

SIGGEN SEMINAR 2014

EXPERTISE AND OUTCOMES

EUROPEAN FUNDING FOR PROTECTED AREAS

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE:

Contribute to meet the EU 2020 targets by implementing the EU Biodiversity Strategy

- a) Developing capacity within the protected area management community to deliver more effectively managed and conserved protected natural heritage.



From 17 – 21 June, EUROPARC Federation took up the generous offer of the Alfred Toepfer Foundation to host the fifth EUROPARC training Sigger Seminar.

EUROPARC was given free use of the Foundation's seminar centre, the Sigger Estate on the German coast of the Baltic Sea. This one week in a year greatly benefits the EUROPARC Federation and its members and helps to take the organisation's mission forward.

The expertise and outcomes of the seminar are gathered in this report, available to the wide network of Protected Areas and Natura 2000 sites to facilitate the understanding of the new EU programs and of the opportunities for financing nature conservation and Protected Area management.

Introduction



The EUROPARC Federation is the largest nongovernmental organisation representing protected areas of different kind across Europe. Together, the members of the EUROPARC Federation are committed to the protection and sustainable management of Europe's natural heritage. Nature knows no boundaries and EUROPARC facilitates international cooperation to further improve and conserve our shared natural heritage and to ensure the values and benefits of protected areas are at the heart of Europe.

The Alfred Toepfer Foundation FVS is a private non-profit foundation established in 1931 by Alfred C. Toepfer. The Foundation is committed to promoting European unification as well as ensuring cultural diversity and understanding between the countries of Europe. It is mainly active in the domains of European integration, international understanding, art and culture, science, nature conservation, and youth work.

The Foundation and the EUROPARC Federation have worked closely together for a large number of years. The Foundation charitably donates money for three Alfred Toepfer Scholarships awarded by the Federation to young conservationists each year.

From 17 –21 June, EUROPARC Federation took up the generous offer of the Alfred Toepfer Foundation to host the fifth Siggen Seminar and side meetings week at the beautiful estate of Gut Siggen. EUROPARC were given free use of the Foundation's seminar centre, the Siggen Estate on the German coast of the Baltic Sea. The whole seminar week was attended by 21 people. The seminar benefits the EUROPARC Federation and its members and helps to take the organisation's mission forward.

SEMINAR TOPIC 2014

European funding for protected areas: Successful projects for effective Management

The Siggen Seminar is an annual event that EUROPARC has been running for five years thanks to the generous support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., aimed at the mid-level protected area professionals. These seminars aim to convert theory into practice by bringing together individuals with different background and from different parts of Europe to share their knowledge, ideas and experiences. At the end of the two-day seminar, participants take away new perspectives and approaches to help them improve the effectiveness of their work in their own protected area.

This year the seminar looked at the funding for Protected Areas. Developing capacity with the protected area management community is a fundamental goal of EUROPARC, as this in turn delivers more effectively managed and therefore conserved and protected natural heritage.

EUROPARC therefore dedicated its yearly two-day seminar on the new EU programming period 2014-2020 and other EU relevant funding for the management of protected areas. The seminar gathered 12 Protected Area managers and practitioners from eight different European countries, with two trainers and two facilitators reach the total number of 16.

The Seminar programme was addressed to protected areas managers, with interventions from funding experts. It included formal lectures, training sessions, and practical activities and was an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences on project management and development among Protected area practitioners from different countries.

The expertise and outcomes of the seminar along with the case studies from the participants are gathered in this report. The outcomes of the seminar will be made available to the wide network of Protected Areas to facilitate the understanding of the new EU programs and of the opportunities for financing nature conservation and PAs management.

More information on this seminar is also available on EUROPARC's dedicated pages for our seminars. Please see here for more information: <http://europarc.org/whats-on/siggen-seminars/siggen-series-2014/>

Annexes available on request:

- Participants list and list of Natura 2000 sites managed by the participant's home organisation/ protected area
- Photos from the seminar
- Evaluation of the seminar

SEMINAR CONTENTS

WHY ARE PROTECTED AREAS AND NATURA 2000 SITES APPLYING FOR EU FUNDS?

- Overcome the budget cuts / lack of funding
- Strengthen their function
- Increase the work force
- Increase the results achieved
- Increase actions implemented
- Increase visibility
- Develop pilot initiatives
- Strengthen partnership
- Show efficiency

EU FUNDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IS A DIFFICULT TOPIC BECAUSE:

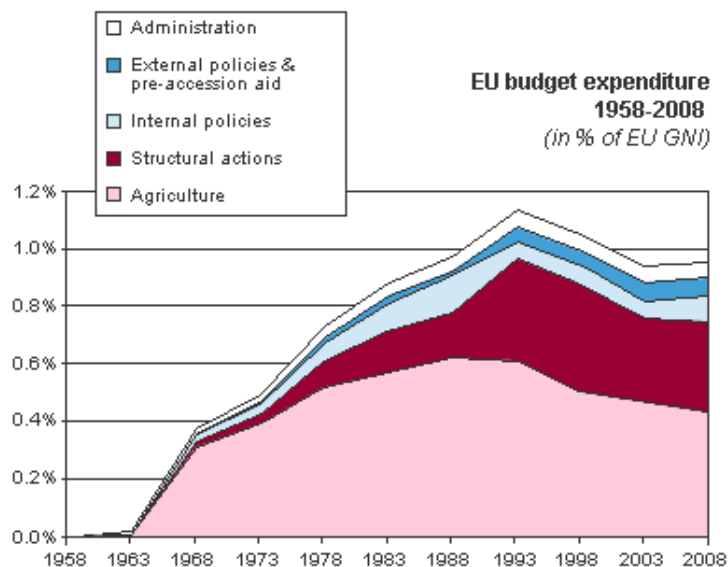
- EU funds jargon + technical jargon
- A lot of theory available, a few examples of real projects available as examples
- Little opportunity to learn from those who design/realize/implement the EU projects
- Necessity of continuous updates (deadlines, rules, regulations, online platforms, etc.)
- It requires a specific mind set
- There are several differences and distinctions between ordinary activities of Parks and EU projects
- Fluctuation – exchange rate problems for EU members not in the Eurozone
- Impact vs. reward

Protected Areas face problems when applying for EU funds due to many reasons, some of which include the technical jargon and not understanding the actual requirements described in the material available. Lack of real examples done in the field with similar funding is also very important. Funders often change rules, do updates and slight changes that for applicant's present difficulties. Protected Areas need to be ready for time that a funding application needs, particularly because many of the paperwork involves long bureaucratic process, which may cause delays.

Failing applications might discourage Protected Areas for re-applying. However, a different mind-set should be put and two options considered:

- a) Idea did not pass -> Look at other sources of funding
- b) Functional "mistake" in the application – to be fixed and re-apply for the same fund!

HOW FUNDS ARE SPENT IN EUROPE? 2007-2013

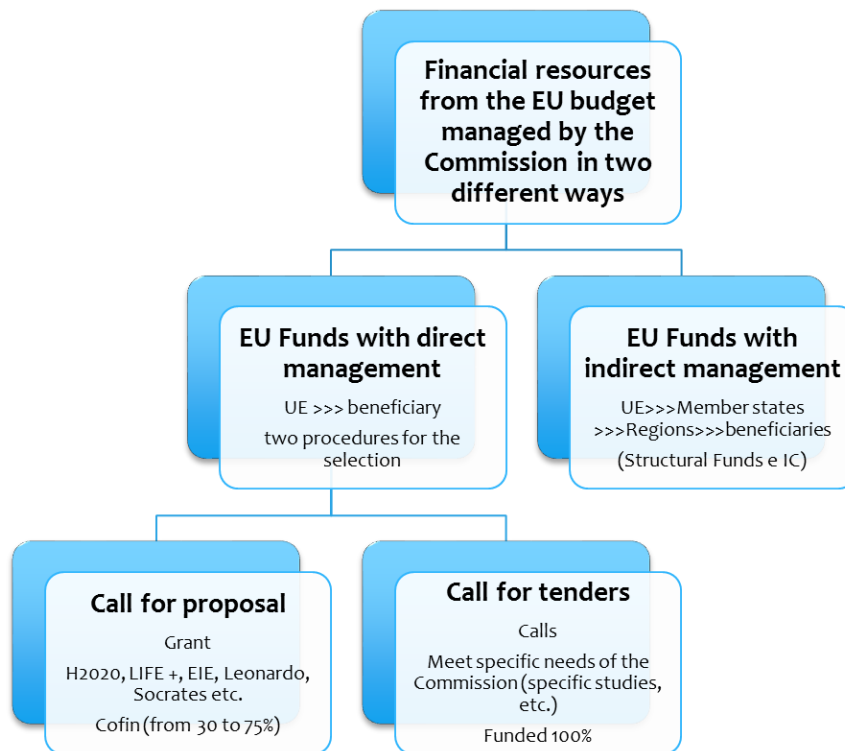
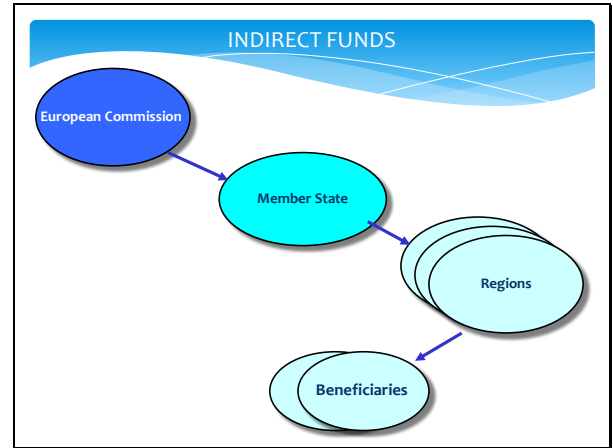
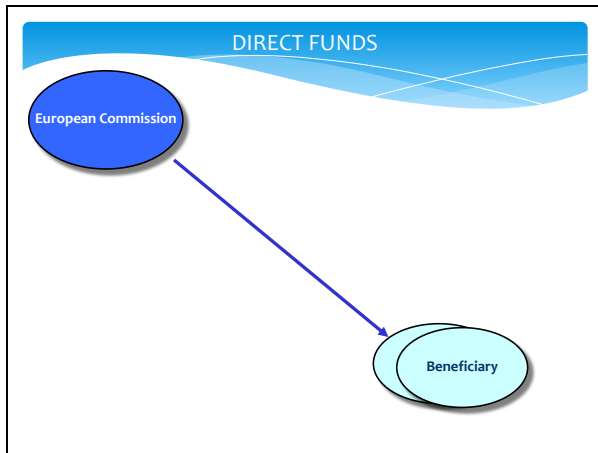


EU PROGRAMMES INTERESTING FOR PARKS

OVERVIEW ON AVAILABLE EU FUNDS; How to identify the right programme?

- **The LIFE + Programme**
 - projects with too much research focus might be rejected
- **INTERREG** (MED, SEE, CENTRAL, IVC, NORTHBALTIC, BILATERALS, ...)
 - ascent on different partners/countries
- **HORIZON2020** (ex. 7FP)
 - Universities might be a good partner for PAs here
- The European Regional Development Fund (**ERDF**)
 - high level of co-financing, up to 75%
 - very attractive, but complex administrator process
 - suggested partnership with local actors
- The European Social Fund (**ESF**)
 - including local actors, educational/training opportunities, esp. with people with special needs
- The Cohesion Fund (**CF**)
- The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (**EAFRD**)
- The Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (**CIP**)
 - include small and medium enterprises
- The European Fishery Fund (**EFF**)
- The EuropeAid
- ERASMUS + (GRUNDTVIG, LEONARDO, YOUTH IN ACTION...)

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EU FUNDS



DEVELOPING THE PROJECT IDEA

- The logical framework of the proposal - needs to be very well developed – “sound strong on the paper”
- How to build a sound proposal?
- Identification and distinction of problems, objectives, results, actions, indicators, communication & dissemination activities

When talking about project ideas, it is not rare that a great idea exists but not exactly the problem, too. The problem itself needs to be very well expressed and the importance of it, pointed out. It needs to be linked to the context of the regular work and explain why the conceptual idea is the ideal solution to solving it. Problems are best targeted and analysed through a problem tree technique.

ELEMENTS OF A PROJECT

- Problem targeted
- Preoperational context (in which it operates)
- Objective/s
- Choosing the means to achieve them
- Partners and target groups
- Budget
- Project timeline
- Results
- Outputs
- Evaluation System

Tip:

Preparing a project is a small project itself. Creating a starting point timeline of actions, checklist of “to-dos”, important papers to get is always advisable. Adding buffer time to a real project duration will minimize the delays and work not being done in time. Budgets should always be determined at the end of preparing the project applications. In the project description, it is really important to include, why a particular fund was chosen, why it is the best option for the project and why some other don't fit.

CONSISTENCY WITH EU ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES IN FORCE

- Principles laid down in the Treaties (subsidiarity, precaution, prevention, polluter pays, action based on scientific data, information, cooperation)
- Other (directives, LIFE + Regulation, plans, etc.).

DISADVANTAGES OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE EU

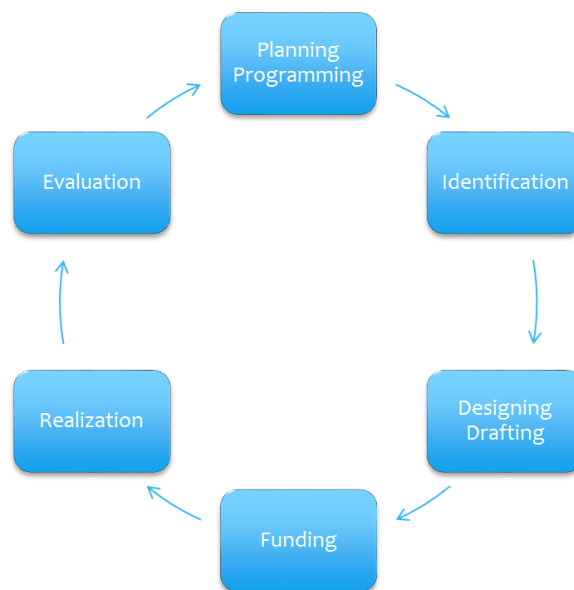
- Additional administrative costs for specific financial reporting
- Technical and financial control of EU
- Long time for coordination and quality control

- Difficult to make changes during implementation
- Initial economic investment

FEATURES THAT PROJECTS SHOULD HAVE - TO RECEIVE EU CO-FINANCING

- Consistency of the project with EU policy to support (eg. environment)
- Good cost-benefit ratio
- Often more partners from different countries
- European added value
- Replicability in other contexts
- A certain degree of innovation
- Follow the rules of the calls

PROJECT CONCEPTION: THE LIFE CYCLE - STEPS TO FOLLOW

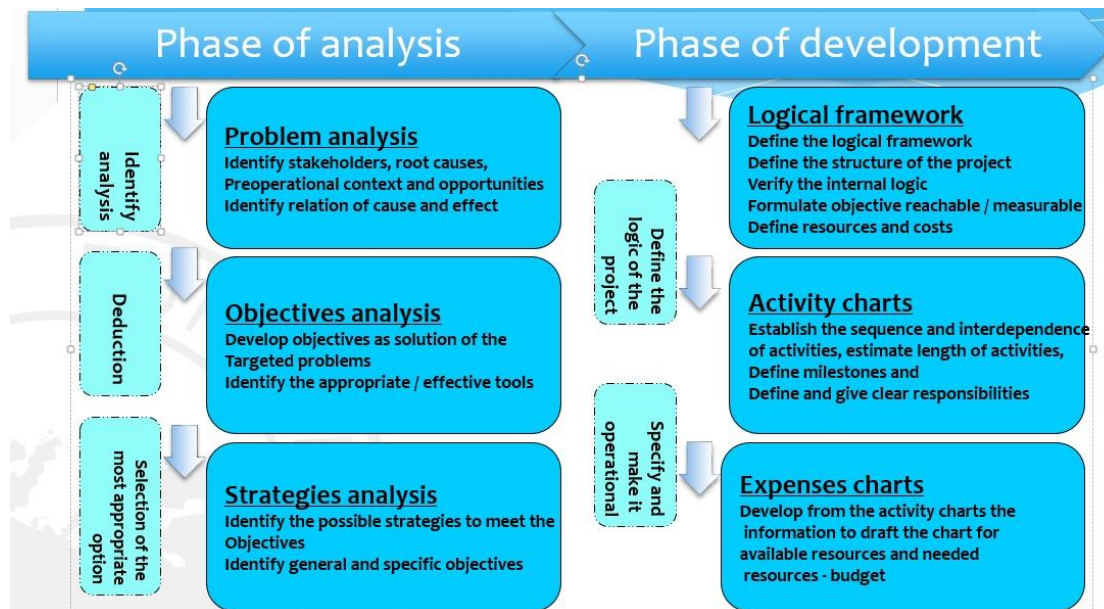


- Evaluate the problems to be solved
- Assess stakeholders and authorities involved
- Verify opportunities and rules of Life +
- Check the database of Life + projects funded in the past on similar issues
- Draw up the logical framework
- propose to partner a list of actions according to the scheme of Life
- Develop the project with partners / stakeholders identified

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH

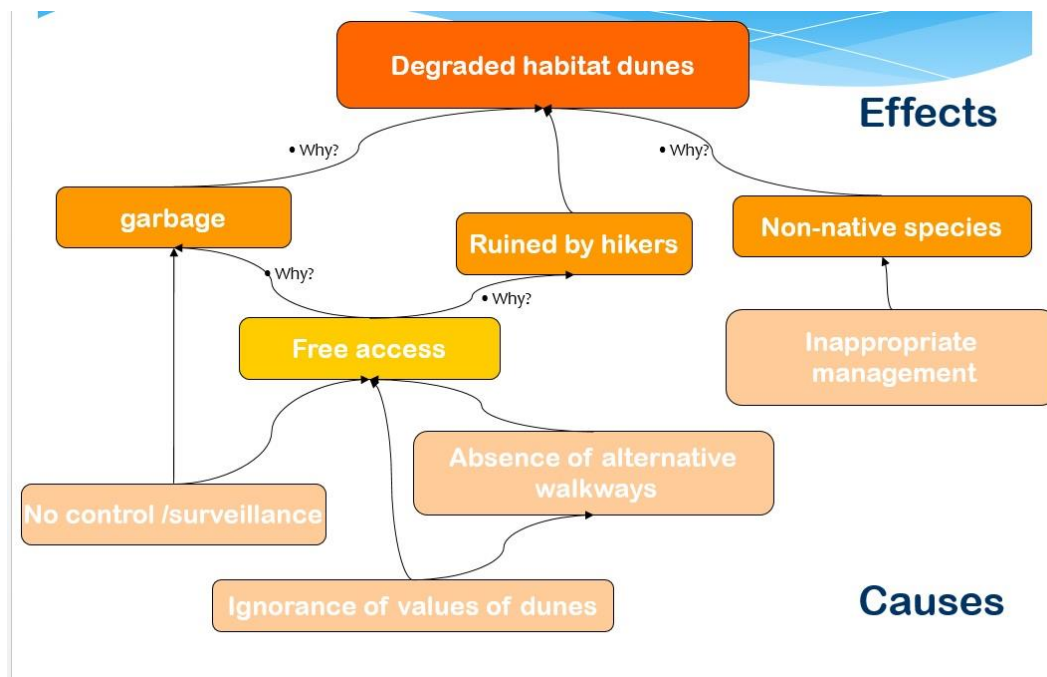
- Helps to organise project ideas when designing
- Requires synthesis, realism, consistency
- It serves both to design and to assess
- It should be supported by thematic expertise
- Known as Logical Framework Approach (LFA)

PHASES OF LFA PROBLEMS ANALYSIS



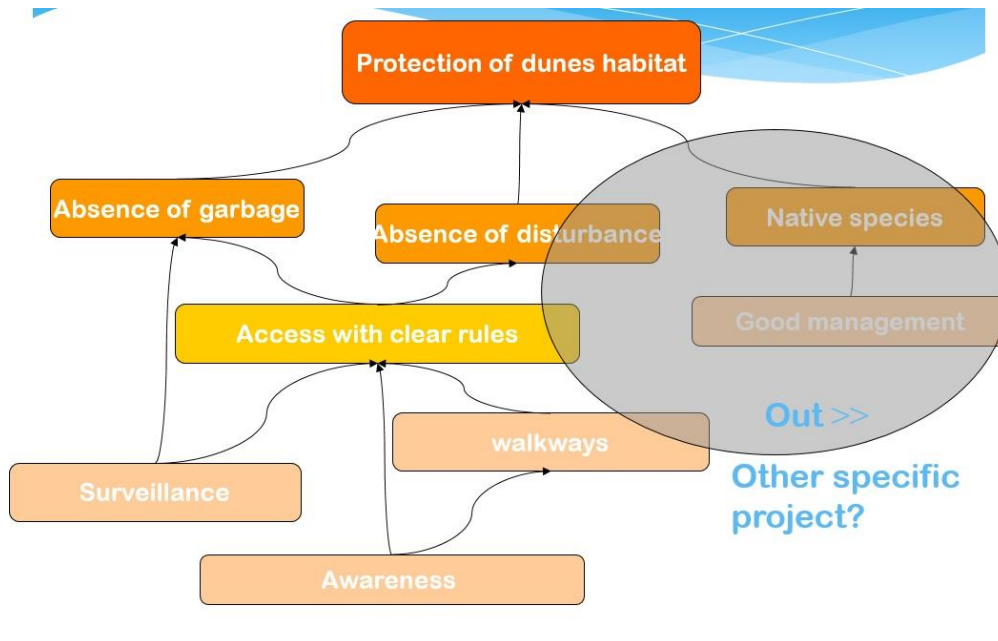
PROBLEMS ANALYSIS

- Identify and agree on the focal problem
- Identification of stakeholders
- Meetings with stakeholders
- Identification of problems
- Establish cause and effect relationships between the problems: to build a problem tree



CHOICE OF STRATEGY

- Which of the issues/problems will be solved by the project?
- Must take into account the interests of stakeholders, political demands, practical limitations and opportunities, technical knowledge
- Should maximize the use of resources



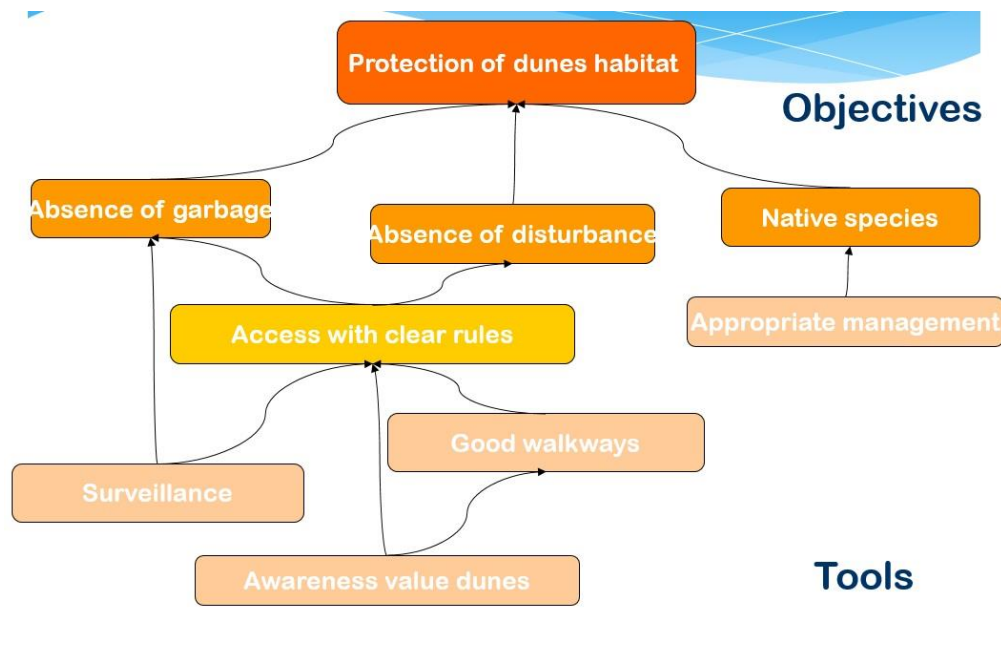
OBJECTIVES

- Turn problems into positive: these are the objectives
- Causes>solution
- Brief prediction of the desired reality

SMART Objectives

- **Specific (precise)** - clear target, not just a vague wish
 - o *'would all readers understand the objective as having the same meaning ?'*
- **Measurable** - quantified, or referred to as an outcome that can in some way be measured
 - o managers must be able to tell whether management activities are achieving the desired results
- **Aadjustable** - enough flexibility to enable adjustment and adaptation
 - o Making an objective too rigid and exact denies managers the flexibility essential to act in response to changing local conditions
- **Realistic (achievable)** - should express what is practically possible
 - o It must be possible to achieve the objectives within the existing context.
- **Time bound** - default time for achieving the objectives: usually the duration of the project
 - o if they are to be achieved in a shorter period this should be made clear

DEFINING THE OBJECTIVE



(Action) what (target) [by (indicating the action)], [(Specifications)] [in/during (time period) years]

Example of a general objective:

START THE RESTORATION, of THE HIGH NATURE VALUE GRASSLANDS on at least 20% of the degraded area by reintroducing SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, especially related to grazing and fire management by the end of the project.

(Action) what (target) [by (indicating the action)], [(Specifications)] [in/during (time period) years]

Example of a specific objective:

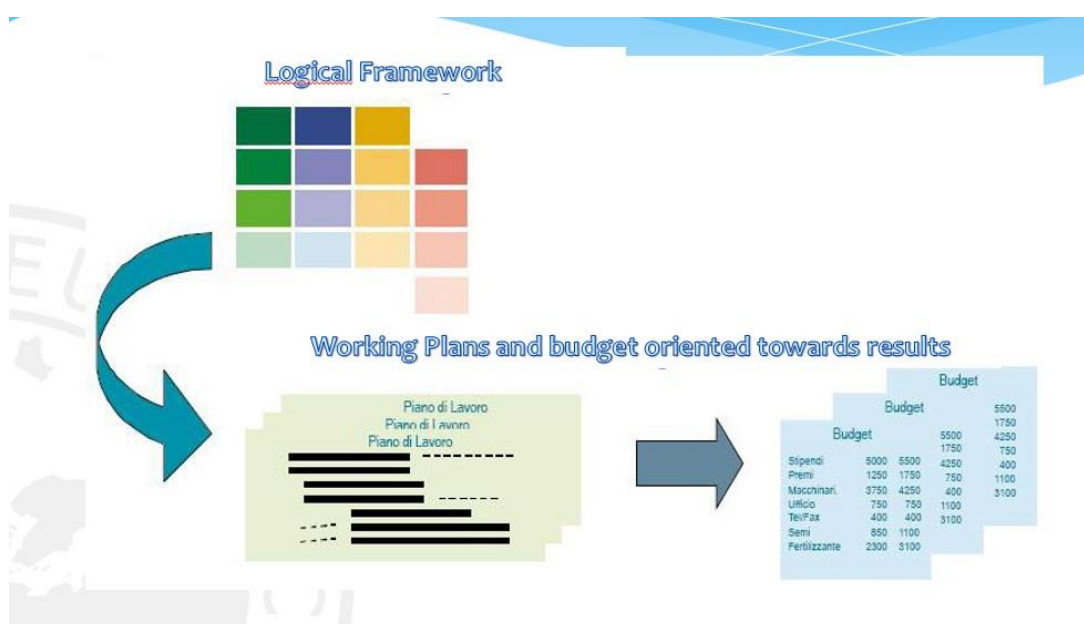
DEVELOP and PROMOTE during the life of the project RECOMMANDATIONS and GUIDANCE ON SUSTAINABLE USE OF HNV GRASSLAND for the USE of LOCAL FARMERS by building on traditional methods and funding criteria for relevant EU subsidies that are of nature friendly character.

FROM THE MATRIX LF TO THE WORKING PLANS

Logic of intervention	Measurable indicators	Verification sources	Conditions
General objectives			
Specific objective			
Expected results			
Activity	Resources	Expenses	
IF the results are given AND the conditions realized THEREFORE the objective of the project is met			Pre-conditions

FROM THE MATRIX QL TO THE WORKING PLANS

- Extract list of actions
- Divide the actions in sub actions according to the chronological order
- Clarify the links between the actions
- Estimate the duration of the actions
- Define milestones and deliverables
- Define the responsibilities



COMMON MISTAKES IN PREPARING DRAFTS

- Poor logical framework of the project: poor link between addressed problems and actions proposed
- Confusion between problems-objectives-actions-results
- Environmental problems poorly and briefly described
- Confusion between causes and effects of the problems
- Right level of details in the proposed actions
- Poor identification of stakeholders
- Stakeholders and the competent authorities on the subject not involved in the project
- Unforeseen risks

STRENGTHS OF APPROVED PROJECTS

Related to the design:

- A clear objective, simple and verifiable manner that contributes to the strategy of reference
- Prediction of realistic timeframes, particularly at start-up
- Knowledge of the baseline situation and risks
- Involvement of stakeholders

Related to the implementation:

- Support the competent authorities
- Competence of the personnel involved
- Continuity in the coordination of the project

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose only 1 general objective for the project
- realistic design
- use clear and concise writing
- Use networks of entities / companies already present
- Help with design techniques: Project Cycle Management and Logical Framework Approach
- Set the project to respond to unforeseen events (flexibility-adaptation)

CRITERIA FOR GOOD PARTNERS

- Coordinating Beneficiary: public body with experience in EU projects.
- Associated Beneficiary1: University, research centre
- Associated Beneficiary2: NGO
- Associated Beneficiary3: firm

E.G. REJECTION LETTER OF CENTRAL EUROPE

Notwithstanding the fact that the project proposal is led by an experienced Lead Applicant in managing transnational co-operation projects, the proposal has not been approved due to the following main reasons:

- The project proposal is considered only to a limited extent relevant for the targeted Area of Intervention;
- The added value of transnational cooperation is not sufficiently presented;
- Links to the national and regional policies have not been thoroughly demonstrated;
- The project features potential overlaps with other Programmes;
- The partnership lacks involvement of representatives of the policy level and entities with experience in innovation, training and promotion of knowledge;
- The work plan does not clearly showcase activities towards reaching the overall objectives and transfer of the results;
- Sustainability and mainstreaming of the project results is not adequately safeguarded;
- The Core outputs have not been clearly defined and adapted to the user needs;
- The communication plan is not sufficiently elaborated;
- The overall budget is not justified based on the proposed activities;
- The split between the Budget Lines are not coherent with activities and outputs.

LIFE COMPARED TO OTHER EU FUNDS

Basic R&D	Applied R&D	Demonstration	Commercialisation	Market accumulation	Diffusion
FP7					
			EIP*		
			IEE*		
			ICT* (enabling)		
		LIFE +			
		ERDF			
					ESF
					Cohesion

FORMS TO BE FILLED ONLINE

**Financial
Forms F**

**Technical
Forms
A, B, C**

ORGANIZING THE WORKFLOW

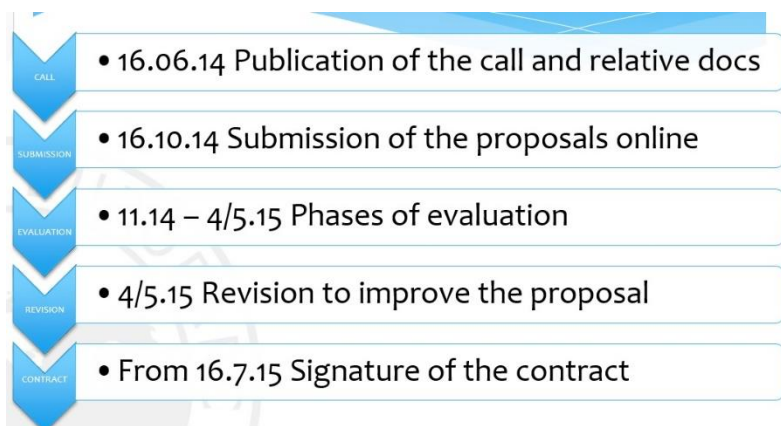
- Who does what and when?
- setting appropriate deadlines

PROJECT XXX			July				September				October		
n#	Activity	Responsible	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III
1	Coordination & Submission												
	Development of the Logical Framework and outline actions												
	Coordination meetings and updates												
	Relationships with partners and co-financiers X												
	Relationships with partners and co-financiers Y												
	Coordination of the design of the proposal												
	Quality Control												
	Start of the procedure online (Registration Lead Applicant)												
	Completions online forms												
2	Part A - Administrative Information												
	Production coordination FORM A												
	Production FORM A												
	Check Administrative data from partner organizations and co-financiers												
	Collection of signed forms and upload the pdf on the site												
	Collection data for Forms AT and online filing												
3	Part B - technical summary and overall context of the project												
	Drawing up the first draft of contents	(person responsible for his/her own part - see breakdown table in the Template Form B)											
	Updated draft (depending on the contents Part C)												
	Finalizing contents												
	Drawing diagrams and explanatory diagrams												
4	Part C - detailed technical description of the proposed actions												
	Drawing up the first draft of contents	(person responsible for his/her own part - see breakdown table in the Template Form B)											
	Updated drafts Actions												
	Finalization of the contents for "Actions"												
	Diagrams and explanatory diagrams												
5	BUDGET												
	Collection of information relative Personnel of the Partners												
	Collecting quotes from subcontractors												
	Drafting Budget												
	Fill out online Budget												

NEEDED ROLES FOR DESIGNING AND DRAFTING THE PROJECT

- 1 technical expert on EU projects
- 1 financial expert responsible for the budget
- 1 secretary for collecting data, info and forms from partners
- 1 technical and administrative reference for each partner/beneficiary

VARIOUS PHASES FOR THE SELECTION OF THE LIFE+ PROJECTS



ORGANIZING THE WORK: TIMELINE

CHART FOR THE SEVERAL PHASES OF THE PROJECT LIFE +								
ACTION	May - 15June	15June - 30June	15July - 31July	1Aug - 31Aug	1-31 August	15-30 Sep	15October	May 2015
a) Preliminary meeting, scientific and technical advice on the actions of the project and evaluation of the adequacy of the design concept with respect to the demands of the LIFE + fund								
b) Setting up the work and coordination of the working group								
c) analysis of the call and guidelines for applicants								
c) Survey of activities of similar projects								
d) Definition of design actions								
e) Assistance in completing Part A (Administrative) of the application form								
f) Data collection and compilation of Part B (Objectives and context) of the application form								
g) Compilation of Part C (Detail shares) of the application form on the basis of data provided by the project participants								
h) Collecting quotes and completing Part F (Budget) of the application form								
i) Meetings between the project participants and the working group								
j) Quality Control								
m) Online filing of the application form and attachments								
Negotiation/revision with the EC to improve the project								

ROLES OF INSTITUTIONS IN LIFE +

European Commission (DG Environment) with external expertise:

- Selection of projects
- Co-financing
- Monitoring of the project implementation

Member States (Ministry of Environment):

- Receive and forward the projects to the EC
- Submit national priorities
- Submit national comments on the projects

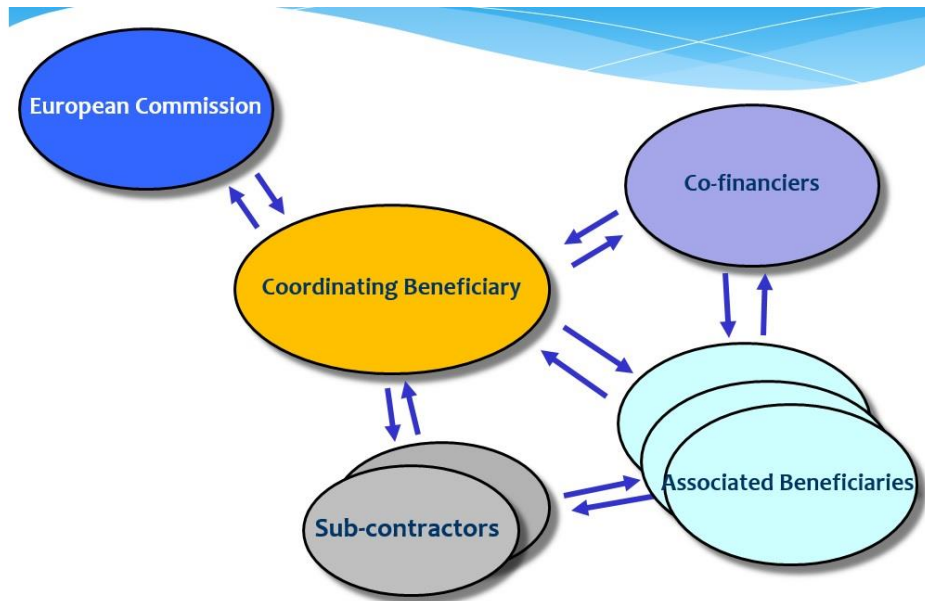
EVALUATION: EC AND EXT.EXP



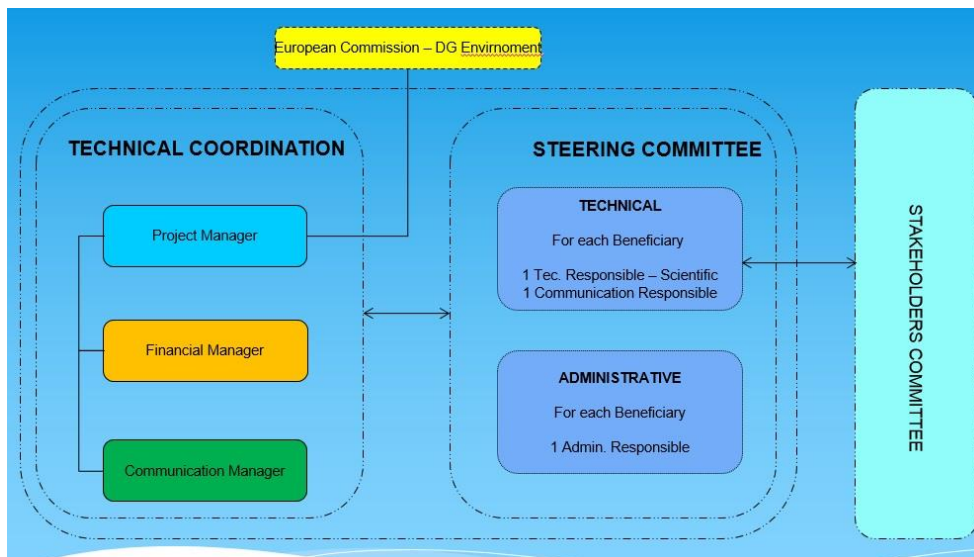
VERIFICATION VISITS - WHAT WILL THE MONITORS CHECK

- Actions development on paper
- Actions development on the sites
- Communication materials (info boards, leaflets, etc.)
- Random check on expenses documents, invoices, etc
- Results achieved
- Eventual problems

PLAYERS OF A LIFE + PROJECT



PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION



PECULIARITIES OF LIFE PROGRAMME 2014 – 2020

- First call from May to October 2014
- LIFE catalyst for other funds
- LIFE should promote implementation and integration of environment and climate change objectives into other policies and practice of the Member States
- Contributing to the 7th Environmental Action Plan
- Better governance
- Specific link with EU priorities: resource use efficiency, biodiversity loss, climate change adaptation and mitigation

WEBSITE LIFE +

The screenshot shows the LIFE Programme website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: HOME, ABOUT LIFE, NEWS, FUNDING, PUBLICATIONS, TOOLKIT, CONTACT, and SITE MAP. Below this is a banner with various environmental images. The main content area is titled 'LIFE 2014-2020' and features a sub-header '2014 Call for proposals for LIFE Action Grants'. The text below the sub-header states: 'The Commission invites legal persons (entities) registered in the European Union (EU) to present proposals for the 2014 Call for proposals for LIFE Action Grants. The call covers proposals for both LIFE sub-programmes. For the sub-programme for Environment, this call will cover action grants "Traditional" projects, Preparatory projects, Integrated projects, Technical Assistance projects and Capacity Building'.

On the left sidebar, there are sections for 'LIFE by theme' (Nature, Biodiversity; Environment), 'LIFE search' (By country; Project database; Best projects; Project publications; Natura 2000 sites), and 'Quick Links 2014 call' (Traditional projects, Preparatory projects, Integrated projects).

LIFE 2014 – 2020, REG. APPROVED 21/11, 3.4 BIL € 60% COFIN.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub-Programme for Environment ▪ "Traditional" projects ▪ Preparatory projects ▪ Integrated projects ▪ Technical Assistance projects ▪ Capacity Building projects ▪ 2.6 billion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub-programme for Climate Action ▪ "Traditional" projects ▪ Capacity Building projects ▪ 0.8 billion
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"TRADITIONAL" PROJECTS

"Traditional" projects cover the following priority areas:

- LIFE Nature & Biodiversity
- LIFE Environment & Resource Efficiency
- LIFE Environmental Governance & Information
- LIFE Climate Change Mitigation
- LIFE Climate Change Adaptation
- LIFE Climate Governance and Information
- **Deadline: 16 October 2014 at 16.00 hours Brussels local time**
- **Format: eProposal**

"Traditional" projects may be best-practice, demonstration, pilot or information, awareness and dissemination projects (ie similar to LIFE+ Nature, Biodiversity, Environment and Information projects), depending on the priority area.

Best practice projects apply appropriate, cost-effective and state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project.

Demonstration projects put into practice, test, evaluate and disseminate actions, methodologies or approaches that are new or unknown in the specific context of the project, such as the geographical, ecological, socio-economic context, and that could be applied elsewhere in similar circumstances.

Pilot projects apply a technique or method that has not been applied or tested before, or elsewhere, that offer potential environmental or climate advantages compared to current best practice and that can subsequently be applied on a larger scale to similar situations.

Information, awareness and dissemination projects aim at supporting communication, dissemination of information and awareness raising in the fields of the sub-programmes for Environment and Climate Action.

LIFE NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

LIFE Nature & Biodiversity (sub-programme for Environment) is similar to the former LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity strand. It will co-finance action grants for best practice, pilot and demonstration projects that contribute to the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives Directives and the Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, and the development, implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network.

LIFE ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

LIFE Environment & Resource Efficiency (sub-programme for Environment) is similar to the former LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance strand (but no longer covers climate change related projects). It will co-finance action grants for pilot and demonstration projects to develop, test and

demonstrate policy or management approaches, best practices and solutions, including development and demonstration of innovative technologies, to environmental challenges, suitable for being replicated, transferred or mainstreamed, including with respect to the link between the environment and health, and in support of resource efficiency-related policy and legislation, including the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe; and to improve the knowledge base for the development, implementation, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of Union environmental policy and legislation, and for the assessment and monitoring of the factors, pressures and responses that impact on the environment within and outside the Union.

LIFE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION

LIFE Environmental Governance & Information (sub-programme for Environment) incorporates elements of the former LIFE+ Information & Communication strand. It will co-finance action grants for information, awareness and dissemination projects to promote awareness raising on environmental matters, including generating public and stakeholder support of Union policy-making in the field of the environment, and to promote knowledge on sustainable development and new patterns for sustainable consumption; to support communication, management, and dissemination of information in the field of the environment, and to facilitate knowledge sharing on successful environmental solutions and practice, including by developing cooperation platforms among stakeholders and training; and to promote and contribute to more effective compliance with and enforcement of Union environmental legislation, in particular by promoting the development and dissemination of best practices and policy approaches.

LIFE CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

LIFE Climate Change Mitigation (sub-programme for Climate Action) will co-finance action grants for best practice, pilot and demonstration projects that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; that contribute to the implementation and development of Union policy and legislation on climate change mitigation, including mainstreaming across policy areas, in particular by developing, testing and demonstrating policy or management approaches, best practices and solutions for climate change mitigation; that improve the knowledge base for the development, assessment, monitoring, evaluation and implementation of effective climate change mitigation actions and measures and that enhance the capacity to apply that knowledge in practice; that facilitate the development and implementation of integrated approaches, such as for climate change mitigation strategies and action plans, at local, regional or national level; and that contribute to the development and demonstration of innovative climate change mitigation technologies, systems, methods and instruments that are suitable for being replicated, transferred or mainstreamed. See also the LIFE section of the DG Climate Action web-site.

LIFE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

LIFE Climate Change Adaptation (sub-programme for Climate Action) will co-finance action grants for best practice, pilot and demonstration projects that contribute to supporting efforts leading to increased resilience to climate change; that contribute to the development and implementation of Union policy on climate change adaptation, including mainstreaming across policy areas, in particular by developing, testing and demonstrating policy or management approaches, best practices and solutions for climate change adaptation, including, where appropriate, ecosystem-based approaches; that improve the knowledge base for the development, assessment, monitoring, evaluation and implementation of effective climate change adaptation actions and measures, prioritising, where appropriate, those applying an ecosystem-based approach, and to enhance the capacity to apply that knowledge in practice; that facilitate the development and implementation of integrated approaches, such as for climate change adaptation strategies and action plans, at local, regional or national level, prioritising, where appropriate, ecosystem-based approaches; and that contribute to the development and demonstration of innovative climate change adaptation technologies, systems, methods and instruments that are suitable for being replicated, transferred or mainstreamed. See also the LIFE section of the DG Climate Action web-site.

LIFE CLIMATE GOVERNANCE AND INFORMATION

LIFE Climate Governance and Information (sub-programme for Climate Action) will co-finance action grants for information, awareness and dissemination projects that promote awareness raising on climate matters, including generating public and stakeholder support of Union policy-making in the field of the climate, and to promote knowledge on sustainable development; that support communication, management, and dissemination of information in the field of the climate and to facilitate knowledge sharing on successful climate solutions and practice, including by developing cooperation platforms among stakeholders and training; and that promote and contribute to more effective compliance with and enforcement of Union climate legislation, in particular by promoting the development and dissemination of best practices and policy approaches.

PREPARATORY PROJECTS

Preparatory projects (sub-programme for Environment only, not for Climate Action) address specific needs for the development and implementation of Union environmental or climate policy and legislation. The specific topics are indicated in the application guide.

Deadline: 29 October 2014 at 16.00 hours Brussels local time

INTEGRATED PROJECTS

Integrated projects (sub-programme for Environment, not for Climate Action) are projects implementing on a large territorial scale (regional, multi-regional, national or trans-national scale) environmental or climate plans or strategies required by specific Union environmental or climate legislation, developed pursuant to other Union acts or developed by Member States' authorities, primarily in the areas of nature (including Natura 2000 network management), water, waste, air and climate change mitigation and adaptation*, while ensuring involvement of stakeholders and promoting the coordination with and mobilisation of at least one other relevant Union, national or private funding source. * Note that this year's call does not include integrated projects for Climate Action.

Deadline: Phase I, concept note 10 October 2014 at 16.00 hours Brussels local time Format: electronic files on CD-ROM or DVD (note: not via e-proposal)

Deadline: Phase II, full proposal April 2015 (tbc)

Format: electronic files on CD-ROM or DVD (note: not via e-proposal)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS

Technical Assistance projects (sub-programme for Environment, not for Climate Action) provide, by way of action grants, financial support to help applicants prepare integrated projects.

Deadline: 15 September 2014 at 16.00 hours Brussels local time Format: electronic files on CD-ROM or DVD (note: not via e-proposal)

CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS

Capacity Building projects provide financial support to activities required to build the capacity of Member States, including LIFE national or regional contact points, with a view to enabling Member States to participate more effectively in the LIFE Programme.

Deadline: on a rolling basis until 30 September 2015 at 16.00 hours Brussels local time

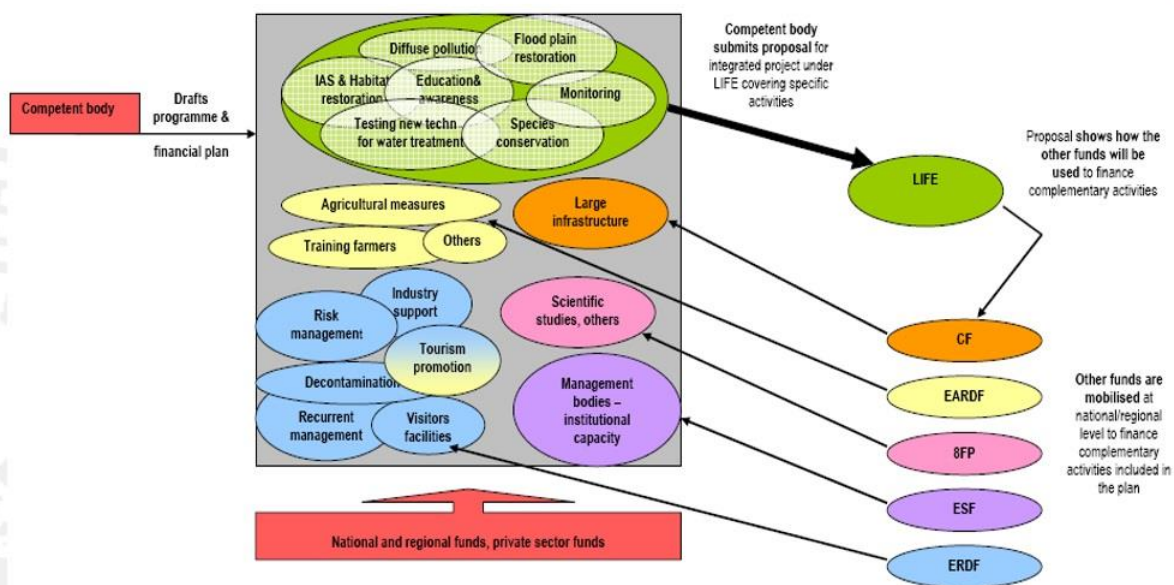
Format: electronic files on CD-ROM or DVD (note: not via e-proposal)

INTEGRATED PROJECTS: PECULIARITIES

- Two-step selection procedure
- simplified reporting
- EC LIFE is responsible for disseminating the results of the project in the appropriate committees
- Technical assistance to member states in order to prepare them

INTEGRATED PROJECTS: EXAMPLE

River Basin Management Plan for Basin X and financial plan*



LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAMMES

- Prepared by the Commission in consultation with Member States
- Will address priorities, allocation of resources between interventions, targets for the period. Ability to create critical mass in specific issues.
- The priorities will have a duration of 4 + 3 years.
- Are not exhaustive: a proposed project may also cover other topics
- Integrated projects do not follow this plan but must relate to the areas referred to in Regulation Life

STRUCTURE OF A LIFE+ NAT&BIO

- Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans or action plans
- Possible purchase of land
- Concrete conservation actions
- Monitoring of the project
- Raising awareness and dissemination of results
- Project management and monitoring of progress

STRUCTURE OF A LIFE+ ENV

- Preparatory actions (if needed)
- Actions to Implement
- Monitoring of the project
- Communication and dissemination
- Project management and monitoring of progress

STRUCTURE OF LIFE+ INF

- Project management and monitoring of progress
- Preparatory actions (if necessary)
- Communication actions / campaigns to raise awareness
- training actions
- Monitoring the impact of the project on the public and on the environmental problem
- Communication and dissemination of the project

Case studies

Here you can find examples of successful projects our participants brought to the seminar that were used as examples of good practice. Please do not hesitate to get in contact with the project leaders and partners for more information. The descriptions below are kept very brief to give you an overview and some examples on what our Protected Areas and Natura 2000 sites are doing out there.

I. W.E.C.A.N - WORKING TOGETHER FOR ECONOMICALLY PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES THROUGH ASSETS of NATURAL HERITAGE

COUNTRY: FRANCE, BELGIUM, WALES

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION

- Belgium (Lead partner) : Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland
- France : Espaces naturels régionaux and the natural regional Parks of Avesnois & Scarpe-Escaut.
- Wales : Valleys regional park & Welsh assembly government

FUND: European Regional Development Fund through Interreg IVB, North-West Europe

DESCRIPTION:

The territories involved in the WECAN project are located in post-industrial, densely populated regions. They have all suffered a massive decline in heavy industry, more specifically the closure of coalmines and related activities. Today, these regions are experiencing high levels of economic inactivity and often suffer with problems of social exclusion.

The local communities involved in the project have a lot in common: previously they were flourishing industrial communities with vast natural areas, some of which are part of the Natura 2000-network, interspersed with reclaimed former industrial landscapes.

To realise the project's objectives, the six partners are focusing on concrete actions, centred on 4 "work packages".

- **Economic Value of Nature** : identifying, developing and testing transferable techniques for analysing the economic value of natural heritage sites.
- **Involving Private Sector** : developing, promoting and evaluating innovative examples of corporate sector involvement (responsible companies) in natural heritage sites.
- **New Visitor Payback Schemes** : evaluating the mechanisms involved in existing 'Visitor payback' schemes with a view to developing appropriate models for post-industrial regions and testing their effectiveness; creating guidelines to promote the transfer of similar schemes in other regions.
- **Stimulating Social Economy** : stimulating the social economy by engaging and encouraging local communities to participate in natural heritage sites to help support economic regeneration. The goal is to help promote employability and create job opportunities.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT: <http://wecan-interregivb.eu/>

II. MOURNE COOLEY GULLION GEOTOURISM

COUNTRY: NORTHERN IRLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION

- Partners: Three local authorities, East Border Region Partnership, Geological Survey of Ireland, Geological Survey of Northern Ireland and Mourne Heritage Trust

FUND: Interreg IVA

DESCRIPTION:

Duration 2.5 years but had been intended for 5. Application and approval process took so long that we ran up against the end of the funding period. €1.4m

This project focuses on the granite upland areas of the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Ring of Gullion AONB, in Northern Ireland, and the adjacent Cooley peninsula in County Louth, Republic of Ireland. It aims to increase visitor numbers in this area divided by the Irish border and impacts by the 'Troubles' by enhancing the access to, and interpretation and marketing, of the shared, special geology and related landscape qualities. It also aims to harmonise visitor and environmental management services and infrastructure across the region.

Difficulties encountered in the application process included the lack of understanding of our local funding administrators – the Special EU Programmes Body for Northern Ireland –of landscape based rural tourism across a wide natural resource, as opposed to a single piece of tourism infrastructure development. This resulted in the project initially being rejected because the officials could not distinguish it from another project and perceiving duplication which did not exist. It was only reinstated to the process on appeal. Understanding problems continued through the assessment and economic appraisal processes, with some incredibly naïve questions being asked repeatedly. Funder also struggled to accommodate the very clear and widely accepted strategic rationale for the project within the constraints of the bureaucratic process and the terms in which they needed outputs, outcomes etc expressed.

Some implementation problems have come from the fact that while the project was initiated and evolved by Mourne Heritage Trust the lead partner had to be one of the local authorities and the processes associated with it around recruitment, procurement etc have not necessarily been effective, while line management of the project has not perhaps been as expert as it might have been.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT:

<http://mournecooleygullion.com>

III. DANUBEPARKS – the Danube River Network of Protected Areas

COUNTRY: ROMANIA

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve / Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA)

FUND:

DESCRIPTION:

The Protected Areas along the Danube preserve and restore the most valuable habitats of this international river, thus safeguarding an important part of Europe's natural heritage for future generations. Cross-border and transnational cooperation is an indispensable part of this work; nature doesn't recognise state borders, so nature protection needs cooperation across borders as well if results are to be achieved. Therefore, DANUBEPARKS – the Danube River Network of Protected Areas – was founded in April 2007. Eight protected areas were among the founders of this network, and many more joined their work during the early years so that today there are a number of 17 protected areas in the network. The goal is to integrate all Protected Area administrations along the Danube as well as the bigger tributaries (e.g. Prut, Sava, Tisza, Morava, etc.), which share the same problems and are therefore able to solve these issues more efficiently by close cooperation. The DANUBEPARKS Network pursues its goals on the basis of continuous informal cooperation, but mainly implements conservation actions contributing to these goals by EU-co-financed transnational projects. The programme which currently fits the network best is the ETC South East Europe Programme, with its priority axis on "Protection and Improvement of the Environment" and the Area of Intervention contained therein on "Promote cooperation in management of natural assets and protected areas". The first project that the Danube Protected Areas implemented jointly, from April 2009 to February 2012, was called DANUBEPARKS and had a budget of € 2,7 mil. Among the activities and results achieved in this project were River Morphology, Nature Tourism, Habitat Networks and Transnational Monitoring and Species Preservation. The second joint project, called DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0, is currently ongoing (October 2012 until September 2014) and builds on the results of the first one, working on implementing joint plans, raising results to policy level and sustainably anchoring the DANUBEPARKS partnership both in the region and with other stakeholders. This project with a budget of € 2,2 mil. Consists in activities for White-tailed Eagle, Black Poplar, river dynamics and nature tourism. The focus of DANUBEPARKS STEP 2.0 is to build on the achievements of the first joint project, anchor results firmly either by implementation actions or by integrating them into a policy framework and to further enlarge the network. We improve consistency of nature protection activities and strengthen our voice on European level. Our main fields of work include restoration of dynamic river habitats, floodplain forest & meadow management, protection and monitoring of rare species, and nature tourism.

There were difficulties encountered in application steps such as: some of the partners which were initially interested withdrew, some partners didn't find financial resources, some activities had not transnational character and finally some partners were from countries which were not part of the programme's area.

During the project run the main difficulties were related to communication between partners and, different national rules and regulations (ex. Procurement regulations, national staff rules, etc.).

The main lesson learnt from this project application is that communication between all partners is the key in a successful implementation.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT:

COUNTRY: SPAIN

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL DE NAVARRA, S.A, Consejería de Agricultura, Pesca y Medio Ambiente-Junta De Andalucía, Spain Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Ordenación del Territorio- Comunidad De Madrid, Spain Consorci per la Recuperació de la Fauna de les Illes Balears, Spain Diputación Foral de Álava–Arabako Foru Aldundia, Spain Grupo de Rehabilitación de la Fauna Autóctona y su Hábitat Spain, Ligue Pour la Protection des Oiseaux, France

PROJECT NAME: Integral Recovery of Bonelli's Eagle in Spain

FUND: LIFE+

DESCRIPTION:

For the first time, a specific programme of conservation measures for diverse core populations of the Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus* or *Aquila fasciata*) has been developed. The programme considers the northwestern Mediterranean 'metapopulation' in Spain and the south of France as one and studies the relationships between the different populations. Spain is home to more than 65% of the European population, and for this reason the consolidation of the species here will impact greatly on its maintenance at European level.

The present LIFE BONELLI project aims to bring about the recovery of the Spanish population of Bonelli's eagle, which is listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. It will carry out a range of protection measures at European, national and regional level. The project will focus on the implementation of the recovery programme developed for the Iberian Peninsula and Balears. It will carry out actions to enhance populations in Madrid, Alava and Navarra, and to facilitate a reintroduction in Mallorca. The project will be supported by local teams that will help to exchange individuals and share experiences, including on recovery opportunities. To improve such connections, a balanced consortium has been established, consisting of the main species recovery stakeholders. Public administrations from the four regions (Navarra, Balears, Álava and Madrid) will work together with the two international breeding centres for Bonelli's eagle (GREFA & LPO). The consortium also includes Andalucía, one of the main reserves for the species at a European level.

This project has one leader and six beneficiary partners, five from Spain, and one from France, and it is a 5-year project (01-JUL-2013 to 30-SEP -2017).

The main difficulty is to find appropriate places to release the eagles, because of the high population in Madrid and the breeding of the eagle chicks.

There are no results yet, as the project has recently started.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4680&docType=pdf

COUNTRY: UNITED KINGDOM

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: South Downs National Park Authority

PROJECT NAME: South Downs Way Ahead Nature Improvement Area

FUND: Defra grant

DESCRIPTION:

The South Downs Way Ahead Project brings together 29 organisations, led by the (SDNPA), to trail blaze the Government's new Nature Improvement Area (NIA) scheme to protect wildlife habitats and the environmental, economic and social benefits they bring. This is a three year project which started in April 2012.

Chalk downland is vital to the survival of rare and endangered wildlife and millions of people in and around the South Downs National Park rely on it to provide clean drinking water and valuable green space. This project aims to protect and enhance this precious habitat by working with a wide range of people and organisations. Nearly 1,000 hectares of chalk grassland habitat have been restored across the five focal areas of Winchester, Harting, Worthing, Brighton & Hove and Eastbourne. Staff and volunteers have collected and propagated local chalk grassland seed, which has contributed to the re-establishment of chalk grassland plants at project sites. This work has helped support and increase populations of invertebrates and other wildlife. There have already been successful results of this habitat restoration work, for example during 2013 there were many more sightings of the rare and endangered Duke of Burgundy butterfly in the project area.

A Visitor Payback Scheme for externally organised events has been developed for externally organised events run along the South Downs Way. The revenue generated from this scheme will contribute to the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats along the South Downs Way.

Objectives:

- To broaden the South Downs Way National Trail as a semi-natural corridor and improve the natural qualities of the route.
- To achieve real improvements to the conservation and management of chalk grassland at the heart of the matrix of downland habitats.
- To demonstrate the viability and benefits of an input based approach to the improvement of groundwater quality.
- To assess and demonstrate the benefits of ecosystem services to urban populations.
- To attribute environmental, economic and social values to the benefits and services provided by chalk downland.

Predicted outcomes / results

- Restored, expanded and reconnected areas of chalk grassland to enable priority species populations e.g. the Duke of Burgundy butterfly to grow and spread. We will use a range of habitat management techniques e.g. scrub clearance, fencing and appropriate livestock grazing.
- Improved water quality, potential for increased carbon sequestration.
- Improved health & wellbeing of local communities, increased understanding of the natural services provided by the Downs, volunteering opportunities.

This work will bring wildlife and people closer together, encouraging local people to value chalk habitats, contribute to their conservation, and to gain practical skills.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT: <http://southdowns.gov.uk/looking-after/biodiversity/south-downs-way-ahead-nature-improvement-area>

COUNTRY: Estonia

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: Estonian Environmental Board

PROJECT NAME: RESTORATION OF HABITATS OF FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSEL

FUND: EEA Grants

DESCRIPTION:

The general objective of the project is to restore the natural habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel in Pudiisoo river to achieve successful breeding of the species.

As for all projects requiring involvement of the private landowners, getting their agreement for participation seems to be one of the biggest challenges and the most time consuming part of the preparation phase. As requirements for applications differ among projects and some of the requirements are sometimes understood and interpreted differently by applicant/partners and donor, or requirements are not enough precise, the application has often to be corrected and/or amended. With this project, some comments have been subjective and amendments required have not been described in the materials available for the applicants.

As the project activities only start in September 2014, one can only predict the difficulties during the project period. One we have encountered with almost every project is related to cost estimation. As for all the main works a call for tender is needed, it is very difficult to estimate the final cost of the works during preparation phase.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT: Tarvo Roose, tarvo.roose@keskkonnaamet.ee – Environmental Board of Estonia

COUNTRY: Germany

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: Müritz National Park

PROJECT NAME: Parks and benefits

FUND: Interreg IVA

DESCRIPTION:

Parks & Benefits resulted from an initiative of protected areas in the Baltic Sea Region who share the conviction that the protection of the natural heritage must involve a sustainable management of the natural resources. The project run from *February 2009 to January 2012*.

The project introduced and strengthened sustainable nature tourism approaches in the Baltic Sea Region and communicated the mutual benefits to protected areas and to their surrounding regions for regional development and sustained natural development. In close and trustful cooperation, the partnership has achieved the following results:

- Joint implementation of the European Charter for sustainable tourism being a practical instrument to generate socio-economic effects within protected areas benefiting also the regional development
- Providing a number of opportunities and advantages in dealing with local processes, visitor impact monitoring and marketing
- Development and introduction of the Charter Part II to the Baltic Sea Region
- Elaboration of an action plan “Generating socio-economic benefits by a sustainable management of protected areas” providing input on values and benefits of protected areas and introducing the management tool Benefit Monitor
- Development of an action programme on a “low impact” transport system network
- Investment in the fields of visitor monitoring, accessibility for all and ICT solutions GPS systems
- Development of a quality and eco label guide for protected areas and SME’s as practical help for implementing eco label schemes at local level.

The Parks & Benefits project has influenced the various processes in protected area management by implementing the *European Charter* (management tool introduced by the [EUROPARC Federation](http://www.europarc.org/)) at park level in the BSR. The involved parks have developed long-term tourism strategies that will be implemented on the basis of 5 years action plans. The parks also have built up strong communication with tourism stakeholders establishing regular tourism forums and involving them into the future development of the protected area.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT: <http://www.parksandbenefits.net/>

COUNTRY: Italy

PROTECTED AREA/ORGANISATION: Regional Park Migliarino San Rossore Massaciuccoli

PROJECT NAME: Conservation of Coastal Ecosystems in Northern Tuscany (LIFE05 NAT/IT/000037)

+ CoREM (Cooperation of the Ecological Network in the Mediterranean)

FUND: Life Programme & IT FR Marittimo

DESCRIPTION:

The aim of the project was to secure and enhance the dune habitats and the wetlands of the back-dune habitats in the Migliarino San Rossore Massaciuccoli Regional Park. The project intended to set up a plan to monitor plants, breeding birds and small fauna in wetland habitats. Specific measures were to be taken to maintain a reproductive colony of bats, a species of Community interest, and to stop the spread of exotic plant species. The project planned to introduce dedicated trails for visitors to reduce the impact of tourism.

Results:

The DUNETOSCA LIFE project achieved an overall improvement of about 80 ha of coastal ecosystems in northern Tuscany. Despite many challenges, particularly around the removal of the invasive *Yucca gloriosa*, this was a larger restored area than initially foreseen. The beneficiary eliminated exotic plants (*Amorpha fruticosa*) to restore about 6 ha of back-dune wetlands with good results. An unexpected outcome of this action was the discovery of two new habitats included in Annex II of the Habitat Directive) in the "Dune litoranee di Torre del Lago" SCI: "Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp." ; and "Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation". The project enlarged and improved the priority habitat calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the Caricion davallianae through the restoration of about 7 ha of wetland habitats in the "Selva pisana" SCI. The project worked to remove another exotic plant (*Yucca gloriosa*) from the priority habitat "Coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp". However, many new *Yucca gloriosa* plants sprouted again during the last year of the project. To protect coastal dunes from human interference and access by motor vehicles, the project closed around 100 unauthorized paths - 80% of the total - and installed 19 wooden platforms and green fences in the park over around 4ha. Awareness raising actions around the protection of coastal dune environments included the publication of brochures on bats and coastal habitats, information panels and a project website. The dunes were also enhanced by the planting of autochthonous species grown in nurseries. The project targeted bat species in particular. It restored two buildings to host the main reproductive and hibernating colonies in Tuscany of the bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* as well as a colony of the bat *Myotis emarginatus*. It installed monitoring equipment to track the bats, which despite the challenge of the high humidity, helped increase knowledge of these species. The bats used the restored buildings successfully. Furthermore, monitoring of the bats in caves identified three new species of isopods. Project monitoring actions showed successful recolonisation of the dunes and wetlands by plants and birds typical of these habitats. To ensure ongoing protection of the dunes and future work, for example, to remove *Yucca gloriosa*, the Park produced and approved five-year dune and wetland action plans.

MORE INFORMATION OR CONTACT:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=2908&docType=pdf