

Programme for the environment and climate action, LIFE 2014-2020

2011/0428(COD) - 21/11/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 568 votes to 20, with 21 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE).

Parliament adopted its position at first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. They amended the Commission proposal as follows:

General objectives: the LIFE Programme should support of the Natura 2000 network and tackling the degradation of ecosystems. It should seek to support environmental and climate governance at all levels and support the implementation of the 7th Environment Action Programme. It could also finance activities in the overseas countries and territories (OCTs).

Budget: the financial envelope for the implementation of the LIFE Programme for the period from 2014 to 2020 is set at EUR 3 456 655 000 in current prices:

- EUR 2 592 491 250 allocated to the sub-programme for Environment;
- EUR 864 163 750 allocated to the sub-programme for Climate Action.

The sub-programme for Environment should have three priority areas: (i) Environment and Resource Efficiency; (ii) Nature and Biodiversity; (iii) Environmental Governance and Information. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts to add, delete or amend the thematic priorities.

At least 55% of the budgetary resources allocated to projects supported by way of action grants under the sub-programme for Environment shall be dedicated to projects supporting the conservation of nature and biodiversity.

The sub-programme for Climate Action should have three priority areas: (i) Climate Change Mitigation; (ii) Climate Change Adaptation; (iii) Climate Governance and Information.

On climate change adaptation, priority should be granted, where appropriate, to ecosystem-based approaches.

Types of financing: at least 81% of the budgetary resources for the LIFE Programme should be allocated to projects supported by way of action grants or, where appropriate, financial instruments as referred to in the Regulation.

A maximum of 30% of the budgetary resources allocated to action grants may be allocated to integrated projects.

Action grants may also finance capacity-building projects.

During the first multiannual work programme, a Member State shall be eligible for funding for one capacity-building project up to an amount of EUR 1 000 000. During the second multiannual work programme, a Member State shall be eligible for funding for one capacity-building project up to an amount of EUR 750 000.

The Commission shall establish a fast-track award procedure for all capacity-building projects.

Geographical balance: the Commission shall ensure geographical balance for integrated projects by indicatively allocating at least three integrated projects to each Member State, ensuring at least one integrated project under the sub-programme for Environment and at least one integrated project under the sub-programme for Climate Action during the LIFE programming period.

Cofinancing rate: in principle it should be the up to 60 % of eligible costs for all projects and may reach up to 75 % of eligible costs for projects funded under the priority area Nature and Biodiversity in the sub-programme for Environment that concern priority habitats or species; or up to 100 % of eligible costs for capacity-building projects.

Conditions for the eligibility of costs are laid down in Article 126 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. Such costs shall include VAT and staff costs. The Commission shall provide an overview, in the mid-term and ex-post evaluations of the LIFE Programme, of VAT reimbursements per Member State that project beneficiaries under the LIFE Programme have requested at the final payment stage.

Beneficiaries: with a view to ensuring the visibility of the LIFE Programme, the beneficiaries shall publicise the LIFE Programme and the results of their projects, always mentioning the Union support received. The LIFE Programme logo shall be used for all communication activities and appear on notice boards at strategic places visible to the public.

Lastly, the mid-term evaluation report shall contain or be accompanied by a thorough assessment of the extent and quality of the demand for, planning of and implementation of integrated projects.