

## LIFE-Environment Summary

LIFE consists of three thematic components: LIFE-Nature, LIFE-Environment and LIFE-Third countries. This information package deals with LIFE-Environment.

Most of the financial instruments of the European Union have an element directly or indirectly concerning the environment but LIFE is the only instrument which specifically supports the development and implementation of Community environment policy.

LIFE-Environment finances **innovative pilot and demonstration actions** aimed at:

- (1) the integration of environmental considerations into land use development and planning, including in urban and coastal areas
- (2) the sustainable management of groundwater and surface water
- (3) the minimisation of environmental impact of economic activities
- (4) the prevention, reuse, recovery and recycling of waste streams
- (5) the reduction of the environmental impact of products and services

Within this scope a number of policy priority area's are defined (PART I of the information pack - GUIDELINES FOR LIFE-ENVIRONMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS).

LIFE-Environment finances also **Preparatory Actions**, aiming at the development of new or revised Community environmental policies. Information on the call for these actions is given separately on the LIFE website.

LIFE-Environment, although open to any legal entity established in the European Union and Candidate countries associated to LIFE (Romania), is addressed in particular to the industrial sector and public authorities.

LIFE-Environment support will be allocated to the best proposals in terms of innovative solutions for important environmental issues, leading to concrete results. Proposals must be highly visible and be technically and financially sound. Projects should incorporate the dissemination of knowledge. The demonstration character is particularly important. Projects must be implemented on a technical scale that allows evaluation of technical and economic viability of large-scale introduction. LIFE-Environment is not directed at research nor at investment in existing technology, it aims to bridge the gap between research and development results and widespread implementation/market introduction.

Proposals should be coherent with the Sixth Environmental Action Programme<sup>1</sup> and the objectives of the Environmental Technological Action Plan<sup>2</sup> which are:

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<sup>1</sup> Sixth Environmental Action Programme Decision No 1600/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 July 2002 OJ L 242 of 10/9/2002  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/newprg/index.htm>

- to remove the obstacles so as to tap the full potential of environmental technologies for protecting the environment while contributing to competitiveness and economic growth;
- to ensure that over the coming years the EU takes a leading role in developing and applying environmental technologies;
- to mobilise all stakeholders in support of these objectives,

Projects within the call of LIFE-Environment should start between the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005. LIFE-Environment projects usually require between 1,5 and 3 years for the implementation. Total project costs vary roughly between 1.000.000 € and 5.000.000 €. The financial contribution is lower or equal to 30 % of eligible costs for projects having a potential to generate (future) income or reduce operational costs, and lower or equal to 50 % for other projects. The contribution does not normally exceed 1.500.000 Euro (the average EC contribution is in the order of 500.000 Euro).

Proposals should be submitted on the standard application forms to the national authorities for LIFE-Environment. The application forms (PART III and Part III-finance forms of the Information Pack) may be downloaded from the European Commission web-site at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm>.

The deadline for submission to the national authorities is 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004, the date may be changed by the national authorities. It is up to them to inform the public subsequently. The Member States and Candidate Country forward the proposals to the European Commission.

The LIFE programme promotes equal opportunities and therefore encourages applications from organisations who themselves implement such principles. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to consider gender balance in respect of staffing for projects proposed under the LIFE programme.

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<sup>2</sup> See COM(2004) 38 final, Brussels, 28.01.2004 'Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: an Environmental Technologies Action Plan for the European Union'  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/etap/etap.htm>

## **PART I**

### **GUIDELINES FOR LIFE-ENVIRONMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS**

#### **I. Introduction**

On 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Regulation (EC) No 1682/2004<sup>3</sup> concerning the financial instrument for the environment (LIFE). This Regulation is the new legal basis for the extension of the third step of the LIFE instrument (LIFE III), from 2005 to 2006, and will be referred to in this document as “the new LIFE Regulation” or “the Regulation”. The Regulation (EC) No 1682/2004 may also be downloaded from the European Commission web-site at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm>.

The LIFE Regulation provides, in article 4 relating to LIFE-Environment, that guidelines concerning the demonstration projects shall be established by the European Commission, in order to promote synergy between demonstration actions and the guiding principles of Community environmental policy with a view to sustainable development and to ensure that LIFE-Environment is complementary to the Community Research Programmes and to the Structural Funds and Rural Development Programmes. Reference is also made to Communication COM(2004) 38 final ‘Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: An Environment Technologies Action Plan for the European Union. The present document responds to this requirement.

These guidelines are addressed to all potential applicants to LIFE-Environment, who are established in the European Union or in the accession candidate countries who have concluded specific agreements for this purpose. For 2005-2006, the candidate country participating in LIFE is Romania.

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 308, 5.10.2004 p 1

## II. Main features of LIFE and LIFE-Environment

### II.1. Scope of LIFE

- (1) The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of Community environment policy and of environmental legislation, in particular regarding the integration of the environment into other policies, and to sustainable development<sup>4</sup> in the Community.
- (2) LIFE is a financial instrument for three major areas of action: **Nature Environment, and Third Countries**. While all three areas aim to improve the environment, each has its specific priorities.
  - (a) LIFE-Nature relates to actions aimed at the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora of EU interest.
  - (b) LIFE-Environment relates to innovative demonstration actions for economic activities and local authorities as well as preparatory actions to support community legislation and policies.
  - (c) LIFE-Third Countries relates to technical assistance to third countries bordering the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas.

### II.2. LIFE-Environment

- (1) The specific objective of LIFE-Environment is to contribute to the development of **innovative** and **integrated** techniques and methods and to the further development of Community environment policy.
- (2) To achieve this objective, LIFE Environment focuses on two different types of projects: **demonstration projects** and **preparatory projects**.
- (3) **These guidelines are aimed at demonstration projects only**. The guidelines for preparatory projects are available on the LIFE website at the following address : <http://europa.eu.int/comm./environment/life/home.htm>

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<sup>4</sup> Sustainable development is meant in its three environmental, economic and social dimensions.

## Guidelines for LIFE Environment demonstration projects<sup>5</sup>

The main objective of LIFE, the only European financial instrument specifically dedicated to the environment, is to support the 6<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme, its four priorities as well as its 7 thematic strategies.

While not legally binding, the European Commission will use the present guidance to evaluate the importance of submitted LIFE-Environment demonstration project proposals in terms of community interest. Applicants are, therefore, invited to take into consideration that proposals addressing issues outside the scope of the priorities listed below are very unlikely to be co-financed.

### I. General principles

LIFE-Environment projects should build upon results of community research programmes as far as this is possible and of promising technologies developed by the industrial sector. These projects should deliver results that could be a basis for wider dissemination activities, for example with the support of the structural funds.

LIFE-Environment supports innovative demonstration projects<sup>6</sup> within the spirit of the Göteborg strategy in particular those contributing to the Lisbon process by adding measurable social and economic benefits to environmental benefits and building on a knowledge base approach.

In accordance with the action plan for environmental technologies<sup>7</sup>, LIFE-Environment encourages projects that lead to:

- the identification of promising environmental technologies/approaches (*or methods or processes*). and of the obstacles to their development leading to solutions to overcome those barriers.

In order to attain the best results projects should to the greatest extent:

- promote the widest possible application of scientifically verified technologies/*approaches* (i.e. network projects, dissemination of results by relevant bodies, etc.);
- integrate capacity building measures;
- involve financial institutions in the diffusion of the technologies/*approaches* developed by the projects.

Projects should address the most important environmental issues in the whole life cycle of a process or a product.

LIFE-Environment support will be allocated to the best proposals in terms of innovative solutions for important environmental issues, leading to viable as well as qualitatively and quantitatively measurable concrete results. Proposals must be highly visible and technically and financially sound. They should incorporate the dissemination of knowledge. The demonstration character is particularly important; projects must be implemented on a technical scale that allows evaluation of technical and economic viability of large scale

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<sup>5</sup> 2004/C 191/02 (OJ C191, 27.7.2004, p.2)

<sup>6</sup> Only projects characterised by a 'high' degree of innovation can claim to be really innovative in this context (i.e. new technology or method, resulting from a study or research, which affects all or most of a production process or service).

<sup>7</sup> See COM(2004) 38 final, Brussels, 28.01.2004 'Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: an Environmental Technologies Action Plan for the European Union'.

introduction. LIFE-Environment is not directed at research or at investment in *existing* technology. It aims to bridge the gap between research and development results and widespread implementation/market introduction. When relevant, LIFE is complementary to the Community Research Programmes and to the structural Funds and Rural Development Programmes, and thus aims at enhancing synergies with, and added value of, past and on-going work.

## II. Specific objectives

The guidelines further define the priorities within the five objectives set out in article 4 of the LIFE Regulation<sup>8</sup> in line with the orientations and approaches defined in the Sixth Environment Action Programme.

### 1. Sustainable land-use development and planning, including in urban and coastal areas.

#### 1 Sustainable urban development<sup>9</sup>

- 1 *Development and promotion of sustainable urban transport plans for town and cities (to reduce urban transport demand, increase the share of public transport, encourage less polluting transport modes and improve the environmental performance of the transport system as a whole);*
- 2 *Implementation of integrated urban environmental management in towns and cities, including the effective reduction of noise level, particularly from transport and construction activities and meeting specific environmental targets.*

#### 2 Air quality management

- 1 *Support of plans and programmes pursuant to Framework Directive 96/62/EC on ambient air quality and its daughter directives, by providing innovative solutions for air pollution abatement or for launching, monitoring and evaluating such plans and programmes through the use of indicators of the impact on health and the environment, including bio-indicators<sup>10</sup>.*

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1682/2004 concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE)

<sup>9</sup> Particular attention will be given to projects which may be used to support the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment prepared by the Commission - [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/thematic\\_strategy.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/thematic_strategy.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Bio-indicators = organisms or communities of organisms reacting under environmental influence with changes in their life functions and/or their chemical structure and therefore make it possible to conclude on the state of the environment.

## 2. Sustainable management of groundwater and surface water<sup>11</sup>.

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| 1 | <b>Impact of agricultural and forest practices on water quality</b> with regard to consequences on river basin management (surface and groundwater) and marine environment (eutrophication). This includes issues of pesticides, nutrient pollution and eutrophication, nitrogen balances in grassland and arable land taking into account quantitative aspects relevant to integrated water management; |
| 2 | <b>Improvements on wastewater management and treatment technologies</b> with a view to increased quality of effluent and reuse needs. Re-use of <b>greywater, including rainwater, and the re-use of agricultural drainage water</b> ;   |
| 3 | <b>Phasing out, cessation of discharges and emissions, and losses of hazardous substances</b> ;  |
| 4 | <b>Flood prevention and control</b> in the context of <b>river basin management</b> .  |

## 3. Minimising the environmental impact of economic activities.

### 1 Clean technologies

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| 1 | Activities covered by the IPPC Directive, involving more specifically:<br>(a) <b>Implementation of more advanced techniques</b> (in connection with environmental protection) <b>than those described as Best Available Techniques in BAT reference documents</b> . The <b>degree of innovation, by comparison with techniques referred to in BAT reference documents<sup>12</sup>, should be clearly described</b> ;<br>(b) <b>Sectors where reference documents have not yet been produced</b> , aiming to address the issues, in relation to BAT, listed in Annex IV of the Directive. |
| 2 | <b>Support of activities addressing obstacles to the development of clean technologies not covered by IPPC, particularly those undertaken by SMEs.</b>  |

### 2 Reduction of emissions of gases having a greenhouse effect

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| 1 | Development of innovative techniques or methods that substantially and quantifiably reduce greenhouse gas emissions (in all sectors, notably in industry, energy, transport, agriculture, forestry and waste management); |
| 2 | Innovative applications using renewable energy sources, for local or small-scale (<10MW) distributed generation of heat and power, complementary to other Community energy funding programmes.                            |

<sup>11</sup> Particular attention will be given to projects that promote a coherent sustainable and integrated approach to water management in line with the orientations and recommendations of the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy).

<sup>12</sup> See the full list of industrial sectors where BREFs are being developed at:  
<http://eippcb.jrc.es/pages/FActivities.htm>

#### 4. Prevent, reuse, recover and recycle waste of all kinds

Priority in descending order:

**1. Waste prevention** for significant waste streams in terms of quantity and environmental impacts involving innovative means for:

*1. Reduction of the amounts of waste through influencing production and/or consumption while not transferring the environmental pressures to other phases of the life cycle of the resource or to other compartments of the environment;*

*2. Reduction of the risks associated with hazardous substances in products.*

**2. Re-use** of products, part of products or extension of the life-cycle of products in such a way as to reduce their impacts throughout their life cycles by:

*1. Demonstration of the acceptability of reuse systems in the market place;*

*2. Design of innovative reuse systems which respond to existing market demands.*

**3. Promotion of recycling** through:

*1. Development of innovative systems for a more efficient sorting of waste to facilitate recycling of batteries, packaging, end of life vehicles and waste electric and electronic equipment;*

*2. Removal of technical barriers and/or demonstration of new uses of recycled materials with the potential of increasing the environmental benefits of recycling especially plastics, rubber and batteries or other materials which are not recycled in normal practice.*

#### 5. Reducing the environmental impact of products and services

##### 1. Environmental design of products and services

*1. Reduction of the environmental impacts throughout the life-cycle of products or groups of products through innovative design (e.g. through ISO Type I labelling schemes) and improvement of the information flow within the supply-chain (e.g. through ISO Type III labelling).*

##### 2. Reducing environmental impacts during the use phase of products and services

*1. Promotion of greening the use, habits and consumption patterns regarding products and services that have a significant overall environmental impact due to the widespread use or their inherent characteristics.*