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

2011/0428(COD) - 11/12/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) for the period 2014-2020.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 614/2007.

CONTENT: the LIFE Programme is the EU financial instrument to support projects on the environment and climate change in the whole of the EU. It shall contribute to sustainable development and to the achievement of the objectives and targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy and of relevant Union environment and climate strategies and plans.

Budget and sub-programmes: the financial envelope for the period 2014-2020 is fixed at EUR 3 456 655 million in current prices as follows:

- EUR 2 592 491250 allocated to the sub-programme Environment;
- 864.163.750 EUR allocated to the sub-programme Climate Action.

1) The sub-programme Environment is made up of three priority areas for action: a) Environment and Resource Efficiency; b) Nature and Biodiversity; and c) Environmental Governance and Information.

2) The sub-programme Climate Action is made up of three priority areas for action: a) Climate Change Mitigation; b) Climate Change Adaptation; c) Climate Governance and Information.

At least 81% of the budgetary resources for the LIFE Programme shall be allocated to projects supported by way of action grants. In line with wishes of the European Parliament, at least 55% of the budgetary resources allocated to projects supported by way of action grants shall be dedicated to projects supporting the conservation of nature and biodiversity.

Types of projects: the Regulation defines the eligibility and award criteria and project selection. It foresees the creation of a new type of project, the integrated projects: these projects aim to improve the implementation of environmental and climate policies and their integration into other policies, in particular, ensuring the coordinated mobilisation of other European funds, national or private funding sources for environmental or climate objectives. The integrated projects shall be implemented on a large territorial scale (in particular, regional, multi-regional, or national, and of cross-sectoral manner).

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.

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

The action grants may also finance capacity-building projects to build Member States' capacity to participate in the LIFE Programme.

Co-financing rates: this is in principle up to 60% of eligible costs: i) 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; ii) up to 100% of eligible costs for capacity-building projects.

Participation: the LIFE programme shall be open to the participation of countries of third countries (European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, candidate countries, countries to which the European Neighbourhood Policy applies).It can also finance activities outside the Union and in overseas countries and territories (OCTs). Cooperation with relevant international organisations, and with their institutions and bodies, shall also be possible

Beneficiaries: public and private bodies may be funded by the LIFE Programme. The LIFE Programme logo shall be used for all communication activities and appear on notice boards at strategic places visible to the public.

Monitoring and evaluation: the Commission shall present, no later than 30 June 2017, an external and independent mid-term evaluation report of the LIFE Programme, and not later than 31 December 2023, an external evaluation report of the LIFE Programme.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 23/12/2013. The Regulation shall apply from 01/01/2014.

DELEGATED ACTS: the Commission may adopt delegated acts in order to secure the best possible evaluation of the use of Union funds. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission for a period of seven years from 23 December 2013. The European Parliament or the Council may raise objections in regard to a delegated act within two months of notification of that act (this period may be extended by two months). If the European Parliament or the Council make objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.