsically related to the project's objectives and the applicant shall explain in detail how the proper implementation of the project relies on these research activities, showing that the existing scientific basis is insufficient, and how the additional knowledge will be used to implement the project actions. In such a case, scientific publications are considered important deliverables of the project.

Projects dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure do not fall within the scope of the LIFE Programme and are therefore not eligible. A project is considered to be dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure if the actual cost[7] of a "single item of infrastructure" exceeds € 500,000. A "single item of infrastructure" means all elements as described in form F4a that are physically bound to ensure the functionality of the infrastructural investment (e.g. for an eco-duct the bridge, barriers, signposting, etc.). Such amount may be exceptionally exceeded if full technical justification is provided in the proposal demonstrating the necessity of the infrastructure for ensuring an effective contribution to the objectives of Articles 10, 11 or 12 of the LIFE Regulation.

1.6.15 Complementarity with other EU funding programmes

According to Article 8 of the LIFE Regulation, activities supported from the LIFE Programme must ensure consistency and synergies, and avoid overlap with other funding programmes of the Union. In particular, the Contracting Authority and the Member States must ensure coordination with the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and Horizon 2020.

It is thus essential that, prior to submitting their proposal to the Contracting Authority, beneficiaries check thoroughly whether the actions proposed under their project **in practice could be, or are, funded** through other EU funds.

The beneficiaries must inform the Contracting Authority about any related funding they have received from the EU budget, as well as any related ongoing applications for funding from the EU budget. The beneficiaries must also check that they are not receiving on-going operating grants from LIFE (or other EU programmes) that could lead to double financing.

Failure to signal this in the appropriate form A7 might lead to rejection of the proposal.

Please note that this is an area of growing concern, evidence shows that an increasing number of similar or same proposals are submitted to various programmes. Increasingly severe checks and cross-checks are carried out by the contracting authority. Failure to declare that the same or a similar proposal has been submitted to

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[6] Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)" and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 81).

[7] Actual cost: Full cost of the infrastructure without applying any depreciation.

another programme (or worst, already even partly financed) may have serious consequences.

In addition, at the project revision stage, the national authority may also be required to indicate the steps taken to ensure the coordination and complementarity of LIFE funding with other EU funding programmes.

On the contrary, projects that show synergies with EU policies different than those covered by the LIFE programme and with other EU funding mechanisms, will receive bonus points in the evaluation phase (Award criterion 6) depending on the extent and quality of such synergies. An example of such synergies could be a project aimed at improving waste management that simultaneously increases social integration.

1.6.16 Proposals following or based on previous LIFE projects

If the applicant is proposing a continuation of a previous LIFE project, he should clearly describe in form A7 why a further project phase is needed and how this will complement the results achieved with the previous project. The applicant should also explain when discussing sustainability (form B6), how a further continuation would be ensured with resources other than the LIFE programme. Last, but not least, in the description of every key action (C-forms) the applicant should provide precise information on how this action builds upon and complements the similar action carried out in the previous project phase.

Applicants should also show that they have taken into consideration other LIFE projects financed that addressed a similar issue. They will need to explain how their proposal builds upon or differs from the others and how it will coordinate with them if those projects are still on-going.

During the evaluation process these aspects will be carefully checked. Failure to provide full details on these aspects will have a negative impact on the final score.

1.6.17 Quantification of (environmental) benefits

The improved performances/advantages introduced by the proposed solution must be quantified in terms of the expected environmental benefits. They must be concrete, realistic and quantified as far as possible and must be presented in a life-cycle reasoning where relevant. This must be done by clearly comparing them to the state-of-play estimated or measured at the outset of the project. In this regard as far as the full proposal is concerned, consistency shall be ensured between (environmental) benefits described in the relevant forms and values reported in the table on LIFE Key project level indicators.

N.B.: For GIE projects, specific advice is available in section 2.

1.6.18 Coordination requirements for multiple proposals aimed at the same/similar issue

Evidence shows that an increasing number of proposals aimed at the same or at a similar issue are submitted, often in the same Member State without a clear rational and coordination mechanism. This happens more frequently in the Nature and Biodiversity priority area.

To avoid such situations applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with National Contact Points (https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/life-national-contact-points**) to check whether the topic they are addressing is being addressed also by other applicants. If this is the case, applicants are encouraged to seek cooperation to avoid possible overlaps and increase synergies.**

1.7 Personal Data Protection Clause

The personal data supplied with your proposal, notably the name, address and other contact information of the beneficiaries and co-financiers, will be placed in a database named ESAP that will be made available to the EU Institutions and agencies, as well as to a team of external evaluators who are bound by a confidentiality agreement. ESAP is used exclusively to manage the evaluation of LIFE proposals.

The same personal data of successful projects will be transferred to another database called BUTLER, which will be made available to the EU Institutions and agencies and to an external monitoring team who are bound by a confidentiality agreement. BUTLER is used exclusively to manage LIFE projects.

A summary of each project, including the name and contact information of the coordinating beneficiary, will be placed on the LIFE website and made available to the general public. At a certain point the coordinating beneficiary will be invited to check the accuracy of this summary.

The list of successful beneficiaries and the relative amounts awarded to the projects selected will also be published in a public database called the Financial Transparency System[8].

The Contracting Authority, or its contractors, may also use the personal data of unsuccessful applicants for follow up actions in connection with future applications.

Throughout this process,

data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested that are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Head of Unit Eco-innovation and LIFE of EASME.

Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-easme.pdf

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System by the EASME, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 136 and 141 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046[1] For more information see the Privacy Statement on: https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en.

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[8] [Financial Transparency System (FTS) - European Commission]
[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1046

Submission of a proposal implies that you accept that the personal data contained in your proposal is made available as described above. It will not be used in any other way or for any other purposes than those described above.

2. LIFE Environmental Governance and Information

2.1 What is LIFE Environmental Governance and Information?

LIFE Environmental Governance and Information

LIFE Environmental Governance and Information aims specifically at contributing to the development and implementation of EU environmental policy and legislation. Projects financed must have a **European added value** and be complementary to actions that can be financed under other EU funds during the period 2014-2020.

Note: the geographical scope of awareness information, communication and awareness-raising campaigns will be taken into account in the assessment of the European added value of proposed projects.

The specific objectives of the priority area ***LIFE Environmental Governance and Information*** are:

- to promote awareness raising on environmental matters, including generating public and stakeholder support of Union policy-making in the field of the environment, and to promote knowledge on sustainable development and new patterns for sustainable consumption;
- to support communication, management, and dissemination of information in the field of the environment, and to facilitate knowledge sharing on successful environmental solutions and practice, including by developing cooperation platforms among stakeholders and training;
- to promote and contribute to more effective compliance with and enforcement of Union environmental legislation, in particular by promoting the development and dissemination of best practices and policy approaches;
- to promote better environmental governance by broadening stakeholder involvement, including NGOs, in consultation on and implementation of policy.

Annex III of the LIFE Regulation describes the thematic priorities for ***LIFE Environmental Governance and Information*** as follows:

a) information, communication and awareness raising campaigns in line with the priorities of the 7th Environment Action Programme;

b) activities in support of effective control process as well as measures to promote compliance in relation to Union environmental legislation, and in support of information systems and information tools on the implementation of Union environmental legislation.

2.2 Thematic priorities and project topics for LIFE Environmental Governance and Information

In this section applicants will find the project thematic priorities and topics to which priority will be given. This does not exclude the possibility of submitting proposals for project topics and thematic priorities that are not listed here, in accordance with Annex III of the LIFE Regulation. Applicants should clearly explain whether and how their proposal falls under one or more of these project topics. In this regard, In this regard, please note that points under award criterion 3 *'Contribution to the project topics'* will be awarded **only** to proposals that **clearly and fully** comply with **the project topics** listed below (for further details on criterion 3, please see the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019)*. Applicants **must choose maximum two project topics** in eProposal and **must clearly explain whether** and **why** their proposal falls under the selected project topics. Only compliance with topics indicated by the applicant will be examined. By not choosing a project topic, the applicant declares that the proposal does not fulfil any of the project topics and acknowledges that no points can be awarded to the project under criterion 3.

The thematic priorities for *LIFE Environmental Governance and Information* are implemented through the **project topics** defined in the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020 (MAWP), which are the following:

2.2.1 Thematic priority for Information, communication and awareness raising campaigns

LIFE Regulation, Annex III, section C, point (a):

The geographical scope of awareness information, communication and awareness-raising campaigns will be taken into account in the assessment of the European added value of proposed projects.

Raising awareness on environmental problems, EU environmental policies, tools and/or legislation among the relevant target audiences, aiming to change their perceptions and fostering the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviours and practices and/or direct citizen's engagement. Applicants need to provide substantial evidence that a change of awareness levels[9] in the field(s) addressed by the project is a crucial factor supporting correct implementation and/or future development of EU environmental policies tools and/or legislation. The awareness-raising activities should have the widest coverage relevant for the specific issue targeted[10]. The environmental problems, EU environmental

[9] Awareness level is defined here as the proportion of target audience who knows of the idea/term/product/concept/environmental challenge/etc. that is the subject of the proposed LIFE project's work. See also the differentiation made in the framework of the LIFE Key Project Indicators (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/toolkit/pmtools/life2014_2020/documents/160215_LIFEproject_level_outcome_indicators.pdf=) between 'reaching' (Reaching is defined as successfully providing project specific information to the target audience (general public or stakeholder groups) represented by their individual members. It can be inferred from certain behavioural patterns that individuals have been reached) and 'raising awareness' (Awareness raising is defined as successfully increasing the understanding and knowledge of the focus area of the project among the target audience (general public or stakeholder groups) represented by their individual members) as the basis for behavioural change.

[10] As a general principle, these proposals should therefore, e.g. fully target a Member State, several Member States or the entire EU, a whole market sector, a major metropolitan area, a species in its entire range, a bio-geographic region or all regions facing a similar issue.

policies, tools and/or legislation targeted should be directly linked to one or more of the themes listed below the following three priorities[11]:

Green growth:

— sustainable consumption with a focus on waste prevention, in particular plastic waste, food waste and marine litter,

— transition to circular economy, in particular implementation of sustainable business models, sustainable production, products and services[12].

Connecting with citizens:

— Natura 2000 and the benefits of the implementation of the European nature legislation, in line with the action plan on nature, people and the economy[13],

— invasive alien species,

— safe use of chemicals,

— benefits of nature including green infrastructure and related ecosystem services.

Making it happen:

— air quality in urban areas and its health effects, and/or

— benefits of the implementation of water legislation.

2.2.2 Thematic priority for Activities in support of effective control process as well as measures to promote compliance

LIFE Regulation, Annex III, section C, point (b):

Information systems, quality of public administration and voluntary approaches

1. **Improving environmental information systems** operated by public authorities for **electronically collecting, processing, storing and sharing environmental information**, by developing and providing new or, where available, enhancing existing systems. Projects should improve the implementation of EU environmental policy and be in line with EU reporting obligations[14].

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[11] Taken from the DG Environment Strategic Plan 2016-2020: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plan-2016-2020- environment_en

[12] Including sustainable building.

[13] Communication COM(2017) 198 final of 27 April 2017 from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'An Action Plan for nature, people and the economy', http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/action_plan/index_en.htm

[14] There are two EU environmental directives with a particular focus on access to and sharing of environmental information: Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information, OJL 41, 14.2.2003, p.26 and Directive 2007/2/EC , INSPIRE. The former includes provisions on active dissemination of environmental information to the public and the latter contains detailed provisions for electronic data-sharing.

Explanatory note:

Improvements can take the form of reduced administrative burden, improved information-sharing within and between authorities, enhanced end-uses of environmental information, including reporting, and better service to end-users, including the public.

As regards chemical monitoring data, projects should improve data availability and accessibility of chemical monitoring data for the regulatory processes via the use of the Information Platform for Chemical Monitoring (IPCHEM), by linking and correlating the chemical monitoring data with human and environmental health data.

2. **Improving the capacity and quality of public administration in relation to plans, programmes, analyses, reviews and assessments and/or to permits, derogations, and other decisions on specific activities,** where appropriate also in partnership with private entities, with a view to reducing administrative burden while optimising environmental outcomes and integrating, where appropriate, nature conservation.

One or more of the following shall be targeted:

Plans, programmes, analyses, reviews and assessments

— **air quality plans**[15],

— **national air pollution control programmes**[16],

— **river basin management plans**[17] and associated programmes of measures, analyses and reviews,

— **marine spatial plans**, and associated programmes of measures, and marine strategies with a view to ensuring synergies with Natura 2000 and river basin management plans,

— **flood risk management plans[18],**

— **nitrate action plans[19],**

— **waste management plans[20],**

— **Natura 2000 management plans[21],**

— **forest management plans required under the Rural Development Regulation**, in order to secure more biodiverse forests,

— land use plans and other plans requiring strategic environmental assessment[22] with a view to improving the account taken of ecosystems[23] and their services[24],

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[15] e.g. as foreseen under Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1).

[16] Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC (OJ L 344, 17.12.2016, p. 1).

[17] Directive 2000/60/EC, see Articles 5, 11 and 13.

[18] Directive 2007/60/EC.

[19] Directive 91/676/EEC

[20] Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste, and repealing certain Directives (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3).

[21] Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC.

— assessments of ecosystem services and related work[25],

and/or decisions related to:

— industrial emissions,

— waste management,

— water pollution and water abstraction[26],

— nature protection[27].

Explanatory note:

For the plans or programmes or other measures targeted, improving the capacity and quality of public administration could relate to one or more of the following: engaging and supporting stakeholders; consulting the public; optimising the content of documents; monitoring implementation of and compliance with the targeted measure; sharing best practices; employing effective methods for the preparation, revision, and environmental assessment of the targeted measures. Increased monitoring capacity through e.g. highly dispersed and real-time monitoring techniques established coherently in multiple localities, increases the opportunities and information-base not only for the assessment of plans but also for creating new, dynamic plans.

As regards Natura 2000 management plans and nature protection related decisions, the recommendations from the Natura 2000 biogeographic seminars should be taken into account. As regards decisions related to nature protection, this regards permitting requirements pursuant to Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and species protection rules pursuant to Articles 12 and 16 of the Habitats Directive and Articles 5 and 9 of the Birds Directive.

Assessment includes measuring and modelling, as well as the establishment and/or improvement of emission inventories. Decisions are decisions of the competent authorities for the purpose of respecting relevant EU environmental legislation.

Decisions are decisions of the competent authorities for the purpose of respecting relevant EU environmental legislation.

3. **Development, promotion, implementation and/or harmonisation of** one or more of the following **voluntary approaches and their use** by entities aiming at reducing impact on the environment of their activities, products and services:

    — **third-party verification** of the performance of innovative technologies when they are ready for the market such as Environmental Technology Verification (ETV)[28],

[22] Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p. 30).
[23] Including soil ecosystems.
[24] Biodiversity Mapping, assessing and/or valuation of ecosystems and their services in line with the First MAES Report:
http://ec.europa. eu/environment/nature/knowledge/ecosystem_assessment/pdf/MAESWorkingPaper2013.pdf
[25] EU Biodiversity Strategy, Action 5.
[26] Including the analysis necessary to establish effective water pricing policies.
[27] Pursuant to Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC.
[28] https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoap/etv_en

— **environmental footprint category rules (PEFCR) and/or organisation environmental footprint sectoral rules (OEFSR)** at European level for products and sectors not yet covered by the existing PEFCRs/OEFSRs and related high-quality databases, based on the **European environmental footprint methodology**[29] and the latest available guidance[30],

— **actions, services, networks and new business models** for fostering the use of remanufactured, repaired, refurbished and/or reused products also linked to product durability and planned obsolescence, and/or for fostering the use of officially recognised ecolabels such as the **EU Ecolabel,**

– common **tender specifications and/or uptake monitoring tools** for public authorities with similar purchasing needs in order to foster the uptake of **Green and Circular Public Procurement**,

— linking regulatory, financial or reputational incentives to environmental performance by using **EMAS**,

— assessment of the **environmental performance of buildings** using the building framework with core indicators[31].

Environmental compliance assurance and access to justice

1. **Supporting environmental compliance assurance**[32] by developing and implementing or implementing existing cross-border, national or regional risk-based strategies to **promote, check and enforce compliance** through use of a mix of administrative law, criminal law and environmental liability regarding one or more of the following:

— **waste crime and offending,**

— **wildlife trafficking,**

— **wildlife and nature crime and offending, including illegal logging,**

— **diffuse and/or point-source water pollution and/or illegal water abstraction,**

— **point and mobile sources of air pollution.**

Explanatory note: '

Risk-based' refers to an assessment of, first, how likely certain categories of person are to commit offences and, second, how serious the impact is expected to be on the environment and human health. The greater the likelihood of offending and the greater the expected impact, the more pressing the need to intervene. The choice of intervention should reflect the nature of the risks and be aimed at mitigating them as far as possible.

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29 Commission Recommendation 2013/179/EU of 9 April 2013 on the use of common methods to measure and communicate the life cycle environmental performance of products and organizations (OJ L 124, 4.5.2013, p. 1).

30 https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/EUENVFP/Documents+of+common+interest

31 http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Efficient_Buildings/ core indicators: http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Efficient_Buildings/documents.html

32 The concept of environmental compliance assurance is explained in Communication on 'EU actions to improve environmental compliance and governance', COM/2018/10 and accompanying Staff Working Document, SWD(2018)10

2. **Supporting environmental compliance assurance** by establishing new or, where in place, enhancing existing cross-border, national or regional **networks** of environmental compliance assurance **practitioners or experts** and/or establishing or, where in place, improving **professional qualifications and training**[33] to improve compliance with binding EU environmental instruments, through promoting, checking and enforcing compliance using a mix of administrative law, criminal law and environmental liability.

Explanatory note:

Environmental compliance assurance practitioners can include those working for authorities and bodies with compliance assurance responsibilities such as local, regional, police and customs authorities, environment agencies and inspectorates, supreme public audit bodies and the judiciary. They can also include non-governmental organisations and academics and researchers specialised in one or more aspects of compliance assurance. With regard to professional qualifications and training, projects should ensure academic credentials and maximise the potential of information technology through means such as webinars and massive open online courses (MOOCs) to allow distance learning to reach as many practitioners as cost-effectively as possible.

3. **Development and use of innovative tools and actions to promote, monitor and enforce compliance** through the establishment and use of new or, where in place, enhancement of existing tools and actions belonging to one or more of the following categories:

— risk-based **compliance promotion systems and techniques**,

— risk-based **systems and techniques for effective monitoring of compliance** with binding EU environmental instruments and obtaining evidence of and analysis of compliance problems on which follow-up action can be reliably based,

— risk-based **systems and techniques for effective follow-up and enforcement** in response to non-compliance with or liabilities related to binding EU environmental instruments and covering use of administrative law, criminal law and environmental liability.

Explanatory note

Risk-based systems and techniques aim at understanding how well landowners, industry, SMEs, public utilities or others (‘duty-holders’) are to comply with their obligations under binding EU environmental instruments and what the impacts of non-compliance will be on the environmental and human health. Based on this understanding, such systems and techniques seek to encourage compliance and discourage non-compliance through promotion, monitoring and enforcement.

Promotion systems and techniques could involve the use of guidance, advisory services, awareness-raising campaigns, partnership agreements, or self-monitoring systems that

[33] Projects should ensure the academic credentials of the qualifications and training and maximise the potential of information technology through means such as webinars and massive open online courses (MOOCs) to allow distance learning to reach as many practitioners as cost-effectively as possible.

assist duty-holders to comply. Monitoring systems and techniques could relate to site inspections, surveillance (including through use of satellites and drones), spot checks, intelligence-gathering, industry analysis, police investigation, data analysis and environmental audits. Follow-up and enforcement techniques can have a similarly wide coverage.

4. **Improving the handling by public authorities of environmental complaints and submissions from the public**[34], where appropriate also in partnership with private entities, through the development and provision of new or, where available, enhancement of existing **systems and techniques for managing complaints and submissions** from the public with a view to optimising the reliability of the information provided, facilitating inter-action between authorities and the public, minimising administrative burden, and contributing to the successful implementation of binding EU environmental instruments.

Explanatory note:

Systems and techniques for managing complaints and submissions can include electronic complaint-handling systems, hot lines, citizen observatories and other citizen science platforms. Citizen science platforms may, amongst other things, allow competent national, regional and local authorities to engage citizens in state-of-the-environment and other forms of monitoring, while also generating more harmonised and useable data.

5. **Promoting access to justice in environmental matters and/or mediation** amongst the public, NGOs, lawyers, the judiciary, public administrations or other stakeholders with a view to improving knowledge, understanding and application of these means of dealing with environmental disputes, with a particular focus on:

— protecting people's **health and well-being** via the requirements of EU air, water and waste instruments covered by LIFE thematic priorities,

— **protecting nature, biodiversity** and **water quality** via the nature, biodiversity and water instruments covered by LIFE thematic priorities,

— effective application of the **Environmental Liability Directive**[35].

Projects should draw on existing modules and know-how in the area of environmental law training developed by the Commission[36].

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[34] An action on national complaint-handling features in Communication on 'EU actions to improve environmental compliance and governance', COM/2018/10 and accompanying Staff Working Document, SWD(2018)10

[35] Directive 2004/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage (OJ L 143, 30.4.2004, p. 56).

[36] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/training_package.htm

2.3 How to prepare a LIFE Environmental Governance and Information project proposal?

2.3.1 Logical steps to conceive a project proposal

1. Identify **the problem or challenge** the proposal aims to address and describe the current situation. Applicants must demonstrate a solid understanding of the problem targeted by describing it and quantifying it in a complete and convincing way in the project proposal (to the extent that this is reasonably possible, depending also on the nature and subject of the project). The **description of the problem or challenge** should include information on the root causes of the problem or challenge, the severity and extent of the problem/challenge.

   Once identified the problem/challenge, applicants should check whether the problem/challenge targeted is clearly related to EU environmental legislation and policy, in particular the **project topics** defined in the Multiannual Work Programme and in Chapter 2.2 of this Guidelines. Furthermore, **information, communication and awareness-raising campaign proposals** must be in line with the priorities of the 7th Environment Action Programme.

   If the proposal fully responds to the LIFE requirements, it is advisable to check in the database on the LIFE website to see whether similar projects have been undertaken in the same field. Applicants could identify potential links, build up on existing knowledge and use lessons learnt or solutions from past or/and ongoing project i.e. thematic database or platform of knowledge may have already been developed through LIFE projects, therefore the applicants may use/build up on them instead of creating new ones.

   A clear and complete **analysis of the current situation** (the baseline) in terms of environmental and social, legal or institutional challenges should be presented in the project proposal. The description of the situation before the project intervention serves to indicate the starting point of the project. This is the starting point of the project and a crucial step in determining the best actions that could solve/address the identified problems/challenges. The baseline helps to demonstrate the logical links between the identified problems/challenges, their causes, the activities and expected results.

   The baseline is also instrumental to assess expected impacts and to monitor the project's progress. In this regard, the baseline description should include quantitative and qualitative data indicating the situation before the project intervention i.e. number of with incomplete inventories of dangerous substances; results of a survey indicating the level of awareness of environmental managers of Nature 2000 best practices; number of hospitals adopting green public procurement practices, etc. Where appropriate, the baseline should describe the governance structure (laws and entities involved in governing certain policy areas targeted in the proposal – i.e describe the management structures for collection and recovery of waste of electrical and electronic equipment WEE) at national, regional or local level.

The baseline should include clear and specific information of past and ongoing projects in the same field led or not by the applicants. In particular, the proposal should indicate what has been achieved by past and/or ongoing interventions and what the added value of the proposal is compared to existing or/and past projects.

In case some information is not available or it's outdated, the applicants can use preparatory actions to complete or/and update the baseline. However, key data – at least qualitative data – should be provided to demonstrate the need and rationale of the project. The source of all baseline data should be provided.

2. *Examples of problems/challenges to be addressed by projects:*
    1) *Insufficient plastic waste reduction.*
    2) *High mortality rate of the brown bear due to illegal killings.*
    3) *Natura 2000 is either not known at all and/or frequently considered as hindering potential economic development. Lack of citizen awareness contributes to this situation.*
    4) *Poor presentation on the web of what environmental authorities are doing to protect the environment, reflecting weak management and communication of information, leaving concerned citizens ill-informed and unable to contribute effectively*
    5) *Moving from paper-based handling of applications for environmental decisions to electronic handling in order to reduce administrative burdens*
    6) *Insufficient cooperation between environmental inspection bodies and other compliance assurance bodies such as prosecutors, which reduces effectiveness.*
    7) *Insufficient understanding of the potential of access to justice to address environmental grievances.*

3. Define **what is to be achieved** as a result of the project in terms of progress towards tackling the problem/challenge targeted. Objectives to be achieved need to be clear, specific and measurable. The simple implementation of, e.g., a communication campaign without achieving anything specific and measurable in relation to the identified problem cannot be considered to constitute a project objective and a positive result of a project. For awareness raising, measurable achievements take the form of a measurable impact on attitudes and behaviours and as much as possible on the state of the environment. For other governance and information projects, measurable achievements could include improvements such as higher satisfaction ratings for consultation of web-sites; reduced time for businesses and administrations to process environmental decisions; active participation in new administrative structures such as national networks of professionals working on compliance assurance.

    Examples of objectives to be achieved by projects:

    1. *Plastic waste generation reduction by 10% after 3 years, as a result of a measurable change of attitude and behaviour regarding plastic waste generation by the target audience.*

2. *Reduction of illegal killings of the brown bear by 30% after 3 years through awareness-raising activities that have a measurable impact on attitudes among the target audience.*
3. *Increased citizen awareness of Natura 2000 sites and network, their value, status etc.*
4. *Improved effectiveness of environmental inspections through increased cooperation between environmental inspection bodies.*

4. Define **who will be targeted** by the project. Applicants have to reflect carefully on the choice of target audience(s)/addressees with respect to the project objectives. The relevance of the target audience(s)/addressees for addressing the problem or challenge identified as well as the size of this audience are crucial aspects in the design of the strategy and need to be clearly explained. Projects focused only at local level risk obtaining a low score for this aspect unless they can prove that they represent high EU added value.

   *Examples of target audiences/*addressees *for projects:*

   1. *The general public, shops, packaging companies and distributors in the target area.*
   2. *Livestock herders active in the brown bear habitats.*
   3. *The general public and other relevant stakeholders in the target area.*
   4. *Environmental inspection bodies from X Member States.*
   5. *Public administrations and/or businesses in a target geographical or subject-area.*
   6. *Public administrations, private legal practitioners and NGOs who inter-act on a particular subject, e.g. access to justice.*

5. Define the **actions** that will enable the objectives to be achieved. All actions must be necessary and appropriate to address the problem or challenge and must be adapted to the target audience/addressees identified. Design a clear strategy linking the individual actions in order to achieve the defined objectives. In this sense, applicants have to demonstrate a solid understanding of the logical links between problem/challenge targeted, objectives, actions and results. Applicants should provide a description of activities, identifying what will be done, who will do it, when it will be done (beginning, duration, completion), where it will be done and who will benefit from the activity.

   i. **Include a 'put into practice' component** in the project. Project should not only be limited to developing tools and methodologies but they should also include a realistic strategy with **concrete activities enabling uptake and effective use of these tools by the relevant actors during the duration of the project and possibly after the project ends.**

   ii. **Involve relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation** of the project to facilitate synergies, multiplying effects and uptake of project results. This may include national or local authorities in charge of the implementation of relevant issues, i.e.

Ministry of Environment department in charge of Green public procurement, managers of Natura 2000 sites etc.

For projects designed to increase awareness or understanding among the target audience, applicants have to demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of current communication techniques and explain the choice and pertinence of the **communication mix** retained for the project. The elaboration of a detailed **communication strategy/plan** as a preparatory action for such projects is also considered to be a necessity, and the key elements of such a strategy should already be presented in the project proposal.

6. Define **indicators** for **monitoring the impacts/benefits** of the project. These indicators should be closely linked to the **objectives** of the project. They should provide relevant information of what is expected to be achieved by the project in terms of change of the situation identified as problematic before the project start. They should **inform on the impacts on the attitude and practices of the target audiences** as well as **the impacts on the state of environment**, whenever possible. Even if the contribution of the project to the achievement of these impacts is only indirect or partial, such indicators provide an indication of the level of ambition and capacity of the project to contribute to a remedy of the identified problem.

   The project impact is normally measured in comparison with the baseline situation identified before the start of the project. In this regard as far as the full proposal is concerned, consistency shall be ensured between impacts/benefits described in the relevant forms and values reported in the table on LIFE Key project level indicators.

   Example of impact indicators:

   1) *% change in level of awareness compared to baseline measured by surveys*
   2) *% change in level of behavioural change compared to baseline (e.g. market shares of environmental friendlier products, increase of separate collection of waste, rates of environmental products purchased by public bodies etc.)*
   3) *change in governance performance/practices compared to baseline (quantitative and qualitative) (e.g. environmental friendly regulations/solutions/protocols adopted, prosecutions for environmental crimes brought forward, reinforced cooperation of institutional actors etc.)*
   4) *change in environmental status (e.g. quality of air/water/soil, halt of biodiversity loss, decrease of marine litter in a given area, etc.)*

Indicators measuring progress of the project (completion of tasks/outputs) are not sufficient to assess the impacts of project. In the proposal, applicants have to explain the appropriateness of the impact monitoring indicators selected and the impact monitoring regime (e.g. frequency) retained.

Each project will have to report on the outputs and impact of the project taking into account the LIFE Key project level Indicators (see further instructions under section 3.2.4). These indicators will contribute to evaluating the impact of the LIFE project.

Such information will have to be included under Form B.3;

7. Define a **clear and realistic strategy to assure that project results will be maintained or improved and actions will continue beyond the project duration**. Public authorities or bodies involved in the usage of proposed solution must clearly declare and demonstrate their commitment in keeping them active after the end of the project. Such information will have to be included under Form B.6. Project activities should show such commitment and already prepare for project continuation during the project timeframe. Some examples of typical activities that would have to be included in light of such continuation during the project are:

   i. Clear definition of the technical and human resources needed. In case of public authorities, definition of the necessary administrative and legislative acts;

   ii. Clear definition of the necessary financial resources and identification of the relevant financial sources;

   iii. Building up of **a comprehensive exploitation plan**, which could include the previous points and would basically detail and present the planned activities, resources (technical and financial) through which the project results will be maintained and exploited **(compulsory and to be included as part of the After-LIFE Plan)**;

   iv. Analysis/studies/activities on the full scale up of the proposed solution to the targeted "real scale" and of its economic feasibility (e.g.: from a substantial part of a city to the entire city, from a substantial part of the public transport fleet to the entire public transport fleet, etc.)

Such type of activities will have to be translated into actions or sub-actions in C Forms.

8. Include substantive actions to **replicate the approach/results** of the projects in similar contexts in other sectors, entities, regions or countries. This means going further than simply committing to project continuation, dissemination of results and networking, but entails a clear and sound plan supported by project activities. .

Examples of typical activities that would have to be included to support a credible replication and transfer strategy are:

i. Analysis aimed at identifying strategic partners required for replication and transfer of the proposed solution to another context and activities linked to directly involving the concerned stakeholders;
ii. Activities aimed at validating the possible extension of the proposed solution to other applications/sectors/regions;

iii. Studies/activities regarding the access to financing sources as well as the physical identification of sites/areas for replication and transfer;

iv. Negotiating and planning for transfer of the proposed solution into other contexts;

v. Development of a credible **replication and transfer plan (compulsory),** including assessment of possible adaptations needed and funding opportunities.

Such type of activities will have to be translated into actions or sub-actions in C Forms.

2.3.2 Some lessons from past calls for proposals

Applicants are invited to pay particular attention to and reflect upon the following <u>recurring reasons for such proposals failing in the past</u>:

- Poor identification and description/presentation of the environmental problem targeted and related awareness and governance issues, with limited or no background information and data. Poor description of the current (baseline) situation in the target area,
- Lack or incomplete description of the value added of the project compared to ongoing or past projects led in the same field.
- Poor identification and description of the target audience of the project.
- Inappropriate target audience with respect to the problem targeted.
- Actions not responding to the needs of the identified target audience
- No coherent strategy linking individual actions to achieve the defined objective and address the identified problem.
- Poor or incomplete identification and involvement of relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of the project.
- Lack of an implementation component including actions to ensure the effective use of developed tools/methodologies by relevant actors
- Lack of a realistic strategy/action plan including concrete actions, beyond dissemination of results and networking, to ensure replication of the approach/tools in other contexts (other regions, countries, sectors)
- No quantification or poor/limited quantification of expected results.
- Indicators not specific/relevant to measure outputs or expected results.
- Inadequate monitoring activities and monitoring indicators for monitoring project impact and results.
- Low value for money.

Key elements of the proposal	Checklist
Identification of the problem	- Describe the problem and its root causes - Indicate who is best placed to act on solving the problem – clarify who the target audience is and why the target group has been selected - Check whether the proposal fully and clearly respond to the LIFE Call requirements i.e. project topics - Check in the database on the LIFE website to see whether similar projects have been undertaken in the same field and verify if similar solutions can be applied in the proposal

Description of the baseline	- Describe clearly the environmental threats and awareness/governance challenges of the current situation - Provide quantitative and/or qualitative baseline data of both environmental and awareness/governance challenges - Provide the source of information for data
Description of the objectives of the project	- Describe what the project will achieve (expected Impacts), by whom and when - Fill in the excel indicators table with the expected Impact indicator and add other indicators, if appropriate - Clarify if/how and to what extent the results will be sustained after the end of the project
Description of the activities of the project	- Define appropriate actions to solve the problems identified in the baseline description - Describe what the activity is about, by whom it will be carried out, when and what are the resources needed – budget, human resources and equipment - Check whether you have included concrete actions to replicate and transfer the results of your project. - Check whether there is a clear logical link between the problem/baseline data, the actions and the expected results - Include a strategy and related actions to ensure that results are sustained and used after the project ends.

3. How to apply

3.1 Stage 1 Concept note

3.1.1 Structure Stage 1

- **Administrative forms (A forms)**
  - Form A1 – General project information
  - Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary
- **Project outline (B forms)**
  - Form B1 – Summary description of the project
  - Form B3 (abbreviated in comparison with stage 2) – EU added value
- **Financial application forms**
  - Form R1 – Project budget

All the forms in the Concept Note need to be completed in English. You are advised to focus on key elements of your project. Please note no attachments can be uploaded in eProposal during this stage.

National authorities access: In those cases where the applicants grant access, all National authorities of Member States participating in the project will be able to:
1. Access the concept note before and after the closing date of the call
2. Access also the communication between the Commission and each applicant who has submitted a proposal through the Mailbox module in eProposal.

This authorisation can be granted by marking the radio button to YES. If the coordinating applicant does not want to grant the authorization, the NO button must be marked.

You may remove access authorisation at any point in time.

Please note that after the submission deadline has passed, this option is no longer accessible.

3.1.2 Administrative Forms (A forms)

A1 – General project information

Project title: It should include the key elements and objective of the project. Note that the Contracting Authority may ask you to change the title in order to make it clearer. The title of the project must be in English, even if the subsequent proposal itself would submitted in a different language, should you be invited to participate in Stage 2.

Project acronym: The acronym must begin with the word 'LIFE', e.g. 'LIFE RIVER'. Once the concept note is created in the eProposal system, all technical, financial and reporting forms will bear this acronym (e.g. 'Proposals / **LIFE RIVER** / Technical Forms /

LIFE Programme priority area: Select the sector from the drop-down menu.

Applicants must indicate whether the project is being submitted to the sector

- Information, communication and awareness raising campaigns in line with the priorities of the 7th Environment Action Programme

  Or

- Activities in support of effective control process as well as measures to promote compliance in relation to Union environmental legislation, and in support of information systems and information tools on implementation of Union environmental legislation

Expected start date: Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY or use the calendar function. The earliest possible start date is defined in Annex 1. The start date should be realistic. Please note that if you choose a late date the costs of participation in the kick-off meeting for all new projects may not be eligible.

Expected end date: Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY or use the calendar function.

Language of the proposal: while the concept note needs to be submitted in English, should you be admitted to Stage 2, you will be able to submit full proposal in any of the official EU languages, except Irish or Maltese. Please indicate language in which you plan to submit full proposal should you be admitted to Stage 2.

Click on the 'Next' button and fill in form A2 (see below).

Please note that after the creation of the concept note (see below, form A2), you will be required to enter the following information in form A1:

The project will be implemented in the following Member State(s) / Region(s) or other countries:

- by default the eProposal tool selects the Member State where the coordinating beneficiary is legally registered (as per form A2). You may change it by using the 'Delete' and 'Add' buttons;
- to add a region, select the Member State, then the Region, and click on the Add button; at least one region must be selected.

If project actions will be implemented outside the EU, select the country from the drop-down list.

Member State	Selected regions	Actions
IT - Italy	All regions	✖
AT - Austria	All regions	Add

Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary

Short Name (max 10 characters)**:** The beneficiary will be identified throughout the technical forms, the financial forms and the reports by its short name.

E-mail: This e-mail address will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all notifications of correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure (see Annex 3 "eProposal Tool", Step 3 "Post-submission Communication").

Legal name: Provide the full name under which the beneficiary is officially registered.

Legal Status: Select one of the following 3 choices: *Public body*, *Private commercial* or *Private non-commercial* (including NGOs). Tick the appropriate box. Further guidance on how to distinguish private entities from public bodies can be found in section 1.6.2 of this document. Tick the box "Is your company a SME?" if your company is considered a Small or Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME). Fill in the box "Number of employees" if you are an SME.

Value Added Tax (VAT) number: If applicable, provide the entity's VAT registration number.

VAT Reimbursement: please note that non-deductible VAT is an eligible cost, save for those activities matching the concept of sovereign powers exercised by Member States. If your organisation is unable to recover VAT paid (for public entities it can only concern VAT related to activities that do not match the concept of sovereign powers) you can opt to include the reimbursement of VAT in your costs submitted under this proposal, in that case then please tick the box 'YES', otherwise tick the box 'NO'.

Legal Registration Number: If applicable, provide the entity's legal national registration number or code from the appropriate trade register (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce register), business register or other.

Registration date: Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY or use the calendar functionality.

PIC Number (not compulsory): The PIC (Participant Identification Code) is a unique 9-digit code used for the identification of legal entities of projects funded under a number of EU programmes (e.g. FP7, H2020…). In case your organisation is already registered, please include your PIC number.

Legal address: Enter Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code.

Member State: Select the relevant Member State from the drop-down menu

Legal Representative information: Enter Name, Surname, Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code (if they are identical to the legal address, you may copy them directly).

Contact person information: Enter Name, Surname, Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code (if they are identical to the legal address, you may copy them directly).

Telephone/Fax: Provide information for the contact person.

Title: Title commonly used in correspondence with the person in charge of proposal co-ordination.

Function: Provide the function of the person in charge of coordinating the proposal. Example: Managing Director, Project Manager, etc.

Department / Service Name: Name of the department and / or service in the entity co-ordinating the proposal and for which the contact person is working. The address details given in the fields which follow must be for the department/service and not the legal address of the entity.

Website: Provide the beneficiary's official website.

Brief description of the activities of the beneficiary: Please describe the entity, its legal status, its activities and its competence particularly in relation to the proposed actions. The description given should enable the Contracting Authority to evaluate the technical reliability of the coordinating beneficiary, i.e. whether it has the necessary experience and expertise for a successful implementation of the proposed project. In case you propose to include affiliated entities in your proposal, list them here clearly indicating their legal name, pic number (if available) as well as legal status and address. Please also explain in a separate document to be uploaded under the attachments in eProposal ('Affiliates_ACRONYM beneficiary) how the affiliated entities comply with the conditions described above in section 1.6.2.

For private non-commercial entities please provide the key elements that prove that the entity is recognised as such.

Click on the 'Save' button available at the bottom of the form.

Your concept note has been now created in the eProposal system and the project acronym is automatically displayed on all screens and forms throughout the entire proposal.

3.1.3 Project outline (B forms)

Form B1 – Summary description of the project

Please provide a Summary Description of your project. The description should be structured, concise and clear. It should include:

- **Environmental problem targeted:** Please provide a clear description of the environmental problem targeted by your proposal, including description of the causes, preoperational context and figures defining the baseline.

- **Project objectives**: Please provide a detailed description of main project objectives, listing them by decreasing order of importance. These objectives must be realistic (be achievable within the timeframe of the project with the proposed budget and means) and clear (without ambiguity).
- **Actions and means involved**: Please list the main project actions and explain what, how and where will be done during the project in order to reach project objectives. If the project success depends on the involvement of stakeholders, please identify them in this section and clarify how they will be involved.
- **Resubmission**: Please check the box "Has this proposal been submitted before?" if you are resubmitting this proposal. Please provide the references and acronym of the previous proposal. For example: "LIFE17 BIO/country/001040 "ACRONYM". This information is used for statistical purpose and to ensure the best quality evaluation.
- **Expected results**: Please list the main results and impacts (environmental benefits) expected at the end of the project. The expected results must be concrete, realistic and quantified as far as possible.
- **Sustainability of the Project Results:** Please describe how the continuation of necessary project actions will be ensured after the end of the project. Please also clarify how will you maintain and further build on the achieved project results, including transfer and replication and the necessary financing.

- **Project topics**: applicants are required to indicate whether the proposal addresses the project topics **(maximum two)** listed in section 2 of this document, by ticking the appropriate checkbox(es). If the proposal does not address any project topic, no checkbox should be ticked. Applicants will be able to describe the reasons why their proposal falls under the selected topic(s) only if they have chosen at least one topic.

- **Reasons why the proposal falls under the selected project topic(s)**: The applicant has to briefly explain why the proposal is considered to fall under the selected project topic(s).

- **Project partnership:** Please describe in this form project partnership structure. If your project will be implemented with associated beneficiaries, please list key partners; explain their role in the project and expertise as well as actions that will be implemented by them.

  You should also clarify in this section how your project will be co-financed, whether it will be financed by beneficiaries' own contributions or co-financed by other entities. Please note that financial contribution breakdown is to be provided in Form R1 (please refer to the paragraph on Financial application forms below). Please also clarify the status of co-financing (whether it is confirmed or to be confirmed). No written commitments from the associated beneficiaries or co-financers should be provided at this stage.

- **Expected risks and constraints related to project implementation and mitigation strategy:** Please list here main constraints and risks that can occur during the project implementation. Please clarify what strategy will be put in place in order to mitigate those risks.

Form B2 – PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO FORM B2 IN STAGE 1.

Form B3 – EU added value of the project

EU added value of the project and its actions: Please clarify 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. Please also clarify how the project will contribute to the implementation, updating and development of European Union environmental policy and legislation.

3.1.4 Financial application forms

Form R1 – Project budget

The form summarises the financial structure of the project, by providing a budget breakdown for the project and an overview of the financing plan. While in Stage 2 it will be generated automatically (based on the data entered in the technical and financial forms), at concept note stage the applicants are required to fill in most of the relevant data themselves. Please note that only fields corresponding to the sums as well as values expressed in percentages will be completed automatically.

Applicants must provide indicative project budget per following cost category:

1. Direct personnel costs
2. Travel and subsistence costs
3. External assistance
4. Durable goods
    a. Infrastructure
    b. Equipment
    c. Prototype
5. Land – not applicable for GIE strand.
6. Consumables
7. Other costs
8. Overheads

You are required to provide total costs in € and eligible costs in € per each cost category. Please note that land purchase costs are not applicable under LIFE Environmental Governance and Information. Please indicate 0 EUR in this field.

At concept note stage you are requested to provide only indicative budget per each cost category.

When establishing eligible costs at concept note stage you are strongly advised to take into account the rules and eligibility requirements indicated in section 3.5.2

Please also describe in form R1 the funding of the project indicating contributions requested by the beneficiary(ies) and / or co-financier(s), as well as the total EU contribution requested.

Please note that should your application be admitted to stage 2, you will be allowed to introduce changes to the total requested EU contribution within margin of 10%. There is no limit to other changes in the budget (including total project cost) as long as the total EU contribution does not increase by more than 10%).

3.2 Stage 2 Full proposal

3.2.1 Structure Stage 2

Proposals are structured in the system[37] as follows:

- **Administrative forms (A forms)**
  - Form A1 – General project information
  - Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary
  - Form A3 – Coordinating beneficiary declaration
  - Form A4 – Associated beneficiary declaration and Mandate
  - Form A5 – Associated beneficiary
  - Form A6 – Co-financiers
  - Form A7 – Other proposals submitted for European Union funding

- **Project outline (B forms)**
  - Form B1 – Summary description of the project
  - Form B2 - General character of the project
  - Form B3 – EU added value and socio-economic effects
  - Form B4 – Stakeholders involved and main target audience of the project
  - Form B5 – Expected constraints and risks related to the project implementation and mitigation strategy
  - Form B6 - Continuation / valorisation and long term sustainability of the project's results after the end of the project

- **Detailed technical description of the proposed actions (C forms)**
  - Form C0 – List of all actions
  - Form C1
    - A. Preparatory actions (if needed)
    - B. Implementation actions (obligatory)
    - C. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (obligatory)
    - D. Public awareness and dissemination of results (obligatory)
    - E. Project management (obligatory)

[37] Refer to Annex III on how to create a proposal on-line by using the eProposal Tool

- Form C2 Reporting schedule

- **Financial application forms**
  - Form F1 – Direct personnel costs
  - Form F2 – Travel and subsistence costs
  - Form F3 – External assistance costs
  - Form F4.a – Infrastructure costs
  - Form F4.b – Equipment costs
  - Form F4.c – Prototype costs
  - Form F6 – Costs for consumables
  - Form F7 – Other costs
  - Form F8 – Overheads
  - Form FC – Financial contributions

Major changes introduced to the full proposal following the concept note stage **are not admitted,see form A7 for more details and also consult the Evaluation Guide as this might be a reason of failure linked to Eligibility criteria.**

Please note should your application be admitted to stage 2, the text that you provide in form A1, A2 and B1, B2 and B3 of concept note will be automatically transferred into corresponding forms/fields of full proposal. You will be able to edit previously provided information when preparing full proposal.

3.2.2 Administrative Forms (A forms)

Form A1 – General project information

Please refer to the instructions provided for the concept note stage on how to fill in this form.

Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary

Please refer to the instructions provided for the concept note stage on how to fill in this form.

Form A3 – Coordinating beneficiary declaration

This form is available at the end of form A2 under the heading 'A3 – Coordinating Beneficiary declaration'.

Some information contained in this form will be automatically retrieved from the data entered in other forms of the proposal.

Click on the 'Generate declaration' button and fill in manually the following fields:

- 'At….on….': indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

Important:

Before completing this form, please check that the beneficiary does not fall into any of the situations listed in art. 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the Financial Regulation n° 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018 (JO L 193 of 30/07/2018)[38]

and that the beneficiary complies with all relevant eligibility criteria, as defined in the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020[39]and the LIFE Call documents, including this Guidelines for applicants.

For accuracy purposes, make sure that this form is **generated,** signed and dated **after** having entered all the technical and financial data into your application.

When the form is completed, scan it as an image file (not as a .pdf file, see accepted formats under point 3.2 General rules), then upload it by using the 'Upload declaration' button.

Form A4 – Associated beneficiary declaration and Mandate

This form is available at the end of form A5 (see below) under the heading 'A4 – Associated Beneficiary declaration and Mandate'; click on 'Generate declaration'.

For completing this form, please also **see instructions for form A3.**

- The forename and surname of the legal representative of the future associated beneficiary signing the form is automatically filled.

[38] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1549552252045&uri=CELEX:32018R1046
[39] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1518531793134&uri=CELEX:32018D0210

You need to manually fill in the following fields:

- The forename and surname of the legal representative of the future coordinating beneficiary of the project.
- 'At….on….': Indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

Form A5 – Associated beneficiary

Click on the 'Create Associated Beneficiary' button: fill-in all necessary information and click on 'Save' button. The Associated Beneficiary then appears in the list of Associated Beneficiaries.

For completing this form, please **see instructions for form A2.**

If the associated beneficiary is not legally registered in the EU, select the country from the drop-down list.

Form A6 – Co-financiers

If a co-financier will contribute to the project, click on the 'Add Co-financier' button: fill-in all necessary information and click on 'Save' button. The Co-financier then appears in the list of Co-financiers.

For completing this form, please **see also the instructions for form A3 above.**

Note that the co-financier contribution will have to be entered in form FC (see below).

Status of the financial commitment: please indicate either "*Confirmed"* or "*To be confirmed"*. If the status is "to be confirmed", this must be explained. Note that at a later stage in the selection process you will be required to provide the A6 form with status "confirmed".

When the form is completed, scan it as an image file (not as a .pdf file, see accepted formats under 3.2 – General rules), then upload it by using the 'Upload declaration' button.

Important note: A coordinating / associated beneficiary should only appear in the proposal with that single role of coordinating / associated beneficiary and not also as a co-financier. In case a coordinating / associated beneficiary wishes to be a net financial contributor to the project, they should still only submit forms A2/A3 or A4/A5 in which their financial contribution may be higher that their foreseen costs.

Form A7 – Other proposals submitted for European Union funding

Please check the box "Has this proposal been submitted before?" if you are resubmitting this proposal. Please provide the references and acronym of the previous proposal. For example: "LIFE17 BIO/country/001040 "ACRONYM". This information is used for statistical purpose and to ensure the best quality evaluation.

Applicants should not underestimate the importance of this form: Clear and complete answers must be provided to each question (max 5000 characters for each question). The beneficiaries must inform the Contracting Authority about any related funding they have received from the EU budget, as well as any related ongoing applications for funding from the EU budget. The beneficiaries must also check that they are not receiving on-going operating grants from LIFE (or other EU programmes) that would lead to double financing.

Failure to signal this in the appropriate form might lead to rejection of the proposal.

If the applicant is proposing a continuation of a previous LIFE project, he should clearly describe in this form why a further project phase is needed and, how this will complement the results achieved with the previous project ensuring that no double financing will occur.

LIFE projects should not finance actions that are better financed by other EU funding programmes (see, section 1.6.16). **Applicants must therefore verify this aspect carefully** and provide the fullest possible information in their answers. Supporting documents (e.g. extracts from the texts of the relevant programmes) should be provided (as far as possible and appropriate). Please also note point 1 of the declaration in form A3 that you have to sign; national authorities may be asked to review this declaration.

Major changes introduced to the full proposal following the concept note stage: you are requested to list and justify any major changes to your project introduced during stage 2 Major changes are those that refer to the actions, partnership and budget. The requested EU contribution may increase by a maximum of 10% of the amount originally requested in the concept note. Please note that changes cannot lead to the change of the project nature and that this might lead to failing the Eligibility phase.

3.2.3 Project outline (B forms)

Form B1 – Summary description of the project (to be completed in English)

Please refer to the instructions provided for the concept note stage on how to fill in this form.

Form B2 – **General character of the project:**

- **Environmental problem targeted**

  Please provide a clear description of the environmental as well as associated awareness/governance problems targeted by your proposal. Explain why you consider that this problem is related to European environmental policy and legislation.

  The current situation (baseline) should be described in qualitative and quantitative terms to enable monitoring and comparison of the situation during and at the end of the project by way of measurable indicators.

Form B3 – **EU added value and socio-economic effects**:

EU added value of the project and its actions:

The information provided in this field will be used, inter alia, for the evaluation of the proposal under the following award criteria (for details see the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019*):

- **Award criterion 3** - Extent and quality of the contribution to the specific objectives of the priority areas of the LIFE Sub-programme for Environment

  Please indicate whether and how your project contributes to the updating, the development as well as to the implementation of 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. **Project impacts/benefits (including environmental) will be assessed under this criterion and considered as an indicator of the extent and quality of such contribution;** they <u>must be concrete, realistic and quantified as far as possible and must be presented in a life-cycle reasoning where relevant.</u>

  Quantification of impacts/benefits: the improved practices/advantages introduced by the proposed solution must be quantified in terms of the expected impacts/benefits during the project duration and 3-5 years after the end of the project. This must be done by clearly indicating what the chosen baseline is. Furthermore, consistency with expected results (Form B1) and values reported in the table on LIFE Key project level indicators shall be ensured.

- **Award criterion 6** - EU added value: synergies and transnationality

  Please indicate whether and how your project addresses: Synergies, Green Public Procurement, Ecolabel, uptake of EU-research results and Transnationality.

  With regard to the bonus for uptake of results from EU financed research projects, this will be awarded only if a brief but comprehensive description of such results and of how they will be used for the implementation of the LIFE project is included in this form.

For further guidance on how these aspects will be assessed please refer to the relevant Evaluation guidelines.

Replication and Transfer:

Replication and transfer (in Award criterion 4)

Please describe your replication and transfer strategy during and after project implementation (see section 1.6.14 for further details). As explained below specific project activities will have to be envisaged to support statements made here (see section 3.3.3.on 'Detailed technical description of the proposed actions C forms').

In the context of this priority area a strategy to ensure replication and transfer of project results to other contexts means going further than simply committing to project continuation, but entails a clear and sound plan supported by project activities that would allow replication/transfer to other sectors, entities, regions or countries. Please be aware that replication and transfer are different from continuation that is addressed in Form B6. However, replication and transfer are part of an overall sustainability strategy.

For this purpose applicant should refer to the information required as described in section 2.3.1.

Socio-economic effects of the project:

Please indicate the probable impact of the project actions on the local economy and population. In particular, applicants are expected to elaborate on the assessment of the impact on jobs and growth, also taking into consideration the continuation of the project and relevant replication/transfer scenarios. In this regard, consistency shall be ensured between jobs and growth data reported in this form and values reported in the table on Performance Indicators.

Form B4 – Stakeholders involved and main target audience of the project

Indicate the stakeholders the proposal intends to involve and how. Please indicate what kind of input you expect from them and how their involvement will be used in the project and useful and/or needed for the project.

Describe target groups and methods for dissemination of knowledge. Comment on activities for general publicity and / or marketing of the concept during and after implementation.

Form B5 – Expected constraints and risks related to the project implementation and mitigation strategy

It is important that applicants identify all possible **internal or external events** ("constraints and risks") that could have **major negative impacts** on the successful implementation of the project. Please list such constraints and risks, in the decreasing order of importance. Please also indicate any possible constraints and risks due to the **socio-economic environment**. For each constraint and risk identified, please indicate how you envisage overcoming it.

You are also strongly advised to include in this section any details on licences, permits, EIA, etc., and to indicate what support you have from the competent bodies responsible for issuing such authorisations. The experience of the LIFE programme has shown that some projects have difficulties completing all actions within the proposed project duration, due to unforeseen delays and difficulties encountered during the project. It is important that applicants identify all possible external events ("constraints and risks") that could cause such delays. One possible reason for such difficulties is the obligation to perform assessments that were not foreseen during the preparation of the LIFE project, in particular:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), according to the Directive 85/337/EEC (the EIA Directive), codified by Directive 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011[40];
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), according to the Directive 2001/42/WE (the SEA Directive)[41];

These assessments may involve long administrative procedures and data collection analysis. This is normally not a problem if the time and funds necessary are foreseen in the project.

Therefore, before submitting a LIFE proposal, applicants should find out whether one or more of the assessments mentioned above will be required under EU or national law.

Applicants should describe in Form B5 how these issues are taken into account and how they envisage overcoming potential problems. To pre-empt unforeseen problems good communication and consultation with the competent authorities in charge of these procedures is essential. This should already be done at the beginning of the LIFE proposal preparation. Form B5 is the correct place to indicate whether the competent authorities in charge of assessments procedures have been consulted and the results of these consultations.

Finally, please detail how you have taken into account the risks identified into the planning of the project (time planning, budget, etc.) and the definition of the actions.

Form B6 - Continuation / valorisation and long term sustainability of the project's results after the end of the project:

Describe how the project will be continued after the end of the LIFE funding, what actions are required to consolidate the results in order to ensure the continuation of the project results. Please describe a clear strategy or mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that the results of the project will continue after the funding period. This goes beyond dissemination and networking .

[40] Codified version of the EIA Directive:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:026:0001:0021:EN:PDF
[41] SEA Directive:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:197:0030:0037:EN:PDF

Information included in this form as well as the project activities linked to the continuation strategy will be considered under Award criterion 4 (EU added value: sustainability, point linked to continuation). Please be aware that continuation is different from replication and transfer that is addressed in Form B3. However, continuation is part of the overall sustainability strategy assessed under Award criterion 4.

Project activities should show such commitment and already prepare for project continuation during the project timeframe. For this purpose applicant should refer to the information required as described in section 2.3.1.

Please note that information provided in this section may be updated during the project life according to the project's results.

In particular, please reply to the following questions:

- **Which actions will have to be carried out or continued after the end of the project?** Please list such project actions indicating their reference (e.g. A1, A2…) and title.
  Examples of typical activities that would have to be included in light of such continuation during the project are described in section 2.3.1
- **How will this be achieved? Which resources will be necessary to carry out these actions?** Please indicate how the above actions will be continued after the project, by whom, within what timeframe and with what financing the above actions will be continued after the project. Resources discussed here are technical, financial and human ones.
- **To what extent will the results and lessons of the project be actively disseminated after the end of the project to those persons and / or organisations that could best make use of them? (Please identify these persons / organisations):** Please indicate how dissemination activities will continue after the end of the project. Please list the persons / organisations that have been so far identified as targets for these dissemination activities.

3.2.4. Detailed technical description of the proposed actions (C forms)

The applicant must list all the actions that will be implemented under the project. **There are 5 types of actions:**

A. Preparatory actions (if needed)
B. Implementation actions (obligatory)
C. Monitoring the impact of the project actions (obligatory)
D. Public awareness and dissemination of results (obligatory)
E. Project management (obligatory).

To be considered eligible for funding, all actions must meet each of the following conditions:

- the need of the action has to be well justified in view of the objectives of the project; and
- the long-term sustainability of the investments must be guaranteed.

Under each type of action (A, B, C…), the applicant must list the different actions: A1, A2 …, B1, B2 … C1, C2 … etc. Sequential numbers under the same category of actions are generated automatically and their order may be changed using the 'Up↑' and 'Down↓' arrows. Inside each action (A1, A2, …., B1, B2,….etc.) specific sub-actions (A1.1, A1.2, ...) may be included by the applicant (manually) in the section "***Description (what, how, where, when and why)*** ". When structuring a proposal, it is strongly recommended to limit the number of actions as much as possible grouping them into homogenous activities and clarifying the logical flow through sub-actions. **Please be reminded that the number of actions and sub-actions should be limited to those strictly necessary to clarify the logical flow of the project.** See example below on what is recommended and what is not:

Recommended

D – Public awareness and dissemination of results

Action D1 – Dissemination planning and execution

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

  Sub-action D1.1 – Networking with other projects

  Sub-action D1.2 – Dissemination planning and Development of the Dissemination Pack (including website, notice boards, Layman's Report, project video, events)

Not recommended

D – Public awareness and dissemination of results

Action D1 – Dissemination planning and execution

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

Action D2 – Development of the Dissemination Pack

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

Action D3 – Layman's Report

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

Action D4 – Project Website

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

Action D5 – Networking with other projects

- *Description of methods employed (what, how, where, when, why)*

It is recommended that only actions that are expected to have an important output for the project. are presented as a **separate action**.

The actions must be described as precisely as possible. The descriptions may be accompanied by maps locating the actions, explanatory graphs, tables or pictures which may be included in the forms by using the "Pictures" functionality. Actions must not be confused with deliverables.

The description of each action should clearly indicate the links with other actions and should clearly (and in quantitative terms) indicate how it contributes to the project's overall objectives. There should be a **clear coherence between the technical description of the action and the financial resources allocated.**

For each action, the applicant should provide the following information:

- **Name of the action**: Please ensure that the name is short (maximum 200 characters) and that it clearly reflects the objective of the action.
- **Beneficiary responsible for implementation:** Please indicate by selecting from the drop-down menu which of the project's beneficiaries will be in charge of the coordination of the implementation of this action. Should more than one beneficiary be implicated, please give full details of which beneficiary is responsible for what in the text field (max 500 characters) available under the drop down list.
- **Description (what, how, where, when and why)** : Please describe the content of the action indicating what will be done, using what means, on which location / site, with what duration and within what deadline. Specify the links with other actions. Please indicate **why** the action is necessary and how it will contribute to reaching the project's objectives. For actions implemented outside the EU, full details should be provided on why such actions are necessary to achieve EU environmental objectives and to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out during the LIFE project in the Member State territories to which the Treaties apply. Specific sub-actions (A1.1, A1.2, ...) may be included by the applicant manually in this section (see example for Action D above).
- **Assumptions related to major costs of the action**: Please summarise the methodology used for estimating the costs of the main expenditures in this action (e.g. no. days * average cost / day,…). Please note that the total cost of the action as inserted in financial forms is displayed automatically (sum of the cost lines created in the F forms for that Action); when creating a new action, this value is by default 0 €. You must give details of the different calculations and estimations on which this total cost is based.
- **Deliverables:** Please list all deliverable products associated with each action and the corresponding completion deadline (day/month/year) by using the 'Add' button. ***Deliverable products*** are all those **tangible** products that can be shipped (e.g. management plans, studies and other documents, software, videos, etc). For each

deliverable, please include the deadline for its completion (day/month/year). Please note that any deliverable product will have to be **submitted as a separate document** (bearing the LIFE logo) to the Contracting Authority together with an activity report.

- **Milestones:** Please list all project milestones associated with each action and the corresponding delivery / achievement deadline (day/month/year). ***Project milestones*** are defined as **key moments** during the implementation of the project e.g. "Nomination of the Project Manager", "Initial operation of prototype", "Final conference", etc. The corresponding documents do not need to be submitted to the Contracting Authority. You will need to inform the Contracting Authority whether the milestone has been completed or not in the technical reports you will send to the Contracting Authority.
- **Timetable:** For each project action, please tick the corresponding implementation period. When planning the implementation period of your project, please bear in mind that a LIFE 2019 project cannot start before 1 July 2019 Also, please add an appropriate safety margin at the end of the project to allow for the inevitable unforeseen delays.

Please find below indication on the additional information to be provided for specific actions.

Form C0 – List of all actions

This form allows the applicant to create all the actions foreseen in the project, per type of action (A, B, C,…), by using the 'Add project action' button. Once an action has been created, you may use the 'Save and next' button to directly create another action.

Very important: **project actions have to be created before you are able to introduce any costs in the financial F forms.**

Form C1

A. Preparatory actions (if needed)

As a general principle, all preparatory actions must produce practical recommendations and/or information that can be implemented (either during the project or after the project) and be used without requiring further preparatory work. Projects may not include preparatory actions that have been fully completed prior to the start of the project.

Preparatory actions should:

- be clearly related to the objective(s) of the project;
- be significantly shorter than the project duration and end well before the end of the project;
- not be research actions, unless they fall under the exceptions described in point 1.6.15 of this Guide,

Preparatory actions should thus primarily remain restricted to the preparation of the actual implementation phase of the project (technical planning, permit procedures, stakeholder consultations, etc.).

The preparatory actions should cover all that has to be completed to allow the start or proper implementation of other project actions indicated in categories B, C, D, E or F. This includes the preparation of technical documents (blueprints, …) and any administrative or legal procedure needed to be carried out (consultation, call for tender, deliberations, training etc.).

If the elaboration of a management plan and / or action plans is foreseen, the description of the corresponding preparatory action should specify what will be done to ensure that these plans will be implemented (e.g. competent authorities adopt the plan before the end of the project).

Where preparatory actions do not lead to direct implementation during the project, their description should include a sufficient set of explanations, commitments and guarantees to show that their full implementation after the project is effectively ensured. Otherwise, such actions may be deleted from the project during the revision phase.

B. Implementation actions (obligatory)

The output of all B actions should be **concrete, measurable and with a clear benefit** for the environmental problem targeted by the project. This benefit should be **measurable** and should be measured and evaluated under **C-category monitoring action(s)**. The output of each action should be indicated in the 'expected results' section. It should be quantified when possible.

Furthermore GIE projects **must also include substantial actions and/or sub-actions to ensure continuation as well as replication/transfer (Award criterion 4, Sustainability).** Project activities should show the commitment to maintain projects results after its end and already prepare for project continuation though concrete actions and sub-actions during the project timeframe. Furthermore, additional actions or sub-actions shall provide the basis for cost-efficient replication/ transfer of the solutions proposed and results obtained either during or after the end of the project. This goes beyond transfer of knowledge and networking, and involves putting the techniques, methods or strategies developed or applied in the project into practice elsewhere. Successful continuation/replication/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. **Please refer to section 2.3.1, points 7 and 8 for details on typical activities that would have to be included to support a credible sustainability as well as replication and transfer strategy.**

The development of credible **replication and transfer plan** is compulsory for all projects and must be included as a deliverable of a relevant B-action.

C. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (obligatory)

Each project will have to report on the outputs and impact of the project taking into account the **LIFE Key project level indicators** (see the excel table: LIFE Key project level indicators Call 2019). These indicators will contribute to evaluating the impact of the LIFE project. Please review project indicators and complete them with the impact of the solution proposed during or at the end of the project (include clear quantification in absolute and relative terms). Please do the same 3 or 5 years after the project ends (please select the timeframe most suitable for your project).

The excel table of LIFE Key project level indicators has to be submitted through eProposal as an attachment.

A dynamic indicators database is available to successful applicants. The database preview can be accessed for information at the following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi_demo.htm. In case the webpage is not working (this can happen, for example, if the applicant does not have the Flash Plugin installed in the browser), it is possible to download an .mp4 movie from the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/files/kpi/kpi_demo.mp4

At the application stage the applicants need to fill in the provided Excel table. The dynamic online database cannot be completed at this time and is presented only to show the applicants the type of information they will be asked to complete if and **after** their grant agreement is signed.

A specific action to monitor and measure the performance indicators (according to the specific template that will be provided as part of the project reporting), with an individual budget, should be part of the proposal. Information on progress regarding performance indicators have to be submitted at least at the time of the project formal reporting (Progress, Mid-term and Final).

Where relevant, applicants may implement a full Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) and include it as a project deliverable.

An assessment of the **socio-economic impact** of the project actions on the local economy and population is also obligatory and shall be included as a deliverable. This can take the form of a study consolidating the data and results over the project lifetime, to be delivered with the Final Report. Examples of positive effects of the project are: direct or indirect employment growth, enhancement of other activities (e.g. ecotourism) aimed to develop supplementary income sources, offsetting social and economic isolation, raising the profile of the area/region, resulting in increasing the viability of the local community (especially in rural areas).

D. Public awareness and dissemination of results (obligatory)

It is warmly recommended to limit D actions to a maximum of two (see example in section 3.3.3).

LIFE Environmental Governance and Information projects **must include a significant set of activities (synthetically and homogeneously grouped in a few sub-actions) to disseminate the results of the project**.

Projects should typically include the following types of communication activities:

- information and awareness raising activities regarding the project to the general public and stakeholders. These activities should in general begin early on in the project.
- more technical dissemination activities aimed at transferring the results and lessons learnt **to those stakeholders that could usefully benefit from the project's experience**
- Networking

For each action, please specify and justify the target audience. If an action involves meetings (e.g. with local stakeholders), you should estimate the number of meetings specify the targeted stakeholders, and explain how this will help the project. If an action concerns brochures, leaflets, publications, films ..., specify the target audience. Should an action concern visitor access, specify what will be done, where, how many visitors are expected, how this will help the project, etc. Should beneficiaries plan to present the project results in national / international events (conferences, congresses), the relevance and added value for the project should be clearly explained.

All actions should specify the expected results in qualitative and quantitative terms (e.g. improved support from the local community, 2500 persons informed, 3000 newsletters circulated, …), indicating how this serves the project's objectives.

The following dissemination activities are considered **obligatory** and shall be grouped in **one sub-action which** includes the following list of deliverables:

- **Notice boards** (deliverable) describing the project shall be displayed at strategic places accessible to the public. The LIFE logo should always appear on them.
- a newly-created or existing **website** (with the LIFE logo) (deliverable),
- A **layman's report** (deliverable).

Networking with other projects (including LIFE III, LIFE+ and/or LIFE projects), information exchange activities etc., should be presented as one distinct **obligatory** sub-action.

Media work, organisation of and participation to events, production of brochures and films, technical publications are not considered obligatory, but are foreseen in many projects and they are welcome as evidence of good dissemination.

See the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement for full details of communication and dissemination requirements. The LIFE website https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/life-communication also contains detailed advice on communication and dissemination actions and the guidelines on how to design a LIFE web-site.

E. Project management (obligatory)

The applicant should list the different activities (synthetically and homogeneously grouped in a few sub-actions) aiming at managing / operating the project and ensuring quality control and risk management, including contingency planning. This typically involves at least all of the following activities and associated costs:

Overall project management:

Each project must include one sub-action named "Project management by (name of the beneficiary in charge)". This sub-action should include a description of the project **management staff** and describe management and reporting duties of the project beneficiaries, even if no costs will be charged for this to the project.

Please include a **management chart** of the technical and administrative staff involved. This chart must provide evidence that the coordinating beneficiary (Project Manager) has a clear authority and an efficient control of the project management staff, even if part of the project management would be outsourced. Explain if the management staff has **previous project management experience**.

It is **strongly recommended** that the project manager be full-time. If a coordinator or project manager also directly contributes to the implementation of certain actions, an appropriate part of his/her salary costs should be attributed to the estimated costs of those actions.

It is expected that the project management is carried out by the staff of the coordinating beneficiary. However, outsourcing of project management is possible on the basis of an appropriate justification, provided the coordinating beneficiary retains full and day to day control of the project. The proposal should clearly describe how this control will be guaranteed.

Please also include a **rationale of the project consortium** by indicating, for each beneficiary, the country and the role in the project. Please include the table below as an attachment in "Project management":

	Country	Role in the project
[Beneficiary 1]		
[Affiliate to Beneficiary 1]		
[Beneficiary 2]		
[Beneficiary 3]		

In case you propose to include affiliated entities in your proposal, they shall also be reported in the table.

Audit report:

Where required (see General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement), this audit should not only verify the respect of national legislation and accounting rules but should also certify that all costs incurred respect the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement. In the financial forms, the costs for the audit should be under the budget item “Other costs”. Audit report must be added to the list of deliverables. No specific sub-action is required.

After-LIFE Plan:

The coordinating beneficiary must produce an "**After-LIFE Plan**" and submit it with the final report. It is compulsory to include a comprehensive **exploitation plan**, as part of the After-LIFE Plan(see section 2.3.1, point 7). It shall be presented in the beneficiary's language and optionally in English, in paper and electronic format. The After-LIFE Plan shall in addition set out how the dissemination and communication of the results will continue after the end of the project. It should give details regarding what actions will be carried out, when, by whom, and using what sources of finance. A separate sub-action for this plan should be added to the proposal and the plan must be added to the list of deliverables.

Form C2 Reporting schedule

Activity reports foreseen:

The coordinating beneficiary shall report to the Contracting Authority about the technical and financial progress of the project. The project's achieved results and possible problems should be highlighted in these reports.

Note that the grant agreement, project management, formal reporting (excluding annexes or deliverables) and all communication with the Contracting Authority must be in English, even if the language of the project proposal is different. The costs for translation of reports (excluding annexes or deliverables) are therefore eligible.

For projects with a duration exceeding 24 months or requesting an EU contribution of more than € 300,000, a Mid-term report with a request for a second pre-financing payment has to be provided. For projects with a duration exceeding 48 months and an EU contribution of more than € 4,000,000, if the coordinating beneficiary wishes to request a third pre-financing payment, a second Mid-term Report has to be provided. The Mid-term report(s) are to be delivered, together with the requests for mid-term pre-financing, in line with the thresholds defined in the Special Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement. One "Final Report with payment request" shall be submitted, not later than 3 months after the project end date. Please note that the reporting schedule may be modified during the revision phase. "Progress reports" may be added if deemed necessary depending on complexity and duration of the project. Please consult General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement for full details on reporting obligations of LIFE projects.

3.2.5 Financial application forms

<u>Important</u>: The project's budget must only include costs which are in accordance with Article II.19 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement. The EU contribution will be calculated on the basis of eligible costs.

<u>General remarks</u>

Please make sure that <u>all costs are rounded down</u> to the next integer. Decimals cannot be entered in the forms.

The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries, entities identified as 'affiliated entities' as well as other companies that are part of the same groups or holdings, cannot act as sub-contractors.

Internal invoicing (i.e. costs that result from transactions between departments of a beneficiary) is to be avoided and will only be allowed if it excludes all elements of profit, VAT and overheads. Please note that costs incurred by the same legal entity should in principle be declared under the correct cost categories (personnel costs, consumables, other costs, etc).

All contracts attributed under any of the cost categories should respect the principle of absence of conflict of interest, regardless of the amount involved.

Value added tax paid by the beneficiaries is eligible except for:

a) **taxed activities or exempt activities with right of deduction;**
b) **activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where it is a State, regional or local government authority or another body governed by public law.**

For each cost line, select from the drop-down menus the short name of the beneficiary that will incur the respective cost and the number of the action to which the respective cost is related.

To add a cost line use the 'Add' button, to delete a cost line use the 'Delete' button.

All financial forms are tab activated: in order to create costs lines quickly, you may use the Tab key on your keyboard to move from one field to the next one, and then to the 'Add' button (then press the 'Enter' key: the cost line is added).

If project beneficiaries wish to be involved in project actions at € 0 cost (and have this piece of information reflected in the declarations A3/A4), they have to enter in the financial forms F1-F7 the respective action with the corresponding € 0 cost.

If project beneficiaries (private organisations) wish to include their 'affiliates' in the project, then they should indicate in the description of the cost items concerned that the cost will be incurred by their 'affiliate + name'. Please note that the use of affiliates would need to be introduced in Art. I.7 of the future grant agreement.

<u>Form F1 – Direct personnel costs</u>

General: The salary costs of public body personnel may be funded only to the extent that they relate to the cost of project implementation activities that the relevant public body would not have carried out had the project concerned not been undertaken. The personnel in question, irrespective of whether they are working full or part time for the project, must be specifically seconded/assigned to a project; the individual assignment shall either take the format of a contractual document or that of a letter of assignment signed by the responsible service or authority of the relevant beneficiary.

Moreover, the sum of the public bodies' contributions (as coordinating beneficiary and / or associated beneficiary) to the project budget must exceed (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs charged to the project for personnel who are not considered "additional" (*please see Article II.19.2, (a)(iii) of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement)*. This will be automatically checked under Report R4 – Compliance with 2% rule when your proposal is validated by eProposal prior to submission, and also both during the selection phase and when calculating the final EU contribution at the end of the project.

The definition of ***'additional'*** personnel costs includes the costs of all personnel – permanent or temporary – of public bodies whose contracts or contract renewals:

- start on or after the start date of the project or on or after the date of signature of the grant agreement in case this signature takes place before the project start date, and
- specifically mention the LIFE project

Further guidance on the above can be found in Annex X of the model grant agreement.

Type of contract: Select from the drop-down menu Additional or Non-Additional Staff (in line with the definition above).

Note that service contracts with individuals (i.e. natural persons) may be charged to this category on condition that Art. II.19.2 (a) of the model LIFE grant agreement is respected and the individual concerned works in the beneficiary's premises, under its supervision and provided that such practice complies with the relevant national tax and social legislation.

Important: The time which each employee spends working on the project shall be <u>recorded</u> on a timely basis (i.e. every day, every week) using time sheets or an equivalent <u>time registration system</u> established and certified regularly by each of the project beneficiaries, unless the employee is specifically assigned to the project full time (or a fixed percentage of his/her time) as per Article II.19 of the General Conditions of the and Annex X (Financial and administrative guidelines) to the Model LIFE Grant Agreement or works less than 2 days per month on average for the LIFE project.

Category / Role in the project: You should identify each professional category in a clear and unambiguous manner to enable the Contacting Authority to monitor the labour resources allocated to the project. The description shall be brief and clear (e.g.: Senior researcher). *Examples of staff categories / roles in the project are: senior engineer / project manager, technician / data analysis, administrative / financial management, etc.* In case the professional category is not explanatory of the role that the person will play in the project, you should include the additional information not here but in the section "Assumptions related to major costs of the action" of the related action (C-forms). For example if the role is Senior researcher in the field of Agricultural Economics, you shall only include here 'Senior researcher', the additional information shall be included in the related action.

Daily rate: The daily rate charged for each member of personnel is calculated on the basis of gross salary or wages plus obligatory social charges and other statutory costs (provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration), excluding any other costs (see Annex X of the model LIFE grant agreement for further guidance on this).

For the purpose of establishing the budget proposal only, the daily rate may be calculated based on indicative average salary costs which are reasonable for the concerned category of personnel, sector, country, type of organisation, etc. Please take predictable salary increases into account when estimating the average daily rates for the project duration.

The total number of productive time per year should be calculated on the basis of the total working hours/days according to national legislation, collective agreements, employment contracts, etc. An example for determining the total productive time per year could be as follows (provided what is established in the appropriate legislation):

Days / year	365 days
Less 52 weekends	104 days
Less annual holidays	21 days
Less statutory holidays	15 days
Less illness / other (when relevant)	10 days
= Total productive time	215 days

Please note that the daily rates indicated in the budget proposal must not be used when reporting the costs of the project; only actual costs, i.e. actual rates and actual hours/days worked on the project may be charged. Any significant deviations from the budgeted costs will have to be justified. Personnel costs shall be charged on the basis of hourly/daily rates obtained by dividing the actual annual gross salary or wages plus obligatory social charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration of an employee by the actual total productive hours/days for that employee. In case the actual total productive hours for the employee are not recorded in a reliable time registration system (e.g. when working full time or on the basis of a fixed percentage of time as indicated in the employment contract) a default value of 1720 productive hours shall be used.

Number of person-days: The number of person-days needed to carry out the project.

Direct personnel costs: calculated automatically by multiplying the total number of person-days for a given category by the daily rate for that category.

Form F2 – Travel and subsistence costs

Note: Under this budget category applicants should foresee the travel costs for 2 persons from the project to attend a kick-off meeting with the Contracting Authority representatives.

Beneficiary and Action number: Please select the Beneficiary and the action number to which the travel and subsistence costs are referred to

Destination: Please select the corresponding type of destination: national, inside EU, outside EU

Explanation of assumptions: Provide a brief and clear explanation about the assumption used to calculate the travel and subsistance rate.

The purpose of travel must be clearly described (including the number of days and persons traveling for the same purpose), in order to allow an assessment of the costs in relation to the objectives of the project.

(examples for completing the field 'explanation of assumptions': ‘2 persons x 1 dissemination event 'xxx' for 2 days’, ‘1 person x 1 technical co-ordination meeting x 1 day’, ‘3 persons x 3 project area visit x 2 days’).

Only costs for travel and subsistence must be included here. Costs related to the attendance of conferences, such as conference fees, should be reported under "Other costs" (form F7). The cost of participation in a conference is only considered eligible if the project is presented at the conference. The number of participants in conferences is limited to those for whose attendance there is a valid technical justification.

Travel costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary. Beneficiaries shall endeavour to travel in the most economical and environmentally friendly way – video conferencing must be considered as an alternative.

In absence of internal rules governing the reimbursement of the use of an organisation's own cars (in opposition to private cars) costs related to the use of these are to be estimated at 0.25 € / km. If only costs for fuel are foreseen, they should also be listed here.

Subsistence costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary (daily allowances or direct payment of meals, hotel costs, local transportation etc.). Make sure that meals related to travel / meetings of the beneficiaries are not included if subsistence costs are already budgeted as per diem allowances.

Travel and subsistence rate and number of travels: Please insert the travel and substance rate and the number of travels. The field 'travel and subsistence costs' should contain the unit cost for one person, the field 'number of travels' should contain the number of travels per person (i.e. if two persons are traveling 3 times to a coordination meeting, then the number of travels is '6').

Form F3 – External assistance costs

General: External assistance costs refer to sub-contracting costs: i.e. services / works carried out by external companies or persons, as well as to renting of equipment or infrastructure. They are limited to 35% of the total budget unless a higher level is justified in the proposal.

For example, the creation of a logo, establishment of a dissemination plan, design of dissemination products, publication of a book or renting of material should be included in external assistance.

Please note that any services supplied under subcontract, but which are **related to prototype development** should be budgeted under prototype and not under external assistance. Costs related to the **purchase or leasing** (as opposed to renting) **of equipment and infrastructure** supplied under subcontract (e.g. installation services) should be budgeted under those cost categories and not under external assistance if they are also depreciated in accordance with the accounting rules.

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to sub-contract the work by using for public bodies ‘public procurement’ and for private entities: ‘direct treaty’, 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' ‘framework contract’. Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

Description: Provide a clear description of the subject of the service that will be subcontracted, e.g. 'carrying out impact assessment', 'maintenance of …', 'renting of …', 'consultancy on …', 'web page development', 'intra-muros assistance', 'organisation of dissemination event', etc. You may use maximum 200 characters for the description of the subcontract if necessary.

General comments on Forms F4.a, F4.b and F4.c – Durable goods

Please put in this category only those goods that the accounting rules of the beneficiary in question classify as durable goods. Conversely, do not put anything in this category that the accounting rules of the beneficiary in question do not classify as durable goods.

In the sub-categories equipment and infrastructure, you need to indicate the actual cost as well as the value of depreciation, in accordance with Article II.19.2 (c) of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement. Only the depreciation is an eligible cost for the project and the EU co-financing will be calculated on the basis of this amount.

Important: Depreciation of durable goods already owned by beneficiaries at the start of the project is not eligible for LIFE funding.

Actual cost: Full cost of the infrastructure or equipment without applying any depreciation.

Depreciation: Total value of the depreciation in the accounts of the beneficiaries at the end of the project. For the purpose of establishing the budget proposal, the beneficiaries should estimate as precisely as possible the amount of depreciation for each item, from the date of entry into the accounts (if relevant) until the end of the project. This estimation is based on their internal accounting rules and / or in accordance with national accounting rules. This amount represents the eligible cost.

Depreciation is limited to a maximum of 25% of the actual cost for infrastructure and a maximum of 50% of the actual cost for equipment (i.e. per cost item). Blocking error messages will be displayed when validating the proposal if these rules are not being observed. **You should be aware of the fact that, although these are the maximum percentages in the LIFE programme, it does not mean they will be automatically accepted because depreciation must firstly be in line with your internal accounting rules/national accounting rules as mentioned above.** Please note the exceptions listed under Annex X to the model grant agreement.

Exception: For prototypes, the eligible costs are equal to real costs under the conditions set up in Article I.13 of the Special Conditions and Article II.19.2 (c) of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement.

Form F4.a – Infrastructure costs

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to contract the work by using for public bodies 'public procurement' and for private entities : 'direct treaty', 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' 'framework contract' Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

Description: Give a clear description and breakdown of the infrastructure per cost item, e.g. 'supporting steel construction', 'foundation of installation', 'fencing' etc.

Important: *All the costs related to infrastructure, even if the work is carried out under sub-contract with an external entity, should be reported under this heading. In addition, the entity* *who directly owns or will own the infrastructure assets should be part of the project partnership.*

***NB:** Projects dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure do not fall within the scope of the LIFE Programme and are therefore not eligible. A project is considered to be dedicated to the construction of large infrastructure if the actual cost (as defined above) of a "single item of infrastructure" exceeds € 500,000. A "single item of infrastructure" means all elements as described in form F4a that are physically bound to ensure the functionality of the infrastructural investment (e.g. for an eco-duct the bridge, barriers, signposting, etc.) Such amount may be exceptionally exceeded if full technical justification is provided in the proposal demonstrating the necessity of the infrastructure for ensuring an effective contribution to the objectives of Articles 10, 11 or 12 of the LIFE Regulation.*

Form F4.b – Equipment costs

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to contract by using for public bodies 'public procurement' and for private entities : 'direct treaty', 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' 'framework contract'. Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

Description: Provide a clear description of each item, e.g. 'laptop computer', 'database software (off-the-shelf or developed under sub-contract)', 'measurement equipment', 'mowing machine', etc.

Form F4.c – Prototype costs

A prototype is an infrastructure and/or equipment specifically created for the implementation of the project and that has never been commercialised and is not available as a serial product. It may not be used for commercial purposes during the life of the project. (See Article I.13 of the Special Conditions and Article II.19.2 (c) of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement). Durable goods acquired under the project can only be accepted in this cost category when they are essential to the pilot or demonstration aspects of the project.

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to contract by using for public bodies 'public procurement' and for private entities: 'direct treaty', 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' 'framework contract'. Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

Description: Give a clear description of the prototype.

***Important:** All the costs related to the prototype, even if the work is carried out under sub-contract with an external entity, should be reported under this heading.*

Form F6 – Costs for consumables

General: Consumables declared on this form must relate to the purchase, manufacture, repair or use of items which are not placed in the inventory of durable goods of the beneficiaries (such as materials for experiments, animal feeding stocks, materials for dissemination, repair of durable goods given that this is not capitalised and that they are purchased for the project or used 100% for the project etc.). Should the project include a significant dissemination activity in which substantial mailing or other communication forms are used, the corresponding costs may also be declared here.

Costs for consumables must be specifically related to the implementation of project actions.

General consumables / supplies (as opposed to direct costs), such as telephone, communication costs, photocopies, office material, water, gas, etc. are deemed to be covered by the overheads category.

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to contract by using for public bodies ‘public procurement’ and for private entities: ‘direct treaty’, 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' ‘framework contract’. Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles)

Description: Provide a clear description of the type of consumable materials, linking it to the technical implementation of the project, e.g. ‘raw materials for experiments action 2’, ‘stationery for dissemination products (deliverable 5)’, etc.

Form F7 – Other costs

General: Direct costs which do not fall in any other cost category should be placed here, i.e. Costs for bank charges, conference fees, insurance costs (when these costs originate solely from the project implementation), etc... Please note that financial support to third parties (including prizes) is not eligible.

Auditor costs for those beneficiaries requesting a Union Contribution of at least € 325,000 related to the auditing of the beneficiaries' financial reports should always be placed under this budget category.

Costs for translation, if needed, must always be reported in this category.

Dissemination materials: costs related to dissemination of information and reproduction (e.g. purchase or printing dissemination materials/products…)

The cost of a **bank guarantee, if required by the Contracting Authority, must always be reported in this category.** Please refer to Articles I.4.2 and I.4.9 of the Special Conditions and Article II.19.2 (e) of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and to the *Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019* for more information.

Procedure: Specify the procedure foreseen to contract by using for public bodies ‘public procurement’ and for private entities: ‘direct treaty’, 'open tendering procedure', 'multiple offers' ‘framework contract’.. Contracts must be awarded in accordance with Articles II.10 and II.11 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement and the beneficiary's internal rules (for as far as they comply with the aforementioned Articles).

Description: Give a clear description of each item, linking it to the technical implementation of the project.

Form F8 – Overheads

Overhead amount: Indicate the general indirect costs (overheads) for each beneficiary. Where an operating grant covers the entire usual activity of the beneficiary, the latter is not entitled to declare any eligible indirect costs under an action grant. Indeed, in that case the operating grant covers the entire overheads needed for the functioning of the beneficiary. Paying indirect costs under the action grant would therefore lead to double financing. Where the operating grant covers only part of the usual activity of the beneficiary, indirect costs under the LIFE action grant may be considered eligible if the beneficiary is able to demonstrate clearly that the operating grant does not cover any costs (including overheads) that may be claimed under the action grant.

To demonstrate this, the beneficiary must:

a. use analytical cost accounting that allows to separate all costs (including overheads) attributable to the operating grant and the action grant. For that purpose the beneficiary must use reliable accounting codes and allocation keys ensuring that the allocation of the costs is done in a fair, objective and realistic way.

b. record separately: all costs incurred for the operating grants (i.e. personnel, general running costs and other operating costs linked to the part of its usual annual activities), and all costs incurred for the action grants (including the actual indirect costs linked to the action)

In case a beneficiary would receive in future an operating grant (covering the indirect costs of the LIFE action grant) for (a part of) the duration of the project, the beneficiary is obliged to report this and introduce an amendment/correction of the budget tables (Forms F) before the end of the project, excluding the 'overheads' budgeted.

Overheads (also referred to as "indirect costs") are eligible at a flat rate, which will be fixed in the grant agreement as a percentage of the total eligible direct costs of each beneficiary, excluding long-term lease of land/one-off compensations for land use rights (and excluding the overheads themselves, since they are <u>indirect</u> costs). In accordance with Article II 19.3 of the General Conditions for the Model LIFE Grant Agreement this percentage may not exceed 7% for each of the beneficiaries. A blocking error message will be displayed in Report R1 and when validating the proposal if this rule is not observed.

Note that the column 'Total eligible direct costs excluding land related costs' is automatically filled in by the tool based on the costs entered in forms F1 to F7.

<u>Form FC – Financial contributions</u>

This form describes the funding of the project by the beneficiary(ies) and / or co-financier(s), as well as the EU contribution requested per beneficiary.

Goods or services which are to be provided **"in kind"**, i.e. for which there is no cash-flow foreseen, are ineligible for EU co-financing and should not be included in the project's budget.

Important: The column 'Total costs of the actions in €' is automatically filled in by the application, based on the costs entered in forms F1-F8.

Coordinating beneficiary contribution: Specify the amount of financial contribution provided by the coordinating beneficiary. This amount cannot include any funding obtained from other public or private sources specifically earmarked for the project or for a part of it (which should be declared as other co-financing).

Associated beneficiary contribution: Indicate the financial contribution from each associated beneficiary**.** These amounts cannot include any funding obtained from other public or private sources specifically earmarked for the project or for a part of it (which should be declared as other co-financing).

Amount of EU contribution requested: Specify the amount of financial EU contribution requested by the coordinating beneficiary and each of the associated beneficiaries. This amount must be in accordance with Articles II.19 and II.25 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement.

Amount of co-financing in €: Indicate the financial contribution of each co-financier**.**

The amounts corresponding to the own contributions and the total costs are transferred automatically to forms A3 and A4. The amounts corresponding to co-financiers contributions are transferred automatically to form A6.

3.3 Stage 2 Reports

eProposal reports contain detailed financial calculations and they are generated automatically, based on the data entered in the technical and financial forms.

Only reports R1 – Budget and R2 – Costs per Action will be included in the .pdf version of the proposal generated by the eProposal tool. The other reports provide, however, practical financial information.

Report R1 – Budget

The form summarises the financial structure of the project, by providing a budget breakdown for the project and an overview of the financing plan.

Reports R2 – Costs per Action, R2a – Costs per Beneficiary, R2b – Costs per Action per Beneficiary, R2c – Costs per Beneficiary per Action

These forms are very useful in order to link technical outputs and costs.

Report R3 – Profit rule per beneficiary

This report verifies that none of the beneficiaries receives a share of the EU contribution exceeding the costs it will incur (see the no-profit rule in Article II.25.3 of the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement).

Report R4 – Compliance with 2% rule

This report shows whether the sum of the public bodies' contributions (as coordinating beneficiary and / or associated beneficiary) to the project budget exceeds (by at least 2%) the sum of the salary costs of their permanent staff charged to the project. If this is not the case, an error message will be displayed when validating the proposal.

3.4 Stage 2 Attachments

Attachment type: Select from the drop-down menu.

Attachment name: Please ensure that the name is short (maximum 200 characters).

Important: the maximum size of each document attached is 2Mb

Attach in this section the appropriate mandatory financial annexes, as explained in the document *'Guide for the evaluation of LIFE project proposals 2019*. The templates of the 'Public body declaration', 'Simplified Financial Statement' and the LIFE Key project level indicators table are provided in the application package available on the LIFE web page.

4. Checklist

4.1 Stage 1 Checklist

1. Is the applicant legally registered in the EU?
2. Have you checked whether your project fits with the requirements of a LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency project?
3. Do all actions take place in the European territory of the EU (or are covered by the exceptions foreseen)?
4. Is your concept note completed in English?

4.2 Stage 2 Checklist

The questions below aim to help you check that your application is as well prepared as possible. Your answers should in all cases be "yes". However, the list of questions is not exhaustive and the questions do not provide all the detailed information necessary; please refer to the detailed information included in other sections of this document.

1. Have you checked whether your project fits with the requirements of a LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency project?
2. In case your full proposal differs significantly from the concept note as far as major elements of the project are concerned did you list to changes and provided justification in Form A7.
3. Are forms A3, A4 and A6 signed and dated?
4. Is form B1 in English?
5. Have you included a safety margin at the end of the project to allow for unforeseen delays?
6. Is the applicant legally registered in the EU?
7. Have you included the mandatory annexes ? **A)** ***<u>For coordinating beneficiaries that are not public bodies</u>*** : (1) annual balance sheet and profit and loss account, (2) audit report or auditor-certified balance sheet and profit and loss account if the amount of the grant exceeds € 750,000 (<u>even if according to your national legislation you are not required to have your accounts audited</u>), (3) simplified financial statement. **B)** public body declaration ***<u>for coordinating beneficiaries that are public bodies</u>***.
8. For each action, have you detailed the expected results as far as possible in quantitative terms?
9. Does your project integrate monitoring, evaluation and active dissemination of the project's results and lessons learnt (see definitions of "demonstration" and "pilot")?

10. Have you included a coherent package of communication and dissemination actions?
11. Have you included substantial activities - beyond the transfer of knowledge and networking - to ensure the continuation, replication and transfer of your solution?
12. Have you included indicators of your project impact during and 3 or 5 years after the project ends?
13. Is the project management team sufficient? Is an organigram provided? Is project management well ensured (this often implies having a full time project coordinator)?
14. Have you excluded all actions that can be better financed by other EU funding programmes? In case of doubt, have you foreseen complementary actions or objectives?
15. Have you and your associated beneficiaries read the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement in full?
16. Do all actions take place in the European territory of the EU (or are covered by the exceptions foreseen)?

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Calendar of the LIFE 2019 evaluation and selection procedure

Date or period	Activity
19 June 2019	Deadline for applicants to submit concept notes to the Contracting Authority
October 2019	Notification to the applicants, shortlisted applicants invited to submit full proposal
February 2020	Deadline to submit full proposals
February 20120 to June 2020	Evaluation and revision of the proposals
July 2020	Signature of individual grant agreements
1 September 2020	Earliest possible starting date for the 2019 projects

ANNEX 2: Important links

General documents for all applicants:

- **Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013**
- **LIFE Multiannual Work Programme 2018-2020**
- **Link to the LIFE Communication**
- **Financial Regulation**

ANNEX 3: eProposal tool

The eProposal tool allows applicants for LIFE "traditional" projects to create and submit proposal(s)/concept note(s) online. Only proposals/concepts notes submitted through eProposal are eligible to be evaluated.

Please post exclusively IT questions/problems about eProposal to

eProposal Help Desk: env-clima-life-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu

Please note that this Help Desk is **only for IT questions** related to the use of eProposal.

All other questions about LIFE should be addressed by reading the documents included in the application package and, in case of need, by contacting the LIFE National Contact Point.

If you cannot find any clarification there, you may also write to easme-life@ec.europa.eu, the latest until 10 working days before the call closure.

After this date, EASME will endeavour to answer timely but cannot guarantee a response to your question.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, EASME will not give a prior opinion on a work programme, an action or specific activities.

Please note that if you registered on eProposal for the 2012-2017 LIFE Calls for proposals, you may continue to use the same user credentials to register, and may skip steps 1 and 2. You may however be requested to change the password.

3.1 Step 1: Create your EU Login user ID and password (for all users)

Access to eProposal Welcome Page is provided via the LIFE web page.

Please, connect to https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eproposalWeb.

Please note that the eProposal tool can only be accessed through EU Login (the European Commission Authentication Service). Therefore you have to register in EU Login first and obtain a user ID and a password.

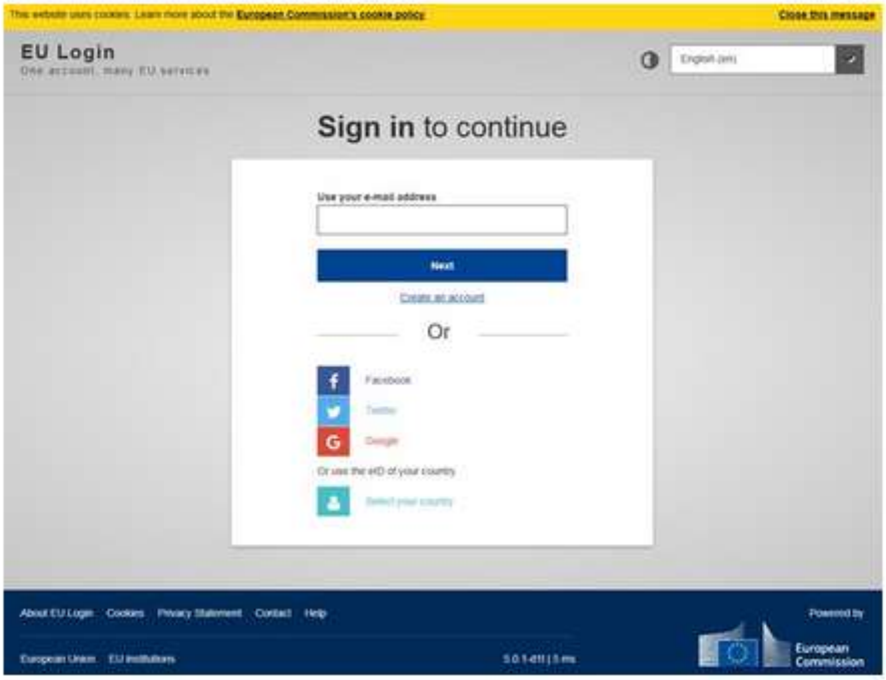
Once you have authenticated your identification, you do not have to re-enter your credentials (username and password) within the same browser session.

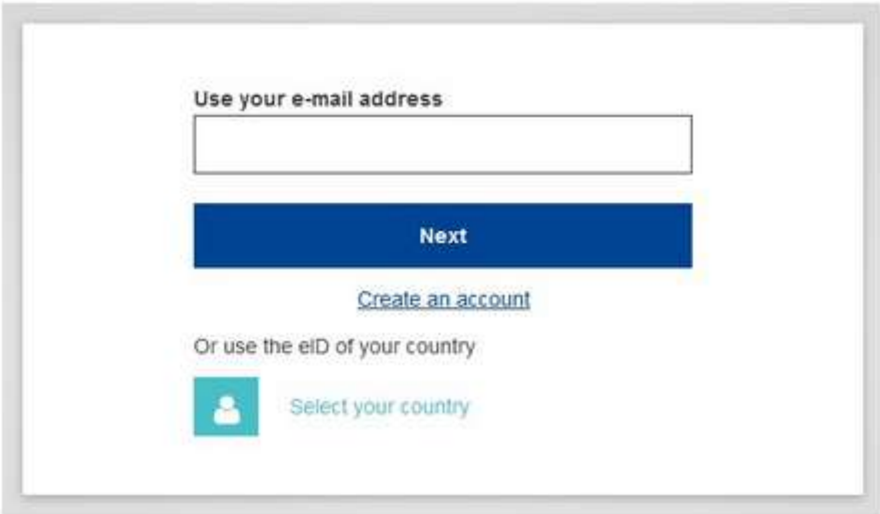
In the 'New user?' menu click 'Register':

3.1.1 EU Login create an account

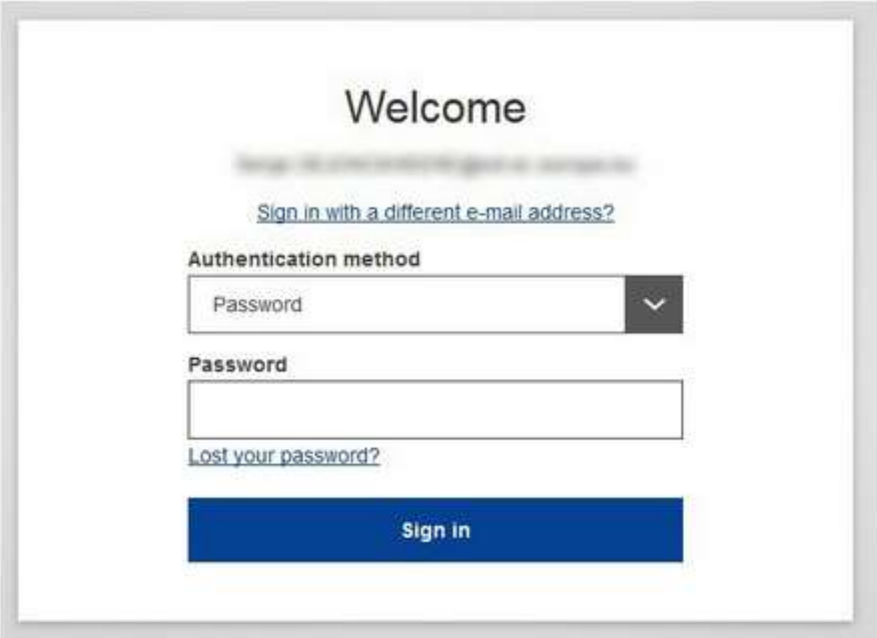
Please provide the information required:

Note that your domain of connexion must be EXTERNAL





Once you have submitted this information, click on the 'Create an account' button. You should then get the confirmation message


Welcome
Sign in with a different e-mail address?
Authentication method
Password
Password
Lost your password?
Sign in

3.1.2 EU Login Create your password

You will receive a confirmation message at the provided e-mail account from EU Login.

Note: it can take up to half an hour for the confirmation e-mail to arrive. If you do not receive this e-mail at all, please first check your SPAM folder before contacting the eProposal Help Desk.

From the moment the e-mail was sent to you, you have 90 minutes **to generate your EU Login password!**

In the confirmation e-mail received, click on 'this link'.

Define your password (minimum 10 characters, containing at least 1 capital letter and 1 digit or special character) and submit.

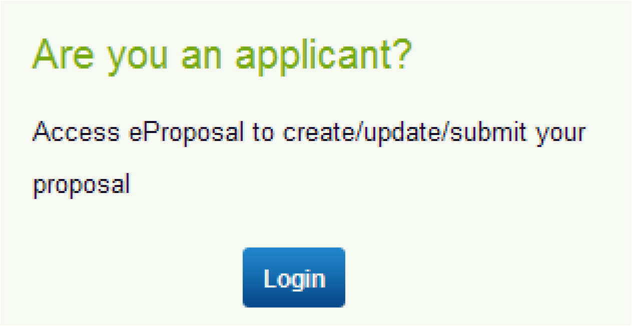
Once submitted, a confirmation message should appear:

You may change your password or ask for it to be reset in case you forget it. We recommend you keep safely the user ID / e-mail address and password you used to register for registration and login to eProposal (Step 2).

3.2 Step 2: Register as a user on eProposal (for all users)

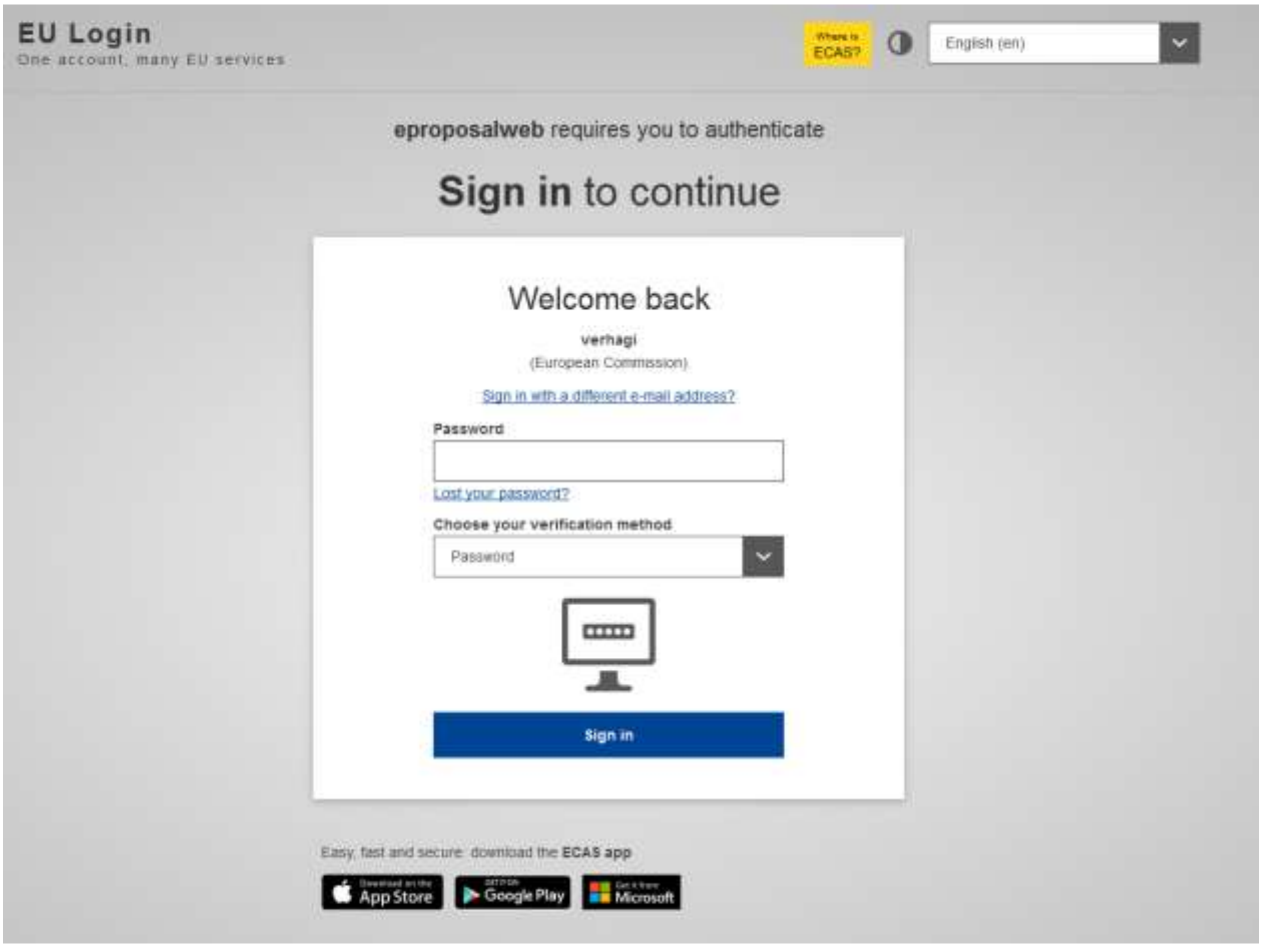
Go to the LIFE eProposal Welcome Page

Click on the option 'Are you an applicant?'



In the "Are you an applicant?' menu click 'Login'.

You will be redirected to this page:



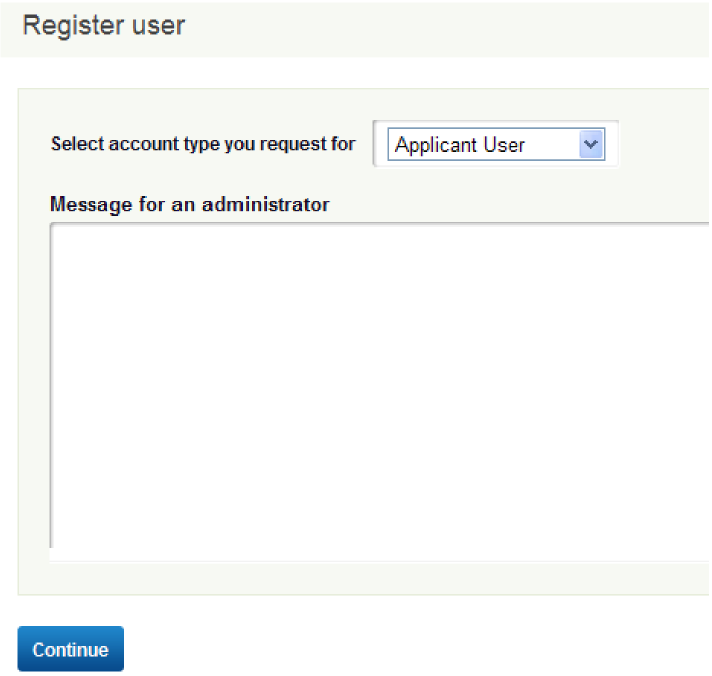
(1) Check that the domain selected is 'External' (if not, please change it to 'External' by using the 'Change it' link and when asked 'Where are you from?', please specify 'Neither an institution nor a European body' + click on 'Select').

(2) Enter your e-mail address and password (the one you created in Step 1).

(3) Click on 'Login' button.

You are now in the LIFE eProposal tool.

Please select the **Applicant User** account type:



Then fill in the required information (compulsory fields are marked by a red asterisk *), and click on the 'Save' button available at the bottom of the screen.

You will get the following confirmation message: 'Your user account has been created'.

Once you are registered as a user, you will also see in the list of proposals any proposal you created (or were invited to see) during this LIFE Call or the 2012-2017, LIFE calls.

3.3 Step 3: Create a proposal/concept note (to be done by coordinating applicant)

Proposals/Concept Notes may only be created in eProposal by registered users acting as "coordinating applicant", i.e. "the owner" of the proposal/concept note.

The 'coordinating applicant' will become the 'coordinating beneficiary' should the proposal be selected for LIFE co-financing.

You may now create a LIFE project proposal/concept note by clicking the 'Create new proposal' button available at the bottom of the screen:

You will be requested to input basic information concerning your proposal/concept note, based on the selected LIFE priority area. This information remains editable once the proposal has been created.

For this purpose, you will be automatically redirected to technical form A1 (see below). Please note that you have to fill in both form A1 AND form A2 in order to create a new project proposal in the eProposal tool. The proposal will be then identifiable with the project acronym entered in technical form A1. The information already entered while registering as an applicant will be available under forms A1 and A2 for the proposal you have created.

Please note that for technical reasons it will not be possible to digitally 'recycle' proposals from the LIFE programme. You cannot generate a new 2019 proposal based on a LIFE proposal; you would need to download the old proposal and cut and paste the contents into the 2019 application forms.

3.3.1 Manage access rights (optional)

A LIFE proposal/concept note created in eProposal is linked by default to its owner: the user who created it.

The owner of the proposal/concept note may:

-view and / or edit the proposal/concept note;

-invite other users and grant them edit rights;

-submit the proposal/concept note.

Management of access rights

In order for the owner to manage access rights and for other users linked to the proposal/concept note to view access rights, you have to perform the following operations:

(a) Select the proposal/concept note for which you want to give access rights to another user or invite an associated beneficiary;

(b) Go to Proposal/concept note menu / Access rights part.

If only the owner is linked to the proposal, the screen will look like this

Inviting another user (optional)

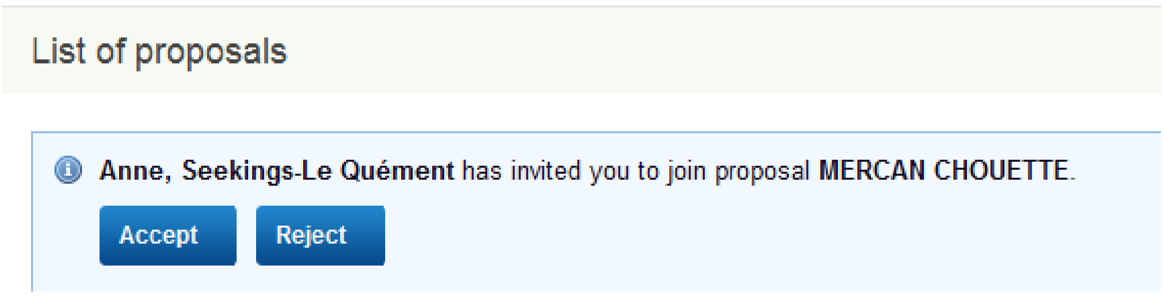
(c) In order to **invite** another user, the owner of the proposal/concept note (the coordinating applicant) must specify the e-mail address of the person to be invited in the bottom field of the screen 'List of proposal users'.The person invited MUST have an account registered in eProposal.

(d) If the invited user is already registered on eProposal:

– The first and last names of this user will appear as '(Pending)' in the Access rights list of users.

– An invitation message is received at the e-mail address entered by the invited user (when they registered to eProposal).

– The user logs on to eProposal: on the top of the first screen, the invitation is visible. The user may accept or reject it.



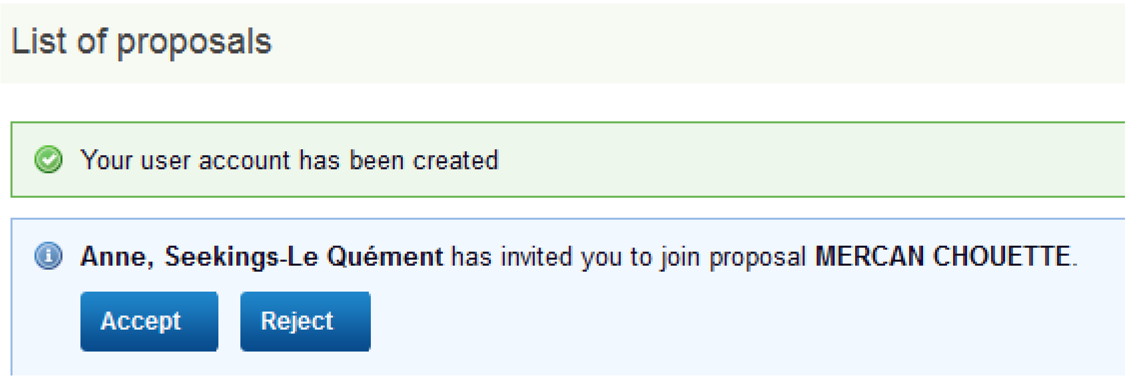
– If the invited user accepts the invitation, the proposal/concept note will appear in this user's list of proposals/concept notes, and the user will be able to view it straight away. The owner of the proposal/concept note may then grant this user editing rights

(e) If the invited user is NOT yet registered on eProposal:

– The first and last names of this user will appear as '(Pending)' in the Access rights list of users.

– An invitation message is received at the e-mail address of the invited user specified by the owner of the proposal. This message contains a link to register on EU Login (if needed, see Step 1) and another one to register on eProposal (see Step 2).

– The user logs on to eProposal: on the top of the first screen, both confirmation or registration and the invitation are visible. The user may accept or reject the invitation.



–

– If the invited user accepts it, the proposal will appear in this user's list of proposals, and the user will be able to view it straight away. The owner of the proposal may then grant to this user editing rights.

(f) The owner of the proposal/concept note may invite as many users as wished, following the same steps.

(g) If several users are linked to a proposal, the Access rights screen will look like this (for the owner of the proposal, for the other users linked to it, all squares will be greyed out):

(h) The owner of the proposal/concept note is always greyed out (at least one user must be owner of a proposal at all times).

User(s) who have accepted the invitation are listed and the squares in the columns 'Owner', 'Can view' and 'Can edit' are activated.

If the first and last names are still '(Pending)', it means that this (these) user(s) have not yet accepted the invitation.

The owner of the proposal may decide to **grant editing rights to other user(s) linked to that proposal/concept note**. The only condition is for the user to have accepted the invitation sent by the owner. This enables several users to work in parallel on the same project proposal.

To grant editing rights to a user, the owner must click on the 'No' square in the 'Can edit' column: it will then turn to **yes**. When that user next logs on to eProposal, s/he will be able to edit that proposal/concept note.

Important: If a user has been granted editing rights, s/he will be able to perform exactly the same actions as the coordinating beneficiary, i.e. modify, delete, add technical and financial data, etc. but will not be able to submit the proposal/concept note and invite other users. The switch between edit and view modes for an associated applicant can be performed as many times as needed / wished by the coordinating beneficiary.

Changing owner

The user that has to become the owner must have already been invited to the proposal/concept note To change owner, the (original) owner must click on the 'No' square in the 'Owner' column corresponding to the user that is to become the new owner: after a confirmation message, it will then turn to Yes. From that moment on the 'former' owner does not have the possibility to manage user rights anymore. When the 'new' owner next logs on to eProposal, s/he will be able to manage user rights for that proposal.

Any data that was already entered in the technical and/or financial forms for the coordinating applicant (e.g. in relation to actions for which the coordinating applicant is responsible, or for costs incurred by this applicant), will have to be manually edited so as to align them to the new set-up of the proposal.

3.3.2 Validating and Submitting a proposal

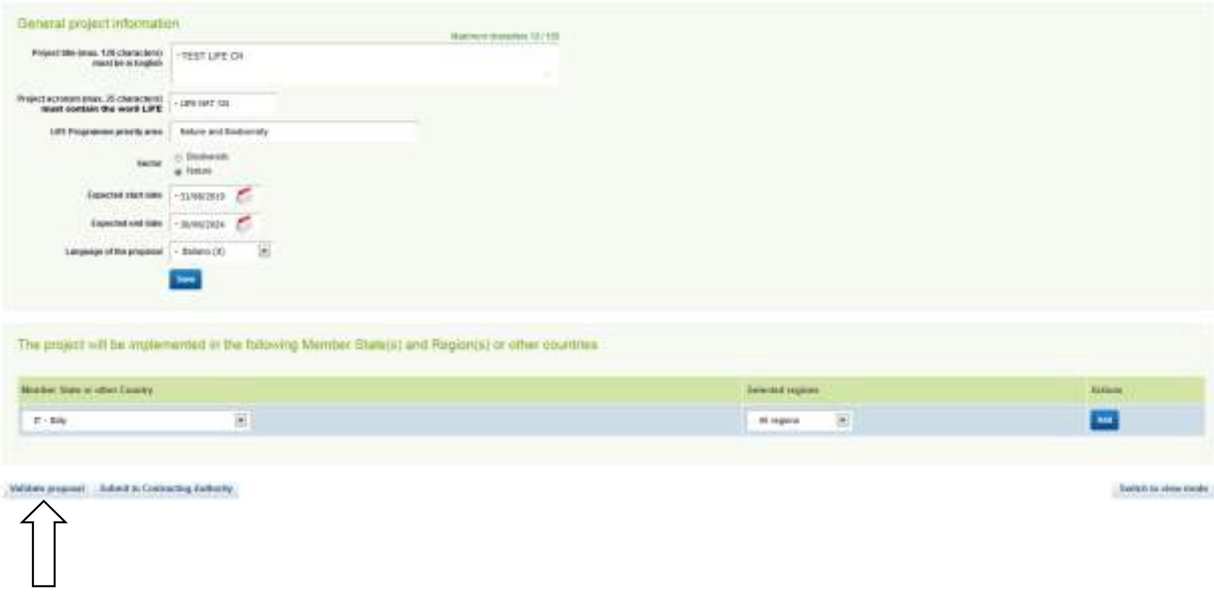
Please note that both steps are compulsory to ensure that the proposal/concept note is taken into consideration during the evaluation process!

Validation

After completing the proposal/concept note, click on the 'Validate' button available on form A1. A number of pre-defined verifications will be launched throughout the entire proposal/concept note.

Validation error messages indicate missing or incorrect information. They block the submission of the proposal.

When the validation is performed without any blocking errors, you will receive the following confirmation message:



Proposal has been successfully validated.

Please note that at this stage the proposal has NOT been submitted yet.

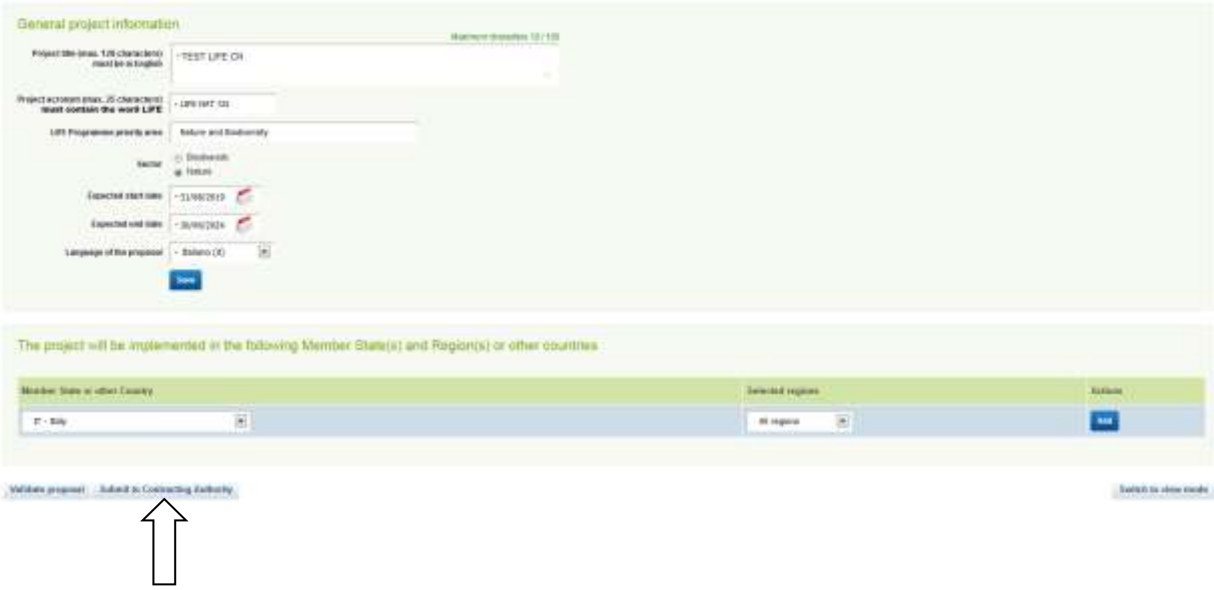
Your proposal has been successfully validated but has NOT been submitted yet.

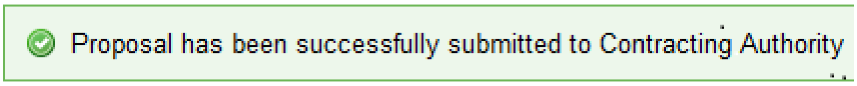
Upon successful validation of the proposal/concept note, eProposal will request the owner whether s/he wants to submit the proposal/concept note at that moment.

Submission

Once the proposal/concept note is validated and before the submission deadline, the coordinating applicant (owner of the proposal/concept note) should submit the proposal/concept note by clicking on the 'Submit to Contracting Authority' button (this button becomes available on form A1 only after the proposal has been validated and no more blocking validation errors are identified).

After clicking on this button, you will receive the following message confirming that the proposal/concept note is successfully submitted:





The proposal/concept note can be modified, validated and (re)submitted as many times as needed until the submission deadline. Each subsequent submission overwrites the previously submitted version (earlier versions are not archived and are therefore not available anymore).

This submission deadline will only be extended in case of 'force majeure' or breakdown of the system and the new deadline (established in a way to compensate the down period) will be communicated on the LIFE website and eProposal welcome page immediately.

The proposal/concept note will be automatically forwarded to the Contracting Authority. National Authorities of the Member States in which beneficiaries are legally registered, may also view the proposal/concept note if the owner of the proposal ticks the button National authorities access (see description page 44).

Each submitted proposal/concept note is automatically attributed a unique project reference code that includes the year of the call, the LIFE priority area and a sequential 6 digits number. All technical, financial and reporting forms will bear this code (e.g. 'Proposals / **LIFE14 ENV/FI/000001 LIFE Water** / Financial Forms / **F1 – Direct personnel costs'**). This code will be referred to in all correspondence with the Contracting Authority during the selection procedure and during the project implementation, if the proposal is retained for LIFE co-financing. A proposal/concept note that has not been submitted yet does not carry a reference.

Important: proposals/concept notes submitted can be modified and re-submitted until the submission deadline is reached. Only the final submitted version of the proposals/concept note will be evaluated by the Contracting Authority.

If you want your proposal to be taken into account under the evaluation process, please make sure that you click on the 'Submit to Contracting Authority' button prior to the submission deadline.

<u>The button 'Submit to Contracting Authority' will be deactivated at the submission deadline.</u> **<u>The Contracting Authority may not be held responsible for any problem caused by slow performance of the system or similar issues. Applicants should take the necessary steps to avoid "last minute" submissions.</u>**

<u>Actively working in your proposal simultaneously with two or more user accounts or two or more same accounts may cause your proposal data to become corrupted and will impair the submission process.</u>

Post-submission Communication

Once the submission deadline has passed, communication with applicants who have submitted a proposal/concept note will be solely through the proposal Mailbox.

Only the owners of proposals/concepts notes with status 'Received by Contracting Authority' (and later statuses) have access to this Mailbox.

WHO CAN USE IT?
- the applicant: to read messages sent by the Contracting Authority or its Consultant and to reply to these messages and to initiate new messages addressed to the Contracting Authority or its Consultant;
- the Contracting Authority or its Consultant: to send messages to any Applicant and to read Applicants' replies.
- National Authorities: to view correspondence for the proposals to which they have access (Applicant or Associated Beneficiaries established in their Member State).

HOW DO I READ AND SEND MESSAGES?
There are 2 options to access the messages:

- go to the List of proposals: if you have a new message for a particular proposal, the icon becomes visible in the 'Unread' column; click on it to access the mailbox directly
- if you have already opened a particular proposal/concept note, the "Mailbox" is available in the drop-down menu under 'Proposal'

These 2 options lead to the Thread list:

The proposal LIFE12 ENV/ES/000692 LIFE SMART FOREST has been submitted to NA on 26/09/2012 13:24:12 (Brussels time).

Create thread

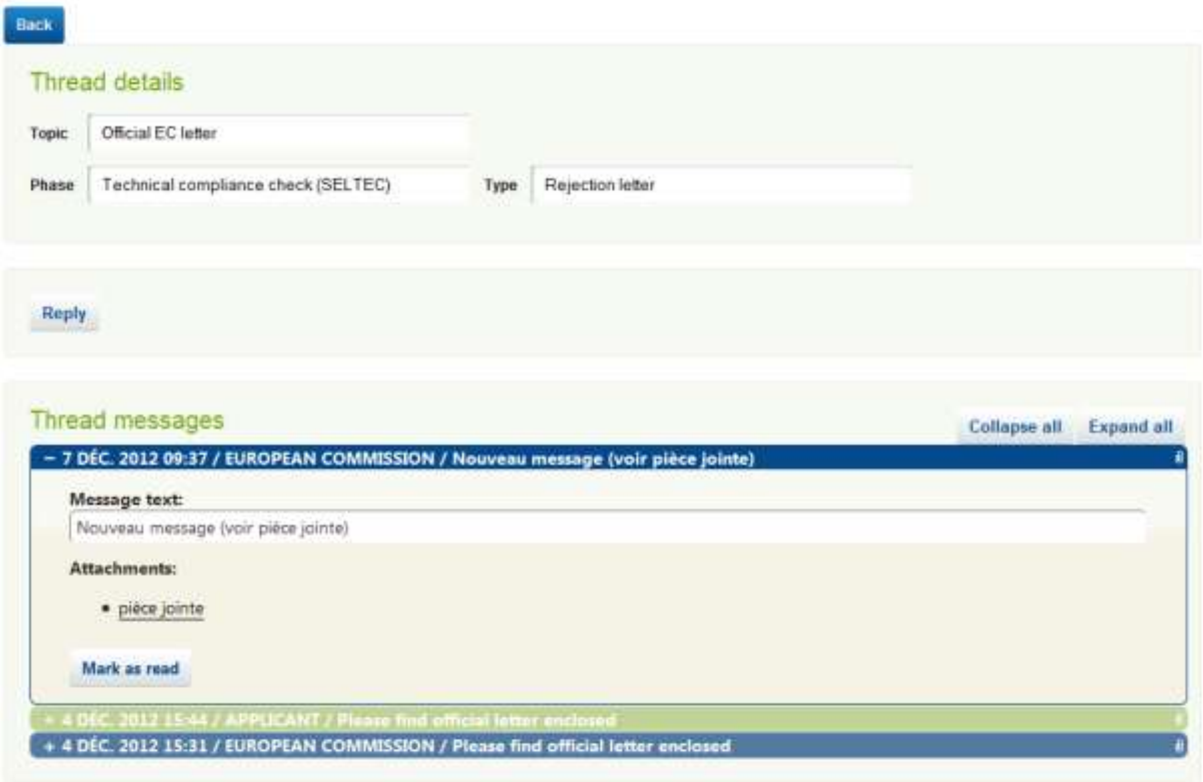
Unread	Topic	Created at	Type	Phase	Status	Actions
1	Official letter	07/12/12 13:08	Rejection letter	Technical compliance check (SELTEC)	Open	
	New thread 1	07/12/12 11:29	Rejection letter	Technical compliance check (SELTEC)	Open	
1	Official EC letter	04/12/12 15:21	Rejection letter	Technical compliance check (SELTEC)	Open	

3 item(s) found

A thread groups all messages linked to the same 'Topic' (which is defined by the one who creates the thread), 'Phase' (the phase of the selection process to which this message is linked) and 'Type' (e.g.: rejection letter, question letter, instruction letter or 'Other').

Threads can be created and closed. Official threads (such as Rejection letter, Instructions letter, etc…) can only be created by the Contracting Authority. Applicants can create (and afterwards Close) 'Other' types of threads, using the button Create thread. The Contracting Authority and its Consultant can close any type of thread.

When clicking on icon  for a given thread, the Thread details appear:



This screen enables you to view all past correspondence (green colour is used for messages posted by applicants, blue colour for messages posted by the Contracting Authority and its consultant). The same colours appearing in a stronger shade indicate a new message, whereas a message in a lighter shade indicates that it has been marked as read.

All applicants have the possibility to define one or many new messages

by clicking the button Create thread.. This is also used to reply to messages previously sent to them (choosing the recipient: Contracting Authority or consultant and clicking on Save; if necessary attachment(s) of 2MB maximum size each may be uploaded; please use only generic formats to ensure readability by other users).

By clicking on Ready to send the Applicant may see the message about to be sent and check its content and list of attachments. To send the new message click on Send. To continue editing the message click on Not ready to send.

HOW WILL I BE ALERTED IF A NEW MESSAGE IS AVAILABLE?
Applicants will receive an e-mail notification message in the mailbox corresponding to the e-mail address indicated on form A2, informing that a new message is available in their Proposal Mailbox.
We advise applicants to regularly check the Proposal Mailbox in eProposal as notification messages may sometimes not reach the recipient (e.g. filtered as SPAM, mailbox changed, mailbox full, etc.).
Only coordinating applicants will receive notification messages.

Withdrawal of a Proposal/Concept Note

The applicant (owner) retains the right to withdraw a proposal/concept note at any moment after submission. A withdrawn proposal/concept note will not be considered during the evaluation.

To withdraw a proposal/concept note:

– Find it in your list of proposals/concept notes;

– For that proposal/concept note, click on the Edit icon in the corresponding Actions column;

– In the proposal/concept note menu, choose the Withdrawal form. There you will be able to detail the reason(s) why you need to withdraw your proposal/concept note (for instance: expected financing did not materialise), and to confirm the fact that you withdraw your proposal/concept note.

– If you click on 'OK' you will receive the following confirmation message:

General rules

- It is recommended to use either Google Chrome orFirefox browsers .
- In order to enter data into the proposal, use the 'Edit' mode; a 'View' mode is also available and you can switch from one mode to the other at any time during preparation of your proposal;
- You may introduce the information either directly into the textboxes or you may copy and paste information in simple text format; note that for security reasons, <u>a text copied and pasted from a Word document or an html page may not be accepted entirely and cause issue to the eProposal system</u>, therefore simple, basic text editors such as Notepad suit better for this purpose;
- **Always click on the 'Save' button before switching to another form**;
- All fields allow introducing a limited number of characters – these limits are clearly displayed. Please note that in order to ensure that the text input in large text fields can be printed in the pdf extract, only the following formatting may be used: bold, italics, underlined. Only simple lists (simple enumerations 1,2,3, A, B,C etc; or bullet points) will appear correctly. If you need to insert tables, do not do so in text fields: please use the Add picture(s) functionality available at the end of most forms;
- Fields marked with a red asterisk * are related to obligatory information and must be filled in; when validating the proposal, error messages will be displayed if mandatory fields have been left empty;
- The data between various technical and financial forms are intrinsically connected, this is why as a matter of principle the information will be introduced manually only once and then automatically transferred to other relevant forms across the application;
- Disabled fields cannot be filled in manually since the respective information will be extracted and/or calculated automatically from other forms;
- You will be allowed to insert objects (such as maps, graphs, tables, photos) in certain forms where the "Maps", "Pictures" or "Declaration" headings appear; you may only use png, jpg, tif, gif, bmp formats; the maximum size accepted is 2MB;
- Enter all dates in DD/MM/YYYY format or use the calendar functionality where available;
- At any stage, you may view your concept note / proposal as a pdf document, by clicking the 'Request pdf' button available in the Proposal exports and Attachments sections of eProposal. Once the pdf version of your proposal has been created, you will receive an e-mail which will allow you to download it straight away, or to do so from the Proposal exports and Attachments sections of eProposal (remember to 'refresh' the page, press key F5);
- You may extract the content of your proposal in order to work off-line:
    - B and C forms to an editable Word document, by clicking on the 'Download working copy' button available in the Proposal exports section;
    - Financial forms and reports to an editable Excel document, by clicking on the 'Financial data export' button available in the Proposal exports and Attachments sections;
    - Please note that these are only working documents to be used to prepare input in eProposal forms and fields. It is not possible to automatically transfer the Word text or the Excel data back into eProposal.

- All the content of a proposal can be edited / viewed using the Proposal menu available at the top of the screen: