

Parks & Wildlife Finland

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How to make good quality LIFE Nature proposal

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METSÄHALLITUS

Content

1. General advice - important issues for coming application rounds
2. LIFE project characteristics - Nature specials
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6. Tools for preparing proposal - Trouble tree, stakeholder analysis, logical framework and risk analysis as tool for project preparation
7. eProposal





LIFE NATURE

- Contributes to the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (Council Directives 79/409 EEC and 92/43/EEC)
- Must be **best practice** and/or **demonstration** projects and/or **pilot**
- Long-term sustainable investments in *Natura 2000* sites and on the conservation of *species* and *habitats* targeted by the *Birds* and *Habitats Directives*; *focus on 'unfavourables'* see *MAWP for project topics*
- Must contain Concrete Conservation Actions (CCA) (at least 25% of the LIFE project's budget); *preparatory actions included if needed for C-actions, for applicant to explain the logic*
- Must fulfill *completely* at least one (max two) *project topics* of MAWP; *crucial 10 points*
- EU funding up to 75% (for priority habitats or species, solely)



LIFE PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS AND TIPS

- Logical story the starting point - *clear background, risks and challenges, actions for them and indicators; tools (later)*
- Project period up to 10 years, but usually 5-7 years; *remember buffer period (6 months - 1 year; no actions required)*
- No budget limitations but over 10M€ projects rare; *value for money*
- Pure research actions not favored but OK if linked to the concrete actions or clearly justified for reaching the objectives; *up to applicant to justify, avoid loose ends...*
- Ongoing actions not eligible if not clearly modified or justified that would be continued without LIFE funding; *up to applicant to justify and explain, lack of resources possible*



LIFE PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS AND TIPS

- Sustainability of the results should be guaranteed and possible future funding convincingly explained; *avoid recurring actions, and actions which lead unknown responsibilities*
- Complementary funding properly justified i.e. why LIFE and not other EU funds; *check timing, no more funds, too low compensation, only parts can be financed*
- Replicability and transferability should be included in the project and continue beyond the project period; *include these aspects in the project actions; training, dissemination to various policy and stakeholder levels*
- Actions generally inside EU (exceptions apply in LIFE Nature and BD); *possible outside if measurable effects inside EU, up to applicant to justify*
- (True) international projects favoured; *additional points*
- Indicative national allocations until 2017, after which merit only; *several countries with full allocations, affects...*





LIFE PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

- All beneficiaries receive and invest; cash flow only in beneficiaries accounts
- EU financing 60% (LIFE Nat max., 75%), Environment down to 50% from 2018 onwards
 - 75% for priority species/habitats; *provided 50% for concrete conservation measures*
- Large infrastructure (over 500 000€) not (usually) eligible
- Overhead max. 7% on direct eligible costs excluding the land acquisition
- VAT eligible if non-recoverable and not related to public authority actions, VAT certificate from tax authorities and public authority action justification from the beneficiary
- Full-time project manager favoured; pay attention to the project management; *all beneficiaries need to invest in management*



LIFE PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

- Actions generally: preparatory, concrete, monitoring, dissemination and management
- Few mandatory actions (monitoring indicators, socio-economic and ecosystem function assessment, audit and LIFE dissemination actions)
- Income: profit rule, basically all income ok if does not exceed the own contribution
 - *Timber income can be used as own contribution provided both the expenses and income are included in the project*
 - *Explain how the income is used; to cover the costs of the harvesting and other project costs*



SPECIAL FEATURES OF LIFE NATURE AND BD

- Be clear between SCI and SPA; actions in SCI for habitats and actions SPA for birds and their habitats
- Species or habitat project; can be a combination
- Recurring actions only limited duration (max 2/3 of the project duration)
 - *(new) recurring actions with demonstrative value OK*
 - *Commitment for the continuity during and after the project*
- Sustainability on private lands: commitment from private landowners, form A8 or own commitment form (min. 20 years), sustainability of the project results
- Approval processes e.g. for management plans approved before the end date, new methods/recommendations adopted - *relevant authorities committed (form A8)*





SPECIAL FEATURES OF LIFE NATURE AND BD

- Land purchase for permanent protection OK if needed to reach the project objectives (check the checklist; answer to each point)
 - *Explain the acquisition methods!*
 - *Not possible between public bodies*
 - *Necessary for the concrete actions*
 - *Areas bordering targeted habitats/species occurrence sites; commitment for sustainability (conservation status, must be included to N2000 if targeting habitats and species for which N2000 is not considered sufficient)*
 - *Short term lease (max. project period) OK for demonstration/pilot actions*
- Actions for non SDF listed species/habitats not OK (unless MoE committed to supplement)



SPECIAL FEATURES OF LIFE NATURE AND BD

- Species reintroduction possible (check the checklist; answer to each point)
 - *Feasibility (clear benefit, chance of suggest, financially viable, area under threat...)*
- Habitat actions outside N2000 possible in principle but
 - *Direct benefits to Natura to be proofed (e.g. coherence and connectivity)*
 - *Site actions also appropriate legal or contractual protection to quarantee sustainability (form A8)*
 - *Exception for infrastructures linked to migration corridors; guarantee of sustainability*
 - *Note that for species actions explanation how guaranteed in long term is sufficient no obligation for legal protection*



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Personnel costs

- Daily rate based on actual salaries including obligatory social charges and effective working hours
- Service contracts - under condition of working in the participant premises and under its supervision (timesheets needed)
- Non-additional personnel salary costs: sum of public bodies' contributions must exceed by at least 2 % the sum of public body employees who are not considered 'additional'
- Additional' personnel includes all employees (permanent or temporary) of public bodies whose contracts or contract renewals start on or after the start date of the project or on or after the date of signature of the grant agreement (if this takes place before the project start date)





LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

2% rule (automatic in eProp)

Example of budget (sum of all public beneficiaries):

Personnel:

Non-additional staff*	105 €
Additional staff	20 €
External Assistance	50 €
Equipment	25 €
Total	200 €

Life contribution = 50% (100 000€)

but

Minimum own contribution from public beneficiaries

= 105 € + 2 % = 107,10 €

Maximum Life contribution

= 92,90 €



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Travel costs

- Follow the national/ organisational travel rules
- Indicate the rates used; ensure that same rates are used by each beneficiary
- Explain the reason for travels clearly; duration, how many persons, number of travels
- Usually between 6-9% of the project budget (Finland)
- Include travel costs for 2 to kick-off meeting (Brussels)



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

External assistance

- Follow the national tendering rules for public bodies
- Framework contracts OK; no need to tender just for LIFE
- Explain what is acquired, for what purpose and possible unit prices
- Indicate how the costs were estimated; *based on internet query, preliminary tendering, earlier similar cases etc.*
- No purchase of services or goods between beneficiaries (unless clearly void of profit, VAT)



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Durable goods, infrastructure

- Include here if considered as capital expenditure and included in the inventory list
- Follow the tendering rules for public beneficiaries
- Note the depreciation rates for non-public/NGO beneficiaries; 50% for equipment and only 25% for infrastructure
- Explain what is acquired, for what purpose and possible unit prices
- Indicate how the costs were estimated; *based on internet query, preliminary tendering, earlier similar cases etc.*
- Remember to acquire at the early stages of the project; needed for project actions



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Consumable material

- Do not include costs for general office supplies/gas/electricity since they are deemed to be included in the flat rate for the indirect costs (Overheads)
- Follow the tendering rules for public beneficiaries
- Catering (room rents to ext. ass.)
- Only for items 100% needed for the project
- Explain what is acquired, for what purpose and possible unit prices
- Indicate how the costs were estimated; *based on internet query, preliminary tendering, earlier similar cases etc.*



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Other costs; miscellaneous costs

- Bank charges, conference fees, insurance costs
- Costs for translation, if needed, must always be reported in this category.
- Dissemination materials: purchase or printing dissemination materials/products...
- The cost of a bank guarantee
- Auditor costs
- And the normal justifications...



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Ineligible costs

- Recoverable VAT and VAT of public authorities (unless public authorities provide an official certificate stating that VAT cannot be recovered for costs related to the project, only relevant for non-authority measures)
- Costs incurred for the purchase of durable goods or communication material not bearing the LIFE logo (and the Natura 2000 logo, when applicable)
- Costs incurred for an action which benefits from aid under other Union financial instruments
- Costs related to any action considered as a compensatory measure
- Exchange losses
- Inkind contribution.... and many more....



LIFE BASIC FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

Ineligible costs

- Costs incurred for an action which benefits from aid under other Union financial instruments
- Costs related to any action considered as a compensatory measure
- Costs related to management plans, action plans and similar plans, drafted or modified in the context of a LIFE project, if the related plan is not legally operational before the project end date
- Exchange losses
- Inkind contribution.... and many more....



BASIC ACTION STRUCTURE AND HINTS FOR LIFE NAT

A -actions

- Preferably linked to C-actions
- Avoid data collection with no clear action to follow during the project
- Restoration/management plans... (additional inventories); permits

B-actions

- Purchase, one-off compensation (typical cases); land swap (note the timing of the transactions)
- Necessary for securing the conservation values
- Short term (project duration) compensation for demonstrating of pilots
- Provide statement on the market prices

C-actions

- Describe which habitats/species targeted (quantitative)
- Why infra/equipment/animals needed

What

Why

Who

When

Where



BASIC ACTION STRUCTURE AND HINTS FOR LIFE NAT

D-actions

- How you monitor the effectiveness of the project actions on the conservation issues targeted
- Assessment of the pilot and demonstration actions also with respect to replicability and transferability
- LIFE performance indicators to be continuously updated
- Socio-economic and ecosystem function assessment!

E -actions

- Define by target groups starting with general dissemination
- Obligatory (www, info stands, Layman's report, After LIFE, networking)
- Small scale infra limited to max 10% of CA budget

F-actions

- Table on the roles of the beneficiaries and management chart
- Action/description how reports are compiled

What
Why
Who
When
Where



PROBLEMS TO AVOID AND WAYS TO AVOID

- Operations context/background not clear; *explain the current situation, problems and how/what kind of changes due to the project*
- Short cuts made in explaining; *proposal is written to an expert not understanding your country's situation*
- Actions not linked to objectives; *explain, provide the logic*
- Links between actions missing, no coherent story
- Actions vaguely described; *what, where, why, outcome*
- Expected results not clearly measurable, lack of quantitative aspects; *provide info in description and deliverable/milestones*
- Actions have only limited outcomes; locally important but not at EU level; *explain the EU added value, replicability, transfer to other locations*
- Missing evidence on the effects of the actions





PROBLEMS TO AVOID AND WAYS TO AVOID

- Sustainability not addressed
- Consortium not right for solving the problem; *make the stakeholder analysis, who do you need for the project and after the project*
- Monitoring not clearly linked to the actions and effect of the project; *consider both indicators per action, success of the action and effects*
- Dissemination and analysis of demonstration actions missing; *demonstration actions requires them both*
- Over ambitious both for actions and timetable
- Project not related to the project topics or LIFE in general
- Lack of commitment for permits, legal adoption of plans; *provide A8 forms or explain what you have done to reduce the risk*



PROBLEMS TO AVOID AND WAYS TO AVOID

- Budget too vaguely described; *provide sufficient details, some info in technical and financial parts*
- 25% rule concrete conservation measures not fulfilled; *remember to explain your logic, explain how actions contributes*
- 2% rule i.e. too much permanent staff

GENERAL TOOLS FOR PROJECT PLANNING

- *Problem tree* - used for understanding the problems and effects, not necessary if info included in relevant strategy, action plan etc.
- *Logical framework* - ensures the logical structure, has to be kept in mind if not used
- *Stakeholder analysis* - important for partner selection and defining communication actions per stakeholder group
- *Risk analysis* - important for showing that you are prepared

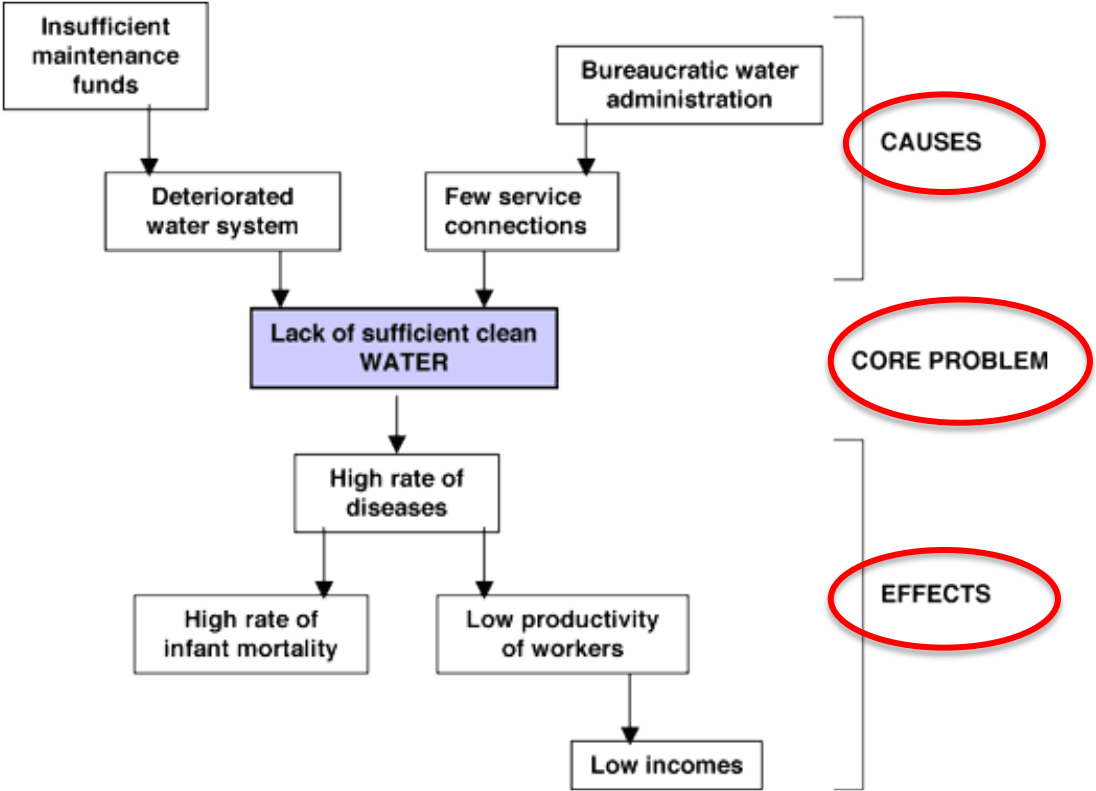
LOGICAL FRAMEWORK - LOGFRAME

Why?

- Ensures that the project is logically structured
- Defining linkages between the project and external factors
- During implementation, the logframe serves as the main reference for drawing up detailed work plans, terms of reference, budgets, etc.
- A logframe provides indicators against which the project progress and achievements can be assessed
- It provides a shared methodology and terminology among governments, donor agencies, contractors and clients

Check e.g. <http://www.sswm.info/content/logical-framework-approach>

BEFORE LOGFRAME - PROBLEM(S) TREE



BEFORE LOGFRAME - STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Box A Key stakeholders

- high degree of influence on the project and high importance for the project success.

Box B Keep informed

- high importance to the success of the project, but with low influence
- require special initiatives if their interests are to be protected

Box C Keep satisfied

- high influence, can affect the project outcomes, but whose interests are not necessarily aligned with the overall goals of the project

Box D Monitor

- low influence on, or importance to the project objectives

		Importance of Stakeholder			
		Unknown	Little / No importance	Some importance	Significant importance
Influence of Stakeholder	Significant influence	C		A	
	Somewhat influential	C		A	
	Little / No influence	D		B	
	Unknown	D		B	

LOGFRAME

Goal: overall objective that may be beyond the reach

Purpose: desired outcome the project will achieve

Outputs: Results of the project

Activities: Tasks needed to achieve these outputs. There may be several for each output.

Inputs: Means and costs, which are needed to carry out these activities.

Project Description		Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
1 ↓ Goal	What is the overall broader impact to which the action will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall goal?	2 What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What are the external factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long term?
	What is the immediate development outcome at the end of the project?	Which indicators clearly show that the objective of the action has been achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	Which factors and conditions are necessary to achieve that objective? (external conditions)
	What are the specifically deliverable results envisaged to achieve the specific objectives?	What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the action achieves the expected results?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?
	Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means:	What are the sources of information about action progress?
What are the means required to implement these activities, e. g. personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.			Costs	What are the action costs?

RISK ANALYSIS

Define risks and assumptions per actions

Decreasing order of importance

Name, actions affected, severity, what you have already done and what you will do

Remember the obvious ones

Project Description		Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	What is the overall broader impact to which the action will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall goal?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What are the external factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long term?
Purpose	What is the immediate development outcome at the end of the project?	Which indicators clearly show that the objective of the action has been achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	Which factors and conditions are necessary to achieve that objective? (external conditions)
Outputs	What are the specifically deliverable results envisaged to achieve the specific objectives?	What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the action achieves the expected results?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?
Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means:	What are the sources of information about action progress?	What pre-conditions are required before the action starts?
		What are the means required to implement these activities, e. g. personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.	Costs What are the action costs?	



GENERAL HINTS

- Provide a clear, logical and coherent story; actions linked to objectives and related to clearly defined threats and problems
- Check that you engage the correct beneficiaries for reaching objectives
- Engage other beneficiaries at an early stage
- Analyse also which stakeholders are important to reach and influence
- Provide sufficient details for cost items
- Pay attention to the coherence between technical and financial parts
- Reserve enough time, invest in full-time project manager (if possible)
- Read the guidelines and address issues included in the them!
- Check the general conditions (rules of the game)



More questions and
then to the eProposal

