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ANNEX 1

ANNEX

to the

Commission Implementing Decision

**on the financing of the LIFE programme and the adoption of the work programme for
the years 2025, 2026 and 2027**

Multiannual work programme for the implementation of the LIFE Programme for the years 2025-2027

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

CET	Clean Energy Transition
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
CSA	Coordination and Support Actions
EA.....	Executive Agency
EIB.....	European Investment Bank
ELENA facility.....	European Local ENergy Assistance facility
ETS	Emission Trading System
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IEA	International Energy Agency
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LUCAS	Land Use/Cover Area frame Survey
MAWP	Multiannual Work Programme
NEEAP	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan
PAF.....	Prioritized Action Framework
OA	Other Actions
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEF.....	Organizational Environmental Footprint
OEFSR.....	Organizational Environmental Footprint Sector Rule
OG	Operating grant
PEF	Project Environmental Footprint
PEFCR.....	Product Environmental Footprint Category Rule
PLP	Projects for addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities
SAP.....	Standard Action Project
SGA.....	Specific Grant Agreement
SIP	Strategic Integrated Project

SMART Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely
SNAP Strategic Nature Project
TA-CAP Technical Assistance for capacity building of Member States' authorities
TAIEX Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
TA-PP Technical Assistance for the preparation of SNAPs and SIPs
TA Project Technical Assistance Project
TA-R..... Technical Assistance for facilitating the upscaling or replication of results
TFEU Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNEP..... United Nations Environment Programme
WHO..... World Health Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/783 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1293/2013 (hereinafter "LIFE Regulation")¹, 'The general objective of the LIFE Programme shall be to contribute to the shift towards a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and - resilient economy, in order to protect, restore and improve the quality of the environment, including the air, water and soil, and to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to tackle the degradation of ecosystems, including by supporting the implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network, thereby contributing to sustainable development. The LIFE Programme shall also support the implementation of general action programmes adopted in accordance with Article 192(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)'.

In this regard, the LIFE Programme as a whole contributes fully to the objectives and targets of the European Green Deal², which aims to:

- transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use;
- protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment and climate related risks and impacts.

The LIFE Programme will contribute to these priorities through its four sub-programmes in particular by

- boosting and integrating the implementation of the EU's policy objectives for halting and reversing loss of wildlife habitats and species across all sectors, as well as the EU Biodiversity Strategy objectives for 2030;
- supporting the transition to a circular economy and protecting and improving the quality of EU's natural resources, including by contributing to the Circular Economy Action Plan³ and the EU Zero Pollution Action Plan⁴;
- supporting the implementation of the 2030 energy and climate policy objectives and related EU 2030 energy and climate targets, the REPowerEU Plan⁵ to phase EU dependence on Russian fossil fuels, the EU's climate neutrality objective by 2050, and the new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change;
- building capacity, stimulating investments, rolling out enabling structures, and supporting implementation of policies focused on energy efficiency and small-scale renewables.

This multiannual work programme (MAWP) for 2025-2027 takes into account the experience gained in the previous LIFE Programme as well as from the implementation under the last

¹ OJ L 172, 17.5.2021, p. 53–78.

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'The European Green Deal' (COM/2019/640 final).

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'A new Circular Economy Action Plan For a cleaner and more competitive Europe' (COM/2020/98 final).

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'Pathway to a Healthy Planet for All EU Action Plan: 'Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil' (COM/2021/400 final).

⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'REPowerEU Plan' (COM/2022/230 final).

MAWP 2021-2024⁶. The current MAWP foresees some adjustments to improve the functioning of the LIFE Programme. This MAWP covers the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2027.

The structure of the MAWP follows the list of contents defined in Article 18(2) of the LIFE Regulation and only addresses the sub-programmes separately, where necessary.

It lays down a detailed framework for the exercise of the Commission implementing powers and provides a view of the activities of the LIFE Programme for 3 years, thus facilitating the participation of potential stakeholders.

The bulk of the activities of the LIFE Programme will be implemented directly by the Commission services or by the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA). CINEA acts within the limits of the delegation defined by the Commission and under its supervision. The overall responsibility for the Programme remains with the Commission.

2. STRUCTURE

According to Article 4 of the LIFE Regulation, the LIFE Programme is structured into two fields – Environment and Climate Action – and four sub-programmes:

1. Under the Environment field:

- The sub-programme ‘Nature and Biodiversity’;
- The sub-programme ‘Circular Economy and Quality of Life’.

2. Under the Climate Action field:

- The sub-programme ‘Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation’;
- The sub-programme ‘Clean Energy Transition’.

For the duration of the present MAWP, a budget of EUR 1,545.7 million is allocated to the Environment field, a budget of EUR 790.0 million is allocated to the Climate Action field⁷.

Each sub-programme is described below with the related objectives and areas of intervention. Specific priorities per sub-programme and cross-cutting priorities aiming at addressing issues under more than one sub-programme are included in the document defining the priority topics, published on the CINEA website.

In the implementation of each sub-programme, the Commission will seek to ensure that each action will live up to the green oath to ‘do no harm’⁸ and will not undermine any of the objectives

⁶ Commission Implementing Decision on the adoption of the multiannual work programme for the years 2021 -2024 for the LIFE programme. (C(2021) 4997 final).

⁷ These amounts do not include the supporting expenditures, which indicative amount is EUR 95 million, for the MAWP period.

⁸ See: COM/2019/640 final and recital 29 of the LIFE Regulation (EU) 2021/783, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/783/oj>.

of the other LIFE sub-programmes⁹, while looking for the development of synergies with other programmes¹⁰ and policies¹¹ with a view to pursuing a holistic vision of the environment.

2.1. The sub-programme “Nature and Biodiversity” and related areas of intervention

In line with the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme as set out in Article 3(2) of the LIFE Regulation, the sub-programme “Nature and Biodiversity” aims:

- to develop, demonstrate, promote and stimulate the scale up of innovative techniques, methods and approaches (including nature-based solutions and ecosystem approaches) for reaching the objectives set out under the Union legislation and policy on or related to nature and biodiversity, and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices, including through the support of the Natura 2000 network;
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the relevant Union legislation and policy on or related to nature and biodiversity, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing the capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society, also taking into due consideration the possible contributions provided by citizen science¹²;
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful solutions/approaches for implementing relevant Union legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

LIFE has been a key tool supporting the implementation of the EU Birds¹³ and Habitats¹⁴ Directives since 1992 and has been instrumental and, in some cases crucial, to ensure the establishment of the Natura 2000 network.

⁹ For example by taking into account Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2139, ELI : http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2021/2139/oj and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2486, ELI : http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2486/oj establishing the actual list of environmentally sustainable economic activities by defining technical screening criteria for each environmental objective laid down in Regulation (EU) 2020/852, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/852/oj> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088. .

¹⁰ In accordance with the LIFE regulation, synergies are, for example, encouraged with projects within the Horizon Europe programme, including synergies with Horizon Europe missions.

¹¹ LIFE projects are encouraged to make use of Copernicus and/or Galileo/EGNOS for satellites-based earth observation, positioning, navigation and/or related timing data and services.

¹² Scientific work undertaken by members of the general public, often in collaboration with or under the direction of professional scientists and scientific institutions.

¹³ Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (Codified version) (OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, p. 7, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/147/oj>).

¹⁴ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj>)

The Nature Directives' fitness check¹⁵, the Action plan for nature, people, and the economy¹⁶ as well as the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030¹⁷ underline the need to increase funding for nature and biodiversity.

The sub-programme covers two priority areas: 1) “EU Nature and Biodiversity”, and 2) “awareness raising, compliance assurance and access to justice related to nature and biodiversity legislation”.

Under the priority area “EU Nature and biodiversity”, the sub-programme will contribute to the EU's objectives for the protection, maintenance and restoration of the Union's natural capital in its marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems, as outlined in the Convention on Biological Diversity¹⁸, the Bern Convention¹⁹ and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework²⁰. In particular, it will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, the Regulation on Invasive Alien Species²¹ and the EU Pollinators Initiative²² as well as relevant objectives under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive²³, the Water Framework Directive²⁴, the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive²⁵, the EU Marine Action Plan²⁶ and the European strategy for Outermost Regions²⁷. The sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity will also contribute to the implementation of the Nature Restoration Law²⁸.

Financed actions will target, among others, the implementation of the EU Habitats and Birds Directive and the Invasive Alien Species Regulation, the establishing of a coherent network of

¹⁵ Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2016) 472 final of 16 December 2016 ‘Fitness-check of the EU Nature Legislation (Birds and Habitats Directives) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/147/oj> and Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora’, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj> (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Fitness-check of the Birds and Habitats Directives’).

¹⁶ 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’.

¹⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ‘The European Green Deal’ (COM/2019/640 final).

¹⁸ Approved by Council Decision 93/626/EEC of 25 October 1993 concerning the conclusion of the Convention on Biological Diversity (OJ L 309, 13.12.1993, p. 1).

¹⁹ Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, approved by Council Decision 82/72/EEC of 3 December 1981 concerning the conclusion of the Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats (OJ L 38, 10.2.1982, p. 1).

²⁰ Decision adopted by the conference of the parties to the convention on biological diversity - 15/4. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

²¹ Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species (OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p.35).

²² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ‘Revision of the EU Pollinators Initiative: a New Deal for Pollinators’ (COM/2023/35 final).

²³ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) (OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19).

²⁴ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1)].

²⁵ Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning.

²⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions ‘EU Action Plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries’ (COM/2023/102 final)

²⁷ See Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions ‘Putting people first, securing sustainable and inclusive growth, unlocking the potential of the EU's outermost regions’ (COM(2022) 198 final).

²⁸ Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869.

protected areas, the implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Law including the restoration of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems, and targeting the specific Nature Restoration Law targets for species and habitats, the reversing of the decline of pollinators, and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem health in agricultural land and forests, and bringing nature back in urban areas as well as restoring the good environmental status of marine ecosystems and good ecological status of freshwater ecosystems. Projects concerning priority habitats or species, habitats or species in a bad conservation status or endangered, as well as newly described species that should be considered as threatened can receive the maximum co-financing rate of 75% as outlined under 4.1.1.1. including explicitly the EU Outermost Regions due to their exceptionally high biodiversity value. This also applies to Overseas Countries and Territories and third countries associated to the LIFE programme.

Under the priority area “awareness raising, compliance assurance and access to justice related to nature and biodiversity legislation”, the sub-programme will contribute to awareness raising of the benefits of nature conservation, to EU nature and biodiversity-legislation compliance assurance, and to access to justice related to nature and biodiversity legislation.

An indicative amount of EUR 977.2 million is allocated to the sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity for the period 2025-2027.

The sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity will mainly be implemented through Standard Action Projects and Strategic Nature Projects.

1. Standard Action Projects (SAPs, see section 4.1.1 below), which are implemented through the traditional bottom-up approach and aim at implementing practical and effective measures for the outlined objectives and priorities.
2. Strategic Nature Projects (SNAPs, see section 4.1.2. below), which support the full implementation of national or regional Prioritized Action Frameworks (PAFs) and other EU biodiversity-policy-related planning instruments.

2.2. The sub-programme “Circular Economy and Quality of Life” and related areas of intervention

The specific objectives of the sub-programme “Circular Economy and Quality of Life” are:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of Union legislation and policy on environment, and to contribute to the knowledge base and, where relevant, to the application of best practices;
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of relevant Union legislation and policy on environment, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society;
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions for implementing relevant Union legislation and policy on environment, by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

This sub-programme covers three priority areas: 1) “Circular economy and waste”, 2) “Zero pollution and sustainable management of natural resources” and 3) “Environmental governance”.

This sub-programme aims at facilitating the transition toward a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient and climate-resilient economy, a toxic-free environment and at protecting, restoring

and improving the quality of the environment in line with the European Green Deal and recent policy developments.

This sub-programme will support the development, implementation and enforcement of policies and legislation in the areas of circular economy, reduction of waste and zero pollution, thus contributing to the Circular Economy Action Plan, the Zero Pollution Action Plan and the EU Bioeconomy Strategy²⁹. Furthermore, it will support actions to improve environmental governance at all levels, in particular by enhancing the capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society.

The sub-programme will contribute to these European Union priorities in particular by:

- enhancing a circular economy in line with the new Circular Economy Action Plan by reducing or preventing resource use and waste, enhancing product durability, reinforcing recycling of waste and recovery of resources (including critical raw materials), strengthening the sustainable and circular use of biomass;
- promoting the development, commercialisation and uptake of safe and sustainable by design approaches for chemicals, materials and products;
- supporting the recovery of resources from waste through recycling and uptake of recycled materials into high quality products and the identification, tracking, separation, prevention and decontamination of waste containing hazardous substances;
- reducing pollution of air, water and soil in line with the Zero Pollution Action Plan;
- achieving and maintaining a good status of the Union's water bodies and ensuring safe, clean and affordable water for all, while avoiding, and if that is not possible, minimising negative ecological, economic and social impacts of droughts and floods and ensuring the protection and conservation of the aquifers, seas, oceans and their coasts;
- protecting the quality and resilience of EU soil and the ecosystem services provided by healthy soil, and preventing soil degradation, desertification and other impacts due to climate change or land management;
- diminishing exposure to harmful noise levels, specifically in densely populated urban areas;
- preventing and reducing production, use and emissions of hazardous chemicals as well as preventing and reducing the exposure of humans and the environment to those chemicals;
- reducing industrial emissions and enhancing safety through the pollution prevention and abatement techniques and the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances.

An indicative amount of EUR 568.5 million is allocated to the sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life for the period 2025-2027.

This amount will be used to finance mainly SAPs and Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) focusing on the following:

- **Activities supporting the objective of a circular economy and the recovery of resources from waste**, in line with the waste hierarchy prioritising waste prevention, the preparing for re-use, and recycling over other recovery and disposal operations.

²⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions 'A sustainable Bioeconomy for Europe: Strengthening the connection between economy, society and the environment' (SWD(2018) 431 final).

- **Activities supporting the achievement of zero pollution and contributing to the sustainable management of natural resources**, for example pollution prevention, innovative solutions to monitor and reduce pollution in air, water, soil reduction in exposure to noise, chemicals and industrial emissions, as well as proposals that contribute to the implementation of the New European Bauhaus.
- **Environment governance projects** such as for example: activities in support of public administrations' decision-making and voluntary approaches for the public and the private sector; environmental compliance assurance and access to justice; behavioural change and awareness-raising initiatives.

2.3. The sub-programme “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation” and related areas of intervention

The specific objectives of the sub-programme “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation” are:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of Union legislation and policy on climate action and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices;
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of relevant Union legislation and policy on climate action, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society;
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions for implementing relevant Union legislation and policy on climate action by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

The sub-programme “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation” will support the implementation of the European Green Deal by contributing to the objectives and targets set out in the European Climate Law³⁰: the goal for Europe’s economy and society to become climate-neutral by 2050; the intermediate Union climate target to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels by 2030; the 2040 Union climate target that the Commission should propose within six months of the first global stock take carried out under the Paris Agreement³¹; and the obligation for the relevant Union institutions and the Member States to ensure continuous progress in enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, in line with the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change³².

The indicative budget allocated to the sub-programme Climate Change Mitigation and Climate Change adaptation for the period 2025-2027 is EUR 376.7 million. The largest part will be spent on grants, especially on SAPs and SIPs.

³⁰ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 (‘European Climate Law’), OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1–17, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1119/oj>.

³¹ On 6 February 2024, the Commission recommended reducing the EU’s net greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2040 relative to 1990 in the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ‘Securing our future - Europe’s 2040 climate target and path to climate neutrality by 2050 building a sustainable, just and prosperous society’, COM/2024/63 final.

³² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ‘Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change’, COM/2021/82 final.

The sub-programme has three priority areas:

1. “Climate Change Mitigation”, whose areas of intervention include activities aiming to:
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including fluorinated greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances, in line with the EU’s climate neutrality target;
 - Increase the generation and use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency by developing, demonstrating and promoting low-carbon or energy efficient products and services, including by addressing the policy and market framework;
 - Support sustainable land and coastal management practices which reduce GHG emissions or remove CO₂ from the atmosphere;
 - Develop and promote solutions to remove/sequester CO₂ from the atmosphere, biogenic sources and existing points sources. Carbon capture and carbon removals can be nature-based and coupled with restoration projects or rely on storage in specific long-term media or use of captured CO₂ products;
 - Support the shift to zero-emission mobility in road transport and the decarbonisation of other transport modes, fostering intermodality and modal shift.
2. “Climate Change Adaptation”, whose areas of intervention include activities aiming to:
 - Support the implementation of climate adaptation policies and the revision of adaptation strategies and plans at all levels and in all sectors, in line with the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change;
 - Improve and implement state-of-the art tools and solutions for adaptation modelling, risk assessment, management and decision support, as well as for adaptation monitoring, reporting and evaluation; and improve and implement ex-ante project assessment tools to better identify co-benefits and positive impacts on the economy of adaptation and prevention projects;
 - Support the rollout of viable nature-based solutions in the management of rural, urban and coastal areas including through assessments, guidance, capacity building, and suitable financial approaches and products;
 - Implement approaches and solutions to ensure a stable and secure supply of high quality freshwater, prevent droughts, reduce water use, protect and restore wetlands, and prevent floods;
 - Implement solutions to climate-proof and enhance the resilience of infrastructure and buildings, including by using blue-green infrastructure and through cooperation with standardisation organisations;
 - Implement adaptation solutions for agriculture, forestry and aquaculture;
 - Prevent and prepare for climate change related health impacts, promote climate proof/climate-resilient health care services, and significantly reduce climate-related morbidity and mortality, particularly in the most vulnerable communities;
 - Support preparedness for compound risks and cascading risks, notably at a local level and in the outermost regions;
 - Promote financial instruments and innovative solutions to deal with climate-induced risks, and public-private collaboration to reduce the share of uninsured climate-related economic losses, including by improving collection and access to climate-related economic loss data.

3. “Climate Change Governance and Information”, whose areas of intervention include activities aiming to:

- Incentivise changes in behaviour and practices, as well as improving citizens’ knowledge and awareness, notably through the support of the implementation of the European Climate Pact³³;
- Enhance green skills and capacity building to implement climate mitigation and adaptation policies;
- Support the development, update and implementation of national, regional and local climate and energy strategies and plans;
- Improve greenhouse gas monitoring, accounting and reporting;
- Contribute to climate policy development, monitoring, assessment and ex-post evaluation;
- Demonstrate and promote Sustainable Finance actions.

The sub-programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation may cover activities related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, as far as they are not covered by the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme calls in that same year.

2.4. The sub-programme “Clean Energy Transition” and related areas of intervention

The specific objectives of the sub-programme “Clean Energy Transition” are the following:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative regulatory, governance and market-oriented techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of Union legislation and policy on the clean, sustainable and just energy transition by upscaling renewable energy solutions and increasing energy efficiency, and contributing to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices;
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of relevant Union legislation and policy on the clean, sustainable, and just energy transition upscaling renewable energy solutions and increasing energy efficiency, including by improving governance at all levels, by enhancing capacities of public and private actors, by assisting and engaging citizens and the involvement of civil society, and by structuring the market to enable and foster the uptake of energy transition technologies;
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions supporting cross-European actions integrating market and regulatory approaches able to favour the implementation of relevant Union legislation and objectives on the clean, sustainable, and just energy transition upscaling renewable energy solutions and increasing energy efficiency, by replicating results and successful best practices, by mobilising investment, upscaling the use of financial instruments and improving access to finance, and by fostering cross-sectoral business cooperations, public-private partnerships and activities of EU cross-border market actors.

The sub-programme Clean Energy Transition aims at facilitating the transition toward an energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and -resilient economy by funding mainly Coordination and Support Actions (CSA). These actions aim at capacity building, at

³³ Ibid. COM(2019)640 final.

dissemination of information and of knowledge, and at awareness-raising to support the transition to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency. They support breaking market barriers that hamper the socio-economic transition to sustainable energy, typically engaging multiple small and medium-size stakeholders, including but not limited to local and regional public authorities, non-profit organisations, energy services companies and utilities, project developers, net-zero technologies manufacturers, financial institutions, professional organisations, consumers associations and citizens initiatives.

The sub-programme contributes to the implementation of the energy-related actions of the European Green Deal and the Fit-for-55 energy legislation, such as the Energy Efficiency Directive recast³⁴, the Renewable Energy Directive revision³⁵, the Energy Performance of Building Directive recast³⁶, and the Eco-design and Energy Labelling related legislations and Regulations³⁷. As part of the implementation of the key Fit-for-55 legislative framework, the sub-programme contributes to the Governance of the Energy Union, the implementation of the National Energy and Climate Plans, and to deliver the 2030 and 2050 Climate and Energy targets. The sub-programme contributes as well to the implementation of the REPowerEU Plan to phase-out EU dependence on Russian fossil fuels, in particular with regards to those actions aimed at accelerating the uptake of renewable energy technologies, and at increasing energy savings and energy efficiency uptake in all end-uses/sectors. In the REPowerEU context, the support of the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition focuses on heating and cooling decarbonisation, stimulating better planning of heating and cooling, phase-out of fossil fuels use for heating purposes, heat pumps uptake, and support to efficient heating supply, including via district heating and waste heat recovery.

The sub-programme Clean Energy Transition contributes to the Just Transition objectives³⁸ by accompanying the territories and the groups of citizens negatively affected by the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, by building capacity of actors and fostering clean energy investments, mainly in energy efficiency and locally available, sustainable, renewable energy sources. The sub-programme aims to involve and support citizens in the clean energy transition, and in this regard provide support to the uptake of energy communities and integrated home renovation services. It also promotes a socially just and inclusive transition, supporting measures to alleviate energy poverty and vulnerability. The sub-programme contributes as well to the implementation of the sustainable finance framework for energy efficiency and renewable energy investments, by promoting a close cooperation with financial institutions on energy transition, and by supporting the development of innovative and private financing solutions for the energy transition. Finally, the sub-programme aims to contribute to improve energy system integration by supporting the roll-out of smart services and digital solutions, electrification, district approaches and efficient energy uses in line with the EU Action Plan for Digitalising

³⁴ Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 (recast), ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/1791/oj>.

³⁵ Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources as amended by Directive (EU) 2023/2413, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/2413/oj>.

³⁶ Directive (EU) 2024/1275 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on the energy performance of buildings (recast), ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1275/oj>.

³⁷ Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1781/oj>; and Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 setting a framework for energy labelling, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/1369/oj> and repealing Directive (EU) 2010/30, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/30/oj>.

³⁸ Communication “a strong social Europe for just transitions” COM(2020) 14 final.

the energy system³⁹, and to support European manufacturing ecosystem for net-zero technologies in line with the Net-Zero Industry Act⁴⁰.

An indicative amount of EUR 413.3 million is allocated to the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition for the period 2025-2027.

The major part of the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme budget will be used to finance CSA grants for the three year period.

In addition, the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition lays down the possibility to finance OAs different from CSAs, in particular in the form of grants to identified beneficiaries to support the implementation of the key EU legislative framework for the clean and fair energy transition. Depending on the outcomes of the first Call for proposals for Standard Action Projects (SAPs) under the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme launched in 2024, a preliminary indicative allocation of EUR 10 million is reserved for future Calls for SAPs under the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme. Prior to the launch of possible Calls for SAPs under the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme in the period 2025-2027, the Commission will share with the Programme Committee for their comments the draft Call text and the selected priorities.

The sub-programme Clean Energy Transition will fund activities responding to the specific topics defined in the annual calls for proposals, which are based on the list of priority topics for 2025-2027. Prior to the launch of the annual Calls under the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme in the period 2025-2027, the Commission will share with the Programme Committee for their comments the draft Call texts and the specific topics.

Other activities related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, which do not address the specific requirements of the calls for proposals defined under this sub-programme, can be submitted to the calls for proposals under the LIFE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation sub-programme.

Activities related to technology development will not be included under CSA⁴¹.

The main CSA calls for proposals under the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition will cover the following priority areas of intervention:

1. Building a national, regional and local policy framework supporting the clean energy transition:

Increasing coherence of energy transition governance at different levels by enhancing multi-stakeholder and cross-policy dialogue and concerted action for building the capacity of public authorities and private actors to deliver under the national energy and climate plans and/or other relevant plans and strategies. Supporting the development and effective implementation of clean energy policies in the EU and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme, including European Free Trade Association (EFTA) members and Energy Community partners. Supporting actions that put into practice the enabling provisions included in the European legislation on clean energy.

2. Accelerating technology roll-out, digitalisation, new services and business models and enhancement of the related professional skills on the market for the clean energy transition:

³⁹ Communication “Digitalising the energy system – EU Action Plan” COM(2022) 552 final.

⁴⁰ Regulation 2024/1735 of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe’s net-zero technology products manufacturing, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1735/oj> and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1724/oj>.

⁴¹ Technology development, research and innovation for clean energy transition will be funded in Horizon Europe.

Providing support for the decarbonisation of the buildings, industry and tertiary sectors, by fostering market uptake of innovative solutions, including digitalization and circular design in line with the development of new added-value services and innovative business models. Accelerating the clean energy transition by enabling net-zero technologies and innovative solutions needs to be accompanied by measures addressing market barriers including support to the development and deployment of new skills and frameworks (labels, certificates, technological and non-technological standards⁴², e.g. for interoperability, etc.).

3. Attracting private finance for sustainable energy:

To upscale investments in sustainable energy, different capital flows need to be made available by addressing both supply and demand of finance, and by using public funds effectively to catalyze private capital, where possible. Supply side activities include: data collection, methodology and evidence-based risk management; harmonisation of definition and measuring of sustainable investments; development of innovative financing mechanisms, products, services and practices; standardisation and aggregation of projects and investments; simplification of the process for investors; capacity building and dialogue. Activities should contribute to EU policy and legislation in the field of sustainable finance⁴³. Demand side activities could include: development of platforms to aggregate small scale sustainable energy projects as well as measures to improve knowledge on energy financing.

4. Supporting the development of local and regional investment projects:

Build capacity of local public authorities and private investors, notably community collective investors. Facilitate cooperation with the financial sector to deliver sustainable energy investments, including tailored actions contributing to a fair society and to a just energy transition in EU regions most dependent on fossil fuels or carbon intensive processes. Promote public procurement of energy and resource efficient works, supplies and services. Support tailored approaches for local actors to develop investment concepts, implement organisational innovations and aggregate projects. Improve market conditions and develop new integrated services offers for sustainable energy in buildings, industry, enterprises and the public sector.

5. Involving and empowering citizens in the clean energy transition:

Support citizens in taking an active role in the clean energy transition, including targeted support for collective actions, community and citizen-led initiatives and development of new energy services and social innovations. Strengthen collaboration between and amongst public authorities, citizen-led initiatives and other relevant stakeholders. Support actions that contribute to alleviate energy poverty and vulnerability. Foster energy literacy and sustainable energy behaviour of citizens, in particular younger generations.

3. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The multiannual allocation of funds⁴⁴ within each sub-programme between different types of funding (in million EUR) is shown in the below table for the period 2025-2027⁴⁵.

⁴² Such as the SAREF ontology <https://saref.etsi.org/>.

⁴³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance_en.

⁴⁴ The allocation of funds in this MAWP is based on the amounts of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2025-2027. It incorporates the figures of the Draft Budget for the year 2025, and includes the revenues assigned to the LIFE Programme. They are subject to the conclusions of the annual budget procedures.

⁴⁵ For the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition grants under other activities will include CSA and grants to identified beneficiary pursuant to Art. 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation.

More details on the allocation of funds per type of grants, including the maximum amount for SNAPs and SIPs are presented under section 4.1.2 below.

In million Euros	Amounts allocated to projects pursuant to Article 9.3 of the LIFE Regulation			Other activities	Total (1)+(2) +(3)+(4)
	(1) Projects financed through grants	(2) Investment support, including blending operations	(3) Projects financed through other forms of funding		
Nature and biodiversity	835.0	10.0	46.7	85.5	977.2
Circular economy and quality of life	449.9	6.0	46.1	66.5	568.5
Climate mitigation and adaptation	291.0	0.0	39.0	46.7	376.7
Clean Energy transition	303.1	0.0	72.9	37.4	413.3
TOTAL	1,879.0	16.0	204.6	236.1	2,335.7

Note: These amounts do not include the support expenditures, which indicative amount is EUR 90 million.

The allocation between the different types of funding is of an indicative nature. Modifications are possible within the following boundaries:

- in line with Article 5.4 of the LIFE regulation, at least 60% of the budgetary resources allocated to projects supported by way of action grants under the field Environment shall be dedicated to grants for projects supporting the sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity;
- in line with Article 9.3 of the LIFE Regulation, at least 85% of the budget for the LIFE Programme shall be allocated to grants, to financial instruments in the form of blending operations and to projects financed through other forms of funding to the extent specified under the section 5.5;

The actions allocated to projects pursuant to Article 9.3 of the LIFE Regulation amounts to EUR 2,099.6 million, which represent 90% of the budget of the LIFE Programme.

- according to Article 18.4 of the LIFE Regulation, the Commission shall ensure that unused funds in a given call for proposals are reallocated between the different types of actions referred to in Article 11.2 of the LIFE Regulation within the same field.

The above funds can be managed under a direct or an indirect management mode within the limits of the Financial Regulation and the LIFE Regulation.

4. GRANTS

The overall indicative amount devoted to grants for the period 2025-2027 is EUR 1,879.0 million, out of which 97.0% is indicatively assigned to action grants and 3.0% to operating grants.

Figures per type of actions are provided below. In line with Article 18.4 of the LIFE Regulation, unused funds from a call for proposals could be reallocated between the different types of actions within the same field.

In line with Article 12 of the LIFE Regulation, the actions financed by the LIFE Programme should be exceptionally open to participation of the legal entities of all third countries not associated to the LIFE Programme providing that:

- their participation is necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the action to ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the Union and/or in overseas countries and territories linked to it, as well as in the third countries associated to the LIFE Programme, and;
- they bear, in principle, the cost of their participation in the action.

Type of action	Allocation in million Euros					Co-financing rate	Maximum eligibility period
	Sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity	Sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life	Sub-programme Climate Mitigation and Adaptation	Sub-programme Clean Energy Transition	Total		
Standard Action Projects	516.9	250.0	189.0	10.0	965.9	Max 60% Max 75% under specific conditions	10 years
Strategic Nature Projects	227.0				227.0	Max 60%	14 years
Strategic Integrated Projects		174.0	90.0		264.0	Max 60%	14 years
Technical Assistance Projects	12.0	9.9	0.6		22.5	Max 60% Max 75% under specific conditions	5 years
Other Actions:						Max 95%	10 years
- CSA				268.3	268.3		
- Other Projects	46.1	10.0	2.4	16.5	75.0		
Operating grants	33.0	6.0	9.0	8.3	56.3	Max 70%	3 years
Total	835.0	449.9	291.0	303.1	1879.0		

According to the provisions of the LIFE Regulation and the Financial Regulation, some of the activities listed below could be implemented under an indirect management mode where appropriate taking into account the specific conditions of their implementation.

4.1. Action Grants

In line with Article 11(2) of the LIFE Regulation, the LIFE Programme may provide different types of action grants:

1. Standard Action Projects (SAPs);
2. Strategic projects (SP): Strategic Nature Projects (SNAPs) and Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs);
3. Technical Assistance (TA) Projects, including TA Projects for the preparation of SNAPs or SIPs (TA-PP); TA Projects for Replication (TA-R); TA Projects for Capacity Building (TA-CAP);
4. Other Actions (OA) needed for the purpose of achieving the general objective set out in Article 3(1) of the LIFE Regulation, including Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) aimed at capacity building, at dissemination of information and of knowledge, and at awareness raising to support the transition to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency, and “Other Projects” (including projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities (PLP)).

4.1.1. Standard Action Projects (SAPs)

These projects represent the traditional LIFE projects aimed to:

- develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches;
- contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices;
- support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the relevant Union legislation and policy, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society;
- catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy related solutions for implementing the relevant Union legislation and policy by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance⁴⁶.

The indicative amount allocated to SAPs for the period 2025-2027 is EUR 965.9 million, of which EUR 10 million will be pre-allocated to the New European Bauhaus projects. In line with Article 18.4 of the LIFE Regulation, unused funds from a call for proposals could be reallocated between the different types of actions within the same field.

4.1.1.1. Co-financing rate

The co-financing rate for SAPs, as a rule, shall not exceed 60% of total eligible costs of the project with the exception of the projects for Nature and Biodiversity that concern:

- any priority habitat or species for the implementation of Directive 92/43/EEC (EU Habitats Directive) as listed in the relevant annexes of this Directive;

⁴⁶ Article 2 (4) and Article 3 (2) of the LIFE Regulation.

- any bird species considered as “priority for funding” by the Committee for Adaptation to Technical and Scientific Progress set up pursuant to Article 16 of Directive 2009/147/EC (EU Birds Directive);
- any habitat type or species listed in the annexes of the Habitats Directive, the conservation status of which has been assessed as unfavourable-bad and with a declining trend (U2-) in the most recent available EU- and national-level biogeographical region assessments;
- any habitat type or species (other than bird species) the EU-level threat status of which has been assessed as “endangered” or worse in the most up-to-date published version of a European species or habitats Red Lists⁴⁷, including in territories not covered by these lists;
- any other habitat or species in territories not covered by the European species and habitats Red Lists, the threat status of which has been assessed as “endangered” or worse in the most up-to date published version of global International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red Lists of species or habitats;
- in exceptional cases and subject to peer reviewed scientific evidence, any newly described species that should be considered as threatened but has not yet been the subject of an IUCN Red list assessment at EU or Global level.

For these nature and biodiversity projects the co-financing rate could reach 75% of total eligible costs provided that the project targets exclusively habitats and/or species as described above. Applicants will need to argue in their proposal that all actions are clearly tailored towards benefiting habitats or species that qualify for 75% co-funding.

4.1.1.2. Eligibility period

The maximum eligibility period for SAPs shall be 10 years. This is justified taking into account the complexity of certain projects and the fact that prolongations may be required for unforeseen events (e.g. extreme weather conditions).

4.1.2. Strategic Projects (SPs)

The SPs include:

- (1) Strategic Nature Projects (SNAPs);
- (2) Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs).

4.1.2.1. Strategic Nature Projects (SNAPs)

According to Article 2 (1) of the LIFE Regulation, the SNAPs support the achievement of Union nature and biodiversity objectives by implementing coherent programmes of action in the Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme, in order to mainstream these objectives and priorities into other policies and financing instruments, including through coordinated implementation of the Prioritized Action Frameworks (PAFs) established pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC.

The SNAPs will target – if possible, in an integrated way - the implementation of the following plans and strategies:

⁴⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/redlist/index_en.htm; and https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/redlist_en.htm.

- The PAFs pursuant to Article 8 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) and;
- National restoration plans pursuant to Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and the Council on nature restoration and;
- Other plans or strategies adopted at international, national, regional or multiregional level by nature and biodiversity authorities and intrinsically linked to the implementation of EU nature and/or biodiversity policy or legislation and which lay down specific and measurable actions, or targets, with a clear timeline and budget.

With regard to other plans in the framework of EU nature and biodiversity legislation and policies (e.g. wildlife trafficking, pollinators, invasive alien species), the SNAPs could include but not be limited to actions to implement these plans.

In addition to focusing on the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy, SNAPs have a wider scope in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, including a focus on mainstreaming.

Depending on the needs of the given Member States (or regions) or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme as identified in their PAFs or in other nature and biodiversity plans (which must be adopted by the time a full SNAP proposal is submitted), the set of measures to be outlined in a SNAP proposal shall include the following:

- institutional support and capacity building actions;
- mobilisation and coordination of additional finance for complementary actions, in particular from other EU funding instruments and programmes;
- actions to mainstream the objectives of the target plan into policy and financial instruments in other policy areas.

In addition, SNAPs may also include concrete conservation measures, in particular, where these cannot be supported through other EU funding programmes.

The authorities competent for nature and biodiversity and responsible for PAFs implementation, shall participate in the SNAPs proposals, either as applicants or, in duly justified cases, as project partners.

The indicative distribution of the SNAPs, in the period from 2021-2027, should be as follows:

Reference: Eurostat data	Countries	Coefficient
Smaller-sized Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme (less than 30.000 km ²)	Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia, North Macedonia	1
Average-sized Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme (between 30.000 and 100.000 km ²)	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Moldova, Iceland	2

Larger-sized Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme (more than 100.000 km ²):	Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine	3
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The coefficient attributed to each group of countries designates the indicative size of the support provided per country through the SNAPs in the period 2021-2027.

The coefficient in the above table provides an indication for the share of EU co-funding that is available for SNAPs in 2021-2027, taking into account that the coefficient 1 indicatively corresponds to EUR 10 million of EU co-financing, the coefficient 2 to EUR 20 million of EU co-financing and EUR 30 million for the coefficient 3. Whereas all Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme are encouraged to submit one single large SNAP proposal the financial volume of which should be based on the above table, LIFE support may be divided into two or more SNAPs in Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme where this is duly justified. To ensure the highest possible geographical coverage of Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme by SNAPs by 2027, the regional authorities considering submitting a SNAP are strongly encouraged to team up with other regions when preparing their proposal.

While trying to ensure a geographical balance, the award of grants will remain competitive. No grant will be awarded for proposals that, following the evaluation, have not reached the minimum pass score. The financing of a proposal from a Member State or third country associated to the LIFE Programme, which has not been awarded with a grant for a SNAP yet, will be considered a priority in comparison with other proposals from Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme which have already one or more SNAPs, only if it exceeds the minimum pass score.

The coordinated implementation of SNAPs between Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme is strongly encouraged, making also use of the transnational coordination and cooperation platforms provided by the EU macro-regional strategies, when the Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme participate in such Strategies⁴⁸.

Overlaps in time between Integrated Projects for Nature from the LIFE Programme 2014-2020 and SNAPs in a given Member State/region are not a priori excluded, if there is clarity about the added-value and thematic complementarity of the SNAP as compared to the integrated projects.

4.1.2.2. *Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs)*

According to Article 2 (2) of the LIFE Regulation, these projects support the implementation on a regional, multi-regional, national or transnational scale, of environmental or climate strategies or action plans developed by Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme's authorities and required by specific EU environmental, climate or relevant energy Union legislation or policy of the Union, while ensuring that stakeholders are involved and

⁴⁸ The EU macro-regional strategies are cooperation frameworks for better coordination of actions and funds in a specific transnational geographical area (macro-region) and they have environment (including nature protection) and climate as common priority. Key features of the Strategies are cross-sectoral approach, multi-level governance and stakeholders' involvement. For info: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/.

promoting coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other Union, national or private funding source.

The plans and strategies targeted by the SIPs will be the following:

- Under the sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life:
 - Circular Economy: National or Regional Circular Economy Action Plans, Strategies, Roadmaps or similar⁴⁹, which
 - are officially approved;
 - include specific and measurable actions, or targets, with a clear timeline and;
 - are in line with or complement the objectives of the EU Circular Economy Action Plan and, when relevant of the Bioeconomy Strategy.
 - Waste: National and regional Waste Management Plans pursuant to Article 28 of the EU Waste Framework Directive and/or Waste Prevention Programmes as requested by article 29 of the EU Waste Framework Directive;
 - Water: River basin management plans pursuant to Annex VII to the EU Water Framework Directive, Flood Risk Management Plans pursuant to the EU Floods Directive, Marine Strategies pursuant to the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Drought Management Plans as suggested by Article 13 (5) of the Water Framework Directive⁵⁰;
 - Air: Air quality plans pursuant to the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive, National Air Pollution Control Programmes pursuant to the EU National Emission Reduction Commitments Directive;
 - Noise: Noise action plans pursuant to the EU Environmental Noise Directive.
- Under the sub-programme for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:
 - National Energy and Climate Plans (pursuant to EU Regulation on the governance of the energy union and climate action⁵¹);
 - National or regional adaptation strategies or action plans;
 - Urban or community-based action plans pioneering the transition to a climate neutral and/or climate resilient society and city;
 - National, regional or industry-/sector-specific greenhouse gas mitigation strategies or plans or economy roadmaps contributing to climate neutrality.

⁴⁹ A Circular Economy Action Plan, Strategy, Road Map or similar is an official document, adopted through the relevant legislative procedure at national or regional level, introducing a vision and propose course of actions/policies to accelerate the transition towards a circular economy at national or regional level, in line with the objectives of the EU Circular Economy Action Plan. The document should have a comprehensive approach, targeting – among other – the life cycle of products and/or materials. To be considered eligible, the plan/strategy/road map must have specific and measurable targets, actions or measures – with clear timelines – that enable tracking the SIP’s contribution to its implementation. Denomination can vary e.g. circular economy plans, circular economy strategies, circular economy road maps, etc. Plans should preferably bridge policy boundaries, and involve cross-ministerial coordination. The European Commission considers such circular economy frameworks as one of the most effective ways to progress circular economy in Member States/ third countries associated to the LIFE Programme and strongly encourage Member States/ third countries associated to the LIFE Programme to adopt and implement them.

⁵⁰ Even though the Water Framework Directive does not require the preparation of Drought Management Plans, the Commission recommended Member States through COM(2007) 414 final and COM/2012/0673 final to prepare specific Drought Management Plans to supplement River Basin Management Plans, where needed.

⁵¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018, ELI : <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1999/oj>.

The Commission will try to ensure the maximum geographical coverage for SIPs by indicatively allocating at least one SIP per Member State and third country associated to the LIFE Programme under each of the two above mentioned sub-programme. Applicants should as far as possible avoid asking for LIFE co-financing exceeding EUR 12 million per project, taking into account the need to ensure the maximum number of projects financed.

For SIPs at transnational scale, the use of the transnational coordination and cooperation platforms provided by the EU macro-regional strategies, when the Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme participate in such strategies, is encouraged.

4.1.2.3. Maximum amounts

The maximum total amount allocated to SNAPs will be EUR 227 million, which represents 27% of the overall budget allocated for grants to the sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity. The maximum total amount allocated to SIPs under the sub-programmes Circular Economy and Quality of Life and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation will be EUR 264 million, which represents 36% of the overall budget allocated for grants to these sub-programmes. The overall amount allocated to SNAPs and the SIPs will be about 26% of the overall LIFE budget allocated to grants.

4.1.2.4. Co-financing rate

For the SNAPs and SIPs the co-financing rate shall not exceed 60% of total eligible costs of the project.

4.1.2.5. Eligibility period

Taking into account that the strategic plans cover the implementation of plan of actions, the maximum eligibility period shall be 14 years.

4.1.3. Technical Assistance (TA) Projects

According to Article 2 (3) of the LIFE Regulation, Technical Assistance Projects may support the development of capacity for the following activities:

- The participation in SAPs and the preparation of SNAPs and SIPs (TA-PP);
- The preparation for facilitating the up-scaling and replication of results from other projects funded by the LIFE Programme, its predecessor programmes or other Union programmes and for accessing other Union financial instruments (TA-R);
- The capacity building of EU Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme's authorities with low effective participation in the LIFE Programme with a view to improving the National Contact Points services across the EU and beyond and to increasing the overall quality of proposals submitted (TA-CAP).

The indicative amount for the TA Projects is EUR 22.5 million. This could be increased by the amount mentioned under section 5.3, in case, taking into account the development of the demand, it would be suitable to reallocate the funds allocated to investment support.

The following indicative pre-allocation of funds is envisaged in 2025-2027, taking into account that unused funds could be reallocated between different types of projects under the same field in line with Art. 18.4 of the LIFE Regulation:

- for TA-PP indicatively EUR 3 million;
- for TA-R around EUR 19.5 million;
- for TA-CAP: EUR 0 million (as no calls for proposals are planned for TA-CAP in 2025-2027).

No calls for proposals are planned for TA Projects under the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition in 2025-2027.

4.1.3.1 Co-financing rate

The maximum co-financing rate for TA Projects will be 60% of eligible costs with the exception of the projects to improve the effective participation in the LIFE Programme (TA-CAP). These projects related to the activities of Member States' and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme's authorities with low effective participation in the LIFE Programme, as defined in Article 11.4 of the LIFE Regulation, will have a maximum co-financing rate of 75% of the eligible costs according to Article 9.4 of the LIFE Regulation.

4.1.3.2 TA Projects for the preparation of SNAPs or SIPs (TA-PP)

These projects are aimed at providing financial support to help applicants to prepare a SNAP or a SIP for a maximum LIFE contribution of EUR 70,000.

4.1.3.3. TA Projects for facilitating the upscaling or replication of results (TA-R)

These projects are aimed at facilitating the upscaling or replication of results from other projects funded under the LIFE Programme or, where relevant to fulfil the objectives of the LIFE Programme, under other EU funds, including by preparing the access to other Union financial instruments.

These projects could co-finance the activities necessary:

- (1) to prepare the up-scaling and/or replication of the results of previous LIFE projects or of other Union programmes;
- (2) to facilitate the access of an operation contributing to the LIFE objectives or to other financial instruments.

This support for investment and replication appears strategic in view to supporting the materialization of green investments on the ground and the catalytic effect of the LIFE Programme.

This financial support could take the form of grants for undertaking some preliminary studies or blending in case the grants are accompanied by repayable resources, such as loans, equity financing or budgetary support (see section 5.3.1).

4.1.3.4. TA Projects for capacity building of Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme' authorities with low effective participation (TA-CAP)

These TA Projects for capacity building of Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme' authorities with low effective participation in the LIFE Programme are aimed at supporting national level public bodies responsible for the implementation of LIFE to improve their country's effective participation in LIFE, and increasing the quality of submitted proposals, through specific needs-based activities.

No calls for proposals are planned for TA-CAP Projects in 2025-2027.

4.1.3.5. Eligibility period

Considering the different subjects covered by the TA Projects, the maximum eligibility period for the implementation of the TA Projects shall be 5 years, although the duration of a TA-PP should not exceed 2 years.

4.1.4. Other Actions (OA)

In line with point (e) of Article 11 (2) of the LIFE Regulation, LIFE grants may finance “Other Actions” (OA) needed for the purpose of achieving the general objective set out in Article 3(1) of the LIFE Regulation.

Other Actions may include:

1. Coordination and Support Actions (CSA);
2. Other Projects, including Projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities (PLP projects);

The Commission will be more prescriptive in the definition of the calls for proposals for these OA than in the case of bottom-up call for proposals (in particular than in the case of calls for proposals for SAPs), where the identification of needs and related possible solutions is in the remit of the applicants.

4.1.4.1. Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs)

Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) are designed to support the implementation of specific EU policies in the different Member States and at EU level and are aimed at capacity building, at dissemination of information and of knowledge, and at awareness-raising to support the transition to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency. They support breaking market barriers that hamper the socio-economic transition toward a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and - resilient economy. The main focus is on the coordination and support to local, national and European stakeholders, public, private and civil actors, to build capacity for the effective implementation of the transition.

CSAs can fund activities such as capacity building, dissemination of information and knowledge, awareness raising, development and adaptation of the policy frameworks, policy dialogues, market monitoring, data gathering, standardization, accelerating technology roll-out and digitalisation, developing new services and business models, ensuring the availability of skilled workers, attracting private finance, developing investment plans, supporting the development of local and regional investment projects, involving and empowering citizens.

CSAs focus on the non-technological barriers to the transition. They are not designed to fund technology development or demonstration projects.

CSA grants may be directly awarded to identified beneficiaries in duly specified cases.

The indicative amount allocated to CSA is EUR 268.3 million.

The maximum funding rate for CSAs is 95%. The priorities for the CSA proposals are defined in the specific calls for proposals.

4.1.4.2. Other Projects

Other Projects may include:

- Policy and Legislative Priority Projects addressing specific Union priorities (PLP projects). PLP projects follow a top-down approach in consideration of their potential to address the challenges relating to the political momentum and to the EU legislative landscape. They are defined on an annual basis, following a consultation with the Member States and the third countries associated to the LIFE Programme.
- Action grants benefitting the organisations mentioned in Annex I of the LIFE Regulation (see also section 4.3 below);

- Other specific projects financed according to Article 195 of the Financial Regulation to support EU policies related to environment, climate action and energy fields to be identified during the implementation of this work programme.

The indicative amount for this type of projects is EUR 75.0 million.

4.1.4.3. Co-financing rate

The maximum co-financing rate for all types of projects under “Other Actions” (CSA and other Projects, including PLP projects) is 95% of eligible costs.

4.1.4.4. Eligibility period for the implementation of the “Other Actions”

Taking into account the different subjects covered by the “Other Actions” (CSA and other Projects, including PLP projects), the maximum eligibility period shall be 10 years.

4.2. Submission and selection procedure for action grants

A one-stage procedure – as detailed in section 4.2.1.– is intended for the award of action grants for: Standard Action Projects (SAPs), Technical Assistance projects (TA-PP, TA-R and TA-CAP) and activities financed under “Other Actions” (CSAs, PLP projects and Other Projects).

A two-stage procedure – as detailed in section 4.2.2. – is intended for the award of Strategic Nature Projects (SNAPs) and Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs).

4.2.1. One-stage procedure for SAPs, TA Projects (TA-PP, TA-R, TA-CAP) and ‘Other Actions’ (CSAs and other Projects, including PLP projects)

The one-stage procedure shall be organised as follows:

1. Following a call for proposals, full proposals are submitted;
2. Proposals are checked for their compliance with the admissibility, eligibility, selection and exclusion criteria. The sequence of the checks can be adapted in line with the Financial Regulation to ensure the maximum efficiency of the evaluation process;
3. Full proposal evaluation based on the award criteria listed below:

1. Relevance (0-20)

- Relevance to the objectives of the targeted LIFE sub-programme and to the specific priorities of the call for proposals and, when relevant, topic description;
- Concept and methodology: soundness of the overall intervention logic;
- Extent to which the project offers co-benefits and promotes synergies with other policy areas relevant for achieving environment and climate policy objectives.

2. Quality (0-20)

- Clarity, relevance and feasibility of the work plan; appropriate geographic focus of the activities;
- Identification and mobilisation of the relevant stakeholders;
- Quality of the plan to monitor and report impacts;
- Appropriateness and quality of the proposed measures to communicate and disseminate the project and its results to different target groups.

3. Impact (0-20)

- Ambition and credibility of the impacts expected during and/or after the project due to the proposed activities, including potential negative impacts on the other specific objectives of the LIFE Programme, in particular to ensure that no substantial harm is done to those objectives;
- Sustainability of the project results after the end of the project and quality of the measures for the exploitation of project results;
- Potential for the project results to be replicated in the same or other sectors or places, or to be up-scaled by public or private actors or through mobilising larger investments or financial resources (catalytic potential).

4. Resources (0-20)

- Composition of the project team – of a consortium or of a sole beneficiary – in terms of expertise, skills and responsibilities and appropriateness of the management structure;
- Appropriateness of the budget and resources and their consistency with the proposed work plan;
- Transparency of the budget, i.e. the cost items should be sufficiently described;
- Extent to which the project environmental impact is considered and mitigated, including through the use of green procurement. The use of recognised methods for the calculation of the project environmental footprint (e.g. Project Environmental Footprint (PEF) or Organizational Environmental Footprint (OEF) methods or similar ones⁵²) or environmental management systems (e.g. Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)) would be an asset;
- Value-for-money of the proposed project.

4. Scoring of the proposals

Each criterion will be scored on a range of 0 to 20 points. The minimum pass score for each criterion is 10 points.

The score of criterion ‘Impact’ will be given a weight of 1.5: the points received by each proposal for the ‘Impact’ criterion will be multiplied by 1.5.

The overall pass threshold, applying to the sum of the weighted individual scores is 55 points.

The following bonus points will be applied to Standard Action Projects, and, where relevant and as defined in the call for proposals, to the TA projects and to ‘other actions’:

- BONUS 1: The proposed project offers exceptional synergies and promotes significant co-benefits between LIFE sub-programmes (2 points).
- BONUS 2: The project is primarily implemented in the Outermost Regions. Where specific regional features are relevant to the needs addressed in the call for proposals – e.g. islands for waste, coal-intensive regions for clean energy, etc. – the bonus could be extended to other geographical areas with specific needs and vulnerabilities (2 points).
- BONUS 3: The project substantially builds on or up-scales the results of projects funded by other EU funded programmes (2 points).
- BONUS 4: The project offers an exceptional catalytic potential (2 points).

⁵² E.g. PEFCRs/ OEFSRs. See list on https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/PEFCR_OEFSR_en.htm.

- BONUS 5: The project envisages a transnational cooperation⁵³ among Member States and/or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme essential to guarantee the achievement of the project objectives (2 points).

The bonuses are based on yes/no criteria without a graduation: either 0 or 2 points are assigned to each proposal.

This means the maximum number of possible points for proposals for Standard Action Projects is 100, while for other types of proposals (i.e. for the TA Projects and “Other Actions”) it is 90, plus any possible bonus).

5. Ranking and preparation of the final list of projects to be funded.

The project proposals will be ranked, taking into account the weighted score of each award criterion and the bonus points, if any. There will be separate lists for each LIFE sub-programme and, within each sub-programme, where relevant for the projects related to governance topics and the New European Bauhaus.

The list of projects proposed for funding will be made taking into account the proposals which have reached the minimum threshold and for which there is available budget. In case of equal scores, proposals with the highest score under criterion 3, ‘Impact’, will be given priority.

6. Reserve list and Seal of Excellence.

The reserve list will encompass all projects that meet the minimum quality requirements (i.e. that get all the minimum pass scores) but cannot be funded in view of the available budget. In case additional funds could be made available, the projects in the reserve lists will be financed in the ranking order.

In the case of the Standard Action Projects, the projects in the reserve list will be awarded a Seal of Excellence in line with Article 16 of the LIFE Regulation.

The list of Seal of Excellence projects, together with a short description of each project, will be transmitted to the competent Commission services, to the LIFE National Contact Points and to the members of the LIFE Programme Committee and, where suitable, to other funding bodies that support the Seal of Excellence in line with Article 16 (2) of the LIFE Regulation.

4.2.2. Two-stage procedure for Strategic Projects (SPs)

The submission and selection process of SNAPs and the SIPs is based on a two-stage procedure and will apply across the sub-programmes implementing strategic projects. It should facilitate the work of potential applicants and ensure that they receive the best possible guidance during the process. The workflow is structured in a way to accompany the progressive development and fine-tuning of each proposal. The principle of equal treatment of all proposals is applied throughout all phases of the evaluation process.

A two-stage procedure is based on the submission of a concept note followed by a full proposal. It is organised as follows:

Stage 1: concept note

1. Following a call for proposals, the concept notes are submitted.
2. The concept notes are checked for their compliance with admissibility and eligibility criteria.

⁵³ “Transnational cooperation” to be understood as including cooperation between adjacent countries/regions on both sides of a national border and also cooperation at larger transnational/macro-regional level.

The concept notes are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Implementation of plans or strategies

- The project aims at implementing the plans or strategies mentioned under section 4.1.2.

2. Territorial coverage

- Implementation of the targeted plan or strategy will cover a large and representative territorial area, in particular, regional, multiregional, national, trans-national. A multi-city approach or smaller territorial scale may also be acceptable for SIPs dealing with air quality management as long as the project delivers substantial impact.

3. Coordination of complementary funds

- The activities will mobilise complementary funding from at least one Union, national or private funding source and take into consideration other relevant European Union, national or private funding.
- The funding is complementary to the SNAPs or the SIPs and used to support and implement complementary activities necessary for the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy.
- Mechanisms for the coordination of the complementary funding are clearly defined.

4. Involvement of key stakeholders

- Key stakeholders will be actively involved in the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy.

Each criterion will be assessed as to whether it is fulfilled or not.

3. List of projects retained.

All the applicants submitting the proposals that fulfil the above mentioned criteria will be invited to submit full proposals.

Those applicants will be also invited to participate in a written question and answer phase, during which they can submit questions related to the preparation of a full proposal. At the end of this phase, the questions and answers will be made publicly available on the CINEA website⁵⁴ in an anonymized manner to equally assist all applicants in preparing their full proposals. Where appropriate, the questions and answers will be supplemented with guidance regarding typical difficulties that applicants might have encountered and that became apparent in the concept notes.

Stage 2: full proposal

1. The full proposals are submitted.
2. Proposals are checked for their compliance with the admissibility, eligibility, selection and exclusion criteria. The sequence of the checks can be adapted in line with the Financial Regulation to ensure the maximum efficiency of the evaluation process.

To be eligible as a Strategic Integrated or a Strategic Nature Project, the project will have to satisfy, among others, the following criteria:

⁵⁴ See: https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-support-applicants_en#ecl-inpage-1377

- The project shall aim at implementing the plans or strategies mentioned under section 4.1.2.
- the targeted plan or strategy has to cover a large and representative territorial area, in particular, regional, multiregional, national, trans-national. A multi-city approach or smaller territorial scale may also be acceptable for a SIP dealing with air quality management as long as the project delivers substantial impacts.
- The project needs to mobilise complementary funding from at least one Union, national or private funding source and take into consideration other relevant European Union, national or private funding. This funding shall be complementary to the SNAPs or the SIPs and used to support and implement complementary activities necessary for the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy. The mechanisms for the coordination of the complementary funding shall be clearly defined in the proposal.
- Key stakeholders shall be actively involved in the implementation of the targeted plan or strategy.

3. Full proposal evaluation on the basis of the award criteria shown in the table below:

<p>1. Relevance (0-20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevance of the contribution to one or several of the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme and the targeted sub-programme; - Extent to which the project is in line with the topic description of the call for proposal; - The soundness of the overall intervention logic; - Extent to which the project offers co-benefits and promotes synergies with other policy areas relevant for achieving environment and climate policy objectives. <p>2. Quality (0-20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarity, relevance and feasibility of the work plan; appropriate geographic focus of the activities; - Quality of the plan to monitor and report impacts; - Identification and mobilisation of relevant stakeholders; - Appropriateness and quality of the measures to communicate and disseminate the project and its results to different target groups. <p>3. Complementary funding (0-20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of mobilisation of other funds complementary to the LIFE project foreseen (beyond the minimum necessary for eligibility) as well as the likelihood of their actual mobilisation and their functional link to the plan or strategy to be implemented; - Quality of the coordination mechanism for the optimal use of other funds, in particular Union funds, necessary to implement targeted plan/ strategy; - Identification, relevance and feasibility of the necessary complementary actions. <p>4. Impact (0-20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambition and credibility of the impacts expected during and/or after the project due to the proposed activities, including assessing potential negative impacts on the other specific objectives of the LIFE Programme, in particular to ensure that no significant harm is done to those objectives; - Sustainability of the project results after the end of the project and quality of the measures for the exploitation of project results;
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- Potential for the project results to be replicated in the same or other sectors or places, or to be scaled up by public or private actors or through mobilising larger investments or financial resources (catalytic potential).

5. Resources (0-20)

- Composition of the project team – of a consortium or of a sole beneficiary – in terms of expertise, skills and responsibilities and appropriateness of the management structure. Appropriateness of the budget and resources and their consistency with the work plan;
- Transparency of the budget, i.e. the cost items should be sufficiently described;
- Extent to which the project’s environmental impact is considered and mitigated, including through the use of green procurement. The use of recognised methods for the calculation of the project environmental footprint (e.g. PEF or OEF methods or similar ones⁵⁵) or environmental management systems (e.g. EMAS) would be an asset;
- Value-for-money of the project.

4. Scoring of the proposals.

Each criterion will be scored on a range of 0 to 20 points. The minimum pass score for each criterion is 10 points. The overall pass threshold, applying to the sum of the individual scores is 55 points. No bonus points are included.

This means the maximum number of possible points is 100.

5. Ranking and preparation of the final list of projects to be funded.

The project proposals will be ranked, taking into account the score of each award criterion.

The list of projects proposed for funding will be made taking into account the proposals which have reached the minimum threshold and for which there is available budget.

In case of equal scores, proposals with the highest score under criterion 3, “Impact”, will be given priority.

In case of lack of budget to finance all the proposals that reached the minimum threshold, priority will be given to the proposals from EU Member States or third countries associated to the LIFE Programme which do not have – yet – a SIPs financed under the specific sub-programme or, under the sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity, a specific SNAP.

6. Reserve list.

The reserve list will apply as for the procedure described in section 4.2.1.

4.3. Operating grants

In line with the LIFE Regulation, operating grants (OG) can be awarded in different cases:

1. Article 11(6) of the LIFE Regulation provides for support for certain operational and administrative costs for non-profit-making entities which are involved in the development, implementation and enforcement of Union legislation and policy and which primarily active in the field of environment or climate action, including energy transition. The maximum amount per organisation per financial year is EUR 700.000.

⁵⁵ E.g. PEFCRs/ OEFSRs. See list on https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/PEFCR_OEFSR_en.htm.

2. Article 13 of the LIFE Regulation states that grants may be awarded to the organisations mentioned in Annex I of the LIFE Regulation. The amount of operating and action grants to these organizations in the years 2025-2027 will not exceed EUR 6 million.
3. Operating grants outside the point 1 and 2 above may be awarded in duly justified cases as defined in Article 195 of the Financial Regulation.

The indicative amount for operating grants in the period 2025-2027 is EUR 56.3 million.

The maximum co-financing rate for all the different types of operating grants is 70% of eligible costs.

4.3.1. Submission and selection procedure for operating grants

The award of operating grants will be based on the following:

- (1) Framework partnership agreements with non-profit entities and, where possible following a risk analysis, also with the organisations mentioned in Annex 1 of the LIFE Regulation. The duration of the framework partnership agreements will not exceed 4 years and will be set in order to keep the balance between the need for certainty and stability of the beneficiaries, the need to ensure an evolution of the partnership and, in the case of operating grants to non-profit entities, the possibility for different organisations to have access to them.

Specific grants agreements will be awarded on an annual basis following a call for proposals addressed to the framework partners.

- (2) Single annual operating grants, when partnership agreements are not possible or not appropriate.

The award procedure will be organised as follows:

1. Following a call for proposals, proposals are submitted.
2. The proposals are checked for their compliance with the admissibility, eligibility, selection and exclusion criteria. The sequence of the checks can be adapted in line with the Financial Regulation to ensure the maximum efficiency of the evaluation process.
3. Proposal evaluation. The proposal for framework partnership agreement will be evaluated on the basis of the award criteria listed below:

1. Relevance.

- Relevance of the contribution to one or several of the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme.
- Extent to which the proposed work plan is in line with the relevant policies covered by the call for proposals.
- Extent to which the proposal demonstrates EU added value.

2. Support to EU policy development.

- Extent to which the proposal shows an in-depth understanding of the EU policy in the area of environment, climate action, and energy transition.
- Extent to which the applicant improves the knowledge and evidence base, thus supporting the Union's environment, climate and energy policies.

- Extent to which the applicant supports the integration of environmental, climate and/or energy policies and coherence with other policies, e.g. agriculture, transport, cohesion policy.
- Extent to which the applicant will act as a channel with civil society in the area of the environment, climate action, and energy transition.
- The appropriateness of means and structures aimed at voicing the concerns of EU citizens and at ensuring their democratic representation.

3. Support to EU policy implementation.

- Extent to which the proposed strategy supports the improvement to implementation and enforcement of EU environmental, climate and/or energy legislation on local, Member State and/or European level.
- Extent to which the applicant will act as a channel with civil society in the area of the environment, climate action, and energy transition.
- Extent to which the applicant uses its network to identify obstacles to policy implementation at national/regional level, for policy feedback.
- Appropriateness and quality of the proposed measures to communicate and disseminate in order to create leverage.
- Extent to which the proposed strategy helps to secure investment for environment, climate and/or energy policy, addressing environmental externalities.

4. Sensor function.

- Extent to which the proposal helps to detect new or emerging issues in the area of environment, climate change and/or energy and is able to analyse the causes of such issues and their possible effects.
- Capacity of the applicant to propose appropriate solutions and to provide feedback or improve policy making on the identified new or emerging issues.

5. Organizational development.

- Quality of the proposed strategy to address the identified organisational development needs and areas for improvement.
- Extent to which the applicant represents relevant stakeholders and endeavours to develop its membership (grassroots or members base).
- Extent to which the fundraising strategy of the applicant ensures the diversification and sustainability of the organisation.
- Analysis of the applicant's dependence on the LIFE operating grant and strategies addressing this dependence are convincing.
- The value-for-money of the proposed work.

Scoring of the proposals

Each criterion will be scored on a range of 0 to 20 points. There is no minimum pass score for individual criteria.

The score of criterion 4) "Sensor function" will be given a weight of 0,25.

The score of criterion 5) "Organisational development" will be given a weight of 0,75.

The overall pass threshold, applying to the sum of the weighted individual scores, is 45 points.

In case of equal scores, the priority order will be established on the basis of the following principles:

1. proposals focusing on a topic that is not well covered by higher ranked proposals will be considered to have the highest priority;
2. thereafter, applications according to their estimated value for money.

Ranking and preparation of the final list of operating grants to be awarded.

The project proposals will be ranked, taking into account the score of each award criterion.

The list of operating grants proposed for awarded will be made taking into account the proposals which have reached the minimum threshold and for which there is available budget.

This ranking of proposals by score and priority order after the evaluation of the framework partnership agreement will also constitute the order in which the applicants will be ranked once their Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) proposals have been evaluated, i.e. no new ranking will be established after the evaluation of the SGA.

For the award of operating grants, the following criteria will apply:

<p>a) Relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extent to which the proposed work plan is in line with the applicant’s framework partnership agreement, if applicable, and/ or with the objectives of the LIFE Programme. Any deviations are justified. <p>b) Quality of the proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarity, relevance and feasibility of the proposed work plan. - Ambition and credibility of impacts expected due to the proposed activities. <p>c) Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriateness of the organisation and management of the work. - Appropriateness of the proposed budget and resources and their consistency with the proposed work plan. - Revenue and expenditure are in balance.
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Each criterion will be scored on a range of 0 to 20 points. There is no minimum pass score for individual criteria. The overall pass threshold, applying to the sum of the individual scores, is 35 points.

4.4. Indicative timetables for the publication of calls for proposals

Quarters	2025				2026				2027			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
SAPs		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
CSA		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
SNAPs		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
SIPs		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
TA-PP		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
TA-R		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Operating grants		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
PLP		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Calls for proposals for SAPs, SIPs, SNAPs, TA-PP, CSAs, PLP will be launched every year and/or will envisage annual deadline for the submission of projects. The timetable for TA-R calls could be adapted, depending on the results of the previous calls.

Calls for proposals for SGA for operating grants are expected to be launched annually. Framework partnership agreements for operating grants will be concluded, where appropriate, on multiannual basis. Calls for proposals for “Other Projects” different from PLP projects are expected to be launched on annual or biennial basis.

No calls for proposals are planned for TA-CAP projects in 2025-2027.

5. OTHER FORMS OF FUNDING

For the purpose of achieving the objectives set out in Article 3 of the Regulation, in addition to the projects financed through grants identified in section 4, the LIFE Programme may also finance through other forms of funding:

- projects as defined under section 5.4,
- activities implemented by the European Commission in support of the preparation, implementation and mainstreaming of EU legislation related to Environment (including Nature and Biodiversity conservation), Climate and Clean Energy Transition,
- administrative and technical assistance to the European Commission for the implementation, the monitoring and the evaluation of the LIFE Programme and its activities.

Other forms of funding may include:

- Procurement contracts;
- Prizes;
- Indirect management activities, including – where suitable – blending.

The indicative amount for projects financed through other forms of funding and financial instruments in the form of technical assistance services under the four sub-programmes for the years 2025-2027 is EUR 456.7 million.

5.1. Procurement Contracts

According with Art. 5 of the LIFE Regulation, the LIFE Programme may finance activities implemented by the European Commission in support of the preparation, implementation and mainstreaming of Union environmental, climate or relevant energy legislation.

Such activities implemented through public procurement may include:

- Information and communication, including e.g. awareness raising campaigns, media relations, publications, information materials, translations, stakeholder consultation/involvement, workshops, conferences and support to participatory schemes/activities, networking and best-practice platforms.
- Support to the design, development, implementation and enforcement of policies and legislation, e.g. scientific, legal and technical support, inspections, capacity building, peer-reviews, audits, evaluations, impact assessments, information technology system,

studies, advisory services, databases and webtools required by policies or into support of policy monitoring and reporting, modelling and scenario building.

5.2. Prizes

Prizes are financial contribution given as a reward following a contest.

Through prizes the European Commission promotes the achievement of policy objectives of the Union.

Prizes will be awarded in accordance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment.

The conditions for participation, the arrangements for paying the prizes to the winners after their award, and the appropriate means of publication are defined in relation to the specific prize organised.

The organisation and management of prizes shall be included in the calculation of the minimum threshold of 85% pursuant to Article 9.3 of the LIFE Regulation.

Examples of prizes financed by the LIFE Programme include the Green Leaf and the Green Capital Awards⁵⁶, the Natura 2000 Award⁵⁷, and the Climate Pact's incentives⁵⁸.

5.3. Activities supporting investments, including blending

5.3.1. Support for investments on natural capital and circular economy

The European Green Deal Investment Plan⁵⁹ acknowledges that greening investments and the economy generally requires a significant strengthening of the technical assistance to proactively develop high-impact investment pipeline.

Furthermore, it is important to mitigate the financial risks linked to strategic investments for promoting natural capital, climate action and nature-based solutions both beneficial for nature and climate change adaptation. The high-impact investment pipeline should focus on projects that conserve, restore, manage and enhance natural capital or lead to carbon removals – in support of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU Circular Economy Action Plan, the EU Bioeconomy Strategy and Action Plan, the EU the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change and other relevant policies.

The technical assistance under the InvestEU Advisory Hub needs to be complemented with specific support to investments in sectors whose bankability is more challenging, like i.e. climate adaptation, the protection and enhancement of natural capital resources as well as development of circular economy.

LIFE contribution to InvestEU is directed:

1. To the top-up to the Sustainable Infrastructure Advisory (InvestEU Advisory Hub) provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB);
2. To run Green Assist, the advisory service developed by CINEA under DG Environment (European Commission) coordination⁶⁰;

⁵⁶ See: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/urban-environment/european-green-capital-award_en

⁵⁷ See: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/natura-2000-award_en

⁵⁸ See “[LIFE and the Climate Pact](#)”, (2022), European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency.

⁵⁹ COM(2020) 21 final.

⁶⁰ The [Green Advisory Service for Sustainable Investments Support \(Green Assist\)](#) is a new advisory initiative under InvestEU, which aims at building up a pipeline for green investment projects that have a high impact.

3. To pilot innovative schemes linked to investments on natural capital and circular economy.

The amount devoted to this support will be linked to the development of repayable financing solutions for nature and biodiversity and the development of demand. It is expected that the amount allocated to these services in the period 2025-2027 under the sub-programmes Nature and Biodiversity and Circular Economy and Quality of Life should not exceed EUR 16 million. This amount is complementary to the repayable forms of support provided under InvestEU and could be funded, as appropriate, in a direct or indirect management mode.

Unused funds will be reallocated to grants.

5.3.2. Support to financing energy efficiency and renewable energy investments

Indirect management of financial support for technical assistance to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments targeting buildings and that save energy and reduce emissions, such as the European Local ENergy Assistance Facility (ELENA Facility⁶¹).

This facility is now managed by the EIB under the InvestEU Programme. ELENA Facility provides grants for technical assistance to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments targeting buildings and innovative urban transport and mobility projects that save energy and reduce emissions.

Under such facility, financial support to project development services is provided in relation to all the activities necessary to develop and mobilise finance for an investment programme including for instance: feasibility studies, design studies, structuring of programmes, business plans, energy audits, bundling of smaller projects to form bankable packages. Costs related to the investment programme itself such as hardware costs are not eligible. The indirect management from the sub-programme LIFE Clean Energy Transition to the ELENA Facility will contribute as well to support the establishment of national and regional technical assistance facilities for energy efficiency and integrated renewable investments.

The implementation of this indirect management support is subject to dedicated contribution agreements between the EIB and the European Commission. The Facility is providing financial support to final beneficiary according to the modalities defined in the contribution agreements.

The support for the financing of technical assistance to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments shall not exceed EUR 40.0 million for the period 2025-2027.

Unused funds for financial support will be reallocated to grants under the sub-programme Clean Energy Transition.

5.4. Other actions under indirect management

According to Article 62.1(c) of the Financial Regulation, the European Commission may delegate budget execution tasks to several types of partners, such as international organisations, decentralised agencies and public law bodies, including Member States' organisations.

The selection of the persons and entities to be entrusted with the implementation of Union funds shall be transparent, justified by the nature of the action and shall not give rise to a conflict of interests.

According to Article 154.3 of the Financial Regulation, the European Commission shall ensure that the entities to which budget implementation tasks are delegated demonstrate a level of

⁶¹ See: <https://www.eib.org/en/products/advising/elena/>.

financial management and protection of the EU's financial interest equivalent to that of the European Commission. To this end, the European Commission carries out an ex-ante assessment (so called "pillar assessment") of the entity's rules, systems or procedures.

The European Commission remains ultimately responsible for the EU budget and informs in the Annual Activity Reports of the operations carried out by and of the entities in charge.

5.4.1. Indirect management activities in the fields of environment and climate

Examples of indirect management activities in the previous years are an update of guidance on heat health action plans, implemented by the World Health Organisation (WHO), or an incubation forum on circular economy in European defence, carried out by the European Defence Agency.

Also, under the current MAWP 2025-2027, indirect management activities might be implemented.

The indicative amount allocated to this type of actions implemented under indirect management is EUR 7 million for the period 2025-2027.

5.4.2. Indirect management activities for activating private sector investments to energy efficiency

DG Energy of the European Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)⁶² co-convened the Energy Efficiency Financial Institutions Group for 10 years (until 2023) with the objective to investigate the barriers and challenges for the promotion of private investments to energy efficiency. Energy Efficiency Financial Institutions Group has produced tools, such as the De-risking Energy Efficiency Platform platform, and reports to synthesise its findings.

In 2024, DG Energy (European Commission) launched, in cooperation with Member States, the European Energy Efficiency Financing Coalition (EEEFIN Coalition) with the objective of facilitating the mobilisation of private financing for energy efficiency in support of the 2030 and 2050 EU energy and climate objectives, and, building on Energy Efficiency Financial Institutions Group's legacy, with the ambition to promote a market-oriented dynamic towards energy efficiency financing, with the ability to support the development of concrete actions and programmes at the national level.

UNEP FI continued to be a privileged partner to the EEEFIN Coalition and, under a contribution agreement, is ensuring specific tasks of the initiative on the European Commission's behalf, notably on the outreach to financial institutions and on communication activities. The current contract with UNEP FI runs until 2025. Should this partnership be continued, the financial support to UNEP FI shall not exceed EUR 0.6 million for the period 2026-2027.

5.5. Projects financed through other forms of funding to be included in the 85% pursuant to Article 9.3

According to Article 9.3, at least 85% of the budget for the LIFE Programme shall be allocated to grants, to projects financed through other forms of funding to the extent specified within the MAWPs and to financial instruments in the form of blending operations.

⁶² See: <https://www.unepfi.org/about/>.

The activities that can be considered in the calculation of the minimum threshold of 85% pursuant to Article 9.3 are:

- Prizes and official awards, including all the related expenditures (i.e. Green Leaf and Green Capital Awards; European Business Award; Natura 2000 Award; the Climate Pact's incentives).
- Support for the management of LIFE projects – including monitoring, evaluation, exchange of experiences and communication.
- Support to the exchange of expertise and best practices, and to networking to improve the participation of different stakeholders to the design, implementation and enforcement of EU environmental climate and energy policies (e.g. Platform for Coal Regions in Energy Transition⁶³, the Climate Pact⁶⁴, Covenant of Mayors⁶⁵, the Clean energy for EU islands initiative⁶⁶, Green Cities Accord, Energy Efficiency Finance Market Place, EU Sustainable Energy Weeks, the European Energy Efficiency Financing Coalition⁶⁷, network activities in support of the LIFE National Contact Points, including training, mutual learning activities and experience-sharing events).
- Capacity building and training and other types of support for Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme and other actors charged with the implementation of EU legislation and policies, including technical assistance for the identification and the promotion of green investments, the peer reviews, the development of guidance and exchange of best practices: Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) - Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) Peer to Peer⁶⁸, co-operation with national judges, capacity building for Member States and third countries associated to the LIFE Programme on the development of national emission inventories.
- Support to data collection, Information and Communication Technologies systems, databases, surveys and specialised bodies enabling stakeholders to the access and/or use environment climate and energy data, e.g.: Land Use/Cover Area frame Survey (LUCAS)⁶⁹, the Forest Information System for Europe⁷⁰, the EU Forest Observatory⁷¹, the Water Information System for Europe⁷², the Industrial Emissions Innovation

⁶³ The [Coal regions in transition initiative](#) help mitigate the social consequences of the low-carbon transition in coal, peat and oil shale regions of the European Union.

⁶⁴ The [European Climate Pact](#) is a movement of people united around a common cause, each taking steps in their own worlds to build a more sustainable Europe.

⁶⁵ The [EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy](#) is an initiative supported by the European Commission bringing together thousands of local governments that want to step up climate ambitions and action.

⁶⁶ The [Clean energy for EU islands](#) is an initiative for the clean energy transition of the more than 2,200 inhabited European islands.

⁶⁷ The [European Energy Efficiency Financing Coalition](#) offers a framework for dialogue and action between the European Commission, EU countries, and stakeholders in the energy efficiency financing sector.

⁶⁸ The "[TAIEX-EIR PEER 2 PEER](#)" tool facilitates learning between environmental authorities. It provides tailored support to national authorities implementing environmental policy and legislation.

⁶⁹ The [land use / cover area frame survey \(LUCAS\)](#) provides detailed information on specific points as well as harmonised and comparable statistics on land use and land cover for the EU territory.

⁷⁰ The [Forest Information System for Europe](#) is the entry point for sharing information with the forest community on Europe's forest environment, its state and development.

[The EU Forest Observatory](#) on deforestation and forest degradation aims to monitor changes in the world's forest cover and related drivers.

⁷² The [Water Information System for Europe](#) is a web-portal entry to water related information ranging from inland waters to marine.

Observatory⁷³, the European Alien Species Information Network⁷⁴, the LIFE project results Database and the [LIFE public Dashboard](#), De-risking Energy Efficiency Platform⁷⁵, Database on Renewable Energy Auctions, European Product Registry for Energy Labelling⁷⁶, the Building Stock Observatory⁷⁷.

- Adequate functioning and security of the EU ETS (Union registry) and derivative applications (Monitoring, Reporting, Verification and Accreditation, National Emissions Ceiling, Market stability reserve) including the auctioning platform⁷⁸.
- Establishment and management of the Union registry under the Regulation establishing a Union certification framework for permanent carbon removals, carbon farming and carbon storage in products (CCF)⁷⁹.
- Indirect management with international organizations – such as WHO, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UNEP, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Energy Agency (IEA), EIB – for the purpose of achieving the objectives set out in Article 3 of the LIFE Regulation (e.g. indirect management for technical assistance to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments targeting buildings that save energy and reduce emissions).

6. CUMULATIVE FUNDING

In some cases, LIFE funds may be used to add, complement or combine funds from other EU programmes. This could happen, for example, to promote, add or steer some specific work on key environmental or climate issues under other programmes.

These types of funding will aim at developing concerted efforts, optimising synergies and/or pursuing specific objectives of the LIFE Programme. They are aimed at ensuring more efficiency in leveraging and at enabling better coordination of support to final beneficiaries/recipients.

Cumulative funding could be used to finance the LIFE contribution to e.g. calls for proposals, specific grants, calls for tenders or blending support financed jointly with other EU programmes and financial instruments.

6.1. Management mode

The activity will be managed directly by the Commission or by one Executive Agency. An indirect management mode will be used if justified by the type of activity.

6.2 Implementing body

⁷³ The [Industrial Emissions Innovation Observatory](#) identify sustainable novel technologies that minimise environmental impacts of industrial processes.

⁷⁴ [EASIN](#) facilitates information on alien species occurring in Europe and supports the EC services and EU Member States competent authorities in the implementation of the EU Reg. 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species.

⁷⁵ [The De-risking Energy Efficiency Platform](#) is an initiative to up-scale energy efficiency investments in Europe through the improved sharing and transparent analysis of existing projects in buildings and industry.

⁷⁶ The [European Product Registry for Energy Labelling](#) contains energy information about products on the European market.

⁷⁷ The [Building Stock Observatory](#) is a web tool to monitor the energy performance of buildings across Europe.

⁷⁸ For details see: https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/eu-emissions-trading-system-eu-ets_en.

⁷⁹ Regulation (EU) 2024/3012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 establishing a Union certification framework for permanent carbon removals, carbon farming and carbon storage in products, (OJ L, 2024/3012, 6.12.2024, ELI <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3012/oj>)

If more than one organisations could be charged with the management of these activities, the organisation managing the most similar activities will be selected, taking into account the purpose and the contents of the activities.

6.3. Rules of implementation

The activity will be managed taking into account, as far as possible, the respect of the rules in force under the programmes concerned.

In case of diverting rules and/or in order to avoid overburdening the applicants, the rules to be applied will be selected to ensure effectiveness in the implementation, the widest possible participation and the maximum simplification for potential applicants.

Any calls for proposals or calls for tenders shall be adequately promoted in the webpage of the LIFE Programme.