



OCTAssociation

ASSOCIATION OF THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND  
TERRITORIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

PAYS ET TERRITOIRES D'OUTRE-MER

LANDEN EN GEBIEDEN OVERZEE

OVERSØISKE LANDE OG TERRITORIERS

**Webinar report**

## **The LIFE programme**

**Organised by OCTA and Enviropea**

*15 September 2020*



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### **The LIFE Program**

*The EU's financial instrument for the environment*



OCTA - Presentation of the LIFE Programme - September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## 1. Introduction of the OCTA - presentation of Enviropea

**Marta Fernández Fornieles**, EU Programmes Officer at OCTA, welcomed the participants and introduced Enviropea:

Enviropea is an association based in France, it has a double function: to provide information on the LIFE programme, and to work on the development of EU projects for stakeholders. In this webinar, they will present the key aspects of this programme, as OCTs will finally be fully eligible for LIFE 2020.

The two speakers from Enviropea are **Yanna Guisolan** (Project Manager) and **Anne Devieilletoile** (Project Officer).

Firstly, they will do a presentation of the programme as it is currently. Certain aspects will change - however the main features will probably remain. Subsequently, there will be a quick focus on the expected changes for the next programme, followed by examples of projects from the Outermost Regions, so that attendees know what LIFE can bring to these different territories. This webinar will end with a Q&A.

## 2. LIFE programme presentation

The LIFE programme is the European Union's financial instrument for the environment.

### LIFE Programme 2014-2020:

- ▶ The LIFE Regulation is renewed **every 7 years** (Regulation 1293/2013 of 11.12.2013). It is a 7-year programme, so the next will go from 2021 to 2027.
- ▶ Objective: LIFE implements the priorities of the 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme (EAP), the relevant **strategies and plans in the area of environmental and climate change**. It aims to implement EU policies, legislation about everything that is environmental. It can range from protecting species to developing renewable energies. The goal is to incentivize, encourage countries, actors to develop the protection of the environment in the EU.
- ▶ Co-financing rate: 55% for Climate and Resources projects; 60% for Nature & Biodiversity projects; and 75% for specific Nature projects.  
The LIFE programme works with grants. The project is submitted to the Commission, if they agree that it is relevant, it will be awarded a grant to support the management of the project. As written above, the percentages are not the same for climate and resources projects and nature and biodiversity projects.  
It is a 7-year programme, which is long. It is split in 2: the first 4 years and then the 3 last years. For these periods there are work programmes which set the specific topics for the period.
- ▶ Annual **call for proposals** in 2-steps (environment sub-programme) or 1-step (climate sub-programme).  
Every year there is a call for proposals, it will ask the different actors to answer either in one or 2 steps, depending on the type of project. If there are 2-steps, the first step is to submit a concept note.
- ▶ Average amount of the LIFE grant: **€1.5 million**.



## What is LIFE?

LIFE is the only European programme that finances environmental projects only, especially Nature & Biodiversity projects. It means that there are several programmes financing environmental projects, but LIFE is only about environment. It is known to be difficult to get the funds because the project has to be precise.

LIFE requires a carefully thought-out, precise, and well-planned proposal, to describe a project that:

- ▶ Usually runs over 3 to 5 years.  
Some projects can last 2 years, some 7 years, there are no rules.
- ▶ Associates a set of partners (but not mandatorily).
- ▶ Aims at reaching **concrete and quantified** environmental results.  
Often this is what is lacking in the projects that the European Commission receives.

## Several types of project can be financed:

- ▶ Traditional projects: the mainstream ones, the most well-known.
- ▶ Integrated projects for the financing of strategies on major priorities (Water, Air, Waste, Climate, Nature) – and technical assistance projects: big projects, around 10 million EUR budget, to implement already existing politics, strategies.
- ▶ Preparatory and capacity building projects (*Specific projects, will not focus on this session*).
- ▶ NGO operating grants (*Specific projects, will not focus on this session*).

In LIFE there are **two clear divisions**: climate action and environment:

The current LIFE sub-programmes and priority areas:

### CLIMATE ACTION

- Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)
- Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)
- Climate Governance and Information (GIC)

### ENVIRONNEMENT

- Nature and Biodiversity
- Efficient use of Resources (Water, Air, Soil, Health, Noise, Circular Economy, etc.)
- Environment Governance and Information (GIE)



The category “Efficient use of Resources” represents the category where the projects are the ones which did not fit into the categories “Climate Action” or “Nature and Biodiversity”.

GIC and GIE are specific, it is about raising awareness, providing training.

The Directorate General (DG) of Environment, DG Climate Action, DG Energy, and Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized (EASME) are involved in the LIFE programme management.

## 2014-2020 Budget:

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3 456 655 000 EUR</b>
<b>Environment sub-programme</b>	2 592 491 250 EUR
<b>Climate sub-programme</b>	864 163 750 EUR

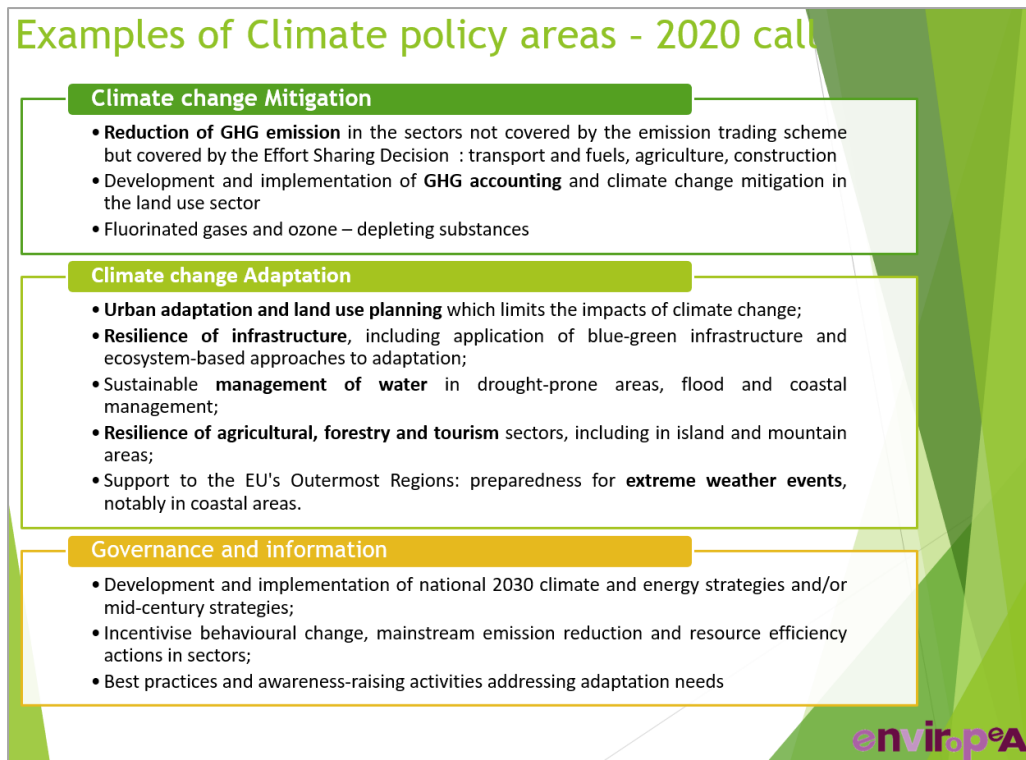
- ▶ 81% allocated to project grants or financial instruments.
- ▶ 55% of the Environment programme’s budget has to be allocated to Nature and Biodiversity projects (article 9 of LIFE Regulation).
- ▶ The annual budget for traditional projects calls for proposals comprises 300-350 million EUR.

There is an imbalance between environment and climate programs. But the climate programme is new, created in 2014.

LIFE finances between 100 and 200 projects per year.

Examples of policy areas:

**Examples** of climate policy areas from the category “**Climate Action**”, to see what the LIFE project is looking for concretely:



### Examples of Climate policy areas - 2020 call

- Climate change Mitigation**
  - **Reduction of GHG emission** in the sectors not covered by the emission trading scheme but covered by the Effort Sharing Decision : transport and fuels, agriculture, construction
  - Development and implementation of **GHG accounting** and climate change mitigation in the land use sector
  - Fluorinated gases and ozone – depleting substances
- Climate change Adaptation**
  - **Urban adaptation and land use planning** which limits the impacts of climate change;
  - **Resilience of infrastructure**, including application of blue-green infrastructure and ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation;
  - Sustainable **management of water** in drought-prone areas, flood and coastal management;
  - **Resilience of agricultural, forestry and tourism** sectors, including in island and mountain areas;
  - Support to the EU's Outermost Regions: preparedness for **extreme weather events**, notably in coastal areas.
- Governance and information**
  - Development and implementation of national 2030 climate and energy strategies and/or mid-century strategies;
  - Incentivise behavioural change, mainstream emission reduction and resource efficiency actions in sectors;
  - Best practices and awareness-raising activities addressing adaptation needs

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**Climate change Mitigation, Climate change Adaptation, Governance and information** are big policy areas. They are divided in sub-categories. For example, within the Climate Change Adaptation category, there are five big policy areas that the European Commission is prioritising. It is not required that the project fits in these sub-categories, however those are the Commission’s priorities.

The category “Support to the EU's Outermost Regions: preparedness for extreme weather events, notably in coastal areas” portrays that the Commission takes more interest in these specific regions, understanding that these territories have specific needs.

Examples of the “Environment” areas:

## Examples of Climate policy areas - 2020 call

- Nature & Biodiversity**
  - Nature
    - Improvement of **conservation status of habitat types or species**
    - Fight against **exotic invasive species** in Natura 2000 sites
    - Marine sites** of the Bird and Habitats Directives : complete national inventories ; restore and manage marine N2000 sites; manage conflicts
  - Biodiversity
    - Green and blue infrastructures**, restauration of degraded ecosystems
    - Management system of **ecosystem services**, evaluation of value
- Environment and resource efficiency**
  - **Water & marine environment**: floods and drought; water industry; marine & coastal management
  - **Waste**: management of waste in outermost regions; innovative recycling of specific types of waste, circular economy
  - **Soil and forests**, green and circular economy
  - **Environment & Health**: chemical products, noise, industrial accidents
  - **Air quality**: industrial emissions, urban emissions
- Governance and information**
  - Awareness campaigns: green growth, “*connecting with citizens*” (Natura 2000, invasive alien species...), air quality, water legislation
  - Effective control process & measures to promote compliance: environmental information systems, voluntary approaches, environmental compliance assurance and access to justice



How can you know if a project is **eligible**?

## Eligibility rules

### Of the project:

- ▶ The coordinating beneficiary needs **to be able to financially manage the LIFE Grant** (different rules depending on whether the CB is a private entity or a public body)
- ▶ The project needs to **contribute to the LIFE programme objectives** and to fall within the scope of the chosen **priority area**
- ▶ For 2014-2020 projects: it must **take place in the EU**, with possible exceptions
- ▶ The project needs to correspond to one of the **project types**, depending on the priority area (pilot, demonstration, best practice or information awareness and dissemination projects)
- ▶ LIFE projects should **not be focused on research** or dedicated to the construction of **large infrastructure**
- ▶ LIFE project should not serve to fund compensation measures deriving from obligations under EU or national law

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Not every actor, association or small company can manage the fact that they receive 1-2-3 million EUR from the European Commission, so there are checks made to make sure that they can handle it.

The project needs to correspond to one of the project types, meaning that it needs to be a concrete project, and not research (Horizon 2020).



## Eligibility rules

### Of the costs:

- ▶ Costs must be incurred during the project **eligibility period**
- ▶ Costs must have been **budgeted**
- ▶ Purchase of goods and services must be **competitive** and done in compliance with **transparency rules**
- ▶ **Time spent** on the project by project staff must **be recorded**
- ▶ *102% rule for the public bodies personnel costs (might disappear)*
- ▶ Each expenditure must be supported by adequate documentation
- ▶ Specific eligibility rules for durable costs (depreciation and maximum amounts)
- ▶ 35% max of the budget for external assistance

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The rule about eligible costs is simple:

Most costs are eligible. Few rules on external assistance, the Commission asks that not more than 35% is external assistance. Just remember that any costs are mainly eligible, personal, goods, etc. the European Commission wants you to be able to conduct the project, so any cost that is logical and necessary for the project is eligible.

What are the recurring mistakes?

## Recurring mistakes

- ▶ Thinking that a project is automatically good and will be favourably evaluated because it is good for the environment
- ▶ Not knowing the context (at the EU level and at the project's site level), nor the roots of the problem -> **no baseline**
- ▶ Not knowing exactly **where and when** the actions will take place
- ▶ Not reading the rules for the eligibility of costs
- ▶ Including « **lump sums** » in the budget lines
- ▶ **Starting too late** (a proposal needs at least 4 real months of work)
- ▶ Forgetting about the « other » actions : monitoring, dissemination, etc.
- ▶ Not planning for **concrete replication**, and thinking that « replicable » means « replicated »

All those mistakes can be summarised in one :

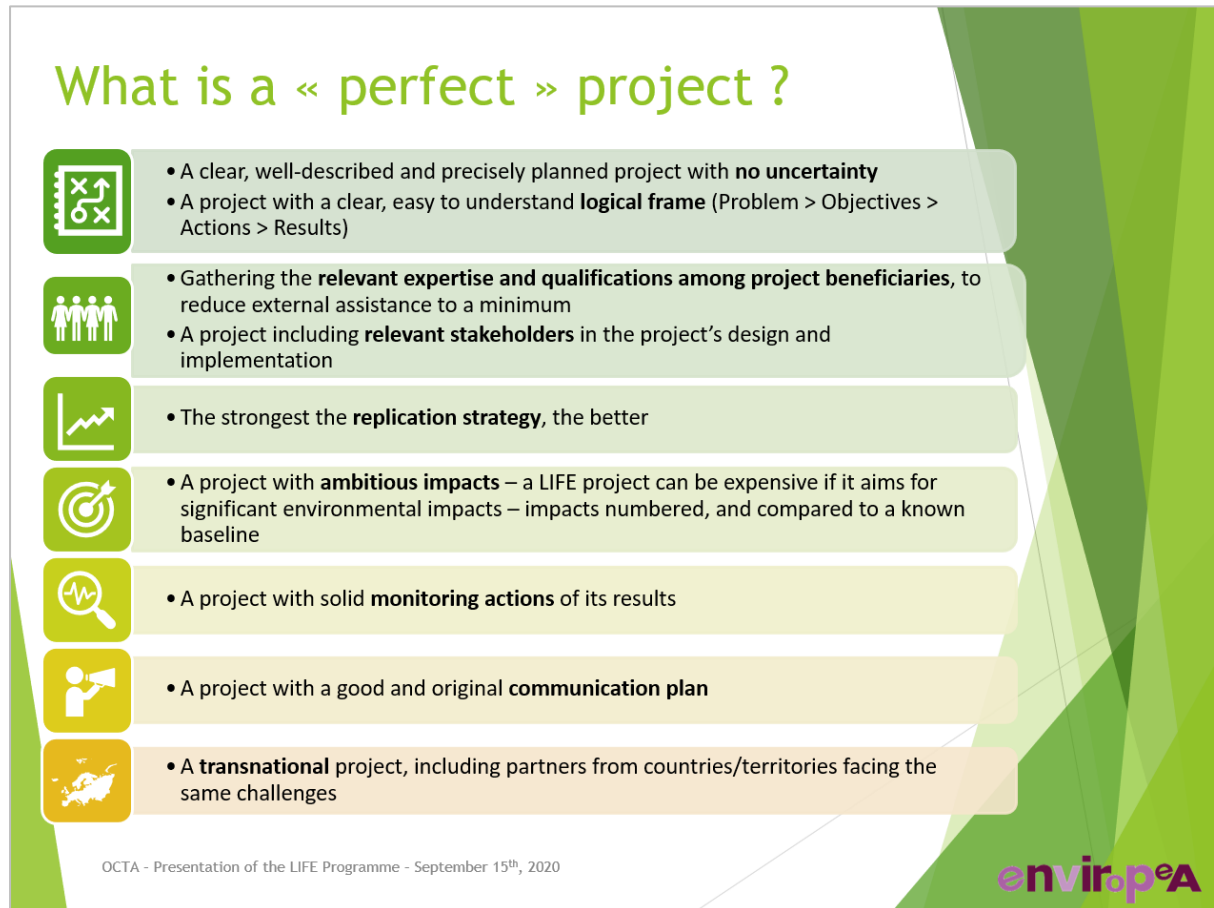
➡ **Not understanding the required level of precision**

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- ▶ The LIFE programme is competitive, there is a 30% success rate. Projects are in competition with the entire EU so the project leaders need to understand that the level of precision is really high.
- ▶ Need to know the baseline, the project should tell the Commission that the situation will be improved by, for example, 25%, therefore it is key to know where you are starting from.
- ▶ Starting too late: A project needs at least 3 real months of work; it is a long process. It is a complex process, but every project that is financed goes well. Once it is financed, it is almost certain that the objectives will be fulfilled.

## What is a **perfect** project?



### What is a « perfect » project ?

- 
  - A clear, well-described and precisely planned project with **no uncertainty**
  - A project with a clear, easy to understand **logical frame** (Problem > Objectives > Actions > Results)
- 
  - Gathering the **relevant expertise and qualifications among project beneficiaries**, to reduce external assistance to a minimum
  - A project including **relevant stakeholders** in the project's design and implementation
- 
  - The strongest the **replication strategy**, the better
- 
  - A project with **ambitious impacts** – a LIFE project can be expensive if it aims for significant environmental impacts – impacts numbered, and compared to a known baseline
- 
  - A project with solid **monitoring actions** of its results
- 
  - A project with a good and original **communication plan**
- 
  - A **transnational** project, including partners from countries/territories facing the same challenges

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The project must have no uncertainties, there needs to be a clear logical framework. To establish a project, there needs to be a set of objectives, develop a set of actions to reach them, and foresee several outcomes of these actions.

There does not need to be several partners, but the European Commission is favourable to partnerships for expertise.

What are relevant stakeholders? Partners that you can discuss with, obtain their opinions and input.

Ambitious impacts: the budget for a LIFE project is around 1.5 to 3 million EUR, although there is no maximum. There was a LIFE project financed with 17 million euros (10 million in LIFE grant). It worked because they had really ambitious objectives - restoring an entire region.

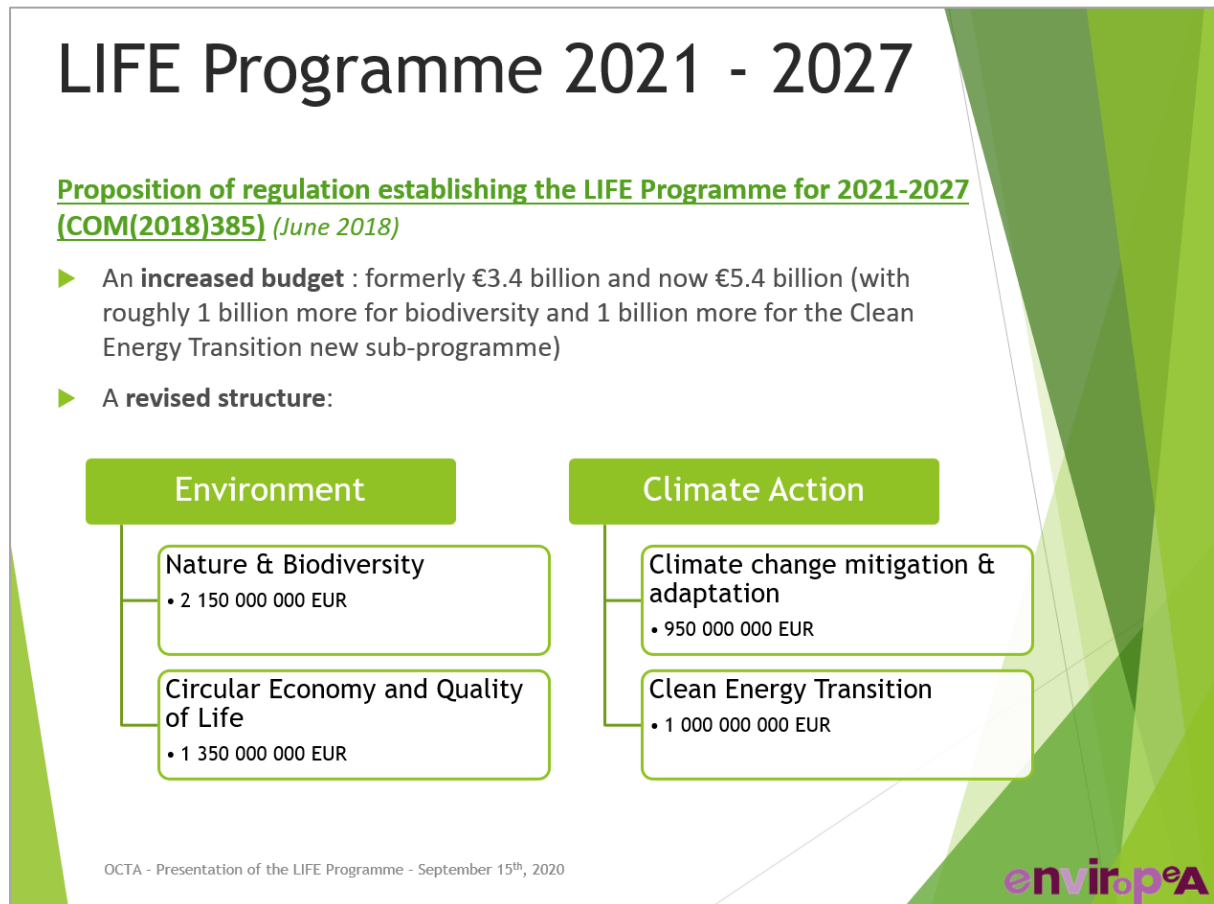
Monitoring actions: so that you can prove that the results are reached.

Communication plan: often, project leaders do not know this. There must be concrete actions: monitoring actions follow the results and, communication actions are key to explain what the EU is doing for the territories.

The current LIFE programme is complex, a lot of information needs to be known, although it should be simplified for the next programming period.

### 3. Expected features of the 2021-2027 LIFE programme

The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is not ready yet, so this information is based on conferences, proposals. It is not sure that the programme will remain as the proposed regulation.



**LIFE Programme 2021 - 2027**

**Proposition of regulation establishing the LIFE Programme for 2021-2027 (COM(2018)385) (June 2018)**

- ▶ An **increased budget** : formerly €3.4 billion and now €5.4 billion (with roughly 1 billion more for biodiversity and 1 billion more for the Clean Energy Transition new sub-programme)
- ▶ A **revised structure**:

Environment	Climate Action
<b>Nature &amp; Biodiversity</b> • 2 150 000 000 EUR	<b>Climate change mitigation &amp; adaptation</b> • 950 000 000 EUR
<b>Circular Economy and Quality of Life</b> • 1 350 000 000 EUR	<b>Clean Energy Transition</b> • 1 000 000 000 EUR

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It is almost certain that the budget will increase significantly. It will reach 5.4 billion EUR.

Where will this money go? 1 billion EUR more will go towards biodiversity and 1 billion EUR to a new LIFE programme: the Clean Energy Transition programme. Therefore, the structure of the programme will change. The environmental part will remain almost the same. Circular Economy and Quality of Life is a new name, but the sub-categories will remain.

Climate action: there will still be climate change mitigation and the new clean energy programme - more programs on renewable energy.



## Proposed regulation:

### Main novelties:

- ▶ The **new Clean Energy Transition** sub-programme with sought **complementarity with the Horizon Europe** research-innovation programme

The programme will insist on the complementarity of the LIFE programme subject with the Horizon 2020 which targets research and innovation (Horizon 2020 will become Horizon EU). LIFE is more concrete, in the field.

One of the main focuses of this new subprogramme is **the renovation of buildings** to make them more energy-efficient. This includes local authorities and municipalities, to renovate schools, hospitals and other community buildings to make them more energy efficient, with other actors then replicating their work.

The objective is to implement solutions developed on H2020 projects from previous multiannual framework: while Horizon 2020 was focused on research and innovation, LIFE is about to deliver projects on the ground - concrete solutions.

- ▶ The extension of integrated projects which proved to be successful, with the introduction of **strategic integrated projects**

Enviropea believes that the integrated subjects will be extended. They are bigger projects, e.g: management of water. Before, they were in pilot phase, which will be extended as they were successful. Their name will change but it is not known yet what the difference will be between integrated and strategic integrated projects.

- ▶ Introduction of **strategic nature projects**, which should aim at mainstreaming nature and biodiversity objectives into other policies and financing instruments. They believe that it is aimed to include biodiversity themes in other areas.

### Proposed regulation – specific information for OCTs:

- ▶ Article 11 – **Eligible entities:** *“legal entities established in (...) a Member state or an overseas country or territory linked to it”*

According to this article, the OCTs should become fully eligible.

- ▶ Regarding the eligibility of OCTs, the proposed regulation specifies *“The participation of these entities to this Programme should focus primarily on projects under sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity”*

It means that the participation of OCTs might be focused on nature and biodiversity themes. It is still unclear if it means that they will be ineligible for other LIFE programs. In case, this presentation will focus on Nature and Biodiversity themes (N&B).

- ▶ The regulation proposes that the scheme **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas (BEST)** be included in the LIFE programme, hence addressing a *“gap*



*related to the financing for biodiversity in the Outermost Regions (ORs) and in the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)"*

The BEST initiative is a smaller programme targeting on biodiversity.

The **inter-institutional negotiations** started on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. This first exchange was an opportunity to exchange on:

- ▶ capacity building projects and **geographical balance of LIFE spending**
- ▶ the quality of projects as selection criteria
- ▶ co-financing rates
- ▶ programme monitoring and evaluation
- ▶ implementation of work programmes through delegated or implementing acts

The third triologue, which took place on March 11<sup>th</sup> resulted in a "*common understanding*" and the Parliament voted the partial agreement on 17 April 2019. **We now need to wait for the Commission's first reading position.**

However, the **final agreement on the 2021-2027 programme will depend on the budget negotiated** under the MFF 2021-2027, which is still ongoing. Therefore, we need to wait to have certain information.

While the partial agreement voted by the Parliament speaks of a total budget of more than 7 billion EUR, the European Commission and the Council of the EU seem to agree on the amount of 5.4 billion EUR and it is this budget that was mentioned last November at the conference on the future of LIFE.

On July 21<sup>st</sup> an extraordinary meeting in Brussels saw the **EU leaders agree on a 1074.3 billion EUR 2021-2027 budget** + 750 billion EUR for the "Next Generation EU" special effort after the COVID-19 crisis, to support investment for a green and digital transition.

### **Conference on the future of LIFE (November 2019)**

Two-day discussions gathering the European Commission and key LIFE stakeholders. The future of the LIFE programme was discussed, what could be improved (workshops, conferences, etc.).

Examples of ideas discussed during this meeting (not binding for the European Commission so we do not know if these ideas will actually be implemented but it can give a few clues):

- ▶ Participants highlighted the need for **more flexibility regarding the type of eligible actions**:
  - for N&B projects, for which the lack of data is often a challenge, financing data collection & analysis actions.

Indeed, for these projects the lack of data and analysis is important, such as to know about the threats. More research needs to be done, so the restrictions on fundamental research actions has been outlined by the participants as a problem.
  - For Circular economy projects, allowing projects to **apply good practices** which are already tested in Europe, but not sufficiently replicated.



The programme is supposed to be for very innovative projects but sometimes a project has already been accepted and tested somewhere, but has not spread to the EU, therefore it could be good to fund projects to spread good practices.

▶ **More simplicity in the application process**

The online platform is complicated and time-consuming. For the next programme the platform will change, so maybe the Commission heard that there was a need for more simplicity.

▶ Need to **involve citizens**, e.g. for N&B projects, private landowners, for Clean Energy, energy consumers.

▶ For N&B projects especially, the **need for political support** and **lack of EU and national funding** dedicated to nature and biodiversity was highlighted (which can be an issue in obtaining necessary co-funding).

▶ For N&B projects, participants also pointed out the need to facilitate the funding of actions **outside the Natura 2000 network**.

▶ For Circular economy projects, the need to test new business models **involving all the actors of the value chain**.

**The LIFE multiannual framework programme for 2021-2024** will specify:

- ▶ The allocation of funds, between each sub-programme and type of funding
- ▶ Project topics
- ▶ Target plans for which funding may be requested for integrated projects
- ▶ The maximum eligibility period for the implementation of projects

**Strategies and policies supported** under the new LIFE programme (Texts we do have)

→ Texts and policies announced with the European Green Deal (we know that the new programme will focus on these issues and strategies):

- ▶ 2030 Biodiversity Strategy ([link here](#))
- ▶ “Farm to Fork” Strategy (sustainability of the food sector) ([link here](#))
- ▶ The 2030 climate and energy framework ([link here](#))
- ▶ New Circular Economy Action Plan ([link here](#))
- ▶ Climate Pact ([link here](#))
- ▶ Other upcoming plans part of the Green Deal ([link here](#))



For the Climate sub-programme, we have the 2030 climate and energy framework whose key objectives for 2030 are:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% (from 1990 levels)
- At least 32% share for renewables
- At least 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency

The new Circular Economy Action Plan aims to:

- Ensure that sustainable products become the norm in the EU.
- Empower consumers to choose.
- Focus on sectors that use the most resources and have a high potential to contribute to the circular economy.
- Ensure less waste.

### Questions & Answers:

- Do you know if the framework programme for 2021-2024 is already being discussed with the Member states?

We hope so because it is supposed to be published before the end of the year. Discussions have been going on for 2 years now, the only thing left at this moment is the budget.

- Regarding co-financing, can LIFE funding be combined with other sources of funding (World Bank, EDF, etc)? Or does it have to be national funding (own resources).

The European Commission expects all project beneficiaries to contribute to the project with at least some of their own funds, to significantly contribute to the project. It can depend on the beneficiary type and revenue, but it is expected. Co-financer could be regional, national or even other EU programs or international programs. Therefore, it is very open and gives more solidity to the project because it shows that others want to finance the project.

Therefore, different types of financing can be used but there is one rule: the same action cannot be funded by 2 entities. For example, exactly what both Cohesion and LIFE are financing needs to be stipulated. This is the only rule, of course different type of financing can be used.





#### 4. Examples of projects in outermost regions and overseas countries and territories (LIFE & BEST)

##### BEST Initiative:

We will talk about it because it is going to be included in the LIFE programme. It is mostly about nature, habitat.



There are 2 initiatives:

- BEST2.0: Focus on the OCTS
- BEST RUP: Outermost regions

## BEST Initiative

- ▶ **Objectives** : Promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories
- ▶ **Small grants scheme**: swift small grants, small grants and medium grants
- ▶ **Territories concerned**: ORs and OCTs
- ▶ **Average number of partners**: between 1 and 9
- ▶ **The different BEST programmes** :
  - ❖ BEST 2.0 > Best 2.0+
  - ❖ BEST RUP > LIFE4BEST
- ▶ **Between 2014 and 2018, 61 BEST 2.0 projects were funded in OCTs.**
- ▶ Since 2019, LIFE4BEST is funded by the LIFE programme, the French biodiversity Agency and the French Development Agency Partly. It mainly targets the ORs. The Best 2.0+ is funded by the DG Devco and the UICN.
- ▶ **The 2020 LIFE4BEST call** was just published (<https://www.life4best.org/appels-a-proposition/>)
- ▶ **The 2020 Best 2.0+ call for proposal** in ongoing (<https://www.best2plus.org/>)

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Three different grants:

- Swift small grants: <50 000 EUR – 12-18 months
- Small grants: > 50 000 EUR and < 100 000 EUR – 12-24 months
- Medium grants: > 100 000 EUR and < 400 000 EUR – up to 36 months

These are small projects compared to LIFE. There is no maximum budget in the current LIFE programme, although there is a minimum, it does not offer financing under 500 000 EUR.

BEST2.0 became BEST2.0+.

The BEST2.0 application process is divided in 2 steps: (1) submission of a note of concept of around 10 pages, and if selected, (2) a full proposal should be submitted (40 pages).

Can finance up to 100% of the cost of the budget (not LIFE) but much smaller projects.

[Examples of BEST projects:](#)

## BEST Initiative

### Examples of BEST projects:

#### ► French Guiana (France) :

Within the framework of the call for proposals BEST RUP 2017, a project carried by the association KWATA has been financed up to 22 730€. This one-year project aims to improve the knowledge base on the feeding ecology of marine mammals and marine turtles in French Guiana, by analysing the stomach content of stranded marine mammals and turtles.



#### ► Saint Helena (United Kingdom) :

From January 2018 to January 2019, the St Helena National Trust ran a project to preserve endemic plant species on the island of St Helena. Funded with €90,789 under the BEST 2.0 SG 2017 call for proposals, this project aims to expand the work of the island's three main nurseries focusing on the conservation of endemic species.

The BEST projects are mainly about gathering knowledge, training for the protection of biodiversity.

UK OTs are eligible for the BEST programme.

# BEST Initiative

## Examples of BEST projects:

**Saving the sea turtles of Anguilla** : combining community action with scientific evidence to drive legislative change

- ▶ Lead organisation: Government of Anguilla, Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources
- ▶ Partner organisations: Anguilla National Trust & the University of Roehampton
- ▶ Targeted territory: Anguilla
- ▶ Duration: 36 months (May 2016 – April 2019)
- ▶ Total budget: EUR 438 238,00
- ▶ BEST 2.0 grant: EUR 394 976,00



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It is a longer project, 36 months - it can last longer than 1 year. Budget over 400 000 EUR. This is one of the biggest projects, above these numbers you enter the LIFE programme field.

About this project: Four species of sea turtles in Anguilla rely on the local habitats, it is difficult to find a compromise between their protection and economic activities because the beaches are used for tourism. Finding a balance between conservation and the economy is an issue often encountered. Furthermore, there is a lack of data, so this project focuses a lot on gathering data, knowledge, to be able to implement mitigation strategies which was the main objective.

# BEST Initiative

Examples of BEST projects:

## **Saving the sea turtles of Anguilla**

**Objective:** gathering data about sea turtles in order to ensure conservation of the species on and around Anguilla.

### **Actions:**

- Using a capture-tag-and-release methodology
- Assessment of threats to sea turtles to develop a mitigation plan
- Completion of an Anguilla Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan
- Trainings on the biology and conservation of sea turtles
- Developing a sea turtle eco-tour guide certification programme

### **Expected results:**

- Identification and assessment of areas and population status of foraging sea turtles and breeding sea turtles
- Identification of threats
- Increasing technical expertise on sea turtle conservation and research
- Increased national and international awareness and support for sea turtle and coastal conservation

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Turtle eco-tour guide: way to conciliate economic and preservation issues.

## Examples of LIFE project:

### ➤ LIFE BIODIV'OM:

## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

LIFE BIODIV'OM (LIFE17 NAT/FR/000604)

- ▶ Coordinator: Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux (NGO)
- ▶ Partners:
  - Syndicat mixte du parc Naturel Régional de la Martinique
  - Groupe d'Etude et de Protection des Oiseaux en Guyane
  - Parc National de la Réunion
  - Société d'Etudes Ornithologiques de la Réunion
  - Association de gestion de la Réserve Naturelle de Saint-Martin
  - Groupe d'Etude et de Protection des Oiseaux de Mayotte
- ▶ Duration: 5 years (17/09/2018 - 17/09/2023)
- ▶ Total budget: €5 578 171
- ▶ European contribution: €3 269 634
- ▶ Co-financiers: French Agency for Biodiversity, Regional Council of la Réunion, Regional Authority of French Guiana, University Training and Research Centre of Mayotte, Conservatoire du littoral, DREAL Guyane Mayotte and Reunion Island, French Ministry for Environment



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This project is implemented in different places, it gathers different territories, sometimes far away from each other but the project identified similarities.

An example of how it is possible to have as many co-financers as needed.

## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

### LIFE BIODIV'OM

- ▶ **Global problem:** Loss of biodiversity in 5 French Outermost Regions (OR): French Guiana, Reunion, Martinique, Mayotte and St Martin.

- ▶ **Two environmental objectives:**

1. To increase the populations of 5 globally threatened species in the ORs: the Reunion cuckooshrike (*Coracina newtoni*), the Madagascar pond heron (*Ardeola idea*) on Mayotte, the Atlantic goliath grouper (*Epinephelus itajara*) in French Guiana and on Saint-Martin, the Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) on Saint-Martin, and the white-breasted thrasher (*Ramphocinclus brachyurus*) on Martinique
2. Improving the conservation status of habitats and major sites for threatened species at European level

- ▶ **Actions:**

- ❖ Invasive Alien Species (IAS) control
- ❖ Protection of major sites
- ❖ Implementation of fishing regulations for certain species + prefectural decrees



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They targeted 5 threatened species. Even though it was on different territories, they identified common threats and actions.

Example for one bird: 3 threats were identified, including invasive alien species. It was decided to take action to control the predators, action to conciliate economic activities and preservation, such as new material for fishermen. Therefore, it is beneficial to involve all stakeholders.

## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

### LIFE BIODIV'OM

- ▶ **Expected results :**

- ❖ Increase in the population of the Reunion cuckooshrike to 35 pairs
- ❖ 150 births of Madagascar pond heron
- ❖ 30% chick survival in the distribution area of the white-breasted thrasher
- ❖ Decrease in catches of both species of targeted groupers in the two ORs
- ❖ Control of IAS at one site for the Reunion cuckooshrike (300 ha) and three sites for the Madagascar pond heron (almost 50 ha)
- ❖ Eradication of *Acacia mangium* trees on 50-70% of the savannas of French Guiana (around 13,000-18,000 ha), including 100% of protected areas.
- ❖ Creation of an ecological corridor to link existing populations of white-breasted thrasher
- ❖ Workshops with local stakeholders on restoring important sites for the Madagascar pond heron and implementation of agri-environmental schemes



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➤ **LIFE EGYPTIAN VULTURE:**

## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

### LIFE EGYPTIAN VULTURE (LIFE16 NAT/IT/000659)

- ▶ Coordinator: E-distribuzione (large enterprise – electricity sector)
- ▶ Partners:
  - Gestión y Planeamiento Territorial y Medioambiental S.A., Spain
  - Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale, Italy
  - ENDESA DISTRIBUCIÓN ELÉCTRICA, S.L., Spain
  - Regione Basilicata - Dipartimento Ambiente e Energia, Italy
  - Regione Puglia - Dipartimento Mobilità, Qualità urbana, Opere pubbliche, Ecologia e Paesaggio, Italy
  - Gobierno de Canarias - Dirección General de Protección de la Naturaleza, Spain
  - Federazione Italiana dei Parchi e delle Riserve Naturali Europarc Italia, Italy
- ▶ Duration: 5 years (October 2017 – September 2022)
- ▶ Total budget: €5 084 600
- ▶ European contribution: €3 813 146
- ▶ Co-financiers: /



Lead by a large enterprise from the electricity sector. Will not go into detail.

All the LIFE projects have their website updated regularly, so it is easy to use the project reference to get more information and details of the project coordinator. There is also a LIFE database in which you can look for projects according to thematic, areas etc.

➤ **MADEIRA**

## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

### LIFE MADEIRA MONK SEAL (LIFE13 NAT/ES/000974)

- ▶ Coordinator: Fundación CBD para la conservación de la biodiversidad y su habitat (NGO)
- ▶ Partners:
  - Secretaria Regional do Ambiente e Recursos Naturais, Portugal
  - Serviço do Parque Natural da Madeira, Portugal
- ▶ Duration: 5 years (01/06/2014 - 31/12/2019)
- ▶ Total budget: €1 143 364
- ▶ European contribution: €670 808
- ▶ Co-financiers: /



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Project held on Madeira, Portugal. It lasted 5 years. All the results are available now since it is finalized.

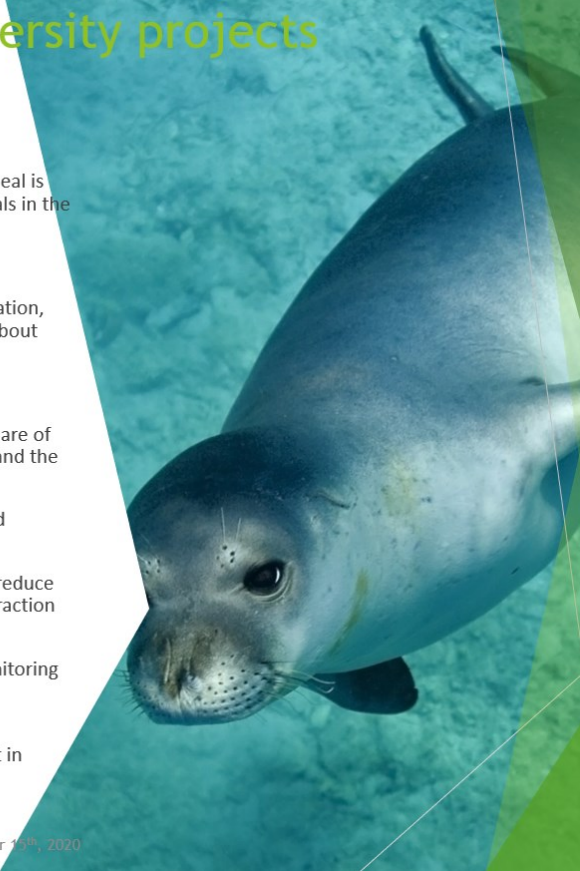
Quite low budget. It is a nature project and as stated this type of project can have 60% of their total budget as a grant. Therefore, they need to find the remaining 40% of the budget, can be private funds, public etc. and a part must be their own funds. LIFE appreciate when there are co-financiers, any actors that are not partners, as it is seen as a sign that your project is solid and interesting. For nature and biodiversity co-financing often comes from local entities, or environmental institutions.



## LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

► **LIFE MADEIRA MONK SEAL**

- **Global problem:** With less than 600 individuals throughout its distribution range, the Mediterranean monk seal is considered one of the most endangered mammals in the world.
- **Environmental objectives:**
  - To get additional knowledge on the population, understand the threats, raise awareness about them, and develop conservation actions
- **Actions:**
  - Locating, defining, and protecting the caves that are of interest to the species on the island of Madeira and the Desertas Islands
  - Creation of an information, emergency, and rapid intervention network (monk seal SOS network)
  - Boarding fishing and maritime-tourism boats to reduce threats, disturbances, or any other negative interaction with monk seals
  - Implementation of non-invasive systems for monitoring monk seals via satellite
  - Establishment of a protocol for monitoring the conservation status of the species and its habitat in Madeira



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In the 19<sup>th</sup> century these seals were killed for the leather, and the devolvement of tourism did not help.

# LIFE Nature & Biodiversity projects

## LIFE MADEIRA MONK SEAL

### ► Examples of expected results :

- ❖ An official Monk Seal Regional Conservation Plan in Madeira
- ❖ Increased capacity of the Natural Park of Madeira to intervene along the coastline to tackle threats or emergency situations for monk seal individuals
- ❖ Surveillance systems, indicators and baseline values for monitoring of the monk seal and its habitat
- ❖ Demonstration of the success and potential transferability of non-invasive monitoring methods for such scattered and low density populations
- ❖ Improved protection and increased availability of high-quality terrestrial habitats used by monk seals
- ❖ Better implementation of regional legislation for the protection of marine vertebrates
- ❖ Reduced threats and disturbances from fishermen, tourism operators, tourists and local inhabitants, including reduction of accidents and entanglements in marine debris and abandoned fishing gear

Layman's report of the project : [https://lifemadeiramonkseal.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Eng\\_Laymans-report-LIFE-MADEIRA.pdf](https://lifemadeiramonkseal.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Eng_Laymans-report-LIFE-MADEIRA.pdf)

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There were caves only accessible by diving. The entire coast of the islands was searched by the teams to find caves, submerged or otherwise. They managed to find more than 100 caves and 26 with a possibility of interest for the monk seals, due to the beaches. They implemented small cameras in the caves so they could see if the seals were going in these caves, which they were. They managed to identify specific threats for this population (human disturbance linked to divers, boats, etc.). They worked on developing results. All the actors (divers, fishermen, etc.) were trained on the impact of their actions and were asked to use an application when they see a seal in danger. More than 30 interventions were carried out to save them.

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Examples of N&B were selected because these subjects are the topics the most associated with OCTs, with BEST programme, and potential new LIFE programme. However, there might be more possibilities, please see below for other **examples on different topics**.

# LIFE programme other potentials

Even though the participation of OCTs to the LIFE programme will likely be primarily under Nature & Biodiversity themes, the other LIFE strands might be of interest.

Examples of topics targeting Outermost Regions in 2020 LIFE call:

## Climate Action - Adaptation



- Support to the EU's Outermost Regions : preparedness for extreme weather events, notably in coastal areas.

## Resource efficiency



- **Management of waste** in outermost region : separate collection, sorting and recycling

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Within the Climate Action policy area, there are again sub-categories. The more you go into it, the more precise it gets, although the project does not have to be exactly in these areas, the project will be awarded extra points because you are answering subjects that the Commission is prioritising.

Preparedness for extreme weather events priority: Four « work areas »:

- ▶ Development and implementation of risk and vulnerability assessments and adaptation strategies;
- ▶ Early warning systems for extreme events;
- ▶ Improving resilience of ecosystems to climate impacts, notably precipitation variability and drought
- ▶ Coastal management to adapt to extreme weather events through ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation (e.g. conservation and restoration of mangroves, saltmarshes and coral reefs, sand dune and beach area management, wetland management, etc.);
- ▶ Implementation of innovative approaches to ensure resilience of energy infrastructure from extreme weather events, especially renewable energy infrastructure.



#### Examples of **Urban Adaptation actions**:

- ▶ **Against floods:** soil vegetabilization (fight against soil sealing); retention ponds; roof greening, etc.
- ▶ **Sea level rise:** dams; floating buildings; evacuations, coastal buffer zones...
- ▶ **Storms:** new management of infrastructures (buried cables); new construction standards; new technology (foldable wind turbine?), etc.

Urban adaptation actions are Multi-thematic projects, work has to be done on many aspects (floods, storms, adapting infrastructure, etc.), meaning that these projects are very flexible, since the Commission is financing projects that develop many different aspects.

Example: a city in France developed urban adaptation where there was an island in the river, they removed constructions to create greener banks to make sure that when there was a flood the soil would absorb the excess water. Also, they developed softer mobility (electric buses, bike roads, etc.), it helped the city to become more resilient, to manage to reduce the floods, and the average temperature was lowered by 2°C.

#### Example of an adaption project: **AD'APTO, CCA "coast management"**:

### Ad'Apto, CCA « coast management »

- ▶ **Ad'apto. Ten initiatives of flexible coastal management**
- ▶ Total budget: € 6 728 520; LIFE co-funding: € 3 161 436
- ▶ Duration : october 2017 - december 2021
- ▶ Leader : Coastal conservatory – partner : BRGM (Geological and mining research bureau)
- ▶ Co-financing : Fondation de France (€ 30 000)

The coast of any country is fragile and sensitive to climate change, it faces many threats (sea level rising, human construction, development of tourism, etc.)

- ▶ **Problem:** sea level is rising, and the risks of storms as well, while the coasts are, in the main time, the most coveted spaces : urban sprawl, tourism... About 20% of the Conservatory's territory could be submerged by 2050.

-> Loss of the « transition zones », accelerated erosion, and around 5 billions in public spending to face the problems (sand importation, Perte des « zones de transition », dams, compensation, etc.) The coasts are also hosting a rich but fragile biodiversity.

- ▶ **Objective :** Create natural « buffer zones » to protect the coasts : the solution is simple and cheap, and would both protect human dwellings and activities but also recreate habitats for a very diverse biodiversity.

This objective means that the aim was to work with the different stakeholders, inhabitants, industries that were on those coasts, tourism industry, housing, diving, etc. and to work with them to recreate the buffer zones. It was about gathering all the different actors and listening to ideas, discussing actions to take.

- ▶ **Actions**

- Create tools to involve stakeholders and develop codecision (historical analysis, co-discussion and co-construction of scenarios, social perception survey, etc.)
- Tests several solutions and compare their costs
- Landscape survey and risk management study
- Communication (towards children/school, inhabitants, local authorities, etc.)

- ▶ **Expected results :**

- Harmonized diagnosis of the scientific knowledge of the sites.
- 10 sites restored and adapted to climate change: restoration of dunes, dykes suppression, habitats restoration, creation of black corridors, etc.
- The implementation of simple and consistent monitoring
- Etc.

- ▶ E-mail : [adapto@conservatoire-du-littoral.fr](mailto:adapto@conservatoire-du-littoral.fr)

- ▶ Website : <https://www.lifeadapto.eu/>

Big aspect of communication. You do not only have concrete environmental actions but the communication aspect is very important. It makes both the actions of the Commission known, and it involves the citizens / stakeholders to inform and explain what is being done.

**Resources project:**

## Resource efficiency strand still underexploited

- ▶ There are very few Resources projects submitted by outermost regions
- ▶ Available budget for LIFE traditional Resources projects for the 2020 LIFE call : 84M€
- ▶ Thematic priorities that could match OCTs interests:
  - ▶ **Water, including the marine environment**
    - Sustainability of human activities related to the marine environment – reducing pressures: underwater noise, disturbance of sea floor, deep sea mining, fishing, agriculture, navigation
    - Water industry: resource efficient provision of water services in rural areas, wastewater treatment, etc.
  - ▶ **Waste**
    - Implementation of waste legislation: methods for management of waste (separate collection, sorting and recycling) in Outermost regions of the EU or on islands with a resident population of less than 250 000 inhabitants

For these projects, what was noticed for the last period is that there are few projects submitted. It could be interesting for OCTs.



### Example: BAQUA project

## Exemples of « Resource » projects

▶ **LIFE BAQUA project** (LIFE15 ENV/ES/000157)

➤ **Total budget:** € 1 700 000

➤ **LIFE co-funding:** about €1 020 000

➤ **Issue at stake:** problem of waste accumulation of organic wastes produced by the bananas harvesting (banana pseudostem). They were usually left in the plantation but they have no nutritional value for the soil.

➤ **Consortium:**

- Coordinator: **University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria**
- Aquanaria: Spanish aquaculture company
- Ambi-metalplast: plastic injection company
- DIBAQ DIPROTEG: animal nutrition specialized group
- Swedish Plastic Industry association: trade organization
- Tecnopackaging: company specialized in nanocomposites and blends



During the banana harvest, a lot of organic waste was left on the plantation, but there was no nutritional value for the soil, so it was a loss of resources. The project was submitted by the University but associated very different kinds of sectors (companies, trade).

## Exemples of « Resource » projects

- **LIFE BAQUA project** (LIFE15 ENV/ES/000157)

- **Project objectives:**

- Optimization of waste management of banana production
- Environmental benefits derived from the improved agro-wastes management
- Development of a circular economy strategy
- Improvement of nutritional quality in fish feed

- **Actions:**

- Optimization of waste valorization technologies and characterisation of natural fibres and pulp
- Production of materials and natural additivated plastic parts
- Enhancement of fish feed and diets by means of natural active compounds

- **Results:**

- Demonstration of a new circular economic viability
- Reduction of 30% CO<sub>2</sub> and 100% N<sub>2</sub>O emissions initially generated by the plastic production and the banana crop wastes abandoned in the soils

Website: <https://lifebaqua.eu/>

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Optimisation: the waste was composed of natural fibre of high quality and residual pulp, so they created a new resource with the waste and used it in two ways. The fibre was turned into a composite for the plastic industry, and the pulp was turned into an antioxidant entity for the fish. That is why the project associated different kind of expertise.


Two kinds of results: environmental and economic results (jobs creation, profit). A real economic and social impact by solving the environment issue.

Resource projects can be linked to the market, generate environmental impact but also an economic one.



Last example of resource project: **EFFICIENTSHIP**

## Exemples of « Resource » projects



- ▶ **Project LIFE+ EfficientShip, 2014-2018**
- ▶ **Total budget:** 1 245 666€
- ▶ **LIFE co-funding:** 622 833€
- ▶ **Issue at stake:** the GHG emissions of the European fisheries sector due to the fishing fleet running largely on diesel engines.
- ▶ **Consortium:** Enogia (French SME); IFP Energies Nouvelles ; Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation Ltd (KFO) ; Italian Institute for Marine Science (CNR ISMAR)
- ▶ **Solution proposed:** demonstrating the efficiency of an innovative technology for reducing GHG emissions by 5 to 10%. The project consists in adapting a heat recovery technology to mobile thermal engines in fishing vessels.
- ▶ This is based on the thermodynamic cycle ORC (Organic Rankine Cycle) : solution innovante qui convertit la chaleur perdue en électricité. It was already used in industries or biomass production centres.

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It is about reducing the gas emissions of the EU sector. To reduce fuel consumption and red gas emission, they tested a technology that aims to recover heat from engines. There is a strong technical aspect, good example of the degree of innovation usually expected in resource projects - innovative actions are really sought after.

- **Actions :** Test on 122 traditional fishing missions with navigating periods (12% of the time) trawling (73% du temps) and 15% of « dead calm ».
- **Expected results :** The electricity production of the ORC thermal engines should cover about a third of the total needs in electricity of the ship, which should lead to a fuel consumption reduction of 3%.
- **After the project:** the project team will continue to work on the prototype in order to be able to deliver an « on-the-shelf » product that could be installed during the annual revision of local ships. Furthermore, the team will pursue efforts to improve the performance of the product in order to demonstrate an advantage in terms of cost efficiency for fishing vessels.

**Website:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n\\_proj\\_id=4869](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4869)

They tested this technology on boats. They managed to show that the electricity production from excess engine heat could reduce the gas consumption. **After the end of the LIFE project, it must be demonstrated that activities can go on without LIFE support.** In this case, they continued to work on the prototype to have a device easily sold for use on other ships. The idea is that after the LIFE projects, the project can reach economic liveability and continue.



## Questions & Answers

### Who can lead a project? What kind of actor?

For LIFE: public institutions, local authorities, small companies, multinationals, NGOs, small associations. With the condition that you are legally registered. An individual or a sole trader cannot lead a project.

### What if we are too small to lead a project?

When you apply, the coordinator has to submit financial annexes (audit reports) so that the Commission can assess if the application is strong enough. For some, leading might be too big but does not mean that you are excluded, you can take part as a project beneficiary associated to the project. In some cases, environmental associations, which are too small, create the project and then look for an association who will agree to carry on the project and lead the project for them.

### On average how many partners in the consortium?

No rules. What is important is to have relevant partners to be able to manage the project. If your institution has all the competencies, rights and agreements necessary to carry out the project, you do not need partners. E.g. If the project is about turtle conservation, the relevant partners would be environmental associations, local authorities, etc. It is about what the project needs, no set numbers given by the European Commission.

### Will OCTS be fully eligible for the full Nature and Biodiversity subprogramme in the next programme (2021-2027)?

We only have the proposed regulation, it says that OCTs are eligible for the LIFE programme, so entities can focus on N&B. More doubts about the other areas, but N&B should not be an issue.

### In light of the impending BREXIT, are you aware of any considerations given to enable UKOTs to participate in the LIFE programme?

It does not look good. It was allowed up until now, but today the UK and its territories could still participate in any kind of EU programmes. The Commission has added a note stating that these actors should not be fundamental for the project (just in case). With the recent developments in the UK and the increasing possibility of a hard Brexit, UKOTs participation would not be possible, except that there can be action happening outside the EU territory if it is needed for concrete results in the EU. It should be applicable to UKOTs, but they will probably not be able to be project leaders anymore. Although these are just educated guesses.

### What is significant co-financing?

We talked about the co-financing expected for the LIFE programme. It just says significant contribution, no numbers. It should be understood to be relative to the share of the partners. It should be reasonable, cannot be less than a 2-5% contribution, but depends on the share these partners have in the project (do they have a substantial financial capacity, etc.). It is understandable that large enterprises would contribute more compared to a small association. It depends, but it should be at least a few percentages of the budget.



E.g.: A project where the project leader, supposed to have more involvement, contributed only 1% of the project budget, but it was calculated on a total budget of 17 million EUR, therefore it is a big contribution, and it was an association that did not have the same financial capacity of a big company. Therefore, the Commission accepted that 1% of the total budget was a reasonable contribution. Would not have been the case for a multinational company.

If the BEST programme finances 100%, is it not better to do more small BEST projects than a LIFE project?

It depends on your project. BEST is about creating knowledge. Every year, around 20 projects were financed for all the OCTs, therefore you can try to have several BEST projects financed, but you do not know if you will get it approved, and it does not have the same global reach as LIFE, which can reach all aspects of the problem, instead of one specific action. LIFE has a global approach.

Once the project is financed it will go smoothly, opening doors to working with different stakeholders of the territory. Every actor of LIFE projects says that it was a great experience for them, and made it possible to discuss subjects that needed to be addressed.

Looking at the eligible costs, some are financed by BEST and not LIFE and vice versa.

How and when do we receive the grants?

Pre-financing. E.g.: for the ongoing calls of proposals, grant agreements are signed in July, a few weeks later the first pre-financing is received. The grant signature is the green light for the EU. Usually there are three pre-financing blocks, depending on the duration of the project. With COVID-19, the first pre-financing was increased from 30 to 40%, so the first costs can be financed already by the EU.

The time you spend on the proposition is not part of the subvention, only the actions described in the project are eligible, and only the costs incurred after the starting date, not the preparation of proposals.

Closing Statement:

We hope this gives you a clear overview of what a LIFE project can finance. We hope that the OCTs will be eligible for all aspects of the LIFE programme and not just the Nature and Biodiversity programme.

Do not hesitate to contact the speakers if you have any questions.

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