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**Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE +)**

ex-ante Evaluation

{COM(2004)621 final}

1. CONTEXT AND METHOD

1.1 Context

In February 2004, the Commission laid out a political project for the Union to tackle the key challenges facing Europe and its citizens in the next financial perspective period from 2007 until 2013¹. Its objective was to launch a forward-looking debate on the European Union's goals, and the tools required to make these goals a reality.

A second Communication² was adopted in July 2004. The Communication set out the value added of the EU action as well as expenditure required to further the political project proposed by the Commission for 2007-2013, and explained how the delivery instruments of this project will be simplified and rationalised. It was accompanied by a set of policy proposals, establishing the legal framework for programmes in key policy areas.

Sustainable development was a main theme in the February communication. This is in line with the conclusions of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Councils. The Lisbon Council set the strategic goal of making the EU the most dynamic, competitive and knowledge-based society in the world by 2010. It was complemented by the EU's *Strategy for Sustainable Development*, which places environmental objectives on a par with economic and social objectives in the Lisbon Strategy. The *6th Environmental Action Programme* (6th EAP), adopted in July 2002, provides the environmental pillar for the Sustainable Development Strategy, identifying the key environmental issues that must be addressed in the period up to 2012 in order to achieve sustainable development. .

EU funding is fundamental to achieving these policy goals. The integration of environment in other sector policies is a principle enshrined in the Treaty and endorsed by various Councils. To date, the environment is included to varying degrees into the structural and cohesion funds, pre-accession assistance, agricultural support and rural development, research and development programmes and external assistance programmes. Sector policies and programmes (e.g. in transport and energy) have specific sustainable development objectives which take forward environment aims.

DG Environment currently manages, on a central basis, several different programmes - the LIFE programme, a sustainable urban development programme, a NGO programme, Forest Focus, a general policy development and implementation facility (which has an internal and external dimension) and a budgetary transfer to the EEA.

The Communications of February and July provide for a continuation of funding for the environment: through mainstreaming in the other funding programmes as well as through a dedicated instrument for the environment.

1.2 Method

The decisions on the timing of the financial perspectives package have meant that the timing of the ex-ante assessment on the dedicated instrument for the environment has been

¹ "Building our common future ~ Policy challenges and budgetary means of the enlarged Union, 2007-2013" [COM(2004)101]

² "Financial Perspectives 2007-2013" [COM(2004)487]

shortened. The following has been conducted by the Evaluation function in DG ENV in light of decisions taken by the Commission on the 2007-2013 financial perspectives, on the basis of evaluations and in the context of needs within the current financial perspectives framework. It specifically takes into account the findings of the mid-term review of the current LIFE regulation³ as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the Court of Auditors Report N° 11/2003.⁴

2. CURRENT SITUATION: STATE OF PLAY AND EVALUATIONS

2.1 Current State of Play

The objectives of protection of the environment and the integration of environment objectives in other sector policies are embedded in the Treaty. Since the 1970s, the European Community has developed an extensive body of European environmental law. Environment policy and legislation is a fundamental complement to the single market and enhances quality of life. European citizens increasingly see access to a clean environment as a right and they look to the EU to guarantee that right and to ensure that Member States implement environment policy correctly. EU funding has been central to achieving environmental policy goals and has been mainly provided by mainstreaming environment in other sector policies and programmes.

In the current programming period for the cohesion policy, for example, the environment represents around 16% of foreseen expenditure in the Objective 1 and 2 regions and 50% of the Cohesion Fund and ISPA has been set aside for environmental infrastructure. This means that roughly €44 billion have been set aside for environment in the current period. In agriculture and rural development, the EU commitment to sustainable agriculture is reflected in policy and funding on agricultural markets. Under the common rules on direct support schemes in those markets, Member States must lay down environmental requirements they consider to be appropriate and may make payments dependant on compliance with those requirements (cross compliance). In addition, the rural development policy includes special environmental measures that provide for payments for commitments going beyond good agricultural practice. RTD programmes finance research and technology development activities in support of other community policies, including environment policy. Under both the 5th (1998-2002) and 6th (2002-2006) RTD Framework Programmes significant financial resources have been allocated to environmental research amounting to some 1.7 billion € for the whole period. The main focus of support has been on climate change, biodiversity, water and marine and land management research.

In addition, dedicated EU funding for the environment in the current financial perspective has been provided through the LIFE programme, a sustainable urban development programme, a NGO programme and Forest Focus.

The LIFE programme (in three strands for Environment, Nature and Third Countries), has supported demonstration and pilot projects aimed at developing new approaches and methods for the protection and enhancement of the environment; the implementation of EU nature conservation policy through the designation of the Natura 2000 Network; and technical

³ Mid-term evaluation on the implementation of the LIFE financial instrument by AEAT

⁴ Court of Auditors Special Report 11/2003 (2003/C/292/01)

assistance activities for capacity building and promoting sustainable development in third countries.

The Community Framework for Co-operation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development provides financial and technical support to networks of local authorities and aims to encourage the conception, exchange and implementation of good practice implementation at the local level of EU environmental legislation, sustainable urban development and Local Agenda 21 (measures at sub-national level aimed at sustainable development).

The Community Action Programme promoting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provides financial assistance for NGOs that are involved in contributing to the development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation in different regions of Europe. The Programme also contributes to the strengthening of small regional or local associations working to apply the ‘acquis communautaire’ in relation to the environment and sustainable development in their local area.

The Forest Focus programme aims at establishing a Community scheme for harmonised, broad-based, comprehensive and long-term monitoring of European forest ecosystems. It covers the monitoring and protection of forests against atmospheric pollution and fires and the monitoring of forests in relation to biodiversity, climate change, carbon sequestration and soils. It also supports the development of forest fire prevention measures.

Other actions for the environment are funded out of general budget lines, both internal and external, based on Article 49(2) of the Financial Regulation (institutional prerogative of the Commission). For the actions within the EU, these budget lines provide funding for the implementation of the environment policy, including studies and awareness raising actions. As for the external dimension, they cover in particular the regular contributions to the Environmental Conventions and international agreements to which the Community is a Party.

2.2 Evaluations and Recommendations

The mid term evaluation of the LIFE programme concluded that the programme contributes importantly to the implementation of environmental policy. LIFE Nature was assessed as having been a necessary and highly effective instrument for implementing the 'Birds and Habitats' directives. LIFE Environment has demonstrated and proven a variety of clean technologies, the adoption of which have and will aid the implementation of EU environmental policy in key areas. LIFE Third Countries was assessed as contributing significantly to developing capacity in third countries, given that it filled an important niche in being able to respond relatively quickly and flexibly to the environmental needs and priorities of third countries.

The LIFE evaluation drew conclusions pertinent to any successor programme. LIFE Environment was not very effective in supporting “preparatory actions” to assist the testing, update and development of either EU or Member State policy. The evaluation recommended that further consideration should be given as to how greater impact can be achieved at the European level and suggested that funding for demonstration projects be focussed on larger multi-country projects with a pan-European dimension, leaving Member States to fund smaller projects under their own programmes. Another suggestion was to continue to support the type of project that is currently funded, but to set aside a budget for monitoring the technical success of the project and “marketing” the results of the project for replication across the Community. The evaluation called for an improved dissemination of results for all

components of the LIFE programme. It recommended consideration of the extension of the geographic scope/international dimension in any successor programme. The LIFE evaluation concluded that whilst the programme is efficiently managed and controlled using systematic and rigorous procedures, the processes are bureaucratic and may be simplified.

In its special report on the LIFE programme, the Court of Auditors came to similar conclusions but also confirmed the usefulness of the programme. As regards the Environment strand of the programme, the Court recommended introducing more precise objectives and a closer link with the 6th Environmental Action Programme. The Court suggested that in order to ensure complementarity between funding programmes and to avoid any possible duplication of funding, interdepartmental consultation procedures should be improved. The Court stressed the importance of an efficient dissemination strategy and noted the measures taken by the Commission in this context. Finally, the Court recommended a number of measures to improve selection, management and control of the projects.

The recommendations of the mid-term review of the LIFE programme and the Special Report of the Court of Auditors have been taken on board in the design of the successor programme. The evaluations of the NGO and Urban programme which are currently on-going will feed into the detailed programme design.

3. PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

3.1 Analysis

Relevance of the Approach

The Lisbon Strategy, complemented by the Gothenburg Strategy on Sustainable Development set the strategic framework for environment policy to 2010. The 6th Environmental Action Programme sets out specific objectives and actions to translate strategic objectives into policy measures and concrete results. The Lisbon and Sustainable Development Strategies are being reviewed at present. The 6th EAP will be reviewed in 2006. The Commission will also present a report on the implementation of the current LIFE Regulation no later than September 2005. Without pre-judging the results of these reviews, it is clear that sustainable development will remain at the heart of the EU's policy agenda – there is widespread recognition and agreement that none of the goals of growth, competitiveness, social solidarity, economic cohesion or environmental protection can be secured on their own, but rather need to be pursued jointly. Furthermore, the text of the new Constitution confirms the common conviction that citizens expect Europe to aim towards sustainable development and to take action in the area of the environment.

That being said, there is a need to demonstrate value-added of actions at EU level, to avoid duplication of instruments and provide beneficiaries of Community assistance with administrative simplification. There is a need to ensure proportionality between the amount of resources and the administrative burden related to their use.

In looking at options for financial programmes under the 2007-2013 Financial Perspectives, in its Communication on the Financial Perspectives [COM(2004)487], the Commission considered the following criteria order in order to test the value added by EU expenditure:

- Effectiveness: cases where EU action is the only way to get results, for instance because of the trans-national nature of the issues concerned,
- Efficiency: cases where EU offers better value for money, for instance because resources or expertise can be pooled.
- Complementarity: cases where EU action is necessary to complement, stimulate, and leverage national action to reduce disparities and raise standards.

In addition, in line with standard evaluation practice, two additional elements are assessed below:

- Delivery Mechanism - Simplification
- Human Resource Considerations

Effectiveness

Funding for the environment has clear European value-added. Environment degradation and climate change combined with the increasing incidence of natural disasters of a transborder nature (eg flooding, forest fires) demand a Europe-wide and global approach and response. If the Union is to face up to combating these environmental challenges, its actions need to be consistent, coordinated, and innovative. EU funding supports activities that by their trans-boundary/global nature would not be funded at national level. There are many examples of common public goods in the environment field, benefiting all of Europe and hence justifying support at EU level. The commitment to environment protection in the Treaty and the need to oversee the implementation of the body of environment legislation which has been adopted over the past thirty years requires action and financial support at EU level of both an investment and policy support nature.

Efficiency

Better value for money can be delivered by ensuring that policies work well together and that certain key goals in cross cutting areas are well mainstreamed into other policies. Environment provides a good example of this. As mentioned above, environmental objectives are at the heart of a wide variety of EU policies and programmes and spending under all EU budgetary headings will have a profound impact on the environment in Europe and beyond.

Under Heading 1, *Sustainable Growth: Competitiveness and Cohesion*, a framework programme on innovation and competitiveness will be developed which will include the promotion and support for eco-efficient innovation and environmental technologies as a main theme. Large environment projects will be eligible for funding under the Growth Adjustment Fund. Support for the environment is an integral element of cohesion policy and funding. Energy and transport policies explicitly aim at encouraging sustainable and environmentally-friendly policies. Research on the environment has long been one of the key themes for EU research and technology development policy. Tackling the challenge of implementing the extensive body of environment legislation, for example, in areas like waste management and emission control, has been a core objective of cohesion policy.

Under Heading 2, *Sustainable Use and Protection of Natural Resources*, in addition to the modest allocation for a dedicated instrument for the environment, most of the resources

devoted directly to environmental goals will be delivered via rural development and fisheries policies and programmes. Cross-compliance also makes high environmental standards a requirement for recipients of agricultural support.

Under Heading 4, *Europe as a Global Partner*, the environment dimension will be fully integrated into enlargement and external relations policies and programmes to work towards sustainable development regionally and globally. This will cover not only country and regional support, but also the take up and implementation of international environment commitments and the external projection of internal environment policy.

Civil protection measures will be funded through the European Solidarity and Rapid Reaction Instrument, which is currently being developed to allow rapid financial assistance in the event of major disasters occurring on the territory of a Member State or of a candidate country. Civil protection will also have access to funding under Heading 4, in particular through the emergency aid reserve.

This integration of environment objectives in other funding programmes and policies provides an efficient means of funding large environment projects, particularly those of an investment nature, allowing for a dedicated instrument for the environment to focus on those areas not covered elsewhere, or, of a more general policy support character, or, where complementary funding will facilitate achieving results and policy objectives.

Complementarity

The European Union is based on solidarity, and on learning from each other. At the same time, the delivery of key agreed objectives requires synergy between actions and expenditure decisions at the EU, national, and regional levels. By complementing and stimulating national efforts to promote environment protection, the Union can contribute to the efficiency of national actions and demonstrate EU-wide solidarity. This is all the more important given the increased diversity following enlargement.

Actions at EU level with a policy support focus offer value for money by making EU policy and programmes work well, complementing national and local policy and funding initiatives. Future environment policy will require ever more sophisticated scientific and technological input to permit a full understanding of the pressures on the environment – at the same time an enlarged Union has made the collection of comparable data still more difficult. If environmental policy objectives are to be achieved, firstly, the knowledge base needs to be strengthened, with improved analyses, modelling and scenario building, design of environmental monitoring and assessment schemes and secondly, implementation needs to be improved through the demonstration of innovative approaches, best practice exchange as well as capacity building of local and regional authorities. Networking and sharing experience are fundamentally important. By spreading expertise through support for networking, a relatively small investment can help create a virtuous circle of dissemination of expertise and knowledge with real knock-on benefits.

A key factor in increasing the impact of policies and programmes is effective information and communication. These activities help to empower individuals and groups in European civil society to participate, in an informed and active manner, in the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of resources. They serve to enhance ownership of EU environmental policies, bringing EU policies closer to the citizen and facilitating dialogue.

Delivery Mechanism

A key objective of the Commission in the next financial perspectives period is to simplify instruments in both legal and management terms, to streamline the budget structure, to increase coherence and consistency between programmes and avoid duplication of instruments. There is considerable room for improvement in meeting these objectives through reducing the number of programmes and simplifying the management and administration of the programmes currently managed by DG ENV. This is all the more important in the enlarged EU.

Human Resource Considerations

There is considerable pressure on human resources in running the different programmes within DG ENV. The LIFE programme is particularly resource intensive⁵, with around 850 projects running at any one time. This argues for simplification of procedures, moving from project to programme approaches, prioritisation and focus on highest value added of EU support.

3.2 Options

Whilst, in light of the above, Community funding for the environment can be considered relevant and justified in effectiveness and efficiency terms, the specific issue of continuing funding of the environment through a dedicated Community instrument was examined. The options looked at were whether to

- i. discontinue the dedicated instrument for the environment;
- ii. continue with the status quo (mainstreaming in the main funding programmes complemented by a number of different instruments managed by DG Environment) or;
- iii. stream-line and simplify, bringing the various environment programmes under one instrument.

The first option was not retained. The main Community funding instruments support physical and tangible investment in the environment as well as support for research, innovation and environmental technologies. However, they do not cover policy support activities having a uniquely European dimension such as best practice exchange, capacity building of local and regional authorities and support for NGOs having a Europe wide vocation. These are essential complements to both EU investment funding and funding at national and local level. With environment mainstreamed into other funding programmes and with significant sums of public money to be devoted to the environment under the next financial perspective, it is all the more important that the means and adequate preparations are put in place to implement EU environment policy and programmes efficiently. This calls for a stronger knowledge base, improved preparations for implementation and increased awareness, all of which in turn point to the need for a dedicated instrument for the environment.

The second option was not considered to be optimal. Continuing with the current number of programmes, each having a relatively restricted scope, but sharing common objectives would not meet the Commission's objectives of efficiency and effectiveness. Each of these different programmes has its own application/administration and comitology procedures, the

⁵ See "Strategic Evaluation of the Management Methods of Programmes", Technopolis, page 82-83 in which the human resource costs of LIFE are compared to a selected number of other similar Community programmes.

management of which demands considerable resources, and hence, runs counter to efforts to simplify administration for the beneficiary.

The third option was retained. A single programme was assessed to be potentially more efficient, effective and transparent. With the exception of *civil protection* which will be funded under a separate solidarity instrument, the *external dimension of the implementation* facility which will be funded under the external assistance instruments and the *subsidy to the EEA* which will be made under the same Budgetary Heading, but not under the (LIFE+) regulation, the single environment instrument will bring all the current funding programmes under one regulation. The efficiency gains through having one instrument will come through substantial simplification of the decision-making process, flexibility in allocation of funds within the same instrument and reduction of administrative overheads involved in funding similar activities through different programmes. A single instrument will allow for a single set of rules and decision-making and financing procedures, as well as more consistent policy targeting. The result will be a reduction in the administrative overheads involved, as well as more transparency and visibility.

However, the single instrument is not a simple extension of the current LIFE programme. In the interests of improving synergy between various Community instruments, the environmental technology and eco-innovation component of the current LIFE programme will be integrated in the EU's competitiveness framework programme which is under preparation. The funding of the external dimension of environment policy will be done through the external assistance instruments.

The results of evaluations have been taken on board in the design of the new dedicated instrument as have lessons learned from the original LIFE programme, along with those learned from the other programmes managed by DG ENV. As mentioned above, these assessments have pointed to the need to improve support of policy development, to improve dissemination of results and to aim for greater Europe wide impact of demonstration projects. The LIFE evaluation concluded that whilst the programme is efficiently managed and controlled, using systematic and rigorous procedures, the processes are bureaucratic and could benefit from simplification. The new programme will bring together the many policy development, monitoring and assessment and implementation strands of current programmes with a view to placing emphasis on policy development and implementation - building the knowledge base and supporting capacity building across the EU. LIFE+ Information and Communication will focus on improved information, dissemination of programme results and communication.

Conclusions 1

- support for the environment at Community level through a dedicated instrument for the environment is relevant and justified –as an integral ingredient in implementing the Lisbon/Gothenburg strategies
- a dedicated instrument for the environment will support actions which provide value added at EU level
- there will be the assurance of an adequate level of efficiency, provided that the various dedicated environment programmes are merged into one instrument

- any new programme should be simplified in terms of delivery mechanisms and designed to minimise demand on human resources, while maintaining sound financial management

4. LIFE+: OBJECTIVES

4.1 General Objectives

The dedicated instrument for the environment, the **LIFE+ programme** aims to support the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU environment policy and legislation as a contribution to promoting sustainable development in the EU. LIFE+ will support in particular the implementation of the 6th Environmental Action Programme which aims at combating climate change, halting the decline in nature and bio-diversity, improving environment, health and the quality of life, promoting the sustainable use and management of natural resources and wastes and developing strategic approaches to policy development, implementation and information/awareness raising .

4.2 Specific Objectives

LIFE + will have two strands:

I. LIFE+ Implementation and Governance will:

- contribute to the development and demonstration of innovative policy approaches and instruments
- contribute to consolidating the knowledge base for the development, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of environmental policy and legislation (through i.a studies, modelling and scenario building);
- support the design and implementation of approaches to monitoring and assessment of the state of the environment and the drivers, pressures and responses that impact on it;
- facilitate the implementation of Community environment policy, with a particular emphasis on implementation at local and regional level, through i.a. capacity building, exchange of best practice and networking;
- provide support for better environmental governance, broadening stakeholder involvement, including that of environment non-governmental organisations, in policy consultation and implementation;

II. LIFE+ Information and Communication will

- disseminate information and raise awareness on environmental issues;
- provide support for accompanying measures (information, communication actions and campaigns, conferences, etc);

The *impact* of these objectives will be reflected in the achievement of the general objectives of environment policy. The nature of the programme means that these impacts will be mainly qualitative rather than quantitative. The type of impact would be improved governance and

improved implementation of Community environment policy through better understanding, monitoring and exchange of experience on achievement of objectives. Given the limited scope of the programme, it will be difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between the programme support and achievement of specific environment policy targets. Therefore, it would not be realistic to assess the impact of the programme against a set of environment impact indicators, but, rather look at impacts in a broader qualitative framework.

4.3 Operational Objectives

The operational objectives have been defined in relation to the main actions planned to achieve the specific objectives mentioned above. The operational objectives target specific actors. The impact of each operational objective will be measured through the use of indicators. Output indicators, for example, will be directly related to the specific activity carried out and defined in relation to the number of projects, costs, etc. The following table gives examples of the type of outcome and impact indicators that could be used.

Example of type of action to achieve the operational objectives	Example of Type of outputs indicators	Example of Type of impact indicators
Building Knowledge Base		
Development of indicators	N° of indicators defined in a common format	Use in the discussion on the achievement of the related objective
Design of innovative approaches to collection and dissemination of data	N° of indicator filled robustness of data collection (validity, margin of error, etc) use of databases	Results available through Europe Robustness of comparisons throughout EU
Studies Evaluation Assessment of impact	key issues and relevance of recommendations	Use in the policy and programming decisions
Modelling and Scenario Building	key scenarios and relevance of recommendations	Use in the policy and programming decisions
Facilitating Implementation Support to the main actors		
Seminar / peer review	N° and type of participants Satisfaction rate Type of learning effects	Progress made in the implementation on the achievement of the related objective
NGO operational support	N° and type of organisations supported	Effects of improved info exchange; demonstration of policy relevant actions
EU Networks	Topic coverage at EU level n° and representative of supporting organisations and MS Lessons learned	Effects of the exchanges / Transfer of information to "organisations" and other main stakeholders

Trainings / seminars / exchanges between officials	N° and type of participants Satisfaction rate Type of learning effects	Progress made in the implementation on the achievement of the related objective
Expert networks	N° of participants Satisfaction rate Type of learning effects	Publication on the related subject Policy making influence
Awareness and dissemination activities		
EU level conferences Events	N° and type of participants Satisfaction rate Type of learning effects	Coverage of the event (media) Publication on the related subject Quality in the message communicated Policy making influence
Publications	Coverage of potential beneficiaries	% of target population addressed Quality in the message communicated
Decentralised Environment Help Desks	N° and type of inquiries	Reduced number of complaints

4.4. Target operators and target populations

Actions will be implemented by key stakeholders – national administrations in the Member States, regional and local authorities, specialised bodies, non-governmental organisations, institutions, etc. The target population is the environment policy support community and the general population.

Conclusion 2

LIFE+ objectives are specifically targeted on improving policy development and implementation as a contribution to achieving wider Treaty and strategic environment policy goals. Operational objectives have been identified, with examples of related indicators provided.

A single instrument will be more effective in supporting environmental policy objectives. It will allow DG ENV to rationalise and streamline, bringing the management of similar activities (e.g. training, networking, monitoring support etc) under one framework in support of the achievement of environment policy objectives. One fund will facilitate a better matching of resources and policy priorities. This will reinforce the coherence of actions funded at Community level.

The programme will be focused on the main stakeholders involved in building the environmental knowledge base, implementing policy and disseminating information.

5. DELIVERY MECHANISMS

5.1 Implementation mechanisms

The LIFE+ programme will be managed centrally, but with the possibility of delegation of budget implementation to the Member States through a programme approach.

Detailed guidelines on implementation will be developed under the programme.

The support will be provided through grant agreements and public procurement procedures provided under the Financial Regulation. Community grants may be provided through specific forms and agreements such as framework partnership agreements and participation in financial mechanisms or funds. They may take the form of co-funding of operating or action grants. For action grants, the maximum rate of co-financing will be specified in the annual work programmes.

Furthermore, expenditure is foreseen for accompanying measures, through public procurement procedures, in which case Community funds will cover the purchase of services and goods. This will cover, *inter alia*, expenditure on information and communication, preparation, implementation, monitoring, checking and evaluation of projects, policies, programmes and legislation.

5.2 Programming Approach

The experience of current and past instruments has highlighted the need to plan and programme on a multi-annual basis and concentrate efforts by prioritising and targeting the areas of activity able to benefit from Community financial aid. Funding will therefore be provided in support of multi-annual strategic programmes. These programmes shall define the principal objectives, priority areas of action, type of actions and expected results for Community funding in relation to the environmental objectives.

Annual work programmes will be prepared, based on the multi-annual strategic programme and shall set out, for a given year, the aims being pursued, the fields of action, expected results, implementation modalities and financing amounts.

5.3 Eligible Actions – General Criteria

LIFE+ will support those activities which have

- European added value: it will intervene only where there is a clear EU value added and contributes to economies of scale on a European level.
- leverage or multiplier effect: it will provide a *co-funding mechanism* with Member States, regional or local authorities and other public and private operators.
- Catalytic or demonstrative character: LIFE + will support actions that show novel ways to approach and implement environment policy;
- Long term perspective: LIFE + interventions will be investments for the future. They will aim at setting the foundations for sustainability

5.4 Types of Actions and Beneficiaries

Types of actions envisaged to meet the specific objectives of the programme are:

- studies, surveys, modelling and scenario building
- development of common methodologies, indicators, benchmarks
- capacity building assistance
- elaboration and publication of guides
- training, workshops and meetings
- networking of specialised bodies
- operating costs of non-governmental organisations
- organisation of working groups of national officials to monitor the implementation of Community law
- best practice platforms
- demonstration actions
- awareness raising campaigns
- organisation of conferences/seminars
- organisation of media campaigns and events
- information and communication actions
- IT platform development and data bases

Beneficiaries: Access to the LIFE+ programme shall be open to all public and/or private bodies, actors and institutions, in particular:

- National, regional and local authorities
- Specialised bodies foreseen in the EU legislation
- International organisations, for actions in the Member States, candidate, Western Balkans and EFTA countries
- Non-governmental organisations

5.5 Monitoring and evaluation

LIFE+ will be monitored regularly in order to follow the implementation of the programme under the two main strands. The programme will be subject to a mid-term and final evaluation which will look at the impact of the programme and its value added at EU level.

Conclusion 3

LIFE+, bringing different programmes under one framework, and based on a multi-annual programming foundation, will result in increased coherence and complementarity in the delivery of activities. Details on implementation will be set out in programme guidelines. All actions will have to meet broad eligibility criteria, including demonstration of EU value added and respect of subsidiarity, complementarity and proportionality.

6. COMPLEMENTARITY

As mentioned above, the environment is funded through all of the budget Headings and through a number of different programmes. The new environment instrument will complement and enhance other EC funding instruments. Specific attention will be paid to ensuring that double funding is avoided.

Conclusion 4

In general, the specific policy support nature of LIFE+ should not lend itself to duplication or overlap with other Community programmes. However, special attention will be paid in programme delivery to ensure that duplication is avoided.

7. COST EFFECTIVENESS

The level of funding for LIFE+ will be relatively modest and does not represent a significant increase over the current financial perspectives.

The rationalisation and simplification of interventions should result in an improved use of human resources, for example:

- common implementation procedures should lead to a reduction in human resource costs
- common database and selection processes should avoid problems of duplication
- more focused actions should be more effective
- fewer projects should allow for improved monitoring and dissemination of results

Conclusion 5

LIFE+ should result in gains in cost effectiveness. This has been a key motivating factor in the design of the new programme.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions 1

- support for the environment at Community level through a dedicated instrument for the environment is relevant and justified –as an integral ingredient in the Lisbon/Gothenburg strategies
- a dedicated instrument for the environment will support actions which provide value added at EU level
- there will be the assurance of an adequate level of efficiency, provided that the various dedicated environment programmes are merged into one instrument
- any new programme should be simplified in terms of delivery mechanisms and designed to minimise demand on human resources, while maintaining sound financial management

Conclusion 2

LIFE+ objectives are specifically targeted on improving policy development and implementation as a contribution to achieving wider Treaty and strategic environment policy goals. Operational objectives have been identified, with examples of related indicators provided.

A single instrument will be more effective in supporting environmental policy objectives. It will allow DG ENV to rationalise and streamline, bringing the management of similar activities (e.g. training, networking, monitoring support etc) under one framework in support of the achievement of environment policy objectives. One fund will facilitate a better matching of resources and policy priorities. This will reinforce the coherence of actions funded at Community level.

The programme will be focused on the main stakeholders involved in building the environmental knowledge base, implementing policy and disseminating information.

Conclusion 3

LIFE+, bringing different programmes under one framework, and based on a multi-annual programming foundation, will result in increased coherence and complementarity in the delivery of activities.

Details on implementation will be set out in programme guidelines.

All actions will have to meet broad eligibility criteria, including demonstration of EU value added and respect of subsidiarity, complementarity and proportionality.

Conclusion 4

In general, the specific policy support nature of LIFE+ should not lend itself to duplication or overlap with other Community programmes. However, special attention will be paid in programme delivery to ensure that duplication is avoided.

Conclusion 5

LIFE+ should result in gains in cost effectiveness. This has been a key motivating factor in the design of the new programme.